

Stereo Review[®]

AUGUST 1975 • ONE DOLLAR

SPECIAL SPEAKER ISSUE

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Versatile features increase listening enjoyment and simplify recording.

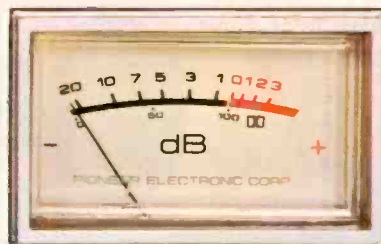
Pioneer has outdone itself on the CT-F2121 with a host of easy-to-use features. A long life permalloy-solid record and play head and a ferrite erase head insure excellent signal-to-noise ratio. The transport operating levers that permit, direct, jam-proof switching from one mode to another without having to operate the Stop lever, are a great advancement. And, like Pioneer's more expensive cassette decks, the CT-F2121 has a separate electronic servo-system and a solenoid that provides automatic stop at the end of tape travel in play, record, fast wind and rewind.

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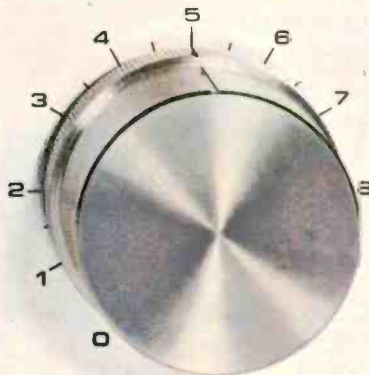


STD STD OFF
CrO₂ CrO₂/Fe-Cr ON

PHONES L—MIC—R



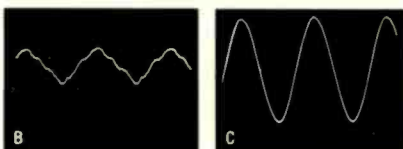
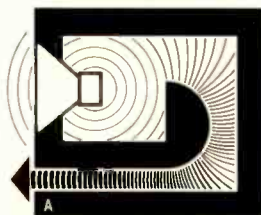
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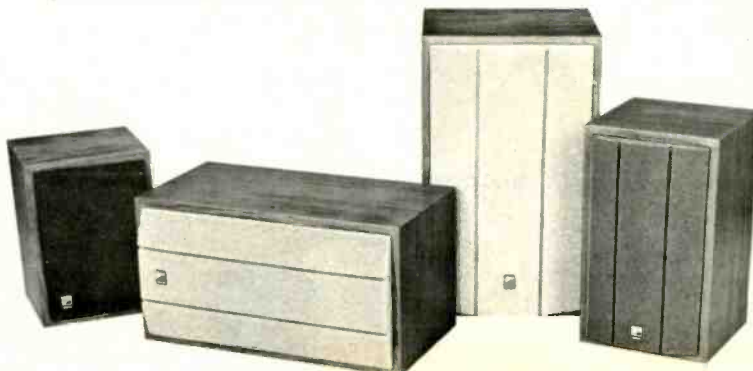
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FORMERLY HI FI/STEREO REVIEW

Stereo Review

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EDITORIALLY SPEAKING

By WILLIAM ANDERSON

WE ARE BUT CRITICS

WE do not, I think, need Senator Proxmire to tell us that at least a few of our government agencies have found some mighty peculiar ways of frittering away our tax money, but we might be moved to thank him for bringing the more exotic examples to our attention—we would very likely not have heard of them otherwise. We are an endlessly curious species, and it cannot be denied that the end results of these fritterings, even when finally boiled down to the arrant horse sense that is often their essence, can make interesting, even useful reading—it is sometimes the only way of reaching those pragmatic minds that will not attend to horse sense unless it is codified in print and supported by the whole paraphernalia of statistical scholarship.

Take, for example, a recent effort called *Americans and the Arts: A Survey of Public Opinion*. Commissioned (paid for, that is) by Associated Councils of the Arts, which is both publicly and privately funded, and executed by National Research Associates (part of the Harris polling organization) with the assistance of the publicly funded National Endowment for the Arts, it is a fascinating if mind-boggling (92 tables!) 162-page compendium that asks (and answers) more questions on the subject than you might have thought possible. If I did not come away from my two hours or so with it any wiser than when I started, I do know what interested me most: Table 13, "Respect for Different Kinds of Occupations and Professions." It will probably be no more news to you than it was to me to read that doctors rate highest (82 per cent of the respondents give them—or did at the time of the survey—a "great deal of respect") or that next in line, descending, are scientists, schoolteachers, policemen, master carpenters (!), and lawyers. It is satisfying to note that professional musicians rate higher than bankers or businessmen in general, and not at all surprising that the "art or theatre critic" is at the very bottom of the list (20 per cent), after baseball players, sanitation workers, and gas-station attendants (neither politicians nor editors made the list).

Now that, I submit, is, if not surprising, at least *interesting* enough to inspire a little thought: just how has the critic managed to make it to the bottom of the heap? How has he contrived to secure a near-monopoly on the public repugnance? Well, first of all, he had a little help, for he has gotten nothing but the worst possible notices from critics of critics over the years. It was most likely the Romantics (novelist Disraeli, poets Coleridge and Shelley) who invented that old saw about critics being failed artists (horse sense tells me it's not true—let's conduct a survey). But there is more to it than that, I suspect, something basic about critics or, more likely, about *us* that makes this antagonism inevitable. Could it be, for example, that (1) we have been (news)paper trained to expect "objectivity" and the subjective critic disappoints us? Is it that (2) those we disagree with are simply disagreeable people even (especially?) when they are right? (3) Do we resent those who threaten our prejudices and make us rethink our old-shoe biases? (4) Do we feel intimidated when someone undemocratically demonstrates that he knows more than we do—and worse, phrases it well? (5) We are all paupers in respect to available time; do we therefore resent being on the receiving end of someone else's intellectual charity, especially when he appears to have *lots* of enviable time (and money) to spend with the frivolous arts? (6) Are critics always "wrong," not only historically but now? Or, finally, (7) are we expressing some measure of nasty self-contempt when we revile the critic, are we not all of us "but critics ready made" (I both telescope and wrench out of context a line each from critics Yeats and Byron)? To answer my own question, I rather like No. 7: the critic as Everyman. I therefore plan to put Jan Sibelius' famous line permanently to rest one of these days by erecting a Statue to the Unknown Critic. The pedestal will be suitably inscribed "Critics All."

Introducing the 601. Dual's first medium-priced single-play turntable (fully automatic, of course.)

With the 601, Dual introduces its second fully automatic single-play turntable. Like the first, the electronic direct-drive 701, it shares several features with Dual's familiar multiple-play turntables, and offers a number of innovations as well.

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A Critical Evaluation.

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Here is Julian Hirsch commenting in *Stereo Review* (April 1975), "The Nakamichi 500 is an exceptional recorder...in the key specifications of frequency response, S/N, and distortion, it is at least the equal of any under-\$500 cassette recorder we have tested and better than most."

Hi Fi Stereo Buyers' Guide declared, "Performancewise, the Nakamichi 500 is outstanding... and the end result is recording equal to, if not better than, that of many high quality reel-to-reel recorders."

And finally, Len Feldman, writing in *Tape Deck Quarterly*, summed it up with, "...it has become a bit of a cliché on the part of many top quality cassette deck manufacturers to compare their product's capability with that of the finest open reel decks. Conservative Nakamichi refrains from making that statement...though if anyone comes close to justifying (it), they certainly do."

The Nakamichi Revolution. An idea whose time has come.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Northern Lights

● Any discussion of Nordic music (June) is incomplete without reference to the superb Scandinavian composer Kurt Atterberg. His beautifully conceived late-Romantic Symphony No. 2, conducted by Stig Westerberg on Discofil, is simply out of this world.

DANIEL JONES
Eldridge, Calif.

● I was most happy to read Richard Freed's June article, "Music's Northern Lights," as I have long wondered why there has been such a glaring neglect of Scandinavian composers in the American catalogs.

Turnabout issued Larsson's *Orchestral Variations* from the old London TW series and could perhaps bless us with more such re-releases—Leon Jongen's *Malaisie* and Joseph Jongen's *Troisième Suite d'Orchestre*, for example. Swedish Society Discofil has contributed a few Nystroem works: the *Sinfonia del Mare* (No. 33207); the Wirén Serenade for String Orchestra, coupled with Larsson's sumptuous and lilting *Pastoralsvit* (No. 33176); and Wirén's *Sinfonieta*, coupled with Kurt Atterberg's *Suite for Violin, Viola, and Strings* (No. 33167). Philips could issue some of their European-sold goodies here, such as Eivind Groven's *Margjit Hjuske*, Op. 48, and *Brudgommen*, Op. 16. And there are Dutch composers who have recorded innumerable Radio Nederland transcriptions, some of which have been issued commercially in Holland. It's time for *new ground* to be broken, and what better way than with a whole body of fine music that has already won wide acceptance in Europe?

WILLIAM C.H. FRASE
Minneapolis, Minn.

● It was nice to see someone finally give some attention to the Scandinavian composers (June). It is long overdue, and I hope that some enterprising record company will make arrangements to release some of the fine records on the Swedish Discofil label. Westerberg's 1971 recording of Nystroem's *Sinfonia del Mare*, which is a vast improvement over Tor Mann's old Dial release, should certainly be made available in the U.S., as should Westerberg's recording of Rosenberg's *Louisville Concerto*, which outshines the Louisville Orchestra's own release of this work. And I agree with Richard Freed in calling for a new

recording of Stenhammar's Second Symphony. I hope Mr. Freed plans a follow-up on his excellent article.

IRVIN E. SASSAMAN
Tamaqua, Pa.

● I enjoyed Richard Freed's article, "Music's Northern Lights" (June). One work I would have liked to have seen included was Svendsen's *Zorahayda*. A radio program (WQXR's "First Hearing") that played it last year indicated it was issued by Philips. But it hasn't appeared in the Schwann catalog since, and correspondence with Philips has produced no information about it, so I assume the recording is not available in the U.S.

LAURENS A. BLANDERS
Nashville, Tenn.

Zorahayda was released on the Phonogram Norway label in that country, and will not be released in this. The address in Norway is Phonogram A/S, Postboks 5327 Rosenborg-gaten 19, Oslo 3, Norway.

● Heartiest congratulations to Richard Freed for "Music's Northern Lights" (June), a tempting smorgasbord of fine recordings reflecting the Scandinavian musical mainstream. However, Mr. Freed's lament about the "lack of interest and curiosity on our part" needs modification at the present time. For example, we have the Carl Nielsen Society of America, the enterprising Genesis label (a gold mine of Scandinavian rarities), and discographers like David Hall, who has plugged away for years on behalf of Scandinavian music. My own contribution is a new 264-page survey, *The Nordic Sound* (Crescendo Publishing Co., Boston), the first American book specifically devoted to the subject.

JOHN H. YOELL
Los Angeles, Calif.

Yes, all very good—but discographies are not recordings! Devoted smaller labels and importers aside, this music remains in limbo until the American majors release it.

Barbara Cook

● Having been a devoted Barbara Cook admirer ever since I first fell in love with her in 1961 in *The Gay Life* as the delicate Liesl, rescuing with beauty and grace Dietz and Schwartz's sentimentalized melodies from

mere Broadway bagatelles, I've wondered why she never reached the pinnacle most similarly gifted artists eventually scale on Broadway. Music Editor James Goodfriend's excellent review of her new album (June) answers some of my questions.

I must admit to finding what he has to say rather harsh on Miss Cook, but so very telling. Miss Cook's revolt against the willowy-elegant roles she so superbly essayed on Broadway has taken a very curious turn. Happily, it seems to be good for her, and her devoted fans want her to be happy, too. But this devoted fan must dissent when even dear Barbara goes too far astray. As for not singing anything from *Candide*, when Miss Cook appeared at *Brothers and Sisters* in New York, requests were heard aplenty for "Glitter and Be Gay," but the lady gently refused, confessing she just couldn't "make it the way it was written." Not any more.

DANIEL GREGG
Bronx, N.Y.

Gloria Gaynor

● Peter Reilly, in his disheartening review (June) of Gloria Gaynor's "Never Can Say Goodbye," states the album as a whole is dominated by "strait-jacketed" and "tin-ear" production. It is apparent to me who has the tin ears.

Ms. Gaynor's album is one of the most ingeniously created and stimulating musical experiences around today. Mr. Reilly's complaint that "the tracks blur into each other like a juke box playing the same record a hundred times in a row" completely misses the mark. The disco trilogy of *Honey Bee*, *Never Can Say Goodbye*, and *Reach Out* was planned and precisely executed in such a way that the three songs merged into one another; this was no haphazard recording accident. It is unfortunate that Mr. Reilly failed to perceive this, as well as the excellence of the entire album.

LUIS H. MORET
New York, N.Y.

Mr. Reilly replies: Mr. Moret only strengthens my point—not only is it juke-box programming, but it was done on purpose. Trouble is, I don't have, and wouldn't want, a juke box in my home, and I suspect I'm not alone in that.

Tracking Error

● One would expect Julian Hirsch's very favorable evaluation of our Model SL-1300 turntable in the February issue of *STEREO REVIEW* to stir us to nothing less than unqualified gratification. Alas, customer misinterpretation of one paragraph in that report—apparently through no fault of reviewer or editor—has clouded our reaction. In that paragraph, Mr. Hirsch noted that, when he first measured lateral tracking error, he found it "higher than we would have expected." It turned out that he had initially erred by 1 millimeter in positioning the cartridge for correct overhang (it should be 52 millimeters, or $2\frac{3}{64}$ inches, from the back of the head shell). After Mr. Hirsch corrected his adjustment, error was found to be "almost too low to measure." He correctly added that future units would be supplied with an overhang-calibration device.

Shortly thereafter, we became aware of some rather bizarre misinterpretations placed on Mr. Hirsch's remarks. These included the mistaken view that the arm was inherently

(Continued overleaf)

Is it live or is it Memorex? Who knows?

In our most recent test, we asked Ella Fitzgerald's old friend and longtime jazz arranger, Nelson Riddle, if he was listening to Ella live, or Ella as recorded on a Memorex cassette.

He couldn't tell.

We believe that's a strong endorsement of our exclusive MRX₂ Oxide formulation. In fact, since we introduced MRX₂ Oxide, a lot of other ferric tapes have been scrambling to find something to beat it. Nobody has.

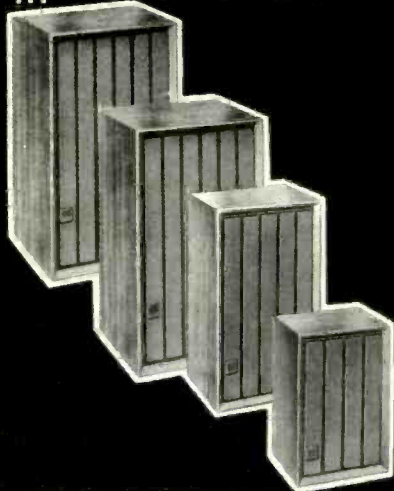


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CIRCLE NO. 20 ON READER SERVICE CARD

flawed, that it would damage records and stylus, and would even be completely redesigned. It's difficult to understand how these misconceptions came about, but let us try to clarify the issue.

(1) With overhang off by one millimeter on the SL-1300 arm, tracking error remains within the limits that would be considered quite acceptable for some other arms whose effective length is 8½ inches or so—in other words, no worse than the inherent error found in many of today's well-regarded arms. The resultant increase in harmonic distortion would probably not be audible, and there certainly is no chance of damage to records or cartridge. Mr. Hirsch did not warn of disaster; he simply reported tracking error "higher than we would have expected." Knowing the arm's effective length to be 9⅞ inches, we assume Mr. Hirsch meant that he expected *extremely* low error as distinguished from reasonably low error. [He did.—Ed.]

(2) Without an auxiliary overhang gauge, correct adjustment is inconvenient, but not impossible. And, in any case, the ease or difficulty of overhang adjustment has nothing to do with the tone arm's geometry and/or design. We therefore have no intention of redesigning an arm that has won deserved praise from so many independent sources. The only change is the inclusion in newly packaged production of a reliable, easy-to-use gauge for the present arm. At the moment, there is no way for the purchaser (or for us) to know whether he's getting an SL-1300 with a gauge in the carton, but we will be pleased to send a free gauge to anyone who asks for one and includes the serial number of his turntable. The address is Technics by Panasonic, One Panasonic Way, Secaucus, N.J. 07094. (Incidentally, the same gauge may be used on our SL-1100A and SL-1200 turntables, as the overhang for the arms is also 52 millimeters. The gauge, however, is *not* usable with other turntables or tone arms.)

SIDNEY C. SILVER
Technics by Panasonic
Secaucus, N.J.

Who Cares?

● I read with interest William Anderson's May editorial "Who Cares?" As an owner of a high-quality stereo system, I too must take issue with the statement that the pop market doesn't care about record quality. I am tired of paying \$7.00 or more for an album that has major defects or whose sound quality is poor. At the prices we now pay for records, I don't think it would be unreasonable for record companies to take more care in their pressings, and I will continue to return defective records as long as the companies continue to turn out shoddy merchandise.

TOMMY ALLEN
Amarillo, Tex.

● Since I'm a disc jockey and music director at WMON-AM, Montgomery, West Virginia. I was particularly interested in "How to Make Good Records" (October 1974) and the summary of readers' reactions in the May 1975 issue.

Despite the fact that more radio stations are now switching to cartridges, thus eliminating most disc-related problems, they still must contend with them during initial dubbing (and the annoyance of surface noise is compounded by jocks who stack discs face-to-face, instead of keeping them in cases). The biggest complaint I have against record companies is

the problem of "off-center" records. You can get seasick just listening to some of these records. I cannot understand why it is so hard to get the hole in the center. Some discs, so flimsy they can almost be bent double without breaking, are badly warped after only a few weeks of playing. And warps on fresh records are unbelievable, both the Postal Service and the packagers being culpable.

I suggest that record companies stop sending four or five copies of records to each station. If each company saved all the vinyl, packing material, time, and postage involved just in sending promotion material, they could spend more on producing a quality product. Listen to the people and to the broadcast industry, record companies!

RICHARD LIVELY, JR.
Montgomery, W. Va.

Pope's Good Friend

● Alexander Pope, the foremost poet of eighteenth-century England, championed Music Editor James Goodfriend's indictment of G. F. Handel, "the root cause of the distinctly unfriendly relations that have existed between music and the English language since his time" (June) in the fourth book of his *The Dunciad* (1742). In lines 53-56, Pope writes:

*O Cara! Cara! silence all that train:
Joy to great Chaos! let Division reign:
Chromatic tortures soon shall drive them hence,
Break all their nerves, and fritter all their sense, . . .*

"Division" is the long, often chromatic series of notes sung to the same syllable of one word, found so often in Handel's vocal music, and leading, as Pope notes, to the "neglect of that harmony which conforms to the Sense." Mr. Goodfriend should be pleased to find himself in agreement with the best minds of the eighteenth century.

PAUL HENNESSEY
Binghamton, N.Y.

Music Editor James Goodfriend replies: Indeed I do, and for one reason in particular: the concern of the best minds of the eighteenth century with music, a subject that does not concern very many of the best minds of the twentieth century—much, I fear, to its detriment.

Garland Tribute

● Thank you for Robert Kimball's excellent and concise article on Judy Garland (June). It's about time someone presented an appreciation of this fine performer's talents and abilities, as opposed to the representative writings on the heartbreaks and tragedies of her life. Liza Minnelli's sensible, unsentimental remarks provided a welcome addendum to this fine article.

RALPH LATIMER
New York, N.Y.

● I loved the picture that ran with the Judy Garland article, and while in Woolworth's the other day was surprised and overjoyed to find it packaged with the "Judy Garland in Concert" album.

AMELIA FRIEDMAN
Bronx, N.Y.

The two-disc set (Trophy Records TR 7-2145) was culled from the best of Judy's CBS TV specials and electronically reprocessed for stereo. It will be available through December 31 at Woolworth's for \$7.95 (disc) and \$8.95 (eight-track tape).

BOOKS RECEIVED

Compiled by
LOUISE GOOCH BOUNDAS

● *The Rolling Stone Guide to High-Fidelity Sound*, by Len Feldman. Straight Arrow Books, San Francisco (1974). 160 pp., \$4.95.

In the year or so it's been around, this simplified handbook has already become a classic. Anybody who wants to know about high fidelity, or who has bought or plans to buy audio equipment, will find it worth much more than its modest price. There is a short glossary, and the book is well illustrated with charts and photographs. What it does *not* contain is all the confusing advanced technical jargon so often found in books of this kind. Mr. Feldman is a great teacher.

● *Twenty-Seven Major American Symphony Orchestras: A History and Analysis of Their Repertoires, Seasons 1842-43 Through 1969-70*, by Kate Hevner Mueller. Indiana University Studies. Bloomington (1973). 398 pp. + lix, \$15.

Make sure your local public library has a copy of this scholarly reference book. At \$15, it is a tremendous bargain, and the information it contains is available nowhere else. If you want to know what music of which composers has been played by which American symphony orchestras in the past 125 years, this is the place to look. Ms. Hevner Mueller has supplemented her study with analytic essays and charts.

● *Philharmonic: A History of New York's Orchestra*, by Howard Shanet. Doubleday, New York (1975), 816 pp., \$20.

This is a wonderful book. Over 350 pages of "backnotes," appendices, and index attest to its value as a reference, but it is the *body* of this lively, well-written history that is sure to capture and hold your interest. There are colorful stories about conductors, musicians, critics, composers, audiences, angels—about the city itself. And there are some well-chosen photographs, too.

● *The Beatles: An Illustrated Record*, by Roy Carr and Tony Tyler. Harmony Books, New York (1975), 128 pp., \$6.95 (paper).

Even better than Hunter Davies' *Authorized Biography*, if only because of the hundreds of superb photos, this just may be the definitive book (so far) on the Beatles. It's musically sound, impeccably researched, remarkably fair, and as up-to-date as is humanly possible. A treat for Beatlemaniacs.

● *Acoustic Techniques for Home and Studio*, by F. Alton Everest. Tab Books, Blue Ridge Summit, Pa. 17214 (1973), 224 pp., \$7.95 (hardbound), \$4.95 (paper).

This manual covers the basics of sound and human hearing, then proceeds to discuss listening-room design, testing the performance of audio systems, and evaluating room acoustics. The book is illustrated with charts and photographs.

A lot of headphones hurt. After a few minutes they begin to weigh you down. A few minutes longer, and they start building a tiring pressure on your ears. They hurt too much to keep on your head.

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We designed the 140 for professional monitoring. Which means wide bandwidths and low distortion, and sound pressure levels over 115 dB. The 140 is compatible with all outputs, 4-600 ohms. Weight: a scant 6.2 ounces. Price? That's so scant it won't give you a headache either. \$34.50.

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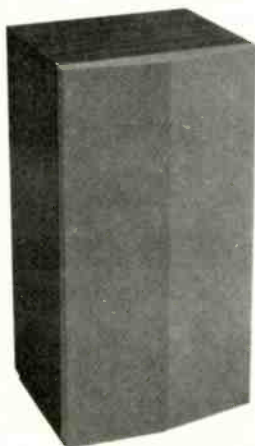
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Kenwood Model Seven Speaker System

The new Model Seven is Kenwood's finest and costliest speaker system. Much of its performance capability is based on the use of



special materials said to be uniquely suited to their applications. Three of its four drivers use diaphragms fabricated from different types of wood pulp that, according to the manufacturer's analysis, possess nearly ideal characteristics of density, rigidity, and elasticity. The fourth driver (the super-tweeter) has a 3/4-inch titanium-foil dome. In addition, the woofer has a copper-capped pole piece to combat hysteresis effects and a specially designed low-deformation surround. The crossover network utilizes silicon steel-core inductors and metal-film capacitors; the enclosure is constructed of solid lumber-core panels overlaid with cross-grained veneers.

The woofer in the Model Seven is a 14-inch air-suspension unit that crosses over at 400 Hz to a 4 1/8-inch dome mid-range. Frequencies from 4,000 to 8,000 Hz are handled by a 1 1/2-inch dome high-frequency driver, while the super-tweeter extends response to 35,000 Hz. The nominal impedance of the system is 8 ohms, with a power-handling capacity of 150 watts program material. Low-frequency response extends down to 20 Hz; distortion is rated at less than 0.5 per cent. The Model Seven is finished on all sides, including the speaker-mounting panel behind its removable sculpted grille, which also conceals output-level controls, calibrated in 2-dB steps from -2 to +2 dB, for all drivers but the woofer. Overall size of the enclosure is 37 x 18 1/2 x 15 inches. Price: \$1,350.

Circle 115 on reader service card

Electrostatic Research ER-139 Speaker System

The second speaker system from Electrostatic Research Company is a three-way design incorporating a 3 1/2-inch cone mid-range that covers the frequencies from 800 to 3,000

Hz and faces straight up. It is otherwise similar to the previous two-way model also referred to as the ER-139.

The distinguishing feature of the Electrostatic Research systems is the array of eight electrostatic tweeters mounted around the circumference of a horizontally oriented drum, providing a 360-degree lateral dispersion pattern. Low frequencies are reproduced by a 10-inch woofer facing downward into a sealed enclosure. The back of the cone then becomes the radiating surface, and the drum (positioned just above) acts as a reflector for its output, spreading it out horizontally. The mid-range driver in the three-way model is mounted in the top of the drum and radiates through a small grille.

The electrostatic elements in the ER-139 are new designs created by Arthur Janszen, a leading authority on electrostatic transducers. They are intended to derive their polarizing voltages from the audio signal itself; alternatively, the system can be plugged into a wall outlet with an ordinary extension cord, which will keep the tweeters energized even during listening interruptions. The ER-139 has an impedance of 6 ohms. It is recommended for use with amplifiers having between 15 and 100 watts per channel continuous power-output capability. Frequency range is 32 to 20,000 Hz. The system occupies a floor area of 16 x 16 inches and stands 28 inches high.



Price: \$179.90, or \$199.90 with the decorative grille top shown. The two-way version costs \$139.90.

Circle 116 on reader service card

IMF Model R Speaker System

A new three-way speaker system from IMF employs a more compact enclosure than this company's "Monitor" systems. It has a 9-inch acoustic-foam-filled duct (called a "resistive line tunnel") of the same cross-sectional area as the woofer diaphragm and ending in a port at the bottom of the cabinet. The main volume of the enclosure's interior is also liber-

ally treated with acoustic foam to absorb internal reflections. The mid-range driver has its own internal sub-enclosure—a long tube filled with acoustic foam of varying density.

The drivers of the Model R, all of which have plastic diaphragms, consist of an 8 x 12-inch flat-oval woofer, a 5-inch cone mid-



range, and a 3/4-inch dome tweeter. Crossover points are 375 and 3,500 Hz, and the crossover network is phase compensated. The high-frequency energy of the system can be subtly altered (over a 2-dB range in three switch positions) to suit the program material. Frequency response is said to be essentially flat from 25 to 30,000 Hz. The impedance of the Model R is 8 ohms, and amplifier powers ranging from 35 to 100 watts per channel continuous are recommended. The system is finished in natural walnut with a black grille; dimensions are 28 x 16 x 14 3/4 inches. The Model R is sold in "mirror image" pairs for stereo at a price of \$330 each. Optional stands (shown), 8 inches high, cost \$50 per pair.

Circle 117 on reader service card

Infinity Monitor II Speaker System

The Monitor II, the latest version of the Infinity speaker system, is now a four-way design with a tall (50 inches) columnar enclosure that provides a damped, ported transmission line for the rear radiation of the 12-inch woofer. The output of a 1 1/2-inch dome mid-range driver covers the range between 450 and 5,000 Hz. The system has two tweeters: a 1-inch dome unit for the octave from 5,000 to 10,000 Hz and Infinity's special version of the Walsh transmission-line driver, which is used as a super-tweeter from 10,000 Hz up. (The Walsh driver employs a steep-sided aluminum cone with its widest end terminated only by a damping plug; vibrations of the voice coil are encouraged to travel up the cone in successive waves instead of exciting it as a pure piston radiator.) The crossover network is designed for minimum phase/time error. The

(Continued on page 12)

The tuner that restates the state of the art.

Imagine a stereo FM tuner that performs as cleanly and vividly as your favorite records. That has distortion so low it defies laboratory measurement. That automatically rejects all unwanted noise and interference.

You're looking at it. The YAMAHA CT-7000... the new state of the art tuner. Its cost? \$1,200. So listen at your own risk, because you may never be satisfied with any other tuner again.

It's the first tuner with Negative Feedback. Long used in amplifiers to lower distortion, the application of Negative Feedback to the CT-7000 has all but eliminated MPX distortion. (At 400 Hz, for example, it's an unheard of 0.02%—and that includes distortion caused by the measuring instrument itself.) Also, Negative Feedback eliminates the need for distortion-causing Side Carrier Filters.

For superior separation of the left and right channels, Yamaha designed a unique *Phase Lock Loop MPX Decoder*. Instead of being a single IC chip as in other tuners, our Phase Lock Loop consists of discrete components mounted on their own circuit board, thus allowing precise control in production and hand-tuning adjustment to meet exact specifications.

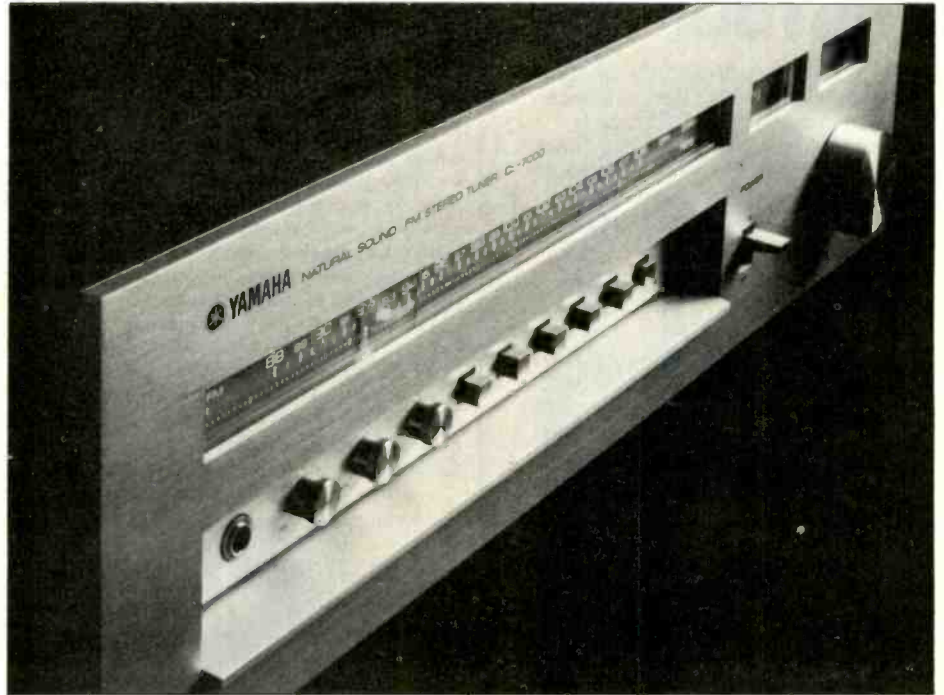
A 7-Gang Tuning Capacitor? Most tuners get by with 4 or 5 stages. We refused to. By designing the Front End with our unique 7-Gang Tuning Capacitor and utilizing Dual Gate MOS FETs, the CT-7000 can receive the weakest stations and, at the same time, accept an extremely high input (up to 1 volt input signal) without overloading.

Advanced IF Amp Stages. Inside the IF amp stage is the world's finest combination of ceramic and L/C filters. This has resulted in an advanced degree of selectivity (the ability to pick out a desired signal while rejecting neighboring frequencies). And maintains proper phase linearity and minimum distortion (less than 0.08%).

A selectable IF Mode lets you choose the width of the tuner's selectivity... narrow setting for crowded band areas; wide setting for uncrowded areas. The tuner's reception can be optimized for virtually every listening situation.

Some other important differences. An *Auto Blend Logic Circuit* automatically operates in three stages to blend high and middle-high frequencies for maximum stereo separation with minimum noise and distortion on even the weakest stations. And you don't need to get up and switch in the MPX filter when a station turns noisy. The CT-7000 does it for you—silently, automatically.

There's Auto-Touch Tuning that automatically disengages AFC while you tune, for maximum station selection. When you release the tuning knob, AFC reengages and locks onto the station,



electronically fine-tuning it to the one point of maximum stereo separation and minimum distortion.

A unique Variable Muting Control makes it possible to receive music where there used to be just noise. This control lets you select the muting cut-off level to an unbelievably low 10 dB (3 $\mu\mu$), yet it can be adjusted to accommodate stations up to 30 dB (30 $\mu\mu$) in level.

Variable Output Level permits adjustment of the tuner's output to match the other input levels. So, when switching from tape, to records, to the CT-7000, you don't have to readjust your volume control.

The end of Multipath Distortion. Reflection of FM signals off their surroundings causes multipath distortion. And that causes muddled, distorted sound. Until now, you could rely on inaccurate signal strength meters to orient the antenna—or you could invest about 800 dollars in an external oscilloscope.

The CT-7000 neatly solved that problem with a unique signal minus multipath circuit which when activated by the S-M front panel relay, allows the signal strength meter to accurately display the multipath content of the incoming signal. Without guesswork, you now can zero-in the antenna incoming signal to reduce to a minimum multipath interference and distortion. In

fact, tests show the S-M meter of the CT-7000 to be three times more accurate for this purpose than an oscilloscope.

Some things we didn't have to do. We could have settled for just having the best performing tuner in the world. But we also wanted it to be the most reliable and durable.

That's why all the push buttons are silky-smooth, precision reed relays instead of switches. Why the flywheel is solid brass. And why, beneath the walnut wood case, each circuit board is protected by a stainless steel cover to guard against stray noises and interference.

Or as Stereo Review summed it up in its January 1975 issue: "Judged by its overall measured performance, the Yamaha CT-7000 is clearly one of the finest FM Tuners ever made. In no respect was it less than superb, and in a few areas—notably distortion, image rejection, AM rejection, and pilot-carrier suppression—it was either far better than anything we had previously measured or simply beyond the measurement abilities of the best laboratory instruments."

Your Yamaha Audio Dealer will be pleased to demonstrate the incomparable CT-7000. Plus other state of the art Yamaha components that make up the system—designed to make you unhappy with what you're listening to now. Because, like life, the best is always yet to come.



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THE GOLD-PLATED RELIABILITY FACTOR.

In this age of planned obsolescence, unreliable performance and shoddy workmanship are almost taken for granted. But there are still a few exceptional products that are built to last and one of them is the Revox tape recorder.

Revox dependability is a combination of many factors, but perhaps the most important of them is advanced engineering. Borrowing from space age technology, Revox gold-plates all of the electrical contacts on its plug-in circuit boards, relays and rotary switches. The result: every one of these movable contacts, the ones that usually cause most of the problems, can be depended upon to perform well for the life of the machine. Obviously, gold plating is considerably more expensive than conventional tinning, but Revox thinks it's worth it.

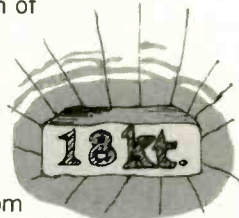
Because Revox engineers demand margins of performance and reliability that far exceed ordinary production standards, you can own a tape recorder that will work perfectly the first time you use it and for years to come.

And that's why Revox is the only one to back its A77 machines with a lifetime guarantee.

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The illustration contains optional extras.



NEW PRODUCTS

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overall frequency response of the system is 26 to 28,000 Hz ± 4 dB.

The enclosure of the Monitor II has walnut side panels and a front covered almost entirely with black grille cloth. Beneath the cloth, the speaker-mounting panel is clad in black vinyl. The top portion of the enclosure is open on four sides to permit utilization of the Walsh tweeter's fully omnidirectional (in the horizontal plane) radiation pattern. Two top panels come with the system: one of acoustically transparent cloth and a second, solid panel finished in oiled walnut. Like the removable main grille, these snap in and out for easy interchangeability, permitting the user to adapt the system to his own needs.

The Monitor II has a nominal impedance of 8 ohms; an amplifier with an output power of 45 watts per channel minimum continuous is advised for driving the system, while amplifiers capable of 250 watts per channel are the maximum recommended. Controls are provided for varying the acoustic outputs of the



dome mid-range and tweeter. The Monitor II measures 50 x 17 x 16 inches overall and weighs 94 pounds. Price: \$449 (slightly higher in the East).

Circle 118 on reader service card

ADC MK II Phono Cartridges

The MK II series of phono cartridges from ADC comprises the company's top models: the VLM, XLM, and Super XLM. The MK II designation indicates that the specifications for these cartridges have been more clearly defined and that the useful life of each has been extended by the tightening of mechanical tolerances wherever possible. The VLM and XLM MK II are stereo cartridges equipped with 0.3 x 0.7-mil elliptical styli; the Super XLM MK II is a CD-4 cartridge fitted with a Shibata-type stylus having edge radii of 0.2 mil and bearing radii of 2 mils.

The VLM MK II has a rated tracking force of 1 to 2 grams, a frequency response of 15 to 20,000 Hz ± 1.5 dB, and channel separation of 24 dB. The outputs of the two channels are



balanced within 2 dB. The XLM MK II tracks at $\frac{3}{4}$ to $1\frac{1}{2}$ gram and has the same frequency response, channel separation of 28 dB, and channel balance within 1 dB. Both cartridges have an output of 0.9 millivolt per centimeter per second of recorded velocity; they are designed to drive an impedance of 47,000 ohms with a maximum shunt capacitance of 275 picofarads.

The Super XLM MK II, with an output of 0.6 millivolt per centimeter per second, has a frequency response of 15 to 50,000 Hz $\pm 2, -5$ dB. Most other specifications match those of the XLM MK II, except that the maximum recommended shunt capacitance is 100 picofarads. The cartridges come in small hinged boxes with stylus brush, screwdriver, and mounting hardware enclosed. Prices: VLM MK II, \$75; XLM MK II, \$100; Super XLM MK II, \$125.

Circle 119 on reader service card

Teac "White Paper"

The "White Paper" from Teac is a comprehensive discussion of tape-recorder design considerations which can serve as an excellent introduction to tape-recording theory. The twenty-four-page booklet begins with the nature of the recorded signal on tape, relates this to head-gap configuration and frequency response, and then continues on through recording-level meters, equalization, bias, distortion, and signal-to-noise ratio, concluding with a description of various tape-drive systems. The booklet is liberally illustrated with black-and-white drawings and printed with wide margins suitable for note-taking. High-quality coated stock is used. The Teac "White Paper" is available free of charge by circling the Reader Service number or by writing Teac Corp. of America, Dept. SR, 7733 Telegraph Road, Montebello, Calif. 90640.

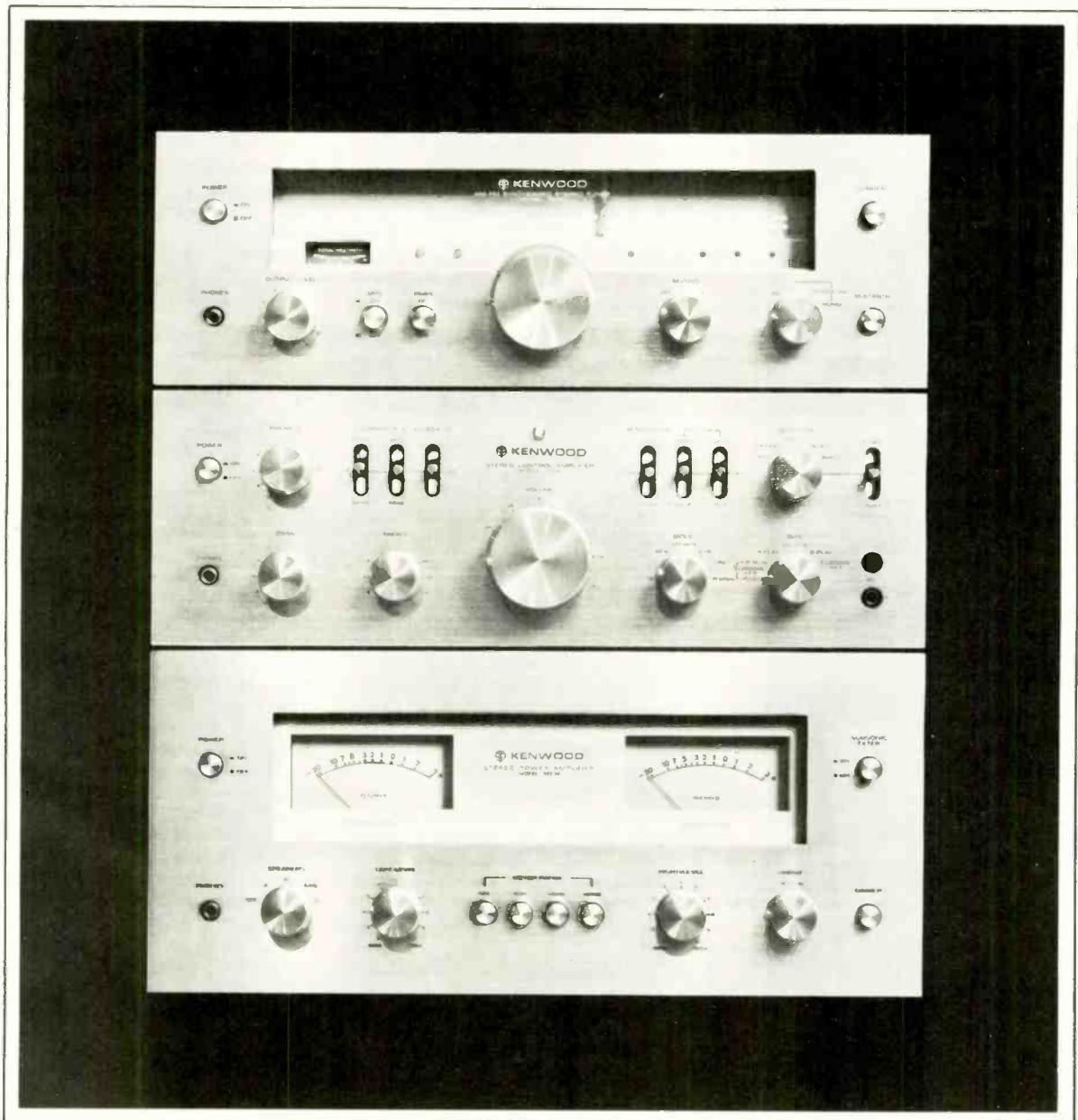
Circle 120 on reader service card

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"The turntable is almost impervious to jarring or bumping."

Audio Magazine

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"I'm glad I bought it"

E.G., Lowell, Mass.

"It has no faults."

H.W., Birmingham, Ala.

"The best turntable in the world."

H.M., Honolulu, Hawaii

The 598 III comes complete with walnut base, plexiglass dust cover, and the world's finest cartridge (4000 D/III). List price \$399.95. It plays any stereo or 4-channel records at tracking forces so low you can't wear out your records. Write for your free full color Empire catalogue:

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CIRCLE NO. 99 ON READER SERVICE CARD

AUDIO QUESTIONS and ANSWERS

By LARRY KLEIN *Technical Editor*



Electromagnetic Speakers

Q. *The use of electromagnetic speakers is virtually unheard of in the stereo industry. However, I have recently become aware that their efficiency is 30 to 40 per cent greater than that of the permanent-magnetic types generally used today. Thus, to reach a given decibel level, an electromagnetic speaker would require less amplifier power. I feel that you would be doing a service for your readers if you would publish a list of manufacturers of this kind of speaker, as it is an elusive product to track down.*

R. S. DAVIS
Syracuse, N.Y.

A. For those unfamiliar with the type of speaker Mr. Davis is referring to, a few words of background would be helpful. The electromagnetic speaker was popular from the late 1920's until the late 1930's. It very much resembled a modern speaker except that instead of having a ceramic or metal-alloy magnet, it used a heavy "field" coil of copper wire as an *electro-magnet*. This coil was energized by d.c. taken from the associated equipment's power supply.

There are at least two things wrong with Mr. Davis' suggestion. I don't know where he obtained his efficiency numbers, but I doubt that they are correct. In addition, it may come as a surprise to many readers to learn that as far as a woofer is concerned, the designer does *not* necessarily choose the strongest possible magnet available to him. At a given point, depending on a number of other design factors, adding more magnetic flux will *reduce* the bass performance of a woofer—because the moving system becomes overdamped. The designer therefore chooses the magnetic flux level that provides the best compromise between efficiency and bass response—which for a hi-fi speaker system is very seldom the point at which the magnetic flux is as strong as possible.

As far as the magnetic flux in mid-ranges and tweeters is concerned, although the designer usually does try for the strongest flux field possible (within his cost restrictions), the problem is to deliver the energy from the magnet to the desired area in the magnetic circuit of the speaker. An electromagnetic field coil provides no advantage over a conventional permanent magnet in this regard either.

In addition to the factors mentioned above, the field coil would require a power source,

and given today's copper cost, a field coil would probably be as expensive as a good-quality permanent magnet. So, Mr. Davis, I am unable to supply you with a list of manufacturers of field-coil speakers, simply because, for the reasons given above, there aren't any.

Doctoring Drivers

Q. *Several years ago I read about a technique to improve the performance of a woofer. As I recall, it entailed cutting slots in the outer edge of the cone and coating it with a special substance. Do you have any thoughts on this?*

MARVIN SPATHE
Fairlawn, Ohio

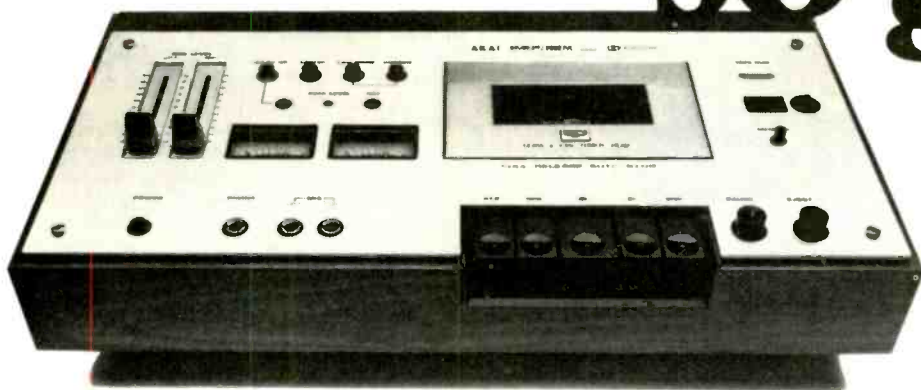
A. Over the years I have also read articles on improving the performance of drivers which involved everything from gluing eggshell halves to the apex of the cone to doping the cone edges with photographic chemicals. And, as a matter of fact, I recommended such techniques myself in the days (over ten years ago) when I was designing build-it-yourself speaker enclosures.

It may be instructive to examine exactly what such speaker-cone modifications are intended to achieve. Any technique for loosening the cone suspension (such as adding slots or substituting rubber segments) is aimed mostly at lowering the mechanical resonance of the cone. The speaker will then be able to reproduce somewhat lower frequencies than it could before the treatment. But the speaker's ability to go down lower, *without an accompanying redesign of the voice coil and magnet assembly*, means that it will run into distortion if it is played loudly at those low frequencies. In other words, the resonant frequency of the cone is just *one* of the limiting factors determining a speaker's low-frequency response and distortion level.

Speaker engineers are constantly making "trade-offs" in their designs, and the factors being juggled at the bass end are distortion, efficiency, cone resonance, and box size. Any attempt by the amateur to second-guess the professional by changing one of the parameters is likely to work out badly. If you disagree with the specific trade-off choices of a speaker-system designer, it's safer to do your second-guessing electronically via a multi-band equalizer than to work directly on the drivers or the enclosure.

(Continued on page 16)

You never had it so good.



(Akai's new GXC-39D stereo cassette deck.)

You may be asking yourself how we could possibly know what you've ever had — and how good it was. Well, we couldn't. Except when it comes to Akai's new GXC-39D.

Then we say — with what it has and for what it costs — you never had it so good.

This cassette deck is so good you can push a button at a certain spot in the tape and it'll remember. And go back to it anytime you want.

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Just turn on the GXC-39D and your tape will be running across Akai's own glass and crystal heads. We developed them.

Lights pop on to remind you the tape is running.

More lights pop on if the recording level is too high.

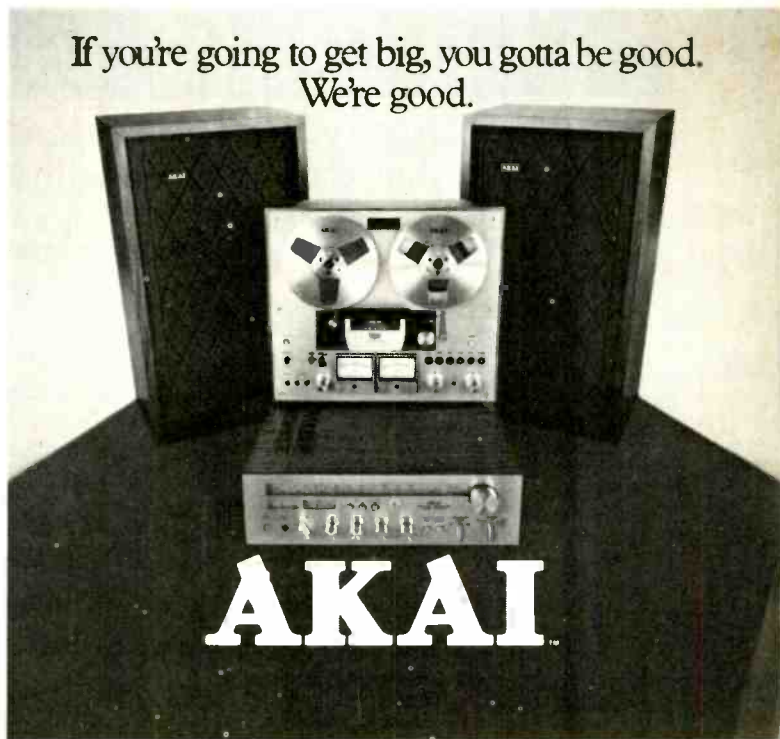
It has direct function controls so you can go from play to forward to rewind and back to play — non-stop.

And it comes in Akai's professionally styled brushed aluminum finish.

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If you are starting from scratch with a build-it-yourself enclosure and you want to experiment with cone modifications, do your doctoring on cheap drivers rather than on expensive ones, because the better the speaker, the worse the odds that your efforts will achieve anything worthwhile.

Open-Reel Reference Level

Q. I note that Julian Hirsch refers to a "standard Dolby level" tape with a 200-nanoweber-per-meter flux level in his tests of open-reel tape recorders. However, the recognized "Dolby level" for open-reels is 185 nanowebers per meter, and S/N measurements referred to a 200-nanoweber-per-meter level will be incorrect. Would you care to comment on this discrepancy?

HUBERT THEIGAL
San Francisco, Calif.

A. You are correct in your statement. The reason Mr. Hirsch uses 200 nanowebers per meter in his tests is simply that the Dolby calibration tape he uses was made in the early days of the introduction of the Dolby B system, before the change was made to 185 nanowebers per meter. The measurement of tape-recorder noise levels, at least insofar as consumer products are concerned, involves visually averaging a constantly fluctuating meter reading whose uncertainty is somewhat greater than the 0.68-dB difference between the two tape-reference levels. To correct the readings to the current standard would really not be warranted by the precision of the measurement, but anyone who cares to "split decibels" can easily do so from the test data in our tape-recorder reports. And, of course, 200 nanowebers per meter is the standard Dolby reference level for cassette recording.

Adding Turntable Capacity

Q. The turntable I would like to buy (because of its excellent rumble and flutter figures) is apparently intended for CD-4 use and has been designed with low-capacitance tone-arm wiring and leads. The cartridge I am considering is one of the several types on the market that require a relatively high capacitive load for flattest frequency response, and I'm wondering whether it is compatible with a CD-4 turntable.

GARRY WOODS
Crown Point, N.Y.

A. This is a problem that, as far as I know, has not yet been dealt with satisfactorily by the manufacturers. It is difficult to optimize the capacitive load on the phono cartridge (even if you know the desired value) when the capacitive loads presented by the turntable cables and the preamplifier's phono inputs are unknown. A simple trial-and-error solution to the problem—pending the day the designers get together—would be to try additional cable lengths at the output of your turntable (which will introduce additional capacitance) or replace the low-capacitance leads with conventional ones. This is easy enough to do since most turntables use cables with phono plugs that insert into jacks beneath the turntable chassis.

If the upper mid-range and highs sound better to you with a given cartridge and phono-cable assembly, then that's the combination to use. I suspect, though, that in most cases the audible differences will be so subtle that the effort may not be worth making.



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Shown above, left to right, 501, 901, and Model 301. For information, write to us at room SS.

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Model 301 Patents Issued and Pending

AUDIO BASICS

By RALPH HODGES



SHOPPING FOR SPEAKERS

THE difficulties of choosing a speaker system cannot be exaggerated. Although the electronic audio components—receivers, tuners, and amplifiers—may be prone to certain sonic shortcomings, none is likely to have faults of such number, diversity, and outright audibility as that last important link in the equipment chain: the speaker. No wonder speaker selection is considered by some to be simply a process of settling for the sonic irritant that annoys you least!

However, as you stand in the showroom and ponder this sobering thought, it should be some comfort to know that there *are* recommended rules and procedures for listening critically to speaker systems. Perhaps they won't lead you automatically to the best choice, but they will improve your chances of spotting it among the throng.

● First, do not be led astray by peripheral design matters—the number of drivers, the type of conductor used for the voice coil, the weight of the woofer magnet, etc. What makes a speaker sound good (or bad) cannot readily be determined from these physical details. Also, do not immediately fall in love with some new design principle or development just because of its newness. Some old techniques may be just as effective as the newer ones.

● Placement in a room affects a speaker's sound, particularly its bass-to-treble balance. When making a final choice between two candidates, try to arrange to hear them side by side.

● Since louder sounds better, even a loudness difference too small to be perceived as such can lead you to conclude that the sound from the louder speaker is more "open" or better defined. If you can hear obvious loudness differences between speakers you are trying to compare, hold everything until the levels are made equal. If you still suspect there is a level/quality problem after adjustment, fiddle with the level controls yourself.

● If you are fond of bass (and who

isn't?), resist the temptation to go whole hog. The bassiest speaker in the store is probably a loser; there is nothing easier than designing a bit of temporarily impressive but false bass into a speaker system. *Quality* (not quantity) of bass is what counts. Also, be aware that a thin-sounding speaker may suffer not from inadequate bass but too much mid-range—a condition that is often remediable via room placement or the speaker's controls.

● Be suspicious of any speaker that has a lot of something—a lot of zip, a lot of sock, or even a lot of bland, retiring qualities. A good speaker is the patient, non-contributing slave of the recording, not an orchestrator of razzle-dazzle effects. Logically, the best speaker is the one that reveals the *most differences* among recordings, because it is so neutral.

● Expect that, for equal loudness levels from speakers of equal sonic quality, the physically *smaller* speaker will require more amplifier power. In other words, smaller speakers tend to be less efficient. This is not, however, a good or sufficient reason in itself for accepting or rejecting a speaker. If you're concerned that the amplifier you favor or own won't have enough power for speaker X, try out the combination in advance.

● You may be told that a good speaker is a merciless exposé of poor recordings. This is true only in part. A good speaker is highly *analytical* and will often reveal exactly what's wrong with a recording. But this may serve merely to make what you hear from it more plausible, more real—and that's a benefit. In any case, no matter how wretched a recording sounds with a good speaker, a bad speaker can always be found that will make it sound much worse.

● Finally, if a speaker well reviewed by respected authorities sounds dreadful in a showroom, there are at least two possibilities: the manufacturer has sold out to Mammon or the dealer has, wittingly or unwittingly, sabotaged the works. In either case, look elsewhere.

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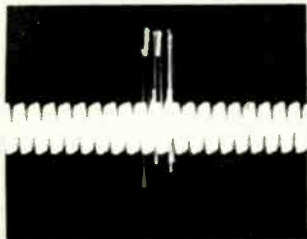
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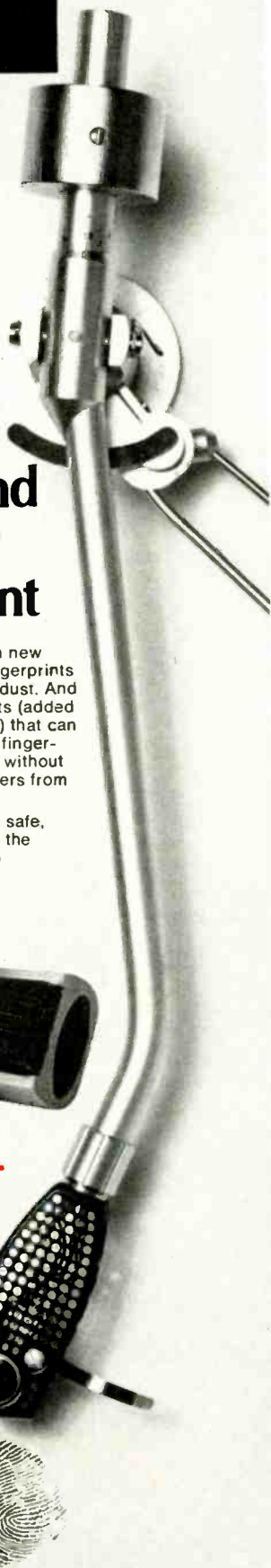
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AUDIO NEWS

VIEWS AND COMMENT

By LARRY KLEIN

Technical Editor

● If you are wondering whatever happened to the ESS/Heil full-range speaker system, I heard the latest (and possibly final) prototype during a recent visit to ESS in Sacramento. The Heil driver moves air by squeezing it between two adjacent surfaces, rather than pushing and pulling it as *all* other speakers do, and the idea is being explored in depth by ESS. I saw perhaps a dozen different configurations of high-frequency drivers in prototype form and, of course, the long awaited full-range system.

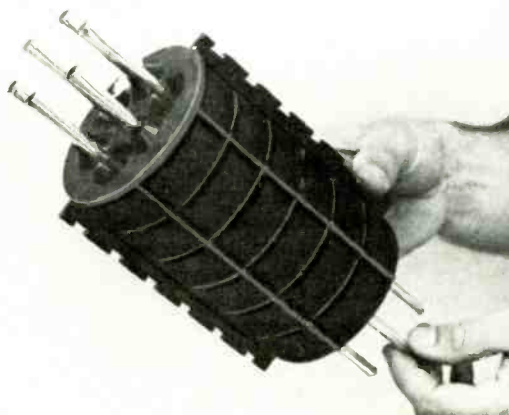
In its present incarnation, the low-frequency driver is a long, three-section cylinder installed in a baffle panel so that it can radiate both front and rear. The cylinders house a series of interleaved fixed and moving small (3-inch) dimpled diaphragms, the active ones being driven by a series of rods which are moved by a voice-coil/magnet assembly. The crossover from the Heil tweeter (the same one that's used in the AMT-1) is at 700 Hz.

How did it sound? At least as good as any speaker system I've ever heard. If and when I get a pair of production models to live with for a while, I may have further reactions. I also heard a pair of prototype Heil-device headphones that in an A-B comparison sounded clearly superior to a very well regarded pair of competing Japanese phones previously distributed by ESS. Target date for distribution of the full-range Heil system (in several models) is this fall.

● A large West Coast speaker manufacturer/retailer recently spoke despairingly to me about the growing popularity (among the rock freaks) of what he referred to as "thud-squawkers." According to my friend, these are bass-reflex speaker systems designed with a big 70-Hz resonant bump *plus* an upper mid-range peak. Although there is no real low bass response, the resonant peak at 70 Hz provides an illusion of bass. (I suppose it's better to have a 70-Hz resonance that thuds rather than a 100-Hz resonance that booms.) My friend tells me that because of the competition presented by these units, he's considering designing some bumps and humps into his own smooth-sounding speaker systems. I sympathize with his dilemma; it really hurts when you see the bad speakers outselling the good ones just because so many rock-music listeners have ears, but apparently hear not.

● If you're having difficulty finding prerecorded open-reel tapes, you might try Barclay-Crocker. They claim to be the foremost retail specialists in open-reel tapes, carrying the largest selection of titles available anywhere. They offer a fast, efficient, personalized service at discount prices both over the counter and through mail order, and visitors are welcome to stop by their office and browse. All the latest Dolby and quadraphonic open-reel releases are listed in B-C's bimonthly newsletter, *Reel News*. If you would like a subscription to this publication, along with a copy of their comprehensive and very nicely put together new 96-page catalog, send one dollar to: Barclay-Crocker, 11 Broadway, Room 8570SR, New York, N.Y. 10004.

● Through the unhappy experience of having my apartment broken into, I've discovered a hitherto unrealized virtue of high-power, heavy-duty audio equipment. My speakers, tape deck, and power amplifiers apparently were just too heavy to steal. But (worry, worry) maybe the thieves intend to return later with the required jacks, lifts, dollies, and hand trucks.



One of the three cylindrical modules from a prototype Heil woofer. Diaphragm motion is provided by the lightweight rods seen protruding from the ends, and air is "squeezed" out of the slots in the housing. The magnet/voice-coil assembly that drives the rods is part of the top and bottom modules.

LARRY KLEIN

If you listen to the experts, you'll listen to our speakers.

Ask any audio expert what makes a speaker good. If he's *Stereo Review's* Technical Editor, Larry Klein, he'll tell you, "A speaker should have no character or sound quality of its own . . . a speaker should be neutral." Or ask Julian Hirsch: ". . . uncolored sound is the only kind of speaker response that gives the listener a good chance of hearing a balanced sound."

If you listen to the experts, you'll look for neutrality in speakers. That's why you should listen to the T-200, Technics' 2-way speaker system. Hirsch-Houck Labs did: ". . . highs were virtually perfect . . . response of the woofer was notably smooth . . . difficult to believe that the sound is coming from an inexpensive compact system." *Popular Science* rated the T-200 "excellent . . . good tonal balance . . . very clean, accurate sound."

The experts are even more impressed with the T-400, Technics' 4-way speaker system. *High Fidelity*: ". . . the sound produced is well

balanced . . . neutral and uncolored with very good internal separation on complex instrumental textures . . . easily one of the better non-compact speaker systems." Martin Clifford of *FM Guide*: "Having a pair of super-tweeters angled to disperse sound . . . means not worrying about the directionality of the highs . . . bass response was good and clean."

For the complete reviews and other technical information, write: Mr. Jack Bloom, Panasonic, 1 Panasonic Way, Secaucus, N.J. 07094.

Technics also offers you the T-300 and T-500. The reviews aren't in yet, but since they share the neutrality and other important characteristics of the T-200 and T-400, we expect the experts to be equally enthusiastic.

The concept is simple. The execution is precise. The performance is outstanding. The name is Technics.

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The new Sansui that set the on its ears



LM 330

At the 51st Convention and Exhibition of the Audio Engineering Society in Los Angeles last May, Sansui demonstrated a new concept in loudspeaker design.

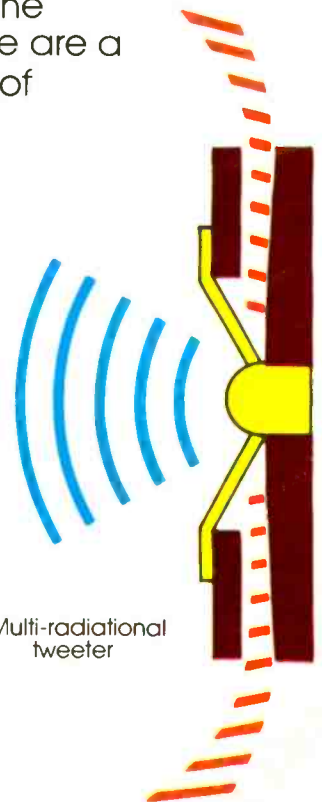
The audience was as golden-eared and hard-nosed as could be found anywhere. Chief engineers of radio and TV stations. Record producers. Recording engineers. Sales executives of audio companies. All of them professionals who make their living with good sound.

Their reaction was overwhelming. The new LM design was acclaimed as a very serious new contribution to loudspeaker technology. The quotes on the opposite page are a mere sampling of this outburst of professional enthusiasm.

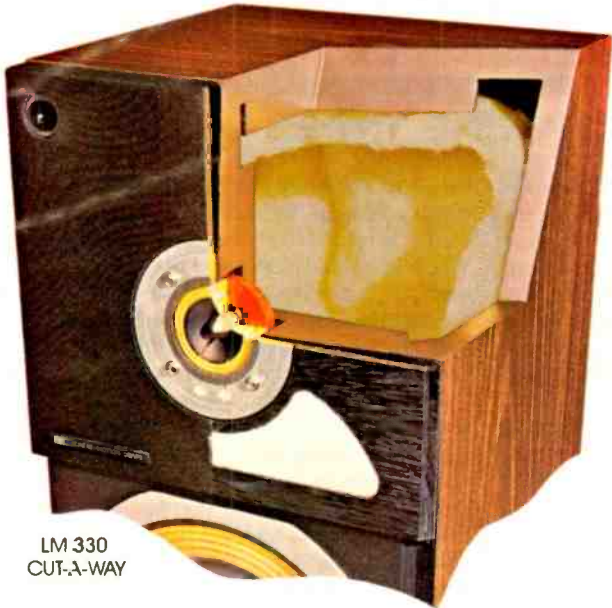
The radically new element in the three LM models is the multi-radiation baffle for the Linear Motion tweeter. The rear sound from the tweeter cone, instead of being damped as in conventional designs, is brought out and added to the forward sound through exponentially shaped parts.

This achieves a broadened sound dispersion and wider stereo perspective. With a completely free motion of the tweeter cone unimpeded by sealed cavities, the results are a spectacular improvement in transient response and overall increased efficiency of the speaker.

In addition, the bass response of the three LM speakers is exceptionally powerful because of the heaviest possible woofer selected for each size and the rock-solid cabinetry.



LM speakers AES Convention



LM 330
CUT-A-WAY

All in all, the new Sansui Linear Motion speakers are a real departure in speaker systems. A more realistic, a more definitive, a more musical system you have never known, even in much larger and much costlier speaker systems.

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Best sound for the small size I have heard yet. R. H. W., Electronic Engineer

LM 330—impressed with bass response. Excellent mid reproduction. Overall excellent speaker. Good things do come in small packages. LM 110—Excellent. D.D.

Very big sound for a small speaker—excellent high frequency dispersion. H. S., Chief Engineer

The lowest, smoothest low frequency response from woofers of this size. Highs—good dispersion, clean, transparent. Congratulations! R. G., Director

Best sound for small size, excellent bass and very good mid-range. J. F. K.

LM 110 and LM 330—Excellent systems—should be a winner. S. S., Studio owner

Much impressed by high frequency dispersion—seemed not to lose highs all the way around the speaker—Better mid-range on LM 330; amazed by sound output from LM 110; good clean sound from both. R. M. H.

Very exciting. R. G. R., President/Director of Engineering

Sounds excellent—can't believe the size for what it does. J. F., Engineer Supervisor

LM 110 and LM 330 (very, very, very—Impressive). G. F., Engineer

Fantastic output and fidelity. M. P.

Super. D. P., Recording Engineer

Good transient response. R. H.



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TAPE HORIZONS

By CRAIG STARK



MICROPHONE TYPES

At one time, most open-reel tape recorders came with their own microphones. Although these mikes were fine for voice, they were certainly less than suitable for high-quality recording, as their owners soon discovered. Today, only the portable cassette machines come with microphones, and those are frequently built in. From time to time, therefore, I get inquiries about choosing mikes for tape decks, and I am sometimes asked if I can recommend a book.

Until now, my answer has been "no," for there just weren't any to recommend. At last, however, there is. Written by Lou Burroughs and edited by John Woram, *Microphones: Design and Application* (Sagamore Publishing Co., 980 Old Country Rd., Plainview, N.Y. 11803; \$20) is a volume intended for professionals and serious amateurs, as its price alone indicates. And while you don't need advanced math to comprehend it, it is heavy on theory and packed with frequency-response curves and graphs.

Besides microphone facts, Burroughs also points up some misconceptions about mikes. For example, if you go to an audio dealer in search of a pair of mikes, one of the first questions you'll get is, "Do you want omnis or cardioids (unidirectional)?" The former pick up sounds from all directions, while the latter reject sounds from the rear, and so need to be "aimed" in the direction of the sound source you want to record. The dealer's recommendation will almost invariably be the cardioid microphone, the reason being the desirability of "eliminating" background noise and increasing separation between channels. This is a popular misconception which can be exposed with a simple test.

Set up a cardioid mike in the room in which you normally record, and with chalk, tape, or newspapers, make a circle six feet in diameter around it. While you man the recorder's controls, have someone stand at the circle's edge in front of a microphone feeding into the left channel and repeat, "one-one-one-

one-one" as rapidly as he can. (The repetition will help him keep his voice at the same level.) Now, keeping the same voice level and repeating the "one-one-one . . ." monosyllable, have him walk around the circle, facing the mike, while you note the time (or tape index-counter settings) he reaches various points on the 360-degree circumference. Rewind the tape, plug in the right channel, and repeat the experiment, but this time outside the house in a quiet spot.

When you compare the playback of the left (in room) and the right (outdoor) channels, you won't need any instruments (though if your VU indicators read the playback levels, they'll confirm it) to tell the difference between the two: the rejection of sounds coming from behind a "unidirectional" mike may be quite satisfactory out of doors, but it will be very slight in your recording room. It's no fault of the mike that sounds originating from the rear bounce off the front wall, and thus also reach the front of the cardioid in time, drastically diminishing its practical advantage over that of the omnidirectional type. But, given the inherently smoother frequency response of an omni in the same price range, your choice is no longer quite as easy as the salesman's automatic recommendation of the cardioid made it seem. When I started taping concerts years ago, I wouldn't even consider an omnidirectional mike. Now, when I can switch-select either unidirectional or omnidirectional pickup patterns with the same mikes, I find I use the latter most.

What you won't get, either here or in Burroughs' book, are hard-and-fast rules for microphone placement or selection. Time and again I've heard studio engineers debate about how they'd use only such-and-such a mike, at a distance of "X" inches for a clarinet pick-up, but for drums they'd not consider anything but a so-and-so (or a pair of them), spaced so far apart. . . . Maybe in their rooms and conditions those choices are optimal, but no two rooms are exactly alike.

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S.R.



TECHNICAL TALK

By JULIAN D. HIRSCH

● **LOUDSPEAKER POWER REQUIREMENTS:** In the September 1973 issue of *STEREO REVIEW* Roy Allison presented a thorough analysis of the power requirements for realistic music reproduction in the home. Mr. Allison's article dealt primarily with the question of how much power is needed with typical low-efficiency speakers to give a satisfactory illusion of "live" listening levels without audible distortion from amplifier clipping. His conclusion was, in brief, that 40 to 60 watts per channel might be enough, provided the listener was satisfied with a *maximum* instantaneous sound-pressure level of about 100 dB. Under these conditions, amplifier clipping can be expected to occur regularly, but most listeners are able to accept the resulting distortion, which need not be grossly audible.

My own conclusions in the matter, reached during (and as a result of) test measurements and listening comparisons between a number of very powerful amplifiers, are consistent with the Allison findings, although I am of the opinion that even the most powerful amplifier available may be inadequate for *completely* realistic sound levels under certain home listening conditions.

In looking at the problem once again, let us put aside most of the variables in the home music-reproduction equation and consider only the matter of the ratio of *peak* to *average* sound pressures in the acoustic output of musical instruments. (By "peak" I mean the highest levels attained by the audio signal, and by "average" the mathematical average of all the signals occurring over the same given period of time.) Studies published over forty years ago—and presumably still valid—indicate that in the output of most instruments the peak sound pressures (in limited frequency ranges) are typically 10 to 30 dB greater than the total average sound-pressure level (SPL). Peak energy levels most often occur in the mid-range—from 200 to 500 Hz—

but there are many exceptions. Extreme examples include the pipe organ, whose sound peaks of 20 to 30 dB above average levels may occur anywhere in the frequency range from 20 to 2,500 Hz, and cymbals, whose peak energy is concentrated at the highest frequencies, with a maximum of +20 dB between 5,000 and 10,000 Hz. (Higher frequencies may have been involved, but 10,000 Hz was the upper measurement limit in the particular study in reference.)

It should be noted that we are not dealing here with the total dynamic range of a given program, which extends from the highest peak level down to the no-signal noise level. That subject was

subject to limiting or compression. To take the pipe-organ figure as an example, a 30-dB increase in sound level represents a *power* ratio of 1,000 to 1, which means that today's largest amplifiers would have to operate at *average* levels of a fraction of a watt to prevent clipping on peaks. The situation is saved, however, by two fortunate circumstances: our ears are able to tolerate without distress—or even recognition—considerable peak clipping (as long as it is not too severe or too frequent), and virtually all program material played through home systems has indeed already been processed to limit (compress) its dynamic range.

I have not seen any thorough study of the peak-to-average level ratio of *recorded* music (as distinguished from "live" music), but my guess is that it is in the 10- to 15-dB range for most classical music and that it rarely, if ever, exceeds 20 dB. Even if the latter figure is valid, it should be possible to listen at average levels of 1 watt or so with a 100-watt amplifier with virtually no clipping, and at substantially higher levels with acceptable amounts of clipping. On many occasions I have listened to music with an average power of 50 to 60 watts per channel using an amplifier that clips at about 250 watts (permitting a peak-to-average ratio of about 6.5 dB) and have not found the clipping distortion objectionable. Perhaps an SPL of over 110 dB is sufficient to mask the distortion that occurs on the loudest peaks, or perhaps it simply numbs the auditory system!

The basic study of music-instrument peak-to-average output, of course, came long before the advent of rock and electronic music. Much hard-rock music has a very high *average* level, with the peaks rarely going more than 5 or 6 dB above it. In addition, distortion is frequently very difficult to hear in rock, whose sound may already be, in effect, "pre-distorted" by the techniques used in its production. Electronically synthesized

TESTED THIS MONTH



Pioneer SA-9900 Stereo Amplifier
Pickering XUV/4500Q Cartridge
Wollensak 4766 Cassette Deck
Tannoy/Micro TM55DD Record Player

treated in some detail at the recent Midwest Acoustics Conference (see *STEREO REVIEW*, February 1975), and the Conference panelists indicated some diversity of opinion as to the dynamic range desired or required for music reproduction in the home. Our concern at the moment, however, is with the upper portion of the program's dynamic range, which extends from the "average" level to the maximum peak levels, since this directly involves the question of loudspeaker survival.

To return to those peak energy figures mentioned above, they appear to be large enough that a home music system would find it virtually impossible to reproduce them unless they had first been

musical sounds are not usually played at the extreme levels employed in much rock music, but they differ fundamentally from the sounds produced by conventional musical instruments. It is possible to synthesize almost any type of waveform, including essentially pure single-frequency square or sine waves. This presents the possibility of driving a speaker with a steady-tone signal, possibly at full power. Most speaker manufacturers caution against driving their products with such signals (especially at high frequencies) except at power levels under 1 watt or so.

All of this leads us to another important factor in the definition of "necessary and sufficient" power for home listening. No matter how much power an amplifier can deliver, there is a finite limit to the electrical input a speaker can accept without harm. A loudspeaker driver can be damaged in two ways: mechanical breakage of the cone, suspension, or voice coil, and thermal burn-out of the voice coil (which can sometimes be accompanied by a spectacular display of smoke and flames). The former type of failure is most likely to occur in the woofer, which undergoes large physical excursions in the course of its normal function. Some acoustic-suspension woofers are designed for cone movements of an inch or more, but any attempt to drive them beyond that point usually produces enough audible distortion that it will effectively discourage the practice. However, an "accident" such as flicking the phono cartridge stylus with amplifier gain at maximum can result in a few hundred watts of power literally tearing the voice coil from its form or the form itself from the woofer cone.

The large size of a woofer voice coil, and the amplitude of its movement, provides enough cooling capacity to make thermal burn-out a rarity. Even so,

a woofer designed to handle the high average power levels of rock music must have a voice coil able to dissipate that power for extended periods, and this calls for special high-temperature materials and bonding agents.

At the other end of the frequency range is the tweeter—by its very nature, a small and rather delicate mechanism. The tweeter cone does not move visibly, and its voice coil is wound with fine wire in the interest of achieving low mass. Physical damage to the cone or voice coil is unlikely, but thermal burn-out is an ever-present threat. To make matters worse, the tweeter does not provide early warning of impending disaster by *sounding* distorted; the entire catastrophe takes no more than a fraction of a second, and the tweeter is no more!

The mid-range driver, whether it is a cone or a dome radiator, usually resembles the tweeter in its lack of appreciable physical movement and general fragility, although its voice coil is larger and more rugged. Unfortunately, many musical instruments deliver their peak energies in the mid-frequency range, and as a result the mid-range driver is usually more vulnerable to damage than any other part of the speaker system. As with the tweeter, its nemesis is thermal overload, and there is no advance warning that it is being overloaded.

Any speaker can handle large momentary power inputs if they are brief enough that the average power does not heat up the voice coil excessively—or damage the cone mechanically. As the duration of the input signal increases, however, the power-handling capability decreases. Most speaker maximum-power ratings are merely a rough guide to the amplifier rating that can drive them to a loud output without undue risk of damage. Some idea of the power-vs.-time relationship can be gained from the

specifications for the AR-LST 1, one of the few speakers we have seen rated in this way. It can handle 23 watts indefinitely, 64 watts for 30 seconds, and 1,000 watts for 2 seconds. No distinction is made in regard to the frequency distribution of the input signal, possibly because the system's multiple mid- and high-frequency drivers provide a more or less uniform capability at all frequencies. We suspect that a somewhat similar relationship between power and time exists with most other speakers, although the numbers will of course be different (and usually much lower).

Many speakers are protected by fuses (and, lately, by circuit breakers) either factory-installed or to be inserted in the speaker line by the user. Although fuse protection is always advisable, the degree of protection varies widely (I have blown out speakers without damaging their fuses!). If the fuse has too low a rating, or if it responds too rapidly to an overload, blown fuses become such a regular annoyance that one is tempted to forego their protection. And, too, a larger fuse or a "slow-blow" type may fail to protect the more fragile drivers. It is best to abide by the speaker manufacturer's recommendations in this respect—and better yet to avoid a gross mis-match between what the amplifier can deliver and what your speakers can take.

If you are aware of the risk, and are willing to assume it, most speakers can be used safely with amplifiers considerably more powerful than recommended. If you choose this route, do *not* try to play the speaker louder than would be possible with an amplifier of the correct rating. Let the added power give your system the "open" quality that comes with an absence of peak clipping instead of risking speaker damage through an over-enthusiastic application of raw wattage.

EQUIPMENT TEST REPORTS

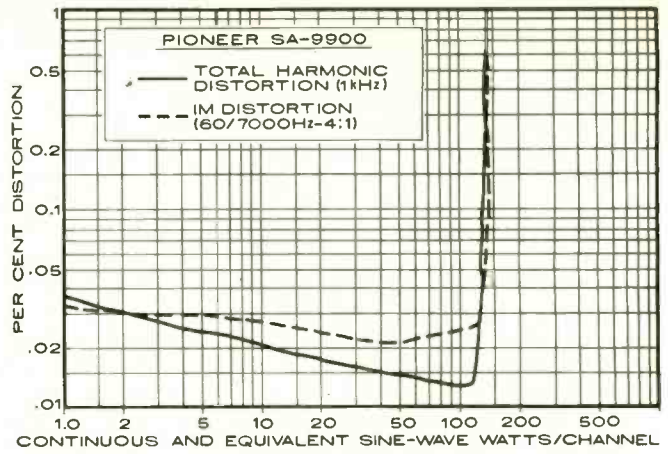
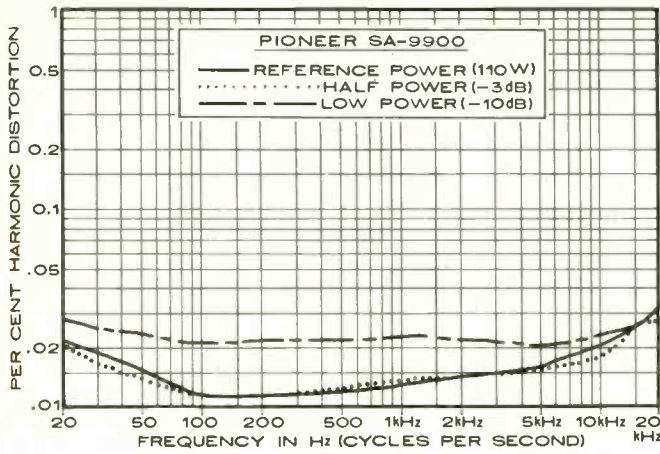
By Hirsch-Houck Laboratories

Pioneer SA-9900 Integrated Stereo Amplifier



● PIONEER's finest integrated stereo amplifier, the SA-9900, is rated to deliver 110 watts per channel continuously between 20 and 20,000 Hz into 8-ohm loads with no more than 0.1 per cent total harmonic distortion (THD). It combines many of the features of earlier Pioneer amplifiers with several new ones to provide exceptional operating flexibility and electrical performance.

The dual tone-control system found on some other Pioneer products is part of the SA-9900. There are two bass controls and two treble controls, calibrated to show their



effect on the output at frequencies of 50, 100, 10,000, and 20,000 Hz. They are step-type controls, the lowest and highest having a range of ± 4.5 dB and the others having a range of ± 7.5 dB, all in 1.5-dB steps. Lever switches bypass all tone-control circuits and introduce low- and high-frequency filters with cut-off frequencies of 15, 30, 8,000, and 12,000 Hz.

The **SPEAKERS** switch connects either or both of two pairs of speakers or shuts them off for headphone listening via the front-panel jack. The **MODE** switch provides normal or reversed **STEREO**, **MONO (L + R)**, and either right or left inputs through both amplifier outputs. As the **BALANCE** control decreases the output of one channel, the level of the other increases by as much as 6 dB (most balance-control systems maintain a constant level on one channel as the other is reduced).

A large **FUNCTION** knob selects the program source. Inputs are provided for **PHONO 1**, **MIC/PHONO 2** (plugging a microphone into the front-panel jack disconnects the phono source), **TUNER**, **AUX 1**, and **AUX 2**. The volume control is a detented twenty-two-position selector that operates with a positive yet light "feel." Volume is reduced in 2-dB steps to -30 dB, and in larger steps to -60 dB, followed by a fully **OFF** position. The level markings are set slightly behind the panel surface and are rather faintly illuminated by edge lighting. A small orange light indicates that the amplifier is on.

A three-position lever switch labeled **ATTENUATOR** makes it possible to operate the volume control in a convenient portion of its rotation over a wide range of input levels. It has fixed steps of 15 and 30 dB. The other front-panel controls include two lever switch-

es, one connecting the amplifier for off-the-tape monitoring from either of two tape decks and the other connecting the recorders to copy a tape from either one to the other. Power is controlled by a pushbutton switch.

Unlike most amplifiers, the rear of the Pioneer SA-9900 is fully occupied by a large heat sink. The various inputs and outputs are located along the sides of the unit, with guides (which resemble handles, but are *not* intended as such) to dress the cables out to the rear. On the left side are three a.c. outlets (one of them switched) and insulated connectors for two pairs of speakers. The separate **PRE AMP OUT** and **POWER IN** jacks are on this side, with a slide switch to open the internal jumpers for connecting accessories (such as electronic-crossover networks or equalizers) between the preamplifier and power amplifier sections.

The right side of the amplifier contains the input and output jacks. A small knob adjusts the **MIC/PHONO 2** sensitivity over a range of 0 to -12 dB relative to the **PHONO 1** sensitivity. A four-position switch adjusts the **PHONO 2** input impedance from 35,000 to 100,000 ohms in four steps (**PHONO 1** is always 50,000 ohms). The amplifier is supplied with soft plastic covers on all signal and power sockets, and the manual suggests leaving them on all unused connectors (presumably to discourage improper connections at a later time). The Pioneer SA-9900, with its front panel finished in satin gold, is 16 1/2 inches wide, 6 1/2 inches high, and 15 7/8 inches deep; it weighs 44 lbs. Price: \$749.95.

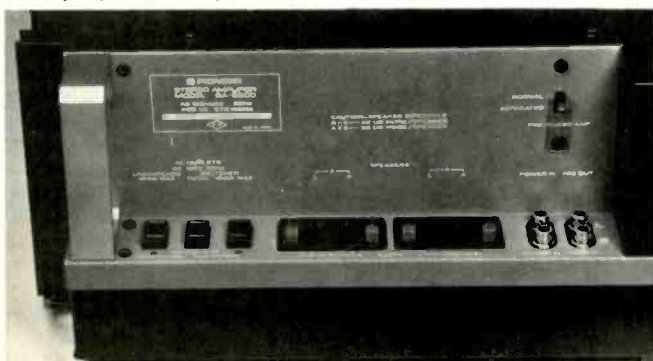
● **Laboratory Measurements.** Following a one-hour preconditioning period at 37 watts output, the Pioneer SA-9900 heat sink was warm, but not excessively so. With both chan-

nels operating into 8-ohm loads, the outputs clipped at 132 watts per channel at 1,000 Hz. With 4- and 16-ohm loads, the power levels at clipping were, respectively, 189 and 85.6 watts. The THD with a 1,000-Hz test signal was below the noise level until the output reached 20 watts, where it measured 0.016 per cent. It remained under 0.013 per cent up to 120 watts, and reached 0.05 per cent at 130 watts. The intermodulation distortion (IM) was less than 0.03 per cent from 2 to 120 watts, increasing to 0.08 per cent at 140 watts. Although the IM rose to 0.32 per cent at the extremely low output of 3.5 milliwatts (mW), this does not indicate any significant amount of "crossover" distortion, since distortion was a mere 0.05 per cent at 100 mW. At the rated 110 watts per channel, as well as at half and one-tenth rated power, the THD was under 0.03 per cent from 20 to 20,000 Hz (typically under 0.015 per cent).

At the **AUX** inputs, 42 millivolts (mV) drove the amplifier to an output of 10 watts with a signal-to-noise ratio (S/N) of 78 dB. The phono sensitivity was 1.4 mV, with a S/N of about 68 dB and a remarkable overload capability of 500 mV. If **PHONO 2** is used at reduced sensitivity, the overload point can be raised to about 1 volt, though this is certainly not required for any hi-fi phono cartridge we know of. The **MIC**-input sensitivity was 1.7 mV, with a S/N of 55.5 dB and a 1.1-volt overload point. Although Pioneer's published S/N figures are somewhat better than our test results, they are based on an output of 110 watts (which adds about 10 dB), on shorted inputs (we use a 2,200-ohm input termination), and on "A" weighting (our measurements are unweighted). When the proper conversion

(Continued on page 30)

The right and left side panels of the Pioneer SA-9900 incorporate a section that provides a convenient mounting surface for the profusion of input and output terminals. Two switches above the phono-input jacks select phono-input load impedance and phono or mic level.



There are no quality compromises in the Philips SC 102A. It's a stereo control center/pre-amplifier that matches the very best high fidelity systems.

Take the Opto-Mute™ for example. It's an optical/electronic muting innovation found only on the 102A. (Only the best pre-amps and receivers have muting devices at all. And ours is superior to any of them.)

Basically, the Opto-Mute works when you turn on the 102A. It gives you a 15 second safety margin while the power stabilizes. (A pilot light tells you the 102A is working.) With today's high performance amplifiers

and wide range dynamic music, this guards against start-up power surges "blowing" your system.

Since the Opto-Mute is all electronic, there are no mechanical parts to get dirty and cause intermittent mechanical noise.

The entire 102A is solid-state with modular printed circuit boards. (In the laboratory we found distortion levels so low they were practically non-measurable.)

Input selections: Phono, tuner, tape and auxiliary. Mode, tape monitor and balance control, bass and treble equalization, volume and phono gain controls are provided. Plus subsonic filter and bass and treble flat switches.

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The SC 102A's surprising specifications.

Maximum Output: 10 V rms into IHF Load
Frequency Response: 2 Hz-80 kHz ± 0.5 dB at rated output.

Total Harmonic Distortion: $\leq 0.05\%$, 20-20 kHz at rated output.

IM Distortion: $\leq 0.02\%$ at rated output (SMPTE)

Total Hum and Noise: High Level: ≥ 100 dB below rated output, IHF "A" weighted. Phono: 80 dB below 10mV input.

Tone Control Range:

Bass: ± 18 dB at 20 Hz.

Treble ± 15 dB at 20 kHz.

AC Convenience Outlets: two switched, one non-switched.

Dimensions: 12½ x 4 x 9"
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factors are applied, there are no essential contradictions between our figures and Pioneer's published ratings.

The tone-control characteristics were as represented, with our measurements agreeing closely with the indicated level changes. Pioneer's dual tone-control system is one of the most effective we have used, making it possible to reduce mid-bass boom resulting from speaker/room resonance without loss of deep bass response, and to restore the sparkle to the high end of a speaker lacking extreme highs without adding stridency or increasing noise. All the filter characteristics are well chosen, with desirable 12-dB-per-octave slopes.

The RIAA phono equalization was accurate to within ± 0.5 dB (about as close as we can measure it) from an extended 30 to 20,000 Hz. Cartridge inductance had only a slight effect on the response at 15,000 Hz and above. The MIC signal passes through the phono preamplifier, with an added network to remove the low-frequency RIAA boost, but with no modification of the high-frequency

rolloff. As a result, its response is far from flat, although it would be satisfactory for public-address use.

The power-amplifier square-wave output had a rise time of about 8 microseconds. Adding a 2-microfarad capacitor in parallel with the 8-ohm load introduced a single cycle of ringing at about 70 kHz. In testing the amplifier we encountered some problems with "ground loops" due to common ground circuits between the signal generator and the output-measuring instruments. But there was no evidence of this effect when the amplifier was connected as part of a functioning system rather than in a test-instrument setup.

● **Comment.** The output transistors are protected against damage from overload and short circuits by a combination of electronic circuits and a fast-acting relay. Any condition that might prove hazardous to the amplifier (or to any speaker rated to handle its power) causes the relay to disconnect the output instantly with a barely audible click. In a few seconds, normal operation is restored auto-

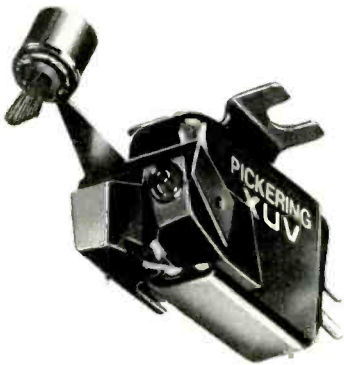
matically. We deliberately presented the amplifier with every problem it was likely to encounter, and the protective system never failed to do its job.

Aside from these generally objective matters, we must say we were impressed by the care that has gone into the "tactile" characteristics of this amplifier. No matter how well a product performs, sloppy or stiffly operating controls can detract from the pleasure of its use. Pioneer products have long been among the smoothest-handling hi-fi components, but in the SA-9900 they seem to have outdone themselves. Every control operates with a definite positioning, without a trace of looseness or wobble, and yet requires only a minimum of effort from the user.

To us, the Pioneer SA-9900 represents the highest current state of development of integrated amplifiers. In all major respects—power output, distortion, noise, freedom from phono overload, control flexibility, and styling—it cannot be faulted. It is a beautiful, albeit expensive, product.

Circle 105 on reader service card

Pickering XUV/4500Q Stereo/CD-4 Phono Cartridge



● **PICKERING** describes the new XUV/4500Q as a "second generation discrete phono cartridge." This is to distinguish it from almost all previous CD-4 cartridges, which have required relatively high tracking forces (usually 1.5 to 2 grams) and which generally were not able to play the highest velocities on stereo discs without mistracking.

The XUV/4500Q is rated for use at a 1-gram vertical force and to have the 50-kHz frequency response and channel separation needed to deliver full performance from CD-4 records. Virtually all CD-4 cartridges have some form of specially shaped stylus, with a very small "scanning" radius to follow the groove modulation and a much larger transverse "bearing" radius to distribute the tracking force over a greater area and thus reduce record wear. Pickering calls theirs a "Quadrilateral" stylus, and as with that company's other cartridges, the replaceable stylus assembly carries a hinged brush that removes surface dust from the record.

The internal coils of the Pickering XUV/4500Q have less inductance than those of most stereo cartridges, but it is still recommended that the total cable capacitance not exceed 100 picofarads (pF) to maintain full output to 50,000 Hz. However, the load is

quite noncritical for stereo applications, and a typical termination of 47,000 ohms and 275 pF has no effect on the response in the audio range. Price: \$139.95.

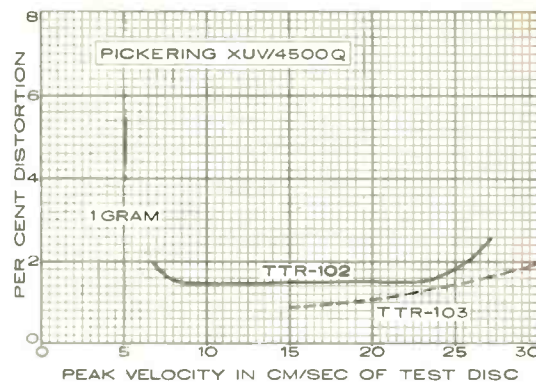
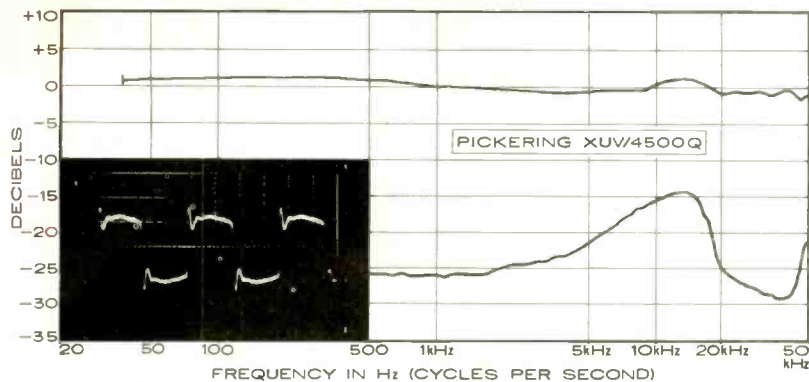
● **Laboratory Measurements.** The Pickering XUV/4500Q was installed in the tone arm of a Garrard Zero 100 record player which had a total cable capacitance of 100 pF. The initial checks made to determine the tracking force needed to play high-velocity test records confirmed that the XUV/4500Q is on a par with the best stereo cartridges in this respect. The 30-centimeters-per-second (cm/sec), 1,000-Hz bands of the Fairchild 101 test record were played with insignificant distortion at only 0.5 gram—a figure that ranks it with the best of the stereo cartridges we have tested. A tracking force of 1 gram sufficed for the 32-Hz portion of the Cook 60 record, and at that force the 300-Hz tones of the German High-Fidelity Institute test record could be played at the 80-micrometer level without mistracking. Only a couple of the best stereo cartridges have done as well in our tests, and the XUV/4500Q matched the best of those by playing the maximum 100-micrometer level with a 1.5-gram force (its maximum rating). We used a 1-gram tracking force for all subsequent tests.

Although most CD-4 cartridges have a rather low output voltage (2 to 2.5 millivolts is typical at the reference test velocity of 3.54 cm/sec), the XUV/4500Q delivered a healthy 3.95 mV. Furthermore, the output was identical on both channels (there is a 1.5-dB channel-balance spec, but our test cartridge was much better than that). The intermodulation (IM) distortion with the Shure TTR-102 test disc was about 1.5 per cent at most velocities, reaching 2.5 per cent at the maximum level of 27.1 cm/sec. This is a noteworthy achievement for any cartridge, let alone a CD-4 model operating at 1 gram. The high-frequency tracking distortion, from the 10.8-kHz tone

bursts of the Shure TTR-103 record, was also low up to the 30-cm/sec maximum of the record. The square-wave response showed a single cycle of overshoot and bounce at about 10,000 Hz. The low-frequency tone-arm/cartridge resonance was at 5 and 6.5 Hz (a double-peaked response), with a relatively low amplitude of about 4 dB.

The frequency response in the audio range was measured with the CBS STR 100 record. It yielded an output flatness of ± 2 dB and a channel separation of typically 20 to 30 dB over the full 40- to 20,000-Hz range. The CD-4 response was checked with the JVC TRS-1005 record from 1 to 50 kHz: it produced an output that was flat within ± 1.5 dB on one channel and ± 3 dB on the other over that entire range. Channel separation was also fully maintained throughout, typically measuring 20 to 30 dB in the audio band and also in the 20 to 50 kHz carrier band; its minimum of 15 to 20 dB occurred at about 10 to 12 kHz. When we changed the cartridge load from the CD-4 values to a more conventional stereo load of 47,000 ohms and 335 pF, there was no measurable change in frequency response up to 20,000 Hz, thus confirming fully the stereo compatibility of the cartridge.

● **Comment.** For listening tests, we used the cartridge in conjunction with an early Panasonic SE-405H CD-4 demodulator. With all the CD-4 discs at our disposal the sound quality seemed at least as good as we have heard from other pickups (no direct comparisons were made, however). At times, especially with some of the older discs, there was an occasional tendency to audible "break-up," which could sometimes be minimized by increasing the tracking force to 1.5 grams. However, we have every reason to believe that this problem is inherent in the specific records used, and possibly in the early-model demodulator they were fed into. At any rate, no other cartridge we have used has done any



In the graph at left, the upper curve represents the smoothed, averaged frequency response of the cartridge's right and left channels; the distance (calibrated in decibels) between it and the lower curve represents the separation between the two channels. The inset oscilloscope photo shows the cartridge's response to a recorded 1,000-Hz square wave, which gives an indication of resonances and overall frequency response. At right is the cartridge's response to the intermodulation-distortion (IM) and 10.8-kHz tone-burst test bands of the TTR-102 and TTR-103 test records. These high velocities provide a severe test of a phono cartridge's performance.

better on these apparently difficult-to-track musical passages.

As a stereo cartridge, the XUV/4500Q is in a class with the best units we have used. On the Shure ERA III test record, the two highest levels of the sibilance test and the highest level of musical bells showed signs of mistracking, as is the case with most cartridges. Otherwise, the XUV/4500Q sounded clean and unstrained at all times, especially with ordinary commercial records whose levels—unlike the test records—have not been designed to stress any cartridge to its utmost.

The slight rise in output above 10,000 Hz, though not enough to impart any obvious brightness, is an ideal complement to the reduced output shown by many speaker systems in that frequency range and should restore some of the fine edge of the program content often lost in the uppermost octave of the musical scale.

The Pickering XUV/4500Q is obviously one of the best phono cartridges presently available. One would probably not buy such an expensive unit solely for playing stereo records (although its Quadrahedral stylus

should produce substantially less record wear at 1 gram than conventional elliptical or conical styli at the same force). On the other hand, there are few stereo cartridges that can outperform it in any of its individual characteristics, and we know of none that could be said to be a better stereo/CD-4 pickup. For use only with CD-4 records, there are only a couple of cartridges (also quite expensive) that are at all comparable, and here, too, the Pickering offers a very hard-to-beat combination of performance parameters.

Circle 106 on reader service card

Wollensak 4766 Stereo Cassette Deck



● WOLLENSAK's new Model 4766 cassette deck, using their time-tested, highly regarded transport mechanism, is a de luxe recorder with provision for FM Dolby decoding (during recording or separately). There is switchable bias and equalization for the new Scotch Classic ferri-chrome tape in addition to conventional ferric-oxide and chromium-dioxide tapes.

Screwdriver-adjustable recording-calibration controls make it possible to match the

Dolby characteristics to any specific tape formulation. These are factory-set for Scotch Low-Noise/High-Density, Classic, and chromium-dioxide tapes. When the 4766 is used just for decoding of Dolbyized FM broadcasts, a front-panel switch shuts off the machine's motor and transfers control of incoming signal levels to a pair of screwdriver-slot adjustments in the rear of the machine. Once set for a particular FM tuner's signal-output level (a Dolby test tone transmitted by the sta-

tion at a 50 per cent modulation level should provide a calibration reading of +2 dB on the recorder's meters), the main recording-level controls can be set as required for other recordings without disturbing the special FM calibrations. The 25-microsecond time constant now used for Dolby FM broadcasts is applied automatically by the 4766.

The tape transport used in the Wollensak machine needs little introduction to audiophiles. Since its first appearance several years ago, this basic mechanism has earned a reputation for high performance, ruggedness, and reliability in a number of recorders made by Wollensak and several other manufacturers. The operating controls, for PLAY, STOP, RECORD, and PAUSE, are clearly distinguished by their placement, shape, and direction of motion in use to eliminate any possibility of confusing their functions. A separate FAST WIND lever, when shifted to either side of its center OFF position, moves the tape at very high speed (much faster than most cassette mechanisms) in the indicated (backward or forward) direction.

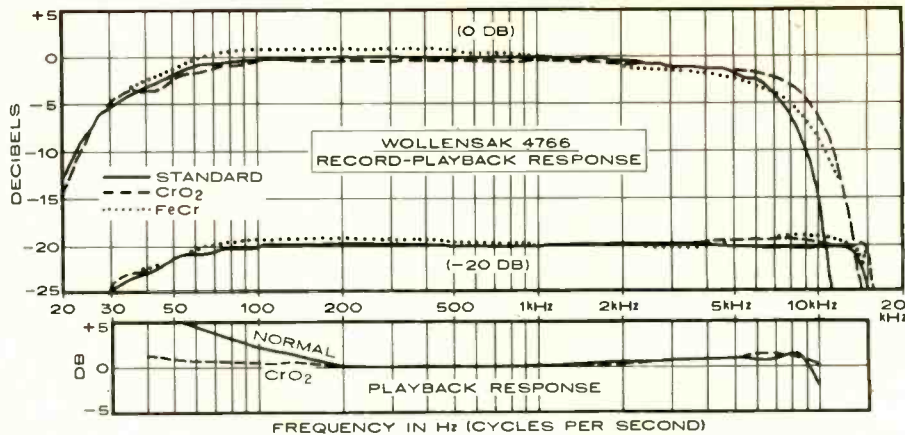
Six toggle switches along the front of the panel control the FM DOLBY, REC/PLAY DOLBY, TAPE bias and equalization, MONO/STEREO recording mode, recording INPUT (for LINE, MIC, or a MIX of the two), and POWER. An EJECT lever raises the cassette-well cover and partially ejects the cassette, and a small panel

section can be removed to expose the heads fully for cleaning or alignment.

Along the back of the panel, behind the cassette, are the pushbutton-reset index counter plus signal lights to show when the tape selector is set for ferri-chrome or chromium-dioxide tapes and whether the Dolby system is turned on. And adjacent pushbutton injects a standard Dolby-level tone into the recording circuits for calibrating the Dolby system.

At the right rear are two large illuminated level meters, slightly angled for easier viewing. Above each meter is a red PEAK light that flashes when momentary signal levels exceed 0 dB, and between them is a red RECORD light. In front of the meters are four knobs for independent adjustment of recording and playback levels on both channels. The line inputs and outputs are recessed into the rear of the recorder's wood base, and a similar recess in the front contains the two microphone jacks and a stereo headphone jack. The Wollensak 4766 is 17¼ inches wide, 10¼ inches deep, and 6½ inches high, including the smoky-plastic cover supplied with it. The recorder weighs 16 pounds. Price: \$429.95.

● **Laboratory Measurements.** The Wollensak 4766 was tested with the three tape formulations for which it was factory adjusted: Scotch LN/HD, Classic, and Chrome. The input sensitivity for a 0-dB recording level was 47 millivolts (mV) for LINE and 0.13 mV for microphone (MIC) inputs, with the MIC input overloading at a rather low 12.5 mV. This suggests that to prevent overload a low-output microphone or an external attenuator had best be used when making live recordings of loud sounds. In the MIX mode, the gains were reduced by about 3 dB. The relative levels of the line and microphone sources must be set externally, since the recording-level controls affect both inputs simultaneously.



The maximum playback level from a 0-dB recording level was 1 volt with LN/HD tape, 0.9 volt with Chrome, and 0.77 volt with Classic. The PEAK overload-indicator lights began to glow at +1 dB, with the brightness increasing at higher levels.

With a 1,000-Hz signal recorded at 0 dB, playback distortion was 2.3 to 2.7 per cent, depending on the tape used. The reference harmonic-distortion level of 3 per cent was reached at +2 dB with LN/HD, +1 dB with Classic, and +0.5 dB with chromium-dioxide tape. Signal-to-noise ratios of the three tapes (with IEC "A" weighting) were, respectively, 53.8, 54.2, and 55 dB referred to the 3 per cent distortion level. With the Dolby system switched in, these figures improved to 62, 60, and 61.5 dB. Through the MIC inputs, at maximum gain, the noise increased by 12.5 dB, but at normal gain settings the added noise was not significant.

The transport of our test sample ran about 1 per cent fast. A C-60 cassette was fast forwarded and rewound in 45 seconds. Wow was literally unmeasurable (0.01 to 0.35 per cent), and the unweighted r.m.s. flutter was about 0.14 per cent—similar to our test results with other decks using this transport.

We measured the playback frequency response with a Nortronics AT-200 test tape for the 120-microsecond "standard" playback equalization, and a Teac 116SP tape for the 70-microsecond equalization used with chromium-dioxide and ferri-chrome tapes. The latter was virtually flat within ± 0.5 dB from 40 to 10,000 Hz, while the former was within ± 2 dB from 100 to 10,000 Hz and rose at lower frequencies to +6.5 dB at 31.5 Hz. Like that of many recent recorders, the 4766's playback equalization at 50 Hz does not conform to the curve of the Nortronics tape, which accounts for the apparent bass rise.

The record-playback frequency response was unusually flat over the full audio range at a -20-dB recording level. With the Scotch LN/HD tape it was within ± 0.5 dB from 60 to 13,000 Hz and it was down 3 dB at 37 and 14,500 Hz. At a 0-dB level, the usual high-frequency roll-off occurred because of tape saturation, with the two curves intersecting at 10,500 Hz. The Classic tape response was ± 1 dB from 50 to 14,500 Hz, down 3 dB at 37 and 15,000 Hz. Its 0- and -20-dB curves intersected at 14,000 Hz, indicating its superior high-frequency capability. Finally, the chromium-dioxide tape produced the widest response at -20 dB—within ± 0.5 dB from 70 to 15,000 Hz, and down 3 dB at 35 and 15,400 Hz. Its 0- and -20-dB curves intersected at 13,400 Hz, placing it about halfway between

the ferric-oxide and ferri-chrome tapes in this respect.

The meters read +2 dB (their Dolby calibration level) when we played a 200-nanowebbers-per-meter Dolby-level tape. Their ballistic response was very close to that of a true VU meter, with 0.3-second tone bursts reading at about 95 per cent of their steady-state indication.

● **Comment.** Having had experience with the Wollensak transport in 3M and other machines over a number of years, we felt completely at home with the 4766. Although it may lack the glamour and feather-touch pushbuttons of a solenoid-operated mechanism, the Wollensak transport has what we consider to be some of the best human engineering in this field, as well as being one of the most time-tested designs in current cassette-recorder manufacture.

The only disconcerting note was the fact that when the fast-speed lever was used it remained in either operating position rather than being spring-loaded to return to its center "off" position when released. Since the automatic end-of-tape shutoff and mechanical disengagement do not function in the fast-winding modes, one must still stand by to shut off the machine when the tape stops. Also, in view of the very fast winding speed of the Wollensak mechanism, we have never considered the need to hold the lever (in the original design) a hardship, but perhaps others have.

The headphone output of the 4766, which is intended to drive 8-ohm phones, is one of the very few we have encountered that can also deliver a strong and listenable volume with high-impedance (200-ohm) phones. The PEAK lights are a very useful guide to setting safe recording levels, since the tape begins to saturate (overload) just above 0 dB, and one must normally keep the maximum meter readings somewhat below that level. By setting the gain so that the lights just flicker on the highest peaks, one is reasonably sure of having a distortion-free recording with the best possible signal-to-noise ratio.

The FM Dolby feature, which is found on a few other recorders, is a strong "plus" of the 4766 because of the way it is interlocked with the recorder controls. For simply listening to a decoded Dolbyized station, the deck's motor is shut off. However, a recording can be made at any time (without going through Dolby decoding) merely by pressing the RECORD and PLAY buttons. In addition, since only a few tuners and receivers have available the 25-microsecond de-emphasis characteristic

(Continued on page 34)



The Dual cassette deck.



The first
high-performance
precision deck
with
automatic
reverse.

Automatic reverse has not been generally associated with high quality in tape recording. But as Dual has long proven with automatic turntables, convenience can accompany precision performance.

Since the primary reason for selecting a cassette deck is its performance quality, let's consider this first. With standard tapes, the frequency response of the Dual cassette deck extends from 20 to 14,000 Hz at ± 1.5 dB and to 17,000 Hz at ± 3 dB. Wow and flutter (DIN weighted) is 0.07%. Harmonic distortion is less than 1.5%, and signal-to-noise is greater than 50 dB; 59 dB when the Dolby system is switched in.

The motor is Dual's well-known Continuous-Pole/synchronous motor which has long proven its reliability in our finest automatic turntables. A precision-ground flat belt transmits power to the capstans.

A separate drive belt powers tape take-up. The VU meters are ballistically damped to provide precisely the rise time and overshoot characteristics specified for broadcast quality meters.

Now for convenience. Automatic reverse lets you double the playback time of any cassette. Continuous-play lets you hear both sides over and over until you shut the machine off. Recording is bi-directional, eliminating the need to turn the cassette over at the end of side one. Rewind time for a C-60 cassette is 60 seconds flat.

You can see the rest for yourself in the photograph. This cassette deck is also typically Dual in appearance: clean, functional, uncluttered. If you own a Dual turntable, you've come to appreciate these qualities. And if you're about to own a cassette, you'll appreciate some additional niceties of the Dual. The meters tilt up for viewing from across the room. The viscous-damped cassette holder rises smoothly and silently when the eject button is pressed. The built-in Dolby test oscillator precisely adjusts for any tapes, today's or those of the future.

In short, this cassette deck was designed with the same philosophy that Dual has espoused for years: the most serious audio equipment can also be the easiest and most convenient to use. Price: \$450.

United Audio Products

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required for proper FM Dolby decoding for either recording or listening, the inclusion of this feature in the Wollensak 4766 eliminates the need for an external adapter.

There is little one can say about the sound quality of the 4766. It is in every way typical of the finest cassette-deck performance—which is to say, very fine indeed. We were somewhat surprised to find that the ferrichrome tape, even with the presumably opti-

mized circuits of the 4766, did not significantly surpass the chromium-dioxide or low-noise tapes. Perhaps the super-critical recordist will prefer the marginally better high-frequency saturation properties of the Classic tape. For our part, there was little to choose from among the various tapes with respect to the final listening quality. They were *all* excellent.

As we see it, the Wollensak 4766 is a ma-

chine designed to be wired into a good music system, including a non-Dolby FM tuner. When so used (in contrast to making "live" recordings, for which it is less well suited), it will probably do as many things for as many people as any cassette machine we know of. Furthermore, it does them about as well as the current state of the cassette art allows, and at a very down-to-earth price.

Circle 107 on reader service card

Tannoy/Micro TM55DD Record Player



● **ALTHOUGH** the Tannoy name has long been associated with loudspeakers, Tannoy (America) Ltd. has recently begun to distribute a line of fine record players manufactured in Japan by Micro/Seiki. At the top of the Tannoy/Micro line is the de luxe Model TM55DD, whose 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ -pound cast-aluminum platter is driven directly by the shaft of a servo-controlled d.c. motor at either 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ or 45 rpm. Separate vernier adjustment knobs for each speed, with a nominal ± 6 per cent range, are located on the front of the base, where they are accessible even with the cover lowered.

The edge of the platter carries four rows of raised stroboscope dots for both speeds and either 50- or 60-Hz power lines. (The turntable speed, of course, is not affected by line frequency, but the neon lamp that provides the stroboscopic illumination of the platter markings is.) The TM55DD is a completely manual record player with no automatic features. Its tone arm is made with jewel-like precision, but it must be placed by hand in the lead-in groove and removed from the run-out groove at the end of the record. The counterweight position is adjusted by rotating it for arm balance; what appears to be the forward section of the weight is then turned to align its zero calibration against a reference mark on the tubular-arm body. Similar systems are used on other arms, but most of them require the main weight to be held in place while mak-

ing the zero adjustment. In the Micro arm, the two rotating sections of the counterweight, although they appear to be a single unit, are constructed so that the tracking-force scale turns completely independently of the main weight, after which the latter is rotated by its knurled ring, turning both sections to place the desired tracking-force calibration (from 0 to 3 grams, at 0.25 gram intervals) against the reference line.

A dial on a horizontal extension of the pivot support is calibrated from 0 to 3 grams; this supplies the anti-skating correction. The arm-

lift bar and its operating lever are also next to the pivot structure, and they provide damped lift and descent of the arm.

The low-mass metal cartridge shell plugs into the end of the arm and is held in place with a locking ring in the manner of many other European and Japanese arms. The finger lift is integral with the sliding cartridge mount, and a plastic jig is supplied for setting the correct stylus overhang. The single operating lever on the motorboard switches the turntable to 45 rpm when moved toward the rear and to 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm when moved toward the front, the center position being OFF.

The base of the Tannoy/Micro TM55DD is rather large (18 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 13 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches) and is handsomely finished in what appears to be rosewood. The tinted, easily removable plastic cover is hinged, and it remains open without additional support. The entire unit is supported on four adjustable feet that act as vibration and shock isolators. Each can be screwed out over a range of nearly one inch, so that the turntable can be leveled on almost any mounting surface with the aid of the circular bubble level on the motorboard. The Tannoy/Micro TM55DD is approximately 18 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide, 13 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep, and 6 inches high (with the cover lowered); it weighs 18 pounds. Price: \$330.

● **Laboratory Measurements.** We tested the Tannoy/Micro TM55DD with an ADC XLM MKII cartridge installed in its tone arm. The low-frequency resonance was at approximately 10 Hz. Since this cartridge resonates at 8 Hz in a typical good-quality record-changer arm, it is evident that the Mi-



The pivot area of the precisely machined tone arm incorporates the anti-skating adjustment and damped cuing lever.

cro arm has a relatively low effective mass in spite of its physically large appearance. The tracking-force calibrations were accurate within 0.05 gram over their full range. The anti-skating dial had to be set about 0.5 to 1 gram higher than the tracking force for optimum correction. The cueing system operated smoothly, with no lateral drift during the arm descent. The tracking error was less than 0.5 degrees per inch over the record's playing surface (between radii of 2.5 and 6 inches). The manufacturer states that the Tannoy/Micro arm was designed to be compatible with CD-4 cartridges, and this was confirmed by the measured wiring and cable capacitance of 95 picofarads per channel.

The turntable reached its synchronous speed in about 4 seconds at 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm. The vernier speed adjustments had a range of +7.2 to -5.2 per cent at 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm, and from +8.6 to -5.8 per cent at 45 rpm. A change in line voltage from 95 to 135 volts had absolutely no effect on the operating speed, which also did not shift detectably over long periods of operation. Wow and flutter, as one would expect from a well-engineered direct-drive turntable, were very low. The unweighted rms wow measured 0.035 and 0.045 per cent at the 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ and 45-rpm speeds, and the flutter readings were, respectively, 0.035 and 0.03 per cent. The unweighted rumble was -35 dB, but since it was concentrated in the sub-sonic frequency range, applying RRLL audibility weighting reduced the figure to a very good -62 dB.

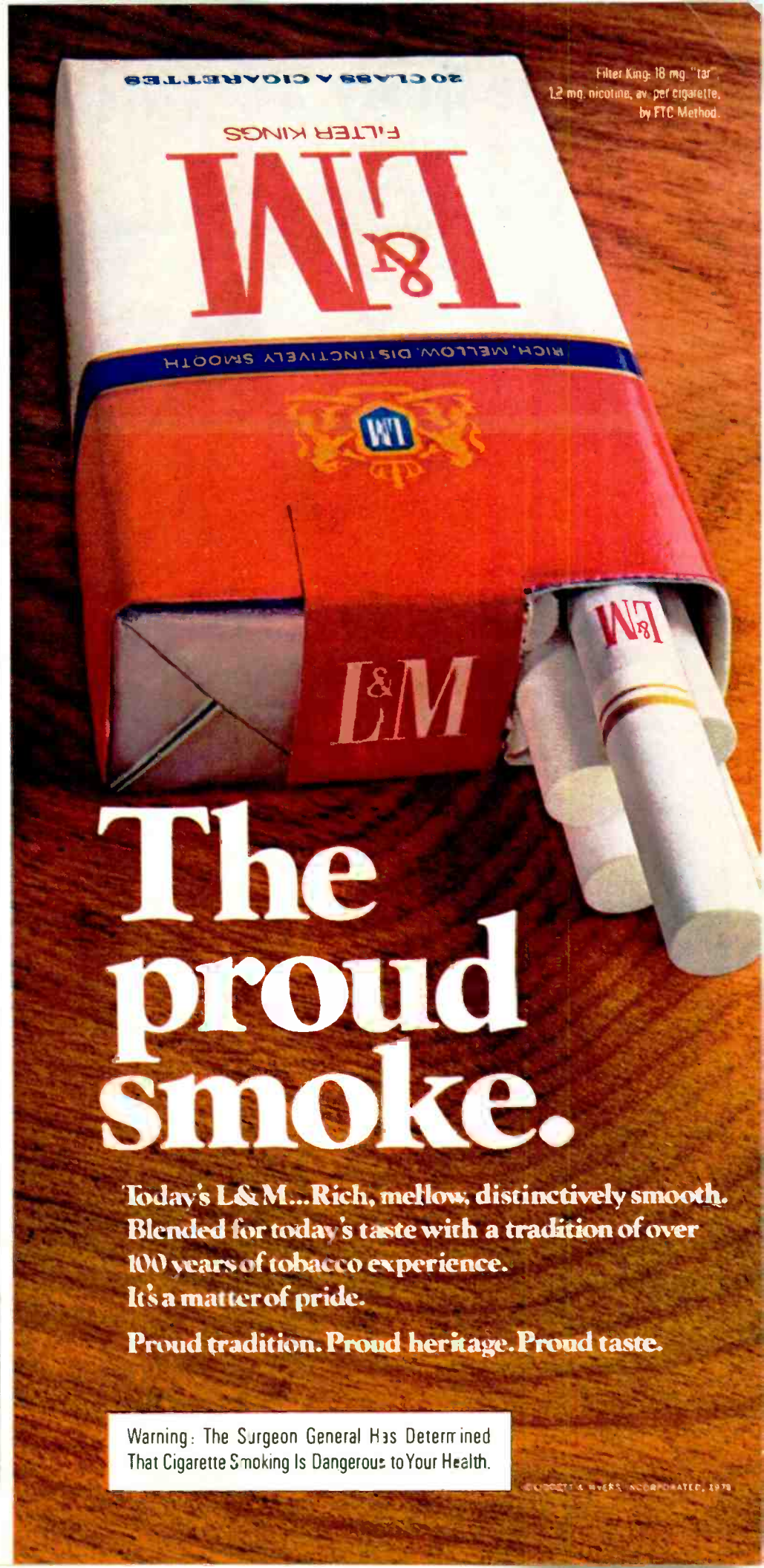
● *Comment.* The simple statement that the Tannoy/Micro TM55DD easily met or surpassed all its specifications completely fails to convey a sense of the "feel" and of the tasteful styling of the total package. In its technical performance aspects, the TM55DD is certainly the effective equal of the best of today's record players, and (in our view) it is also one of the handsomest pieces of equipment we have seen in some time. Admittedly, styling is a subjective matter, but we could not help being impressed by what appears to be a most successful wedding of form and function.

The adjustable mounting feet of the TM55DD (a feature most of us tend to ignore in favor of the more publicized aspects of record-player design) are remarkably effective in both of their intended functions. Leveling the base takes a few seconds, and the soft mounts isolate the record player from external vibration with considerable effectiveness. It would be difficult, if not impossible, to induce acoustic feedback with this unit unless it were placed directly on top of a speaker that had powerful bass response. Rough measurements suggest that its isolation from the supporting surface, in the frequency range from 20 to several hundred hertz, is from 10 to 30 dB better than that of a couple of highly regarded record players we have checked in a similar manner. This new measurement technique has recently been undertaken at H-H Labs in the hope that it will yield quantitative data on the susceptibility of record players to acoustic feedback. As we gain experience with other record players, we expect to have some specific results to report.

To sum up, the Tannoy/Micro TM55DD, although lacking the automatic features of most comparably priced units, nevertheless does offer some very concrete advantages to the user, in addition to being a thoroughly competent and attractive product.

Circle 108 on reader service card

AUGUST 1975



Filter King: 18 mg. "tar",
1.2 mg. nicotine, av. per cigarette,
by FTC Method.

The proud smoke.

Today's L&M... Rich, mellow, distinctively smooth.
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100 years of tobacco experience.
It's a matter of pride.

Proud tradition. Proud heritage. Proud taste.

Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined
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"The Sony TC-756 set new records



TC-756-2 Stereo Deck also features 15 and 7½ ips tape speeds; Ferrite & Ferrite 2-track/2-channel stereo three-head configuration; symphase recording that allows you to record FM matrix or SQSM 4-channel sources for playback through a decoder-equipped 4-channel amplifier with virtually non-existent phase differences between channels. Also available, TC-756 with quarter-track/2-channel stereo head configuration.

for performance of home tape decks!"

(Stereo Review, February, 1975)

Hirsch-Houck Laboratories further noted, "The dynamic range, distortion, flutter and frequency-response performance are so far beyond the limitations of conventional program material that its virtues can hardly be appreciated."

The frequency response of the TC-756-2 is rated at 30 to 30K \pm 3 dB at 15 ips. Hirsch-Houck Laboratories said, "Although no claims are made for the TC-756-2 in this regard, it is the first machine we have seen whose frequency response should allow it to copy CD-4 discs in their encoded form."

The Sony TC-756-2 is representative of the prestigious Sony 700 Series—the five best three-motor 10½-inch reel home tape decks that Sony has ever engineered.

Like the TC-756-2, all feature a **closed loop dual capstan tape drive system** that reduces wow and flutter to a minimum of 0.03%; **logic controlled transport functions** that permit the feather-touch control buttons to be operated in any sequence, at any time without spill-

ing or damaging tape; an **AC servo control capstan motor** and an eight-pole induction motor for each of the two reels; a record equalization selector switch for maximum record and playback characteristics with either normal or special tapes; mic attenuators that eliminate distortion caused by overdriving the microphone pre-amplifier stage when using sensitive condenser mics; tape/source monitoring switches that allow instantaneous comparison of program source to the actual recording; a mechanical memory capability that allows the machine to turn itself on and off automatically for unattended recording; and a full two-year guarantee*.

In addition, each deck has its own versatile combination of built-in professional functions.

Sony engineers know that it's not one feature—but a combination of high performance features that makes a good unit great. Sony knows. Stereo Review knows. If you're a serious recordist, you'll want to know more about the Sony 700 Series.

SONY®

Brought to you by **SUPERSCOPE**



TC-755 Stereo Deck also offers the lowest price in the Sony 700 Series at \$699.95; Ferrite & Ferrite heads; symphase recording; 7½ and 3¾ ips tape speeds; tape path adjuster for even tape winding.



TC-758 Automatic Reverse Stereo Deck adds features like programmable auto reverse and bi-directional recording that allow up to 6 hours continuous record and playback time—longer than any Sony unit; roto-bilateral Ferrite & Ferrite heads that offer wider frequency response, better tape-to-head contact and less distortion than other magnetic heads; symphase recording; and 7½ and 3¾ ips tape speeds.



TC-788-4 Quadradial Deck features 4-channel record and playback; built-in PAN POTS that function as a built-in mixer; synchro-trak that allows record heads to double as playback heads for perfectly synchronized multi-track (sound-with-sound) recording; mode selector switches that make it virtually impossible to erase master track while recording additional tracks; and 15 and 7½ ips tape speeds.

*Superscope, Inc. guarantees to the original registered owner that all parts will be free from operating defects for two years from purchase date. Product will be repaired or replaced free of charge in the sole discretion of Superscope, Inc., provided it was purchased in the U.S.A. from an authorized dealer. The serial number cannot be altered or removed. Product must be serviced by authorized Superscope repair technicians only. **©CBS, Inc. © 1975 Superscope, Inc., 8150 Vineland Ave., Sun Valley, CA 91352. Prices and models subject to change without notice. Consult the Yellow Pages for your nearest Superscope dealer. Send for free catalog.

THE SIMELS REPORT

By STEVE SIMELS



MY FRONT PAGES

MY younger brother's passion—or perhaps it's a mania—for film exceeds even mine for music. I mean, he'll sit through four hours of a Republic serial without even going to the john! But his mania has its uses: not long ago I was browsing through an esoteric film journal in his collection and chanced across an article whose basic premise I have decided to crib. Titled simply "Things We Like," it was a completely and openly subjective (what else?) catalog by two film nuts of moments they found memorable in various motion pictures. One moment that stopped me—and it's the only entry I can remember, by the way—was the opening: "Mariette Hartley's wedding in Peckinpah's *Ride the High Country*." Lovely.

Anyway, after worrying away at my own list culled from twenty-odd years of rock-and-roll, I've decided at last to air the dirty linen in public. What follows is simply a random rundown of things that have given me pleasure, rock-wise, over the years—specific songs, events, brief musical bits. I won't pretend, as much as I'd like to (ought to?), that any of them have any significance other than showing where my own head is at, but never mind. This is strictly for browsing; I'm willing to bet any rock fan could come up with a totally different list that would be equally valid and just as much fun. So, without further ado, "Things I Like."

George Harrison's last harmonic on the solo from *Nowhere Man*.

Charlie Watts hitting the bell of his cymbal on the final line of *Dead Flowers*.

The opening a cappella harmonies on Fairport Convention's version of *Percy's Song*.

The Beach Boys' background ah-ohm-wop-diddits on *This Whole World*.

Smokey Robinson's heartrending wordless vocalizing at the end of *Ooo Baby Baby*.

Keith Richards' guitar solos on *Down the Road Apiece*.

Dave Davies' finger-picking on the fade-out of the Kinks' *See My Friends*.

Roy Wood introducing his solo on *Turkish Tram Conductor Blues* with a coy "Oh, yes."

All of Bruce Springsteen's *Rosalita*.

Bob Dylan's spoken introduction for *Like a Rolling Stone* on the Albert Hall bootleg.

The back-up vocals on the last verse of the MC 5's *Shakin' Street*.

Steve Marriott's screaming at the end of the Small Faces' *Tin Soldier*.

David Crosby's harmonies on the last verses of the Byrds' *Fifth Dimension* and *I Come and Stand at Every Door*.

The drunken Dixieland band on the Stones' *Something Happened to Me Yesterday*.

Arlene Smith's singing on the Chantels' *Maybe*.

The production (especially of the percussion) on Martha and the Vandellas' *Dancing in the Street*.

Paul McCartney's bass line on *A Little Help from My Friends*.

Keith Moon's drumming on the final break of *Happy Jack*.

Eric Clapton's lead guitar on the studio version of *Badge*.

Stevie Winwood's organ work on the ending of *I'm a Man*.

Jeff Beck's guitar solo on the Yardbirds' *Train Kept A-Rollin'*.

Keith Richards' forgetting to turn on his fuzz-tone during *Satisfaction* on the *Ed Sullivan Show* in 1966.

Todd Rundgren's guitar work on the Nazz's *Under the Ice*.

Leon Russell's piano on Dylan's *Watching the River Flow*.

Alan Price's two-fingered organ solo on the Animals' *Boom Boom*.

Johnny Johnson's boogie-woogie piano break on Chuck Berry's *School Days*.

Jimi Hendrix's solo on *Little Wing*.

Roger Daltrey's "Yeahhhhh!!!" after the instrumental section of the Who's *Won't Get Fooled Again*.

The censored original cover for "Beggars Banquet."



The uncredited piano player (Carole King?) on the Chiffons' *One Fine Day*.

Steve Stills' and Neil Young's guitar duet on the original *Bluebird*.

Skip Spence's mumbled vocal on Moby Grape's *Seeing*.

The rave-up during the Kinks' *Milkcow Blues* (studio and live versions).

Buddy Holly's rendition of *Slippin' and Slidin'*.

The Stones doing *Under My Thumb* at Altamont, as seen in *Gimme Shelter*.

Van Morrison's harp break on *Mystic Eyes*.

Joni Mitchell's long-held notes and guitar work on *Marcie*.

Ian Hunter's primal (what else?) screaming on Mott the Hoople's *The Journey*.

The fact that Dylan is removing Pete Hamill's liner notes from "Blood on the Tracks."

The back-cover photo on the English EP version of "Got Live If You Want It."

Paul Buckmaster's orchestral evocation of Vaughan Williams at the conclusion of *Moonlight Mile*.

Paul McCartney's vocal on *Long Tall Sally*. (Not to mention Ringo's drumming or George's second solo.)

The out-of-tune twelve-string and falsetto vocal on the Stones' *Singer Not the Song*.

Gary Brooker's scream of "Here I Go!" from *Rambling On*.

Nicky Hopkins' electric piano on the Beatles' *Revolution*.

Zal Yanovsky's solo album.

Lou Reed's singing on the last verse of the original *Sweet Jane* from "Loaded."

John Fogerty's harmonica on *Run Through the Jungle*.

John Mendelssohn's review of "Led Zep-pelin II."

The Move's *Tonight*.

"Beatles VI."

Joan Baez's unintentionally hilarious attempt at soul singing on the Righteous Brothers' *You've Lost That Lovin' Feelin'* (in the 1966 rock film *The T.N.T. Show*).

Almost anything by Dave Edmunds.

Carly Simon's legs (but not her records).

John Lennon forgetting the words to *Help!* on the *Ed Sullivan Show*.

The echoed hand-clap before the end of the Zombies' *Tell Her No*.

John Entwistle's bass figures on the "teen-age wasteland" portion of *Baba O'Reilly*.

Rod Stewart's "Whooh!!!" on the Faces' *Had Me a Real Good Time*.

Iggy Stooze's Ray Davies imitation on *Gimme Danger*.

The Beatles' Shea Stadium Concert film.

Elvis' weight problem.

Jack Cassady's eyebrows. (Also, his bass on the Airplane's *Other Side of This Life*.)

Lou Reed being reduced to tears by anti-Semitic remarks during his recent Italian tour.

Steppenwolf's *Born to Be Wild* as featured in the credit sequence of *Easy Rider*.

Keith Richards' teeth.

Carl Wilson's twelve-string break on the Beach Boys' *Dance Dance Dance*.

B. J. Wilson's one-measure drum solo on Procol Harum's *The Devil Came from Kansas*.

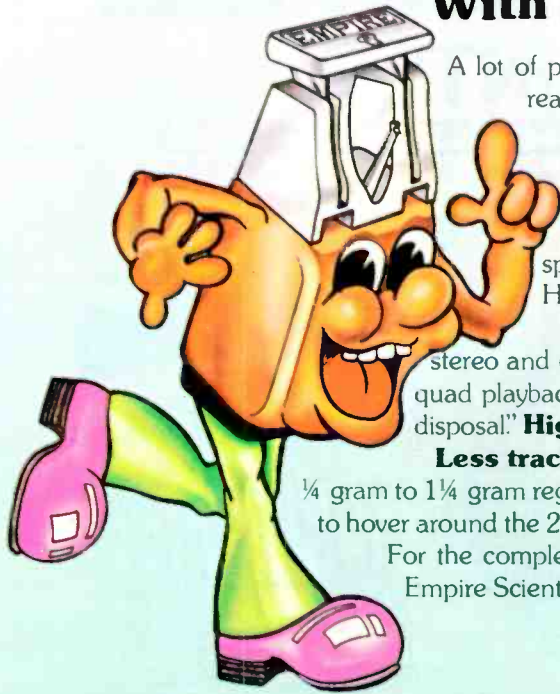
Neil Innes' "worst guitar solo in history" from the Bonzo Dog Band's *Canyons of Your Mind*.

West, Bruce and Laing titling a banal slow blues *Slow Blues*.

And, of course, just everything from "Exile on Main Street."

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GOING ON RECORD

By JAMES GOODFRIEND
Music Editor



PASSING THE BATON

RECENTLY, Pierre Boulez announced that he would no longer lead the New York Philharmonic Orchestra after 1977. The announcement, or something like it, had been expected for some time, for rumbles of discontent had been steadily building up in musical circles. and even the least sensitive observer must have understood that Boulez himself had reservations about the job—though he is too much the professional, and too much the gentleman, to have aired them publicly. Naturally, this brings up the question of who will succeed him. But it also raises some larger questions about conductors and orchestras today, their mutual pressures, and their somewhat conflicting demands.

Boulez is not the only conductor of a major ensemble about to leave it. At the National Symphony in Washington, D.C., the board of directors informed Antal Dorati—who had *not* yet resigned—that his successor, as of 1977-1978, had already been chosen: Mstislav Rostropovich, the eminent cellist-turning-conductor. In St. Louis, Walter Susskind has recently conducted his last regular-season concert as music director. He will be replaced by Jerzy Semkow. Other relatively recent appointments include Seiji Ozawa as director of the Boston Symphony, James Levine as music director of the Metropolitan Opera (he was formerly principal conductor), and André Previn as director of the Pittsburgh Symphony. Leonard Bernstein has also made loud noises about wanting to return to the New York Philharmonic in some capacity, though it is doubtful that taking on, once again, the responsibilities of music director is exactly what he has in mind.

It is just those inherent responsibilities of the job of music director, of course, that make it seem that both orchestras and conductors are going about things in what must ultimately prove to be a self-defeating way. The New York Philharmonic—using the name to cover not only the orchestra but the board of direc-

tors and the audience as well—has not really been satisfied with a music director since . . . well, I don't go back that far. Rodzinski. Stokowski. Mitropoulos. Bernstein, Boulez—all have come in for harsh criticism and sometimes outright antagonism. The announcement in Washington—to cite a different example—provoked an ill-considered letter to the *Post* saying that Dorati, who, after all, had built the orchestra up from a mediocre ensemble to an estimable one, was an advocate of "elite programming" and that Washington would be better off under Rostropovich. I wonder. He is not the music-director type.

LEAVING aside all the social folderol and the nonmusical administrative duties and decisions, a music director has two principal jobs: first, to build and maintain an orchestra at a high level of proficiency; and second, to direct the repertoire in such a way as to keep audiences happy and interested, so that the house will be filled at every concert. The first of these demands that the music director be there, with the orchestra, for most of the season. He simply cannot make the orchestra grow, or even maintain its best present level, if he is not familiar with the day-to-day capabilities of every individual member of the ensemble. That is not something to be assimilated on planes jetting from one guest appearance to another.

The second of these jobs requires that the music director be a specialist in the familiar and even the commonplace. He must know the basic orchestral repertoire and know it cold because, novelties aside, *that* is the music that keeps subscribers coming back, *that* is what makes board members happy, *that* is the magic formula which attracts and holds the newer and younger audiences still in the throes of their first discovery of Tchaikovsky and Beethoven.

How many major conductors today would sit still for these requirements if they were

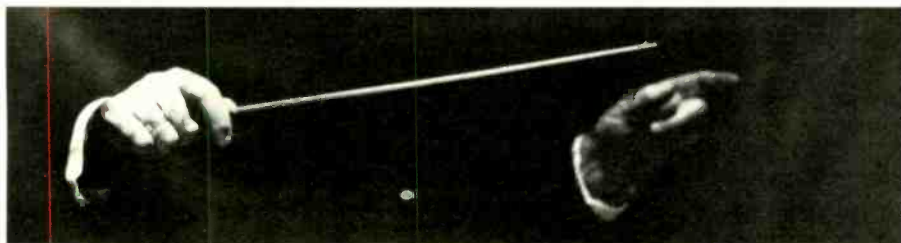
really required? That kind of job-with-obligations is the success story of an earlier day, not of our own. Important conductors today want an orchestra already so accomplished that it has nothing left to learn but what the conductor wants in this piece or that. Will a Bernstein take precious time (his own and the orchestra's) to drill and *re-drill* the strings into playing smoothly, together, and on pitch? He didn't, as many records still in the catalog will testify, when he was music director of the Philharmonic. Will a Boulez put aside his concerns with contemporary music and take the time to master not only the notes but the performance traditions of a Beethoven symphony? His sole recording of a Beethoven symphony seems to deny it. Will a Maazel (now in Cleveland) be content to provide relatively standard interpretations of standard works because his audience (unlike himself) is still learning the music? The eccentricities of many of his prior recordings make it seem very unlikely.

Most major conductors today think about the post of music director either as a sinecure and a base from which to branch out to international guest appearances, or else as a challenge to shape the musical life of a community in the way *they* think it should go. The first of these attitudes is cynical; the second is, given today's situations, somewhat unrealistic. At any rate, *somebody* invariably gets frustrated: the orchestra goes to pot, or the audience rebels against the programming; the conductor resents time expended on drilling the orchestra in basic playing techniques, or he finds himself at war with the board in regard to repertoire; the orchestra begins to play better for visiting conductors than for its own music director and finds it *prefers* to play for one or more of the visitors. These may not be intolerable conditions, but they are not healthy ones either.

If we conclude, therefore, that there *is* a problem that will not get solved through current ways of doing things, there are still different approaches to betterment. Perhaps the music director should *not* be an internationally famous "glamour" conductor but someone younger, someone willing to invest *all* his energies and talents in the building of an orchestra and the purveying of standard repertoire to a continually growing and changing audience. The "big" conductors would come in for guest appearances, find a well-disciplined ensemble waiting for them, conduct their specialties, and move on. Such a situation would imply that the post of music director is *not* the top of the heap—but then it isn't today, except in name.

OR another approach: since most "big" conductors are more or less specialists in certain areas of the repertoire today (and most of them not in the standard areas), perhaps the Boston should restrict itself pretty much to what Ozawa is best at, the St. Louis to Semkow's specialties, and so on, and let the *visiting* conductors do whatever basic repertoire is to be done. I would guess that something of the sort is what Boulez had in mind when he came to the Philharmonic. It is, of course, not what happened.

Directors, players, conductors, audiences, and record companies might do well to keep these things in mind before selecting this or that individual as the "logical" man to assume the directorship of any given orchestra. The lines of succession are not so clearly drawn as they might think.



THE OPERA FILE

By WILLIAM LIVINGSTONE



MY SUMMER VACATION

Music lovers in New York, particularly opera fans, used to get a little time off in the summer. The Metropolitan and the New York City Opera Company would end their seasons in the spring, and we could spend free evenings putting our record collections in order and maybe even get away to the beach for a few weeks. No more! The "season" now seems never to end. New opera-producing companies keep springing up, and we get occasional visitors from elsewhere (Moscow's Bolshoi Opera is already poised to spring at us). And with the continuing decentralization of the performing arts in this country there are more frequent and more tempting productions to lure operaphiles to such places as Santa Fe, Houston, Seattle, and Boston.

Shortly after the end of the Met season this year, Sarah Caldwell, artistic director of the Opera Company of Boston, had large numbers of fans traveling up from New York for America's first staged production of Berlioz's *Benvenuto Cellini*. Jon Vickers sang the title role, and other principals were Patricia Wells, Nancy Williams, Gimi Beni, Donald Gramm, and John Reardon. Miss Caldwell mounted and conducted the work herself, and I was most impressed by her ingenious staging, which included the casting of Cellini's famous statue of Perseus before our very eyes.

The production was an important event in the current revival of French opera and was well worth the trip to Boston. But, despite Miss Caldwell's clever direction, *Benvenuto Cellini* did not work for me as a theater piece (dramatic construction was not Berlioz's long suit). There is some wonderful music in it, however, and it was fun to hear familiar bits from the *Roman Carnival* Overture sung. The performance was in English, and English so well projected that one could follow the complicated plot easily. This made me wonder whether, given the current shortage of French singers, it might not be wise to do certain other French operas in translation.

Back in New York, I was still turning this thought over in my mind when I went to a performance of Ravel's opera-ballet *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges* (*The Spellbound Child*) in the New York City Ballet's festival celebrating the Ravel centennial. The sets and costumes were beautiful, the choreography was by George Balanchine (he had worked with Ravel on the premiere), and it was conducted by

Manuel Rosenthal (he studied with Ravel). But somehow *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges* didn't come off well as a theater piece either. Since the characters include an armchair, a teacup, a clock, assorted animals, and arithmetic (I am *not* making this up), all except The Child were portrayed on stage by dancers and were sung (English again) by singers off to one side.



Teresa Berganza as Luisa Fernanda

This was something of a strain on the audience, and *anything* that has a child performer in it (in this case boy-soprano Paul Offenkrantz) is already in big trouble as far as I'm concerned. *L'Enfant* is a fascinating work musically, and it lasts only about forty minutes, but in the theater it seemed at least twice that long. And even the English didn't help.

Well, if I'm of two minds about opera in English in the theater, at least I know that on records I want the original language. And although *Benvenuto Cellini* and *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges* are difficult to stage convincingly, they are fine on records. Fortunately, both are available in excellent performances in idiomatic French, *Benvenuto Cellini* on Philips and *L'Enfant* on London Stereo Treasury and Deutsche Grammophon. London offers a budget price, decent sound, and a delicate performance by a cast that includes Suzanne

Danco conducted by Ernest Ansermet. For the full price on DG you get a more recent recording with up-to-date sound and a robust performance by Lorin Maazel. Both albums are recommendable.

ANOTHER post-season vocal event was a repeat performance of *Luisa Fernanda*, a Spanish zarzuela, produced by José Bovantes and the Teatro Lírico Latino Americano. Bovantes, a Cuban impresario who has spiced up New York musical life for the past few years with such things as the return of Yma Sumac, staged *Luisa Fernanda* last year with regular members of his company. The cast I saw absolutely knocked me out—Puli Toro (as Luisa), Jorge Gavira, Antonio Barasorda, and Sara Escarpanter, a marvelous zarzuela singer of the old school with a glottal attack that would strip vocal gears not made of steel. Revived this year with the parents of Met tenor Plácido Domingo—Plácido Domingo Sr. and Pepita Embil—it went less well. Mme. Embil, a famous zarzuela singer who toured for years with her own company, no longer has the vocal resources to play the title role in *Luisa Fernanda* convincingly.

If you are not familiar with the Spanish operetta form called zarzuela (after the royal palace in Spain where it originated), *Luisa Fernanda* is a good work to begin with. Composed by Federico Moreno Torroba, it is filled with attractive music, and there is an excellent recording on the Alhambra label conducted by Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos and starring Teresa Berganza.

Zarzuela music is no more profound than the average Broadway musical. Distinguished by a strong lyric impulse, it was written to move or amuse audiences, and Alhambra's zarzuela catalog is a treasure trove of proof that it can. The company is a branch of Spanish Columbia, which is in turn an affiliate of British Decca, which in this country is London Records. Some of Alhambra's albums are performances conducted by Ataulfo Argenta that were formerly available on the London label. These include a highlights album called "*Romanzas y Dúos de Zarzuelas*," which is one of my favorite zarzuela records and a good sampler for beginners. It contains famous arias and duets performed by Berganza and Pilar Lorengar when they were very young, and by Manuel Ausensi, Carlos Munguía, and Ana María Iriarte, a unique older singer with an incredible low chest register.

IVE only just begun to mine the gold of this catalog, but I've liked everything I've heard so far. This includes *Los Gavilanes* and *La Leyenda del Beso* (one disc each) with Ángeles Gullín, *La Dolorosa* and *Los Claveles* (on one record) with Berganza and Plácido Domingo, *La Gran Vía* (one side) with Nati Mistral, and *El Pájaro Azul* with Montserrat Caballé. A brand-new item is a disc of tenor arias from zarzuelas sung by Plácido Domingo, also a good sampler for beginners.

Alhambra records are produced for Spanish-speaking collectors, so some of them contain a complete libretto in Spanish only and others have no annotation at all. If you can't find them in your area, you can order directly from the company: Alhambra Records, 2214 West 8th Ct., Hialeah, Florida 33012. They will send a catalog to anyone who requests it. I look at that catalog and want everything in it, and if I have any free evenings this summer, I expect to spend them listening to zarzuela records.

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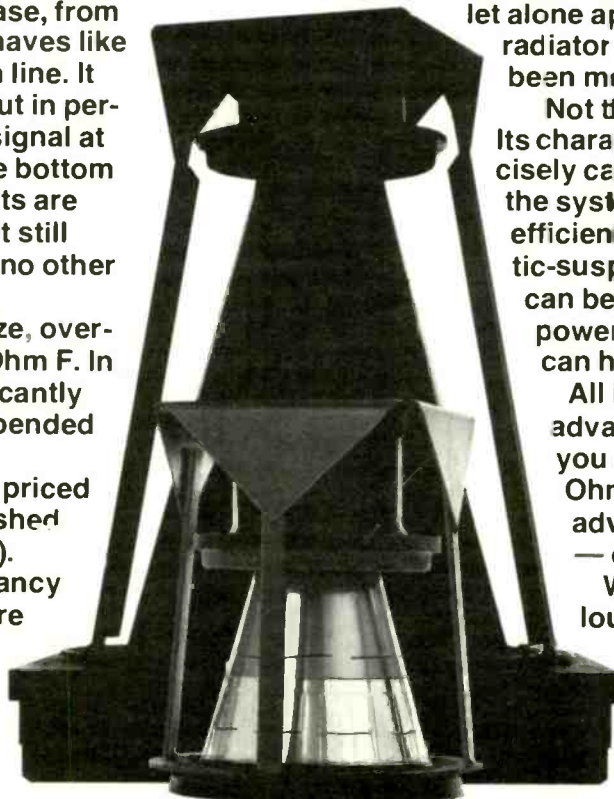
let alone apply it, so that passive-radiator systems in the past have been mostly cut-and-try.

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CIRCLE NO. 16 ON READER SERVICE CARD

THE BASIC REPERTOIRE · 184

By MARTIN BOOKSPAN

SIBELIUS' FINLANDIA

THE year 1899 was a difficult one for Finland and its population. As a subject of Imperial Russia, Finland had long been brutalized by outside interference in the administration of her affairs. Now, however, the tyranny from across the border grew in intensity. Revolutionary flames were fanned by new Russian repression, and Finnish intellectuals—writers, poets, musicians—gave voice to a newly aroused nationalism. One such patriot was Jean Sibelius, who since the early 1890's had been allied with the radical nationalists. In 1899 Sibelius was thirty-four years old. He produced his First Symphony in that year, along with two other works that instantly fired the imagination of the people. One was titled *The Song of the Athenians*: scored for a chorus of men and boys, it was set to a seemingly innocent classical text. Karl Ekman, Sibelius' biographer, wrote that in *The Song of the Athenians* the composer "made the metallic sound of the boys' voices proclaim the readiness of a whole nation to fight and die for its liberty. . . . At one blow Sibelius had stepped into a leading position in Finland's political front by virtue of his ability to interpret in music the thoughts and purposes that could not be expressed freely in words during the years of oppression."

The other score of 1899 that was a powerful stimulus to the Finns' national aspirations was a work for chorus and orchestra, titled at first *Finland Awakes*. It was the finale of a series of patriotic tableaux with music staged in Helsingfors on November 4, 1899. Six months later, Sibelius revised *Finland Awakes* as a score for orchestra alone and submitted it to the Helsingfors Philharmonic Orchestra under the title *Suomi*, the generic name for Finland. On July 2, 1900, the orchestral version was played for the first time—and it created a sensation. "Hot with the spirit of revolt" was the way the great American critic, Philip Hale, described *Suomi*. In English-speaking countries the music has come to be called *Finlandia*; in Germany it is known as *Vaterland*; in France as *La Patrie*. Significantly, *Finlandia* was one of the works Sibelius conducted during his only visit to the United States in the crucial summer of 1914.

The summer of 1939 was also a crucial one in the history of the world, and *Finlandia* figures in one of my most indelible memories of that period. With the clouds of war gathering ominously over Europe, a World's Fair was scheduled for 1939-1940 in New York. To the miracles of the Trylon and Perisphere and General Motors' World of Tomorrow exhibit was added the first genuine multimedia extravaganza in my experience: every evening at

sunset the magnificent fountains in the very center of the fair were illuminated with multi-colored shimmering lights, and, as the waters cascaded up and down, the music of *Finlandia* roared out majestically over the public address system. Now that was a spectacle of sight and sound!

MY own favorite among the many recordings of *Finlandia* is Eugene Ormandy's version in any one of its several alternative couplings on Columbia: the one I would recommend is MS 6732, on which *Finlandia* shares disc space with three other Sibelius favorites, *The Swan of Tuonela*, *En Saga*, and *Valse Triste*. There is also a cassette of the *Finlandia* performance available—Columbia 16-11-0184—but with other couplings. Ormandy's recording is particularly distinguished in its use of the version for chorus and orchestra. When the mighty sound of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir is added to the richness of the Philadelphia Orchestra in the presentation of the great hymn in *Finlandia*, only the stone-hearted could resist the nobility and grandeur of the experience. The recorded sound, though now more than a decade old, is still quite serviceable. Ormandy's years-long devotion to Sibelius is evident in every measure of this assured performance.

Another longtime Sibelius champion was Sir John Barbirolli, and his is the performance I would single out from among the many recordings of the orchestra-alone version (Seraphim S 60208). Barbirolli, too, delivers a high-voltage reading of the music, and if his Hallé Orchestra does not have quite the tonal splendor of Ormandy's Philadelphia forces, the recorded sound is never less than first-rate, with particularly fine reproduction of the snarling brass at the very opening. Barbirolli conducts *Finlandia* as part of an entire Sibelius program, the other works included being the *Karelia Suite*, *Pohjola's Daughter*, *Valse Triste*, and *Lemminkäinen's Return* from the composer's *Four Legends*, Op. 22. Everything on the disc is conducted and played with conviction and deep commitment. At the bargain Seraphim price, the Barbirolli record is an ideal introduction for newcomers to Sibelius' music.

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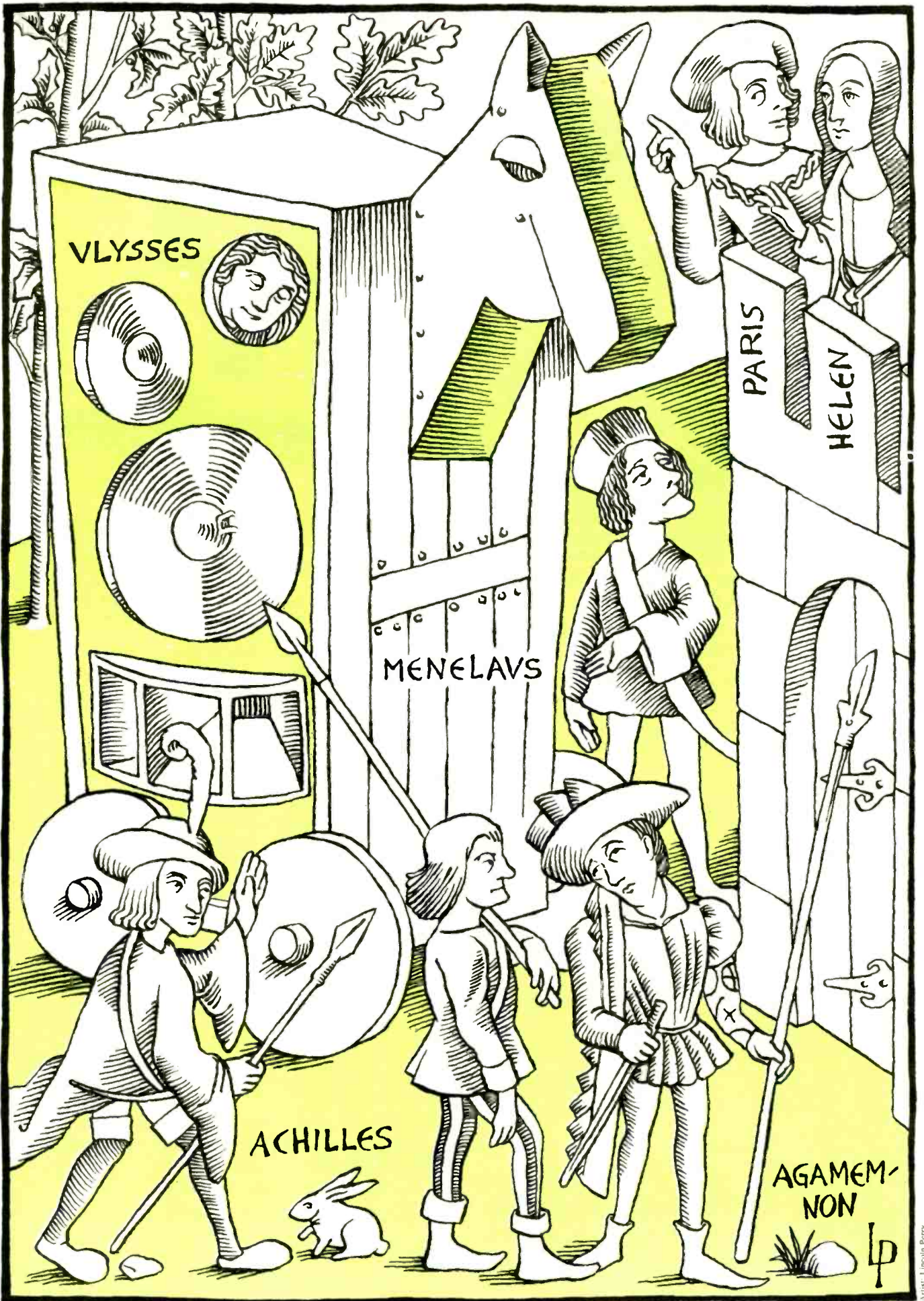
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SPEAKER MYTHS

Since speaker design is more mysterious art than exact science, it tends to be a natural magnet for a lot of very fanciful baloney, applesauce, twaddle, and poppycock, which are here exposed by

Technical Editor Larry Klein



OF all the hi-fi components, loudspeakers offer the audio consumer the very best opportunity to make a bad buy. He not only faces the usual difficult decisions inherent in the purchase of any audio component, but in addition must cope with a hodgepodge of confusions and misconceptions peculiar to speakers as a product category. And even the best intentioned hi-fi salesman is likely to be of little help in separating fact from fallacy because of the probability that he is similarly handicapped by his own treasury of spurious loudspeaker lore. Historically, the attempt to dispel superstition with hard fact has always been a thankless task (consider poor Galileo). Nevertheless and notwithstanding, I will attempt in the following pages to debunk some of the most well respected, popular (and hence pernicious) myths that make it so difficult for a speaker shopper to arrive at a well-considered choice.



True, everyone does hear differently; but, Carlos Castaneda to the contrary, we are all listening to the same *objective* reality. Suppose I set up a microphone and make a perfect anechoic tape recording of this issue's Reader Service card being shredded by the blades of a rotating electric fan. The tape, when played back (assuming the recording and playback system to be perfect), would, to any listener's ears, sound identical to the original. However, some listeners might nevertheless feel that the reproduction of the card shredding lacks bass, the mid-frequencies have no "presence," or the highs are without "zip." They are certainly entitled to those opinions, but their sonic preferences have nothing whatever to do with high-fidelity—fidel-

ity, that is, to the *original sound*. The fact that we all do not share the same hearing apparatus therefore has no bearing on our possible disagreement about what constitutes good sound *reproduction*. This dispute arises because of differences in sonic *taste*, not differences in *perception*.

The point is simply this: one is entitled to introduce whatever variations one likes into the reproduction of a sound, but such departures from the original—whether produced accidentally or on purpose by a speaker or a tone control—cannot be justified on the basis that "everyone hears differently." The live sound and the reproduced sound are both heard by the same ears in the same way. The two sounds either match reasonably well—or they don't.



Some are—but then some ain't. It is usually true that a bigger speaker is a more efficient speaker, assuming that we are talking about a system using conventional dynamic drivers. But isn't a more efficient speaker a better speaker? Yes . . . if all other factors are equal—and they very seldom are. It is possible to design a system in a one-cubic-foot cabinet whose bass response goes down lower and comes out cleaner than that of a 15-cubic-foot horn-loaded p.a. speaker. However, the little unit will not be able to play very loud without severe distortion, and it will perhaps be only 1/100 as efficient as the larger unit. You could drive the big unit to a given sound volume with, say, 1 watt, while the smaller unit might require as much as 100 watts from the amplifier to reach the same volume level—assuming it could do so without blowing up. Speaker-system designers who know what they are doing are

able to make exactly the compromises they desire, within a given price range, between cabinet size, low-frequency response, low-frequency distortion, and efficiency. The factors are traded off against each other in the final product according to the designer's notion of what the public wants, what he thinks they *should* have, or some compromise between the two.



The unexpressed assumption behind this myth is that the speaker designers are restricted mostly by cost limitations. If given more dollars to put into the design, they will automatically come up with a better product. Oh, would that this were the case! The unfortunate reality is well illustrated by an event that took place in my living room not too long ago.

One evening, at my invitation, manufacturer X brought to my apartment two different pairs of bookshelf speakers: a three-way system selling for about \$180, and a four-way job that costs about \$40 more. To my surprise, when I went through my usual A-B plus equalizer listening-test procedure, the more expensive and slightly larger four-way system sounded *and* tested inferior to the three-way system.

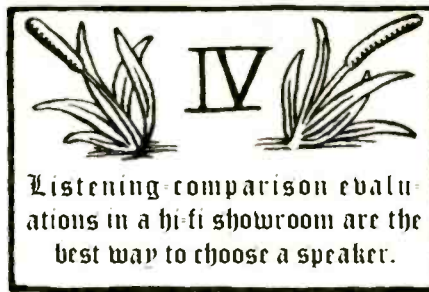
Seeing that I was somewhat taken aback, the manufacturer hastened to explain that the four-way system was designed as a "step-up." In the jargon of the trade, this means that once the dealer has persuaded a customer to buy a three-way Brand X, he might possibly step up the sale by indicating that it would cost only \$40 additional to upgrade to a four-way system. As my tests revealed—and the designer acknowledged—the price step-up was, in fact, accompanied by a

performance step-down—probably because of interference between the two tweeters.

The moral to be drawn from the tale is simply this: more is not *always* better. It is true, however, that a careful and knowledgeable designer *can* provide legitimate price-point step-ups for the dealer by intelligent manipulation of the design trade-offs discussed earlier. Specifically, the more expensive speaker systems in a given manufacturer's product line should have an advantage in one or more of the following aspects: power-handling capacity (which is related more or less to volume-output capability), efficiency, low-bass capability, high-frequency range and dispersion, or physical appearance (for example, solid walnut trim and veneers rather than vinyl).

It is important to realize that these "trade-offs" in design do not really determine the *basic* sound of a speaker system. Rather, relatively small frequency-response irregularities in the 70- to 8,000-Hz region are audibly far more obvious and determine a system's specific sonic *character* ("coloration"). It is the flatness of response in this critical range that to my ear separates the good from the bad—and both of these from the indifferent. The correct handling of the "trade-off parameters" is simply the frosting on the basic cake.

To illustrate: I once spent hours A-B-ing a small, two-way, \$75 bookshelf system installed atop a nine-driver \$600 system, both made by the same compa-



This is such an "iffy" proposition that to my mind it qualifies as a myth. First of all, the statement assumes that the listener comes to a showroom with the ability to differentiate between accurate and less-than-accurate reproduction. But even if such a talent is present (actually it's more training and experience than talent), it is frequently *very* difficult for anyone to differentiate between the inherent performance capabilities of a speaker and the possible peculiarities introduced by the program material or the acoustics of an unfamiliar room. It's not uncommon to have a speaker sound fine in my own living room—and measure well in the lab—yet be sonically disappointing when encountered in some other environment. The reverse has seldom occurred, but it *is* possible that the choice of program material and/or the acoustic peculiarities of a showroom may by accident (or design) compensate somewhat for sonic aberrations that would be heard as defects under more normal circumstances.

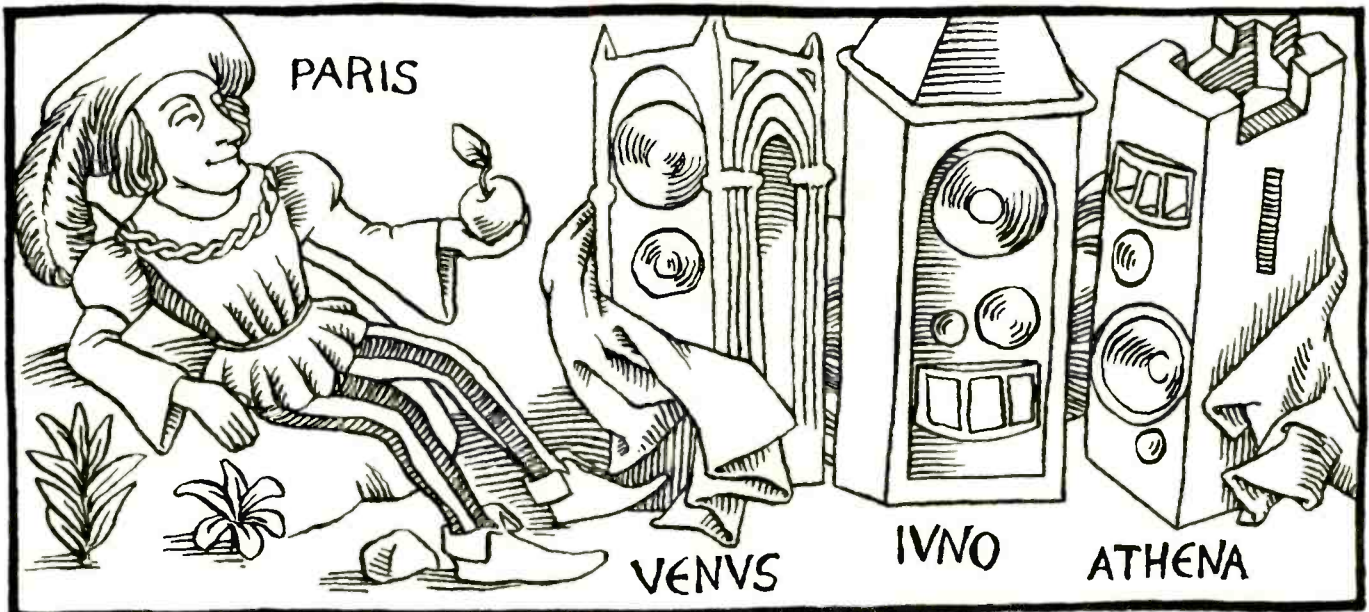
Now that I've shot down showroom

Although you will find a *certain* amount of disagreement on details among the reviewers, to my knowledge none of the legitimate magazines have ever given a really *rotten* speaker a good review. Good products, however, for obscure and complicated reasons, do occasionally receive mediocre reviews (elsewhere, of course!).

A note of caution: speaker systems, in general, have improved tremendously over the years. A system we rated as one of the very best five or ten years ago might be judged as simply just another good speaker among many today. For this reason be sure to check the dates on reprints of (or quotes from) speaker reviews to avoid being misled. (An index of STEREO REVIEW's own test reports can be obtained by sending 25¢ and a stamped self-addressed long envelope to STEREO REVIEW, Dept TR1, One Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016.)



Although I applaud the good intentions of the propagators of this myth, there are several practical things wrong with the idea—aside from the simple fact

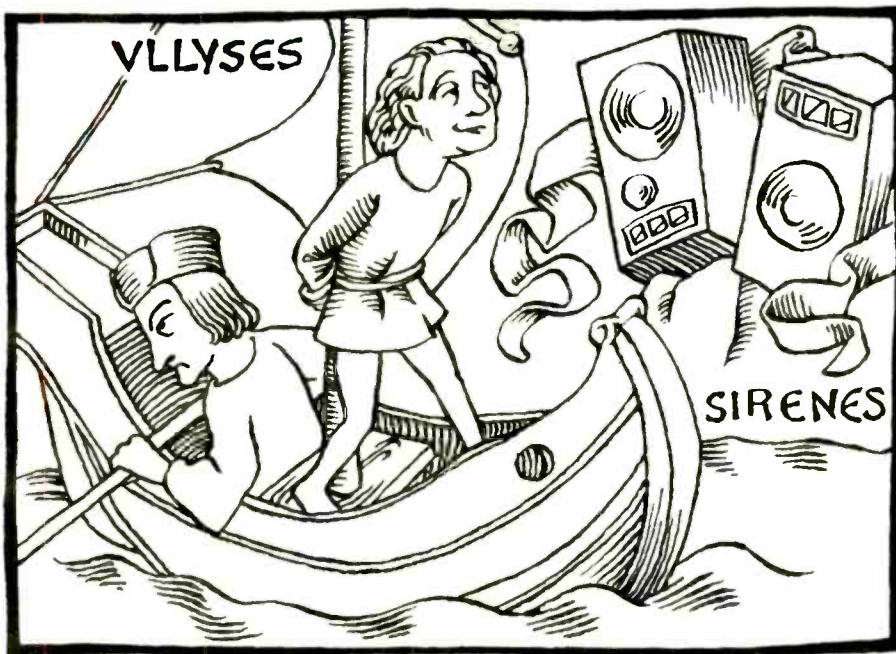


ny. I proved to my own satisfaction that as long as I kept the volume at a reasonable level, played program material that did not have very-high highs and very-low lows, and listened on-axis, the speakers both sounded excellent—and virtually identical. That is just one good example of proper use of cost-vs.-performance trade-offs.

evaluation, what is left? That's easy. If you are serious about your speakers and unsure about your ears, the best source of guidance is the speaker test reports in the legitimate hi-fi magazines. Searching out these reports is not as time-consuming a task as it might at first appear since manufacturers who have received good reviews usually have reprints available.

that recordings only rarely embody the same sound qualities heard in a concert hall. The major flaw has to do, once again, with *the nature of auditory perception*. Most people hear well enough to make judgments, but they simply do not know what to listen *for*—even after years of concert-going.

The experienced loudspeaker evalua-



tor consciously or unconsciously divides the frequency spectrum reproduced by a speaker into three general bands: lower, middle, and upper. He then focuses on each frequency band individually and listens for typical problems. In other words, he listens for what's wrong, rather than what's right.

In the low band, one should listen for the presence of boom or "barrel effect" on deep male voices. Listen also for weaknesses in the low-frequency range, although this is very difficult to judge except on a comparison basis. For example, a speaker can have a low-frequency peak at, say, 70 Hz and not be able to go much lower, but it will nonetheless sound, on many modern rock records, as though it has better bass than another speaker that goes *smoothly* down to 40 or 50 Hz (moral: choose your program test material carefully). Such peaked speakers are also usually more *efficient* than speakers that go down lower and smoother—all of which relates to the design trade-offs discussed in Myth III.

In the mid-range frequencies, listen for a sound quality that's neither too projected (boosted middles) nor too withdrawn (depressed middles). The forward type of projection is frequently associated with a nasal, honky quality that shows up in female voices, especially in the middle (rather than soprano) range. A withdrawn quality makes vocalists sound as though they were behind the orchestra rather than in front of it.

In respect to the high-frequency range, I've found a tambourine to be a fine "test instrument": it provides an excellent live standard of comparison. Note the delicacy, shimmer, and lack of "shatter" in the sound of the live tambourine versus the recording of a tambourine reproduced by speakers. Of course, the phono cartridge and the recording also introduce variables here, but there

should be no problem in finding ones that do a proper job. (It should be obvious that I've covered just some of the areas in which speakers can go wrong, but the subtlety of the other effects—and the lack of an accepted terminology—unfortunately precludes verbal description.)

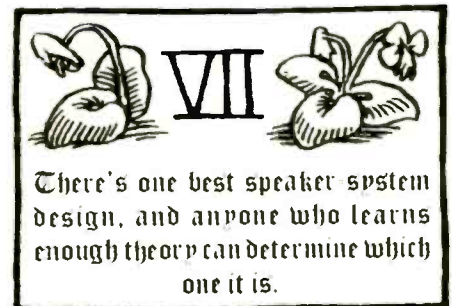


This myth dies hard, mostly because many speaker manufacturers tend to endorse it, having lost their shirts trying to fight it. For perspective on the question, it's necessary to be aware of the distinction between *more* bass and *lower* bass touched on in Myth V. For all of us, the mid-frequencies (roughly 400 to 2,000 Hz) provide a subjective zero-reference point. If this entire range of frequencies were to be boosted, the overall sound would be louder, but there would be an audible *loss* of highs and lows. Conversely, if the mid-range were to be depressed, there would be a loss in loudness and an audible boost in the high and low frequencies. In other words, to the ear it's all relative.

In addition, the *amount* of bass produced by a speaker system can vary radically in response to its placement and the acoustic character of the room. Speakers in the middle of the floor or in the middle of a wall produce the least bass. Place them at a floor-wall junction and you have more bass. Install them in a corner and you have the most bass of all. Which is best? Ideally, the level of the bass frequencies should be more or less even with the level of the middle

frequencies. In other words, you want a *flat* frequency response.

But all of this has to do only with the relative *amount* of bass, not how low the bass goes. The ability—or inability—of a speaker system to reproduce the low bass, say frequencies of 50 Hz and on down, is inherent in its design. The room can either help the speaker realize its low-bass performance potential or prevent it from doing so. One rough index of a speaker system's low-bass potential is its "in-box" or system resonance specification. Most bookshelf speakers with good low-bass performance have a resonance between 40 and 50 Hz. However, don't confuse the in-box resonance with a woofer's *free-air resonance*, which is probably specified at under 25 Hz and is not meaningful except to the designer.



I must confess that this myth is never phrased in language *quite* this blunt. It is more likely to appear as, say, an oblique question probing into the significance of a specific—and usually novel—driver design. Or it may be a question about the relative design virtues of acoustic-suspension vs. aperiodic vs. transmission-line enclosures. In any case, as far as determining how close a particular design concept comes to achieving some ideal of "absolute fidelity" (cost no obstacle), I really can't be of any help since I know of no way to establish the absolute best among the many high-accuracy reproducers we have tested over the years. All we honestly can—and do—say in our test reports is something like "this ranks with the finest speakers available." It may well be that among those "finest" there is one that comes closer to perfection (absolute accuracy) than the others, but we have no way of *scientifically* making such a fine distinction. Moreover, in any practical listening situation, differences in program material, the associated audio equipment, the acoustic environment, and room placement will introduce *far* more variation in the audible outputs of two excellent speakers than might result from the differences in their measured performance. However, if there were magically to appear on the market a speaker system that sounded and tested as good as "the finest" and was half the price, half the size, and had twice the efficiency, the impossible dream would have been realized—and I would be inclined to judge it *the* best. □

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 195024-195025. Verdi: *Requiem* — Bernstein, London Symphony Orch., Chorus (2-record set counts as 2 — Columbia) *

246645. Music From Walt Disney's *"Fantasia"* — *Night on Bald Mountain* (Stokowski, London Sym.); *Sorcerer's Apprentice* (Hermann, London Phil.); many others (London) *
 227561. Vivaldi: *The Four Seasons* — violinist Pinchas Zuckerman and the English Chamber Orch. (Columbia)
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The delicate question of **SPEAKER PLACEMENT**

Some useful—even ingenious—how-to guidance
by speaker expert Roy Allison



THE process of choosing, buying, and installing high-fidelity components is often accompanied by some anxiety and frustration. Perhaps the most exasperating experience of all, however, is to bring home some speakers that you know are good ones, only to find that they sound disappointing or even terrible in your listening room.

If this should happen to you, the fault may lie with a component you haven't even thought about: the room itself. Any room has a major effect on what you hear from the speakers used in it. At low audio frequencies it actually modifies the acoustic-power output of a speaker as measured in the room, and it determines the spatial distribution of that power as well. Moreover, by means of its ability to absorb certain audio frequencies more readily than others, the room alters the frequency balance you hear when listening to the speakers. The acoustical characteristics of your listening room, and the placement of speakers in the room, are therefore of crucial importance in determining the quality of the sound field at your ears.

Room Dimensions

Sound energy *reverberates* in a room—that is, it persists for a time after leaving the speakers because of being reflected from one room boundary (wall,

ceiling, or floor) to another. Ultimately, partial absorption at each encounter with a boundary or piece of furniture gradually diminishes the energy until it is no longer audible. At certain frequencies, however, it arrives back at its source (the speaker) at just the right moment to be reinforced strongly. This happens when the total to-and-fro length of the path followed by the reflected sound equals one wavelength of the sound or a multiple thereof. The reflected sound returns just in time to be in phase with the continuing output of the speaker. Then the sound energy, comprised of what was left of the original impulse plus the augmentation by the speaker, makes *another* circuit of the room and is further reinforced as it reaches the speaker again. For as long as the speaker continues to emit sound of the same frequency (or frequencies), *standing waves* are set up in the room. The standing waves are room resonances, quite similar to the air-column resonances in organ pipes of various lengths.

The path length of the reflected sound is of course determined by the dimensions of the room, and a set of room resonances therefore exists for *each* dimension—length, width, and height. (A set of resonances also occurs for each combination of *two* and *three* dimensions. It is a simple matter to calculate

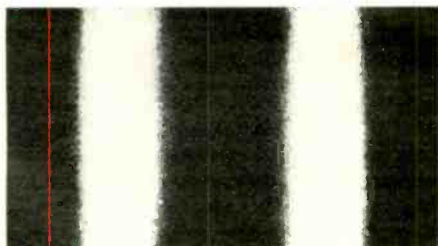
the frequencies of the resonance modes involving single room dimensions. To find the lowest-frequency resonance mode of a dimension, simply divide 565 (half the speed of sound in feet per second) by the dimension in feet. If a room is 20 feet long, for example, its lowest resonance frequency is $28\frac{1}{4}$ Hz. Resonances for each dimension also occur at every *multiple* of the lowest frequency: twice the frequency, three times, four times, etc. Thus the set of 20-foot-length resonances is $28\frac{1}{4}$, $56\frac{1}{2}$, $84\frac{3}{4}$, 113 Hz, and so on. If the width dimension is 15 feet, the set of resonances for it is $37\frac{2}{3}$, $75\frac{1}{3}$, 113, $150\frac{2}{3}$ Hz, and so on. And if the height dimension is 10 feet, resonances occur at $56\frac{1}{2}$, 113, $169\frac{1}{2}$, 226 Hz, and on up. In rooms of typical size, resonances above these low frequencies are clumped together so closely that they tend to give uniform support to all frequencies. Therefore, the emphasis (or the suppression) of any single frequency above about 500 Hz is rarely prominent enough to cause problems.

However, at the lower frequencies we are considering, note that all *three* of the simple room dimensions have resonances at 113 Hz, and that two of the dimensions are resonant at $56\frac{1}{2}$ Hz. Strong, probably annoying reinforcement could be expected for music tones near these frequencies in the room. But

even so, the situation could be much worse. If two of the room dimensions were equal and the third were half of the others, there would be many groups of three identical resonance frequencies, and wide frequency expanses between them with little or no reinforcement from the room (see Figure 1). In other words, the low-frequency and transient responses of the room would both be very bad.

Simple logic informs us that the ideal room proportions are those for which the sets of resonance frequencies are separated by equal intervals. A good approximation is obtained when the dimensions are in the ratios of 1 to 1.26 to 1.59. This would be true for a room 8 feet high, 10 feet wide, and 12¾ feet long, or by one 9 feet high, 11¼ feet wide, and 14¼ feet long. These are not very large rooms, but ceilings higher than 8 or 9 feet are rare in home environments. One acceptable compromise would be to adopt a length-to-width ratio of 1.4 and use whatever ceiling height is available.

Suppose you are stuck with a room in which two dimensions are equal, or in which one is an exact multiple of another. You can break up a strong resonance mode in one direction by building a partial room divider several feet out from one wall; cabinets or bookshelves on pole supports can serve this function very well. Alternatively, a wall can be covered by wood paneling, not more than ¼ inch thick, applied over wall studs or furring strips. This is one of the few methods of resonance damping that is effective at upper bass frequencies (where coincident resonance frequencies are most frequent) but which does not have high absorption at high frequencies also.



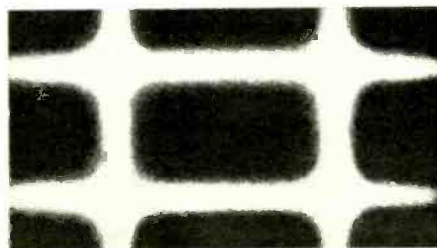
Side view of the sound-pressure distribution in a room when the second resonance of the room's length is stimulated. Darkest areas represent zones of maximum pressure.

Room Construction and Furnishings

If room proportions are reasonable to start with (or can be made so with minor modifications) the distribution of resonance frequencies will be fairly uniform. But at low frequencies there are wide frequency intervals between resonances in rooms of average size, even when the distribution is very good. If the room boundary surfaces and furnishings absorb little sound energy, for example, reverberation will continue too long—the room will provide too much reinforcement of sound at the resonance frequencies but very little reinforcement at the in-between frequencies. Music played in such a room sounds hollow, boomy, and—because of too little absorption at higher frequencies—screechy bright.

Fortunately, normal room-surface coverings and furniture do absorb some sound energy. In doing so they *damp* the room resonances. Damping reduces the amplitude of the peaks at the resonance frequencies and fills in the valleys between, producing a more uniform reinforcement throughout the room for all frequencies. Too much absorption, on the other hand, is nearly as bad as too little, for then the room has a lifeless quality that is decidedly unpleasant.

The right kind of acoustic treatment for a listening room involves a mixture of hard, rigid surfaces (such as real plaster



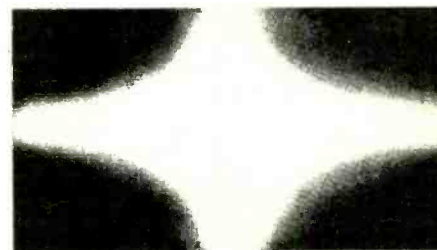
Sound-pressure distribution (overhead view) when the combined second-order resonance of a room's length and width is stimulated—nine columns of maximum pressure result.

walls and ceilings, solid doors, and glass window panes) that have low absorption, and soft padded surfaces (heavy drapes, upholstered furniture, and rugs) that have high absorption. Also, for all but

the very lowest audio frequencies, open doorways are virtually perfect absorbers.

Ideally, there should be alternating surfaces of both kinds throughout the room. Usually it isn't practical to arrange this; the ceiling, for example, is most often uniformly hard. But in most cases it is at least feasible to avoid the condition in which *opposite* room surfaces are both entirely hard or completely soft. If the ceiling is plaster, much of the floor area should be covered by rugs with thick padding underneath, or even by wall-to-wall carpeting with a lighter padding. If one wall is nearly all papered or painted plaster, or wood paneling, the opposite wall should have large areas of draped windows, bookcases, or wall hangings. Furniture is obtainable in a wide range of mostly hard or mostly soft surfaces; it can be used to partially compensate for room-surface textures.

One of the most difficult problems in room acoustics—particularly in modern

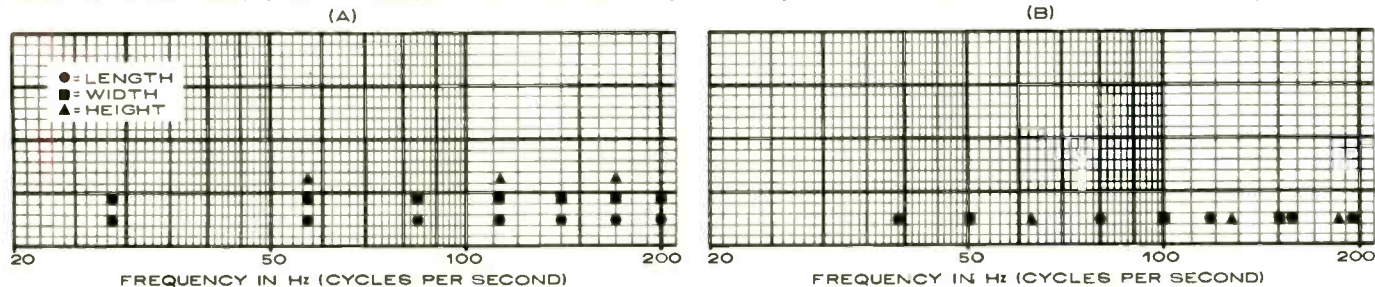


Side view of the sound-pressure distribution when the combination resonance of room width and height is activated. Pressure is least in centered vertical and horizontal planes.

home construction—is the lack of rigidity in walls, ceilings, and floors. A partition wall built of 2 x 4-inch studs on 16-inch centers, with thin wallboard and a skim coat of plaster on both sides, is really quite flexible. So is a large expanse of window glass. They yield readily to low-frequency sound-pressure waves, and they absorb or pass through the bass energy that should be reflected if it is to be reinforced equally with the rest of the frequency range. The result is a loss of bass in the sound field of the room that, in many cases, is quite significant.

Only a major job of carpentry or masonry can correct this condition in a room already built, for it requires the installation of a layer of additional thick-

Fig. 1. Distribution of resonant modes in two rooms. (A) shows the coincidence of such modes in a room with cubical dimensions. Resonant modes in another room (B) are well distributed and would minimize formation of areas that would be "hot" or "dead" at certain frequencies.



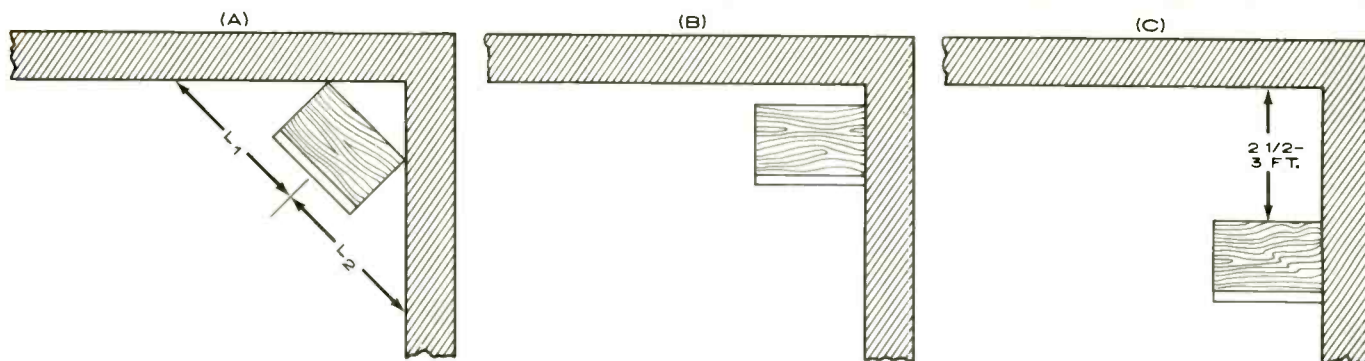


Fig. 2. Corner placement of a conventional bookshelf speaker system as in (A) produces the greatest bass reinforcement, but it may cause dips in the upper-bass response. Placements (B) and (C) may improve frequency balance greatly owing to better room-boundary relationships.

ness to the partition wall—a brick veneer or additional sheets of wallboard and plaster. A floor at the first-story level can be stiffened substantially by means of an adjustable lally column installed in the basement between the concrete basement floor and a joist or beam at the approximate center of the room's floor. If that isn't practical, another layer of oak flooring thoroughly nailed across the existing floor will be of some value.

These are drastic reconstruction measures, to be sure. I recommend them only to those who are totally obsessed by a search for the perfect sound system. The rationale would be that the room is part of the system—as indeed it is. The lucky few whose listening rooms already have rigid boundaries can congratulate themselves that they are getting all the bass their speakers are putting out.

Speaker Placement

There is little need to elaborate on the general rules of placement for stereo speakers: they should be approximately equidistant from the center of the listening area and spaced apart by between one-third to two-thirds of that distance. In four-channel or ambience-recovery setups, the two rear speakers should preferably be placed as far behind the listening area as is convenient; if that cannot be done, nearly as good results can be obtained with the "rear" speakers placed to the left and right of the listening area. In either case, they should be as far away from the listening area as the front speakers are, or as nearly so as the room dimensions allow.

Within this general framework much variation is possible, and some experimentation—the only way to do it—is almost always advisable. When a speaker is placed at a location in a room where a standing-wave resonance has its maximum pressure, it will excite that resonance most efficiently. Conversely, if the speaker is placed at a point where that resonance has minimum pressure, it will excite the standing wave least effectively. Some degree of room-resonance control can therefore be obtained merely by

moving a speaker a relatively small distance from its initial location.

Every room-resonance mode has its maximum pressure at the room's corners. Half of the modes have maximum pressure at two-boundary intersections (floor and wall, ceiling and wall, or two adjacent walls), one quarter of the modes have maximum pressure at the center of a wall, and only one eighth of the modes have maximum pressure at the center of the room. In general, the bass output from any speaker is increased as the number of low-frequency resonance modes fully excited is increased. Moving a speaker closer to a wall intersection and then down toward the floor, therefore, gradually increases the average amount of bass power delivered to the room, but at the risk of strongly exciting some potentially undesirable combination of resonances. The only practical way to strike the best compromise in location is by trial and error.

There is another important aspect of speaker placement that has only recently received attention. When a conventional speaker is normally situated in a room, reflections from the three nearest room boundaries reduce the speaker's power output significantly in a rather narrow band of frequencies—usually in the 150- to 400-Hz range. The effect is difficult to avoid completely, but it can be reduced in severity by following the few simple rules illustrated in Figure 2.

1. Do not put the speaker at equal distances from the floor (or ceiling) and two adjacent walls. The most severe power-output dip occurs when a speaker is located on a line of symmetry from a room corner.
2. Turning the speaker cabinet so that one side, rather than the back, is against a wall is helpful if it can be done without compromising adequate radiation of the middle and high frequencies into the listening area.

3. The best placement (from the point of view of uniform bass-power output) has the side of the speaker cabinet against a wall, the woofer end of the cabinet resting on the floor, and the cabinet at least 2½ or 3 feet from the nearest other wall. This is especially effective if the speaker system has a woofer-to-mid-range crossover frequency of 500 Hz or lower. Unfortunately, it may result in so much bass output that the system becomes bass-heavy.

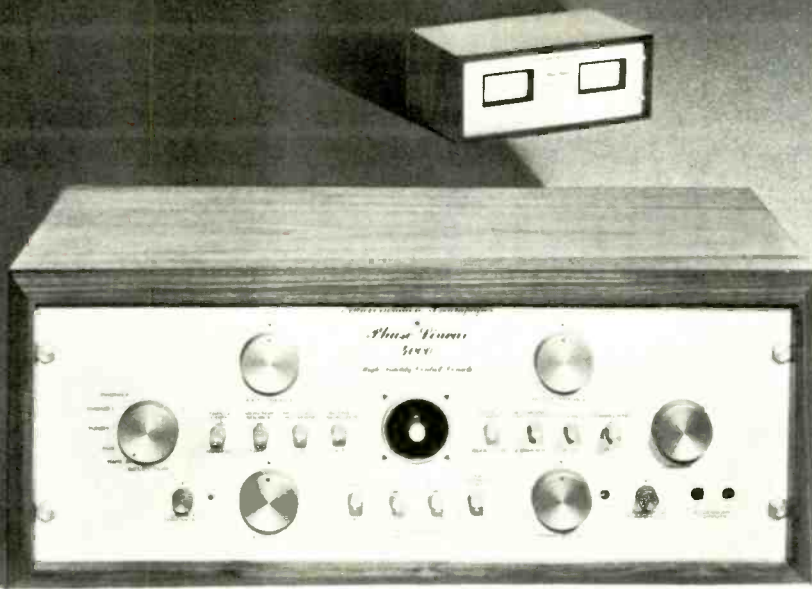
To repeat, there is no substitute for experiment in speaker placement. To ease your task, take advantage of the law of acoustical reciprocity. Put the left speaker in the chair in which you will normally be sitting while listening. Put on a record, set your amplifier in the *mono* mode, and disconnect the right speaker. Then move *yourself* around, exploring with your ears the general areas of all possible left-speaker locations. Note the location of your head where the sound is best, and put the left speaker there (or as close to it as possible). Repeat the process, putting the right speaker in your listening chair, etc. If you try this method, you'll find that moving either yourself or the speaker affects the sound in similar ways—a fact worth remembering as you adjust for optimum final placement.

Next, return to your listening position and, using the same mono program source, assure yourself that the two speakers sound reasonably alike when you switch rapidly between them. If they do not, it's possible that your chosen speaker locations have too many differences between them to be compatible for stereo. For example, one may be surrounded by hard surfaces—bare walls and floor—while the other is amidst carpeting, upholstered furniture, and the like. If tone controls, or the controls on the speakers themselves, cannot compensate for these differences enough to produce a satisfactory, stable stereo image, you will have to repeat the whole speaker placement procedure, using another wall or perhaps even another arrangement of room furnishings.

FINALLY, don't feel obliged to follow either hi-fi or decorating convention. There is no law, for example, that says both the left and the right speaker *must* rest against the same wall. If an odd, asymmetrical speaker placement turns out to be sonically the best and it is not aesthetically objectionable, then *that* is the place for your speaker.

Roy Allison, formerly Vice President of engineering at Acoustic Research, is now the President of Allison Acoustics, Inc.

This article is adapted from "Your Listening Room: The Final Component" which appeared in Boston's *Phoenix*.



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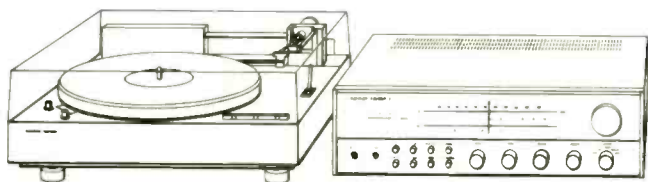
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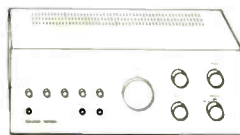
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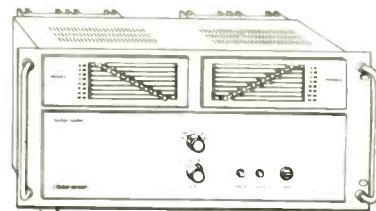


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AMONG today's major symphony and opera conductors, Carlo Maria Giulini cuts an especially imposing figure. Tall, classically handsome, and with a full head of greying but still predominantly dark hair, he looks much, *much* younger than his sixty years—an age to which he admits with disarming directness. His manner, both on and off the podium, is suave and elegant in an Old World, always gentlemanly way. Other musicians I've interviewed go out of their way to speak of him as one of the most gracious and charming colleagues they've ever worked with. "I adore Giulini," Alexis Weissenberg told me. "Giulini

How had Vienna gotten him to change his mind? Giulini smiled as he replied to the question during a recent interview in New York. "You see, the title 'music director' is a bit different there than here. It is more like chief conductor. This is all I really am in Vienna. I am not at all interested in administration. I put this to them very clearly. I want nothing to do with such problems—only with musical problems. For example, if they want me to hear an audition. I do so. Just so it deals with music.

"Another condition I made," he continues in soft-spoken, lightly accented English, "is that I don't want to conduct

quently took him into the forests of neighboring Austria. In the peace settlement that ended World War I in 1918, Italy's northern border was extended to include territory that had formerly been Austrian. That's when Giulini's father moved his family to a small town in the newly Italian territory that he had known and liked before the war.

"It was a beautiful town, surrounded by forests," Giulini says, illustrating the comment expressively with his hands. "We were one of the first Italian families there, so I grew up speaking both German and Italian. I started kindergarten there, and also my first music lessons.

Conductor Carlo Maria Giulini

"... more and more I find orchestras everywhere can do everything."

By Roy Hemming

lini is absolutely marvelous," says Shirley Verrett. Other comments from fellow musicians inevitably end up sounding like a fan-club oration.

Yet Giulini remains something of an enigma on the contemporary music scene. He is as concerned with maintaining a cultivated balance in his personal life as he is with being a world-famous conductor. In an age when most musicians jet here, there, and everywhere week after week, Giulini rigidly restricts the number of engagements he will accept. He shuns big social events and as much of the publicity whirl as he possibly can. When he is not conducting he flees to the privacy of his small-town home in the mountainous region of northern Italy.

Until last year Giulini had steadfastly turned down offers to head major orchestras in both the United States and Europe. The closest he had come was his engagement, dating from 1969, as principal guest conductor of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Other than that, he had long insisted that he did not want to get tied down to a permanent post with any orchestra. Then, to almost everyone's surprise, Giulini agreed last year to become music director of the Vienna Symphony Orchestra.

very often. Perhaps five or six programs in all the year. Of course, if and when the orchestra goes on tour outside Vienna, I will tour with them as their chief."

Does his Vienna contract give him approval of other conductors and programs when he's not there? "Yes," he replies, "although arranging everything is a little bit complicated because I prefer not to live in Vienna."

Home for Giulini is Bolzano, in the Dolomite Alps, not far from the Austrian border in northeastern Italy. "When I am not conducting I stay there expressly to be quiet, to be in contact with nature." He makes the comment without any of the pretentiousness or affectation it might bear coming from another speaker.

"My home used to be in Rome, then Milan, but I don't want to live in big cities any more," he explains. "Cities, I feel, are less and less for human beings. When I conduct, of course, I am obliged to be in the big cities, because that is where the great orchestras are. But after the concerts I must get away. This is very important to me."

ALTHOUGH Giulini was born in the Adriatic town of Barletta in southern Italy, he grew up in the Dolomites. His father was a lumberman whose work fre-

"I think I was about four years old when I first saw a violin. You know the man who goes about the village playing the violin for charity—what is he called in English? Well, never mind. I must have been very taken with his playing, for when my father asked me what I wanted for Christmas I said a violin. So he bought me a starter-size violin. My mother told me later that I was absolutely crazy about learning how to play it—and to play *everything!*"

"I began taking lessons from an old Bohemian violin master who lived in the village. I will never forget that man. I studied with him until I was twelve. Then the Italian government set up a new music school in the region under a cousin of the composer Mascagni. He sent a young Italian violinist to our town with a whole new conception of teaching. My Bohemian teacher, who loved me like a son, said to me: 'I am old. Go and start fresh with this new teacher.' How he must have suffered as he said it—but he understood."

When Giulini was fifteen his family realized that their town was too small for further important musical study. So they packed him off to Rome. At the Santa Cecilia Conservatory he studied violin, viola, and composition. By the mid-

Thirties he was already playing in a string quartet.

"Each summer I always went back to the mountains. One of my teachers sent me a telegram there, telling of a competition for the *last* viola chair in the Augusteo Orchestra in Rome. At that time the Augusteo was a really great orchestra. So I went back to Rome to enter this competition. When they told me I was the winner of the *twelfth* seat in the viola section, this was for me the greatest joy of my musical life—before or since!

"And what an experience it was. We played under all the greatest conductors—Mengelberg, Kleiber, Klemperer,

casts he had to work with and with production problems at major houses, he announced in 1969 that he was giving up opera to concentrate on symphonic music—at least for four or five years.

Since that length of time has now elapsed, is he thinking of going back to opera? Giulini answers quietly but firmly: "I have no projects for the opera house. I have no time now for opera, because there are so many symphonic works I haven't performed that I would still like to do. And I really don't want to conduct too much. I don't want to get *used* to the music I perform. For me, every performance, every rehearsal

chestra in Rome or London because the individual players are different?

"Every great orchestra has its own character, its own personality," he replies. "The conductor must understand what that character is, and then try to bring out *his* sound, *his* conception. A work that is played in London may *sound* different because of the character of the orchestra, but the artistic conception, the interpretation of the conductor will be his wherever he conducts."

How about a Mahler or Bruckner symphony played by an orchestra in Vienna which has grown up with a certain tradition or identity with these com-



Claudio Abbado

De Sabata, Richard Strauss, Bruno Walter. Sometimes we would play the same Brahms or Beethoven symphony with Walter and De Sabata—two completely different conceptions, and both *great* conceptions. When you sit there and play with such great musicians—even when you are in the last chair—you cannot help but get excited."

Giulini's love affair with orchestras has lasted ever since, although it has been from the conductor's podium rather than as a player since the end of World War II. It was Giulini who led the first concert at Rome's Teatro Adriana following the liberation—after he had spent months in hiding from the Nazi police as an anti-Fascist. In 1946 he became a conductor for Radio Italiana, and in 1953 a principal conductor at Milan's La Scala Opera. His American debut came in 1955, with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

During the 1950's and 1960's, Giulini was most closely identified with opera. In those years he was the conductor for some of the great Angel recordings with Maria Callas and Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, and he was principal conductor for the Rome Opera's visit to the United States in 1968. Then, amid reports that he was increasingly dissatisfied with the

must be a great event. I do not want it to become routine. That possibility terrifies me.

"I am afraid, I know that I'm afraid, and I know also *why* I'm afraid. This mystery of music—the mystery of sound that before you actually hear it you first hear it *inside* yourself—you cannot let this become like a machine. So I perform for three or four weeks, and then I must have three or four weeks to myself—to study, to think, and to restudy. I find that the more years I live and the more experience I acquire, I must study again and again to try to understand the creative geniuses for whom I would be a servant. You cannot jet everywhere all year long and do this."

Just as he fights the increasingly machine-like "manufacture" of music today, Giulini bristles at impersonal references to an orchestra as an instrument. "I hate this," he says. "The orchestra is *not* an instrument. It is human beings who *play* instruments. That's a very different thing!"

Can orchestra players then, I asked, shape the way a conductor will play a particular work? For example, will Giulini himself play the Brahms First Symphony differently with the New York Philharmonic than he will with an or-

posers? "Yes, in Vienna there are some charming things that it is impossible for others to imitate," Giulini admits. "It's been with them for so many years. But music is much more than this. And more and more I find orchestras everywhere can do everything. There are no longer borders. I do not believe in borders. Human beings, I feel, are much the same everywhere. We all have a heart. Sometimes the outward expression of individual feeling is different. But what is inside us is fundamentally the same—the sorrow, the joy, the tears, the smiles, all these things.

"Sometimes I hear it said in Europe that American orchestras are splendid but cold. I get a bit crazy whenever I hear this. It is not true! Sometimes an American orchestra *can* play cold, just as a European orchestra can play cold. It is up to the conductor to bring out its heart."

There are many who would agree that Carlo Maria Giulini has few peers today in being able to do just that. Maybe it's his ability to pull back from the rush of the modern world that has made it possible for him not only to preserve his own contact with the music that is so important to him, but to serve so well as one of ours. □

TEAC A-2300SD

74dB

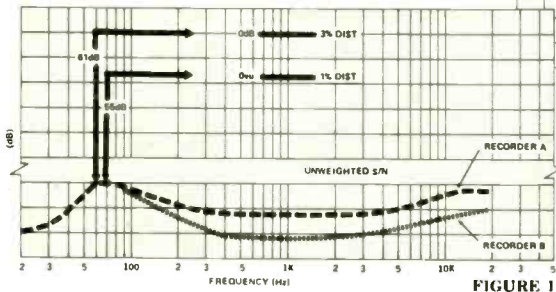
signal to noise ratio



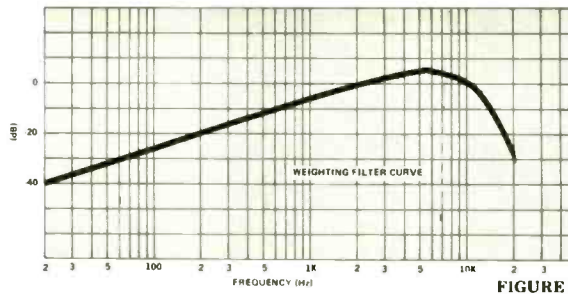
Noise vs signal

Noise is usually defined as an unwanted disturbance of some sort. In a tape recorder, noise does not occur at the same volume level across the entire frequency spectrum. Low frequency hum is generally louder than high frequency hiss, but the human ear does not perceive noise in that relationship.

The sensitivity of the ear is not uniform with frequency, a situation expressed graphically in the well known Fletcher-Munson curves. Since the ear is most sensitive to sounds in the range from 1 kHz to 4 kHz, low frequencies (hum) must be substantially louder than high frequencies (hiss) for the same *apparent* loudness.

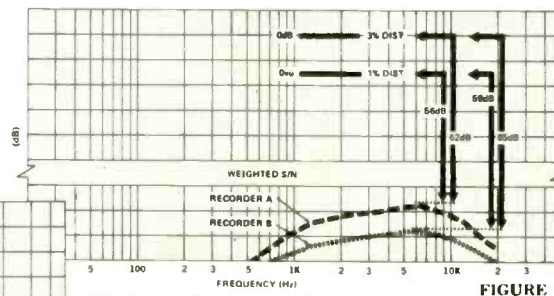


You can see from Fig. 1 that recorder A has more hiss than B, yet the unweighted signal-to-noise ratio would be the same for both machines (61 dB). Obviously this method of specifying noise characteristics is inadequate and misleading. It gives no indication at all as to the *kind* of noise measured. Hiss is more annoying than hum because it is more apparent at the same relative level.



What is weighted noise?

Weighting curves simulate the non-linearity of human hearing (Fig. 2). When they are used as filters in signal-to-noise measurements, they make the resultant specifications more credible and meaningful. Comparisons based on weighted noise figures are therefore more valid.



Using the previous example of recorders A and B, we now send the overall noise through the weighting filter and then measure the remaining

noise. You can see from Fig. 3 that recorder A measures 62 dB, while recorder B measures 65 dB referenced to 3% distortion. Now this comparison more accurately corresponds to what the listener actually hears and the subjective annoyance of the noise.

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Because you can gain an additional 9-10 dB reduction in noise with the B-type Dolby system. And that works out to be 74 dB on the

A-2300 SD. We took something already quite good, and made it better.

The advantages of integral Dolby.

With an external Dolby unit, irregularities in a tape recorder's frequency response characteristics will be magnified during the signal processing, generally by a factor of two. When the Dolby circuits are an integral part of the recorder, however, the record and playback electronics can be optimized for the encode/decode

processing. In addition, with integral Dolby you don't have to pay for an extra power supply, cabinetry and the like.

Some popular misconceptions.

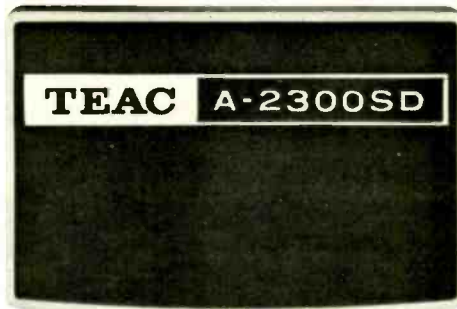
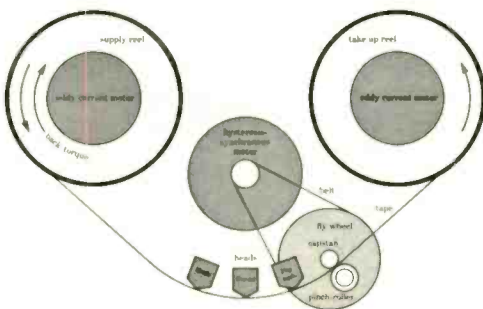


There's no doubt that Dolby is an effective means of reducing noise, however the system will not eliminate any noise present on the original signal source. That noise would go through the encode/decode processing along with the signal.

Then there's the feeling that Dolby reduces high end response in the process of reducing hiss. Highs are reduced during decoding, but in exact proportion to the extent they were boosted during encoding — back to the level they were on the original music. Finally, since the Dolby system is level sensitive — low level signals are affected more severely than high level signals — it should be emphasized that very high level signals are virtually unaffected by Dolby.

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The Dolby/FM switch activates the new 25 micro-second de-emphasis curve for decoding Dolbyized broadcast material. In addition, there's an FM copy switch on the back of the unit so you can record the broadcast encoded while monitoring the program decoded for a more accurate listening reference. With the A-2300 SD you can decode any external Dolby source. And the external calibration controls, including a built-in tone generator, help you derive optimum benefits of the Dolby system through accurate level settings.



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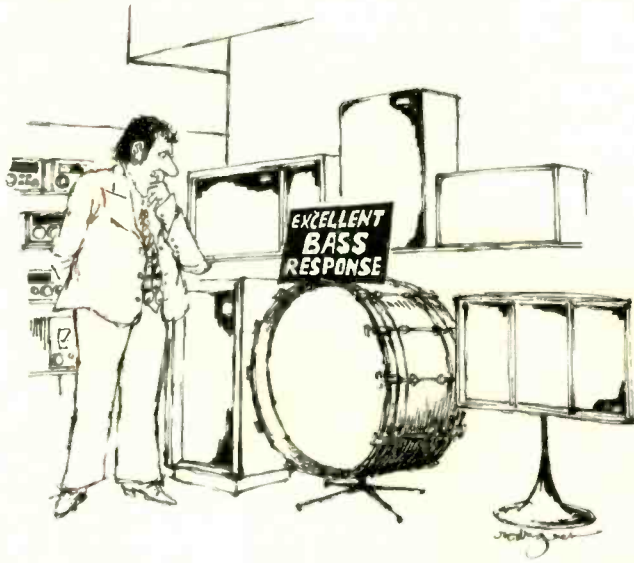
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RODRIGUES





ON SPEAKERS



IF there is a new musical messiah coming, he, she, or it is now well overdue, and if you happen to be a member of any of the music-industry congregations centered upon Los Angeles, San Francisco, or New York, the anxiety generated by the waiting is by now almost unbearably intense. Truth to tell, rock has been creatively stagnant—at least relative to the appearance within the medium of another starry visitation such as Elvis Presley or the Beatles—for at least five years, and during most of that time many people have been wondering just when the new musical savior will

Souther-Hillman-Furay Band, and the splintered efforts of the CSN&Y individuals. Another example is the Eagles, a quartet which is at once simply another regrouping of spare parts and something very special: it draws its inspiration quite candidly from the examples of the Byrds, Buffalo Springfield, the Beach Boys, and the Beatles, but it adds to it a curious and completely original dimension of technical perfection.

In its first incarnation, the Eagles consisted of Glenn Frey, Bernie Leadon, Randy Meisner, and Don Henley, and it might be well to see just who *they* were.

Anyway, the four fledgling Eagles eventually fluttered separately to Los Angeles, where they landed by splendid accident in the middle of a clique that was fast becoming rock's new dynasty—Messina, Furay, Jackson Browne, and Linda Ronstadt (who is, of course, the former lead singer of a lesser farm-club group, the Stone Poneys). First individually and later collectively, the Eagles-to-be met one another through Linda and ultimately became her back-up group.

In 1972 the quartet became officially the Eagles (choosing the name after an at least superficial study of the religion of the Hopi Indians, who revere the eagle as the most sacred of animals), signing on with David Geffen (then an artists' manager as well as the head of Asylum Records), who was as deeply involved in the rebirth of certain ex-Beach/Byrds/Buffalo/Beatles members as they themselves were.

Geffen sent the Eagles off to England to record under producer Glyn Johns, whose previous clients had included the Rolling Stones, Eric Clapton, Traffic, and the Who. The result was the album "Eagles," Asylum SD-5054. The album produced a hit single, *Take It Easy*, and was followed in mid-1973 by "Desperado" (SD-5068) and its single, *Tequila Sunrise*, the instrument with which the group proved itself the most successful of the incest groups. So back they went to England in late 1973 to record their third album, "On the Border" (and, incidentally, to sign on slide guitarist Don Felder as Eagle No. 5). The single *Already Gone* was a sizable hit from that session, as has been, more recently, the ballad *Best of My Love*.

Glenn Frey gives credit for all this to Glyn Johns: "He's really what made us different and set us apart. It would have been easy for us to stay in L.A. and record, but we didn't. First, Glyn's an English producer, and he feels more comfortable technically in the studios over there. But the most important thing is that by going to England we just avoided a lot of distractions. We were able to divorce ourselves from all our usual hang-outs." (The third album was completed in Los Angeles, however, with producer Bill Szymczk at the helm, the "distractions" having proved less distracting, perhaps, with success. Szymczyk is also the producer of the fourth album, "One of These Nights," which is reviewed in this issue.)

"We're a combination of all kinds of things," says Frey. "We know that we're really a product of the Byrds, the Buffalo Springfield, and others, and that's not necessarily a distinctive thing these days. But by taking *our* conception of those influences to England and giving it to Glyn Johns, it got refined and became more clear-cut."

"Desperado," a concept album, tried to draw a few romantic parallels between

THE EAGLES

"...what we want to do is... upgrade the lyrics and the appeal of country music."

By Al Parachini

appear, who he will be, and, particularly, what he will be like. But watched pots do not boil, and it is conceivable that simply because so many people have been sitting around impatiently waiting for it, the second (or third) coming has been indefinitely postponed.

In the meantime, rock has been perpetuating itself through what can only be described as incest. It has become so common for so-called "new" groups to be formed merely by reshuffling the members of older ones that the music industry (on this level at least!) is starting to resemble professional sports, in which players are shifted from team to team by trade, sale, or waiver.

Rock today can be said to be under the domination of third-generation groups that were themselves formed from secondary reorganizations. The Buffalo Springfield, for example, begat portions of Poco and of Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young. These secondary groups, in turn, produced Loggins and Messina, the

Meisner met Richie Furay and Jim Messina in Nebraska just before the Buffalo Springfield broke up, then joined them professionally in the early days of second-generation Poco. Leadon emerged professionally in San Diego playing with Dillard and Clark, a group dominated by ex-Byrds, then continued this development with the Flying Burrito Brothers, another part of the Byrds legacy. Henley, a native of Texas, met Kenny Rogers on a First Edition tour and ultimately migrated, under Rogers' influence, to Los Angeles, where he played with a group called Shiloh, which evolved somewhat and became the late Manassas, the back-up group for Steve Stills (of CSN&Y, of course, if you are still with me). Frey, the *least* incestuous of the Eagles, sprang almost miraculously out of Detroit, where he had been profoundly influenced by Bob Segar, whose various bands have been very influential on other professionals even though they have not had much effect on the public.

the images of the Western outlaw and the rock-and-roll musician. It was a calculated risk, but the group elected not to play it safe: "We *could* have done another album just like the first one, then put a picture on the cover of all of us sitting in a field with our shirts off," said Frey.

Geffen booked Eagles conservatively, putting them on the road with Procol Harum and Jethro Tull, then getting them top-bill concerts of their own. By the summer of 1973 talk about Eagles was in terms usually reserved for only the most successful of groups, and their flight since has been sustained and

audiences—except when some brief observation skitters across Glenn Frey's mind and machine-guns out his mouth. There was a theatrical experiment of sorts in the spring of 1973, when the group performed the songs from "Desperado" in front of a Western-style backdrop in Santa Monica and beefed up their sound with a modest string section. It was effective, probably because it was understated.

"As far as we're concerned," says Frey, "the bottom line is the songs. We work a little bit on stage personality, but it's not our main concern. I think we

for example, that he once told a University of California audience, "It's about time you hippies took country music away from the straight people." It's the kind of thing you don't want to say too loudly or too publicly, since the traditionally conservative country crowd don't take kindly to sentiments that ring so with the political rhetoric of the long-haired left.

"If I had it to do over again, I wouldn't put it quite that way," says Frey. "I don't really want to take country music away from them for good—just for a little while, and then give it back after

Asylum Records



*The Eagles
left to right:
Bernie Leadon,
Glenn Frey,
Don Henley,
Randy Meisner,
Don Felder*

strong—though not without the problems success itself brings.

"Some days success is a mind boggle; other days I can put it in perspective," says Henley, who speaks with a soft Texas drawl and is noticeably calmer than Frey and Leadon, both of whom sizzle with nervous energy. "But sometimes it even gets too much for me," complains Frey. "The elements of the business seem to control you. When you have hit records, people tend to assume you're rolling in money and want for very little. I suppose, though, that the idea of 'taking it easy,' which really came across in that song [written by Frey and Jackson Browne], is that you shouldn't get too big too fast."

Perhaps because it is already a unique amalgam of country and rock musical roots, Eagles has not presented itself as a "personality" group in the extra-musical areas of costuming, staging, and the like. The group prefers jeans and T-shirts on stage, and they say very little to their

have a strong image—strong in terms of consistency and in terms of ourselves. If you can retain the music as your bottom line, the audience itself will create your aura and your image."

It's a simple philosophy as Frey expounds it: he wants Eagles to be remembered for its music, and he wants to make a reputation for himself as a songwriter. "Beyond that, I don't really care. We're concerned with the state of the art [of songwriting], and we don't feel like compromising the music for wider public acceptance.

"Country music today is an insult to the intelligence of the average redneck blue-collar worker," continues Frey, to the accompaniment of encouraging nods from the rest of the band. "There are some righteous pickers in Nashville who don't like the way things are going, but they can't change it on their own. Everybody has to help."

Frey occasionally gets carried away with his missionary zeal, regretting now,

some of us young people have had a chance to have some influence. We've been walking the line, not making any waves: what we want to do, which is upgrade the lyrics and the appeal of country music, we have to lay on them a little at a time."

IF the Eagles last, as they seem likely to, they should have lots of opportunity to get a little of this work done. And at least some observers, tired of the messiah watch, have begun to wonder whether the next development in popular music hasn't already occurred. Rock's new forms have in the past been the result, if not of immaculate conception, at least of some form of spontaneous creation. The Eagles' success argues strongly that all that may now be over, that the age of miracles has given way to the age of evolution. That's a net loss in the excitement department, of course, but at least we know the system works.

MUSICAL HONORS

It is hard, in a self-consciously democratic country such as ours, to find meaningful ways of recognizing conspicuous individual achievement in the various areas of human endeavor. We do not have, say, a Queen's Honors List, but we do have the mechanism of the Honorary

Doctorate, plus various other little shifts that cunningly outwit our egalitarian reflexes. Custom—perhaps even instinct—dictates that these ceremonies take place in early summer, and here is a representative sample from this year's awards in the field of music. —Ed.



Thelma Sparks/Duke

At Duke University in Durham, North Carolina, it's an honorary Doctorate in Humane Letters for well-loved contralto Marian Anderson, shown here with the university's president Terry Sanford.



Audio-Visual Center/Brooklyn College

Awarded the same degree at Brooklyn College was composer Aaron Copland, here with President John W. Kneller, Provost Donald R. Reich, and Dean Robert Hickok of the School of Performing Arts.



Cecilia Photographers

Some are too young for doctorates, but give them a little time. Above is fourteen-year-old Margaret Ann Griebing accepting one of Broadcast Music Incorporated's young-composer awards from BMI president Edward M. Cramer and the congratulations of composer William Schuman, permanent chairman of the judging panel. Right (and old enough) is the imperishable Lionel Hampton (he and his big band currently ornament Bette Midler's Broadway show *Clams on the Halfshell*), in academic garb to accept an honorary Doctor of Music degree from Xavier University of Louisiana, New Orleans, shown chatting with university president Dr. Norman C. Fraucis.



Xavier University



Brand-new Doctor of Music Mabel Mercer (second from left, of course) poses after the commencement ceremonies at Boston's Berklee College of Music with, left to right, composers Alec Wilder and Cy Coleman, Berklee's president Lawrence Berk, jazz pianist Marian McPartland, music publisher (and commencement speaker) Leonard Feist, Mrs. Lawrence Berk, and Berklee College's vice-president, Lee Eliot Berk.

Columbia University/Public Information



Pianist Artur Schnabel, eighty-eight, Doctor of Music, Honoris Causa, addresses the commencement gathering at Columbia University in May shortly before signing a new five-year contract with RCA.

Martha Storer



French ambassador Jacques Kosciesko-Morizet (at mike) congratulates New York City Ballet's George Balanchine on receipt of the Order of the Legion of Honor at the "Hommage à Ravel" Festival.

Judith M. Olansen



William Beck



Pulitzer prizewinner in music for 1975, for his song cycle *From the Diary of Virginia Woolf*, is Dominick Argento (left). The work was premiered by mezzo Janet Baker with the Minnesota Orchestra last January in Minneapolis. And was ever an award so justly given or so aptly titled as the Doctor of Fine Arts degree awarded to the guitarist Andrés Segovia by the North Carolina School of the Arts? Above, right, Dr. Segovia accepts the congratulations of Dr. James H. Semans, who is chairman of the school's board of trustees.

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Massenet's *La Navarraise*: Designed Not to Charm But to Clobber

JULES MASSENET's brief two-act opera *La Navarraise* was produced in London on June 20, 1894, following closely upon the Paris première of his more celebrated *Thaïs* on March 16. But what a difference those three months made! *Thaïs*, sentimental, perfumed, and sensuous, continued the pattern Massenet had so successfully exploited in his

Hérodiade (1881), *Manon* (1884), and *Werther* (1892), while *La Navarraise*, brief, tragic, almost brutal, was clearly a Gallic response to the challenge of *verismo*. Its concentrated action presents a passionate story: a girl commits murder to get her man, but the desperate act proves futile—her lover dies and she loses her mind. All this happens in something like forty minutes, and it may fairly be said that, unlike previous Massenet operas, *La Navarraise* was designed not to charm its audiences but to clobber them.

Contemporary criticism, apparently unable to accept such atypical subject matter from the hand of Massenet, made rather too much of the opera's al-

leged "noisiness," its trumpet calls, gun shots, ringing bells, and the like. Since *La Navarraise* is a wartime story (one of nineteenth-century Spain's numerous civil wars), these effects are hardly overdone, being instead quite logical tools for a composer bent on embracing the new operatic realism. And, too, Massenet accomplished skillfully what he set out to do: *La Navarraise* is not, perhaps, a masterpiece, but simple though it is, it is yet powerfully effective, most particularly in its *verismo* aspect: brief moments of tenderness set in a whirling sea of passion, tragedy, and human stupidity.

Columbia has scored a coup with the first complete recording of this opera. The music is paced very effectively by

A contemporary sketch of the sack of Cuenca by Carlist forces under Don Alfonso on July 14, 1874



Culver Pictures



Columbia Records

La Navarraise: Lucia Popp

conductor Antonio de Almeida: there is evident tension, but no effect-seeking vulgarity. The principal roles have not, I think, been ideally cast, but all the singers are good and they do their professional best nonetheless. The role of Anita, the Navarraise of the title, calls for a voice more robustly dramatic than that of Lucia Popp, for example (Emma Calvé created the role in London, Paris, and New York; Geraldine Farrar interpreted it in a Met revival of 1921). But though much of the music lies below Miss Popp's most effective range, she manages to cope with its dramatic requirements admirably. Again, tenor Alain Vanzo is fine in the love scene, but his part, too, seems to demand a sturdier, more ringing sound. The same is true of the role of the Spanish general Garrido: Pol Plançon and Léon Rothier were its interpreters at the old Met—true basses both—but Vicente Sardinero, an able light baritone, here sounds a bit uncomfortable with the tessitura at times. Gérard Souzay and Michel Sénéchal both contribute fine, idiomatic characterizations, and the recording's technical qualities—excellent sound and vivid theatrical presence—are distinct production values. All in all, a worthy, useful addition to the opera catalog.

Lawrence W. Haward observes in the 1954 fifth edition of *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians* that Massenet, "with all his skill as a composer . . . was strictly confined by a temperament of narrow range, so that to have heard 'Manon' is to have heard the whole of him." (Mr. Haward himself, evidently, had not heard "the whole" of Massenet: *La Navarraise* is not even listed in his

article.) It is perhaps impossible from this distance to discover whether such a statement is hurried, ill-informed, or simply prejudiced on the part of its author, but it is at the very least insulting to the French (and other) audiences who listened to Massenet works with pleasure both before and after 1884. Such Olympian disdain perpetuated in standard reference works is intellectual mischief, closing doors too quickly, peremptorily, and unfairly on a posterity that has a right to its own judgments.

It is heartening, therefore, to find that modern tastes—or perhaps even mere curiosity—are opening at least this door again. There is certainly more to Massenet than *Manon*, and the current revival of interest in some of his neglected works will enable modern audiences to reach their own conclusions as to just how *much* more. These manifestations include, for the record, last year's *Thérèse* from London, this *Navarraise* (and another to come soon from RCA), the *Esclarmonde* produced last year in San Francisco (it is also scheduled for recording by London soon), the recent RCA *Thaïs*, and another to come in time from Angel—it will be based on a 1976 production to be mounted for Beverly Sills and Sherrill Milnes first in San Francisco and later at the Met.

George Jellinek

MASSENET: *La Navarraise*. Lucia Popp (soprano), Anita: Alain Vanzo (tenor), Araquil: Gérard Souzay (baritone), Remigio: Michel Sénéchal (tenor), Ramon: Vicente Sardinero (baritone), Garrido: Claude Meloni (baritone), Bustamante. Ambrosian Opera Chorus: London Symphony Orchestra, Antonio de Almeida cond. COLUMBIA M-33506 \$6.98.

The Alban Berg Quartet Plays Haydn with Traditional Warmth, Contemporary Crispness

It may seem odd for Haydn quartets to be performed by an ensemble bearing the name of Alban Berg, but the European tradition of naming such performing groups for composers (for example, the Sibelius Quartet in Finland, the Dvořák, Smetana, Janáček, and Novák quartets in Prague, the U.S.S.R.'s Beethoven and Borodin quartets) has seldom been a delimiting factor in terms of repertoire. What the youngish members of the Alban Berg Quartet did commit themselves to do when they banded together in Vienna was to include a work of Berg, Schoenberg, Webern, or a con-

temporary composer in every one of their programs.

Significantly, before making their public debut as a unit in 1970, violinists Günter Pichler (a former Vienna Philharmonic concertmaster) and Klaus Maetzl, violist Hatto Beyerle, and cellist Valentin Erben spent a year in the United States studying with the La Salle Quartet, the Cincinnati-based group so admired for its authoritative interpretations of the works of both Viennese schools. This combination of Viennese and American influences has been a happy one, to judge from the Berg Quartet's new Telefunken disc of Haydn's *Horseman* and *Emperor* Quartets. Neither work has been more effectively set forth in a recording known to me, and most certainly not in any other available at present.

The playing here is as crisp and clean as one would expect from specialists in contemporary material, yet free of the "antiseptic" quality such specialists often display. At the same time it is filled with the warmth and affection one associates with the most revered interpreters of the Viennese classics, yet never veers in the direction of sentimentality. Clearly the Alban Berg Quartet has managed to soak up tradition in a productively selective way, learning from it without being bound by it.

All the tempos in the *Emperor* are on the brisk side, and the work benefits enormously, especially in the two inner movements; the variations have real dignity here, and the often languid-sounding Menuetto springs to life with a freshness that can still be astonishing even in Haydn. The finale may seem a shade *too* brisk, but in the context of the whole it is a convincingly joyous conclusion. The realization of the *Horseman* is sheer perfection, combining the gutsy vigor of the Griller version with the suave polish of the Fine Arts and adding a large element of affectionate understanding in the glorious slow movement such as has barely been hinted at since the Budapest Quartet's short-lived recording of some thirty years ago. Here the outer movements are conventionally paced, their strength lying in the rock-firm rhythm and eloquent phrasing: this performance alone would make the disc indispensable.

Telefunken has provided first-rate sonics and has used a gatefold container in order to provide elaborate notes in three languages; unfortunately, the English translation of Ludwig Finscher's German original is inept, but this is the only blemish on a really superb production, a major addition to the swelling Haydn discography. Richard Freed

HAYDN: *String Quartet in G Minor, Op. 74, No. 3* ("The Horseman"); *String Quartet in C Major, Op. 76, No. 3* ("The Emperor"). Alban Berg Quartet. TELEFUNKEN SAT 22550 \$6.98.



CLARK TERRY: consistently dy-no-mite!

ALBAN BERG QUARTET: Klaus Maetzi, Hatto Beyerle, Günter Pichler, and Valentin Erben



Clark Terry: Superb Big-Band Playing by a Somewhat Neglected Master

CLARK TERRY is one of the most reliable and (therefore?) one of the busiest players in jazz. He also happens to be a man of extraordinary talent and, as evidenced in his new Vanguard album, great wit. He was a member of the *Tonight Show* band for many years, but although he had a great deal more to say than most of the guests on that show, neither camera nor microphone ever gave us more than a hint of his presence. Now, a little late, we get a chance to hear some of what we missed. Recorded during a concert at the Wichita Jazz Festival in April of last year, the album faithfully reproduces over forty-three minutes of a superb big band playing fine arrangements by such talents as Phil Woods, Jimmy Heath, and Ernie Wilkins, the whole neatly and humorously MC'ed by Terry, complete with hilarious impersonations of . . . Lawrence Welk and Muhammed Ali.

Terry's version of *Mumbles* here, his big hit of several years ago, is different from any rendition I have heard him do and funnier by far than any number of so-called comedy records. Add to this a string of memorable solos and you have one of the finest albums released so far in this year 1975. I won't single out any track; I couldn't—the album is consistently *dy-no-mite!* *Chris Albertson*

CLARK TERRY: *Clark Terry's Big B-a-d Band Live.* Clark Terry (trumpet, flugelhorn, vocal); Jimmy Nottingham and Richard Williams (trumpets); Jimmy Heath, Ernie Wilkins, Phil Woods, and Charles Davis (reeds); Duke Jordan (piano); Wilbur Little (bass); orchestra. *Una Mas; Nefertiti; Take the "A" Train; Randi; Mumbles; Sheba; Cold Tater Stomp.* VANGUARD VSD 79355 \$6.98.

A Thoughtful Report From the Home Front By Investigator Carly Simon

CARLY SIMON's new album "Playing Possum" for Elektra is an intelligent, mind-warming romp and an almost continuous musical joy. The candid cover photograph of Carly has caught her in an abbreviated chemise in a way

that makes her look like a sexy grasshopper, all long white arms and longer legs, proving that her various parts are as nicely matched as the songs in the album are: she has gotten her head together, in 1975 terms, better than any other young female composer-performer around.

The sexual revolution? Put such pedestrian back-numbers out of your mind. Carly has clearly moved beyond all that. Listen to her in *Look Me in the Eyes*: "It's your heat that makes me warm/ Makes me climb on you like a tree/ And I don't need no fancy dancing/ When you bend over me." Hm. Quite frank, as we used to say, but also as clear-eyed, healthily straightforward, and up-to-the-minute as can be for an honest woman dealing with these matters today.

Slightly more ambivalent is her approach to the Lib game in *Slave*: I worship your opinions/ I imitate your ways/ I try to make you grace me/ With a word of praise/ However much I tell myself/ That I'm strong and free and brave/ I'm just another woman/ Raised to be a slave." "Raised" is the key word, of course, but the song is a statement of fact, how things are, and not a cry of impotent rage. The point is that it's *all* role playing; we cannot choose *no* role, but we can choose among the number available, even the one called the path of least resistance. And choice is not without its dangers too, according to Carly (and Jacob Brackman) in *Attitude Dancing*— "Find a role you like/ Capture it and freeze/ Then turn it around/ A hundred and eighty degrees"—for even choosing can become a habit, a role, condemning the player to a life of confused, directionless (even though self-manipulated) jostling. The best song here, however, is the title song, *Playing Possum*. It's about whatever happened to The Revolution, it echoes with little whispers of frustrated cultural possibilities, perhaps sinister, perhaps pathetic, and it will make you think.

Production is by Richard Perry, and it is superb—as well it ought to be for an album that at least temporarily sums up a number of current social conundrums better than might any learned dissertation by one of the paper pundits of the media. And anyway, no one of them sings as well as Carly Simon Taylor.

Peter Reilly

CARLY SIMON: *Playing Possum*. Carly Simon (vocals); other musicians. *After the Storm*; *Live Out in the Street*; *Look Me in the Eyes*; *More and More*; *Slave*; *Attitude Dancing*; *Sons of Summer*; *Waterfall*; *Are You Ticklish*; *Playing Possum*. ELEKTRA 7E-1033 \$6.98. Ⓟ ET8-1033 \$7.98. © TC5-1033 \$7.98.

Carly Simon right side up;
for the camera-eye view, rotate
90 degrees counterclockwise.

Photo by Euseyehlan Works





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POPULAR DISCS AND TAPES

Reviewed by CHRIS ALBERTSON • NOEL COPPAGE • PAUL KRESH • PETER REILLY • JOEL VANCE

AMERICA: *Hearts*. America (vocals and instrumentals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Midnight; Bell Tree; Old Virginia; People in the Valley; Sister Golden Hair; Tomorrow;* and six others. WARNER BROS. BS 2852 \$6.98. Ⓟ M8 2852 \$7.98, Ⓢ M5 2852 \$7.98. Ⓛ L9B 2852 \$8.98.

Performance: **Excellent**
Recording: **Excellent**

I began listening to this album with no great expectations, but by the third song the excellence of the arrangements and production was so evident—and so comforting—that the rest of the disc moved easily and pleasantly. America still dispenses tuneful, if basically bland, pop-oriented pastiches of Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young, but let's face it: as pabulum goes, it's remarkably well prepared.

The man responsible for the arrangements and production of "Hearts" is George Martin, and it's high time he got some kind of award. Before he became associated with the Beatles (and it is fair to say that Martin's skills, which are diplomatic as well as musical, helped the Beatles immensely). Martin produced the recordings of the Goons, featuring Peter Sellers, who were the Monty Python of the Fifties. Whether dealing with lunatic comedy, the farthest reaches of rock, or the very tuneful and straight-ahead pleasantries of America, Martin has always brought to his productions taste combined with an understanding of both what performers *want* to do and what they are *capable* of doing. He is a very accomplished gentleman, is Mr. Martin, and without

him the history of recent pop music would have fewer great moments. *J.V.*

HOYT AXTON: *Southbound*. Hoyt Axton (vocals, guitar); Jerry Scheff (bass); Mike Botts (drums); John Hartford (fiddle); Doug Dillard (banjo); Linda Ronstadt (backing vocals); other musicians. *I Love to Sing; Southbound; Lion in the Winter; Blind Fiddler; Pride of Man; Nashville; Whiskey;* and six others. A & M SP-4510 \$6.98.

Performance: **Pleasin'**
Recording: **Very good**

If you're not familiar with Hoyt Axton, try to imagine Mac Davis with a lot more talent and a lot more taste, if that isn't too much of a strain. Maybe it would help to remember that Hoyt's mama wrote *Heartbreak Hotel*. He turned out interesting. His duet with Linda Ronstadt, *Lion in the Winter*, quickly became a staple on country music stations, raising *their* quality average by several points. Axton has a deep-voiced Southern kind of sentimentality, which helps him make *Greensleeves* enmeshed with *House of the Rising Sun* sound more like real music than most people could nowadays, but which also inspires him to overdo the between-lines groaning in *Blind Fiddler*, which needs all the understatement it can get. Then there are some worthless songs included, such as *No No Song*, which he helped write and should have left in the fumble hands of people like Ringo Starr. But *Pride of Man* and *Speed Trap (Out of State Cars)* and such make up for the lapses. I know how it must sound, asking you to pay attention to yet another roughneck poet, but I think this one's for real. *N.C.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

JEFF BECK: *Blow by Blow*. Jeff Beck (guitar); Max Middleton (keyboards); Phil Chen (bass); Richard Bailey (drums). *You Know What I Mean; She's a Woman; Constipated Duck; AIR Blower; Scatterbrain;* and four others. Epic PE 33409 \$6.98. Ⓟ PEA 33409 \$7.98, Ⓢ PET 33409 \$7.98.

Performance: **Outstanding**
Recording: **Excellent**

I am not very familiar with Jeff Beck's career

beyond the basics: former lead guitarist for the Yardbirds, considered one of the three most important guitarists in rock (Clapton and Hendrix are the others), inventor of some of the dodgier possibilities of the electric instrument (such as deliberate feedback), and general *enfant terrible*. But, after listening to "Blow by Blow"—produced, with his customary infallible taste and discretion, by George Martin—I can only say that Mr. Beck ought to drop all pretense of being a rocker, since he is obviously too talented to be confined in that category.

A guitarist can easily fiddle with the dials on his electric instrument and come up with a lot of claptrap, but Jeff Beck is far from being satisfied with making a racket. He actually has the taste and sense to (1) choose tunes that have real structure to them, (2) play variations that allow for creativity but do not violate the boundaries of the tune, and (3) make these variations brilliant. All this from a *rock* guitarist? I wouldn't have believed it, but here it is.

Clapton, Hendrix, and the late Duane Allman expanded the technical possibilities of their instruments, as did Beck. But it seems that only Beck has gone beyond mere technique, however accomplished, to what the point of playing any instrument is: the making of music. "Blow by Blow" might just turn out to be the album of the year. *J.V.*

CHER: *Stars*. Cher (vocals); orchestra. *Mr. Soul; These Days; Bell Bottom Blues; Love Enough; Just This One Time;* and six others. WARNER BROS. BS 2850 \$6.98, Ⓟ M 82850 \$7.98, Ⓢ M 52850 \$7.98.

Performance: **Cher Bared!**
Recording: **Good**

For sure, Cher's personal life is a hell of a lot more interesting than her singing. "Sonny Seems To Be Carrying Torch!" "Cher Leaves Dave Geffen For Greg Allman!!" "Cher Testifies About Wild Hollywood Drug Party!!!" "Cher's Father Sues Her For Libel!!!" And so on.

Well, if you feel that the excitement of following her glamour-drenched life is getting too much for you, try her new album; it'll calm you down in a big hurry. She's sorta-inta-deeper-material-y-know, like Janis Ian's

Explanation of symbols:

- Ⓡ = reel-to-reel stereo tape
- Ⓟ = eight-track stereo cartridge
- Ⓢ = stereo cassette
- Ⓛ = quadraphonic disc
- Ⓡ = reel-to-reel quadraphonic tape
- Ⓟ = eight-track quadraphonic tape
- Ⓢ = quadraphonic cassette

Monophonic recordings are indicated by the symbol Ⓜ

The first listing is the one reviewed; other formats, if available, follow it.

Stars and Jimmy Cliff's *The Harder They Come*, and her whole attitude is more-on-the-serious-sida-Cher-y'know. But as she bares her newly found soulful self in track after track, even going so far as to tackle Jimmy Webb's *Just This One Time*, one cannot but notice that Cher doesn't sound any different here—which is to say, she sounds pleasant enough, but so unremarkable that she might be one of a dozen other singers. Her talent still consists of her startling looks, her inbred chic, her flair for costume, and a quickly developing skill at sketch comedy, all of it firmly visual. On records she continues as the Invisible Woman—the cover tells you who's singing, and I suppose her fans just mentally conjure up the rest. I wouldn't want to call her a no-talent as a singer. No siree, no more than I'd want to read that "Cher Has Jury In Tears In Slander Suit Against Reviewer!!" P.R.

CHICAGO: *Chicago VIII*. Chicago (vocals, instrumentals). *Anyway You Want; Harry Truman; Never Been in Love Before; Long Time No See; Ain't It Blue?; Old Days*; and five others. COLUMBIA PC 33100 \$6.98, © PCA 33100 \$7.98. © PCT 33100 \$7.98.

Performance: **Mediocre**
Recording: **Good**

The evolution of Chicago is probably about complete. It has gradually gotten away from the box-square self-consciousness of its "jazz-rock" sound—which has already been milked for its prestige value and serves only to date the group—and now it is casting about in several styles: one cut here is folkish, another uses the sighing-strings jazz-ballad approach, another is polite honky boogie, and so on. But Chicago is still one of the dullest outfits ever to waddle down the yellow brick road. Unfortunately, it is also extraordinarily successful, so its music has a consistent smugness about it which comes only when a band moves from simple self-confidence to a sense of its own infallibility.

This album includes not only the *de rigueur* wall-size color poster, but also a Chicago logo decal you can iron on to your T-shirt or face. Hats and horns! J.V.

JUDY COLLINS: *Judith*. Judy Collins (vocals, guitar, piano); David Spinozza, Steve Goodman (guitars); Eric Weissberg (steel guitar, dobro); Don Brook (harmonica); other musicians. *The Moon Is a Harsh Mistress; Angel Spread Your Wings; Houses; The Lovin' of the Game; Song for Duke; Send in the Clowns*; and six others. ELEKTRA 7E-1032 \$6.98, © ET8-1032 \$7.98, © TC5-1032 \$7.98.

Performance: **Yes (!) and no (!)**
Recording: **Very good**

Judy Collins can pull off a lot of unlikely capers because she's a good person, a good, honest, fine, brave person, and she has such wonderful big blue eyes besides. But she can't pull off the bizarre lunacy that attends the song selection on the second side of this disc. *Salt of the Earth, Brother Can You Spare a Dime*, and *I'll Be Seeing You* are ridiculous things for her to be singing in that earnest, straightforward-pretty way of hers. The first side, particularly the taste behind it, is really good, making it all the more puzzling. In the past, Collins has shown a tendency to let down about once per album, which anyone could endure as long as her eyes didn't turn brown, but she—or at least the album—stays

in a second-half slump this time. Her singing of Steve Goodman's *City of New Orleans* is all right, and the instrumentation, with Goodman himself in there playing one of the better acoustic guitars and Don Brook playing one of the better harmonicas, can't be faulted. But for some reason she lets Eric Weissberg, one of the better steel players, attempt to sing harmony. So much for that one. The really good stuff, on the other side, includes Jim Webb's *The Moon Is a Harsh Mistress*, Stephen Sondheim's *Send in the Clowns*, Collins' own *Houses*, and a great job on a less than great song, Pat Garvey's *The Lovin' of the Game*, with a non-singing Weissberg and Brook carrying the heavy work. I see by the slightly different front-and-back cover photos that Judy's eyes stayed blue. Somewhere in there the music turned brown. N.C.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

ROBERTA FLACK: *Feel Like Makin' Love*. Roberta Flack (vocals); orchestra. *Feelin' That Glow; I Wanted It Too; Early Ev'ry Midnite; Mr. Magic*; and five others. ATLANTIC SD 18131 \$6.98, © TP 18131 \$7.98, © CS 18131 \$7.98.

Performance: **Joyous**
Recording: **Excellent**

There's been a great deal said and written about Roberta Flack's fire and vitality and of

how superbly alive she is as an artist, but not really enough about the pure joy she can communicate. This fine new album has several tracks that are disappointing from the repertoire viewpoint, but Flack takes it all in stride, lazing along, gathering and strewing rosebuds as only she can, and freely and happily using her enormous natural gifts to bedeck even the average and the mediocre. She is able to bring the most quiescent material to brimming life and to add her own special hints of her pleasure in doing it. When she does encounter a really fine piece of writing, such as Stevie Wonder's *I Can See the Sun in Late December*, the combined effect of her lustrous technique and superior material is downright stunning. The production here is first-rate, with the good sense to stay clear of Miss Flack when she's doing her thing—which she does wonderfully well. P.R.

GEORGE GERSHWIN: *From Tin Pan Alley to Broadway*. George Gershwin, R. O. Erlenbach, Cliff Hess (piano rolls). *Honky Tonky; Arrah Go On I'm Gonna Go Back to Oregon; Chinese Blues; Story Book Ball; A Young Man's Fancy*; and fifteen others. MARK 56 RECORDS 680 two discs \$11.96.

Performance: **Panoramic poundalong**
Recording: **Good**

George Gershwin, as practically anyone who has been to the movies knows, went to work

JUDY COLLINS: such wonderful big blue eyes



Elektra Records

at the age of fifteen as a piano pounder on 28th Street in New York, which was where Tin Pan Alley is said to have been located, and made fifteen dollars a week. To supplement his income, he also started recording piano rolls, and the Mark 56 people have managed somehow to assemble twenty of these into a two-record set. It is not quite as fascinating as their earlier albums in which Gershwin rehearses scenes from *Porgy and Bess* and plays his own pieces, but it's interesting enough to hear the young Gershwin—sometimes with the help of another pianist—embellishing perfectly ghastly tunes with his own characteristic touches to make them sound better than they really were. Yet honky-tonk and banal the tunes remain until we get to the contributions of such as Jerome Kern and Irving Berlin, where his open admiration is reflected in his playing. He also clonks out one of his own first songs, *I Was So Young*, as well as his *Come to the Moon*, *Kickin' the Clouds Away*, *So Am I*, and *Sewanee*, which was a flop when introduced at the Capital Theatre in 1919 in a show called *Demitasse Revue*, but wowed the world when Al Jolson sang it later in *Sinbad* at the Winter Garden. When Gershwin plays his winning and sophisticated *That Certain Feeling*, we seem to be entering an era where the player piano at last was capable of reproducing some subtleties of fingering and dynamics, and the true Gershwin charm finally comes across. But by then the program is ending. P.K.

HOT TUNA: America's Choice. Jorma Kaukonen (vocals, guitar); Jack Casady (bass); Bob

Steeler (drums). *Sleep Song; Funky #7; Walkin' Blues; Invitation*; and four others. GRUNT BFL1-0820 \$6.98, © BFS1-0820 \$7.98, © BFK1-0820 \$7.98.

Performance: **Regular**
Recording: **Good**

Jorma Kaukonen is one of the musicians I regard highly enough to tout, in my quiet way: Jack Casady probably is the most spacey bass player I've heard; and I'll go along with whatever drummer they want to use. But still it seems every other Hot Tuna album is just routine. This is one of those, more blues-based rock of the Cream mode. It seems to me that Kaukonen, an amazing sound-effects man with the electric guitar, is limiting himself with this kind of straight-ahead part, which calls for a lot of loud chording that lousy pickers could do as well, together with solos that just can't approach the textures he achieves on the acoustic guitar. His singing keeps getting better, though, and the material really isn't bad. The cover is, as Hot Tuna covers always are, gaudy and not as funny as it was intended to be: this one supposedly represents a box of wash-day product. It is a fairly pleasant album (the drummer is crisp, which helps), with nothing really bad in it. But this is a group of talented musicians capable of something quite beyond fairly pleasant albums. N.C.

BEN E. KING: Supernatural. Ben E. King (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *Supernatural Thing (Parts I and II); Your Lovin' Ain't Good Enough; Drop My Heart Off;*

Extra-Extra; Imagination; and four others. ATLANTIC SD 18132 \$6.98.

Performance: **Smooth**
Recording: **Very good**

I delight in seeing justice done: I'm happy to know that Ben E. King, a valuable and experienced vocalist, has a comeback hit, *Supernatural Thing*. King has been out in the cold for some time—the wheel of fortune sometimes turneth exceeding slow—and he was in danger of disappearing altogether or being raised from the grave every few years to appear at oldies concerts. But now he is back and it's good to have him.

I only wish that the material in this album were worthy of King's talents. He is, after all, the man who first sang *Save the Last Dance for Me* and *Stand By Me*. Those songs had some melody or sentimental hokum to them, which gave King a chance to show what he could do—a little embellishment here, a little caution there—in a delicious display of a knowledgeable singer's technique.

But the material here is 1975 mechanical soul music, two-chord, half-a-lyric stuff in which a grunt or a gasp or a "heh, baby" is given the same weight as "Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?" King tosses off these stillborn songs like a short beer. Oh, what he could do with a good song! Won't someone please give him one? J.V.

MANHATTAN TRANSFER. Manhattan Transfer (vocals and instrumentals). *Operator; Candy; Gloria; Blue Champagne; Java Jive; Heart's Desire*; and six others. ATLANTIC SD 18133 \$6.98, © TP 18133 \$7.98, © CS 18133 \$7.98.

Performance: **Good**
Recording: **Good**

This is a silky salon job that will probably be most appreciated by the "in" group in pop social circles. Aaron Russo is Bette Midler's manager, which just might have given him a little clout around Atlantic, since he also manages Manhattan Transfer and one hand does, even in the pristine world of pop music, tend to lave the other. The album is produced (very well, incidentally) by Ahmet Ertegun, who isn't precisely chopped liver over at Atlantic; he founded the label some years ago in order to make records that he and his friends would enjoy listening to. The album itself is a clever rehash and remembrance of the *temps perdu* of the big-band sound of the late Thirties. Michael Brecker's tenor sax solo in *Operator* is very fine indeed, as is the guitar work of Ira Newborn in *Java Jive*, but Manhattan Transfer's vocal "stylings," as they used to say, though good enough, are hardly invigorating. Still, as I was saying to Elton the other day, it's a perfect little gift for Mick and Bianca to play when they're flying down to Rio in their jet and ennui threatens. P.R.

JOHN MAYALL: New Year, New Band, New Company. John Mayall (vocals, harmonica); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Sitting on the Outside; Can't Get Home; Step in the Sun; To Match the Wind; Sweet Scorpio; Driving On*; and four others. ABC/BLUE THUMB BTSD-6019 \$6.98, © 8307-6019H \$7.95, © 5307-6019H \$7.95.

Performance: **Okay**
Recording: **Very good**

There are eight people in John Mayall's new band. It does not take eight people to play

MANHATTAN TRANSFER: a perfect little gift for Mick and Bianca



Atlantic Records

watered-down white blues based on watered-down black blues based on the post-1945 urban blues style. But they play it anyway. Thank you very much, and good night. J.V.

KEITH MOON: *Two Sides of the Moon*. Keith Moon (vocals, drums); instrumental accompaniment. *Crazy Like a Fox*; *Solid Gold*; *Don't Worry Baby*; *One Night Stand*; *Teenage Idol*; *Back Door Sally*; and four others. MCA/TRACK 2136 \$6.98, © MCAT 2136 \$7.98.

Performance: **Poor**
Recording: **Okay**

Keith Moon is the Who's great drummer. John Entwistle, the bassist for the group, records very entertaining and delightfully vicious tunes on his own solo albums. Entwistle is vulgar sometimes, but that is all right, since he has wit. Mr. Moon, however, does not. He is merely vulgar. And his solo album—a mediocre imitation of an Entwistle album—is pointless. J.V.

ELLIOTT MURPHY: *Lost Generation*. Elliott Murphy (vocals, guitar, harmonica, piano); instrumental accompaniment. *Hollywood*; *A Touch of Mercy*; *History*; *When You Ride*; *Bittersweet*; and five others. RCA APL1-0916 \$6.98, © APS1-0916 \$7.98, © APK1-0916 \$7.98.

Performance: **Competitive**
Recording: **Very good**

Elliott Murphy has the kind of gimmicky act record companies are always willing to spend money promoting; that is, it's a composite of familiar, safe-looking gimmicks—a little Dylan, a little Bowie, a little Springsteen, some nostalgia to make it all personal. Scared people who advance in corporate politics understand these things, having heard them enough times in the last decade, thanks to their kids. Murphy also has a right to make a living as an entertainer, as he can carry a tune, write a tune, and handle the language better than some. He's a competent hack, that's what he is, and don't get all riled up thinking "hack" is something nasty. The difference between the competent ones and the incompetent ones is more important than who is or isn't one, and we've suffered many incompetent ones promoted more extravagantly. Murphy just doesn't have untainted credibility on the subjects he discusses, and he doesn't have much to offer in the way of unusual performing skills either. The vocals here are hidden in or obscured by the instrumentals in several selections, even though the words are supposed to be the thing, but if they brought up the vocals, the thinness of Murphy's singing would be a problem. This album isn't quite as tuneful as his previous one, but that's hardly a major consideration. It's simply not all that important, and at the same time it is well enough crafted to do no damage. N.C.

PASADENA ROOF ORCHESTRA. Pasadena Roof Orchestra (instrumentals); John "Pazz" Parry (vocals). *Paddlin' Madelin' Home*; *Love in Bloom*; *Nagasaki*; *Muddy Water*; and nine others. ISLAND ILPS-9324 \$6.98, © Y81-9324 \$7.98.

Performance: **Contrived**
Recording: **Good**

As if the British weren't already mired down enough in the past, they still keep looking back into the distorting mirror of the bygone

The country-rock vein: already played out?



The Proficient Eagles

As far as I'm concerned, country-rock has proved to be a total dead end. When the fusion really worked, as it did in the dazzling surface textures of certain tracks by the Lovin' Spoonful, Moby Grape, the Youngbloods, the Byrds, the Allman Brothers in their *Blue Sky* moments, or even the roughhewn (and slightly mad) best work of the Burrito Brothers and the late Gram Parsons, it was one of the most appealing of all the rock hybrids. Unfortunately, what it has boiled down to of late is usually an adenoidal kid from the Bronx pretending to be a redneck while singing mawkish nonsense to the accompaniment of a steel guitar. You all know who I mean: Poco, with their infuriatingly moronic grinning optimism; the unspeakably banal Souther-Hillman-Furay Band; Loggins and Messina . . . the list is endless. And while I'm on the subject, the Cosmic Cowboy fantasy these groups purvey is, as far as I'm concerned, fully as boring and corny as all that sci-fi/pseudodecadent androgyny offered by the glitter contingent.

Which may be why I'm so disappointed in the Eagles; they seemed at first to promise so much more. When *Take It Easy* blasted onto the airwaves in the summer of 1972, it was so obviously a major record that one naturally assumed this was a group to be reckoned with. It was perfect: a real fusion song that didn't compromise either of the forms it was working with, complete with bracing harmonies, a charming lyric, powerful Who-esque playing and production, and an arrangement that built from start to finish. A classic by any standards.

Needless to say, nothing they've done since has come even close to that one magnificent moment. The first album was totally forgettable (except that *Witchy Woman* sounded like an unconscious parody of the score for a John Ford western at just the point the Indians are massing on the horizon); "Desperado" was an unqualified dud (do you really care if you ever hear *Tequila Sunrise* again?); and the third album . . . well, *Already Gone* was good

enough to be a hit, but any competent band could have made a rocker like that, *Best of My Love* is so soppy that I rate it my major AM annoyance so far this year, and as for the rest, despite the opinions of various friends whose opinions I respect, the mere thought of having to listen to their version of Tom Waits' similarly execrable and sentimental *Old '55* is enough to make me break out with the hives.

And the new one? You guessed it . . . the same old same old. You can predict every lick, every other lyric line, and there are two really horrendous bummers—a six-minute exercise in old-style psychedelia in which Bernie Leadon's banjo does a ridiculous sitar imitation (*Journey of the Sorcerer*), and what may be the world's first c-&-w cocktail song, *I Wish You Peace*. In fairness, I must also point out that there are one or two bits I like a little, and the end of *Hollywood Waltz* attains some real tinselly grandeur as the instrumentation builds up relentlessly.

I can't explain why the group hasn't done any better than they have. Glenn Frey has a terrific rock voice, whether he's faking a country twang or not, the rest of them are great harmony singers, and instrumentally they're as proficient as any band in the world. My suspicion is, simply, that the genre itself is played out. Rock, as we all know, is all about the endless manipulation of the cliché, and I'm reasonably certain that unless there's some genius out there we don't know about yet, none of the country-rock clichés are going to be manipulated very interestingly in the foreseeable future. They certainly aren't on "One of These Nights." More's the pity.

—Steve Simels

THE EAGLES: *One of These Nights*. The Eagles (vocals and instrumentals). *One of These Nights*; *Too Many Hands*; *Hollywood Waltz*; *Journey of the Sorcerer*; *Lynin' Eyes*; *Take It to the Limit*; *Visions*; *After the Thrill Is Gone*; *I Wish You Peace*. ASYLUM 7E-1039 \$6.98, © ET-81039 \$7.98, © TC-51039 \$7.98.

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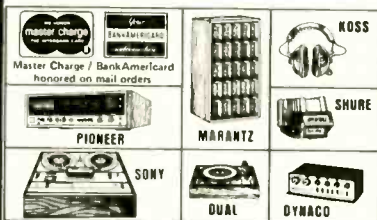
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for a trendy giggle or two at the sheer tackiness of it all. Some of the results are superb. Angus Wilson's *For Whom the Cloche Tolls*, for instance, which appeared in 1953 (and probably gave Patrick Dennis a hint or two about his later *Auntie Mame*), is the funniest book ever written about the Twenties: Sandy Wilson (no relation) created a minor work of art in his Twenties pastiche, *The Boy Friend*, as did Ken Russell, who moved the period up to the Thirties in his musical film version of it. But these were creations based on great love and great knowledge of the periods they were about. The Pasadena Roof Orchestra, regardless of the California associations in its name, seems to be an attempt to parody the old and very great Ray Noble Orchestra, which was the most popular musical group in England during the Thirties. Unfortunately, nobody involved in this album seems to have really listened to that splendid orchestra's recordings (and why not a re-release of some of them, EMI?), and the result is a tame, listless run-through of songs of the Twenties and Thirties with all the tricks and curlicues of the period but none of the elegance or heart. John "Pazz" Parry makes a few feints at copying the style of Noble's vocalist, Al Bowley, but he remains, as does the Pasadena Roof Orchestra, the palest watercolor in comparison to the vivid Art Deco original. P.R.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

JOHN PRINE: *Common Sense*. John Prine (vocals, guitar); Steve Goodman (guitar); James Brown (organ); Larry Muhoberac (piano); Peter Bunetta (drums); Tommy Cathay (bass); other musicians. *Middle Man; Common Sense; Way Down; My Own Best Friend; Forbidden Jimmy; Saddle in the Rain; That Close to You*; and four others. ATLANTIC SD 18127 \$6.98, TP 18127 \$7.98, CS 18127 \$7.98.

Performance: **Very good**
Recording: **Very good**

I'm not enthralled by John Prine's major shift of emphasis here, but this thing is so consistently good-sounding it's worth having. Prine seems, as Dylan did, to be moving from a topical period to a stint as an absurdist folk (-rock) poet. At the same time, as also happened with Dylan, he seems to be paying more attention to how it all sounds, how the instrumentation can be profitably fattened up, the rhythms better exploited, and so forth. The difference in the ways he and Dylan do these things, stylistic idiosyncracies aside, is a difference in musical sophistication and composer savvy, coming down to such practical matters as Dylan's having a better grasp of what minor chords can do and a few other small, important things like that. But for one more album's duration, Prine's simple way with melodies holds up well, and his way with words at least was never looser. "She was leaning on a juke box/And was lookin' real good/Like Natalie Wood/On a Pontiac hood" is the kind of thing he just keeps tossing off here. You move from one interesting tangle of language to another—it isn't too difficult to listen through his similarities to Dylan to the differences, Prine's uniqueness—but I guess I don't like dealing with dadaism much. Too much like keeping track of a dart game whose players are blindfolded.

There are some hot issues around nowadays, and, as always, they need alert, articulate, truthful observers such as Prine on the

scene. But no, not now, says he, I'm going to lay up in my room for a while and play with these words. Maybe it comes down to a matter of degree, and a little bit of this now will lead to a lot of something else later. And even here Prine doesn't drop all the way out; a new, closer kind of peer friendship is one of the turns I and a couple of good film directors seem to see our society about to take, and Prine gets into that in *He Was in Heaven Before He Died*. And then, and then, he—well, he boogies on outa here, is what he does, with Chuck Berry's *You Never Can Tell*. He'd already boogied about in the middle some, though, and if you can curl up with the best of that (*Forbidden Jimmy*) and some headphones, you'll probably wind up feeling a little better. *Saddle in the Rain* and the title song are especially good-sounding cuts, too, Prine's pal Steve Goodman deserving special notice, and somebody ought to get an award for Best Folk-Rock Use of Horns for some punchy work in several selections. Mostly, the album is not about anything, but it gives you something with Prine's signature on it. And gives it to you in such a nice way, is the thing. N.C.

LUCKEY ROBERTS: *Ragtime King*. Charles Luckeyeth Roberts (piano); Garvin Bushell (clarinet, alto saxophone); Herbert Cowens (drums); Joe Benjamin (bass). *If You Knew Susie; St. Louis Blues; By the Beautiful Sea; Honeysuckle Rose*; and seven others. EVEREST FS 304 M \$5.98.

Performance: **Available for weddings, etc.**
Recording: **Good**

Charles "Luckey" Roberts died over seven years ago, but the notes for this album would have us believe he is still active. Furthermore, this collection of trivia, obviously released in order to cash in on the current Scott Joplin renaissance, has as little to do with ragtime music as Horowitz playing Chopin. Except for bassist Joe Benjamin, who gets in a few worthwhile solos, the group sounds like something sent over from the local musicians' union for a bar mitzvah.

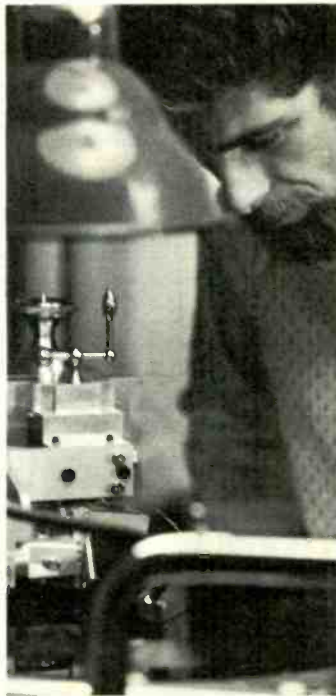
Roberts made his first recordings for Columbia in 1916, but they remain unissued. His accompaniments for entertainer Bert Williams reveal but a fraction of the talent he is said to have possessed, and subsequent recordings—made in 1946 and 1958 for the Circle and Good Time Jazz labels—appear to be those of an artist already past his prime. I don't know when these selections were made, but they should not have been. C.A.

SMOKEY ROBINSON: *A Quiet Storm*. Smokey Robinson (vocals); orchestra. *Love Letters; Coincidentally; Happy; Wedding Song*; and three others. TAMLA T6-337S1 \$6.98, T-337T \$7.98, T-337C \$7.98.

Performance: **Good**
Recording: **Excellent**

Here's a beautifully produced and recorded album by Smokey Robinson. He performs, with his usual pliant ease, another collection of his own songs, and there is some entertainment to be found in *Happy* and *Love Letters*. The main problem with Robinson's work is that he has a broad streak of marshmallow sentimentality which, while it may be genuine on his part, eventually seizes me in the kind of clammy embrace that means turn-off. P.R.

(Continued on page 83)



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Mel Tormé cuts the cake
at a birthday celebration
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Mel Tormé: A Little Older, Still a Pro



Al Levine/St. Regis Hotel

SOME performers, Lord knows, strut and fret their hour on the stage and are heard no more; others seem to go on forever. Mel Tormé is, thanks be, one of the latter. His latest recording is Atlantic's new "Live at the Maisonette," and "live" is certainly the word for it. Critically christened in his youthful years as "the Velvet Fog"—the very nub and essence of crooning blandness, that is—Tormé, now fifty, has managed to leap, not walk, clear over the generation gap and land, vigorously triumphant, on the other side.

I hope I may be forgiven when I confess that I had long thought of him as a closed case, a limited yeoman talent trudging dutifully but joylessly back and forth along the Miami Beach-Las Vegas-Los Angeles night-club axis in response to some faint summons from an aging and diminishing band of followers. His television appearances I found easy enough to take, but singularly lacking in urgency. All of that—or maybe it's just all of me—has changed. For the last four years this singer has been opening the fall season at the Maisonette Room in New York's St. Regis hotel with a verve and a style that have fairly set the rafters to ringing. He has proved himself there a wizard among arrangers, the most winning of personalities, and, as a singer, a man who has learned to find gold even in mines we would have sworn were played out. In short, the velvet fog has lifted, and the fellow behind it turns out to be a dynamo of musical energy and enthusiasm.

It is good to have the latest of his Maisonette visitations on record—this one was recorded on the premises last September. From the first moment when the imperishable

Tormé struts out to greet his patrons ("Oh, you're beautiful!"), the atmosphere seems to tingle with a special excitement. The singer pays tongue-in-cheek tribute to his classy surroundings by opening the proceedings with a sophisticated little piece of irony called *The Jet Set* ("The good life—that's the only way to fly"). Then he settles down for a hushed and serious treatment of *What Are You Doing the Rest of Your Life*—and not a glass is heard to rattle. "A beautiful song," he comments, and after another "You're beautiful," shifts into high gear for a rapid—but not vapid—tiptoe through that hardy perennial *Mountain Greenery*. He then sets out to reduce the whole place to tears with an irresistible study in self-pity entitled *It Takes Too Long to Learn to Live Alone*, concluding side one in a burst of period exuberance with *Get Your Kicks on Route 66*.

ALL this while, the crowd has been audibly if slowly warming up to Mel Tormé, and side two will melt any remaining icicles of reserve: he launches into one of the longest Gershwin medleys in night-club history, a fifteen-minute cycle of no less than seventeen Gershwin songs. He really knocks himself out, counterpointing the melody of one old favorite against an accompaniment drawn from another, working bits of the *Rhapsody in Blue* and the *Concerto in F* into the mosaic of the overall design, speaking in tongues in homage to Ella Fitzgerald (who still sings these songs better than probably anyone else alive) until he climbs, right there before his stunned auditors, a dizzying flight of musical steps, that star-studded *Stairway to Paradise*. And the

applause thunders in, as well it should, from every side.

An astute man in the programming department, Tormé drops quickly back down to present reality with a clever Stevie Wonder number called *Superstition* and winds up the evening—or at least the one presented on this album—with *The Party's Over*. This listener was sorry to hear it.

What, besides some newly discovered vitamin, can account for the infectious energy projected by this half-century-old entertainer? In part, it's the intelligence and ingenuity of the arrangements, most of which are the singer's own. Another is the room-filling build-up in an ecstatic style he seems to have learned at the feet of such singers as Miss Fitzgerald and the once (and deservedly) celebrated Frances Faye. The playing of the Al Porcino Orchestra also has more than a little to do with it. The rest—and there's a lot of that—can only be attributed to the mystery factor that enables an authentic talent to broaden and develop over the years instead of freezing into mannerism, becoming a mere parody of itself. I am left to say to Mel Tormé only what he keeps telling his audiences at the Maisonette: "You're beautiful." —Paul Kresh

MEL. TORMÉ: *Live at the Maisonette*. Mel Tormé (vocals); orchestra, Al Porcino cond. *Introduction*; *Jet Set*; *What Are You Doing the Rest of Your Life*; *Mountain Greenery*; *It Takes Too Long to Learn to Live Alone*; *Route 66*; *Gershwin Medley*; *Superstition*; *The Party's Over*. ATLANTIC SD 18129 \$6.98, TP 18129 \$7.98, CS 18129 \$7.98.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

LEON RUSSELL: *Will o' the Wisp*. Leon Russell (vocals, piano, bass, synthesizer, clavinet, clarinet, guitar, etc.); Teddy Jack Eddy (drums); Steve Cropper (guitar); other musicians. *Little Hideaway; Make You Feel Good; Can't Get Over Losing You; My Father's Shoes*; and seven others. SHELTER SR-2138 \$6.98, © SRT-2138 \$7.98, © SRC-2138 \$7.98.

Performance: **Uh-good**
Recording: **Very good**

Leon Russell has given me a lot of fun through the years, most of it nasty, malicious fun at his expense, but still fun. Certain friends and I would feel culturally deprived if we couldn't use Leon's "uh-hey" from *Roll in My Sweet Baby's Arms* as a formal greeting, or if we couldn't quote Leon (in something from that horrible live album) when inquiring whether certain sights, sounds, tastes, smells, and other sensations "make you want to go Woo Woo." This album has some funny stuff in it, though, that may not have been 100 per cent unintentional. I wouldn't put it past Leon to have planned it so those Japanese instruments in *Can't Get Over Losing You* sound just slightly like something cooked up by the Monty Python bunch. The reason I suspect that may be tied to the fact that at last Leon has again shown some craftiness in his songwriting. I always thought *Delta Lady* was no fluke, but I surely didn't have the evidence to back up such a wild idea. Here, at last, is some. *My Father's Shoes* may catch your head first; and then you'll notice, incredulously, that *Back to the Island* becomes increasingly pleasant as Russell shovels the clichés into it; and then along comes *Deep River*, which is just a rinking-tinking dandy. Russell's voice, of course, is still not a work of art, or even of very good engineering, but it's kind of a friendly voice, for all its posturing. And one of the better features of this album is how disciplined he seems to be with the instrumentals. There are some familiar excesses in *Little Hideaway*, but once the thing hits its stride it doesn't break it. I was impressed in listening to Russell's country album by how well musicians play behind him—he must be treating them well, communicating with them—and I'm impressed by that again. What I'm saying, Leon ol' buddy, is uh-hey, this'n almost makes me want to go Woo Woo. N.C.

TELLY SAVALAS. Telly Savalas (vocals); orchestra. *I Think of You; What's New; Try to Remember; Didn't We; But Beautiful*; and five others. AUDIO FIDELITY AFSD 6271 \$6.98.

Performance: **For fans**
Recording: **Good**

I am so sick of Telly Savalas oozing around my TV screen like some giant, malevolent amoeba in his role as Kojak that I found I could easily contain my rapture at the appearance of his new album. Aunt Myrt is going to love it, of course, as will most of the ladies over fifty or so who, along with small children, seem to make up his fan club. Everything is all very *küss die Hand* (or "gondidental," as Tante Rifka might say) in Savalas' versions of such pulse raisers as *Try to Remember*, *Didn't We*, and *Last Time I Saw Her*. He's professional enough, in a grisly way, and the production by John Cacavas has a diamond-pinkie-ring sort of assurance, but I still had

the feeling I was sitting in a vat of mayonnaise. What Savalas' kiddie fans will make of all this, I have no idea. But I'm positive that Grandma will get the message. Oh, Granny, how could you? P.R.

SEALS & CROFTS: *I'll Play for You*. Jim Seals (vocals, guitar, banjo); Dash Crofts (vocals, mandolin); other musicians. *I'll Play for You; Blue Bonnet Nation; Golden Rainbow; Fire and Vengeance*; and five others. WARNER BROS. BS 2848 \$6.98, © M 82848 \$7.98, © M 52848 \$7.98.

Performance: **Very good**
Recording: **Very good**

There's still a not-quite-realized quality about Seals and Crofts that, in this album, seems to

have settled in and put its feet up. Something's missing from the words, and maybe also from the blend of the voices, even though as musicians they are thorough pros. Somehow they seem to keep signaling what I read as Stand By for Significance, and then they just go on being adamantly bland. Partly, it may have something to do with the times, which seem to be pressuring everyone to rehash Tin Pan Alley. Seals and Crofts, here as always, clearly represent themselves as going beyond that, but—possibly because little is bothering them—they don't really take you on much of a trip. Maybe you can imagine yourself in some far-out place anyway, as people did with all those Hermann Hesse books, but you ought to consider giving yourself a little more of the credit for making the

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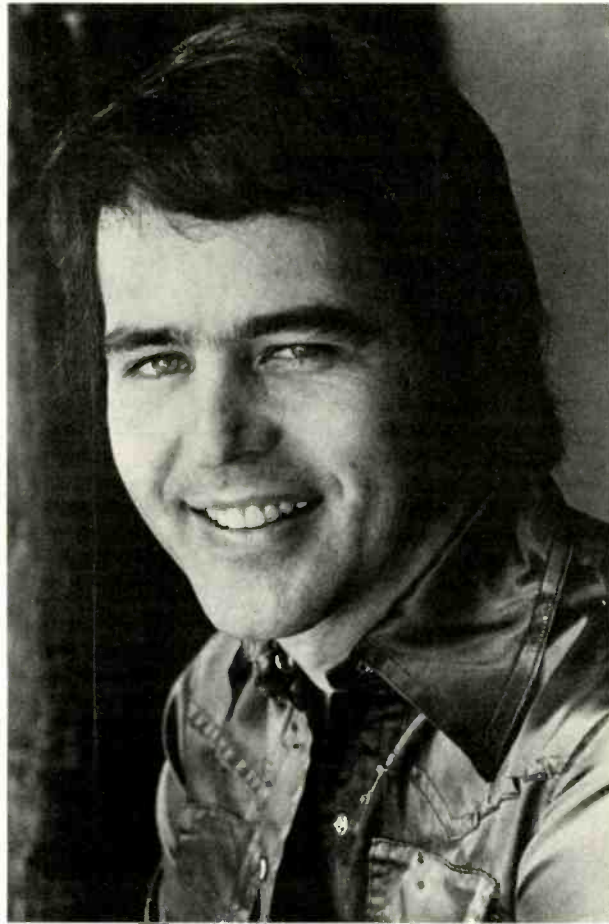
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JIM STAFFORD:
an appealing
c-&-w Buster Keaton

travel arrangements. This is still, of course, a pleasant album and stands up well to comparisons with other albums. As Martin Mull says, it just doesn't go that extra mile. *N.C.*

CARLY SIMON: *Playing Possum* (see Best of the Month, page 73)

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

JIM STAFFORD: *Not Just Another Pretty Foot*. Jim Stafford (vocals and guitar); orchestra. *Lady Greenfeet; Your Bulldog Drinks Champagne; I Ain't Working; Midnight Snack*; and seven others. MGM M3G-4984 \$6.98. © M8H-4984 \$7.98.

Performance: **Fun and funny**
Recording: **Good**

There's a touch of c-&-w Buster Keaton about Jim Stafford that I find very appealing. Deadpan, earnest, and often thwarted, Stafford always seems either to find that *I Got Stoned and I Missed It*, or to have the amiable-appearing young girl roar, "I know karate smarty/And I carry a knife. . ." and *You'll Never Take Me Alive*. Just a trifle winded, perhaps, but still undaunted. Stafford reaches his comedic high point with the Brontëish tale *Your Bulldog Drinks Champagne*. Seems that Stafford is in his hotel room in his shorts, drinking beer, when he notices that a woman across the street is entertaining a bulldog with champagne. Brooding over this for the next few weeks, he finally musters up enough courage to go over and ring her bell, "Cause any woman that'll get a bulldog drunk/Would have to be good to me." But "Then the bulldog staggered out the door/And he said 'How do you do?'/But the

lady bit me on the leg/And I said 'I love you too'." The more I hear it, the more I'm convinced that it's my favorite track of the year. Strange, aren't I? Not to mention Stafford. *P.R.*

STEELY DAN: *Katy Lied*. Donald Fagen (vocals); Walter Becker (guitar); instrumental accompaniment. *Black Friday; Bad Sneakers; Rose Darling; Daddy Don't Live in That New York City No More; Doctor Wu*; and five others. ABC ABCD-846 \$6.98, © 8022-846 \$7.98, © 5022-846 \$7.98.

Performance: **Okay**
Recording: **Clean**

I admire Steely Dan—or, more accurately, I admire Walter Becker and Donald Fagen as writers and melodists—but I am disappointed in this album. A Steely Dan outing usually includes one outstanding tune. This time they get close but never quite make it. Though some of the writing here is taut and fine, Steely Dan too often depends for melody on fill-ins played by a number of guitarists, including Becker and the little-known but greatly accomplished Hugh McCracken. The fills attempt to bolster the performances, but nothing can replace the absence of a real melody or improve a mediocre one.

There may be extenuating circumstances. The group is temporarily in flux, the regular supporting musicians having departed. Here the back-up is provided by studio men, and although their efforts are professional, there is a lack of the spirit which only the interplay of a living, working band can spark. Still, Steely Dan at half power is better than most other groups at full power. Maybe next time around they'll come up with some of the peculiar, ar-

resting melodies of which they are capable. I live in hope. *J.V.*

AL STEWART: *Modern Times*. Al Stewart (vocals, guitar); Simon Nicol (guitar); Tim Renwick (guitar); Peter Woods (keyboards); George Ford (bass); other musicians. *Carol; Sirens of Titan; What's Going On?; Not the One*; and four others. JANUS JXS 7012 \$6.94, © 8098-7012 H \$7.95.

Performance: **Quo vadis, Al baby?**
Recording: **Very good**

Al Stewart probably has a plan of some kind. His previous album dealt with some of the larger historical events, and this one, in addition to what's implied in the title (styled after one of the songs), has imagery of rusty trains, wooden benches that contain no travelers or Irish lady authors, and a girl who walks like Greta Garbo and talks like Yogi Bear. The lad is driven by some vision, but I can't quite make out what it is. His stuff continues to sound oddly bookish, and not simply on the surface—where, in this case, he makes up a song for Malachi Constant, hero (well, main character) of Kurt Vonnegut's worst book—but somewhere in the attitude toward how words are written and sung. His singing apparatus is tidy and competent but singularly unspectacular: the voice sounds bookish too, about five-foot-seven in a bow tie. He has a better-than-average way of putting things, though, and usually writes a decent tune to put them in. His backing here seems to suggest that rock in the middle Seventies can be tasteful without being excessively dull, and *that*, like so many things about Stewart, surprises me in some tiny, obscure way. *N.C.*

B. J. THOMAS: *Reunion*. B. J. Thomas (vocals); orchestra. *Real Life Blues; Crying; Doctor God; Sea of Love; City Boys*; and five others. ABC ABDP-858 \$6.98, © 8022-858 H \$7.98, © 5022-858 H \$7.98.

Performance: **Flat**
Recording: **Good**

B. J. Thomas has a flat, weary style that makes for tepid, boring listening. There's a little spirit in *(Hey Won't You Play) Another Somebody Did Somebody Wrong Song*—but not very much. Most of the time Thomas sticks to a style close to Johnny Cash's, but since the voice itself is reminiscent of Johnny Ray, and since he doesn't seem to have the energy to do much with either factor, the listener is left indifferent. *P.R.*

FRANKIE VALLI: *Closeup*. Frankie Valli (vocals); orchestra. *My Eyes Adored You; Swearin' to God; I Can't Live a Dream; Why*; and four others. PRIVATE STOCK PS 2000 \$6.98, © 8300-2000 H \$7.98, © 5300-2000 H \$7.98.

Performance: **Flabby**
Recording: **Poor**

Frankie Valli's album and his flabby performances have a fake Fifties sound that made me think of Fabian, Annette Funicello, beach party movies, Edsels, and, eventually, the Franco-Prussian war. This last because it holds even less interest for me than the goings on in the Eisenhower Era—I grow listless at the mere thought of even trying to find out why it happened. *P.R.*

LESLIE WEST: *The Great Fatsby*. Leslie West (guitar, vocals); instrumental accompa-

niment. *Don't Burn Me; House of the Rising Sun; High Roller; I'm Gonna Love You thru the Night; E.S.P.; Honky Tonk Woman*; and four others. PHANTOM BPL1-0954 \$6.98. © BPS1-0954 \$7.98. © BPK1-0954 \$7.98.

Performance: **Good**
Recording: **Good**

Actually, this is pretty good dinosauric hard rock, if you're in the mood for that sort of thing. West is a screamer rather than a singer, so he gets tiresome after a while; if all the tunes are not in the same key, then they are loaded with the same amount of decibels. West is also a good mechanical guitarist in a limited way. He doesn't do anything that a six-month guitar student couldn't handle on an acoustic model, but, amplified on an overkill electric instrument such as West plays, it sounds impressive. Good party music. J.V.

BOBBY WOMACK: *I Don't Know What the World Is Coming To*. Bobby Womack (vocals, guitar, bass); other musicians. *I Don't Know; Superstar; Git It; Check It Out; Jealous Love; It's All Over Now*; and five others. UNITED ARTISTS UA-LA353-G \$6.98. © EA353-H \$7.98. © CA353-H \$7.98.

Performance: **Overacting**
Recording: **Good**

Almost all of this album is devoted to Mr. Womack roaring away in his hoarse voice to no great purpose that I can hear. Although he has been a professional songwriter for many years and has recently become known as a performing artist, he has very little style of his own. His efforts are loaded with every cliché of pop music imaginable.

There are two bright spots, however. One is his tune *It's All Over Now*, an early hit for the Stones in the mid-Sixties. Womack's performance isn't particularly good, but he is joined by Bill (*Ain't No Sunshine*) Withers, who shows how it should be sung. *Git It* is an instrumental with some wordless vocals in the middle: the organist is William "Smitty" Smith, the former captain of the Canadian quartet Motherlode (*When I Die*), which was one of the finest small groups in the history of rock or jazz in the last thirty years. Although he is not credited, it sounds as though Smith is also singing on the track. It doesn't really make much difference whether you listen to Womack or not, but if you ever come across the first Motherlode album (Buddah BDS-5046), get it at all costs and listen to the glorious Smitty. J.V.

COLLECTIONS

RURAL BLACK RELIGIOUS MUSIC: *Sorrow Come Pass Me Around*. Ephram Carter: *Sorrow, Come Pass Me Around*. Willard Artis "Blind Pete" Burrell: *Do Remember Me; A Little Talk with Jesus Makes It Right; I Shall Not Be Moved*. Babe Stovall: *The Ship Is at the Landing; When [sic] the Circle Be Unbroken*. And nine others. ADVENT 2805 \$6.98 (from Advent Productions, P.O. Box 635, Manhattan Beach, Calif. 90266).


Performance: **You shall not be moved**
Recording: **Home variety**

The Library of Congress has been making field recordings of this nature since the early Thirties, and this album of recordings made between 1965 and 1973 indicates that there

are at least some rural black Americans whose music remains unaffected by times and trends. Everything in this album is very folksy and authentic but unfortunately not very good from a musical standpoint. For instance, Robert Johnson's (not the Robert Johnson) *Can't No Grave Hold My Body Down* pales by comparison to *Ain't No Grave Can Hold My Body Down*, recorded for the Library of Congress by Bozie Sturdivant in 1942. It's the same song, but whereas Sturdivant's rendering is artistically on a par with Bessie Smith at her best and soulfully deeper than anything Bessie ever recorded, Johnson's performance is the pitiful, though no doubt sincere, whimper of an old man. Furry Lewis, heard here on one track, can be heard to much greater advantage on his Vocalion recordings of the late Twenties and on the commercial sessions he did after his "rediscovery" in the early Sixties. Similarly, Napoleon Strickland's *Motherless Children* is no match for Blind Willie Johnson's very moving 1927 Columbia recording of the same song. And if you want to hear your religious black music sung a cappella I suggest you forget Katie Ma Young's *By the Grace of My Lord, I've Come a Long Way* and check out Marion Williams' rendition of the Dr. Watts hymn *Shall These Cheeks Go Dry*.

Since the tape recorder became accessible to the common man, those following in the footsteps of the Lomaxes have almost become a crowd. Though this has resulted in much important documentation of our musical and folkloric heritage, all that glisters is not gold. C.A.

(Continued on page 88)



CALENDAR OF CLASSICAL COMPOSERS

Back by popular demand and updated from its original (1966) printing, Music Editor James Goodfriend's *Calendar of Classical Composers* is a listing of the most important composers from the year 1400 to the present, grouped according to the stylistic periods—Renaissance, Baroque, Classic, Romantic, etc.—in which they worked. This 12 x 24-inch aid, guide, and complement to your music listening is printed in color on heavy, nonreflecting stock suitable, as they say, for framing. A key to the calendar, consisting of capsule accounts of the principal stylistic characteristics of each musical period, is included. The whole will be sent rolled in a mailing tube to prevent creases; we pay postage. All you do is send 25¢ to:

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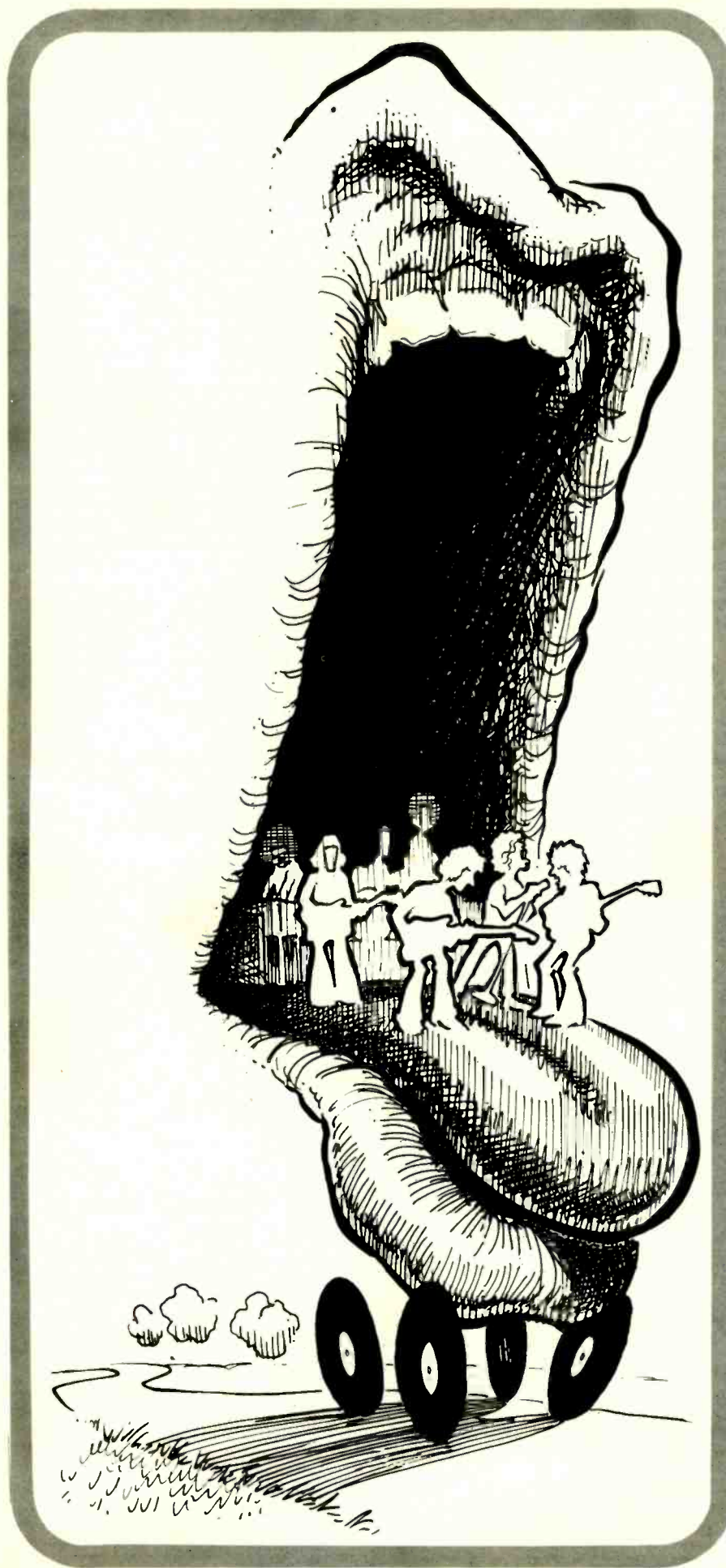
The Stones — On Disc and On Tour

WELL, here it is the summer of 1975 and the Rolling Stones are touring again, for which we can only praise the Lord; if there's anything that can shake us — meaning the rock audience — out of our collective doldrums, it's having the Stones back on the road. There's drama in the air this time, a sense of something crucial impending, and the stakes are very high indeed. In terms of the Stones' future, this is rather obvious, but I'm referring as well to the future of rock itself. A friend of mine has the depressing theory that the late efflorescence of German bands such as Kraftwerk may kill it for good in the next two years; if the high-school kids I've talked to lately are any indication, he may be right.

In the meantime, both of the Stones' record companies have new releases out, although neither of the discs is *really* new — the Munich album the band has been working on for the last several months has been delayed until September after the tour dust will have settled. Atlantic has rushed out "Made in the Shade," which is simply a greatest-hits package culled from the Stones' four releases on that label since 1971, and London (via Abkco and Allen Klein) has simultaneously favored us with a single (praise the Lord again, for what good is a summer without a Stones single?) and an album of previously unreleased vault material recorded at various times throughout the band's long career.

To take the Atlantic album first: as greatest-hits packages go, it's reasonably well programmed, and since my copies (and probably yours as well) of the originals are pretty scratched up, it's nice to have all these great songs together in a spanking new pressing, especially considering that the cover art and title are simply perfect. I must nit-pick, however; the absence of *Moonlight Mile*, perhaps the song from "Sticky Fingers," is somewhat annoying, and there is simply no excuse for the failure to include *Through the Lonely Nights* and *Let It Rock* (the B-sides of, respectively, *It's Only Rock 'n' Roll* and the English version of *Brown Sugar*), among the finest things this band has ever committed to vinyl and nowhere available on L.P. This was clearly the time to rectify that situation, and I'm pretty damn annoyed that nobody thought enough about Stones fandom to do it. Then again, that kind of seemingly random thoughtlessness has been part of the Stones' own who-gives-a-hoot stance for so long (it's their charm, really) that I can't say I'm surprised either.

The Abkco album is another kettle of fish entirely, a sort of Stones equivalent of the Who's "Odds and Sods." The difference is, however, that when the Who put their outtakes together, they assembled the lot themselves, and they saw to it that they put their



STEVE MILLER

best foot forward in the process. In the Stones' case it would appear that they simply dumped a load of tapes on Allen Klein in order to extricate themselves from the ridiculous legal hassles they've been having with him for lo these many years (did I say "random thoughtlessness"?). This is all typically very unclear, of course; the parties involved have been making all sorts of contradictory remarks about just how the tracks were selected and even who actually owned them.

Mick Jagger has already indicated that he feels much of the material is substandard, an opinion I would be inclined to take seriously—except for the fact that he's said much the same thing about *lots* of their old records, including some of the best ones. As far as "Metamorphosis" is concerned, however, I'd say on the evidence that he's about half right. Some of this stuff is pretty feeble, the ballads (such as *Each and Everyday of the Year*) in particular, even though they are, in a period way, kind of charming. The real turkeys are *Heart of Stone*, an early hit inexplicably done here as a c-&-w tune without a hint of the fury or menace of the original, and a downright amateurish run-through of the great *Memo from Turner*, its only redeeming virtue being the chance to hear the original last line, in which Jagger offhandedly observes "You schmucks all work for me." That, needless to say, is somewhat ironic given the situation vis-à-vis Klein and the Abkco folks who made this grave robbery necessary.

FORTUNATELY, there are also some terrific things here, and if the Stones don't like them, I for one don't care. *Out of Time*, perhaps the neatest straight pop tune they ever wrote, is done here to a fare-thee-well, with a fantastic vocal and some cracking-good production touches—far superior to either of its prior public incarnations. There's also a Chuck Berry tune (you're shocked, I'm sure) called *Don't Lie to Me* that rocks along in great good spirits, with Wyman throwing in that wonderful bass riff from their version of *I'm Moving On*; a few folkish things that sound as if they came from the "Aftermath" era—an irresistibly wistful seduction song called *If You Let Me*, for example; and, best of all, a rocked-up rendition of an obscure Stevie Wonder tune, *I Don't Know Why*, with a blistering lead from Keith and a choked-up soulful vocal by Mick that together make it one of the most powerful things they've ever done.

Overall, "Metamorphosis" is certainly entertaining, and no more rag-tag, really, than "December's Children," the 1966 set London put together from various English cuts of differing vintage: nobody, to my knowledge, has ever groused about *that*. The Stones, after all, are at their best when they're sloppy, and here we have them with all their lovable warts (as a certain ex-President might have put it) in full view. For all its faults, it's fun, which is more than can be said for far too many of the slick, high-polish LP's some of our major artists are shoving on us today.

But I do wonder what the public's reaction to it will be. I wonder especially what the younger Stones fans, who picked up on the band only after their sound had begun to get, so to speak, more refined, will think of all this. I guess that's part of the drama I mentioned at the beginning. If those kids can accept it

(and I fervently hope they can), then rock-and-roll, the most vital and overwhelming pop music of the twentieth century (if you'll pardon my critical pontificating) may still be here to stay, despite the fast-approaching Invasion of the German Androids. One way or another, this looks to be an interesting summer.

* * *

I WROTE the above a few days before the Stones' tour began, and, as you may have gathered, I was worried. I wasn't the only one, of course; while at the airport, in fact, preparing to fly to Baton Rouge to see my heroes at their out-of-town opening, I chanced across a magazine article that articulated those worries in an extremely pessimistic way. I disagreed with it almost reflexively, but as it was written by Nik Cohn, the brilliant English pop scribe who did the text for *Rock Dreams*, I couldn't exactly dismiss it either. I thought Cohn's central thesis—that the Stones, because of the inevitable attrition of the years, had become a self-parody (if a brilliant one; he hedged on the music)—was more a lament for his own lost youth than anything else. Still, an awful lot *has* happened in the decade since the Stones first came to prominence. In 1966 Ed Sullivan wouldn't let Jagger sing *Let's Spend the Night Together* on television, but today someone as totally bland as Paul Anka has a Top Ten hit called *I Don't Like to Sleep Alone* (they even had it on the Muzak tape on my flight). That may be progress of a sort, but if there's no one left to shock any more, where does that leave the band that practically invented outrage?

I decided finally that Cohn was *partly* right; that band (the one that used to urinate on gas station walls to make the front pages) *doesn't* exist any more. But on the other hand, the teenagers who came to see the Stones at the concert I attended never saw them, they probably don't know about that Ed Sullivan show, and they may not even remember the song involved. To those kids, the Stones are a band that appeared in 1971 with *Brown Sugar*, or a band they first encountered at their neighborhood movie houses in *Gimme Shelter*. So whether or not the Stones are still juvenile delinquents is mostly irrelevant.

That made me feel better, but I still had nagging doubts; all of us old-timers did after "Goats Head Soup," and the last album was a comeback only of sorts. It seemed the question was no longer whether or not the Stones were still the World's Greatest Rock-and-Roll Band (something to be considered, surely, after the trauma of Mick Taylor's departure), but whether being the WGRRB was a worthwhile ambition. Could rock still mean something more than "That's show biz," and could the Stones prove it? Somehow a lot seemed to be riding on that.

But I'm delighted to report that my fears were groundless; the Stones in 1975 are (or were, since by the time you read this their latest assault on America's larger concert halls will have just wound up) as strong and vital as ever, maybe *more* so than ever. The sense of strain, of fatigue, that many of us noted on the 1972 tour is gone; the band seemed completely comfortable in their new roles, and the show they put on and the music they made transcended the mere professionalism of most

other bands with a kind of ease that was a joy to behold, especially because the audience so clearly picked up on it.

This was not a nostalgia package; there was a lot that was new in the act. Yes, Ron Wood acquitted himself brilliantly in the second guitar slot; I'll miss the kind of seamless floating lines that Taylor dispensed, but Wood plays with equal fire, and he complements Keith far better. And there were surprises—Wood on bass for the first time since 1968, Bill Wyman's debut on synthesizer, and Jagger's first-ever appearance as a rhythm guitarist. The band as a unit even allowed itself, with a total lack of self-consciousness, to share the stage with Billy Preston for a number or two. Best of all, everybody was a star this time out. Taylor, bless his heart, never really seemed to fit on stage, and it was wonderful to see Wood and Richards doing their level best to carry the weight *along with Mick*—just like the old days when Brian Jones used to mug shamelessly in a good-natured attempt to upstage the other two frontmen.

It is significant that when Jagger sang *You Can't Always Get What You Want*, hardly an out-and-out boogie number, the crowd was almost as ecstatic as they were for the straight rockers that are usually considered the band's *raison d'être*. In fact, it's more than significant; it's heartening. For what that song is about—a mature acceptance of life's pain as well as its rewards, and, most crucially, the realization that good times have to be earned—is something much more important than the kind of narcissistic Look-At-Me-I'm-Wonderful bushwah that most of the Seventies rockers have been trying to peddle to today's kids, and there's no doubt in my mind that both band and audience understood that. The kind of love I saw pass in both directions across the stage in Baton Rouge is very rare these days. It happens with the Who, and sometimes with Rod Stewart and Faces, but it took the Rolling Stones to really make me aware of it. And, unlike Nik Cohn, I think that in the long run that feeling, and the music that accompanies it, are going to mean much more than the Stones' initial stance of adolescent rebellion and blues purism. That was fun in its day, to be sure, and I'll always regret I never got to see *that* band in the flesh. But *this* band . . . well, I can only say I hope you got to see them too. You need them as much as they need you.

—Steve Simels

THE ROLLING STONES: *Made in the Shade*. The Rolling Stones (vocals and instrumentals); other musicians. *Brown Sugar*; *Tumbling Dice*; *Happy*; *Dance Little Sister*; *Wild Horses*; *Angie*; *Bitch*; *It's Only Rock 'n' Roll*; *Heartbreaker*; *Rip This Joint*. ROLLING STONES COC 79102 \$6.98, ⑧ TP 79102 \$7.98, © CS 79102 \$7.98.

THE ROLLING STONES: *Metamorphosis*. The Rolling Stones (vocals and instrumentals); other musicians. *Out of Time*; *Don't Lie to Me*; *Each and Everyday of the Year*; *Heart of Stone*; *I'd Much Rather Be with the Boys*; (*Walkin' Thru the Sleepy City*); *Try a Little Harder*; *I Don't Know Why*; *If You Let Me*; *Jiving Sister Fanny*; *Downtown Suzie*; *Family*; *Memo from Turner*; *I'm Going Down*. ABKCO ANA-1 \$6.98.

JAZZ



BILL EVANS: *Intuition*. Bill Evans (acoustical and electric piano); Eddie Gomez (bass). *Invitation; Blue Serge; Hi Lili, Hi Lo; Falling Grace; The Nature of Things*; and three others. FANTASY F-9475 \$6.98, © 8160-9475 H \$7.98.

Performance: **Graceful**
Recording: **Very good**

It can truly be said that Bill Evans has never made a record on which he was less than very good. Consistently inventive, lyrical, and tasteful, Evans virtually makes love to the piano, extracting from it beauty that less sensitive fingers fail to find. When many of his colleagues turned to electronic keyboards, Bill Evans continued caressing the piano in its natural state. I admired him for that, and I hoped I'd never see the day when he, too, switched his instrument on. Well, he has done just that on some of these tracks. The result is listenable, but it can in no way measure up to the beauty of Evans' acoustical sound. Bassist Eddie Gomez—who remains acoustical throughout—first recorded as a member of the Newport Youth Band fifteen years ago and has since developed into one of the finest exponents of his instrument. As annotator George Cleve points out, Gomez seems to operate on Evans' wavelength—which is a good frequency for any musician. C.A.

CHUCK MANGIONE: *Chase the Clouds Away*. Chuck Mangione (flugelhorn, elec-

tric piano); Gerry Niewood (soprano and tenor saxophones, flutes); Chip Jackson (bass); Joe LaBarbera (drums); Esther Satterfield (vocal); orchestra. *Echano; Song of the New Moon; Soft*; and three others. A & M SP-4518 \$6.98.

Performance: **Evenly ebullient**
Recording: **Very good**

I have heard only two other Chuck Mangione albums of recent vintage, so my frame of reference is small, but I think this is a far more satisfying album than "Alive!" and it lacks the pretentiousness that marred "Land of Make Believe." Mangione's quartet, with the very talented Gerry Niewood, is suitably framed by a fair-sized studio orchestra. The arrangements are by Mangione, who has kept the spotlight on the quartet except on *Soft*, a low-keyed song featuring the not-so-interesting voice of Esther Satterfield. Highlights are Mangione's fiery flugelhorn solo on *Echano* and Niewood's soprano work on *He Was a Friend of Mine*, but the album is full of good music of the middle-of-the-road jazz variety, something like what Lalo Schiffrin used to cook up for Cal Tjader.

Technically, the recording—made without overdubs or additions—is very good, but my reviewer's copy produced some rather rude noises on the right channel in the outer inch of side two. C.A.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

GERRY MULLIGAN/CHET BAKER: *Carnegie Hall Concert, Volume 1*. Gerry Mulligan (baritone saxophone); Chet Baker (trumpet); Bob James (piano); Ron Carter (bass); others. *Line for Lyons; Song for an Unfinished Woman; My Funny Valentine; Song for Strayhorn*. CTI CTI-6054 S1 \$6.98, © CT8-6054 \$6.95, © CTC-6054 \$6.95.

GERRY MULLIGAN/CHET BAKER: *Carnegie Hall Concert, Volume 2*. Gerry Mulligan (baritone saxophone); Chet Baker (trumpet); Bob James (piano); Ron Carter (bass); others.

Bernie's Tune; It's Sandy at the Beach; K-4 Pacific; There Will Never Be Another You. CTI CTI-6055 S1 \$6.98, © CT8-6055 \$6.95, © CTC-6055 \$6.95.

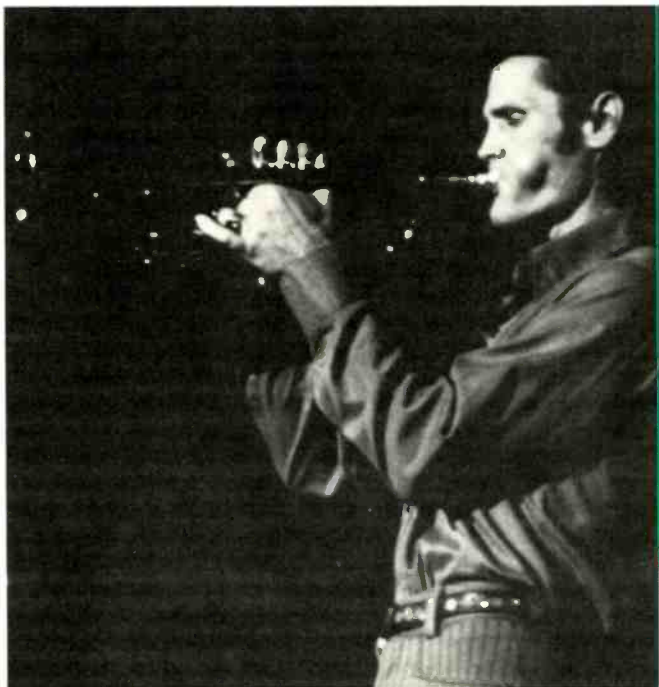
Performance: **No skimping on the old family recipe**
Recording: **Excellent remote**

With pop nostalgia doing big business, ragtime composer Scott Joplin practically becoming a household word, the Andrews Sisters rubbing shoulders with Gladys Knight on juke boxes, and Hollywood scrambling to re-create the era that fostered it, it was only to be expected that old jazz sounds would be resurrected too. Jelly Roll Morton's works have fallen victim to two abysmal attempts at re-creation in recent times; Time-Life Records spent a fortune re-recording the old big-band charts in stereo, but failed to find the spark that characterized the originals; Linda Hopkins, a fine singer, has lost her own identity trying to be Bessie Smith. But yesterday's jazz can be brought back more successfully, especially when the retrievers are also the originators. The Mulligan/Baker reunion at Carnegie Hall last November is a case in point.

Twenty-two years had passed since Gerry Mulligan and Chet Baker recorded those first classic sides with the piano-less Mulligan quartet, and it had been ten years since they last performed together, but that old rapport was very much intact. Only four of the eight selections contained in these two volumes give us Mulligan and Baker together: *Line for Lyons*, *Bernie's Tune*, and *My Funny Valentine* from the old quartet repertoire, and *It's Sandy at the Beach*, a more recent Mulligan composition. Baker's trumpet and vocal are heard in *There Will Never Be Another You*, and Mulligan is featured in the three remaining selections.

The addition of guitarist John Scofield and pianist Bob James makes it obvious that exact re-creation was not intended, but the Mulligan/Baker sound brings back those early Fifties when it was hip to dig their Pacific Jazz

Chet Baker (left) and Gerry Mulligan: two volumes of smooth, swinging, timeless jazz



Carl Rowman/CTI Records

sides. What we have here, then, is the resurrection of a sound rather than a stereo reconstruction of something we once enjoyed in mono. More, Mulligan plays his own music in the present tense with fine support from members of the CTI stable. These are two volumes of smooth, swinging jazz that is as timeless as the nearly generation-old records that inspired the reunion at Carnegie Hall. C.A.

JACK REILLY: *Blue-Sean-Green*. Jack Reilly (piano); Jack Six (bass); Joe Cocuzzo (drums). *Halloween; Waltz for Fall; Unichrom; Floral Space*; and three others. CAROUSEL ATM-1001 \$6.98 (available by mail from Carousel Records, 125 Prospect Park West, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11215).

Performance: **Studied soul**
Recording: **Good**

Jack Reilly's musical background is very impressive: David Hollander, Ali Akbar Khan, Hall Overton, and George Russell are among those who taught him. But, except for a tour with the Ben Webster Quartet and a stint as musical director of David Frost's TW3 show, most of Reilly's time has been spent composing and teaching, so chances are that you have never heard of him before.

This album, recorded privately in 1968 by the late Jerry Newman (whose early Forties Tatum recordings appeared on Onyx a couple of years ago), show Reilly to be a good, technically facile pianist and a very interesting composer. Though much of his music is jazz-inspired (*Halloween* by Bobby Timmons' *Dat Dere* and *This Here, Blue-Sean-Green* by Charlie Parker's *Billie's Bounce*), Reilly's sometimes complex, often mathematical writing tends to get in the way of the music if viewed from a jazz standpoint. Such are the hazards of a formal music education. Nevertheless, Reilly's music—and the entire album consists of it—has much to offer, and I would really like to hear some of it played by a less formal performer. Reilly and his cohorts do a good job, however, and the album deserves your attention. C.A.

CLARK TERRY: *Clark Terry's Big B-a-d Band Live* (see Best of the Month, page 73)

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

TOOTS THIELEMANS: *Captured Alive*. Toots Thielemans (harmonica); Joanne Brackeen (piano); Cecil McBee (bass); Freddie Waits (drums). *Airegin; Giant Steps; Days of Wine and Roses*; and five others. CHOICE CRS 1007 \$5.98 (available by mail from Choice Records, 245 Tilley Place, Sea Cliff, N.Y. 11579).

Performance: **First-rate**
Recording: **Very good**

Before Jean "Toots" Thielemans became a prominent figure on the U.S. jazz scene as a member of the popular George Shearing Quintet in the Fifties, the harmonica had not been considered a jazz instrument, although blues men did use it, mostly to emulate the human voice and mournful train whistles. Since leaving Shearing in 1959, Thielemans has worked as a studio musician in New York, free-lanced, and enjoyed some popularity in Europe, but his recordings have mainly been of the commercial pop variety and only a step closer to jazz than Larry Adler. This album is particularly refreshing, then, for here, backed by a superb rhythm section and play-

ing a variety of music that ranges from Mancini to Ellington, Rollins, and Coltrane, Thielemans is in his element.

I have to admit that the harmonica has never produced my favorite sound, but Thielemans' approach is saxophonic (if there is such a word), and he is an imaginative improviser. Ms. Brackeen, who contributes two interesting compositions to this set, is the most interesting female pianist since Mary Lou Williams. Cecil McBee has been impressing me since his early days with the Paul Winter group, and Freddie Waits is one of those rare drummers who doesn't let his ego get in the way of his playing. Choice Records has previously proved its dedication to good jazz and should be commended for this worthy addition to its catalog. C.A.

GROVER WASHINGTON, JR.: *Mister Magic*. Grover Washington, Jr. (soprano, alto, and tenor saxophones); Bob James (keyboards); Eric Gale (guitar); orchestra. *Earth Tones; Passion Flower; Mister Magic; Black Frost*. Kudu KU-20 S1 \$6.98, ② KU8-20 \$7.98. ③ KUC-20 \$7.98.

Performance: **Formula funk**
Recording: **Very good**

Grover Washington, Jr. is a good if not terribly exciting saxophone player whose records follow the slick funk formula of the day and, as funk, are all right. But in a few years this stuff will sound as hopelessly outmoded as the once super-hip Hi-Lo's do today. Billy Strayhorn's *Passion Flower* is lush and listenable here, but it too will pass. C.A.



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“Cecil Taylor’s ‘Silent Tongues’ is, simply, a superb album...”

In the course of making Columbia Records the number one company in youth-oriented music, then-president Clive Davis fostered the careers of Janis Joplin, Donovan, and Sly Stone, brought us such groups as Chicago, BS&T, and Santana, and directed the Miles Davis rejuvenation program that catapulted Davis (Miles, that is) into the rock world and spawned the Weather Report school of electronic jazz-rock units. He also brought Charles Mingus back to the label and signed Bill Evans and Ornette Coleman, who was about as close to the avant-garde jazz movement as the label ventured.

“Silent Tongues,” not only because it is, simply, a superb album, but also because Taylor is a talent who has been neglected by American record companies for many years. Ironically, Taylor was turned down by Columbia during Davis’ regime, but these recordings from last year’s Montreux Festival will surely inspire Arista to record more of his work. His solo piano performance is a complex tour de force of technical virtuosity. Taylor’s music is more capricious and not as lyrical as Keith Jarrett’s, and, though improvised, it is less akin to jazz, but there is an intensity about it that commands attention.

traditional playing makes this quite an interesting set.

Roswell Rudd, one of the few white players in New York’s avant-garde movement of the early Sixties, has come up with a surprisingly conventional album—well, conventional by *his* standards, at least. Featuring vocals by Sheila Jordan (whose name is misspelled on the album), “Flexible Flyer” falls outside the avant-garde category, reminding me more of some of the recordings Abbey Lincoln made for Riverside almost twenty years ago. Rudd, whose background includes stints with such veteran Dixielanders as Wild Bill Davison

Avant-Garde Jazz Finds An Unexpected Outlet On the Arista Label

CECIL TAYLOR:
*an intensity that
commands attention*



Arista Records

When Clive Davis’ dramatic and unexpected dismissal from Columbia was announced in 1973, those who knew him knew it would be only a matter of time before the industry witnessed his resurrection. Thus the announcement, a few months ago, that Davis would be heading up a new label came as no surprise, but few could have predicted that Arista, along with soul/rock offerings, would introduce a line of avant-garde jazz albums to rival the excellent Polydor ECM series.

As was the case with ECM, all but one of Arista’s initial releases in this genre stem from a European source. Alan Bates’ Black Lion/Freedom label, but the list of artists reads like a Who’s Who of American musicians who have had to look to other countries for measurable recognition. Polydor’s ECM series, though richly rewarding from an artistic standpoint, has not been a commercial success, and, with the possible exception of an Ornette Coleman album (which I did not receive for review), neither will the Arista records. Still, it’s good to see these artists on a label that promises to have good distribution, and—who knows?—perhaps proper exposure will eventually make this music a more viable commercial product.

On the whole, Arista’s releases are not as well produced as the ECM series, but there is much here that warrants attention. The most gratifying of this initial batch is Cecil Taylor’s

The album by the late Albert Ayler, recorded in Copenhagen eleven years ago, is characteristic of his work, though less pretentious than some of his later recordings for Impulse. Former Ornette Coleman associate Don Cherry and bassist Gary Peacock make it a little easier to tolerate Ayler’s technical deficiencies. I admit that I’m not an Ayler devotee, but his tango-palace sound can be quite effective at times, and this date proved to be one such instance.

Alto saxophonist Marion Brown does have full mastery of his instrument, and his “Porto Novo” album, recorded in Holland in 1967 with a Dutch bassist and drummer, is as fine an example of his work as I have heard. Firmly rooted in jazz traditions, he uses their elements to produce highly personal statements in a language wide audiences have yet to grasp. Brown’s day will come, and when it does these works will seem as classic as the Ornette Coleman of fifteen years ago. The Dutch rhythm men are also excellent here.

Gato Barbieri and Dollar Brand taped their collaboration in Italy in 1968. Brand, a South African, plays cello as well as piano, and “Confluence” provides this series of releases with its most inaccessible music, but when Barbieri’s tenor is not “screaming,” an effect he employs to excess, there are moments of great beauty here. The juxtaposition of the saxophonist’s free form with Brand’s almost

and Eddie Condon and who spent some five years tailgating for Eli’s Chosen Six, is a remarkable musician of enormous scope. Though he has recorded with Cecil Taylor, Archie Shepp, and the New York Art Quartet, this is only his second album as a leader—it should have been his twentieth. The whole album is a gem, Miss Jordan’s voice is an instrument of beauty and great sensitivity, and pianist Hod O’Brien is also a tremendous asset to this fine session.

CHARLES TOLLIVER, a Clifford Brown/Freddie Hubbard-inspired trumpeter, has several albums out on the musician-owned Strata-East label, but this 1968 session was his first as a leader. With a pre-electric Herbie Hancock, Ron Carter, and Joe Chambers forming the rhythm section and with (on side two only) alto saxophonist Gary Bartz, Tolliver takes us through six of his own compositions in a group style not unlike that of Miles Davis ten years ago. He is an interesting composer with a lyrical style and good tone, and this is a good album, but Tolliver’s music has progressed since 1968 and he is far more interesting today.

When Anthony Braxton teamed up with Joseph Jarman on a recent Delmark release, the result was disastrous, but “New York, Fall 1974,” the only album in this collection that is an original Arista release, is super-

excellent. Braxton is one of the finest saxophonists the new music has produced; he makes Albert Ayler sound like a rank amateur, and he is leagues above Archie Shepp. I predict that he will in time be regarded with a respect equal to that now given John Coltrane and Eric Dolphy, and I think this album will do much to further his career. Kenny Wheeler, a Canadian trumpeter now living in England, and bassist David Holland, on whose ECM album "Conference of the Birds" Braxton came to the fore, add immeasurably to the high quality of this album, but it is Braxton himself, through his compositions and his playing, who leaves the most indelible mark. Fumbling haphazardness mars much of the avant-garde output, but there is none of that here.

SINCE the Impulse label became an outlet for watered-down alternative takes, the ECM/Polydor series has been virtually the only major, properly distributed source of the so-called "new music." But now there is also Arista. Let us hope Clive Davis is encouraged to continue releasing not just overdue music from foreign sources, but also fresh, quality albums like the Braxton set. —Chris Albertson

CECIL TAYLOR: *Silent Tongues*. Cecil Taylor (piano). *Abyss; Petals and Filaments; Jitney; Crossing, Parts 1 and 2; After All; Jitney No. 2; After All No. 2*. ARISTA AL 1005 \$6.98.

ALBERT AYLER: *Vibrations*. Albert Ayler (alto and tenor saxophones); Don Cherry (trumpet); Gary Peacock (bass); Sonny Murray (drums). *Ghosts; Holy Spirit; Mothers*; and three others. ARISTA AL 1000 \$6.98.

MARION BROWN: *Porto Novo*. Marion Brown (alto saxophone); Maarten van Regten Altena (bass); Han Bennink (drums). *Similar Limits; QBIC; Sound Structure; Porto Novo; Improvisation*. ARISTA AL 1001 \$6.98.

GATO BARBIERI & DOLLAR BRAND: *Confluence*. Gato Barbieri (tenor saxophone); Dollar Brand (piano, cello). *To Elsa; Eighty-First Street; Hamba Khale!; The Aloe and the Wildrose*. ARISTA AL 1003 \$6.98.

ROSWELL RUDD: *Flexible Flyer*. Roswell Rudd (trombone, French horn); Hod O'Brien (piano); Arild Anderson (bass); Barry Altschul (drums); Sheila Jordan (vocals). *What Are You Doing the Rest of Your Life; Maiden Voyage; Moselle Variations*; and two others. ARISTA AL 1006 \$6.98.

CHARLES TOLLIVER: *Paper Man*. Charles Tolliver (trumpet); Gary Bartz (alto saxophone); Herbie Hancock (piano); Ron Carter (bass); Joe Chambers (drums). *Household of Saud; Lil's Paradise; Earl's World*; and three others. ARISTA AL 1002 \$6.98.

ANTHONY BRAXTON: *New York, Fall 1974*. Anthony Braxton (contrabass clarinet, soprano and alto saxophones, flute); Kenny Wheeler (trumpet and flugelhorn); Julius Hemphill (alto saxophone); Oliver Lake (tenor saxophone); Leroy Jenkins (violin); Richard Teitelbaum (Moog synthesizer); Dave Holland (bass); Jerome Cooper (drums). Six untitled selections. ARISTA AL 4032 \$6.98.

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CHOOSING SIDES

By IRVING KOLODIN



AKSEL SCHIØTZ (1906-1975)

IF ever an artist was bedeviled in his lifetime, that artist was the late Aksel Schiøtz. The development of an artist is a slow, painstaking business and virtually unrewarding in itself. But the long way is lit, at least, by the expectation of some final fulfillment, just compensation for the work, the effort, and the sacrifice that have gone into the building process. For Schiøtz, fulfillment was almost unconscionably delayed—from 1939, when he was ready for recognition as *the* lieder singer of his time, until after 1945, when he and all the Danes were finally freed from the German occupation.

Schiøtz's moment came at last in the summer of 1946, with appearances at Glyndebourne and at the Edinburgh Festival. It was perhaps the sweeter for being delayed, but it was also maddeningly brief. The bright hopes of that summer turned almost to a death watch by December, when Schiøtz underwent one of the most delicate operations a surgeon can undertake. A sudden onset of double vision had given warning that Schiøtz was afflicted with a tumor of the acoustic nerve. The surgical procedure has become known medically (after another famous musician who did *not* survive it) as "the Gershwin operation." Schiøtz did survive, but at the cost of a predicted penalty: lifelong paralysis of the right side of the face.

Blighted careers are subject to many forms of frustration. It was Schiøtz's particular curse to have in existence tangible, demonstrable, *recorded* evidence of the beautiful sound, the rare musical art, the exquisite command of language that made him a master interpreter of vocal music—and to know that, after his surgery, he would never be able to produce them again.

As time progressed, he accepted the inevitable—first by performing in the baritone range and then by applying his intelligence and insight to teaching (a profession for which he had originally been trained). But when he and I first became acquainted, the operation and its aftermath were still fresh memories, the hope that a miracle—plus exercise and patience—might restore his faculties to a functional level at least was still alive.

This was in the fall of 1948, when his New York debut was one of the eagerly awaited events of the new musical season. It was known that Schiøtz had been ailing and inactive, but neither the cause nor the duration of

his problem were yet clearly understood publicly. A representative of his manager (who, I learned much later, had read my comment of the previous year which had likened Schiøtz's singing of Handel to John McCormack's and had booked him, unheard, because "John" had long been one of his favorite clients) suggested a meeting. To my surprise and shock I was confronted by a cordial, well-spoken man in his early forties with a cruelly contorted right lip and lower jaw. As the total effect of this deformity on his singing could not be judged until his first public performance, I wrote nothing about the visit until after his Town Hall concert. It was textually well-handled and musically scrupulous—but I had to add that it was also "effortful and uncertain" vocally, that Schiøtz was "taxed to reach a G."

As our acquaintance broadened, I discovered the reasons why Schiøtz had come to America when he did. (My first question drew the response that, yes, he had been warned that it was too soon after surgery, but he had begun to sing in Copenhagen nonetheless only weeks before.) The first reason he gave was the gnawing human necessity to know whether he could face an audience again; the second, he confided, was simply financial need. Following the expensive surgery, he had been advised to seek tranquility in a long (and costly) sea voyage. It took him from Denmark to



South America, across the Pacific, and back again to Europe through the Suez Canal. The two things taken together, and the need to provide for a wife and four (eventually five) children, made inescapable a return to the one thing he knew: public performance.

Some months later, I received a Christmas greeting from Schiøtz which contained the following note: "Health is improving and voice too. Apparently it was mad to come to New York last year, but I learned more there in three months than I would have learned at home in three years. So it was not lost." In the years that followed, I would meet Schiøtz often in the oddly unexpected places where a performer's path and that of an itinerant critic might cross: at Perpignan during a Casals Festival; in Boulder, Colorado, where Schiøtz was teaching at the University of Colorado; and most recently in St. Paul, Minnesota, a few years ago, where he had been invited to attend the American première of Carl Nielsen's opera *Maskarade*.

In other circumstances—perhaps if he had been prevented from singing altogether—Schiøtz might have reaped something sizable from his treasury of recordings. Before his voice was impaired, he had recorded a total of more than two hundred sides (as documented in a fine discography published in 1966 by the National Diskoteket of Copenhagen), of which many were Danish materials not readily marketable elsewhere. Outside Scandinavia, where many of the communal musical properties (Grieg, Nielsen, Svendsen) *did* circulate, record companies were—as they notoriously are—loath to perpetuate discs by living, but no longer prominent, performers. Angel has been a conspicuously creditable exception to this rule: its three discs of "The Art of Axel Schiøtz" contain, in their Seraphim reissues, fourteen Nielsen songs (Vol. I, 60112), Schubert's *Die Schöne Müllerin* (Vol. II, 60140) with Gerald Moore as the incomparable collaborator, and another of selections with orchestra (Vol. III, 60227) ranging from the superb "Comfort ye, my people" and "Every valley" from Handel's *Messiah* to six great Mozart arias. These three records would in themselves be sufficient to make any tenor's reputation. But they were not enough for Schiøtz, for he was not "any tenor."

Perhaps the happiest thing that happened to Schiøtz in his years of unhappiness was the appearance in the United States in the early Fifties of his famous recording, with Gerald Moore, of Schumann's *Dichterliebe* (RCA LCT 1132) backed with the historic performance of the same work by Charles Panzéra (with pianist Alfred Cortot), a baritone of an earlier generation. It was an instance of corporate *noblesse oblige* that might well be emulated in these latter days of duplicated riches. The suggestion for the coupling came to me from a correspondent who asked me to relay it to RCA. I had reason to believe that Panzéra would be the last artist in the world to object to having his performance bracketed with one by Schiøtz. During his only visit to America (in the summer of 1948, when he conducted a master class at the Juilliard School), I became acquainted with both Panzéra and his wife, and I introduced them to the Schiøtz recording of *Dichterliebe*. After sampling a few songs, he turned to his wife, fellow professional and pianist Madeleine Panzéra-Baillet, and exclaimed: "But this is unbelievable! I have never heard such vocal art!"

Another twenty-five years of listening and a

recent rehearing of the Schjøtz-Moore *Dichterliebe* have, I think, given me an insight I did not then have into Panžera's meaning. There is, as anyone can hear, a remarkable legato line throughout Schjøtz's reading of the cycle, an uncanny interrelation of word and tone, a smooth, gearless shift from *piano* to *forte* and back again. But, if you listen in a particular state of awareness, you may suddenly become conscious as well, as I lately did, of something you do *not* hear: any intake of air, any sense of a note's being truncated because it lies in an awkward place, or consonants unpronounced because their omission might make the singer's task easier. To state it affirmatively, one is aware of a breath support so complete, so uninterrupted, that the vocal statement sounds as effortless as it must have been effortful to master.

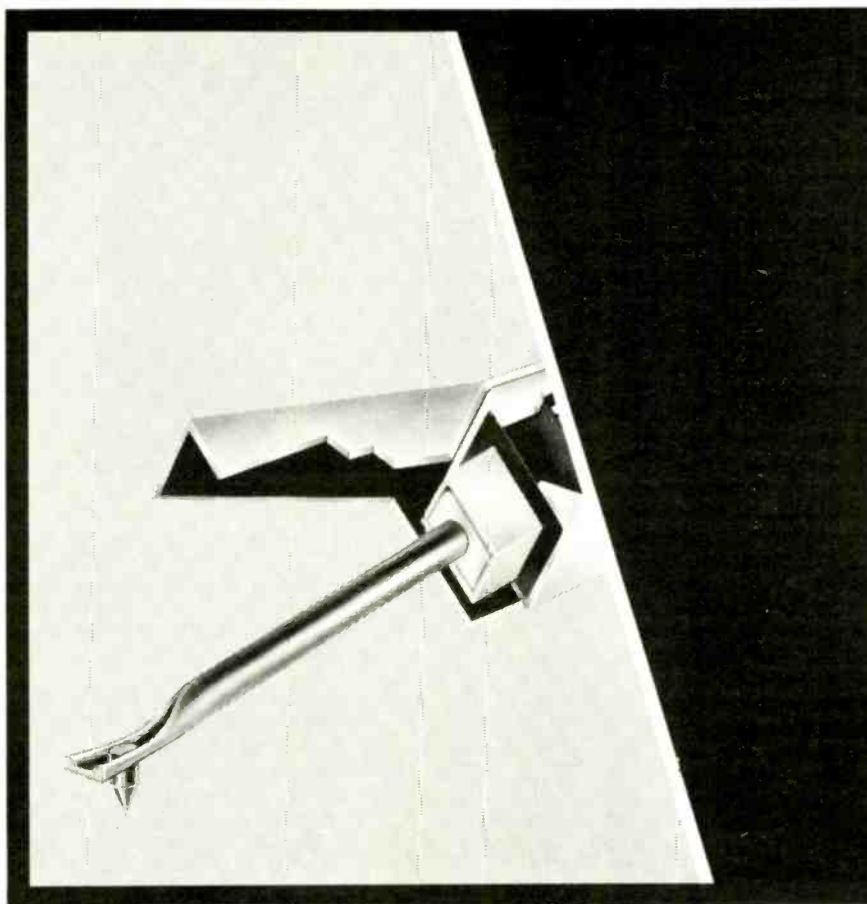
Perhaps the best demonstration of what Panžera characterized as "unbelievable" comes in the five-part series of "*Danske Sange*" which accounts for nearly one hundred of Schjøtz's numerous song recordings (EMI/Odeon E 051-37021/5, \$5.99 each at import outlets). Jacket information about the contents is restricted to the names of the songs, their composers, and their poets (when known); no text, let alone translation, is offered. Lacking even a word of Danish, I was nevertheless enthralled as song succeeded song and side succeeded side. Merely by inflection alone, Schjøtz kept me with him all the way, never in the least doubt just what emotion was at issue. Whatever the shade of sadness (grave, pensive, wistful) or of gladness (quiet, triumphant, exultant), it was all there in the Schjøtz sound. It was a sound pure, fervent, square on pitch, intensely individual—and, sadly, never the same after the surgeon had done his life-preserving work.

Taken together, these five discs memorialize Schjøtz as something more than a great vocalist, a prime artist, or a performing personality. He was a man born to do one thing, and to do it supremely well—to sing. This applies no less to Oscar Rasbach's *Trees* and Cole Porter's *Night and Day* (both of which he recorded in the summer of 1941 in flawless English) than to Grieg's setting of Hans Christian Andersen's *Jeg Elsker Dig* (one of the least effusive and most eloquent versions of that great love song ever), or to the simple strains of *Mor Danmark*, performed almost daily by Schjøtz during the occupation.

WHEN one has heard, say, a hundred and fifty performances of Schjøtz on record in a week's time (there is a further collection of seven LP's on Danish Odeon—MOAK 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 19, and 20—which duplicates much of the content already mentioned but searches out some other matter as well), one is impelled to recognize one basic fact: Schjøtz was a rare order of artist, one who fulfilled completely the precept that the style should be the man. He was thoroughly consistent in singing the way he lived and in living the way he sang, a man who faced up to the challenge of his tragically shortened career as courageously as he did to the invaders—not conquerors—of his beloved country.

One of the greatest of all his performances was of Haydn's "*Mit Würd und Hoheit Angetan*," from *The Creation*. In it, he made such words as "*ein Mann und König der Natur*" ("a man and king of nature") live for us because they were words by which he himself lived. Aksel Schjøtz died of cancer on April 19, 1975.

AUGUST 1975



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CLASSICAL DISCS AND TAPES

Reviewed by RICHARD FREED • DAVID HALL • GEORGE JELLINEK • IGOR KIPNIS
PAUL KRESH • ERIC SALZMAN

J. S. BACH: *St. Matthew Passion*. Karl Erb (tenor), Evangelist; Willem Ravelli (bass), Jesus; Jo Vincent (soprano); Ilona Durigo (contralto); Louis van Tulder (tenor); Herman Schey (bass); Amsterdam Tonkunst Choir; Zanglust Boys Choir; Concertgebouw Orchestra, Amsterdam, Willem Mengelberg cond. PHILIPS 6747-168 three discs \$23.94.

Performance: **Imposing**
Recording: **Good for its age (1939)**

The *St. Matthew Passion* is one of those monumental works that literally demand stereo, what with its drama enacted on various levels (action, narration, contemplation), its double choruses, its divided orchestras. And, since there are a number of fine stereo versions in the catalog to suit virtually all tastes, Philips's reissue of an actual performance recorded on Palm Sunday, 1939, is not intended to compete with them. Historically, however, this is a significant set because of its conductor Willem Mengelberg, who was something of a giant in those days, and tenor Karl Erb, the outstanding Evangelist of his time.

Mengelberg's reading was found "eccentric" by some critics when this recording first appeared here some twenty years ago on Columbia SL-179. "Romanticized" would be a fairer assessment, perhaps, for it is characteristic of the nineteenth-century view of Bach: large forces deployed in a large-scale manner. Mengelberg's tempos seem quite sensible, and, if he goes in for some violent dynamic

contrasts or heavy retards, he is by no means the only conductor to have done so. At least he offers a *dramatic* performance.

Erb's Evangelist is worthy of its fame—profoundly moving, with every word eloquently projected. It cannot be denied, however, that several Evangelists in the modern recordings (Pears, Häfliger, Altmeyer) are comparable to Erb's, which was once a unique recorded achievement.

Mengelberg's singers may not number such outstanding vocal personalities among their ranks as Christa Ludwig, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, and Nicolai Gedda (who are heard on the Klemperer-directed Angel S-3599), but they form a well-balanced ensemble without any weak points. Sonically, the vocal numbers are reasonably well captured, but the choral and orchestral reproduction cannot satisfy today's demands despite Philips' clean reprocessing in electronic stereo. It should also be added that this version is far from complete: several important arias and choruses are omitted, particularly in Part Two. As a historical memento, though, it is eminently listenable. *G.J.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

BEETHOVEN: *Seven Bagatelles, Op. 33; Six Bagatelles, Op. 126*. Glenn Gould (piano). COLUMBIA M 33265 \$6.98.

Performance: **Irresistible**
Recording: **Very good**

The Op. 33 Bagatelles are among Beethoven's earliest creations: one or two of them were apparently written before his teens (but revised in his early thirties, when the set was published). They are not heard frequently, and Glenn Gould communicates their sunny inventiveness and wit with such charm that he must be forgiven the insistent vocal obbligato that accompanies his keyboard work. The later and more substantial Op. 126 set is ornamented with a similar vocal contribution, but the freshness and imaginativeness of Gould's characterization of these six pieces is even more striking than in the earlier seven. Some of his tempos are conspicuously unorthodox, but they are without exception irresistibly persuasive—particularly in No. 4 in B Minor,

whose rumbustious humor is so much more delectable at Gould's jaunty but unhurried pace (*à la* Gottschalk, leaning toward ragtime) than in the scramble of a true *presto*. The recording, which does keep Gould's light baritone to a murmur, presents a realistic image of his instrument. There are several more important piano records among this year's releases, but none, I think, more downright enjoyable than this one. *R.F.*

BEETHOVEN: *Violin Concerto in D Major, Op. 61*. Arthur Grumiaux (violin); Concertgebouw Orchestra, Amsterdam, Colin Davis cond. PHILIPS 6500 775 \$7.98.

BEETHOVEN: *Violin Concerto in D Major, Op. 61*. Henryk Szeryng (violin); Concertgebouw Orchestra, Amsterdam, Bernard Haitink cond. PHILIPS 6500 531 \$7.98. © 7300 275 \$8.98.

Performances: **Both excellent in their differences**
Recordings: **Both excellent**

As if it were not strange enough to have a label competing with itself at all, we have here not only two of the best musicians in the business as competing soloists, but both of them recording with the same orchestra. Moreover, this is each violinist's third time around on records with the Beethoven concerto.

Even so, this is no case of Tweedledum and Tweedledee. For a starter, Szeryng uses the Joachim cadenzas, while Grumiaux opts for the Kreisler. Szeryng favors both a wider vibrato than in his 1965 Mercury recording and an almost expansively romantic approach to the music—an essentially *Mittel Europa* view that evokes memories of Adolf Busch. Here one can discern, perhaps, the influence of conductor Bernard Haitink. Grumiaux and Colin Davis, for their part, are all aristocratic elegance and enchanting lyricism, bringing to an essentially classically styled reading a shade more rhythmic tautness than is the case with the Szeryng-Haitink team.

In short, then, we have two fine and different readings to choose from here, both graced with full-bodied and well-balanced sound. Of course, there are still Heifetz, Oistrakh, Milstein, Stern, etc., etc. *D.H.*

Explanation of symbols:

- Ⓜ = reel-to-reel stereo tape
- Ⓢ = eight-track stereo cartridge
- ⓐ = stereo cassette
- Ⓛ = quadraphonic disc
- Ⓡ = reel-to-reel quadraphonic tape
- ⓑ = eight-track quadraphonic tape
- Ⓒ = quadraphonic cassette

Monophonic recordings are indicated by the symbol Ⓜ

The first listing is the one reviewed; other formats, if available, follow it.

BRITTEN: *The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra* (see PROKOFIEV)

DEBUSSY: *Fantaisie for Piano and Orchestra; Danse Sacrée et Danse Profane; Clarinet Rhapsody; Saxophone Rhapsody*. Aldo Ciccolini (piano); Guy Dangain (clarinet); Jean-Marie Londeix (saxophone); Marie-Claire Jamet (harp, in *Danses*); French National Radio Orchestra, Jean Martinon cond. ANGEL S-37065 \$6.98.

DEBUSSY: *Jeux (Poème Dansé); Images pour Orchestre*. French National Radio Orchestra, Jean Martinon cond. ANGEL S-37066 \$6.98.

Performances: **Strong**
Recordings: **Good**

Angel's Debussy orchestral series with Martinon and the French Radio Orchestra began with an album of arrangements and oddities; these are the second and third albums. Volume 2 consists of three relatively obscure concerted works, the early *Fantaisie*—apparently never performed in Debussy's lifetime and curiously unpopular since—as well as the Clarinet and Saxophone Rhapsodies and the Sacred and Profane Dances, all "occasional" works of modest merit. Volume 3 begins with *Jeux*, once equally obscure but now quite thoroughly rehabilitated. (*Jeux*, a kind of *Sacre du Printemps* in tennis shoes, was premiered within a few days of the Stravinsky heresy and was consequently overshadowed by it.) Of the *Images pour Orchestre*, only the *Ibéria* is really popular, although the complete set turns up rather often these days and was recently recorded by Boulez in his Debussy series with the New York Philharmonic.

It is difficult not to compare the two new performances of *Jeux*, since Boulez was largely responsible for the restoration of that unusual work to favor. Martinon is altogether more engaging and, in a sense, more "French" (in the cliché meaning). He makes a nice sound, he aims to please, and he succeeds. The electric tension, the clarity of rhythm and color, and the special energy that Boulez brings is missing; Martinon's *Jeux* is softer and more flowing. And the French Radio group is not really as good an orchestra as the New York Philharmonic. In the *Images*, the same differences hold, but in the lesser music Martinon is exceptionally convincing. These are attractive performances and recordings, and the listener who prefers his Debussy in the pure, traditional, "French-impressionist" manner may even prefer them to Boulez's versions. E.S.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

HADZIDAKIS: *For a Little White Seashell, Preludes and Dances for Piano, Op. 1*. SKALKOTTAS: *Suite for Piano, No. 3*. PONIRIDY: *Rythmes Grecs*. Nicolas Constantinidis (piano). MUSICAL HERITAGE SOCIETY MHS 3055 \$3.50 (plus 75¢ handling charge from the Musical Heritage Society, 1991 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023).

Performance: **Greek music lives**
Recording: **Very good**

The piano music of three twentieth-century Greek composers writing in widely different styles makes for a fascinating program. Manos Hadzidakis, born in 1925, achieved world fame through the sensuous allure of his music for the movie *Never on Sunday*, and themes (Continued overleaf)

“... those big, beefy pizzicatos of his...”



YEHUDI MENUHIN: expansive



ITZHAK PERLMAN: polished

A Pair of "Kreutzers"

BECAUSE of what struck me as unevenness in the total production of Deutsche Grammophon's big 1970 bicentennial release of all of Beethoven's works for piano and violin, I tended to undervalue Wilhelm Kempff and Yehudi Menuhin's splendid account of the *Kreutzer* Sonata when I listened to it back then. I am happy to report that that marvelous recording can now be better appreciated—and richly enjoyed—on its own. As it happens, Deutsche Grammophon's reissue comes at the same time as the first installment in another "integral" survey of the Beethoven violin sonatas, on London, and I would think one or the other of these records might well head the list of currently available *Kreutzers*.

Menuhin and Kempff had never performed with each other before they made their Beethoven recordings, but each had been playing the music for decades (and each had made two earlier recordings of the *Kreutzer*), and, as Menuhin remarked, "We understood each other instantly." That is exactly what their *Kreutzer* suggests: their mutual concept, both impassioned and expansive, has the soaring feel of inspired improvisation—big, unrestricted, quintessentially romantic in the best sense. Vladimir Ashkenazy and Itzhak Perlman, on the other hand, have performed together and have recorded jointly before: both are superb artists and superb collaborators, but after exposure to the winged intensity of the Kempff/Menuhin performance, the younger performers may seem relatively detached—even a little cautious—in their approach.

To start with the final movement (after all, that is where Beethoven began): Ashkenazy

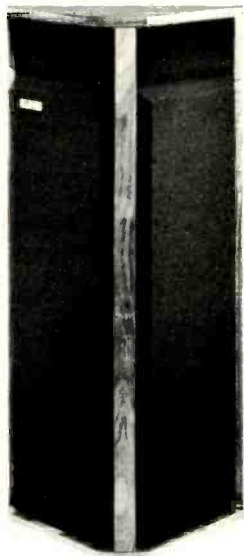
and Perlman play only a shade below the traditional *presto* speed, but their version seems to lack momentum: Kempff and Menuhin play at a conspicuously slower pace, and theirs shines with life. Vitality, in this case, is more a matter of spirit than of velocity. In the opening movement this is felt no less forcefully: Perlman is the smoother of the two violinists, but Menuhin is the more fiery, and the occasional roughness of his tone only underscores this exciting quality: those big, beefy pizzicatos of his make other fiddlers' efforts sound perfunctory—a small point, perhaps, but one that plays its part in defining the character of the performance. Kempff, of course, never threatens to boil over at the keyboard, but at the unhurried pace he and Menuhin favor, the calm authority and delicacy of the pianist make him an effective counterbalance for the violinist's more impulsive thrusts. Ashkenazy and Perlman, to a degree, simply reverse this balance, with the violinist the more "tidy" and the pianist essaying the grander strokes. Personally, I find the sense of pulse in the Kempff/Menuhin recording more compelling. I'm aware, though, that some listeners will find this version exaggerated; for them the polished, if less adventurous, Ashkenazy/Perlman will yield its own measure of satisfaction. Both of the lighter sonatas are delightfully done, and the recorded sound in both cases is very good indeed.

—Richard Freed

BEETHOVEN: *Sonata No. 9, in A Major, Op. 47 ("Kreutzer"); Sonata No. 8, in G Major, Op. 30, No. 3*. Wilhelm Kempff (piano); Yehudi Menuhin (violin). DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 135 \$7.98.

BEETHOVEN: *Sonata No. 9, in A Major, Op. 47 ("Kreutzer"); Sonata No. 2, in A Major, Op. 12, No. 2*. Vladimir Ashkenazy (piano); Itzhak Perlman (violin). LONDON CS-6845 \$6.98.

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from that score, including a fragment from the title song, can be heard in the miniatures that make up his suite of preludes and dances called *For a Little White Seashell*. But what seasons the suite is the tang of Prokofiev. Indeed, one of the pieces is entitled *Conversation with Prokofiev* and wittily calls up the manner of the Russian master. The five pairs of preludes and dances that make up the suite employ such Greek forms as the *syrtos*, the *mandinada* (or dialogue), a lively *ballos*, and a *calamationos* in 7/8 time; a *sousa* (which means "spring") closes the action with bright, leaping figurations. Economy of means and fluent charm mark this attractive work.

Nikos Skalkottas (1904-1949) studied in Germany under Kurt Weill and Arnold Schoenberg, and it is Schoenberg's influence that can be heard in the "polychords" and driving complexities of his dark music. Yet popular Greek motifs underlie the minuet, the theme with variations, and the march that make up his Suite for Piano, No. 3, written in his later style, which was atonal but not serial. This composer was largely ignored in his lifetime, but his advanced music has recently been getting the attention it well deserves.

The third aspect of Greek music to be heard here is the open, energetic, and highly folkish one of George Poniridy, now in his eighties. His *Rythmes Grecs* is constructed of six short sections evoking the music of various regions in ancient and modern Greece, but vigor and invention do not allow the suite to be a mere musical travelog.

Greek pianist Nicolas Constantinidis proves equal to all the challenges inherent in the complications and shifts in musical language in the course of his absorbing concert, and the album notes are unusually insightful and informative. P.K.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

HANDEL: Chamber Cantatas: *Delirio amoroso: Nel dolce del' oblio*. Magda Kalmár (soprano); Ferenc Liszt Chamber Orchestra, Sándor Frigyes cond. HUNGAROTON SLPX 11653 \$6.98.

Performance: **Very good**

Recording: **Excellent**

Among the chamber cantatas the young Handel wrote on his arrival in Italy (around 1707-1708) are, according to Paul Henry Lang, many authentic masterpieces. Furthermore, Lang says, "they represent an idea bank in which Handel deposited funds that lasted for the remaining half century of his life." The accuracy of these remarks hit home almost immediately as I listened to this Hungaroton release and discovered that the orchestral background to one of the arias in *Delirio amoroso* was identical to the bouncy tune of the fourth movement of Handel's Sonata for Violin and Harpsichord in D, Op. 1, No. 13.

Delirio amoroso is rather lengthy, consisting of a French-style operatic overture, four full arias with appropriate recitatives, and some orchestral interludes. The orchestral writing provides for virtuosic stints for the solo violin, cello, recorder, and oboe. *Nel dolce del' oblio* is short and calls only on the violin soloist for exposed solo passages. Both are pastoral pieces set to negligible texts, but both are musically interesting—parts of *Delirio amoroso* quite strikingly so.

Magda Kalmár, a young Hungarian soprano, is a well-trained singer with an agree-

(Continued on page 99)

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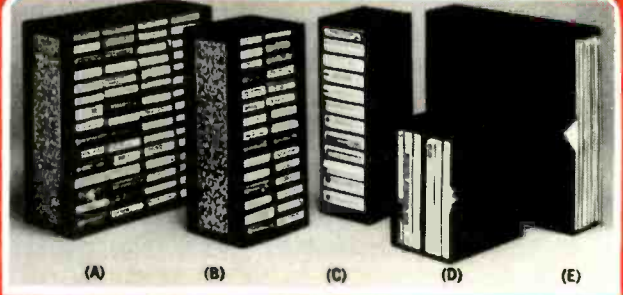
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able vocal timbre. Her intonation is pure, and her coloratura technique, while not dazzling, is expert enough to give an impressive account of her quite demanding part. The first-desk players of the Ferenc Liszt Chamber Orchestra (particularly oboist Péter Pongrácz, violinist János Rolla, and recorder soloist László Czidra) carry out their assignment with distinction, and the engineering is ideal. *G.J.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

HAYDN: *String Quartet in G Major, Op. 76, No. 1; String Quartet in B-flat Major, Op. 76, No. 4 ("Sunrise").* Amadeus Quartet. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 089 \$7.98.

Performance: **Exemplary**
Recording: **Very good**

One would expect all six of Haydn's Op. 76 quartets to be as abundantly represented on records now as his twelve "London" symphonies, but, according to Schwann, there is only one "integral" recording of this magnificent demi-dozen at present, and until the release of the present disc No. 2 in D Minor and No. 3 in C Major had for some time been the only parts of Op. 76 available separately. No one familiar with the Amadeus recordings of those two works (both paired with Mozart quartets on Deutsche Grammophon) should need any encouragement to buy the new record of Nos. 1 and 4 beyond the mere announcement of its availability. The Amadeus has recorded far more Mozart and Beethoven, but has reached its highest level. I think, in its exemplary Haydn, perhaps because the group's collective musical personality most nearly matches Haydn's own—with emphasis on style, taste, and a peculiarly aristocratic vitality. Such younger ensembles as the Tokyo Quartet and the Alban Berg Quartet will undoubtedly have a good deal to say about this music in the years ahead, but this beautiful record can stand as a model of all that is best in the playing of string quartets. Now Nos. 5 and 6, please. *R.F.*

HAYDN: *String Quartet in G Minor, Op. 74, No. 3; String Quartet in C Major, Op. 76, No. 3* (see Best of the Month, page 72)

KODÁLY: *Summer Evening; Hungarian Rondo; Suite from Háry János; Ballet Music; Theatre Overture; Dances of Marosszék; Dances of Galánta; Peacock Variations; Concerto for Orchestra; Minuetto Serio; Symphony in C Major.* Philharmonia Hungarica, Antal Dorati cond. LONDON CSA 2313 three discs \$20.94.

Performance: **Lithe and vital**
Recording: **Excellent**

Unlike his lifelong friend, Béla Bartók, Zoltán Kodály appears to have achieved the greatest and most effective concentration of his creative gifts in his choral works, most notably in the *Psalms Hungaricus* (1923), *Budavari Te Deum* (1936), and the *Missa Brevis* (1945). The orchestral works were more or less peripheral to the core of his interests, particularly after World War One. Nevertheless, the eleven works recorded by Antal Dorati and the Philharmonia Hungarica for London, making up the whole of Kodály's output for symphony orchestra, do have their special points of fascination and occasionally display high achievement.

(Continued overleaf)



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Foremost in the category of high achievement I would place the Concerto for Orchestra, a terse and mettlesome piece that combines Classical tradition and Magyar folk roots in a brilliantly effective fashion, though it is painted on a somewhat less expansive canvas than Bartók's celebrated work of the same name, completed some three years later. Not far behind the Concerto in my estimation come the *Peacock Variations*, based on an old Hungarian folk tune. The justly popular *Háry János Suite* needs no further commentary here. As for the two sets of dances, I always have preferred the more compact and musically more substantial *Marosszék* series, written originally for piano, to the better-known *Galánta*. Among the more fascinating minor surprises is the Ballet Music—a grotesque Dragon Dance intended for *Háry János*, which comes surprisingly close to the Bartóki-ian idiom—and the bitter-sweet *Minuetto Serio* (taken from the stage piece *Czinka Panna*), which is redolent of Ravel's *Tombeau de Couperin*. The Symphony is superbly crafted, but I find its content rather bloodless except in the superb slow movement. *Summer Evening*, the Hungarian Rondo, and the Theatre Overture (a curtain-raiser for *Háry János*) are all of lesser moment.

Antal Dorati and his orchestra of Hungarian expatriates are totally in their element in this kind of music, which they dig into with enormous zest and a rhythmic litheness not often encountered in the general run of performances by major orchestras. There are times when I would have wished for a bigger string sound, especially in the *Peacock Variations*, but the ensemble as a whole plays beautifully.

London has done a splendid recording job here, achieving a deep stereo perspective that shows to fine advantage in the echo fanfares of the *Háry János* battle episode. *D.H.*

KURKA: *The Good Soldier Schweik, Suite* (see WEILL)

LISZT: *Dante Symphony*. La Psallete de Lorraine; Orchestra of Radio Luxembourg. Pierre Cao cond. CANDIDE □ QCE 31082 \$4.98.

Performance: **Alert**
Recording: **Adequate**

Liszt's *Faust Symphony* has fared well in

recorded documentation—two good and one outstanding stereo issues, by Bernstein, Ansermet, and Beecham, respectively—but its companion piece, based on Dante's *Inferno* and *Purgatorio* and rounded off with a choral *Magnificat*, has done quite poorly. The ancient mono recordings by Alfred Wallenstein (Decca) and F. Charles Adler (SPA) failed to do justice to an admittedly problematic score, and the early stereo Urania issue with George Sebastian did not represent any substantial improvement.

The Candide label has now given us a recording that is at least a step in the right direction: the sound is generally good, despite its somewhat confined radio-studio quality, and the performance is alert, if not the very last word in big-time orchestral virtuosity. The *Dante Symphony* is a less well-integrated piece than the *Faust Symphony*. However, I find its finest moments more striking than any in the *Faust* score except the best of the Gretchen music and some of the more ironic touches in the Mephistopheles movement. For the present, we can be grateful to Candide for giving us the first reasonably adequate recorded realization of a neglected major Liszt orchestral work. But perhaps one of the major labels will bring a topflight conductor and orchestra together to give this music the *outstanding* recorded performance it deserves. Only then can we really evaluate it accurately. *D.H.*

MAHLER: *Symphony No. 4, in G Major*. Judith Blegen (soprano); Chicago Symphony Orchestra, James Levine cond. RCA ARL1-0895 \$6.98, Ⓜ ARS1-0895 \$7.98, Ⓒ ARK1-0895 \$7.98.

Performance: **Gorgeous**
Recording: **Likewise**

James Levine's recording of Mahler's First Symphony, with the London Symphony Orchestra, received a warm welcome in these pages last May, and the virtues David Hall cited in his review are largely evident again in this gorgeous Fourth. The approach is less straightforward this time, but everywhere there is clarity, phenomenal attention to detail, and an obviously deep feeling for the music—set off by the finest orchestral playing and probably the finest reproduction of it yet offered in a recording of this work. Dozens of previously unnoticed details in the scoring are

brought to the fore, and for the most part the blend of voluptuousness and innocence is intoxicating. I am left with the feeling, however, that the inner movements are a good deal more convincing than the outer ones in this performance: in the first movement I found myself admiring the execution more than being swept along—as if everything were set out *too* beautifully to come to life—and the finale lacks something of the spontaneity one wants in this music to give it real continuity.

Judith Blegen is always an intelligent and attractive singer; here she is mindful of Mahler's (and, no doubt, Levine's) injunction to perform "without a trace of parody"—but there is also not a trace of *radiance*. How does one define such a quality, let alone measure it? It is terribly subjective, of course; I can only report that I missed it, and found instead a certain degree of self-consciousness, both orchestrally and vocally, that spoils the movement for me. Some of those "previously unnoticed details" are emphasized to the point of burlesque, and there is a sense of constantly pulling back, until the music almost comes to a standstill.

The two inner movements, though, are exceptionally persuasive. Levine's tempos are broad, his slow movement extremely leisurely but with nothing the least bit static about it. It flows, in fact, more convincingly than any other part of the work: he has found a (not necessarily *the*) natural pulse for the Adagio, and the momentum is superbly sustained. This movement is extraordinarily beautiful; Levine's fastidious regard for internal balance and subtle dynamic shadings ensures the sort of clarity that really illumines the score instead of merely X-raying it.

No one could be blamed for being seduced by the magnificent projection of the great Adagio, or simply by the outstanding orchestral playing in all four movements, but the curious failure of the outer ones to come to life is as much emphasized by the marvelous technical work (both musical and electronic) as compensated for by it. It may not be necessary to spend more than \$3.98, the price of the late Paul Kletzki's Seraphim disc (with soprano Emmy Loose, S-60105), to enjoy a thoroughly satisfying Mahler Fourth—unless you feel that the 1958 recording shows its age now, in which case the characteristically idiomatic and more brightly recorded performance under Rafael Kubelik, at full price

Trio Bell' Arte (Susanne Lautenbacher, Ulrich Koch, and Thomas Blees): ingratiating Mozart *Divertimento*



(with Elsie Morison, Deutsche Grammophon 139 339). will justify the extra outlay. *R.F.*

MASSENET: *La Navarraise* (see Best of the Month, page 71)

MOZART: *Divertimento in E-flat Major (K. 563)*. Isaac Stern (violin); Pinchas Zukerman (viola); Leonard Rose (cello). COLUMBIA M 33266 \$6.98.

Performance: **Highly inflected**
Recording: **Sumptuous**

MOZART: *Divertimento in E-flat Major (K. 563)*. Trio Bell' Arte. TURNABOUT □ QTV-S 34567 \$4.98.

Performance: **Ingratiating**
Recording: **Warmly realistic**

These two performances of the greatest of all string trios contrast with each other fairly sharply all along the way, and I find more to enjoy in the one by the lesser-known Stuttgart team. That the all-stars on Columbia play the music beautifully need hardly be said, but they apparently see the work as a very large-scale one, and, it seems to me, are rather self-consciously insistent on reminding us of its greatness: in some sections themes are introduced with portentous sobriety and every note is weighted lest the drama be missed; in others (notably the final movement) there is a gratuitous romanticizing, as if the abundant charm of the work needed underscoring. While the recording itself is otherwise excellent, the cello is occasionally given unnatural prominence, even in passages in which the instrument has a purely rhythmic-supportive function. The Trio Bell' Arte players seem content to let the music speak for itself, in a frame of easygoing spontaneity—confidently aware, one might infer, that so sublime a masterwork has no need of interpretive enhancement. Susanne Lautenbacher, the Bell' Arte violinist, cannot match Stern for sweetness of tone, but she is thoroughly inside the music, and the mesh with her two associates (Ulrich Koch, as fine a violist as is active anywhere today, and the very solid cellist Thomas Blees) sustains the effect of ingratiating spontaneity most convincingly. Turnabout's four-channel sound (QS matrix) is less sumptuous, perhaps, than Columbia's stereo, but it does not lack for warmth, and the instrumental balance is always realistic.

Neither of these releases, beautiful as both are in their respective ways, displaces the elegant version of the Grumiaux Trio on Philips 802.803-L.Y., the *ne plus ultra* among all recordings of K. 563 to date. The Philips disc, however, does cost twice as much as the new Turnabout. *R.F.*

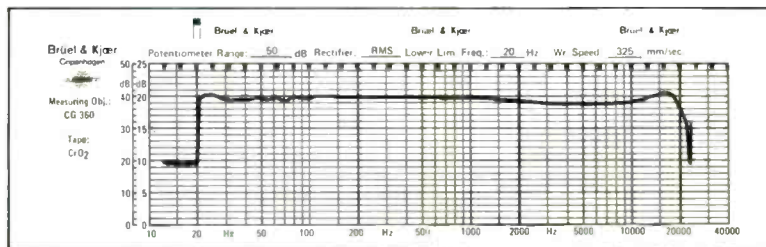
RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

MOZART: *String Quartets: No. 14, in G Major (K. 387); No. 15, in D Minor (K. 421); No. 16, in E-flat Major (K. 428); No. 17, in B-flat Major (K. 458, "The Hunt"); No. 18, in A Major (K. 464); No. 19, in C Major (K. 465, "Dissonant").* Quartetto Italiano. PHILIPS S-C 71AX301 three discs \$23.94.

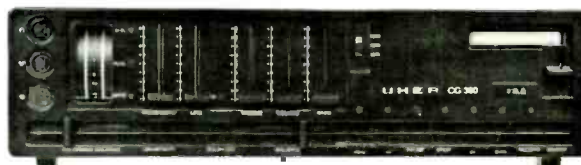
Performance: **Bel canto**
Recording: **Very good**

Strange as it may seem, the long-delayed American issue of this recording, available in England since 1967, makes the Quartetto Italiano the only ensemble currently represented
(Continued on page 103)

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The Minnesota Orchestra's Ravel

THE essentially "cool" interpretive approach of Stanislaw Skrowaczewski and the precision he insists on from his Minnesota Orchestra (formerly the Minneapolis Symphony) make both conductor and ensemble excellent choices for Vox's new quadrasonic recording of Ravel's orchestral works. This is the first major recording the able Minnesota Orchestra has done since breaking off its Mercury affiliation some years ago. And the performers are not all the four-disc Vox Box has going for it.

As producer of the Mercury recordings made between 1952 and 1956, I found the Northrop Memorial Auditorium, former home of the Minnesota Orchestra, just about impossible acoustically, and I rejoice in the good fortune represented by the new Orchestra Hall in Minneapolis (opened last October), where the Vox Ravel recordings were made. To my ear, on the evidence of these recordings, the hall is a real beauty [see the Editor's comments on the hall's opening, "Concert-Hall Surrealism," in the January issue]. Here are clarity, brilliance, and a wonderful sense of space—though I think it may take a bit more practice before the Vox engineers get everything there is to be had from Orchestra Hall in terms of optimal sonic focus of the orchestra as a whole.

It is in the most lightly scored works—the *Eventail de Jeanne* Fanfare (two minutes of magic!), *Le Tombeau de Couperin*, *Ma Mère l'Oye*, and the *Menuet Antique* with its astonishing touches of dissonance—that conductor and engineers score most tellingly. Solo-in-

strument aural "placement" is precise and clear—most particularly the wonderful oboe of Rhadames Angelucci in *Le Tombeau*—while the larger ensemble textures come through with fine transparency, enhanced in the QS-matrix quadrasonic recording by a judicious semi-surround distribution of the sound.

Of the more densely textured pieces, *Une Barque sur l'Océan* (Ravel's "La Mer") comes off best, if only because its great washes of sound don't demand the precise focus called for in the climaxes of such pieces as the *Alborada del Gracioso*, *Daphnis et Chloé*, *La Valse*, and *Boléro*. Without having been in the hall, it is hard to tell whether the tendency toward diffusion in these latter works is the fault of the hall or of poor microphone placement. This same diffusion factor is probably also responsible for a seeming lack of body in orchestral string bass and percussion in both *La Valse* and *Boléro*. Microphone and/or ensemble placement is definitely at fault. I think, in the choral sections of *Daphnis et Chloé*, especially in the Suite No. 1, where the *a cappella* choir should sound totally disembodied rather than so uncomfortably close.

ODD as it may seem, I found the most fascinating single interpretation in this whole album to be that of *Boléro*, which Skrowaczewski plays at the same stately tempo Ravel himself used in his 1930 recording (available on Turnabout 4256). Of course, the latest and best of today's recording technol-

ogy, applied in a superb new concert hall, does make a difference in one's overall impression of such a reading. This *Boléro* is no mere essay in orchestral *frissons*, let alone "fifteen minutes of orchestration without music," as the composer ironically put it, but rather an insidiously hypnotic North African ritual. Perhaps, in the context of the current work being done by the likes of Terry Riley and Steve Reich, this interpretation has a validity today that it could not have had in the cultural milieu of twenty or more years ago. I do wish that the Minnesotans' violin body had more bite and presence in the later pages of the score, but, even so, I think the recording provides fresh insight into Ravel's much maligned and interpretatively abused piece.

The Vox set is priced at only \$10.98, less than \$3 a disc, and, despite the minor reservations I have expressed, it is definitely an excellent buy. Moreover, I guarantee it will whet your appetite for more and even better productions from Vox in the company's future forays with the Minnesota forces.

—David Hall

RAVEL: *Menuet Antique; Pavane pour une Infante Defunte; Une Barque sur l'Océan; La Valse; Alborada del Gracioso; Rapsodie Espagnole; Ma Mère l'Oye (complete ballet version); Valses Nobles et Sentimentales; Daphnis et Chloé, Suites 1 and 2; Le Tombeau de Couperin; Fanfare, L'Eventail de Jeanne; Boléro.* St. Olaf Choir; Minnesota Orchestra, Stanislaw Skrowaczewski cond. Vox □ QSVBX 5133 four discs \$10.98.

in the Schwann catalog by all twenty-three of the Mozart string quartets. Only the mail-order Musical Heritage Society offers an alternative choice, with performances by the Bulgarian Quartet at a considerably lower price.

The six quartets Mozart dedicated to Haydn are among the towering miracles of chamber music, and have, of course, been the subject of many notable recorded performances, among them those by the Budapest Quartet (Odyssey, mono), the Amadeus (Deutsche Grammophon), and the Juilliard (in a short-lived Epic album). The Quartetto Italiano ranks right along with these ensembles as one of the world's finest and most musically cultivated, but they have a very distinctive playing style.

In using the term *bel canto* in the capsule commentary above, I mean it in the literal sense. This is to say that the Quartetto Italiano approach is that of maintaining a *singing* line throughout, with somewhat less emphasis on the purely formal and rhythmic aspects of the music than one encounters with Northern and Central European ensembles.

This singing quality comes to the fore in the G Major Quartet, which gets a volatile and sharply nuanced reading, graced by subtle and highly effective rubato touches. For my taste the interpretation of the somber D Minor Quartet is a bit over-refined, but the Italians cover themselves with glory in a deeply moving realization of the K. 428 slow movement. Except for a little heavy-handedness in the finale, K. 464 is another prize in the package, especially the opening movement, where the conversational ambiance is brought off with enormous flair and subtlety. The famous *Dissonant* Quartet gets a brilliant and highly nuanced reading, with the trio of the minuet movement an absolute gem of a performance. A further happy note is the excellence of the recorded sound—enough presence to provide intimacy and full-bodied tone, enough room reverberance to lend a halo of aural warmth.

One small unhappy note—the annotations in my review album were in German and French only. But that will probably be remedied in future production.

D.H.

OLDFIELD: *The Orchestral Tubular Bells*. Mike Oldfield (guitar); Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. David Bedford arr. and cond. VIRGIN VR 13-115 \$6.98, Ⓟ TP 13-115 \$7.98. © CS 13-115 \$7.98.

Performance: **Anglo-pop-Mahler-Sibellus**
Recording: **Effective**

Mike Oldfield's *Tubular Bells* was a kind of inspired one-man-band, multitrack, overdub improvisation in the Terry Riley hypnotic-pop vein. Now, as orchestrated by avant-garde composer David Bedford in the manner of Mahler and Sibelius, it has lost almost all the qualities of humor, invention, and brashness that made it endearing in the first place. Gone are the cave-man grunts and groans, the weird assortment of unusual instruments all doggedly superimposed by Oldfield himself, the suave B.B.C. announcements of instrumental entries, the slight pop-rhythmic eccentricities, and the sense of spellbinding crescendo. Instead, we have a superlatively tasteful orchestration, polished performance, and recording that tastefully soothes and exhilarates even as it reveals the weaknesses of free-association composition. What emerges is the ultimate film score for which the film has yet to be made (it will be, no doubt).

(Continued overleaf)

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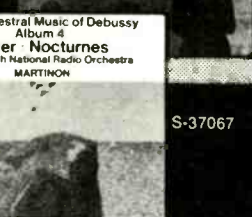
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Those who may be tempted to buy this recording to hear Oldfield solo with orchestra should be warned that there are only a couple of bars of solo guitar playing near the end of side two. *E.S.*

PONIRIDY: *Rythmes Grecs* (see HADZIDAKIS)

PROKOFIEV: *Peter and the Wolf, Op. 67.*
BRITEN: *The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra, Op. 34.* Will Geer (narrator); English Chamber Orchestra, Johannes Somary cond. VANGUARD □ VSQ 30033 \$7.98; VSD 71189 \$6.98.

Performance: **Good to brilliant**
Recording: **Superb**

The desirability of narration with one or the other of these deservedly popular scores is a matter of taste. Personally, I prefer the Britten without narration; but if narration there must be, the British manner certainly seems more fitting than Will Geer's Foxy Grampa approach. The Foxy Grampa does have a place of sorts in the Prokofiev, but for those who prefer something else, there is a representative of just about every other narrative style one can imagine among the dozen or so other *Peter and the Wolf* recordings.

The recording is the thing here, together with the wonderful performances of the English Chamber Orchestra, particularly the solo winds, in the Prokofiev. In quadrasonic playback the realistic presence of the instruments becomes almost frightening in its immediacy. Yet the overall balance remains excellent throughout (except for, occasionally, too much snare drum). The contrast between the quadrasonic and the two-channel discs is fascinating: the former amounts to cineramic semi-surround, with featured instruments decidedly centered; the two-channel disc offers more obvious lateral localization against a flatter acoustic backdrop.

The *Young Person's Guide* performance is of much the same character sonically, but I find it a bit less alert musically and close to stodgy in what should be a bracing and exciting display bit for the percussion.

I don't know what children will think of this record, but for sound buffs the quadrasonic disc is certainly something to have—along with such other remarkable four-channel Vanguard discs as the Stravinsky *Petrouchka* and the Mussorgsky *Pictures at an Exhibition* and *Khovantchina*. *D.H.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

RACHMANINOFF: *Études Tableaux, Op. 33 and Op. 39.* Jean-Philippe Collard (piano). CONNOISSEUR SOCIETY CS 2075 \$6.98.

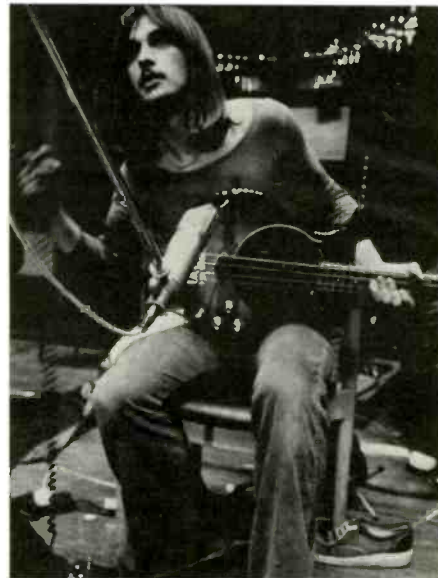
Performance: **Stunning**
Recording: **First-rate**

Jean-Philippe Collard, still in his twenties, is a musician to watch. He is yet another of the younger generation of pianists who, like our own Murray Perahia, excels in the Romantic repertoire, and, from what I have heard so far, his playing affords vast satisfaction and enjoyment. M. Collard comes to the Connoisseur Society label by way of a cross-licensing arrangement with Pathé-Marconi in France, and, in addition to this Rachmaninoff album, there are available a Schumann disc and a complete set of the Fauré Nocturnes (see Best of the Month, July).

The seventeen Rachmaninoff *Études Ta-*

bleaux, composed at the peak of the Russian master's creative powers, are among the most demanding and musically varied of all his solo piano works. A merely virtuosic performance, however, makes them seem empty, while a reading too heavy in sentiment obscures the truly fine craft that the composer lavished on these pieces. Happily, Collard has everything it takes to make this music work—virtuosity, intellect, and heart.

The tone is set at the very beginning with Collard's impetuous-sounding but sternly controlled reading of the impassioned Op. 39, No. 1, in C Minor. This is followed by an uncannily hypnotic treatment of the succeeding A Minor, with its *Dies Irae* ostinato and harmonic recollection of *The Isle of the Dead*. The F Minor, No. 1 of the Op. 33 set, is another special favorite of mine, and Collard



Virgin Records

MIKE OLDFIELD
Where has all the humor gone?

gives it a reading best described as tigerish. Perhaps the finest performance of all here is of the brooding Op. 33, No. 3. All told, this is a wonderful album. And if you happen to be afflicted with an aversion to Rachmaninoff, Collard just might be the one who can cure it. *D.H.*

CYRIL SCOTT: *Sonata No. 1, Op. 66; Danse Nègre; Lotus Land; Five Poëms.* Martha Anne Verbit (piano). GENESIS GS 1049 \$6.98.

Performance: **Perfumed and pretty**
Recording: **Very good**

Cyril Scott was one of five English composers (the "Frankfurt Five") who came back to Britain from their studies in Germany at the start of this century determined to dazzle English ears. Of the group, only Percy Grainger made it to popularity; Scott was considered the runt of the litter. By the time of his death in 1970, however, English audiences were turning again with interest to his post-Romantic, dreamy piano works. One side of this disc is devoted to his Piano Sonata No. 1, a labyrinthine, meandering dodo bird of a piece that features Scott's two specialties—parallel chords and what he called "irregular rhythm." It is pleasant enough music, but so amorphous and crepuscular in mood that it's hard to focus attention on, and it soon dissolves into the background where it goes on providing more atmosphere than substance. But then, in

Scott's music, it is always twilight, and a heavy jasmine scent saturates the musical air. Despite the ubiquitous perfume, the shorter works on side two, straight out of Debussy, Satie, and Griffes, are easier to grasp and to live with. The *Danse Nègre* is practically pure Debussy in his *Minstrels* mood, and *Lotus Land* is drenched in Oriental scent, but both are appealing. For the group of five *Poems* (the umlaut is the composer's, not mine), the excruciatingly dreadful texts of five pseudo-Oriental verses are supplied. I hope it is not his lines about distant mosques "roseate with the pale illuminating haze" that are bringing Scott's works their new audience in England, for the music itself remains attractive in its narcotic way. Miss Verbit, a fine pianist who has made her reputation with lectures on (as well as recitals of) the music of Scriabin, gives these pastel pieces a bit of an edge they sorely need. P.K.

SIBELIUS: *Finlandia* (see The Basic Repertoire, page 44)

SIBELIUS: *Symphony No. 5, in E-flat Major, Op. 82; En Saga, Op. 9.* Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, Paavo Berglund cond. ANGEL S-37104 \$6.98.

Performance: **Idiomatic**
Recording: **Very good**

SIBELIUS: *Symphony No. 5, in E-flat Major, Op. 82; Karelia Suite, Op. 11.* London Symphony Orchestra, Alexander Gibson cond. LONDON STS-15189 \$3.49.

Performance: **Very good**
Recording: **Good**

Paavo Berglund, who gave us the première recording of Sibelius' early *Kullervo* Symphony four years ago, shows again in these more familiar works both how fine a Sibelian he is and the high level of proficiency to which he has raised the Bournemouth orchestra. Interpretively, both performances on the new Angel disc can only be called idiomatic: they ring with the conviction born of long and devoted acquaintance with the material. I especially like the feeling of *lift* Berglund imparts at the outset of the finale, the way he sustains it throughout the movement, and his imaginative handling of those problematic final chords. It must be acknowledged, however, that his brass does tend to thin out a bit in the final pages, and the weight of his strings seems a little light for the demands made on them in *En Saga*.

The Gibson record was originally issued by RCA in 1960; it was transferred from Red Seal to Victrola a few years later, then deleted when the rights reverted to London. It is one of Gibson's very finest achievements, with the London Symphony at or near the top of its form and the sound quality not all that dated. The symphony's finale does not have quite the lift Berglund gives it, and the very end is rather prosaic, but there is glorious brass playing by way of compensation, and the *Karelia* Suite is brought off splendidly. At "half price," this is an excellent value.

Yet, for an outstanding Sibelius Fifth irrespective of price, Bernstein's, with his stunning account of *Pohjola's Daughter* as "filler" (Columbia MS 6749), is still the one to have, and no other current version of *En Saga* is quite as persuasive as Okko Kamu's, which is paired with his indispensable Sibelius Third (Deutsche Grammophon 2530 426). Ormandy's attractive performance of the *Karelia*

Suite is especially recommended as part of the package that includes his gorgeous performance of Alfvén's *Midsommarvaka* (Columbia MS 7674). R.F.

SKALKOTTAS: *Suite for Piano, No. 3* (see HADZIDAKIS)

JOHANN STRAUSS, JR.: *Die Fledermaus.* Gundula Janowitz (soprano), Rosalinde; Renate Holm (soprano), Adele; Waldemar Kmentt (tenor), Alfred; Eberhard Wächter (baritone), Eisenstein; Wolfgang Windgassen (tenor), Prince Orlofsky; Heinz Holecek (baritone), Falke; Erich Kunz (baritone), Frank; Erich Kuchar (tenor), Dr. Blind. Vienna State Opera Chorus; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Karl Böhm cond. LONDON OSA 1296 two discs \$13.96.

Performance: **Less than intoxicating**
Recording: **Excellent**

The reservations will outnumber the compliments in this review; let me therefore begin with the bouquets. After all, there is much to enjoy in this set — when an ever-fresh, joyous operetta is served up in *echt*-Viennese style, how can it be otherwise?

The veteran Karl Böhm paces the music with caressing affection, securing warm-toned playing from the Philharmoniker. His tempos are a bit leisurely in comparison with other recent recordings, but the music never loses its stimulating effect, and Böhm manages to point up a few happy orchestral touches other conductors have glossed over in more precipitous readings.

But if the cast glitters on paper, the gold is found mainly in the female roles. Gundula Janowitz is a somewhat remote and *too* lady-like Rosalinde, without the sauciness of a Schwarzkopf, Gueden, or Rothenberger, but her tonally immaculate singing is always welcome to the ear. Repeating her interpretation of Adele (which is one of the ornaments of the Boskofsky-directed Angel set), Renate Holm is all charm, temperament, and vocal expertise.

The men are a varied lot. Eberhard Wächter makes a ranting bully of Eisenstein, a part which should not be sung by a baritone to begin with (it was written for tenor). Waldemar Kmentt, the affable Eisenstein in the previous London set (under Karajan), is a somewhat effortful Alfred here, without the tonal allure his part calls for. Erich Kunz delivers the part of the prison warden Frank with debonair charm though in a mere thread of a voice, and Erich Kuchar does the drunken Frosch routine delightfully. Most baffling is the presence of Wolfgang Windgassen as Prince Orlofsky. In what may have been the late tenor's last phonographic appearance he seems thoroughly miscast and emphatically dull.

To add insult to the weaknesses of this production, *Fledermaus* has here been made into a series of isolated musical numbers without the dialogue that gives them continuity, a procedure that virtually eliminates the role of Falke, the prime mover of the plot (what remains of him is interpreted without distinction by Heinz Holecek). Since both London OSA 1249 and Angel S-3790 offer not only better but more complete treatments of *Die Fledermaus*, either of them is preferable to this new offering. G.J.

R. STRAUSS: *Ariadne auf Naxos.* Viorica Ursuleac (soprano), Ariadne; Helge Roswaenge

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(tenor), Bacchus; Miliza Korjus (soprano), Najade; Gertrude Rünger (contralto), Dryade; Ilonka Holndonner (soprano), Echo; Erna Berger (soprano), Zerbinetta; Karl Hammes (baritone), Harlekin; Benno Arnold (tenor), Scaramuccio; Eugen Fuchs (bass), Truffaldin; Erich Zimmermann (tenor), Brighella. Stuttgart Radio Orchestra, Clemens Krauss cond. BASF ® KBF 21806 two discs \$9.98.

Performance: **Very good**
Recording: **Dated**

If the liner notes are accurate, this set is a faithful reproduction of the third complete operatic performance ever broadcast in Germany. The old composer listened to the "epoch-making event" at home with his family, and afterwards communicated his fervent compliments to his devoted friend, Clemens Krauss. That was, of course, forty years ago, and the recorded sound that meets our ears is no better than such vintage productions usually are—perhaps even a bit worse. The orchestral sound is particularly weak, yet the conductor's authority clearly emerges in the seamless flow of the music, in his unsentimental but unhurried pacing.

As *Ariadne*, Viorica Ursuleac confirms a reputation which, on the basis of her later recordings, may seem unfounded. She builds her aria "Es gibt ein Reich" to an exciting climax with a secure B-natural, and she handles her part in the final scene impressively. Hers is a voice with a true dramatic ring, not entirely free of tonal blemishes, but expressive and imposing. Helge Roswaenge, ideally cast, is probably the best Bacchus on records, and Erna Berger, while not as spectacular as I perhaps expected her to be, is most certainly a first-rate Zerbinetta. Despite the presence of two stellar names (the third, Ilonka Holndonner, was then the wife of Roswaenge), the trio of nymphs does not match the ethereal blend achieved on some more modern recordings. The Scaramuccio and Brighella are adequate, and baritone Karl Hammes (who was to perish four years later as a Luftwaffe pilot) and bass Eugen Fuchs are excellent.

The set contains the "opera" only, without the Prologue. *Ariadne auf Naxos* has fared very well on records (my own favorite is Angel 3532, mono, with Elisabeth Schwarzkopf in the title role and Karajan conducting). This BASF set is in no way to be considered as an alternative to the modern recordings, but I recommend it as a valuable and still enjoyable historical document. G.J.

STRAVINSKY: *Les Noces (Orchestral Version, 1917)*; *Les Noces (Tableaux I and II, Chamber Version, 1919)*. Rosalind Rees (soprano); Rose Taylor (mezzo-soprano); Richard Nelson (tenor); Bruce Fifer (baritone); Gregg Smith Singers; Orpheus Chamber Ensemble, Robert Craft cond. *Symphonies of Wind Instruments (Revised Version, 1947)*; *Chant du Rossignol (Symphonic Poem)*. Columbia Symphony Orchestra, Robert Craft cond. COLUMBIA M 33201 \$6.98.

Performance: **Craft without Stravinsky**
Recording: **Okay**

The meat of this record is a pair of historical curiosities: Stravinsky's original thoughts about the instrumentation of *Les Noces*. This remarkable work—a kind of scenic cantata about a Russian peasant wedding—was completed in 1917, but it did not reach its final form (or performance) until 1923, when Stra-



I Musici: Tartini in twentieth-century dress

vinsky settled on the remarkable and unusual orchestration of four pianos and percussion. What we have here are the composer's discarded view of the piece as a chorus-and-orchestra cantata and a transitional attempt to score the piece for cimbaloms, harmonium, player piano, and percussion. The former is basically superfluous (except for its documentary value) and tells us nothing about the piece that we don't know already. The second version, much more interesting, is something else again. Stravinsky is said to have given it up (he scored only the first two scenes) because of the difficulty of synchronizing the player piano, but he must have had second thoughts about the cimbaloms as well since they did not appear in the final version (he did use this Hungarian instrument later on in *Mavra*). In any case, the cimbaloms certainly dominate the sound of this orchestration in a way that pianos do not.

The rest of this recording is taken up by competent performances of the *Symphonies of Wind Instruments* and the symphonic poem *Le Chant du Rossignol* (after Stravinsky's opera *Le Rossignol*), both composed in the same period as *Les Noces*. I will leave to others the question of whether Craft's performances can be called Stravinskyan by virtue of his longtime association with the master. In my opinion, much of the antagonism that used to be directed toward Stravinsky was, in his later years, transferred to Craft, himself a rather brilliant, mercurial, and difficult personality. His version of the *Chant du Rossignol* is like "modern music"—clear but without charm or finesse. The performance of the *Symphonies of Wind Instruments* is strong and reinforces the impression that this is one of Stravinsky's major accomplishments. E.S.

TARTINI: *Concertos for Violin, Strings, and Continuo: Concerto in A Major (D. 96)*; *Concerto in B-flat Major (D. 117)*; *Concerto in G Major (D. 78)*. Salvatore Accardo (violin); I Musici. PHILIPS 6500 784 \$7.98.

Performance: **Polished**
Recording: **Excellent**

Giuseppe Tartini, one of the most important figures of the eighteenth century in the development of the violin sonata and concerto and of violin technique, composed about 125 concertos for the violin. Generally speaking, these bridge the gap, stylistically, between the

Baroque concerto and the concertos of the later eighteenth century. They are most notable for showing off Tartini's melodic gifts, but equally interesting, especially from the standpoint of performance practice, for the composer's emphasis on proper ornamentation, embellishment (he provided numerous examples of "graced" slow movements, including one in the present G Major Concerto), and other interpretive and technical refinements. This new Philips release is one of the few recordings of Tartini's concerted violin writing in the catalog.

The thirty-four-year-old soloist, Salvatore Accardo, plays the concertos with admirable technical finish, and the performances are in some respects (trills are started correctly on the upper auxiliary, for instance) better than past performances. Still, a comparison with the stylistically superior playing to be heard on the now deleted Edvard Melkus record (DG Archiv 73270) reveals some shortcomings here, in spite of the fantastic polish of I Musici and Accardo. The approach is that of the technically seamless, long-line, modern style, heavy and rhythmically cumbersome in *fortes* yet blandly undifferentiated in phrasings and bowings in the slow movements. I am certain that I Musici is not about to change its playing style to match that of Melkus or such ensembles as the Vienna Concentus Musicus, nor should one necessarily condemn the Italian group for adhering to its manner of playing. There are indeed some lovely moments here, but listeners should be aware that this is Tartini clothed at least partially in twentieth-century dress. Philips has provided sumptuous sonics. I.K.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

VIVALDI: *La Stravaganza, Op. 4*. Carmel Kaine and Alan Loveday (violins); Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields. Neville Marriner cond. ARGO ZRG 800/801 two discs \$13.96.

Performance: **Inspiring**
Recording: **Excellent**

The twelve violin concertos that make up *La Stravaganza* may not quite match the astonishing melodic richness of those in Vivaldi's other collections of this sort—*L'Estro Armonico*, Op. 3, for example—but they are by no means deficient in good tunes and are perhaps the most striking of all in terms of rhythmic

vitality and color. In any event, they are surely too substantial to suffer the neglect that has been their lot: they are almost never performed in concert and have not been available on records for several years. The latter circumstance is most handsomely corrected with the release of this excellently played and recorded set: indeed, it would be hard to imagine how these inspiring performances could be bettered. They are played from a new performing edition prepared by Christopher Hogwood, whose editions of *L'Estro Armonico* and Corelli's Op. 6 Concerti Grossi were used in the Academy's recent Argo recordings of those works (and who again serves as one of the keyboard players in the continuo). In this set, as in those, the continuo is rich and varied—harpsichord, organ, a pair of theorbos, bassoon, and/or violone; the use of the organ in all but two of the opening fast movements may come as a surprise, but it is a most effective touch, enhancing the robust, warm character of those exuberant allegros.

Alternating the solo responsibilities between two violinists was another nice idea, and fully in keeping with the custom of Vivaldi's time; both soloists here are splendidly attuned to the style, and so similar in their approach that there is no jarring personality shift from one concerto to the next. If there is any complaint to be made, it might be that the harpsichord is too distantly recorded in spots—but, personally, I would rather have it this way than jangling away front-and-center as if it, and not the violin, were the solo instrument. Musical and sonic excellence characterize the entire set. *R.F.*

WAGNER: *Der Fliegende Holländer* (highlights). Hans Hotter (baritone), the Dutchman; Georg Hann (bass), Daland; Viorica Ursuleac (soprano), Senta; Karl Ostertag (tenor), Erik; Franz Klarwein (tenor), Steuermann; Louise Willer (contralto), Mary. Choir and Orchestra of the Munich State Opera. Clemens Krauss cond. BASF Ⓜ 21538 \$6.98.

Performance: **Of historical interest**
Recording: **Dated**

Veteran collectors will recall that this performance was once available, complete, on the Mercury label. The recording, dating from 1944, was considered mediocre even by early LP standards and shows its age even more now, but the performance is not without merit. Clemens Krauss paces the music with vigor and authority, but, of course, the antiquated sound of the orchestra limits his effectiveness.

It is a pleasure to rediscover Hans Hotter in his vocal prime, singing the Dutchman's music in tones of firmness and resonant warmth—qualities not found in his recordings of later years. Georg Hann in his brief scenes projects a Daland of exceptional vitality, and the two tenors are capable. The Senta of Viorica Ursuleac, however, is woefully inadequate. (She, too, was an eminent soprano once, but only her status as Madame Clemens Krauss can explain her appearance on this record. . . .) I recommend the disc only to those who wish to retain a souvenir of Hotter's superb Dutchman. *G.J.*

WAGNER: *Parsifal* (excerpts). James King (tenor), Parsifal; Gwyneth Jones (soprano), Kundry; Franz Crass (bass), Gurnemanz; Thomas Stewart (baritone), Amfortas; Donald McIntyre (baritone), Klingsor. Bayreuth Festival Chorus and Orchestra, Pierre Boulez

cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2536 023 \$7.98.

Performance: **Mostly good**
Recording: **Good**

This is the only single LP devoted to highlights from *Parsifal*, a lengthy opera that nonetheless is rarely abridged. The scenes have been skillfully edited and include the Prelude with the opening lines of Gurnemanz's greeting, Amfortas' first anguished soliloquy (Act I), the Klingsor-Kundry dialogue leading up to the appearance of the Flower Maidens (Act II), the Good Friday Scene, and the Final Scene (Act III). In allotting minimal exposure to the weak Kundry and the wobbly Klingsor, the disc shows the other principals to good advantage, particu-

larly Thomas Stewart, who sings Amfortas' music with moving eloquence. The conducting of Pierre Boulez is clear-textured and considerate of the singers, but those familiar with the Knappertsbusch or Solti interpretations will miss their massive power. *G.J.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

WEILL: *Three Penny Opera, Suite*. **KURKA: *The Good Soldier Schweik, Suite*.** Music for Westchester Symphony Orchestra. Siegfried Landau cond. CANDIDE CE 31089 \$4.98.

Performance: **First-rate**
Recording: **Very good**

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Robert Kurka's of war and its ways—makes up a record that deserves points for programming as well as for performance. Weill's suite from the *Three Penny Opera*, called in German *Kleine Dreigroschenmusik*, conveys a bitter humor that instantly identifies it as his work, not only in mocking, nervous tunes like the famous *Moritat*, in Polly's song of disillusionment, and in the deliberately awkward *Tango-Ballad*, but also in the dry, period orchestration so skillfully preserved in the composer's own symphonic arrangement. *The Good Soldier Schweik*, an opera based on the anti-war satirical novel by Czech author Jaroslav Hasek, deals with a seemingly idiotic soldier who manages to survive his German military masters by playing it dumb straight through the First World War. It was a suite before Kurka expanded it into the memorable opera produced at the New York City Opera shortly before his death at fifty in 1958. The suite includes six short pieces—an overture depicting Schweik's character, a lament, a quirky march, a war dance, a pastorate, and a finale.

Both works have been recorded before—Weill's more trenchantly by Erich Leinsdorf and more broadly by Bernard Herrmann. Kurka's creditably on the Louisville label under Robert Whitney—but both get first-rate treatment here, and they reinforce each other in derisive irreverence when they are heard in sequence. P.K.

COLLECTIONS

Laurindo Almeida: *Duets with the Spanish Guitar, Album 3.* **Mignone:** *Passarinho está cantando.* **Ovalle-Bandeiro:** *Modinha.* **Tchaikovsky:** *Waltz from the Serenade for Strings.* **Falla:** *Canción; Farruca from The Three-Cornered Hat.* **Ravel:** *Pavane pour une Infante Defunte; Menuet from Le Tombeau de Couperin.* **Bach:** *Duetto III from the Clavierübung; Menuets I and II from the Partita in B-flat Major; Gigue from the Partita in B-flat Major.* **Trad.:** *Three Songs.* Laur-



Northern Illinois University

Blackearth Percussion Group: left to right, Garry Kvistad, Richard Kvisted, Allen Ote, Michael Udow

indo Almeida (guitar); Salli Terri (soprano); Martin Ruderman (flute); Vincent de Rosa (French horn). ANGEL S-36076 \$6.98.

Performance: **Polished and tasteful**
Recording: **Excellent**

This is the third volume of reissues in the "Duets with the Spanish Guitar" series that won much critical acclaim when it was in the Capitol catalog some ten years ago. The connecting link is Laurindo Almeida; the "duets" are sometimes ingeniously conceived double voicings executed by the guitarist himself. Otherwise Mr. Almeida takes the upper hand or provides effective counterpoint for Salli Terri's appealing vocalizing or Vincent de Rosa's remarkable horn playing (in two Bach selections), and Martin Ruderman adds his tasteful flute obbligatos to four tracks. It is all done with great skill, and if the sequence from a Brazilian *modinha* to Tchaikovsky or from

an American folk song to Bach seems a bit strange, I can assure you that it works fine in this uniquely appealing recital of unostentatious virtuosity and flagrant tastefulness. G.J.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

BLACKEARTH PERCUSSION GROUP. **Harrison:** *Fugue.* **Miller:** *Quartet Variations.* **Bertoncini:** *Tune.* **Garland:** *Apple Blossom.* **Cage:** *Amores.* **Albright:** *Take That.* Blackearth Percussion Group. OPUS ONE 22 \$4.98 (by mail from Opus One, Box 604, Greenville, Me. 04441).

Performance: **Knockout**
Recording: **Very good**

The Blackearth Percussion Group comprises faculty artists-in-residence at Northern Illinois University, Dekalb, Illinois, but there is nothing academic or "provincial" about their music. Theirs is a very dynamic and sensitive percussion ensemble with a tremendous range of sound and sensibility. The lead piece in this recording, Lou Harrison's *Fugue* (1941), is a real find; John Cage's *Amores* (1943) also represents that very attractive early American percussion period of the Thirties and Forties, and Peter Garland's *Apple Blossom*, soft sustained music for two marimbas, claims descent from that tradition. William Albright's *Take That*, for sixteen low drums, claims its inspiration from the galley-slave scene in *Ben Hur*, and when you hear it you'll know why. Take two aspirins and call me in the morning. Mario Bertoncini's *Tune* for an army of suspended cymbals is an intellectualized, worked-out, European sound piece in the manner of Stockhausen. Finally, Edward Miller's *Quartet Variations* is a graphic sketch—a kind of plotted improvisation—by the group. All of this music is very well planned, performed, and produced. Percussion-music records are certainly no longer novelties, but this is a good one. E.S.

HILDE GUEDEN: *Children's Songs from Many Lands.* Hilde Gueden (soprano); Vienna Volksooper Orchestra, George Fischer cond. LONDON STS 15167 \$3.49.

Performance: **Good**
Recording: **Good**

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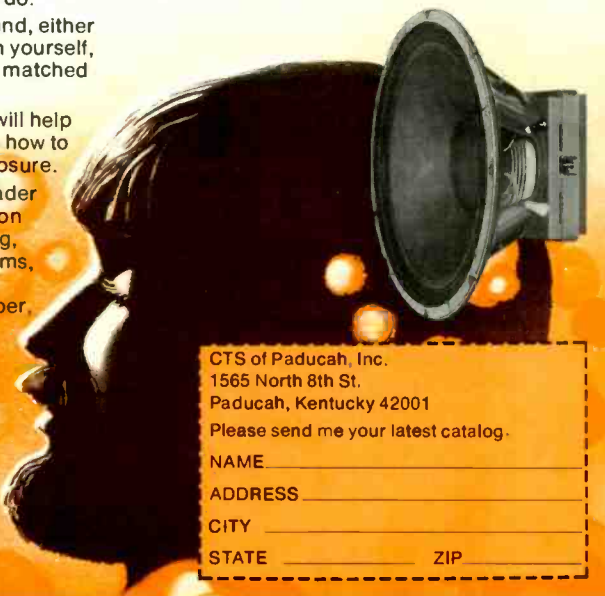
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German songs, nine English nursery rhymes, five internationally known French songs, and five others (Spanish, Italian, Hungarian, and Japanese). Hilde Gueden, accompanied by what sounds like a tiny orchestra, sings them with straightforward simplicity, clear enunciation, and obvious affection. Everything is tastefully done, and, though I am not sure about what kind of audience will go for a collection like this (the parents may like it more than the children do). I enjoyed it, and I certainly wish its producers the best of luck with it. *G.J.*

FRANK PATTERSON: *My Dear Native Land. The Bard of Armagh; The Minstrel Boy; She Lived Beside the Anner; The Stuttering Lovers; The West's Awake; Lark in the Clear Air; The Young May Moon; Kelly, the Boy from Killane; An Raib Tu Ag an gCarraig;* and five others. Frank Patterson (tenor); orchestra, Thomas C. Kelly cond. PHILIPS 6599 227 \$7.98.

Performance: **The corn is green**
Recording: **Very good**

Frank Patterson started his career as a boy soprano in the local choral society of Clonmel in Eire where he was born. He grew up to have a glorious tenor voice, which he puts in the service here of a program of those Irish songs that are such a curious blend of love, courtship, politics, and patriotic polemics. From men meeting maids on May mornings in meadows to the angrier patriotic ballads, Mr. Patterson takes them all on with equal and artful enthusiasm. The melting impressionist arrangements were devised by Thomas C. Kelly, who conducts them with a fervor that sometimes swamps the simple contents of the songs themselves. *P.K.*

ROMANTIC DUETS. Mendelssohn: *Herbstlied; Mäiglöckchen und Blümelein; Abendlied.* Schumann: *So wahr die Sonne scheint; Herbstlied; Schön Blümelein.* Brahms: *Weg der Liebe; Die Meere; Phänomen.* Dvořák: *Möglichkeit; Der Apfel; Der kleine Acker; Die Taube auf dem Ahorn; Der Ring.* Herrad Wehrung (soprano); Traugott Schmohl (baritone); Karl-Michael Komma (piano). MUSICAL HERITAGE SOCIETY MHS 1896 \$3.50 (plus 75¢ handling charge from the Musical Heritage Society Inc., 1991 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023).

Performance: **Good**
Recording: **Good**

Some of these vocal duets are seemingly new to records; others may be familiar to those acquainted with the Evelyn Lear/Thomas Stewart Deutsche Grammophon release of some years ago or the new Judith Blegen/Frederica von Stade recording on Columbia. The singers and pianist on this MHS disc are not in the same interpretive league as the DG and Columbia artists, but they manage these intimately scaled and relatively undemanding songs well. As for the music, it is consistently enjoyable without calling forth deeper emotions of any kind. The Dvořák songs, in particular, have an infectious lilt, and Schumann's *Schön Blümelein*, with its rippling rhythm, will remind you of Schubert's *Die Forelle*. Texts are not supplied, but the annotation by Douglas Townsend is unusually informative. *G.J.*

AKSEL SCHIØTZ: *Recitals* (see Choosing Sides, page 92)

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America's Musical Heritage

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"The Musical Heritage of America" is billed as "the exciting story of the U.S. told through the songs of its people, with spoken introductions to each selection by Tom Glazer." Mr. Glazer is the possessor of a pure and pleasant baritone and an affable, unaffected microphone manner: I can think of few other folk singers (and no musicologists at all) I would rather have sing nearly 150 songs to me. Yet there were times when the stubborn simplicity of the material and the relentless directness of Glazer's approach were enough to make me long for a juicily elaborate arrangement recorded in souped-up stereo by the Mormon Tabernacle Choir aided and abetted by the Roger Wagner Chorale and maybe even the Vienna Choirboys. There is something so dreadfully educational and doggedly enlightening about these multi-record sets, so obviously assembled with one eye on the budget and another on the local school libraries! Even so, this particular collection comes off a great deal more engagingly than many of its predecessors.

Mr. Glazer begins by asking, in the first volume, "What is a folk song?" He answers, in terms that suit his own programming purposes, that a folk song "is almost any song which is liked by almost everybody in the country of its origin over a long period of

time." This enables him to include songs by such readily identifiable composers as Stephen Foster and William Billings along with ballads handed down through the generations in the "oral tradition" by "the folk." Since I have long suspected that "the folk" have been studiously ignoring folk songs for centuries and are certainly not the main audience for this music any more anyway, that approach is fine with me. At the same time, it makes the contents of these collections fairly arbitrary, since it's possible to include Foster and ignore Ives, for example, on the grounds that, Glazer says, Ives' songs would be among those "liked only by certain minorities of people instead of by majorities in any given area."

BE that as it may, after Glazer's opening comments he and his colleagues (they vary from album to album) get down to business. With some able assistance from Pat Moffit's voice (vaguely Joan Baez-ish), Dick Weissman's and William Ninger's guitars, and Mr. Weissman's banjo, we are launched into Colonial times. Early hymns and ballads transplanted from Britain—such as *The House Carpenter*, *Lord Rendal*, and *Barbara Allen*—are gradually supplanted by home-grown material: war songs, pirate songs, comic ballads, sea chanties, love songs. Most of them have been recorded before, and many in more ambitious settings, but it is fascinating to hear them this way in the perspective of history, a record of the country's settlement and development. The narrative passages serve to move us forward and spare us the necessity of consulting tedious notes; they are succinct, entertaining, and related with gusto, making each of the twenty-four sides in this collection a kind of self-contained radio show.

Here are refreshingly insolent songs leading up to the Revolutionary War—ballads about

the Boston tea tax, the capture of Quebec in 1759, an answer from the Colonials to the jeers of the British in Boston in the form of a parody set to the Englishmen's own tune offering to give the English generals "a dance upon liberty tree." Then come the war songs, from both the American Revolution and the War of 1812, followed by ballads celebrating such events as the opening of the Erie Canal, the building of the railroads (how I longed for Tom Smothers during some of these), the trek west, the Gold Rush. The performances are almost all lively and enjoyable—except when it comes to big numbers like *The Hunters of Kentucky*, *Lolly Toodum*, and the sea chanties, when one wishes Mr. Glazer had been granted an ampler stipend so that he might sign on at least a small chorus and maybe a few more instruments. And I have heard more moving renditions of *Shenandoah* and *Down in the Valley*, which are a little beyond this singer's powers of emotional projection. Mr. Glazer and his friends shine brighter in the quick, strict-rhythmed numbers such as *Old Dan Tucker*, *Pat Works on the Railway*, and *The Blue Tail Fly* than in more sentimental, melodic songs calling for bigger voices or a more daring departure from the rhythmic beat to which they adhere all too faithfully.

VOLUME TWO takes us through the Civil War. This time, Mr. Glazer's fellow vocalists are Eileen Gibney and Kemp Harris, along with Jackie Spector and Pam Goff, while Mr. Harris plays the piano and Mr. Gibney provides obligato effects on the banjo, autoharp, and pennywhistle. The music ranges from militant marching songs to songs of war weariness, from sentimental ballads of the girl left behind to comic songs about the army diet of beans and peanuts, from prisoner-of-war songs to songs of longing for peace, from *When Johnny Comes Marching Home* to minstrel songs. The most prolific songwriter of the period was George Root, a man resourceful enough to have written two versions of his *Battle Cry of Freedom*, one for rallying the boys around the flag, another for actual battle. Among the shamelessly maudlin songs in the Noble Sentiment department of the period are *Lorena* (which one writer of the time described as "probably the most cherished air on both sides of the struggle"), *Just Before the Battle Mother*, and *Aura Lee* (which Elvis Presley used a century later for the tune of *Love Me Tender*).

I was particularly struck by a ballad called *Common Bill*, a "gumphead" who might be a blood relative of the Bill P. G. Woodhouse wrote his lyrics about for *Showboat*. Some of the songs in this group are heard in both Northern and Southern versions set to the same tune—sometimes with only the word "blue" substituted for "grey," so that the whole thing works on either side of the Mason-Dixon line. Mr. Glazer gets us ably and adroitly through the entire war right up to Sherman's march to the sea and the burial of Lincoln, with a ballad for each, and even supplies a coda in which he reminds us, dutifully, that tensions still exist "between people of different backgrounds." There are almost fifty

songs, more than two hours' worth, on the four records in Volume Two. None of them were among the 1,200 songs entered in a Civil War competition for a prize of \$500, of which not one was deemed worthy enough to be honored as the winner.

This brings us to Volume Three, "The Winning of the West." Here we are back with Miss Moffit and another singer, Jane Olian, both seemingly content to remain demurely in Mr. Glazer's shadow. We trek across the prairies with the pioneers, shoot Indians, extol the virtues of *Home on the Range*, and shake our fists at that "dirty little coward" who "laid Jesse James in his grave." The program is divided into one side for the "settlers and sod-busters," another for the "cowboys and Indians," and yet another (the liveliest) for the bad guys like train-robber Sam Bass and the Johnny who was shot dead-a-da-dead-dead by his gal Frankie. Later there are songs of the Gold Rush, songs of the loggers or "shanty-boys," suitable accompaniment for cutting down trees, and songs, once more, about the building of that transcontinental railroad. The pageant of our "musical heritage" comes to a close with a miscellany of ballads: *Green Grow the Lilacs*, *Dakota Land*, and *The Buffalo Skinners*.

WITH the assistance of an able engineer, Mr. Glazer and company have done a brave job of seeing through a project of formidable dimensions and somehow avoiding getting lost in the cul-de-sacs and sandtraps of history and folk music. There's enough variety, entertaining anecdotal sidelights, and information here along with the songs to divert and enlighten just about anybody. I therefore suggest you ignore the text that is provided, since it is riddled with misprints and sometimes wildly at variance with the version being sung. Just listen, learn, and enjoy.

—Paul Kresh

THE MUSICAL HERITAGE OF AMERICA: Volume I—From Colonial Times to the Beginning of the Civil War. Tom Glazer (narration, guitar, vocals); Pat Moffit (vocals); Dick Weissman (guitar, banjo); William Nininger (guitar). *Who Is the Man?; When Jesus Wept; Tobacco's But an Indian Weed; The Little Mohee; The Indian Christmas Carol;* and fifty-two others. CMS RECORDS 650/4L four discs \$28.92, © X-4650/4L \$32.80.

THE MUSICAL HERITAGE OF AMERICA: Volume II—The Civil War. Tom Glazer (narration, guitar, vocals); Kemp Harris (piano, vocals); Tom Gibney (banjo, guitar, autoharp, pennywhistle, vocals); Eileen Gibney, Jackie Spector, Pam Goff (vocals). *I Am Sold and Going to Georgia; Run to Jesus; Johnny, Won't You Ramble; Follow the Drinking Gourd; No More Mourning;* and forty others. CMS RECORDS 660/4L four discs \$28.92, © X-4660/4L \$32.80.

THE MUSICAL HERITAGE OF AMERICA: Volume III—The Winning of the West. Tom Glazer (narration, guitar, vocals); Pat Moffit, Jane Olian (vocals); Dick Weissman (guitar, banjo). *Great Grandad; The Sherman Cyclone; Common Bill; The Lane County Bachelor; The Housewife's Lament;* and forty-one others. CMS RECORDS 670/4L four discs \$28.92, © X-4670/4L \$32.80.

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SR—875

Introducing the Staff...

Since readers from time to time understandably display a natural human curiosity about the backgrounds of the writers and editors who bend their ears each month in these pages, we will be offering, in issues to come, a series of capsule biographies and autobiographies designed to satisfy that expressed need and at the same time to circumvent some of the hazards of mere speculation.

—Ed.



Contributing Editor

David Hall

I WAS born in 1916, by happy coincidence on the same day of the month as Ludwig van Beethoven. Whether or not this accounts for my lifelong interest in music I couldn't say; by the time I was attending school (Exeter), however, this interest was in full bloom. In fact, I had by then (that was back in 1932) already fashioned my first "hi-fi" rig complete with a two-speed turntable on which I was able to play early RCA long-playing records, including Stokowski and the Philadelphia doing the Beethoven Fifth, that were never issued on 78's!

Even later at Yale (1935-1939), although I nominally majored in psychology, I spent every spare moment at the music school as an enthusiastic amateur. So, after a year of graduate work at Columbia effectively turned off any desire for a professional academic career, I took a dare from Norman Cousins, who had just assumed the editorship of the *Saturday Review*, and concocted *The Record Book*, the very first full-scale layman's guide to recorded music up to that time. (B. H. Haggin's very selective *Music on Records* preceded it, and Irving Kolo-

din's *Guide to Recorded Music* followed it by a few months.) Later, after a rugged apprenticeship at Columbia Records' Bridgeport headquarters, I eventually wound up, in 1941, doing full-time concert-music scripting at NBC, and gained, in the bargain, a truly intensive kind of musical education as a result of sitting in on six or so years of Toscanini/NBC Symphony rehearsals.

Those who can't, teach, as the old saw, with simplistic inaccuracy, has it, and after my NBC tenure came the opportunity to join Mercury Records as a record producer—a kind of teaching. It was a rocky time in the record industry (the "battle of the speeds," and all that), but by 1951, with the encouragement of the front office and the collaborative genius of C. R. Fine (he and I heard ear-to-ear on the use of single-microphone pickup for symphony-orchestra recording), the Mercury "Living Presence" series got under way. After a few trial runs, we went for broke with the Chicago Symphony under Kubelik (the famous *Pictures at an Exhibition*), and then launched extensive series with Dorati and the Minneapolis, Howard Hanson and the Eastman Rochester, and the Detroit under Paul Paray. Perhaps our most famous undertaking was the first recording of the *1812 Overture* complete with real cannons, churchbells—the works—back in 1954-1955.

A year's interlude, by virtue of a Fulbright grant, came in 1956. My artist wife and four children packed up and accompanied me to Copenhagen, where I worked with the American Scandinavian Foundation, whose music center did much of the spadework for the belated U.S. recognition of Carl Nielsen and other post-Grieg Scandinavian composers. Upon return to the States, through a combination of damn-fool luck and help-from-the-powers-that-were, I wound up on the founding editorial staff of a fledgling music magazine, known today to all and sundry as *STEREO REVIEW*, settling in as Music Editor (rather tentatively at first, I must confess, though there was a measure of improvement with age and experience).

Mid-1962 marked my exit from full-time magazine work, and from 1963 to 1966 I was president, on a part-time basis, of CRI Records. Then, in 1967, I fulfilled one of my most long-cherished ambitions: I became head of the Rodgers and Hammerstein Archives of the New York Public Library's recorded-sound research facility at Lincoln Center, a dream I had nurtured since the late Forties, when I was invited to prepare the initial draft for a prospectus encompassing just such an archive.

Other current activities? Well, I'm still writing for *STEREO REVIEW*, of course, and my spouse Bernice, who has enjoyed her own career as art teacher and artist, is at the moment chairwoman of art for the New Canaan school system. Our four children are enjoying their own careers as well—they're all married but one, and all are involved in teaching, social work, art, and music in varying degrees. Our summers have been spent, since 1962, in Castine, Maine, where sailing and beachcombing have been major forms of recreation. Music hath its charms, but so, after all, do nature's delights, a full family life, and congenial sociability.

—D.H.

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"Marantz calls the rotatable array mirror imaging—mid range and tweeter elements can be adjusted so that they're exact mirror images of each other for proper dispersion and the best possible stereo separation."



"There's 360 degrees of change possible by simply rotating the array. This means you can adjust the angle of dispersion to get the most high frequency material in any given area."

"When you consider that no two rooms are exactly the same, the more adjustments you have within a speaker the better the sound is going to be. Imperial 8 Floor-Standing Speakers have more flexibility, more control, more variables to compensate for differences in room configurations."

The Marantz Imperial 8 Speaker System is just one of two exciting Marantz floor-standing speaker models. The step-up model Imperial 9 with two 10" woofers is designed for higher power handling capabilities as well as high efficiency and mirror imaging. Both models reflect the kind of technical expertise and engineering excellence that has made Marantz the choice of professionals world-wide. Send for a free catalog or stop by your local Marantz dealer and see the complete line of floor-standing and bookshelf speaker systems starting as low as \$59.95. Each features a five year guarantee** on parts and labor.

Marantz. Ask an expert.



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We sound better.

"Bring it back alive."

"Professionally, people see me playing concerts or leading the Tonight Show orchestra. But when I relax to the purest sound of my favorite music, nothing brings it back alive like the incredible Sound of Koss.

"From the deepest, toe-curling bass notes of a pipe organ, to the crisp, brilliant highs of the brass section,

nothing can match the excitement of a live performance as well as Koss Stereophones. And nothing can match the incredible sound of the PRO-4AA. Because the Koss PRO-4AA features the only driver element designed specifically for stereophones. So when it comes to mixing the sound in your head instead of

on the walls of your living room, you'll hear two more octaves than you've ever heard before in a dynamic stereophone.

"Take a tip from old 'Doc' and hear it like you've never heard it before... on Koss Stereophones. From \$15.95 to \$175, they're the greatest. Just ask your Audio Specialist for a

live demonstration, or write for a free full-color catalog, c/o Virginia Lamm. Either way, you'll 'bring it back alive'."

Koss PRO-4AA Stereophone



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