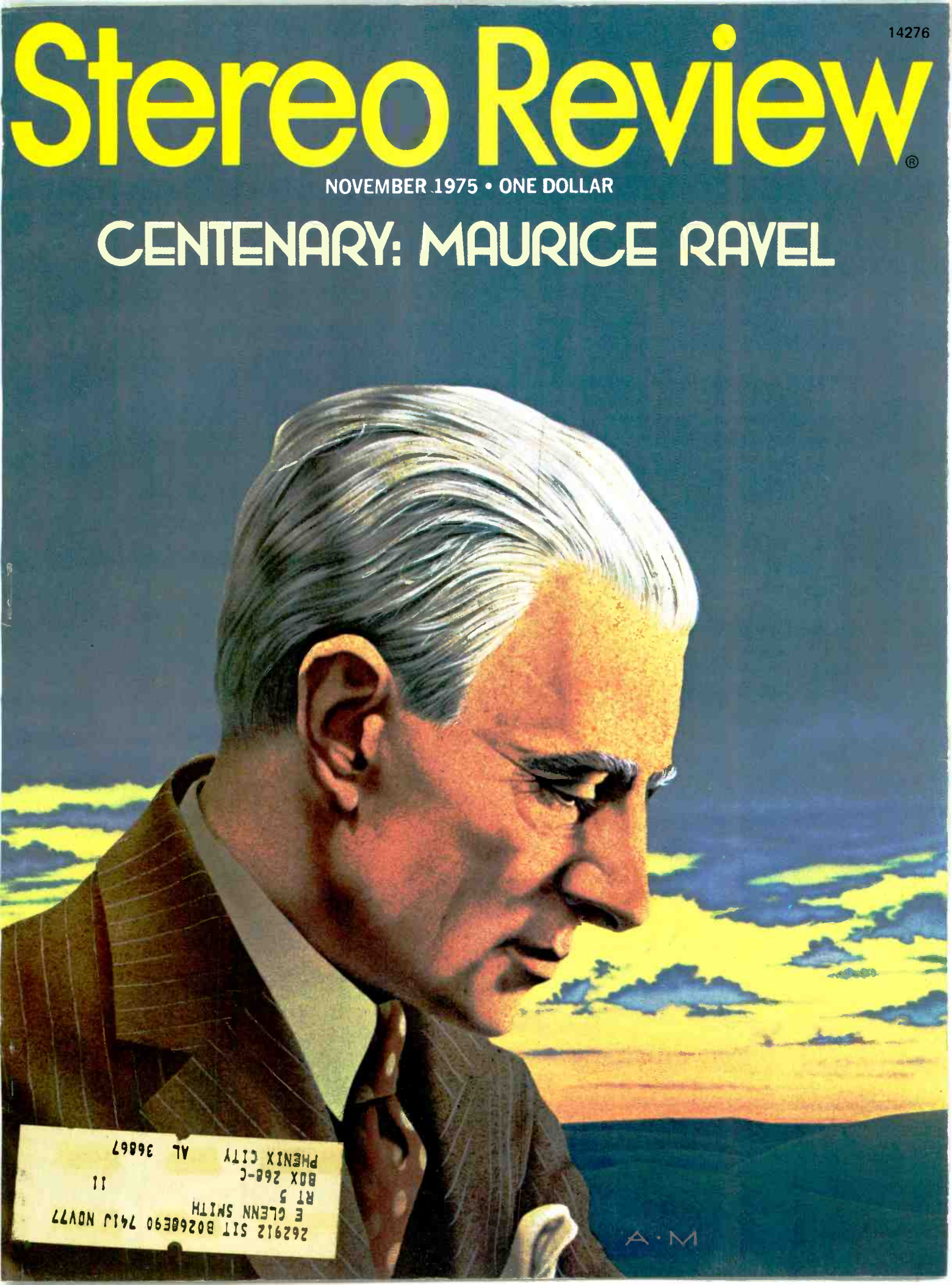
Stereo Review®

NOVEMBER 1975 • ONE DOLLAR

CENTENARY: MAURICE RAVEL



2.0 μV FM Sensitivity.

Solid-State Ceramic FM IF Filters.

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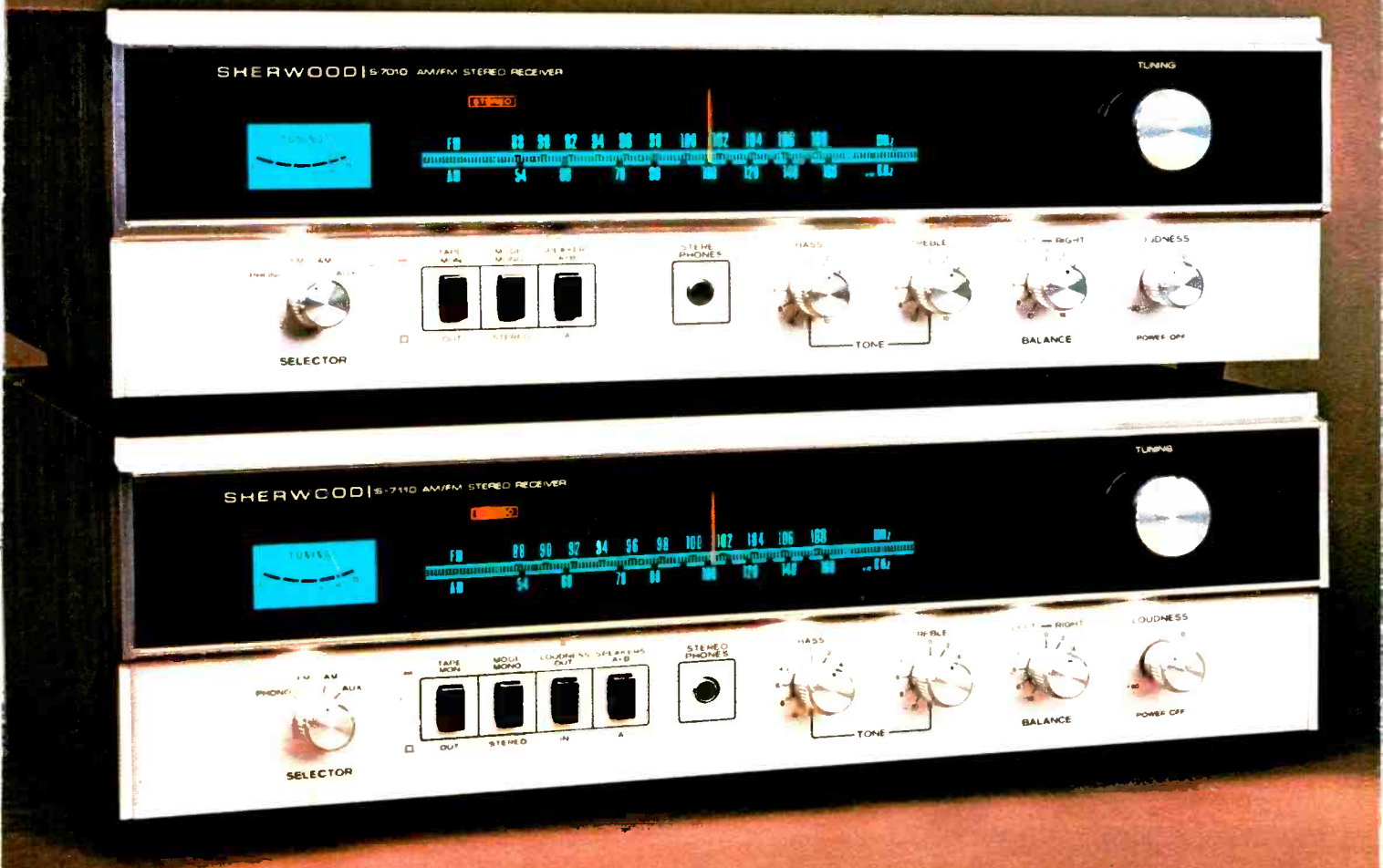

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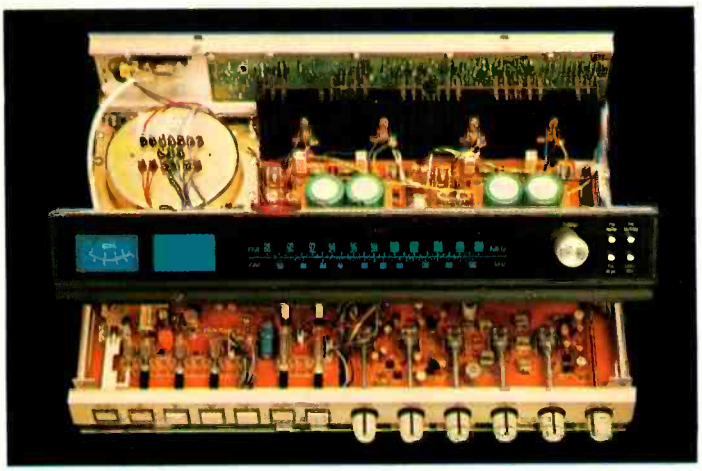

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FORMERLY HI FI/STEREO REVIEW

Stereo Review®

NOVEMBER 1975 • VOLUME 35 • NUMBER 5

The Music

The Equipment

The Reviews

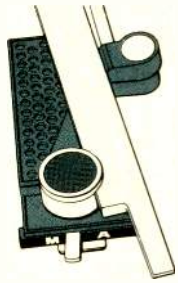
The Regulars

COVER: Portrait of Ravel by Alan Magee

 Stereo Review, November 1975, Volume 35, Number 5. Published monthly by Ziff-Davis Publishing Company; Editorial and Executive Offices at One Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016; Telephone: 212 725-3500. Hershel B. Sarbin, President; Furman Hebb, Executive Vice President; Vincent Perry, Financial Vice President and Treasurer; Charles B. Seton, Secretary. Also the publishers of Boating, Car and Driver, Cycle, Flying, Modern Bride, Popular Electronics, Popular Photography, and Skiing. One year subscription rate for U.S., $7.98; U.S. possessions and Canada, $8.98; all other countries, $9.98. Second class postage paid at New York, N.Y. and at additional mailing offices. Authorized as second class mail by the Post Office Department, Ottawa, Canada, and for payment of postage in cash. SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE: Forms 3579 and all subscription correspondence should be addressed to Stereo Review, Circulation Department, P.O. Box 2771, Boulder, Colorado 80302. Please allow at least eight weeks for change of address. Include your old address, as well as new—enclosing if possible an address label from a recent issue.

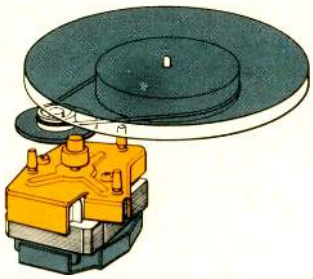
Four questions you multiple-play

1. Does it perform as well as any single-play turntable?



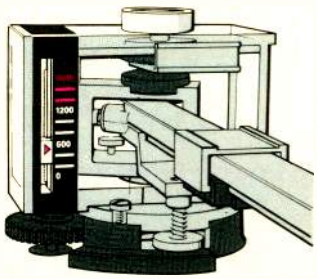
There are some who believe that a single-play turntable is somehow inherently better than a multiple-play unit. All right—the Z2000B *is* a single-play turntable. Its capacity to function as a multiple-play unit offers convenience with no compromise of performance. The *automatic* mechanism which gently indexes the arm, lifts it at the end of play, returns it to the arm rest and shuts off the motor—is completely disengaged during record play. A 2-position control sets the proper vertical tracking angle for single or multiple play. The Z2000B can truly be called the automated, single-play turntable with multiple-play capability.

2. Does it have belt-drive and variable speed?



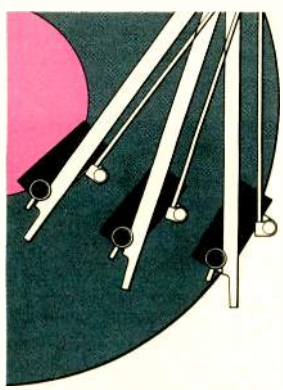
Garrard engineers have attained remarkable results by combining the world famous Synchro-Lab motor and an inventive belt/idler drive combination. A 5 lb., die-cast, dynamically balanced platter is rotated via a flexible belt. Not only are the tiniest fluctuations of speed smoothed out, but an extraordinary -64dB rumble is only one example of the impressive specifications achieved. A variable speed control corrects out-of-pitch recordings and an illuminated stroboscope provides optical confirmation. The Z2000B combines all of these elements to achieve the main goal of Garrard engineering: superior performance at reasonable cost.

3. Does it handle records gently?



All responsible turntable manufacturers are concerned with protecting your records. With Garrard, it's an obsession. The Z2000B boasts an array of features designed solely to prolong the life of your records. In addition to the exclusive, articulated tonearm, it incorporates an exceptionally accurate magnetic anti-skating device. Cueing is viscous damped in *both* directions. The ingenious built-in automatic record counter keeps track of how many LP sides the stylus has played. And unlike some of the highest priced changers that support records only at the center hole, the Z2000B supports them at the hole *and* edge, and the release mechanism operates at *both* points. Protection for your records indeed!

4. Does it eliminate tracking error?



The grooves of a record are cut by a stylus that travels in a straight line. Conventional playback tonearms move in an arc. The difference between these two paths is called "tracking error." Simply stated, tracking error launches a cycle of distortion and record wear. In good design, the error is averaged over the record so that distortion is minimal. But such compromise was unacceptable in the Z2000B. What Garrard engineers did about it was summed up by High Fidelity Magazine which described the Zero Tracking Error Tonearm as "...the best arm yet offered as an integral part of an automatic player." The Z2000B is the *only* automatic turntable in the world without tracking error.

For your free copy of the New Garrard Guide, write to Garrard, Division of Plessey Consumer Products, Dept A, Plainview, New York 11803.

must ask about any turntable.

The Garrard Z2000B. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes.

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EDITORIALLY SPEAKING

By WILLIAM ANDERSON

SINS OF THE CRITICS

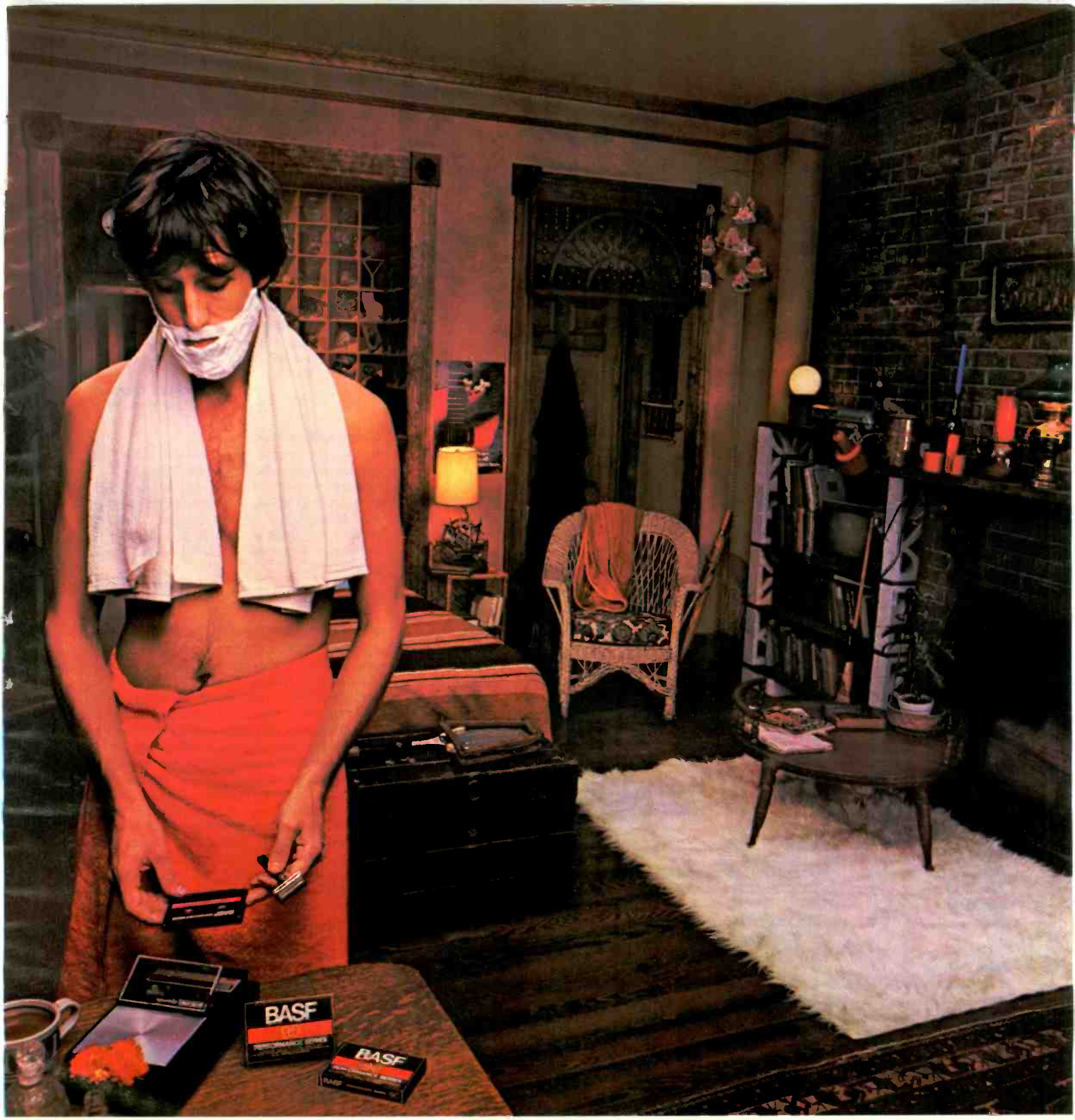
JUST as there is a limit to the amount of audio power a given loudspeaker can take without going into distortion or blowing up, there is a limit to the amount of information any one of us can accept and process without drawing a blank or going quietly bonkers. In the world's whole history, no generations other than our own have ever faced so concentrated, so unremitting, so infinitely various and devilishly attractive a barrage from the so-called "media." Newspapers, magazines, books, radio, TV, recordings, movies, and even telephones have us in their sights waking and sleeping. Little wonder that many with slight appetite and/or low tolerance for these kinds of botheration head for the hills, that others avoid bookstores, record shops, and newsstands, let subscriptions expire, and unlist their telephones.

But such avoidance tactics are only half solutions, for in that welter of messages there are many that are interesting or entertaining, others that are useful, perhaps even a few that are vital. A better solution, therefore, is to install a personal filter system, a network of deputies to handle the "in" box and separate what is important from what is trivial. We call such deputies "critics"; one can find them working, ready to be consulted, in every field from poetry to politics. Without meaning to make any comparison between their functions, I think one should be at least as careful in choosing a critic as in choosing, say, a dentist. Do not, first of all, rule out a critic simply because he does not share your biases; someone you *always* disagree with is at least recommended by his admirable consistency. Treasure him—but at an angle of 180 degrees. Do, however, rule out at once all those venial sinners, the picky pedants, the paraders of knowledge, the dull writers, the petty, the tasteless, the ignorant, the sophomores in judgment (chronological age notwithstanding). You will then be free to protect yourself from subtler threats to your intellectual balance, those cardinal sinners, otherwise blameless, whose opinions are disfigured by some fatal critical flaw such as. . .

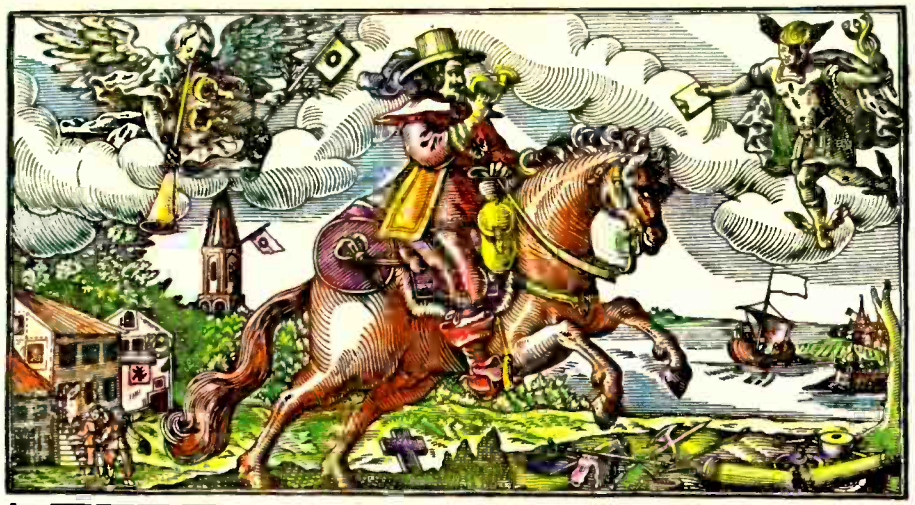
● *The Hanslick Fallacy:* Poor Eduard Hanslick, as the half-educated never tire of reminding us, was Wrong About Wagner. He was also Right About Brahms and a lot of other composers, and he was "wrong" about Wagner in a way that was perfectly right for his own time. Therefore, beware the critic pridefully more concerned with being "right" a hundred years hence than with being useful now. Opinions, even opinions about greatness in art, change with the needs of the times. Composers (some of them) may have to wait to be appreciated, but that is posterity's business, not ours. And who are we to deny them the innocent pleasure of feeling superior?

● *The Fallacy of the Single Standard:* We are evidently a good deal cleverer about our stomachs than we are about our ears. We would not, for example, criticize pizza for not measuring up to *quiche Lorraine*, Coke for failing to remind us of Cabernet Sauvignon. But how easy it is to fall into the trap of condemning a major composer's minor works (is it inconceivable that he intended them that way?) or a minor composer for not being a major one. "Nothing but the best" is a very thin diet indeed. It leads, paradoxically, to its own kind of satiation: starvation through boredom. You should go on "red alert" whenever you find a critic comparing a composer or performer with another who is patently out of his or her league.

● *The Ad Hominem Fallacy:* There are, it appears, no more men, women, or people in performing life, only "personalities." That may be okay for the general public, free to drift as they will with their unexamined prejudices, but we expect more of the critic. His eye is supposed to be on the art, not the artist—and not the audience either. If a critic has so little to say about the performance itself that he must turn his basilisk glare on the performer's face, form, or private life, if he must deplore the audience's witless taste, he doesn't belong on your team either, for in exercising his ill humor he places his satisfaction before yours.



If you've never heard music on BASF tape before, turn the page and see how it sounds.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

American Music Awards

● The American Music Conference, an educational and research association, is inaugurating its American Music Awards to honor composers and performers who have influenced the development of all aspects of American music. The initial list, to be announced in July 1976, will include approximately two hundred musicians, both living and dead. Candidates already under consideration include Charles Ives, William Billings, Louis Armstrong, John Phillip Sousa, Aaron Copland, Bessie Smith, W. C. Handy, Scott Joplin, Irving Berlin, and George M. Cohan.

Nominations are welcome from the general public and the music industry and should include native-born Americans and/or those who reached their musical maturity in the United States. A jury of outstanding musicians will review the list and make the final selections. Additions to the list will be made at five-year intervals.

Anyone wishing further information about the American Music Award, or interested in entering nominations, should contact the American Music Conference, 150 East Huron Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611.

CLARA DEGEN
Chicago, Ill.

John Denver

● Noel Coppage's ridiculous article on John Denver (September) deserves only one evaluative and summary comment: Pfffffft!

A. HUMPHREY
Atlanta, Ga.

● Noel Coppage drives home the central quality about John Denver and his music in the first few paragraphs when he says that the Middle Class produced Denver. Precisely! The same Middle Class that gave us McDonald's, Five-Day Deodorant Pads, Astroturf, and Richard Nixon could not help but deliver on a plastic, pre-packaged, sanitized, shallow hype like John Denver.

Why an articulate person like Noel Coppage sees fit to add to the mass-media deification of America's primo pine needle junkie is beyond me. Had this same article on Mr. Far-Out been printed in *National Lampoon*, it would have stood excellently on the basis of its ludicrous direction and content. John Denver talking about "art" and "truth" is a philosophical absurdity, and to print such trash is a waste of paper and ink.

MARK FAHRENKRUG
Newburgh, Ind.

● I had thought of John Denver as a fast-buck singer—country for the audience, soft rock for the identity—until I read Noel Coppage's excellent and convincing article. I see now that nothing in his music is intended to be spectacular, not even *Take Me Home, Country Roads*. Mr. Coppage's words, "Good people, the ones I see every day running the libraries and things in small New England towns," brought out another element—that John Denver and those surrounding him are congruent with my concept of sincere friendliness, with the ability to communicate about any subject in a simple, well-thought-out way and to share knowledge of what makes for optimum peace of mind.

ALEXANDRE G. BARBIER
Elmira, N.Y.

● Come on—you blew a great article on John Denver with a plug of "est," the rip-off of the century. STEREO REVIEW usually does an outstanding job with monthly interviews, but this one stinks. What a shabby way to show a star like Denver.

GARY JOHNSON
Minneapolis, Minn.

● Thank you for your September cover story on John Denver. I have long felt and admired—both through media observations and through the music—the "toughness" yet "innocence" of the man. I could never have summed it up the way Noel Coppage did. Maybe Mr. Coppage has some of Denver's skill in simplifying the complicated. Anyway, the article was informative, positive, and just a pleasure to read. It's nice to get an inside look at someone with an inside worth looking at.

ROBERTA ROSENFELD
Reedsville, Pa.

● One night back in the 1960's in a smoky little Washington, D.C., folk club called the Cellar Door, my wife and I watched John Denver lope on-stage in his first appearance as replacement for Chad Mitchell in the Chad Mitchell Trio and belt out *Long Tall Texan* with the same grinning, jug-eared exuberance that remains with him in 1975. Although I'm not a rabid Denver fan—for me his lyrics fall a little short of real life—his consistent good-humoredness and pleasant voice have earned his records a place in my collection. Moreover, I've always had a feeling that there was more substance to Denver, more depth and conviction, than his lyrics hint, and I've been irritated with writers and columnists who treated him as all presence, no brain.

So, quite simply, Noel Coppage's thoughtful article was the finest on Denver that I've read. Peeling away and discarding the show-biz veneer, the easy answers, as Coppage did, is demanding journalism. That Denver is dissected and yet emerges as a whole person and not a freak is a tribute to him and to Coppage's sense of painstaking responsibility. More Coppage!

AVERY COMAROW
New York, N.Y.

Sleeping Beauties

● Please continue James Goodfriend's September column on "Sleeping Beauties." In reading this article, I happily discovered that I own three of these genuine golden oldies. I am sure many of us who have been collecting records for some years will be delighted to rediscover treasures we already own. More, please.

ELIZABETH FORD
Washington, D.C.

● Music Editor James Goodfriend's July column on "Sleeping Beauties" was so delightful STEREO REVIEW should make it a regular feature, inviting all critics and guests to contribute. Mr. Goodfriend's mention of the Eastman Wind Ensemble should remind record companies that they could celebrate the Bicentennial by reissuing, at the very least, the Ensemble's incomparable performances of American wind music: Robert Russell Bennett's *Suite of Old American Dances*, Samuel Barber's *Commando March*, Vincent Persichetti's *Psalm* and *Symphony*, and Peter Mennin's *Canzona*. Finally, I'd like to offer one of my favorite Sleeping Beauties: Zino Francescatti's recording of violin concertos by Niccolo Paganini and Camille Saint-Saëns. The performances are marvelous and the record is still listed in Schwann-2!

ALAN M. COOPER
New Haven, Conn.

Scotto

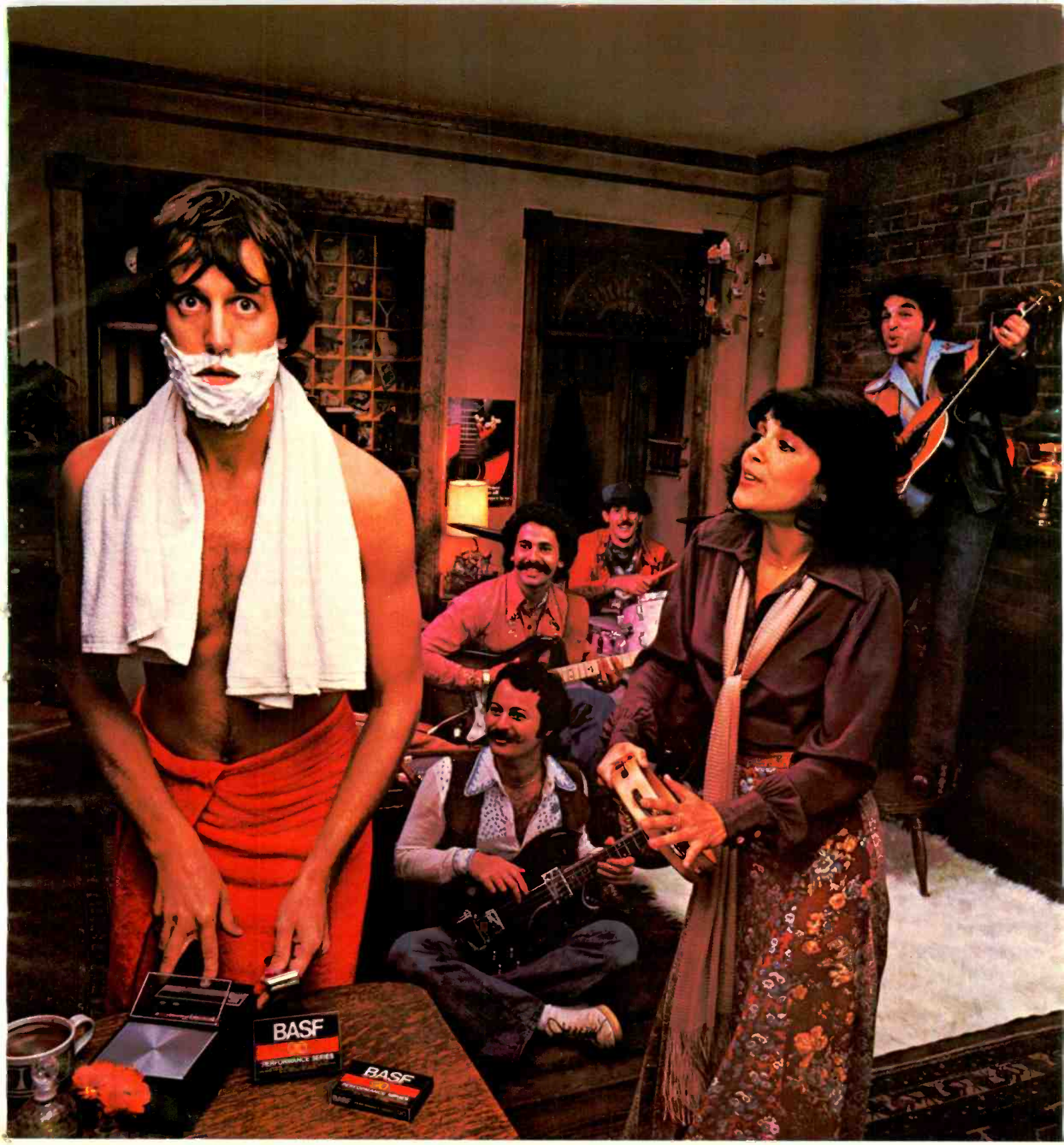
● Thank you for William Livingstone's September review of Renata Scotto's new discs; it is nice to know that at least one critic feels we in the U.S. don't get enough of her recordings. I have thought so ever since I bought the first record I had ever seen her name on almost ten years ago: "Monte Carlo Opera Gala" (Deutsche Grammophon SLPM 138653).

VERNON BARTHOLOMEW
San Francisco, Calif.

Opera Fans

● I was amused by Peter J. Kaufman's letter (September), in which he complained that Renata Scotto revived interest in Bellini's *I Capuleti* only to see Beverly Sills record it. The passionate devotion of fans like Mr. Kaufman is part of what makes the whole subject of opera so exciting. The letter reminded me of an article I read on the bel canto revival: Montserrat Caballé was quoted as saying,

(Continued on page 10)



BASF sound is so clear and true, nothing comes between you and the music.

What you experience when you listen to music you record on BASF tape is simply this: the music. Pure and clear.

How does BASF make this phenomenal clarity happen? By polishing the tape. Literally.

When tape is made, it has thousands upon thousands of tiny bumps and ridges that can cause background noise. By getting rid of most of them, we get rid of most of the noise as well.

And to make sure the sound you *do* hear is all there, we give the tape incredible range and response by using a highly magnetizable dense oxide coating.

Of course, when you listen to music this rich and clear, you don't just hear it. The music happens. (Which may come as a surprise if what you've been experiencing until now is background noise.)

Now if all this sounds too good to be true, there's something we'd like to point out. BASF invented audio tape in the first place. Giving us lots of time to perfect it.

So it isn't surprising we sound so much like the original. You see, we *are* the original.

BASF. We sound like the original because we are the original.

CIRCLE NO. 11 ON READER SERVICE CARD

"Leyla Gencer exhumes these forgotten operas; Beverly Sills records them; *I* sing them." Caballé probably never said that, but if she didn't, she should have.

JOHN LONG
New York, N.Y.

Hardware/Software

● Ralph Hodges and STEREO REVIEW should be commended for September's coverage of the Chicago Consumer Electronics Show. Given the scope of the show, reportage has to be somewhat limited, but Mr. Hodges was surprisingly comprehensive in his approach. Dividing the report into various component sections was a very thoughtful aid which did not go unappreciated.

Steve Simels' contribution on the software side of audio certainly fits my ideal of what a music critic is supposed to do. Critics aren't around to trash records—they're here to inform the public of good music that may otherwise have been missed. Mr. Simels did us all a service in his column by sharing a bit of the wealth of excellent and unrecognized folk-based music of English groups such as Fairport Convention and Steeleye Span.

ESAU SIMMONS
Bronx, N.Y.

***Mea Culpa*, You All**

● First, I had to remove the St. Christopher medal from the dashboard of my Corvair. Then I had to take the Nixon souvenir ashtray off the coffee table. Now I'm told Steve Simels is fallible and has turned himself in, using his September column ("The Critic Recants") as a confessional. How much more can I take? Next, Julian Hirsch will claim that my Oompah speakers are not state-of-the-art. I warn you, Mr. Hirsch—I'll o.d. on Bon Vivant consommé!

DALE PIZZINI
Springfield, Va.

● I must write to you while the enthusiasm over Steve Simels' September column is fresh in my mind. Honesty is a rare quality today—especially in a reviewer.

CARLA J. LUCHT
Lowell, Mass.

Eagles: Another Clutch

● I was very upset to read "The Proficient Eagles" by Steve Simels (August). He says, "I can't explain why the group hasn't done any better than they have done." Well, Steve, what's wrong with being No. 1?

RICK PRATT
Springfield, Va.

● Just because Steve Simels thinks the sun rises and sets on Mick Jagger and heavy rock in general doesn't mean that everybody does. The Eagles (August) happened to come along at a time when people were ready for a more together, more mellow sound of the Seventies. As far as tight music goes, the Eagles are in a super class by themselves. And the fact that an egotistical rock would-be can sit down at a typewriter and severely dismember a very worthwhile effort by a group of serious performers who make not good music but refreshingly *great* music just blows my mind.

KENNETH J. FLANAGAN
Glastonbury, Conn.

● In his "Eagles" article (August), Allan Parachini says he is still looking for a new musical messiah. Well, look no more, Allan; he's here and his name is Bruce Springsteen.

TOM COLUMBO
West Orange, N.J.

Greek Glitch

● David Hall, to my surprise, committed a grammatical horror in his review of Stokowski's *Eroica* (September). He uses *kudos* as a plural word—there's no such thing as a "kudo." It's like saying "praise are due the horns. . . ."

DAVID PIERCE
Vero Beach, Fla.

The Editor replies: Mr. Pierce (and others) is perfectly correct, and we're ashamed of ourselves. One more demonstration of how the general illiteracy wears away the once-sharp tools of communication. One way to keep out of trouble, of course, is to use very little Latin and even less Greek: the English language contains quite enough challenge for anybody.

Pope's Handel

● Paul Hennessey's letter (August) completely misrepresents Alexander Pope's attitude toward Handel in *The Dunciad*. The poem is meant to praise Handel in the strongest possible terms.

Strong in new Arms, lo! Giant Handel stands,
Like bold Briareus, with a hundred hands;
To stir, to rouze, to shake the Soul he comes,
And Jove's own Thunders follow Mars's Drums.

Pope, in fact, had written the libretto for Handel's first oratorio, *Esther*, in 1720, and

later explained that he praised Handel in his poem because "merit in every branch of science ought to be encouraged."

Pope's confusion, owing to his admitted lack of musical knowledge, is hardly helpful; when he refers to "chromatic tortures," he seems not to have understood that such tortures were *introduced* by Handel.

EDWARD MENDELSON
New Haven, Conn.

● Paul Hennessey, in his August letter, is incorrect in suggesting that Alexander Pope shared James Goodfriend's indictment of Handel, for Pope's comments on Handel are regularly favorable. And Handel's setting of Pope's "Where-e'er you walk, cool Gales shall fan the Glade" goes some distance toward contradicting Mr. Goodfriend's view of Handel's music.

WILLIAM DICKEY
San Francisco, Calif.

Elton John and Superfluity

● I don't mind subjective criticism. In fact, I'd say that music criticism and objectivity are a contradiction in terms. However, Peter Reilly has abandoned criticism in his review of Elton John's latest: "Elton John . . . make(s) reviewing or criticism superfluous." Why? I don't think that Elton John's communication with a huge audience exempts him from criticism. If it does, then what is the role of the critic? To reinforce public opinion?

DAVID ROSENAK
Ventura, Calif.

● I thought the review of "Captain Fantastic and the Brown Dirt Cowboy" was great. Peter Reilly is right in saying that you can't describe Elton's music in words—but Bernie Taupin does it in his lyrics. I may not understand what he's talking about all of the time, but he still touches me.

SHARRESE KALIBJIAN
Livermore, Calif.

Tatum

● I must compliment Irving Kolodin on his September column on Art Tatum. Mr. Kolodin certainly chose one of the greatest jazz pianists known. Art Tatum may never make your front cover, but perhaps someday his equal will. May I suggest Oscar Peterson?

GARY FARR
Tampa, Fla.

Schiøtz

● Irving Kolodin's tribute to the late Aksel Schiøtz (August) recalled to me my one encounter with his art. In May 1960 I was a member of the M.I.T. Choral Society for a performance of the Bach *St. Matthew Passion*. Klaus Liepmann, the society's leader, was our conductor, Blake Stern was a moving Evangelist, and the soloists included such Boston luminaries of that day as Phyllis Curtin, Eunice Alberts, and Paul Matthen. Aksel Schiøtz was Jesus. I remember to this day his dignity of bearing, the stiffness of his face, the nobility of his projection. I did not know at the time how deep his understanding of suffering went.

HARRY WELLS MCCRAW
Hattiesburg, Miss.

Baez

● I didn't think it was possible to analyze the beauty of Joan Baez's art, but Peter Reilly came very close to accomplishing this feat in his review of "Diamonds and Rust" (September). His articulate description of her vocal qualities will be cited whenever I'm asked why I'm such an avid Baez fan. And it was good to see Joan Baez cited *twice* in Best of the Month. Both Peter Reilly and Noel Coppage should be commended for their ability to make musical evaluations without becoming involved in analyzing Baez's political convictions. I realize that her politics and her music stem from the same philosophical idealism and human sensitivity, but too many critics who react negatively to her politics let their political reactions color their aesthetic responses.

PAUL GOODNATURE
Albert Lea, Minn.

Hollywood Goo

● It grieves me that Paul Kresh could equate Alex North's brilliant *Spartacus* score (September) with the kind of Hollywood goo dished out by such skillful but uninspired composers as Elmer Bernstein, Victor Young, and Miklos Rozsa. North's passionate, eloquent score transcends the genre of mere film music and is both innovative and creative in its own right—just think of the superb *fugato* under Saul Bass' chilling main titles, the music itself crumbling into the most dissonant harmonies as the final statue begins to disintegrate on the giant screen, foretelling plainly the decline of the Roman Empire. There is nothing overblown or conventional about North's greatest film achievement.

DANIEL GREGG
Bronx, N.Y.

From Teaneck to Tenafly

● Drummond McInnis must have slipped on the wrong disc when he refers to Teaneck, New Jersey, as the home of the young Lesley Gore (June). She was a resident of Tenafly, New Jersey.

CHARLES EVERETT
Sag Harbor, N.Y.

Mr. McInnis replies: Sorry, but we're both *right. Before Miss Gore scored her recording successes, she was a resident of Teaneck, New Jersey, moving to Tenafly at age sixteen or thereabouts.*

Cryptoquad Revisited

● The "quad identity crisis" persists. In the September Letters column, Jay Rudko says he hopes Polydor will release a four-channel version of the *Tommy* movie soundtrack. It's been done, and is available as a QS-encoded record. Another "secret" QS album just released is Ray Thomas' (ex-Moody Blues) album "From Mighty Oaks." Angel has been kind enough to send me a mimeographed copy of all their SQ releases, some of which do *not* carry the double-circle logo that is supposed to identify quadraphonic releases. However, the company says all its SQ albums will carry this logo in future press runs.

BRIAN A. MOURA
Hayward, Calif.

Yes, and Angel's parent company, EMI of England, has announced that all future classical releases in that country will be in stereo-compatible SQ quadraphonic to avoid the expensive "double inventory" (stereo and four-channel) problem on both the production and retail ends. American Angel has not yet gone along, but it can only be a matter of time.

NEW PRODUCTS

THE LATEST IN HIGH-FIDELITY EQUIPMENT

Scott RD 1000 Digital Stereo FM Receiver

The standout feature of H. H. Scott's most elaborate stereo receiver, the FM-only RD 1000, is its frequency-synthesizing FM section. Based on techniques developed for the company's Model T33S, the tuner section now incorporates a built-in memory in which ten stations can be preprogrammed for instantaneous recall. Frequencies of the stations to be programmed are "read" into the memory via a ten-button keyboard and are retained permanently, even when the receiver is turned off or unplugged, until deliberately cleared. Any station thus stored in the memory can be tuned in automatically at the touch of a single pushbutton. In addition, there is a manual tuning mode in which the station's frequency is simply punched in on the keyboard and a scanning mode that causes the tuner to sweep up or down in frequency,

bringing in all stations along the way or, if desired, only the stereo stations. The tuned frequency is indicated by a brightly lit light-emitting diode (LED) digital display; additional LED's show signal strength, register the presence of multipath, and indicate the operating mode of the tuner.

The RD 1000's FM-tuning circuits are referenced to a quartz-crystal oscillator, and a phase-locked loop is employed in the multiplex section. Basic specifications include an IHF sensitivity of 1.7 microvolts, an ultimate signal-to-noise ratio of 70 dB, and a frequency response of 20 to 15,000 Hz ±1 dB. Alternate-channel selectivity is 100 dB, capture ratio 1 dB, and AM suppression 75 dB. Spurious-response rejection is 100 dB. The tuner has 40-dB stereo separation at 1,000 Hz, and harmonic distortion is 0.2 per cent in mono, 0.3 per cent in stereo. The FM de-emphasis is switch-selectable between 25, 50, or the standard 75 microseconds. The tuner also has a switchable filter to blend the high frequencies for reduced noise on stereo broadcasts.

The amplifier section of the RD 1000 is rated at 100 watts per channel from 20 to 20,000 Hz with both channels driven simultaneously into 8 ohms. Harmonic and intermodulation distortion are, respectively, 0.15 and 0.1 per cent at rated output. Controls include knobs for bass, treble, and mid frequencies as well as volume and balance, and there are pushbuttons for six inputs (two phono, two tape, FM, and AUX), tape monitoring (two three-head tape machines are accommodated), high- and low-cut filters, loudness compensation, tone-control bypass, mode, and audio muting. A final pushbutton introduces an accessory such as a graphic equalizer into the signal path. There are front-panel inputs and outputs for one of the tape machines and a stereo headphone jack. The RD 1000 has a black wooden cabinet with overall dimensions of 21¼ x 6⅝ x 13 inches. Price: $1,500.

Circle 115 on reader service card

Sansui Linear Motion Speaker Systems

The LM series of three new speaker systems from Sansui employs a unique tweeter configuration. In each system, a 2½-inch cone tweeter is mounted on a separate baffle that includes three exponential horn-loaded slots through which the rear radiations of the tweeter are directed straight up and to either side. The front of the tweeter operates as a conventional direct radiator. Aside from increasing the high-frequency acoustical output of the system, this technique is said to improve stereo imaging. For low frequencies the LM speakers employ vented cabinets with woofers of 10 (Model LM-330, shown), 8 (LM-220), and 6½ (LM-110) inches. Frequency responses for the three systems extend up to 20,000 Hz, and down to 31 Hz for the Model LM-330, 32 Hz for the LM-220, and 38 Hz for the LM-110. Other specifications for the systems, in the same order: peak power-handling capability, 60, 45, and 35 watts; output (for a 1-watt input measured at a distance of one meter), 92, 91, and 90 dB. The crossover frequency for all three systems is 2,000 Hz, and the nominal impedance is 8 ohms. Rear-panel controls are provided to

adjust the output levels of the tweeters. The walnut-grain cabinets of the systems measure, respectively, 28 x 12¼ x 12 inches, 24½ x 11 x 10 inches, and 21 x 9¾ x 7¾ inches. The dark cloth grilles are removable. Prices: $199.95, $169.95, and $124.95.

Circle 116 on reader service card

Kenwood KX-620 Stereo Cassette Deck

The KX-620 is Kenwood's first front-loading cassette deck and also the least expensive unit in the company's present line. The machine is equipped with Dolby-B noise reduction as well as switchable bias for ferric-oxide and chromium-dioxide tapes and equalization for standard, chromium-dioxide, and ferri-chrome formulations. Push keys control the transport, which has a pause function and employs an extra-large capstan and a feedback-controlled d.c. servo motor. The recording levels are set by two large control knobs

concentrically mounted and affecting both line and microphone inputs. When recording from microphones, an attenuator can be switched in when necessary to avoid overload of the mike inputs. The microphone jacks are located on the front panel along with a stereo-headphone jack.

Frequency response is 40 to 11,000 Hz ±3 dB for iron-based tape formulations, and 40 to 12,000 Hz ±3 dB for chromium dioxide. Signal-to-noise ratios are 50 (standard tape) and 53 (chromium dioxide) dB with Dolby noise reduction, which improves both figures by 8 dB when in use. Size of the Kenwood KX-620 is approximately 17 x 5½ x 11¾ inches. Price: $219.95.

Circle 117 on reader service card

Phase Linear 1000 Autocorrelator Noise Reduction System

The ingenious signal-processing circuitry of the Phase Linear 4000 preamplifier is now available in a self-contained accessory stereo unit, the Model 1000, for addition to any existing audio system. The principal operating feature of the Model 1000, the Phase Linear "autocorrelator" noise-reduction system, affords approximately 10 dB of noise reduction above 2,000 Hz with any program material. No preprocessing or encoding of the material is necessary.

The autocorrelator is a complex and sophisticated approach to noise reduction. Over fixed time increments, the "history" of the input signal is examined in such a way as to permit music (correlated information) to be distinguished from noise (uncorrelated) information). From these data are derived control voltages that effect the opening and closing of a series of one-octave-wide filter gates acting above 2,000 Hz. The gates, normally closed, are opened in the presence of music both at the fundamental frequency and at frequencies corresponding to the overtones of the fundamental (since overtones or higher harmonics can be assumed to accompany a musical fundamental). The operation of the gates is also

(Continued on page 14)

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affected by circuits that sense the high-frequency content and dynamic rate of change of the input signal in order to prevent the generation of audible side effects ("breathing" or noise modulation, modulation of the signal by the control voltages, etc.). The Model 1000

also contains a comparatively simple dynamic filter acting below 200 Hz to eliminate low-frequency noise (rumble, etc.) occurring below a certain threshold level.

The second function of the Model 1000 is dynamic-range expansion: "Peak Unlimiter" and "Downward Expander" circuits act above and below carefully chosen threshold levels to automatically adjust program levels in a manner said to complement the signal compression usually introduced during recording. The action of these circuits has also been designed to eliminate undesirable audible side effects.

The Model 1000 can be installed within the tape-monitor loop of an amplifier or receiver, in which case the tape-monitor switching facilities of the Model 1000 replace those taken up by its installation. Frequency response is 20 to 20,000 Hz ±1 dB, and distortion is under 0.25 per cent. Maximum input before overload is 3 volts rms into the 70,000-ohm input impedance, and maximum output is 8 volts. The autocorrelator and expander circuits can be switched in or out of the signal path independently; both have continuously variable threshold adjustments that permit them to be set for optimum audible performance. The Model 1000 measures 9½ x 5 x 12 inches. Price: $349. An optional walnut cabinet is available for $29.00.

Circle 118 on reader service card

Maxell UDXL Cassettes

A new magnetic particle developed by Maxell is said to open the way for significant improvement in the performance of high-output/

low-noise audio tape. The particle consists of an outer shell of cobalt ferrite bonded to a solid, needle-shaped core of gamma ferric oxide. The Maxell process is reported to control particle size and length-to-width ratio within very close tolerances; particle dispersion and orientation within the tape coating are also held to very high standards. As a result of these efforts, Maxell claims a noise level that is more than 1 dB lower than that of comparable tapes as well as increases in output of 4 dB at low and mid frequencies and 6 dB at high frequencies without any degradation of print-through characteristics. The new tape is available in C-60 and C-90 lengths in Maxell's UDXL series of cassettes.

The cassette shells used in the UDXL series are formed with new tooling to provide precision molding. Tolerances are said to exceed the Philips standards by a factor of three. Internally, the UDXL cassettes employ roller-type tape guides turning on metal pins and carbon-impregnated Teflon slip sheets. Prices: C-60, $4.89; C-90, $6.89.

Circle 119 on reader service card

Audio Research D-150 Stereo Power Amplifier

Physically one of the largest and heaviest amplifiers ever built for consumer use, the Audio Research D-150 is a vacuum-tube de-

sign with a rated output of 150 watts per channel into any load impedance from 4 to 16 ohms, with a maximum of 0.5 per cent harmonic or intermodulation distortion. Rated power is available at any frequency from 20 to 20,000 Hz, both channels driven simultaneously. The signal-to-noise ratio is 90 dB.

In common with some other large amplifiers of its type, the D-150 has front-panel meters (separate for each channel) that display the cathode currents of the eight output tubes so that grid biases can be set via the readily accessible screwdriver controls. In their normal mode of operation the meters read output power. A third meter indicates the a.c. line voltage, and an associated switch (which also turns the amplifier on) permits the power-supply voltages to be adjusted correspondingly to fall within the range of safe operation. Designed for optional rack mounting, the D-150 has a 19 x 10½-inch front panel and a depth of 16½ inches. Ventilation is maintained with three built-in cooling fans. It weighs 110 pounds. Price: $1,995.

Circle 120 on reader service card

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AUDIO QUESTIONS and ANSWERS

By LARRY KLEIN *Technical Editor*

Tone-control Design

Q. *I have noticed that many of the more expensive components have the normal treble and bass controls plus a switch or switches labeled "turnover," with two separate frequencies indicated. For the treble control there might be a choice of 3,000 and 6,000 Hz; for the bass control, 100 and 250 Hz. Is it useful to have such tone-control switching, and exactly what is its purpose?*

CHARLES BOLTAN
Los Angeles, Calif.

A. Many designers have become aware that conventional tone controls do not do a very good job of compensating for practical frequency-response problems. For example, rooms with thin walls or rooms that are too small make it very difficult for even good speakers to deliver bass much below about 70 Hz. With conventional bass tone controls, any attempt to boost the low bass in an effort to provide a flatter response in a specific room will also result in an unneeded boost at 100 Hz and higher—causing boominess or muddiness in the sound.

At the very high end—say, above 10,000 Hz—more or less the same situation exists. The higher frequencies can be soaked up by carpets and heavy drapes or emphasized because of the lack of same. The conventional treble control cannot cope with these situations because it is unable to apply the boost in the frequency areas where it is needed without also injecting boost in areas where it isn't. The accompanying graph A illustrates the problem. Many speakers are also deficient in the upper highs (starting at about 8,000 Hz or so) and would benefit from some equalization.

If tone controls are designed to affect narrow areas that may need adjustment without also disturbing adjacent frequencies, the advantages are obvious. This is what the various controls that have "turnover" switches attempt to achieve, specifically by adjusting the frequency at which the tone control starts to operate or—in technical language—the "turnover point." A few components have a separate mid-range control, and these can be helpful too, mostly because the bass and treble controls are designed to work at frequencies lower and higher than is usual.

In my view, the most useful type of tone control divides the audio frequency band into five *or more* segments, each of which can be adjusted individually. This permits the knowledgeable user to compensate in those exact areas that require it (see graph B) without creating unwanted effects in adjacent octaves.

Electrostatic Reaction

Q. *I trust that you or Ralph Hodges will correct the error in Part 15 of the Glossary of Technical Terms concerning "Ground." Hum (120 Hz, not 60 Hz) is not induced electrostatically; it results from an electromagnetic field. My guess is that Mr. Hodges is not an electrical engineer, or if he is, a lesser editor made an inadvisable change in the article.*

PHILIP BLAIR
Lyndhurst, Ohio

A. I am the "lesser editor" who inserted the term "electrostatic" in Mr. Hodges' definition. The distinction was meant to differentiate between hum induced in a circuit from the electromagnetic field of a turntable motor or transformer and hum picked up by a high-gain, high-impedance unshielded circuit. In the second case, a copper screen, for example, would provide adequate shielding; in the case of an electromagnetic field, a ferrous shield of some kind would be needed.

It's true that any hum field can be referred to as "electromagnetic" in nature—even light can be—but that clarifies nothing. As to the question of hum frequency, it can be anything that is being radiated, with 60-Hz hum being merely the most prevalent in low-level signal lines.

Parental Guidance

Q. *I am having a dispute with my parents over the question of record damage from cheap phonographs. I am fifteen and own a reasonably good record player with a 1½-gram cartridge installed. My mother likes to play my valuable records on my sister's $100 compact system. The so-called turntable on this unit has no stylus-force gauge, an unnamed cartridge, and seems to track at about 6 grams. Isn't my mother damaging my records?*

MARK BIZER
Amherst, Mass.

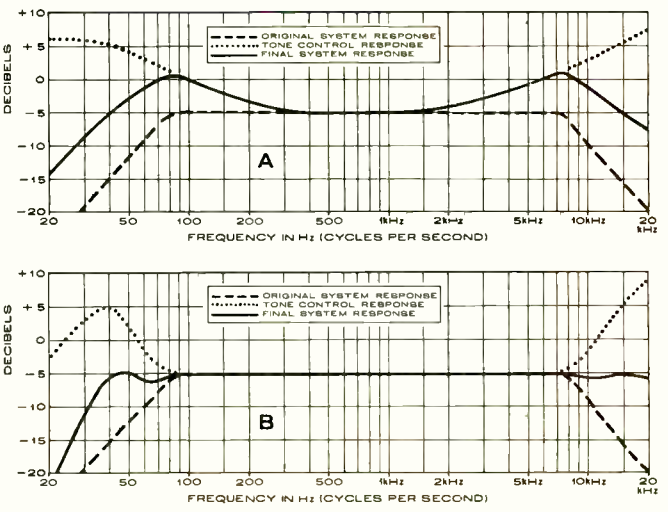
A. Probably. There will be an increase of "surface" noise, a loss of high frequencies, and a harshness permanently added to the program material. Good luck in your efforts to make her stop.

Speed Defect

Q. *I frequently make cassette copies of my discs and have noticed that when I compare the cassette with the record by switching back and forth between them the tape playback falls behind the disc. There is also a pitch change when I switch that confirms that the tape is running slower by a small amount. This doesn't bother me when listening to the tape by itself, but I wonder whether it is an indication of some defect in my equipment.*

R. A. STEPHAN
Carmel, Calif.

A. The question of whether a piece of equipment—any kind of equipment—is "defective" is sometimes difficult to resolve. What I'm saying is there are no hard and fast rules. Obviously, if nothing happens when you push the ON button despite the fact that you've observed all the manufacturer's requirements as to connections, then any reasonable person would judge the equipment to be defective. But when it comes to (as in your example) slightly off-speed operation, or an occasional production of a strange noise, or the tendency to run warm, and so forth, then the user, if dissatisfied, can only hope that the manufacturer's definition of "defective" agrees with his. To return to your specific case, if the manufacturer guarantees your cassette deck to be within a given *range* of speed accuracy, and the one you are using falls outside that limit, then everyone can agree that it is defective.



(A) The dashed line shows the response of the system before correction. The bass and treble tone controls inject the response shown by the dotted line, which produces the less-than-satisfactory final response shown. (B) A tone-control response (dotted line) that can place the correction in exactly the frequency area where it is required can produce the extremely flat final system response shown.

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Four ½" LEDs display broadcast – only frequencies accurately measured by its digital counter. Careful attention was given to AM design so it isn't just something you listen to, but something you enjoy. It features dual-gate MOSFETs, computer-designed LC filter, shielded loop antenna. Purely superb FM. With dual JFET 4-gang tuner for 1.7 μV sensitivity, low distortion digital discriminator, sophisticated LC filter for over 100 dB selectivity, adjustable muting, phase-locked loop multiplex for 40 dB stereo separation, signal and center-tune meters, multipath outputs, direct planetary drive. Professional.

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Distinctive styling. Massive diecast front panel. Black textured metal cover. Simulated walnut-grained metal end panels. Tastefully luxurious.

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With 28 ICs, 134 transistors, and 55 diodes, obviously some kit building experience would be helpful. But it isn't difficult. Modular construction simplifies – 14 circuit boards and 4 wiring harnesses. Most of the boards flip up for checking while the unit is operational. The built-in test meter helps, too.

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Expand your MODULUS system with your choice of stereo power amplifiers. Module II is a medium power amplifier (35 watts per channel); Module III is higher powered (60 watts per channel) 35 or 60 watts: minimum RMS, per channel into 8 ohms at less than 0.1% total harmonic distortion from 20-20,000 Hz. Both styled to match the Module I Tuner/Preamp. Add one of either power to make a MODULUS Stereo Receiver. Add two of either power to make a MODULUS 4-Channel Receiver.

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To enjoy the reduced noise and increased dynamic range of specially-encoded Dolby FM broadcasts, add this module. It fits inside the Module I Tuner/Preamp.

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See next page for specifications

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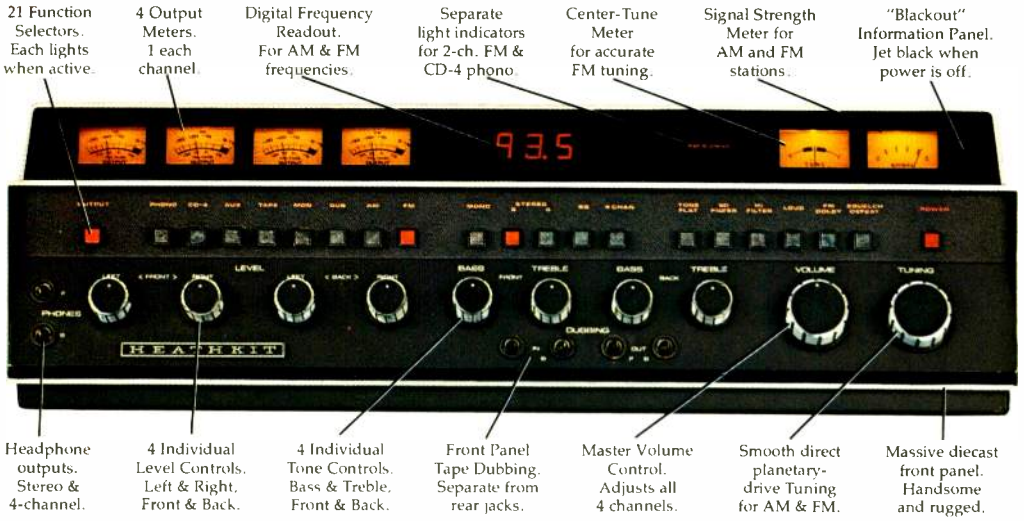
Features and specifications

MODULE I — Digital AM/FM Tuner/2-4 Ch. Preamp/Control Center (#AN-2016)



(see specifications below)

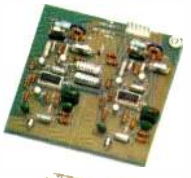
MODULE II — Medium power Stereo Power Amplifier (#AA-1505)

Perfect match for Module I in styling and performance; also compatible with most other preamps. *35 watts, minimum RMS, per channel into 8 ohms at less than 0.1% total harmonic distortion from 20-20,000 Hz.* Intermod. distortion less than 0.1% at full output. Frequency response: −0.5 dB from 8 to 45,000 Hz. Damping factor: 60. Drives two sets of 8 ohm stereo speakers. Front panel switching of Main and Remote Speaker systems. Polarized speaker connectors. Lighted power button.

MODULE III — High power Stereo Power Amplifier (#AA-1506)

Identical to Module II in features and specifications, except: *60 watts, minimum RMS, per channel into 8 ohms at less than 0.1% total harmonic distortion from 20-20,000 Hz.*

MODULE IV — FM Dolby (#AD-1504)



Using this module for noise reduction of Dolby encoded FM broadcasts is like moving the station one-third closer. You get better reception of more stations (not for use on regular FM broadcasts). Uses two special ICs; unity gain; noise reduction up to 10 dB.

MODULE V — CD-4 Demodulator (#AD-1507)

High performance plug-in module for reproducing four discrete channels of audio from CD-4 discs. LSI IC in each channel with detection quality enhanced by LC filters. Separation ≥20 dB, front to back, side to side, or diagonally. Total harmonic distortion less than 1%.

MODULE VI — SQ 4-Channel Decoder (#AM-1503)

Latest concept in matrix decoding from CBS, Inc.; full logic circuitry with variable blend. Uses three special ICs. Response ±1 dB, 25 to 15,000 Hz; total harmonic distortion 0.5% or less; separation 40 dB L-R front; 12 dB L-R rear; 18 dB front-to-back; 20 dB diagonally.

AN-2016 SPECIFICATIONS — PREAMPLIFIER — Frequency Response: 10-30,000 Hz, −0.5 dB. **Total Harmonic Distortion:** 0.05%. **Intermodulation Distortion:** 0.05%. **Hum and Noise:** phono, −75 dB (ref. 10 mV input); hi-level, −80 dB (ref. 0.25V input). — **FM — Sensitivity:** 1.7 μV. **Total Harmonic Distortion:** less than 0.3%. **Alternate Channel Selectivity:** greater than 100 dB. **Capture Ratio:** 1.3 dB. **IM Distortion:** less than 0.05%. **Frequency Response:** 20-15,000 Hz, ±1 dB. **SEPARATION:** 40 dB at 1k Hz. **Signal-to-Noise Ratio:** 68 dB. **SCA Rejection:** 65 dB. — **AM — Sensitivity:** 6 μV for 20 dB S + N/N. **Signal-to-Noise Ratio:** greater than 48 dB. **Alternate Channel Selectivity:** greater than 60 dB.

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PIONEERS IN HIGH FIDELITY COMPONENTS

HF-298

AUDIO BASICS

By RALPH HODGES

SCHOOLS FOR SOUND

SOUND engineering may be the glamour career of the Seventies, to judge from the number of inquiries we receive from readers who want to get into it. Before tackling the questions of what to study and where to apply (the most common queries in these letters), let's touch on an even more basic point: what, exactly, is the job?

When you think of an audio engineer, do you see a mixing-desk jockey pulling a Led Zeppelin tune into a chart-climbing smash with a few deft flicks of the pan-pots, or a loose-jointed concert-sound man chatting easily with Elton John as he checks out the stage monitors at the Tuscaloosa Civic Center? Well, these romantic (if oversimplified) ambitions are legitimate—at least in the case of those lucky few who get to the top.

Equally legitimate, if less romantic, is the vision of the audio engineer as a key member of a motion-picture or radio-broadcast team, an equipment designer, a maintenance specialist or service technician, a disc-cutting engineer, a researcher, a teacher/instructor, a man who mikes sound for panty-hose commercials or installs public-address systems in churches or meeting rooms, and, strictly speaking, even the patient chap who dubs programs for radio stations.

These sound specialists, although often degreed professionals, lack diplomas saying "Audio Engineer" to hang on their office walls, because no fully accredited U.S. colleges or universities award a degree in audio engineering. However, a growing number of college catalogs list an occasional course that is directly related to the subject. Even when there are no such offerings, it's sometimes possible—with faculty guidance—to assemble a good program leading in the right direction. A musical background is always stressed by professionals as being invaluable, so a proper curriculum would be heavy in music, together with applied physics, electronics, and anything touching on acoustics that is available. Also, don't overlook courses in digital design, bound to play a large role in recording studios of the future. In a college setting it's possible to attain a mastery of these subjects that goes well beyond what the audio "trade" schools can offer. But, on the other hand, what the better trade schools have on their side is an orientation toward practical experience.

These trade schools, along with various other study programs and seminars, have sprung up rapidly in the wake of audio's popularity surge; in general, they purport to give the enrollee a useful background in recording-studio techniques or some other branch of the business. Some of them can be highly recommended; others seem to be fly-by-night, and still others, occupying a middle ground, are probably well intentioned, but for some reason—either lack of experience or inappropriateness of study materials to today's real world of audio engineering—are not of as much value to the fledgling sound man as their claims (and tuitions) would indicate. None of these organizations are accredited, which is not surprising since there now exists no accrediting body.

The Audio Engineering Society (60 East 42nd Street, New York, N.Y. 10017) has appointed a committee to investigate educational possibilities in audio. According to Technics/Panasonic's Almon Clegg, who has been active in this group, the committee has started to look into teaching establishments offering some audio instruction, and even has some hopes of informally screening their qualifications. This plan may prove too ambitious, but even so, the AES is still the most dependable source of school information at present. If possible, plan to attend its fifty-second convention at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in New York City, from October 31 through November 3. Several of the more prominent schools have already reserved display space, and the rest of the exhibits—all types of sound gear—will be an education in themselves.

TAPE HORIZONS

By CRAIG STARK

REGULAR MAINTENANCE

A NEW recorder, like a new car, won't maintain its high-quality performance very long unless you give it systematic and proper care. And, as with automobiles, there are three basic levels in a tape-recorder maintenance program: routine things that *everybody* should be able to do for himself; less frequent, but slightly more difficult, chores that most people would rather have done in the shop; and really technical (and, fortunately, infrequent) jobs that must be left to experts who have both the experience and the necessary specialized tools and test equipment.

The basic routine maintenance procedure consists of cleaning and demagnetizing those parts of the recorder that the tape touches as it passes from one reel to the other. Once you are set up, the job takes only a few minutes. Studios are likely to go through the routine every day, but, depending on how much you use your machine, once a week *or* once a month may be adequate. A safe rule of thumb is to clean and degauss after every twelve to twenty hours of use. Despite the little effort required, these two forms of cleaning (the physical and the magnetic) are crucial. Just as a car's get-up-and-go won't last long if you don't give it regular maintenance, your recorder's extended high-frequency response, which might have cost hundreds of extra dollars, won't be heard through even the slightest oxide build-up on the heads. Worse still, the heads and tape guides—every ferrous-metal part that touches the tape—can acquire a magnetic charge with use. If this isn't removed by demagnetizing, it will permanently record hiss and erase the delicate high frequencies every time you play a tape.

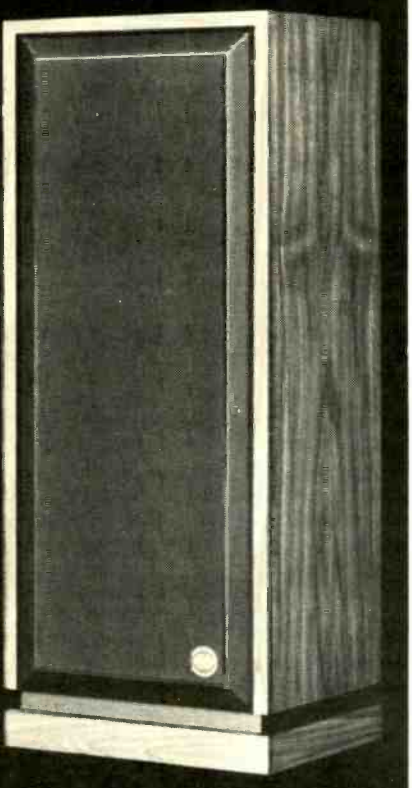
For cleaning, you'll need a bottle of isopropyl alcohol and a few cotton swabs, to which you may want to add a couple of round wooden toothpicks (for caked-on debris that's hard to reach) and perhaps about a foot of carpet thread. If your machine uses felt pressure pads, the best cleaning device I know for them is the kind of hard-bristle brush used to clean out electric shavers.

To get at the heads, remove their protective covers along with any magnetic shields, moisten (don't soak) a cotton swab with alcohol and rub their faces until they're shiny clean. Most oxide debris will come out of the guides in the same way, but sometimes getting into their corners is difficult. Here's where the toothpicks may be helpful, or (depending on your machine's layout) that short length of carpet thread, soaked in alcohol. Simply wrap it around the top and bottom corners in the guides, and you'll get the last traces. Using fresh swabs as needed, scrubbing the capstan and puck roller completes the process. You can rotate them by hand if you like, but it's usually easier to fool the machine's automatic shut-off temporarily into thinking you've got a tape threaded up. If you then put the machine in PLAY, the capstan and roller will turn by themselves. Hold the wet swab against the roller and capstan until they're clean.

And now, while the head covers are off, you demagnetize. Head "degaussers" are available at any audio shop for a few dollars or considerably more for some very powerful units. The procedure is simple, subject to three cautions: (1) Turn off your recorder entirely. (2) If your demagnetizer has exposed metal tips, cover them with plastic electrical tape lest you accidentally scratch a head face. (3) Never turn the degausser on *or* off within arm's length of the recorder, or you may remagnetize the machine to a worse state than it was in originally! So, plug in and turn on the demagnetizer *at a distance*, and *slowly* bring it up to each head, guide, and capstan. It does its work within seconds. Then, again slowly, withdraw it, and turn it off only when safely far away.

At least once a year, however, more than basic cleaning is required. You have to lubricate, check wear inside, etc. For those who want to do it themselves, I'll have some advice in a future column.

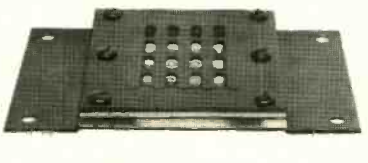
The SCX³. A significantly better way to listen to music.



The KLH Research Ten SCX³ is an awesome performer. Its uncanny ability to recreate the timbre and texture of every instrument in an orchestra will absolutely astound you. All too often, loudspeakers that can successfully reproduce the bite of brass unfortunately bring the same brittleness to the sound of violins. Or if they can capture the sizzle of the cymbal, they fizzle when it comes to the plucking of a string. Clearly this is due to the severe limitations of the single-ended tweeter – cone or dome. Too much mass has to be started, accelerated and stopped too quickly. The structure just doesn't allow for it. Consequently there's a lack of air between instruments, a kind of a blur and overlapping that squashes the music together.

Not so with our new DVR Tweeter.

The DVR combines the best attributes of dynamic and electrostatic tweeters. It has an ultra thin membrane with an etched printed circuit "voice coil" – plus an array of many rare-earth samarium-cobalt magnets on either side of the membrane to create a push-pull effect. Because the membrane mass is so low and the magnets have such extraordinary force, the inertial qualities are exceptional. The membrane can be accelerated and stopped with *extreme accuracy*. The result is very extended frequency response with truly low distortion. Overlapping completely disappears. Fuzziness is gone. The inner voices of the orchestra come alive. There's the kind of airiness and transparency you find only in the concert hall. And all of this is achieved without the traditional drawbacks of the electrostatic tweeter – no capacitive load to drive your amplifier crazy and no need for a power supply.



The DVR Tweeter.

But a tweeter, even a great tweeter, doesn't make a loudspeaker.

Actually, though, there isn't much we can say about the SCX³'s mid-range. It's just the best mid-range made.

Period.

As for the 12" Megaflux™ Woofer, it is probably the most unique magnetic structure available today. It uses many specialized strips of magnetic material which, housed in its large, box-like structure, create and focus magnetic energy (flux) into the voice coil gap with essentially *no external stray field*. Since all of the energy is directed to an exact and predetermined area of the voice coil, very large woofer excursions are possible. Also the magnetic field produced is so uniform that many non-linear types of distortion found in conventional designs simply are no factor in this configuration. But perhaps even more important is the staggering power handling capacity of this woofer – over 200 watts RMS at 30 Hertz.

In short, the SCX³ has an exceptional woofer. And exceptional metalized Mylar® capacitors. And exceptional air core inductors (as opposed to iron core inductors which saturate at high listening levels and cause major distortion).

What we're obviously trying to say is that the SCX³ is an exceptional loudspeaker – a significantly better way to listen to music.

At $400, it darn well better be better.

For more technical information, write to KLH Research & Development, 30 Cross St., Cambridge, Mass. 02139. (Distributed in Canada by A. Allen Pringle Ltd., 30 Scarsdale Road, Don Mills, Ontario, Canada.)

KLH Research Ten Division
KLH Research & Development Corp.
30 Cross St., Cambridge, Mass. 02139

CIRCLE NO. 33 ON READER SERVICE CARD

TECHNICAL TALK

By JULIAN D. HIRSCH

● **THE ABC'S OF A-B TESTING:** Readers have from time to time informed me that they "know" the Sono-Blast 1000 amplifier has immeasurably greater definition (or "detail," or "clarity," or whatever) than its competitors—especially the highly touted Super-Brute 800, whose muddy bass and horrendous crossover distortion (or "TIM," or "slow slew rate," or similar congenital defect) completely disqualifies it from serious consideration by any truly knowledgeable audiophile.

And the Super-Brute 800, oddly enough, has *its* own coterie of faithful admirers; they "know" with equal certainty that the Sono-Blast 1000 is prone to self-destruction when driving anything more complex than an 8-ohm noninductive resistor, that it is unlikely to survive more than a minute or two of a Rolling Stones recording played at reasonable rock listening levels (say, 110 to 115 dB), and that it is also noted for the veiled, gritty quality that is instantly audible to anyone who listens to it through a "good" speaker system. "Good" may be defined as a speaker which sounds veiled or gritty when driven by the Sono-Blast, but is a paragon of clarity when coupled to the Super-Brute 800. (By some strange happenstance, "good" speakers are almost always large, expensive, and available only in limited quantities through a handful of dealers whose average distance from any prospective customer seems to be about 223 miles.)

Proponents of both the Sono-Blast and the Super-Brute share one characteristic—a deep and abiding *faith*. They *know*, without question, that their amplifier is superior to the other. They know this because they have been told that it is so by someone else who "knows." He may be a dealer (disinterested, of course), another audiophile, or a magazine reviewer who writes only for an obscure, small-circulation super-audiophile publication.

There are still some skeptical souls, however, who actually try to listen for themselves before committing their faith, a policy I heartily endorse. This is done by means of an "A-B test" in which two products are compared with each other with little or no interruption in the program. If performed correctly, an A-B instant-switching test *should* be able to unmask minute differences that might pass undetected in casual listening. And, in fact, it does just this—but the key word is *correctly*. Nothing must change except the single component being evaluated. The program material, auxiliary equipment (preamplifiers, etc.), and speakers must be common to both components, and ideally the loads presented to the preamplifier by the two amplifiers should be identical. Finally, the listening volumes must also be absolutely identical since we tend to hear a slight increase in loudness as being somehow "better," especially when it is too small to be perceived as a loudness change. (I usually avoid using the word "absolutely," but if it applies *anywhere* in audio, it does here.)

If two amplifiers have the same frequency response over the audible range, far less distortion than the program source, comparable power capabilities, and exactly the same output level, they should sound almost exactly alike in an A-B test. In my experience, they do. I say "almost" only to allow for the effects of widely differing damping factors (unlikely, but possible) on the overall system frequency response—and because I admit the possibility of there being certain forms of distortion whose existence and audible effects have not been adequately documented as yet.

Let us suppose that the Sono-Blast 1000 has a gain 0.5 dB greater than that of the Super-Brute 800 when Mr. Skeptical Audiophile makes his comparison. There is a high probability that he will be impressed by its more "lifelike" quality, especially if he knows that he is hearing this famous and highly regarded amplifier. However, if the gain were to be lowered by 1 dB, making the Sono-Blast 1000 some 0.5 dB *less* loud than the Super-Brute 800, the same listener might well pick the latter as "better."

In the past, I have referred to "double blind" tests in which neither the listener nor the person conducting the test knows which product is being heard at any given moment. One of the members of the Boston Audio Society (an exceptionally knowledgeable and enthusiastic group of audio hobbyists) presented a well-reasoned treatment of the question of A-B testing in the November 1974 issue of their publication *The B.A.S. Speaker* (Box 7, Boston, Mass. 02215). It described a basic double-blind testing circuit using a whimsically titled "Witch-or-Glitch" switch to make the A-B transfer largely a random matter (with some switch combinations, the switch actually gives an A-A or B-B comparison). Although I have made limited use of such techniques, one of the things I learned when I first tried them was that a person will tend to hear what he *expects* to hear. If A is a very expensive, highly praised amplifier such as the Sono-Blast 1000, and B is a much less pretentious model (or even the much-maligned Super-Brute 800), and if the listener is aware of which is playing at any time, he is very likely to believe that A

TESTED THIS MONTH

●

B&O 4002 Record Player
Allison:One Speaker System
Yamaha CR-800 AM/FM Receiver
Uher CR 134 Cassette Recorder

sounds better (especially if he has just invested a sizable sum in one). As a matter of fact, he will probably choose A even if the switching is reversed, so that he is hearing B while he thinks he is hearing A, or even if the same amplifier is used in both switch positions. If you firmly believe that one of two similar products sounds better, then—for you—it does! If, in addition, the favorite is playing a fraction of a decibel louder, your judgment is further reinforced.

I used the example of a 0.5-dB difference in the output level as being significant in respect to making judgments. If that seems exaggerated, let me assure you that it is not. Some of the Boston Audio Society researchers, as well as Technical Editor Larry Klein, have confirmed my own conclusion that a level mismatch of 0.5 dB *can* influence a comparison, and I would suggest that even a 0.25-dB mismatch might be detectable under some conditions. It is not easy to match levels with such precision. In fact, with any given pair of components, it may even be impossible. Consider, if you will, two amplifiers whose individual frequency responses may vary by no more than ±0.25 dB from 20 to 20,000 Hz. However, amplifier A has a rising response over that range, while amplifier B has a complementary falling response. Fine—but at what frequency do you adjust for equal output levels? If they are matched at 1,000 Hz, amplifier B will have slightly more output at 20 Hz and will be down somewhat at 20,000 Hz relative to amplifier A. Under some test conditions, it is easy to imagine a listener's concluding that B is a bit warmer sounding as well as somewhat "soft" at the extreme top end. Matching the levels at any other frequency might lead to a variety of conclusions regarding the relative sound qualities of the two amplifiers, and in all probability none of them would be "correct."

The situation with FM tuners is quite similar. To make matters worse, unless you are providing your own FM programming through a high-quality signal generator, you are at the mercy of a very uncertain and usually inferior source of program material. (I'm referring, of course, to the quality of the broadcast signal.) An off-the-air A-B test can, however, reveal some important characteristics of a tuner. If a good antenna splitter is used, delivering identical signal strengths to both tuners, small differences in quieting can be heard during pauses in the program, as well as any "birdies" from SCA or other interfering signals. If you hear—or think you hear—differences in frequency response between tuners, there are at least two possible explanations: (1) there may actually *be* a difference, since some tuners are not perfectly flat down to the lowest frequencies, and tolerances in the de-emphasis networks or the multiplex filter can easily give a ±1-dB variation at the high-frequency end, even on good tuners; (2) a small amount of residual noise (hiss) can make a tuner (or amplifier or tape deck) *seem* to have better highs, for, paradoxically, a superior tuner with a very low noise level may sound slightly "dead" compared with one that has a trace of hiss.

It is easy to infer from the critical nature of A-B testing with nearly perfect *electronic* components that A-B speaker comparisons are far more difficult. This is certainly true. However, the relatively gross aberrations of speakers makes it quite easy to distinguish one from another. Any reasonably skilled listener would probably not be fooled by a Witch-or-Glitch switch—at least not for long.

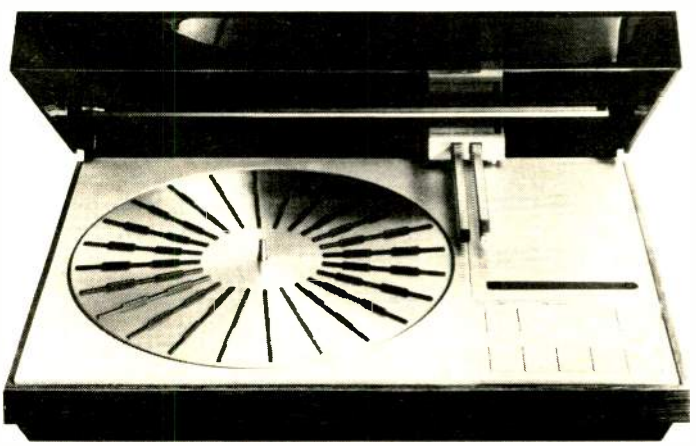
With subjective speaker comparisons, it may be easy to decide which of two speakers you prefer, but be sure to make the comparison with a wide variety of music, since many speakers may seem to favor one type of music to the detriment of others. (The question of objective superiority is much more difficult to settle. I will go into that matter in more detail in a future column.)

Summing up, when you compare two amplifiers (never try to compare more than two items at a time), be sure that no factor is changed but the amplifiers themselves, and if you think that one sounds better, try adjusting their relative gain settings slightly. Things may sound very different when that is done. If this happens, you can reasonably conclude that the two amplifiers are very much alike, that neither is really "better sounding" than the other, no matter what some "expert" says.

EQUIPMENT TEST REPORTS

By Hirsch-Houck Laboratories

B&O Beogram 4002 Record Player



● In spite of the recognized advantages, both theoretical and practical, of radial tone arms, very few have reached the market, and fewer have survived the test of time. One likely candidate for success is the Danish-made Bang & Olufsen Beogram 4002. The Beogram 4002 combines a unique servo-driven radial tone arm integrated with the B&O MMC6000 cartridge (reported on in STEREO REVIEW in September of 1974) and an electronically driven, servo-controlled two-speed turntable.

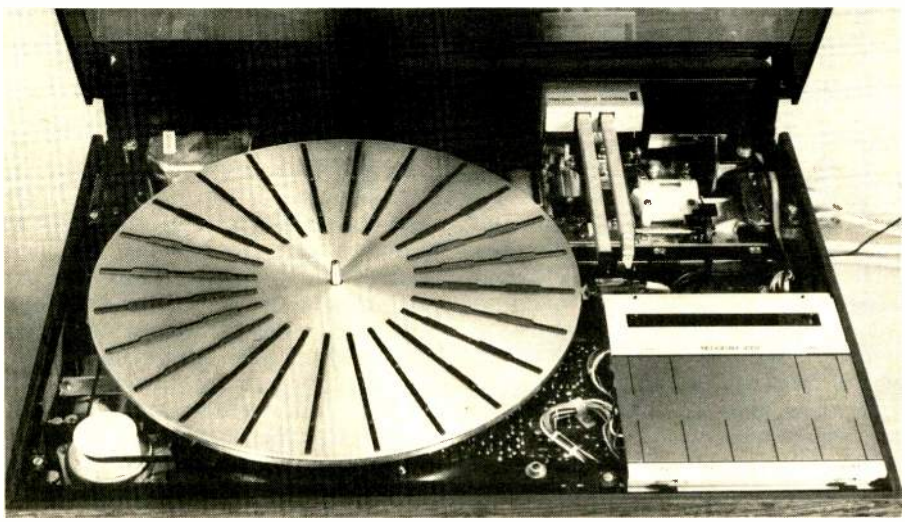
It is imprecise to consider the Beogram 4002 as though it were merely a combination of a turntable, an arm, and a cartridge, for it is far more than that—one of the most sophisticated and thoroughly engineered home record players ever made. Furthermore (and this is important for a component that will be in plain view as a part of one's home furnishings), the styling of the Beogram 4002 is as special as its technical features. In fact, it is a permanent part of an exhibit of contemporary design at New York's Museum of Modern Art.

The Beogram 4002 is quite large, measuring 19¼ inches wide and 15 inches deep. It is only 4 inches high, including the hinged tinted plastic cover, but 18 inches of vertical clearance must be allowed for raising the cover. The slim appearance of the unit belies its considerable weight of 28 pounds. A narrow wood-trim strip decorates the front and sides

(rosewood is standard, teak and oak trim strips are optional).

The control and operating surfaces, including the full-size platter, are finished in satin aluminum. The platter is flush with the control panel but has twenty-four radial spokes of black plastic that support the record with a minimum of contact area. The arm carriage at the rear of the unit travels on concealed rails, and it has what appears to be two slim tone arms, of square cross section, spaced about half an inch apart. A tracking-force scale, reading from 0 to 1.5 grams, is on top of the carriage cover, and it is adjustable by screwdriver through a hole in the side of the cover.

The "inner" arm carries a lamp and photocell that sense the presence of a record on the turntable, and the "outer" arm, which is pivoted to permit a slight horizontal movement, carries the tiny plug-in MMC6000 cartridge at its tip. The arm is *never* moved by hand or even touched in operation. The arm carriage cannot, in fact, be positioned manually, since it is driven by a d.c. servo-motor turning a threaded lead screw.



The inside story of the Beogram 4002 is exposed by removal of the top plate when the wood side panels are slid forward. All electronic and mechanical elements are easily accessible. Note the belt-drive pulley at lower left and the sophisticated control panel at lower right.

At the front right of the control panel is a single thin metal plate, slotted to form seven sections that can be pressed to operate the record player. Only moderate pressure is required, and the control sections move almost imperceptibly. They are marked with arrows indicating the resulting direction of arm movement. The front controls include ON, OFF, two arm-movement controls for cueing the pickup to any part of a record, and one that alternately raises and lowers the pickup. To their rear are two speed controls, one for 33⅓ and one for 45 rpm. Behind them is a black strip covering individual scales that light up to show the operating speed. Each scale is calibrated over a range of ±3 per cent relative to the nominal speed, and next to each is a small vernier speed-adjustment wheel. The speed scales are not stroboscopic indicators, but are actually more accurate than stroboscopes, which depend ultimately on the a.c. power-line frequency for their accuracy.

In normal operation, a record is placed on the platter and the ON button is pressed. The platter starts to turn, and the arm assembly travels inward. When the photocell senses the edge of the record (which interrupts the reflection of the travelling-lamp's light beam from the platter to the photocell), the carriage stops and the arm is lowered to the record. Since the indexing is determined by actual record size, it is automatic for 10- or 12-inch discs. If the arm moves inside a 5-inch radius without detecting a record, the control system assumes that any record present must be a 45-rpm, 7-inch disc, and the speed automatically changes to 45 rpm. At the end of play, or if no record is found on the turntable, the arm lifts and the carriage returns to its rest position outside the turntable diameter, shutting off the player.

If the ON button is pressed with no record on the turntable, the arm travels across the platter, finds no record, returns to its rest position, and shuts off the unit. B&O has gone to great pains to make the 4002 as foolproof as possible, with a number of logic interlock systems that make incorrect operation virtually impossible. If the power is shut off or is interrupted while the player is operating, the arm instantly lifts. When power is restored, the turntable can be placed in operation only by pushing the ON button. Even a burned-out lamp in the sensing arm (which could lead the photocell to "think" that a record is on the turntable since it receives no reflected light) is interlocked to stop the arm from lowering.

The black spokes on the platter are a key part of the automatic sensing system. As the lamp and photocell pass over them, they "chop" the reflected light to generate an a.c. signal at 13 Hz or 18 Hz, depending on the turntable speed. As long as this frequency is present, the arm continues its search and the pickup cannot be lowered. When a record is on the platter, it blocks the a.c light modulation and the system goes into its playing mode.

Touching the center control section energizes a solenoid that instantly raises the pickup from the record. Another touch lowers it, over a 1-second period, under air-damped control. To cue the pickup, either of the slewing controls is touched. The pickup lifts from the record and the arm moves in the indicated direction at a rate of ¼ inch per second. It stops instantly when the pressure is released. Touching the lift control then lowers the pickup to the record surface. For faster slewing, the ON and OFF buttons can be used in the same manner, but the arm moves at twice the rate (½ inch per second). Pressing any of the other controls stops the arm movement.

Although the motor is fastened rigidly to the base, the arm and turntable system floats as a unit on three cantilever leaf springs. A sophisticated damping system is used on the suspension, which has a resonant frequency of 4.5 Hz and makes the unit relatively insensitive to external shock or vibration.

The MMC6000 cartridge is designed for playing either CD-4 or stereo records. The signal output cable, fitted with DIN plugs at both ends, has an adapter with four conventional phono plugs, marked for the four quadraphonic channels. Normally, only the two front outputs are used. However, B&O makes a CD-4 demodulator that can be installed within the Beogram 4002, which then supplies a four-channel output through the signal cable. A slide switch on the side of the base selects either stereo or CD-4 operation. The price of the complete Beogram 4002 (stereo version) is $650.

● ***Laboratory Measurements.*** The Beogram 4002 starts up very quickly compared with most automatic record players. Only three seconds after the ON button is pressed, the pickup contacts the record and un-mutes (the audio outputs are muted at all times *except* when the stylus is on the record surface). Shut-off is almost as rapid, with eight seconds needed for the arm to return to its rest position and shut off the player. With the speed dials set to "0," both speeds were exactly correct, as measured with a frequency counter. The vernier control range was +3.3 to −2.8 per cent at 33⅓ rpm and +4.6 to −3.7 per cent at 45 rpm. The speeds did not change in the least over a line-voltage range of 95 to 135 volts. Below 95 volts, the reduction in sensing-lamp output causes the arm to lift. The unweighted rms wow was 0.025 per cent and the flutter was 0.035 per cent. To the best of our knowledge, these are the residual readings of our test records and instruments, since we have never measured lower levels on any turntable.

No measurements were made on the cartridge. We did, however, measure the arm/cartridge resonance: 13 Hz, with an amplitude of 7 to 8 dB. This shows that the effective mass of the B&O arm is about one-fourth that of the high-quality record-changer arm in which we had previously tested an MMC6000 (with a resonance at 6.5 Hz). The 13-Hz resonance is well above the range where it might be excited by record warps. However, when we measured the rumble, the unweighted measurement (including both lateral and vertical components) was an unexceptional −30 dB. Canceling the vertical component improved this to −38 dB, indicating that most of the rumble was in the vertical plane. This rumble was largely in the vicinity of 13 Hz, evidently resulting from excitation of the arm resonance by the very slight motor vibration. With RRLL audibility weighting, the rumble was −60 dB.

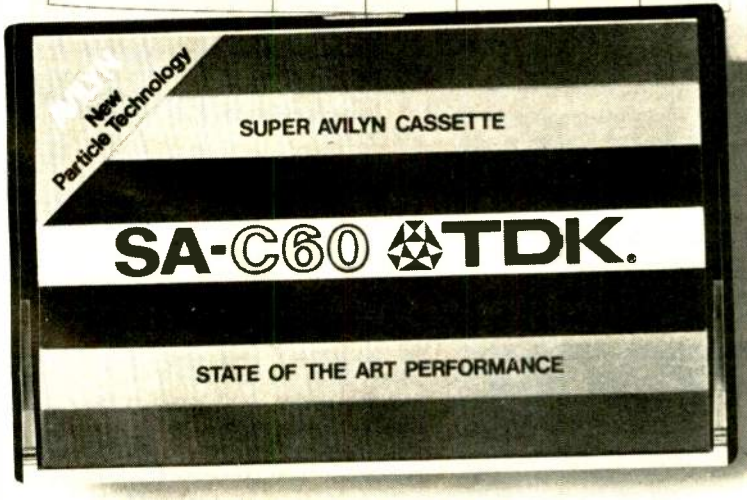
Note that although these figures are numerically not quite as good as B&O's specifications, they do not really conflict with them. The DIN standards used by B&O are based on a higher reference level than the NAB or RRLL measurements. They also have different weighting curves (which would also reduce the apparent rumble), but the difference

(Continued on page 34)

INTRODUCING TDK SUPER AVILYN. IT OUTSOUNDS CHROME. AND THE #1 FERRICHROME.

INDEPENDENT LAB TEST RESULTS

	TDK SA	A	B	C	D
Signal-to-Noise Ratio	1st	4th	1st	6th	7th
Distortion (I.M.)	1st	2nd	3rd	7th	6th
Low-Frequency Response Accuracy	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st
Mid-Frequency Response Accuracy	1st	2nd	5th	5th	2nd
High-Frequency Response Accuracy	2nd	2nd	6th	5th	1st
Maximum Output Level (3% thd)	1st	2nd	4th	6th	5th
Output (0 VU)	1st	4th	5th	2nd	2nd
Surface Abrasiveness	low	high	high	high	low



Seven tapes were tested (TDK SA, TDK KR, Scotch Chrome, BASF Chromdioxid, Advent Chrome, Scotch Classic and Maxell UD) and ranked 1st to 7th. The chart shows the results for 5 representative tapes tested.

The following tape decks were selected for use in the tests: Nakamichi 500 & 1000, Advent 201, and TEAC 450.

SA now available in C 90.

You want the best sound you can get from your cassette recorder without worrying about headwear. And until now, chrome and ferrichrome had the sound—they outperformed ferric oxide tapes in extended high frequency response with lower noise.

Well, TDK has advanced cassette recording to a new standard of high fidelity. It's new Super Avilyn, the cassette that outsounds chrome, the best-selling ferrichrome, and the top-ranked ferric oxide tapes.

Its magnetic particle is new. It soaks up more sound and plays it back with less distortion. That's power and clarity you can hear.

Super Avilyn doesn't require special bias/eq. setting for optimum performance. It is compatible with any tape deck that has the standard CrO_2 bias/eq. setting.

Distortion—that's the big story. Look at these lab test figures.

LEAST DISTORTION—CLEAREST SOUND.

RECORD INPUT LEVEL	TDK SA	A	B	C	D
0 VU	11%	13%	26%	50%	32%
-5VU	4.5%	5.4%	11%	17.5%	5.4%
-10VU	4.2%	4.5%	8.5%	7.8%	4.8%
-20VU	4.9%	5.0%	8.0%	5.2%	6.0%

SMPTE METHOD: I.M. DISTORTION—7000 Hz—60Hz, 4:1 ratio.

There's just no contest. Super Avilyn delivered the clearest, cleanest sound. More lifelike sound—and to a discriminating ear, that's the ultimate test. Fact is, Super Avilyn is the new state of the art.

TDK Electronics Corp.
755 Eastgate Blvd., Garden City, N.Y. 11530. Also available in Canada.

TDK®

Wait till you hear what you've been missing.

To honor the 200th birthday of all time" TIME-LIFE RECORDS

BEETHOVEN BICENTEN

Beethoven's achievements are a reflection of the man himself, for his music is like a diary into which he poured his life, his desires, his regrets, his furies, his melancholies and his loves. Beethoven was at constant odds with his society—a society shaken by the opposing forces of repression and revolution. He transposed his own personal struggle to the scale of the whole human race, and dreamed of bringing to it joy and universal brotherhood.

Start your collection with the first six symphonies, recorded by the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra under the direction of Herbert von Karajan. All six symphonies are yours to audition for 10 days free.

Over the years there have been many record albums devoted to various works of the immortal Ludwig van Beethoven. But there has never been a truly comprehensive collection of his works. That is why TIME-LIFE RECORDS assembled this magnificent collection that contains every important work the master ever wrote—even some rare vocal pieces never before available! It's the BEETHOVEN BICENTENNIAL COLLECTION, recorded by the famous Deutsche Grammophon Company of Germany.

10-day free audition: To introduce you to this incomparable collection we invite you to audition Volume I, the first six symphonies plus the popular LEONORE OVERTURE NO. 3 for 10 days FREE. These selections were performed by the renowned Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra under the direction of Herbert von Karajan. Highlighted in Volume I are:

SYMPHONY NO. 3 IN E FLAT MAJOR—the *"Eroica."* This was Beethoven's first symphony on the "new" road—a decisive break from the eighteenth century school.

SYMPHONY NO. 5 IN C MINOR—The opening is probably Beethoven's most well-known theme. It is merely four notes but those four notes color and characterize the entire work, a work filled with violence and muscle, struggle, anger—and triumph.

SYMPHONY NO. 6 IN F MAJOR—the *"Pastoral,"* a musical evocation of nature's changing moods—from serene to tempestuous, from lush green to black stormy skies.

Only the beginning: If you decide to keep Volume I for just $19.95 plus shipping and handling, you become a subscriber, entitled to audition approximately every other month, other albums in the collection for the same low price. Some of the magnificent works contained here are:

THE 9TH SYMPHONY—the first choral symphony composed is a resplendent setting of Schiller's *"Ode to Joy,"* a celebration of the brotherhood of man.

MISSA SOLEMNIS—a synthesis of symphony, opera, church music—ending with a prayer for inner and outer peace.

5 PIANO CONCERTOS—including *The Emperor,* one of the most original, imaginative, effective of all.

CELEBRATED PIANO SONATAS—like the famous *Moonlight,* the turbulent *Appassionata* and the vast and difficult *Hammerklavier.*

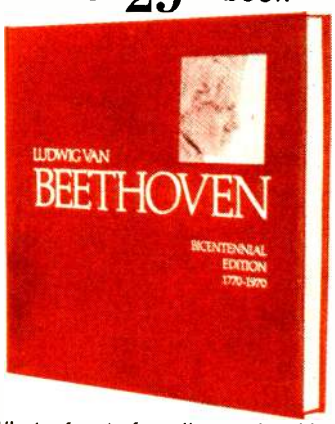
VIOLIN CONCERTO and KREUTZER SONATA—two of the mainstays of every great violinist's repertory.

THE 16 QUARTETS—reflecting Beethoven's evolution from the elegant 18th century style to prophetic genius of the future.

FIDELIO—complete recording of his only opera, a heart-stirring drama of love, courage and the universal struggle against oppression.

Herbert von Karajan, Conductor

YOURS FREE
with purchase of Album 1
this $29.50 book



What a feast of reading and looking awaits you in this big, exquisitely designed and printed book! It has been carefully prepared in cooperation with the famed Beethoven Archive in Germany to enable you to explore both the life and the work of the master in fascinating detail. In this one lifetime volume, as a companion to your Beethoven albums, you enjoy an absorbing chronicle of Beethoven's life and times—essays and discussions of every aspect of his work by noted musicologists—reproductions of his manuscripts and much, much more!

These are just a few examples of the excitement you will discover in this monumental series. It includes every major work Beethoven ever wrote.

No risk or obligation: If you are as delighted with Volume I as we think you will be, you may keep the five-record set for only $19.95 plus shipping and handling. We will include, free with your purchase, the giant book on Beethoven described above—a $29.50 value. You are under no obligation to purchase any minimum number of volumes and you may cancel your subscription at any time. Mail the postpaid card today—and reward yourself and your family with this truly remarkable collection.

If card is missing write: TIME-LIFE RECORDS, Dept. RBA932, Time & Life Building, Chicago, Ill. 60611.

of "the great musician
created this magnificent

NIAL COLLECTION

THE BEETHOVEN BICENTENNIAL COLLECTION

Think what it will mean to families that care about serious music, to young people just discovering the pleasure of meaningful music. Imagine this series of LP recordings on your shelf, always at hand to bring the enchantment of Beethoven to your home—his power, his ability to inspire, to confirm hope and make you laugh and rage and dream.

World-Renowned Artists Perform this Feast of Beethoven

HERBERT VON KARAJAN
Conductor, supreme interpreter of the Beethoven symphonic *oeuvre*.

YEHUDI MENUHIN
One of the world's most acclaimed violinists with a profound insight into Beethoven's work.

BIRGIT NILSSON
Opera's greatest dramatic soprano.

WILHELM KEMPFF
Dean of European pianists; searching, insightful, powerful.

DIETRICH FISCHER-DIESKAU
Baritone, acknowledged master of German lieder.

PIERRE FOURNIER
Silken-toned cellist who brings his superb technique to the service of Beethoven's five cello sonatas.

THE AMADEUS QUARTET
The brilliant British ensemble which probes the depths of Beethoven's string quartets.

KARL RICHTER
Masterful choral conductor who leads the less frequently heard but stirring Mass in C Major.

THE BERLIN PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
Brings a profound and moving interpretation to a number of Beethoven's major orchestral works.

in reference level alone would convert our −60-dB measurement to −69 dB, compared with the B&O rating of −65 dB. By our measurement standards, the Beogram 4002 has state-of-the-art wow and flutter performance, with rumble comparable to that of the better contemporary belt-driven turntables and many of the direct-drive turntables. In other words, it is inaudible at any reasonable playing level.

We found the Beogram 4002 to be remarkably solid and free of any tendency to respond to the kind of jarring that often causes pickup "bounce" with conventionally suspended turntables. However, when we mounted it directly in front of the speakers and turned up the volume, it was easy to induce acoustic feedback, which we judged to be in the vicinity of 13 Hz (the arm-resonance frequency). When it is installed with reasonable attention to good practice, the Beogram is completely free of such effects.

● *Comment.* It is difficult to describe the performance of the Beogram 4002 in purely objective terms without being grossly unfair to the product. To say that it functioned flawlessly in every respect, that it performed at least on a par with the best of today's record players, though accurate, does not begin to convey our reaction to this beautiful product, which is perhaps the most effective wedding of form and function we have seen in many years.

For example, although not a screw or other fastener is visible on its outside, it can be disassembled in moments without tools. Pulling the wooden trim strip forward slightly permits the two cover plates to be removed, exposing its impressive internal mechanism. Some idea of the electronic-circuit complexity of this player can be gained from our count of its transistors—thirty-five in all, plus a vast number of diodes and other components. When the covers are snapped back into place, one would never suspect what lies beneath them.

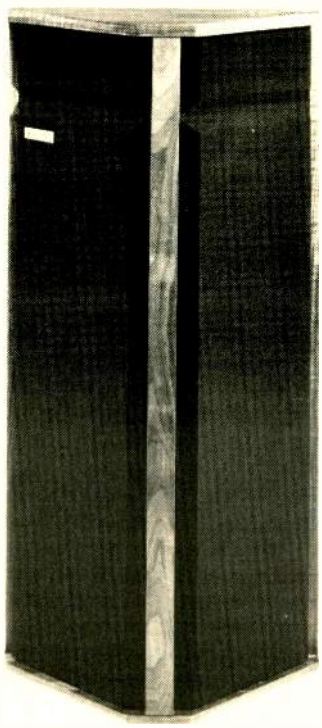
The basic virtues of a radial tone arm, augmented by the exceptionally low mass of this one, made it possible for the Beogram 4002 to track the most grotesquely warped records in our Chamber of Horrors collection, discs which have been unplayable on any other record player we have tried up to now. Not only did the stylus stay in contact with the groove at all times, but in most cases we could not even tell by ear when it was playing the warp.

One might think that the arm-positioning system would be less precise than conventional manual pickup cueing. Quite the contrary—we could pinpoint the stylus to almost the exact groove by operating the controls, and both the lift and descent of the pickup were completely free of side drift.

We were almost relieved to find that the Beogram 4002 *could* be made to feed back acoustically, even though only through grossly improper installation. Otherwise, we would have been tempted to call it a perfect design, which we know does not exist! Even if it is not "perfect," it is far and away the most refined and totally engineered record-playing product we have yet seen. Try as we might to make it misbehave functionally, we could not. The Beogram 4002 is one of the most expensive record players in the world. No one who examines and uses it can doubt that it is worth every cent of its price.

Circle 105 on reader service card

Allison:One Speaker System



● It is widely recognized that the interaction of a loudspeaker with the boundaries of the room in which it is installed can have an appreciable effect on its acoustic output, especially at bass frequencies. Since most loudspeakers have a box-like shape, the user has considerable latitude in their placement, with a correspondingly uncertain ultimate performance. Extensive research into the effects of room boundaries on the power output of a typical low-frequency cone radiator led Roy Allison to the conclusion that the most predictable and flattest output over a woofer's operating range is obtained when its cone is kept as close as possible to the intersection of two room surfaces and at least several feet from the third boundary. Conventional boxes are physically not well suited to meeting these conditions, at least not with optimum results.

The new Allison:One speaker system has been designed from the outset to provide the flattest possible power/frequency response in a practical home installation, using the criteria established by the investigations of Mr. Allison and others. It is a three-sided column, 19 inches wide, 10¾ inches deep, and standing 40 inches high. Each of the two front surfaces, angled at 45 degrees to the back wall and the front, has a woofer, mid-range, and tweeter.

At the bottom of each side is a 10-inch acoustic-suspension woofer, placed as closely as possible to a wall/floor intersection. The two mid-ranges and the two tweeters, with newly designed convex diaphragms, are located near the top of the column. The mid-range, which operates from 350 to 3,750 Hz, has an effective cone diameter of 3½ inches and a 1½-inch voice coil. The high-frequency driver, similar in design, has a 1-inch cone and a ½-inch voice coil. Both drivers have good efficiency, exceptional power-handling ability, and wide dispersion.

A three-position lever switch near the top of the cabinet's rear surface, where it can be reached easily from the front, provides the system with its flattest power response at one limit and introduces different amounts of mid- and high-frequency attenuation at the other settings. In effect, there are three frequency/power-response slopes, one of which is selected by the user to provide the most pleasing sound balance in a particular room.

The Allison:One is rated to have at least 8 ohms impedance at any audio frequency and at any switch setting. A minimum amplifier power of 30 watts is suggested to produce a sound-pressure level (SPL) of 100 dB in a typical home environment. Price: $360. (A slightly smaller version, the Allison:Two, with 8-inch woofers but otherwise essentially identical to the One, is $295.)

● ***Laboratory Measurements.*** The averaged frequency response in the reverberant field of our test room, with the speakers installed as recommended, was within approximately ±2 dB from 35 to 15,000 Hz, with the slope switch set for flattest response. The woofer response matched Allison's published curves within better than 0.5 dB over its operating range, and its overall response was a startling—and excellent—±1 dB from 40 to 400 Hz.

The slope switch had the stated effect, with a maximum roll-off starting at about 300 Hz and reaching about 3.5 dB at the highest frequencies. The speaker impedance was a minimum of 8 ohms at 3,000 Hz, with maximums of 18 ohms at 40 Hz and 20 ohms at 600 Hz. The bass distortion was exceptionally low. With a 1-watt constant-drive level it was nearly constant at approximately 1 per cent down to 35 Hz, increasing to 2.5 at 30, 5 at 25, and 11 per cent at 20 Hz. With a 10-watt input the distortion above 30 Hz increased slightly, but there was no change at the lower frequencies. Both the very low level of its bass distortion and the relative lack of breakup with a high drive level mark the Allison:One as an exceptionally fine performer. A 1-watt input in the octave centered at 1,000 Hz produced a 90-dB SPL measured at a 1-meter distance in front of the speaker. The tone-burst response in the operating range of each driver was good, with minor ringing at 1,000 and 5,000 Hz, but a near-perfect response at 100 Hz.

(Continued on page 36)

60% of BOSE Owners Changed Our Mind

While we enjoy talking about the technology that distinguishes the BOSE 901®, and about the unprecedented series of rave reviews by leading critics, the purpose of an advertisement is to increase sales by introducing more people to the product.

A surprising result of a customer survey changed our mind as to the most effective use of advertising funds. It revealed that 60% of the people who select the BOSE 901 do so at the recommendation of a 901 owner! This told us that the best advertisement is the product, and the best salesman is the enthusiastic owner.

We concluded that an excellent use of advertising funds would be to help set up an absolutely phenomenal music system in as many owners' homes as possible. Known as the SUPER BOSE SYSTEM, it consists of the 1801™ power amplifier and **two** pairs of 901 speakers. One pair of 901s is placed to reflect sound off a front wall, and the second pair reflects off side walls, producing sound with spatial realism and presence that is simply astounding.

Our program in setting up these systems in owners' homes is to provide the **SECOND PAIR OF 901s FREE** to all those serious enough to purchase a component system consisting of the 1801 amplifier and a pair of 901s. We have allocated sufficient advertising funds to cover all purchases made from October 15, 1975 to January 15, 1976.

We believe that the SUPER BOSE SYSTEM is the best music system available today.

And we believe that its owners will be the best BOSE salesmen tomorrow.

One equalizer is required for the Super Bose system, and accordingly the second pair is supplied without equalizer.

This offer is good in continental U.S.A., Alaska and Hawaii only.

901 cabinet is walnut veneer.

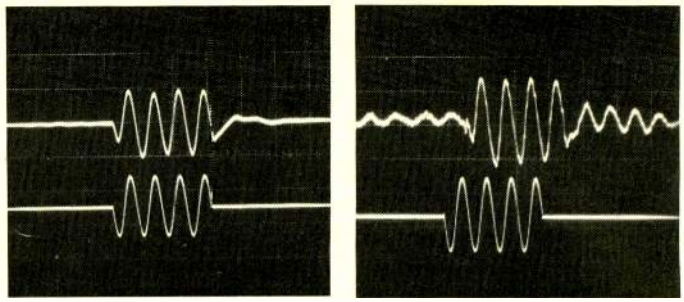
BOSE®

The Mountain, Framingham, MA 01701

● *Comment.* In the simulated live-*vs.*-recorded test, which excludes frequencies below about 200 Hz, the Allison:One was a nearly ideal imitator of our recorded "live" material. Its energy balance throughout the middles and highs, and its dispersion in these ranges, were practically perfect in this critical listening test. As compared with the original material, the Allison's lower middle/upper bass seemed a trifle "warm"—probably as a result of the improved room coupling of the Allison compared with the reference system.

We listened to a wide variety of program material, for extended periods, and aside from their smooth, uncolored sound and extended frequency range, the most salient characteristic of these speakers was an extremely powerful and clean low-bass response. This is not surprising, perhaps, in view of the fact that the cone area of two 10-inch woofers is about 40 per cent greater than that of the single 12-inch woofer used in the better conventional acoustic-suspension speaker systems.

The tweeters and mid-range drivers of the Allison:One are much more rugged in design than the typical dome radiators of other speakers, which often have to be used in clusters to withstand the power levels commonly employed to drive their woofers. Although our listening room is fairly bright, we preferred the "flat," unsloped response setting of the speaker-control switch, but its effects are rather subtle and no doubt others will find a reduction of high-frequency output to their liking.



These oscilloscope photos show the fine tone-burst performance of the Allison:One at (left to right) 100 and 1,000 Hz.

Judging only from its sound and the measurements we made, the Allison:One easily merits a place among today's finest speaker systems. Although its size and weight prevented us from moving it to different rooms to evaluate its independence from room-boundary effects, we have heard Mr. Allison's public demonstrations of the validity of his findings, and we have no doubt that this speaker will perform at its best in almost any home listening environment.

Circle 106 on reader service card

Yamaha CR-800 AM/FM Stereo Receiver

● YAMAHA's CR-800 stereo receiver shares the clean, almost stark styling that characterizes the company's line of electronic components. A large rectangular dial cutout occupies most of the upper half of the satin-finish aluminum panel, although the dial scales themselves account for only a fraction of that width. In contrast to the "blackout" dials that have appeared on most tuners and receivers in recent years, the CR-800 dial has a light silver finish matching that of the panel, and it is protected by a clear glass window. The FM tuning scale is calibrated in linearly spaced intervals of 0.5 MHz, and it employs a wide illuminated clear plastic "pointer" with a thin hairline for precise station setting.

The tuning meters (a signal-strength indicator for AM and FM and a zero-center FM meter) are at the left of the dial, and at its right are three red indicator lights marked POWER, STEREO, and AFC/STATION. The latter glows dimly when a station is tuned in (the AFC is disabled when the large tuning knob is touched), and a couple of seconds after the knob is released the AFC comes on gradually and automatically, with the light simultaneously coming to full brilliance.

Below the dial area are five smaller control knobs for the BASS and TREBLE tone controls, MIC (microphone) VOL, LOUDNESS, and VOLUME (the latter is concentric with a slim ring for BALANCE adjustment). The TONE and LOUDNESS controls have eleven detented step positions, and the BALANCE control is detented at its center. Yamaha's loudness-compensation system is unlike most others, since by the use of two controls it permits the degree of compensation to be matched to the actual listening level (a rarely provided necessity for effective loudness compensation). With the LOUDNESS knob fully clockwise, the VOLUME control is set for the loudest listening level one is likely to use. Subsequent level adjustment is made with the LOUDNESS control, which then provides fixed and repeatable contours for each of its positions as it reduces the audio level.

The MIC VOL control, which has an OFF position, adjusts the level of any dynamic microphone plugged into an adjacent jack. The microphone signal mixes with the normal program but does not appear at the tape-recording outputs. Below the microphone jack is a stereo-headphone jack.

Three bar-knob switches select the two pairs of speakers (A, B, A + B, and OFF), the input function (AUX, two magnetic phono inputs, FM with and without muting, and AM), and the tape-monitoring functions. The last of these connects the amplifier circuits to the source or to the playback output of either of two tape decks, or it interconnects the tape decks for dubbing from either machine to the other. Lever switches control a.c. POWER, MUTING (a 20-dB level reduction), MONO/STEREO mode, and the low- and high-cut filters. The filter switches are three-position "center-off" switches. The LOW FILTER provides cutoff frequencies of 70 or 20 Hz with a 12-dB-per-octave slope. The HIGH FILTER has an 8,000-Hz (6-dB-per-octave slope) position and a HIGH BLEND mode which reduces channel separation at the higher audio frequencies to lessen hiss on stereo programs without affecting frequency response. Although other receivers have a similar function for their FM tuner sections, the Yamaha CR-800 makes it available for all stereo program sources.

The various input and output connections in the rear of the CR-800 are supplemented by separate preamplifier outputs and main amplifier inputs normally coupled through a nearby slide switch. An IF OUT jack supplies a signal before de-emphasis for use with a future discrete four-channel decoder should a suitable FM quadraphonic broadcast system be approved by the FCC. The speaker terminals are insulated spring clips. There is a pivoted ferrite-rod AM antenna in addition to the usual AM and FM antenna terminals. Two of the four a.c. outlets are switched. The Yamaha CR-800 comes in a handsomely finished wooden cabinet 17¾ inches wide, 6¼ inches high, and 11¾ inches deep. It weighs 31 pounds. Price: $580.

● ***Laboratory Measurements.*** Yamaha supplies exceptionally complete performance ratings for the CR-800 which are too numerous to list here. For the most part, our tests

(Continued on page 38)

BOSE ON INNOVATION

Multiple Acoustically Coupled Drivers

There is one, and only one, reason for innovation in loudspeaker design...to produce a better musical experience. If the innovations are based on thorough research and executed with exceptional skill, they can produce truly dramatic results.

The Bose 901® eliminates woofers, tweeters and crossover networks by using nine matched full range drivers in each enclosure. The close spacing of the drivers results in acoustic coupling which causes the resonant frequencies of each driver to diverge from those of every other driver. This means that only one driver out of nine can be in resonance at a time—a proportion which is inaudible and which effectively smooths the frequency response. The result of this patented design is a freedom from audible coloration and extreme clarity of reproduction.

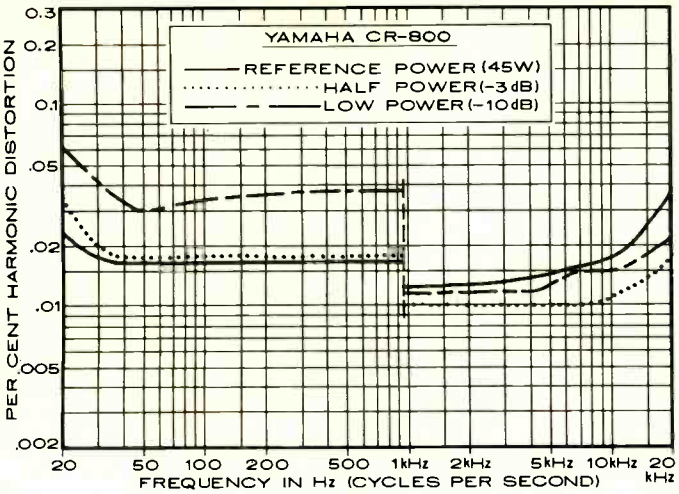
Listen to the 901 in comparison to any speaker of your choosing...and understand how Bose innovation has produced the most highly reviewed speaker...regardless of size or price.

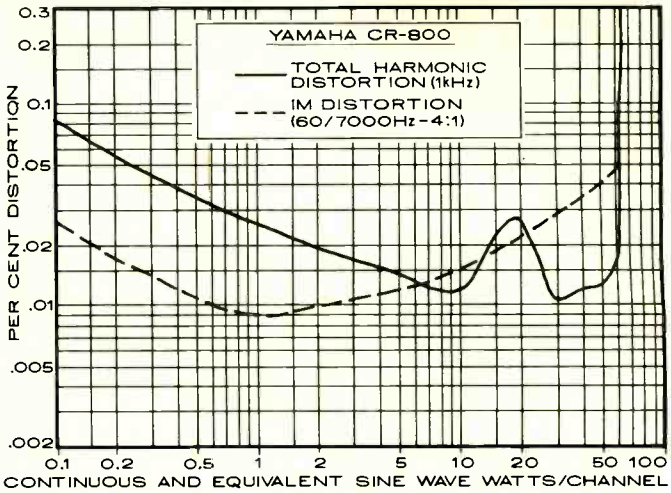
The Direct/Reflecting® 901. By Bose.

BOSE®

The Mountain, Framingham, MA 01701

Please write us for the complete story of the 901. 901 cabinet is walnut veneer on particle board.





showed that the published figures were extremely conservative. The power output at clipping with a 1,000-Hz input signal into 8-ohm loads, both channels driven, was 61 watts per channel. It was 79 watts into 4 ohms and 41 watts into 16 ohms. The total harmonic distortion (THD) was lower than the noise level up to several watts output and less than 0.03 per cent up to 60 watts output. The intermodulation distortion (IM) was under 0.03 per cent from 0.1 to 30 watts, reaching 0.05 per cent at 60 watts.

At Yamaha's rated 45 watts output and at lower power levels, the THD was less than 0.035 per cent from 20 to 20,000 Hz and typically less than 0.015 per cent. At one-tenth power, the THD reading was 0.03 to 0.06 per cent at frequencies below 1,000 Hz, but much of this was inaudible power-line noise our test equipment could filter out when measuring above 1,000 Hz. At higher outputs it was masked by the distortion components. Incidentally, the CR-800 proved its ruggedness by surviving without mishap an accidental 30 minutes of severe overload, with both channels driven into hard clipping.

To develop a reference power of 10 watts, the required inputs were 57 millivolts (mV) at the AUX terminals, 1.2 mV at the phono inputs, and 1.1 mV at the MIC jack. The respective unweighted signal-to-noise (S/N) measurements were 80, 78, and 74 dB—all of them outstandingly good. The phono preamplifier did not overload until a very high 250-mV input signal was applied. The microphone-input overload level of 700 mV was the highest we have yet measured on an amplifier or receiver.

The RIAA phono equalization was within ±0.5 dB from 30 to 20,000 Hz. Cartridge inductance affected it only slightly, reducing the 15,000-Hz response by one or two decibels (typical of most good amplifiers, and not audibly significant). The bass tone control had a sliding turnover frequency with a maximum boost of almost 20 dB. The treble control had a hinged response characteristic with a maximum range of about ±12 dB. The filter characteristics were as rated—excellent at the low frequencies but too gradual to be really effective at high frequencies. However, the "high-blend" system did an excellent job of noise reduction, on stereo records as well as FM, without sacrificing high-frequency response.

The loudness-compensation system impressed us as one of the best we have used. Over much of its range, one was not really aware of its action, since the program's frequency balance remained seemingly unaffected as the level dropped (but if it was disabled by setting the LOUDNESS knob to maximum, and the output level was adjusted only with the volume knob, the difference was striking). Only at lower settings did the loudness compensation produce the rather heavy quality typical of most such circuits throughout their range.

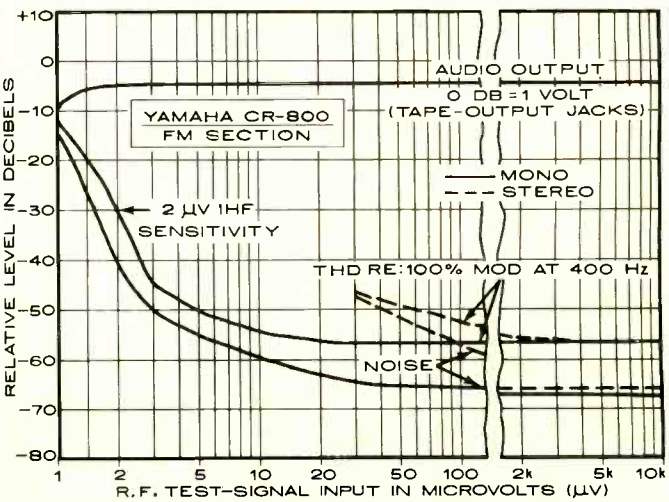
The FM tuner section had an IHF sensitivity of 2 microvolts (close enough to the rating to be considered within normal measurement tolerances) and reached 50 dB quieting at only 3 microvolts (μV) input in mono and 43 μV in stereo. The stereo switching and muting thresholds were the same, between 15 and 22 μV, which was somewhat higher than we would think necessary for a tuner as good as this one. (Yamaha tells us that it will be readjusted.) However, the muting action was as nearly perfect as we have ever heard, with absolutely no transient noise evident during its operation.

The ultimate S/N ratio (unweighted) was 67 dB in mono and 66 dB in stereo. At a 1,000-μV input, the harmonic distortion was 0.15 per cent in both mono and stereo. The capture ratio of 0.9 dB was outstanding, as was the AM rejection of 70 dB. The alternate-channel selectivity measured a fine 88 dB, while the image rejection was 79 dB.

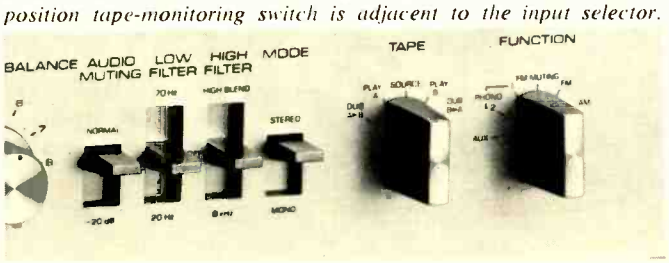
The stereo FM frequency response was as flat as our test instruments, within ±0.3 dB from 30 to 15,000 Hz. This flatness at the highest transmitted audio frequencies suggests that the usual 15,000-Hz low-pass filter is *not* used in this receiver to remove 19-kHz multiplex pilot-carrier leakage. This makes the lack of 19 kHz-signal leakage into the audio outputs quite remarkable—it was literally undetectable, being suppressed to better than 85 dB below a 100 per cent modulation level. Stereo channel separation was better than 40 dB from 30 to 7,500 Hz, exceeded 50 dB between 150 and 1,500 Hz, and was a strong 33 dB at 15,000 Hz.

(Continued on page 42)

The levels of both random noise and total harmonic distortion (which includes noise) are compared with the audio-output level as input-signal strength increases. Both mono and stereo are shown. ►



Some of the Yamaha's many front-panel lever switches and rotary controls are shown in this close-up view. The very flexible, five-position tape-monitoring switch is adjacent to the input selector.



Introducing the changer that outperforms all others. The direct drive SL-1350.

Introducing the world's first and only direct-drive changer. The SL-1350. The first changer with the Technics direct-drive system. A system so superior many radio stations now use it.

No other changer, and only a handful of manuals, can equal its 0.04% wow and flutter. And because the motor spins at the exact speed of the record, any rumble is an inaudible −70dB (DIN B).

Direct Drive System

Two pairs of pivot bearings ensure the rotational sensitivity of the SL-1350's gimbal-suspended tone arm. And for precise tracking, its effective pivot to stylus length is $9\frac{1}{16}$".

With the Technics Memo Gram dial control, the SL-1350 can play up to six records in sequence. Or repeat-play any disc up to six times. You can even use it as a manual turntable.

But any way you use it, the SL-1350 gives you everything you need. Like viscous damped cueing and variable pitch controls. A 13" platter. An easy view prism strobe. CD-4 phono cables. Even a hinged detachable dust cover and base are included.

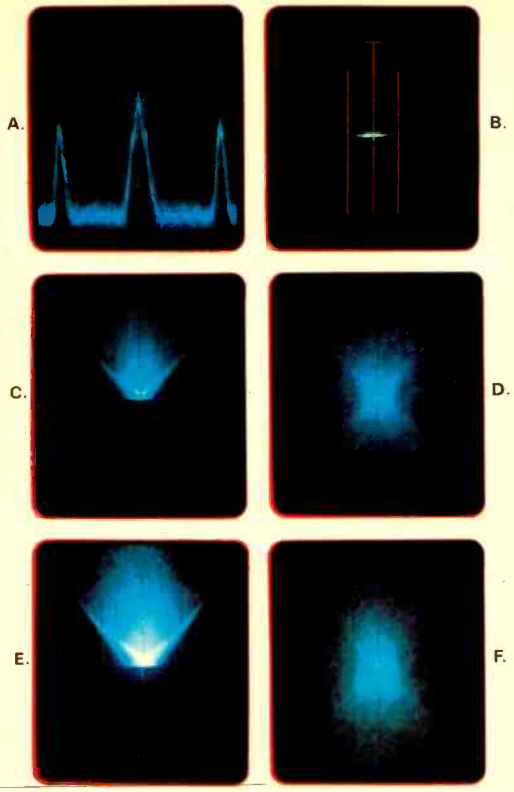
So if you've been sacrificing the convenience of a changer for the performance of a manual, take a look at the Technics SL-1350. It'll change your mind about changers.

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

FOR YOUR TECHNICS DEALER, CALL FREE 800 447-4700. IN ILLINOIS, 800 322-4400.

Technics
by Panasonic

CIRCLE NO. 66 ON READER SERVICE CARD



A benchful of instrumentation at your fingertips.

A. Panoramic spectrum analysis: a horizontal, 2 mHz-wide panoramic display of all signals (shown as "pips"), and FM stations located 1 mHz above and below tuned FM carrier frequency centered. **B.** Tuning, signal analysis: a thin, straight, centered horizontal display, minimum AM product of multi-path, instantaneous peak deviation, modulation and signal level. **C.** Internal vector separation analysis: instantaneous peak deviation of L+R stereo information and separation. R-front vector at 45° L-front vector at 135° **D.** External vector separation analysis: Same as C, but quadraphonic information, with L-rear vector at 225° and R-rear vector at 315° **E.** Internal vector phase analysis: stereo mode L+R front vector. Base line horizontal displacement indicating phase relationships at center of X axis. **F.** External vector phase analysis: same as E, but quadraphonic mode with front-to-rear phase relationship at center of Y axis.

To appreciate the SEQUERRA forget everything you know or assume about tuners.

Then you will begin to understand why it may be difficult to acquire.

THE SEQUERRA MODEL 1.

Four-digit LED readout is frequency-controlled (not synthesized). Accurate to 0.1 mHz.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY OWEN BROWN

By the end of this year, about five hundred Sequerras will have been built and purchased. Most of these are used professionally, such as at FM stations, by those who require its unique capabilities as a multi-function program monitor and as an extraordinary high-performance FM tuner.

Only 100 units per month.

Because of the nearly five thousand separate parts required by its design, the complex assembly, ninety-three test adjustments and hundreds of inspections, monthly production is currently limited to approximately one hundred units. This, plus its price of $2500, is likely to continue restricting the ownership of Sequerras in the forseeable future.

We're trying to be fair to all.

To accommodate those who will settle for nothing less than the Sequerra, we have instituted a special procedure. When an order is placed with a Sequerra dealer who does not have a unit in stock, a sequential serial number is reserved for that purchaser who then receives a certificate of ownership. When this unit has been produced and has successfully passed our validation procedures it is shipped directly to the address requested: home, lab, or studio. Should you desire, Collins Radio Broadcast Field Engineers are available to assist you.

Those who already know of the Sequerra's technical capabilities need only one more bit of information: the names and addresses of our carefully selected dealers. A request for the list will be promptly fulfilled. Those who want more technical data will also be sent a brochure and a selection of reprints from the more than twenty test reports published world-wide.

Evaluations of monitoring functions.

Considerable space in these reports is devoted to the Sequerra's monitoring functions. As *Audio* reported: "We have just seen a four-quadrant oscilloscope capable of visually depicting stereo and quadraphonic signal separation and phase relationships." A portion of *High Fidelity's* report described additional information revealed by the scope: "The vector display can be used to check relative amplitude and placement in any signal source: quad, stereo, or mono. Where adjacent channels interfere with each other, the display can be used as gauge of antenna positioning to minimize the interference."

And from *Stereo Review:* "Unlike most such oscilloscopes (tuning and multipath-distortion indication), this one is accurately calibrated in signal levels over a range of more than 100 dB. In other words, it is now possible to estimate the number of microvolts of any signal reaching the tuner's antenna terminals from any tuned-in station."

Evaluations as "just" an FM tuner.

As for the Sequerra's performance as "just" an FM tuner, the following comments are also from the test reports. *Audio:* "...the world's best performing tuner...at least a whole order of magnitude better than anything else around." *High Fidelity:* "...so superlative that (it) can, with justice, be called 'best'." *Stereo Review:* "... may be a godsend...if it won't do the job, nothing else will..." *Radio-Electronics:* "$2500. it's worth the price!...masterpiece..." *Absolute Sound:* "... in a class by itself...state-of-the-art tuner."

Even if your present requirements and personal situation don't yet call for the ownership of a Sequerra, we hope you will visit one of our dealers for a demonstration. As *High Fidelity* also said: "We guarantee you'll by fascinated by it."

THE SEQUERRA COMPANY, INC.
A MEMBER OF THE BARRETT GROUP
143-11 ARCHER AVENUE, JAMAICA, N.Y. 11435

● *Comment.* The resemblance of the Yamaha CR-800 FM tuner section to the $1,200 Model CT-7000 FM tuner (reviewed in STEREO REVIEW for January 1975) is apparently more than skin deep. Clearly, many of the design concepts and performance goals of the CT-7000 have been carried over into the CR-800. In a point-by-point comparison, the FM performance of the CR-800 comes remarkably close to matching that of the CT-7000, which ranks with the most advanced FM tuner designs we have seen.

We were pleased to find that the ultra-smooth "feel" of the CT-7000 is also built into the CR-800. The operation of its controls conveys a strong impression of precision, which is completely consistent with the measured performance of the receiver. For example, the dial-scale calibrations were accurate enough that one could set the dial to a predetermined frequency, turn on the receiver, and find the desired station tuned in "on the nose." Even the signal-strength meter, frequently a less-than-perfect feature of tuners and receivers, has a logarithmic scale that provides useful readings on signals too weak to be received with full quieting, yet is not driven off-scale by thousands of microvolts.

There are many fine receivers on the market, especially at the price level of the Yamaha CR-800. Obviously, some of them have features not present in the CR-800, and vice versa. Some are more powerful, although we doubt that many people will find the CR-800 underpowered. However, if there is a significantly *better* receiver in any of the respects that really matter to the user, we haven't seen it.

Circle 107 on reader service card

Uher CR 134 Stereo Cassette Recorder

● THE Uher CR 134 is an extremely compact portable battery/a.c.-operated stereo cassette recorder whose performance compares favorably with (and in some respects surpasses) that of many of today's typical good-quality home cassette decks. The CR 134 features automatic tape reversal in playback, a built-in capacitor microphone, and inputs for external stereo microphones. There are inputs for high-level signals from a tuner or similar source, and the line-level playback outputs are suitable for connection to home amplifier inputs. A small monitoring speaker is built in, and there are outputs for external speakers or headphones (the amplifiers of the CR 134 can deliver about 1 watt per channel to 4-ohm loads).

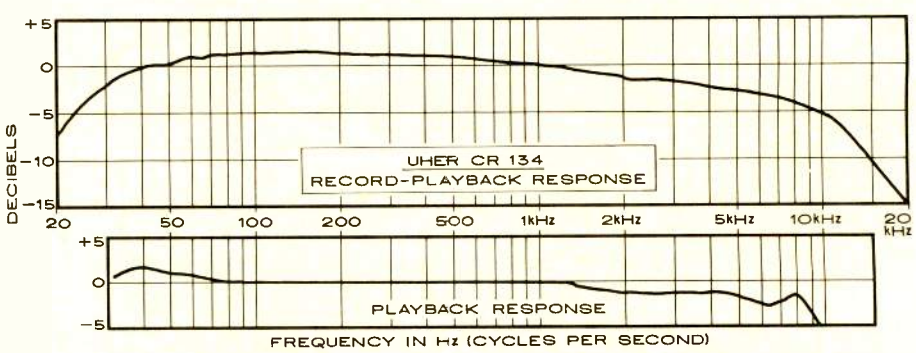
The Uher CR 134 is approximately 7⅛ inches square and 2¼ inches high; it weighs 5½ pounds with its optional internal, rechargeable NiCad battery pack. An a.c. line-operated battery-charger/power-supply is available, and this can be installed within the recorder case if desired, or the unit can be operated from six "C" cells or from a 12-volt automobile battery. The operating controls are located on the recorder's front edge, along with the cassette insertion slot. The cassette is drawn into place by a spring-loaded claw when partially inserted, and pressing down on a locking key places the machine in readiness for use. A button underneath the key serves to eject the cassette after use.

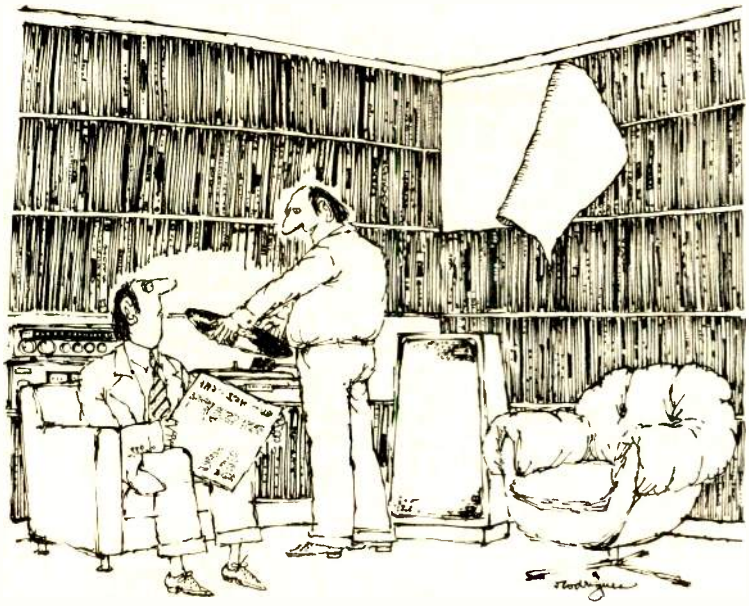
The CR 134 records in one direction and plays back in both directions. The principal transport control is a small T-bar lever. Pushing it down turns on the electronics of the recorder, and a momentary push to right or left puts the tape in motion in either the forward or reverse direction, with automatic head switching to contact the appropriate pair of tracks. The transport is solenoid-operated, with a self-latching mechanism, so that the lever returns to its neutral position when released. A small meter indicates the direction of tape travel, and there is a three-digit push-button-reset index counter. A separate lever controls the fast-forward and rewind operations; this must be returned manually to its center position to stop the tape.

The brushless d.c. motor is electronically controlled, and a photoelectric sensor automatically reverses the tape, in either direction, at the end of play. Recording can be done (only in the forward direction) by pushing a red button while moving the transport lever to its operating position. At any time during recording or playback, the lever can be pressed down to stop the tape without releasing the recording interlock if it is engaged. A small meter with a horizontally moving red indicator bar monitors the battery voltage during playback and the program level during recording. Its response is quite fast, with a much slower decay, and it is calibrated from −20 to +2 dB. As a voltmeter, its expanded scale covers 6 to 8 volts (the latter is the normal voltage of a fully charged battery). Proper operation of the recorder is maintained down to a 6.5-volt battery level.

To the left of the meter is a ¼-inch opening for the built-in capacitor microphone (which Uher says is really a low-voltage capacitor microphone, *not* an electret type). The volume control sets both recording and playback (monitor) levels, but the line outputs to an external amplifier are at a fixed level. A DIN socket below the volume control accepts external stereo microphones. Other pushbuttons on the panel shut off the internal monitoring speaker (which is on the top surface of the recorder), switch between internal and external microphones, and activate the recording ALC (automatic level-control system). Along the side of the metal-cased CR 134 are three DIN sockets—for high-level inputs and line outputs, external speakers or headphones, or remote-control accessories which can control all tape-transport functions. A separate monitor volume control adjusts the level through the speaker or headphone outputs while recording (when the volume control is in the recording inputs). A DIN socket in the rear of the unit interconnects it with an automobile radio. A small hinged panel opens for access to the battery/power-supply compartment.

The basic specifications of the CR 134 include a frequency response of 20 to 13,000 Hz, an "A" weighted signal-to-noise ratio of better than 56 dB, and wow and flutter of less than 0.12 per cent. Price: the Uher CR 134 with carrying case is $378; a NiCad battery pack is $67.65, a power-supply/charger $38.85, and a stereo microphone $60.70. Other accessories, including special adapter plugs and cables, are also available.





● *Laboratory Measurements.* The Uher CR 134 was tested with TDK SD tape. The record-playback frequency response was within ±5 dB from 20 to 13,000 Hz. A hotter tape would doubtless have flattened the high-end response. The playback frequency response, with a Nortronics AT 200 tape, varied +1.5, −2.5 dB from 31.5 to 9,000 Hz, and it was down 7 dB at 10,000 Hz. This is probably the result of an equalization mismatch rather than any inherent fault of the machine.

For a 0-dB recording-level indication, an input of 4 millivolts (mV) was required at the RADIO inputs and 0.2 mV at the microphone inputs. The corresponding playback output level was 670 mV. When a standard Dolby-level tape was played it provided a 580-mV output level, which is equivalent to −1 dB. The harmonic distortion was 2.4 per cent at 0 dB and reached the standard 3 per cent level at a +1-dB recording input. The signal-to-noise ratio (S/N) referred to that level was 49 dB unweighted, 59 dB with IEC "A" weighting.

The wow and flutter (combined record-playback) were 0.02 per cent and 0.12 per cent and measured the same in both directions of tape travel. The operating speed was slightly fast (we would estimate the error as somewhat less than 1 per cent, and there was a difference of 0.4 per cent in speed between forward and reverse operation). A C-60 cassette ran through in 116 seconds in fast forward or rewind.

We checked the battery capacity by playing C-60 cassettes, in both directions, at the rate of two or three a day and monitoring the voltage indications on the recorder's meter, starting with a fully charged battery. In seven hours of play the voltage dropped from 8 to 7 volts, and during the next half-hour it suddenly fell to less than 6 volts and the recorder stopped. We would consider this to be a very satisfactory amount of service on a charge, although the sudden drop suggests that one should not let the voltage go below 7 volts when in the field. About twelve hours is required to fully recharge the battery (the recorder can be used during the charge period with the a.c. supply connected).

● *Comment.* Although the frequency response of the Uher CR 134 does not quite match the performance of the better cassette decks in range or flatness, it nevertheless needs no apologies. We were impressed by the low flutter, which is on a par with many of the best a.c.-operated cassette machines and the low noise level, which is about as low as one can get with a non-Dolby machine.

The CR 134 was developed originally for the European market, where DIN connectors are commonplace; however, adapters are needed for equipment to be found in this country. And as with most DIN-equipped devices, the high-level line-input sensitivity is far too high for direct interface with conventional components, although suitable attenuators are built into some DIN adapters. Uher's instruction manual states that recording can by accomplished only with cassettes whose knockout tabs have not been removed. Unfortunately, at least in our test sample, this is not so. And if one does not realize that an already recorded cassette is in the machine (it cannot be seen when in place), it is perfectly possible to accidentally erase a valued recording.

The tape reversal is so fast and smooth as to be virtually imperceptible, requiring perhaps a second. Connected to a stereo receiver, the CR 134 delivered a sound quality on off-the-air FM recordings that compared in every way to what one would expect from a fine component cassette deck. As Uher points out, the built-in microphone is not recommended for high-quality music recording, but it produced clean and wide-range voice recordings. The ALC goes into action rapidly at levels exceeding 0 dB and allows inputs up to +30 dB before distortion sets in. However, its release time is *very* long—many minutes—so that low-level sounds coming after loud ones may not be recorded with sufficient level unless the ALC button is momentarily released and re-engaged to clear the circuits (there is no mention of this in the otherwise complete instruction manual).

Summarizing, the Uher CR 134 is a very versatile, high-performance miniature portable stereo cassette recorder that has much of the quality of a good home machine, yet is smaller than most mono portables. While it is not inexpensive, it appears to be very well made, and its price can surely be justified for those people who need its special qualities.

Circle 108 on reader service card

THE OPERA FILE

By WILLIAM LIVINGSTONE

TURN YOUR RADIO ON

As a result of a brief spare-time course I took years ago in the army, I have retained a Russian vocabulary of perhaps a hundred words. And when the Bolshoi Opera visited New York last summer I think I heard every one of them at one performance or another except the words for match (*spichka*) and railroad station (*vogzal*). The Bolshoi singers' diction was so marvelous that the words just leapt out at you. You might not think Russian an ideal language for singing—all those consonants—but they made it sound so beautiful that I wanted to learn it.

The Berlitz language schools tell me I could quickly become proficient in reading, writing, and speaking Russian in their "Total Immersion" course. In T.I. one works with a team of three Russian teachers from 8:15 a.m. to 5:15 p.m., Monday through Friday, with two hours of homework every evening, for only five weeks, and it costs $4,300, including lunch.

Frankly, that seemed a bit strenuous and rather costly, even considering that you'd save a month's lunch money. And how much would I use Russian even now that the Met's policy is to sing *Boris Godunov*, *Eugene Onegin*, and *Pique Dame* in that language?

Well, there are all those fine Melodiya records to listen to. And as I mulled this over, I decided that before going for broke at Berlitz, I'd try to learn a bit of Russian from opera records—a sort of discreet Presbyterian Sprinkling rather than Total Immersion—and I thought I'd memorize the words to an aria or scene from a Russian opera I particularly like. After all, that's the way I learned most of the Italian I know. As a result, in speaking Italian I'm much better at announcing my intention to overthrow the impious altar of the Druids or telling a girl she is not my daughter but a slave of the Pharaohs than at making plane reservations or ordering meals.

Anyway, the Russian scene I chose was Act 1, Scene 1 from Prokofiev's *War and Peace*, and I'm learning it with the Columbia/Melodiya recording. (If you haven't bought that one yet, start saving your lunch money. It's worth it.) I had found the scene rather difficult to sing along with before, but knowing the words, even imperfectly, helps a lot.

Next I'm going to attack the big seduction scene from Tchaikovsky's *Pique Dame* (*The Queen of Spades*). The Melodiya/Angel recording of this opera doesn't satisfy me. Galina Vishnevskaya is good enough, but I can't stand the tenor, conductor Boris Khaikin sets some very odd tempos, and his symphonic approach deprives the big climactic scenes of dramatic impact. Columbia Records is going to release a new Bolshoi *Pique Dame* with artists who performed it in New York last summer. I'm so curious about it that I've tried to wheedle a copy of the master tape out of Columbia. No luck.

I got hooked on this opera (again back in my army days) when I sent away for a batch

Exam

Hermann Prey, the Barber on TV

of operatic records offered cheaply by the Musical Masterworks Society. Most of them were bad, but *Il Trovatore* sung by a Dutch company was good for laughs, and a disc of highlights from *Pique Dame* was excellent. It featured Georgi Nelepp, Eugenia Smolenskaya, Pavel Lisitsian (one of my all-time favorite baritones), and Alexander Melik-Pashayev, who conducts the Columbia *War and Peace*. The sound, early-Fifties mono, is still acceptable.

My heart leapt up when I beheld the *whole* recording of the Melik-Pashayev performance complete on three records for $13.50 recently at the Four Continent Book Corporation (156 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10010). The store specializes in imports from Russia—such fascinating things as "Vocal Cycles

(Continued on page 46)

When a good friend tells you "I can't afford Interface:A," tell her about the new Interface:B.

Our new Interface:B is a way of acquiring most of the excellence of our vented, equalized Interface:A speaker system for much less money. Interface:B is friendly advice in another way too: we designed it to work with lower powered electronics and still provide superior sound at satisfying levels.

Flat, accurate response here. Less than 2¢ a Hz.

Below the lowest reach of a bass guitar is a whole acoustical world that's costly to reproduce. And most speakers miss it. Yet down there, Interface:B responds with startling accuracy to a 36-Hz tone. We used an Interface:A technique to achieve this; it is not unlike squeezing a 16-foot organ pipe into a box of true bookshelf size. The device that enables this is the same vent substitute we developed to meet the design goals of the Interface:A. It looks like an extra woofer, but it duplicates the function of a column of air ten inches in diameter and nearly 20 feet long.

Highs the way the composers wrote them.

In the midrange, most high-efficiency bookshelf speakers in the Interface:B price class come on strong. Overly so, we think. On top of that, many don't disperse their high-frequency output uniformly, either. We haven't resorted to these design tradeoffs in Interface:B. Interface:B puts out an earful of uncommonly uniform acoustic power because, first, its midrange is radiated by a relatively small diameter driver, plus it has a simple but effective acoustic lens on the tweeter combined with a compensating amount of high-frequency boost from the equalizer.

We mixed the equation so that B equals A, nearly.

So that lower powered receivers could be used with Interface:B, we altered the mathematics of Interface:A's enclosure. About an inch increase in size all around permits, with only a 4-Hz change in low-frequency limit, a conversion efficiency fully 3 dB higher than Interface:A. So it takes half the power to drive Interface:B's to the same volume level.

And so that subsonic signals such as record rumble don't distort the flat response of Interface:B, we designed the equalizer to roll off sharply below 36 Hz.

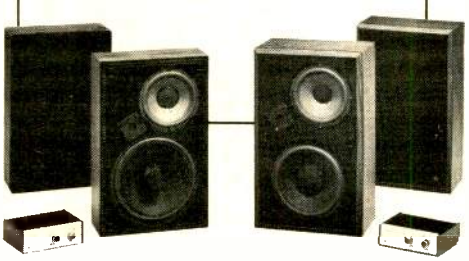
A-B our new Interface:B against the higher priced systems.

For accurate response, superior dispersion, and deeply satisfying levels, we think practically nothing beats our Interface:B (except our Interface:A). Give us a hearing.

Free manual.

Send for our free Interface information package. It includes an Interface:B Owner's Manual that is practically an education in vented speaker design and application.

Specifications	Interface:A	Interface:B
Response, On Axis	32—18,000 Hz, ±3 dB	36—18,000 Hz, ±3 dB
Total Acoustic Power Output	32—18,000 Hz, ±3 dB	36—18,000 Hz, ±4½ dB
Sound Pressure Level (1 Meter, 1-W In)	89 dB	92 dB
Suggested Amplifier Power Rating (RMS per channel at 8 ohms)	Minimum: 10 Watts Maximum: 250 Watts	Minimum: 5 Watts Maximum: 180 Watts
Long-term average power handling capacity (midband)	25 Watts	18 Watts
Peak Power Handling Capacity (midband) (10 milliseconds)	250 Watts	180 Watts
Dimensions	14" x 22" x 7¾" deep	14" x 23" x 9¼" deep
Suggested Retail Price (Slightly Higher in Western States)	$450.00 per pair including equalizer	$325 per pair including equalizer



Interface:A Interface:B

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Electro-Voice® INC
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CIRCLE NO. 18 ON READER SERVICE CARD

by Lettish Composers"—and if you're at all interested in out-of-the-way Russian items, I suggest you order their free catalog. I also recommend anything by the great Russian tenors Ivan Kozlovsky and Georgi Vinogradov.

WHILE the Bolshoi Opera company was in this country, I heard a rumor that Exxon was going to underwrite the taping of one of their productions to broadcast on television. The rumor turned out to be totally false, but an opera that Exxon *is* presenting in its Great Performances Series on the Public Broadcasting System is *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, a La Scala production with Teresa Berganza, Hermann Prey, Luigi Alva, and Paolo Montarsolo, conducted by Claudio Abbado—the same cast as on the Deutsche Grammophon recording. A separate soundtrack was made for TV, but the performances should be about the same as on the records. Although the DG set is not ideal in every respect, the telecast will give us a welcome chance to see Berganza, who no longer performs in this country. It is scheduled for January 7.

There will be some other operatic offerings on PBS this season, and radio continues to be a good friend to operaphiles. Those who live within the range of WFMT in Chicago can hear the entire repertoire of the Lyric Opera of Chicago, and in four-channel sound, no less! That company's season runs from September 19 through December 13 and includes *Otello*, *La Traviata*, *Elektra*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Fidelio*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, and *Orfeo ed Euridice*.

Station KKHI in San Francisco broadcasts performances by that city's opera company live and in four-channel. The San Francisco season (September 12 to November 30) includes the following works: *Il Trovatore*, *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*, *Der Fliegende Holländer*, *L'Elisir d'Amore*, *Norma*, *Pique Dame* (in Russian), *Werther*, *Simon Boccanegra*, *Andrea Chenier*, *Il Tabarro* and *Gianni Schicchi*, and *The Magic Flute*.

I wish a sponsor could be found to make some of these Chicago and San Francisco broadcasts available nationally. I really hanker for Joan Sutherland and Luciano Pavarotti's first *Trovatores*, which they are singing in San Francisco, and in November Renata Scotto takes over for Sutherland. San Franciscans are also getting Josella Ligi's American debut, along with many other treats. And there are some fascinating operatic doings in Houston, Dallas, Seattle, Boston, and Kansas City that are worth broadcasting nationwide.

BUT as long as we have Texaco presenting the Metropolitan Opera, we shouldn't complain about what we *haven't* got. This will be Texaco's thirty-sixth consecutive season of live broadcasts of Saturday matinees directly from the stage of the Met. The broadcast season runs from December 6 through April 17, and the operas will be presented in the following order: *Un Ballo in Maschera*, *Carmen*, *Così Fan Tutte*, *Hansel and Gretel*, Puccini's *Trittico*, *Elektra*, *The Siege of Corinth*, *Boris Godunov*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *Fidelio*, *La Traviata*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Norma*, *Aïda*, *I Puritani*, *Ariadne auf Naxos*, *Der Rosenkavalier*, *Madama Butterfly*, *La Gioconda*, and *Die Meistersinger*. Two of these will be Met broadcast "firsts": Puccini's *Trittico* (January 3), which has not been performed by the company since 1920, and *I Puritani* (March 13), which has been out of the Met repertoire since the season of 1917-1918.

Introducing one of the finest collections of stereo receivers in the world: the MX1580.

Power* of the Sony 7065. FM Sensitivity* of the Pioneer 838. Selectivity* of the Sherwood 7900A. Capture ratio* of the Marantz 2270. Total Harmonic Distortion* of the JVC VR-5660.

With so many excellent AM/FM stereo receivers around these days, who needs another? So instead of making just "another," we collected the most significant specs and useful features of five of the best, and "combined" them in one: the MX 1580.

Of course, some of these five receivers have features our one doesn't have (we think you can manage without two phono inputs).

But then, ours has features they don't have; features you *shouldn't* do without.

You pay for—and get—what you really need.

The MX 1580 has exclusive ASNC, which automatically reduces the noise level on weak stereo stations without reducing separation on strong ones.

And special thermal protection for output transistors and the power transformer.

Plus lots more we were able to include and, at $475.95** save you a few bucks in the bargain.

How? It wasn't easy. But we had help.

The oldest new company in the business.

Although we're a completely separate group, we were able to draw on the resources of a company that's been a leader in the industry since 1915. So we could afford to wait until we had the MX 1580 right.

And now it's so right, we insist that every single one be inspected twice before it's shipped. After all, we have one of the world's finest stereo collections to protect.

Features and Specs:

- Sensitive front-end with three dual gate MOSFET's and 4-gang tuning capacitor.
- Two 6-pole linear phase filters for improved selectivity and phase response.
- High gain IC quadrature FM detector.
- Switchable signal-strength/center-tuned meter.
- Phase lock loop IC circuit for FM stereo multiplex.
- Computer-designed low pass audio filters for suppression of ultrasonic frequencies.
- OCL direct-coupled differential amplifier for extended frequency response and wide bandwidth.

Power . . . . . 60 watts per channel, min. RMS

Power Bandwidth 20Hz-20kHz

Total Harmonic Distortion 0.5%

Load . . . . . 8 ohms

IM distortion 0.8%
Frequency response . . 20Hz-25kHz
Usable sensitivity (IHF) 1.8uV
Selectivity (IHF) 75dB
Capture ratio (IHF) 1.5dB
50dB signal to noise mono . . 2.5uV
Stereo separation @ 1kHz . . . 50dB
@ 10kHz . . 40dB

All specs subject to change without notice.
Specs of competitive receivers taken from manufacturers' own published data sheets.
**Manufacturer's suggested retail price; optional with dealer.

MX™

We're being heard from.

MX High Fidelity Components, Ft. Wayne, Indiana 46804

CIRCLE NO. 37 ON READER SERVICE CARD

THE SIMELS REPORT

By STEVE SIMELS

SPRINGSTEEN: BORN TO SING

I ALMOST don't know *what* to say about Bruce Springsteen, his recent five-day stint at New York's Bottom Line, or his new album, "Born to Run." I *could* say that you read it all here first (and you did—you may recall that Bruce's first album won a STEREO REVIEW Best of the Year award in 1973) except we don't want to appear self-important, now do we? Or I could say that I find myself listening to him the way I used to listen to Dylan, the Beatles, and Chuck Berry—as though a life depended on it—only I can't, because Michael Watts has *already* said that in *Melody Maker*. In fact, there's the basic problem in a nutshell. I don't know what to say about Bruce because other people (and I myself, at various times in these pages) have already shot off all the superlatives.

That being the case, all I can offer are some more personal observations, and I'll *try* to avoid telling you again that Bruce is the greatest thing since blah blah blah even though he is. May I indulge in this much hyperbole, however: there is absolutely no doubt in my mind that he is in the same league as The Most Significant Figures in Rock History, and when that book is written, I'm certain he'll rate higher and longer than, say, a genial and entertaining May fly like Elton John

I saw three of Springsteen's Bottom Line shows, heard a fourth on the radio, and then received an advance of his new album, all in the space of a week, so my reactions have had ample opportunity to jell. The first thing I'd like to bring up is the prevailing critical cant that his previous records have been poorly produced, and that they *all* fail to convey the excitement and power of his live show. Well, yes and no. "Born to Run" is very cleanly produced (as pure sound, it reminds me more than anything else of "Who's Next," which is high praise indeed), and I hold that the productions on the previous two, though admittedly vastly different, were totally appropriate to the music—frankly, I can't imagine a song like *Incident on 57th Street* (from "E Street") being done much better under any circumstances. The latest one, however, will likely be more accessible to most people simply because of the nature of the songs. Bruce is editing himself more tightly these days, and so the stories he tells are easier to follow.

As for the records' effectiveness paling before the heavy impact of the live show, I think that's simply a matter of apples and oranges. Examples: live, Bruce did the new album's opening track, *Thunder Road*, as a solo—just him and the piano, and it was really quite poignant. You got the feeling that the girl the song is addressed to was coming along for the ride with him. But on record the song has an entirely different effect, with the band rocking along like mad, and when Bruce sings the final line ("This is a town full of losers and I'm pulling out of here to win") there's real triumph in his voice—you know that he's right and the girl is almost irrelevant. Either way, it's a stunning number. On the other hand, though *Spirit in the Night*, from the first album, is a blistering rock-and-roll showstopper when Bruce does it live, it never takes on one iota of the haunting, late-night-romantic feel of the recorded version. The point I'm trying to make is that you win either way: Springsteen is a stupendous performer who also happens to make great records.

The second thing I'd like to call attention to is one of his greatest gifts: his ability as an interpreter. The oldies (hate that word) I've seen him perform over the last three years—Spector material, songs by the Stones, Beatles, Searchers, even Manfred Mann—were never nostalgia exercises *à la* Sha-Na-Na, or attempts to prove how groovy he is *à la* Bryan Ferry or Bowie's "Pin Ups," but simply songs that he loves and sings with the same conviction he brings to his own. That's only natural, because they do indeed spring from the same impulse that powers his own music, and probably the greatest compliment I can pay him is to say that when he sandwiches *Route 66* or *Then She Kissed Me* in between his own numbers, they sound like *his* songs, as if *he* wrote them. That, friends, is the mark of someone who *really* understands rock.

Finally, there is the question of what happens now. Was this set of appearances our last chance to see Bruce in such intimate surroundings? (The Bottom Line audience seemed to sense it; the experience was remarkably like, as one friend remarked, "seeing the Beatles' last show at the Cavern in 1963.") Some folks are already beginning to say that the Big Time will spell the end for him as a creative force; I very much doubt it. I suspect that he's just beginning to do his best work, that his basic honesty, lack of pretension, and love of music are going to get him very nicely through the superstardom that is his inevitable due. At the moment, Bruce is simply state-of-the-art for rock, and that means he's bound to raise everybody's standards, even his own.

As for "Born to Run," well, there's not a dud cut on it. *Jungleland* may be his best song to date, and I think you're going to see lines from the title track scribbled on walls very soon. But, as I said, we've already exhausted the superlatives. I'll merely paraphrase Lester Bangs (who was talking about McLean's *American Pie*, which, ironically enough, is about the *death* of rock) and say that if you've ever cried because of a rock-and-roll band or album; if you've ever lain awake nights wondering or talking through to the dawn about the music and what it means; if you've ever kicked off your shoes to dance; or if you've ever *believed* in rock-and-roll, then you absolutely have to have "Born to Run."

★ ★ ★

While I've got your attention, the following addenda: the English version of the Stones' "Metamorphosis" has two extra cuts on it (shades of the old days); Eric Clapton's new studio single, a predictably dull reggae workout of Dylan's *Knocking on Heaven's Door*, has a B-side, a slow gospel blues, on which he burns as he hasn't in years—you should get it immediately; and, finally, I chanced across a very high-quality stereo bootleg of David Bowie recorded somewhere during his first American tour (probably Santa Monica) that has forced me to re-evaluate somewhat. He and the Spiders, at least when they were into no more than guitars and an *occasional* costume change, were a pretty good little rock band. If nothing else, it cuts the official RCA "David Live" by miles. So, belatedly, good show, Dave.

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GOING ON RECORD

By JAMES GOODFRIEND
Music Editor

REALITY REVEALED

CONFIDENTIAL information comes out in the damndest ways. The facts most difficult of access in the record business have traditionally been sales figures (of anything but a runaway hit) and break-even points. It's a tossup as to whether companies are ashamed of low sales and convinced that everyone else must be doing better, or whether they think that general knowledge of their successes would provoke damaging competition, but the most open and honest record executive (there are such things) becomes positively tongue-tied when asked how many discs of so-and-so have been sold.

How strange it is, then, to find that the Congressional hearings in Washington on the subject of performing rights for sound recordings elicited a veritable host of facts and figures about record sales and profits – not whispered about under the rubric of "off the record, of course," but available for public consumption and digestion. There has been an awful lot of animosity expressed against the record business in recent years caused by a general lack of understanding of how – and how well – the business works. I think some of these figures may tend to straighten things out in people's minds, so that even though some practices may still be considered inexcusable, they will at least no longer be totally inexplicable.

According to a report of the hearings published in *Billboard* magazine, an analysis was done by the Cambridge Research Institute of a sample of the releases of those eight major record companies which in 1972 (the year surveyed) accounted for 53 per cent of the record industry's sales. Presumably, only domestic sales were considered. The first things established were the break-even points (which, for those totally unfamiliar with sales practices, means the number of units that must be sold to recoup all production costs, advance payments, and applicable overhead, after which any profit may be calculated on the difference between manufacturing and royalty costs and the actual selling price). Those break-even points are as follows: pop singles, 46,000 records; popular LP's, 61,000 records; popular tapes, 24,000 units; classical LP's, 22,000 records; classical tapes, 34,000 units.

These are averages, of course: the break-even point for every individual record is different. And those familiar to some extent with record economics know that the break-even points of the other 47 per cent of the industry are quite likely to be considerably lower than those of the major companies (lower overhead being the major difference). Furthermore, I am myself unable to comprehend what seems to me like an excessively high break-even figure for classical tapes. Still, these numbers have to be taken with at least a congressional seriousness.

Accepting them as they are and concentrating for the moment on classical releases, we find the following *sales* figures. Of classical discs released, 11 per cent sold 0 to 2,000; 22 per cent sold 2,000 to 4,000; 40 per cent, 4,000 to 8,000; 10 per cent, 8,000 to 10,000; 12 per cent, 10,000 to 20,000; 3 per cent, 20,000 to 50,000; 1 per cent, 50,000 to 100,000; and 1 per cent, 100,000 to 300,000, which was the top figure.

Lincoln Perry

Matching up sales and break-even points is all too easy and all too revealing: *95 per cent* of all classical albums in 1972 *lost* money. The tape situation is even less promising: only 1 per cent of classical tapes sold more than 8,000 copies, meaning that something over 99 per cent of releases lost money.

Of course, we have been talking about 1972, which was just a year after STEREO REVIEW published its own analysis of the "Classical Crisis." Things have improved since then. But I have had access myself to a few specific sales figures for 1974 since reading about the Cambridge Research report, and I can tell you that, based on the same break-even points, at least one successful major company could count precisely three money-makers among its ten top best-selling classical LP's. To call the classical record business a "marginal" operation, then, would seem the most reckless of understatements.

A little perspective on the matter is furnished by figures on popular records. As regards pop singles, 81 per cent of them, in 1972, failed to break even. Among the albums, 77 per cent lost money, while the figure was 80 per cent for tapes. What keeps the pop market from being a marginal operation as well is that of those 23 per cent of popular albums whose sales exceeded their (rather high) break-even point (61,000), better than one-quarter sold in excess of 300,000 – and "in excess of" can mean several million. Among singles, 5 per cent of the total went over 300,000, to Lord only knows what stratospheric heights.

One can define the popular album business, then, as a horse race in which the odds are slightly more than fifteen to one against the bettor's winning big. But the payoff can be astronomical. And even if he does not hit it big, the odds are only about three to one against the bettor's making a reasonable profit or at least recouping his money. The singles market is similar, but with somewhat lower stakes, since both the costs and the profits of singles are smaller.

BUT the classical market – oh, the classical market! It is not a horse race, for no self-respecting horse player would take such horrendous odds against such a small potential payoff. It is, rather, a business of men devoted to trying to *stay* in business; playing the game conservatively to try to make a *little* profit, or at least not to lose too much, on the standard items; taking penny-ante gambles in the hope of hitting it big only *in relation to* the original costs. Classical records are saved (to some degree) by their sales over a period of years, but when sales of a disc amount to no more than about three hundred over a twelve-month period, even the best will in the world can't justify its remaining long in the catalog.

And that is why so many musically wonderful records are no longer available to be bought; why recording artists groan when their fans tell them they have just "taped" their latest record; why the industry seems so impervious to new, exciting ideas that will produce prestige but not profits; and why classical producers sadly throw up their hands when they are criticized for the low quality of pressings the plant has inflicted upon them. There is little money, and where there is little money, there is little power, and eventually there is little enthusiasm. Help!?

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The reviewers also reached unequivocal conclusions about the CS701 performance. Note the absence of such qualifiers as "one of the" or "among the." For example: High Fidelity said: "...The Dual 701 has placed itself in the select group of products against which we must measure the performance of others." And the highly conservative English publication, HiFi News & Record Review: "The experience of listening to records of the highest quality on this turntable is not likely to be forgotten...you will never again be satisfied with anything less perfect."

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THE BASIC REPERTOIRE

By MARTIN BOOKSPAN

RAVEL'S LE TOMBEAU DE COUPERIN

THE usual route to the orchestral music of Maurice Ravel is by way of *Boléro*, that 1928 phenomenon the composer himself called "orchestral tissue without music." *Boléro* was avowedly an experimental work designed to examine the effect of a long, very gradual crescendo. "There are no contrasts," Ravel wrote of the piece. "There is practically no invention except the plan and manner of execution. . . . I have carried out exactly what I intended and it is for the listener to take it or leave it."

Another introduction to the orchestral world of Ravel, one more rarefied and certainly more characteristic, is the suite *Le Tombeau de Couperin*, which began its existence – as did so many others of the composer's orchestral works – as a score for piano solo. Ravel began his piano suite in the summer of 1914, intending it as homage to François Couperin, a French composer of an earlier period. The English music historian Edwin Evans wrote that Ravel was "fond of looking at a style or a period, as it were, with his head on one side, and speculating what could be done with it." In *Le Tombeau de Couperin*, to borrow again from Evans, Ravel conjured up "the very spirit of the precise and ordered classicism of the eighteenth century."

MAURICE RAVEL

Work on the original piano version of the suite was interrupted by World War I, during the early years of which Ravel served as an ambulance driver. In 1916 he was medically discharged and sent to recuperate in a war hospital. On his release, he was able to resume his creative activity and returned almost immediately to his interrupted evocation of the style and period of Couperin. Ultimately, the piano suite consisted of six movements: Prelude, Fugue, Forlane, Rigaudon, Minuet, and Toccata. When the music was published in 1918, it bore a dedication to the memory of Ravel's friends killed in the war. Then the composer took four of the movements (the Fugue and Toccata were omitted) and orchestrated them for a rather small orchestra. The resulting suite for orchestra is among the most cherishable of all Ravel's orchestral pieces. It has an elegance and grace that are perfectly evocative of a bygone era, and yet its perfumed perfection is the quintessence of Ravel's style and aesthetic.

AMONG the current crop of available recordings of the orchestral *Le Tombeau de Couperin*, my unhesitating recommendation is the performance conducted by Pierre Boulez (Columbia M 32159; cassette MT 32159). The carefully polished precision and meticulous attention to detail that are the hallmarks of Boulez's style generally find their perfect outlet in his Ravel interpretations. He has contributed some of the very best Ravel performances ever recorded, and surely his version of *Le Tombeau de Couperin* is one such. All the very special qualities of the music – those characteristics defined by Edwin Evans as reminding one "of the days when such things were said with a shake of a lace handkerchief and a wave of a porcelain snuffbox" – are delineated with the utmost sensitivity and perception. The solo oboe plays a crucial role in Ravel's orchestration, and in the Boulez recording the principal oboist of the New York Philharmonic, Harold Gomberg, plays his part to perfection – such technical ease, seductive tone, breath control, and speech-like phrasing are truly remarkable. Indeed, all the players involved in the performance are to be congratulated for their superb playing. And the recording team, under the supervision of producer Andrew Kazdin, has captured the whole in luminous, pellucid sound.

Once having made the acquaintance of *Le Tombeau de Couperin* in its version for orchestra, many collectors will want a recorded performance of the original piano version. Here, among currently available performances, my preference is for the one by the young French pianist Pascal Rogé (London CS 6873), who invests the music with a personality and flair that are quite convincing.

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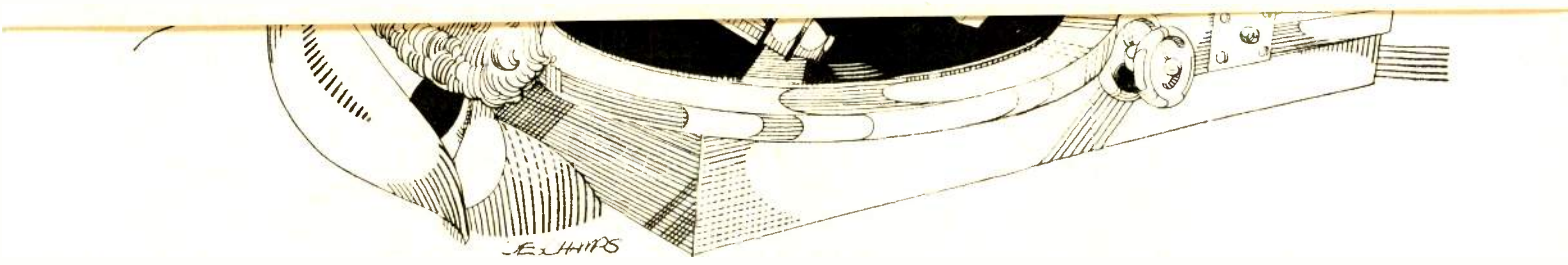


tend to creep into the channel with the violins whenever they play together. Or suppose you do attain what seems to be adequate separation, but the matrix logic (if any) in the listener's playback system later becomes confused and causes the trumpets to shift from place to place. One can forestall this shifting during playback by mixing the trumpets with the violins *before* encoding (there will be no tendency for the trumpets to shift toward the violins if both instruments are already in the same place), but the best solution would of course have been to minimize leakage between the tracks during the original recording session.

There are two general approaches to mixing a matrixed disc. One is to go from the multitrack tape to the mixing console and then directly to the encoder (see Figure 1). This permits you to hear your encoded product immediately and to make any corrections needed to help the matrix along. One matrix manufacturer (CBS) even makes a special "black box" that permits "bending" of the matrix parameters for this purpose. Another approach is to make a discrete four-channel submaster first and then encode that (see Figure 2). The advantage of this is that you can then use the same four-channel discrete master tape to encode in any matrix or to cut a CD-4 disc – a real time-saver if you are producing recordings in more than one format. The disadvantage is that you cannot then custom-tailor the mix for a *particular* matrix format. If the engineer and producer are really familiar with the idiosyncracies of each encoding system, however, they can probably make a compromise mix that will work quite well with all. Another problem with making a four-channel submaster, of course, is that you have added another generation of tape hiss, wow, flutter, phase shift, and so forth, all of which can cause difficulties during encoding.

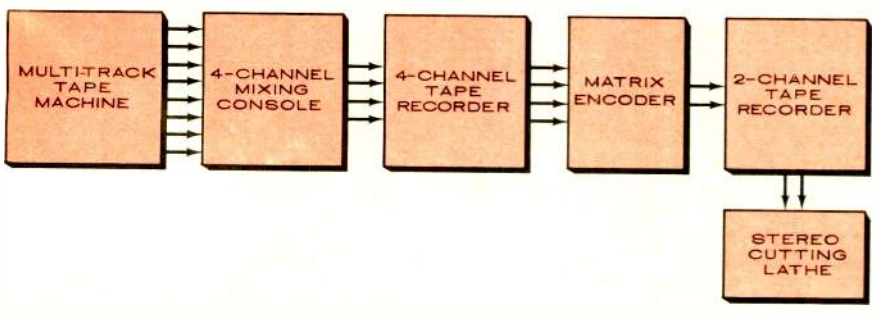
Many of these mixdown upsets can be avoided if during the original recording session the producer has some rough idea of what he wants his final four-channel sound to be. If he can tell the recording engineer where certain groups of instruments will be placed later in the mix (right front, left rear, etc.), the engineer can then choose a microphone placement that will make the mixdown engineer's job a lot easier.

Matrix Systems

The relative merits of the two major matrix systems (SQ and QS) have been debated endlessly over the past few years, but, in general, both systems work in the same way and encounter the same problems in the process of converting tape to disc. In both matrix systems, the encoding process consists of shifting the phase of the rear channels in a certain way and mixing them with the two front channels. The later decoding during playback involves circuitry that theoretically sorts out the signals according to their phase relationships and restores them to their proper position. This process can give very impressive results, particularly if the sound goes directly from four-channel tape to encoder to full-logic decoder. However, as soon as you introduce a tape recorder between the encoder and the decoder, strange things begin to happen.

One of the early experiments in producing matrix recordings involved making an encoded tape master, making a tape copy of that master, and then decoding the copy. The results were disastrous! None of the copies could be decoded properly, channel separation was poor, and the logic circuits turned on and off at all the wrong times. What went wrong? The encoder and decoder were checked and found to be working properly, as were the tape recorders. A closer investigation finally revealed the culprit to be *head azimuth differences* (see glossary) between the two tape machines used for the copying: they had "skewed" – sometimes severely – the phase relationships between the

Figure 2. Another recording scheme proceeds from mixing console to a four-channel recorder, where a quadraphonic master is made for later recording in any matrix format desired.



If you think the equipment manufacturers are having their problems with four-channel formats, consider the predicament of the man whose job it is to turn out

QUADRAPHONIC SOFTWARE

By Charles Repka

WE'RE now near the end of 1975, and quadraphonic sound, no doubt to the surprise of many skeptics, is still with us. Not only is it still with us, but it's here in at least eight existing or proposed forms. We have two major matrix systems (SQ and QS) and several minor ones, a "discrete" disc using an FM carrier system (CD-4), a disc using a combination of matrix and FM carrier (the UMX system), discrete four-channel open-reel tapes and four-channel eight-track cartridges, plus several proposed systems for four-channel cassettes involving matrixing, new track assignments, and even new tracks.

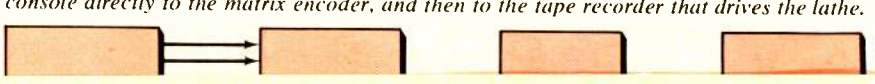
If you think all of this is confusing to the average audiophile, how about the poor recording engineer who has to get involved with one, two, or perhaps all of these available four-channel systems? Audiophiles, once they have acquired the proper decoder or demodulator along with the necessary amplifiers and speakers, can at least sit back and enjoy the first fruits of the quadraphonic era. For the recording engineer, however, whose business it is to bring those fruits into being, getting four-channel to work well can be an exercise in tooth-gnashing frustration. The successful fitting of a four-channel recording into any of the popular disc formats almost always requires a thorough understanding of not-always-compatible principles and equipment, considerable foresight, and more than a dash of creative ingenuity.

The first important step in producing that product. Here is where the various channels of audio information (from a minimum of four to as many as forty channels on a two-inch tape) are combined along with equalization, echo, and other special effects to come up with a finished master tape that will then be converted to disc, open-reel tape, tape cartridge, or what-have-you.

The introduction of four-channel has made even more complex what has *always* been a rather ticklish job, for the engineer has to try to satisfy the desires (and egos) of the producer and artist(s) and at the same time keep their aesthetic demands within the realm of engineering possibility. It isn't easy, but it can be done—is being done—and if you have a quadraphonic recording (of any type) that sounds like four channels of monophonic sound, the fault (it *is* a fault) may very likely lie not with your equipment but with a producer and engineer who haven't yet learned to think in four-channel terms or who were unable to work out their mutual problems.

Pages could be filled with the mechanics of mixing in general (spending several days on just *one* song on a pop album is not uncommon), but there are areas of the art that apply mostly to quadraphonics. First of all, it is helpful to the engineer to know in what format(s) (matrix or CD-4) the finished disc will be produced. This will enable him to tailor the mixing to get the best results by recognizing and allowing for the specific idiosyncrasies of each format. For example, certain combinations of channels won't always work in one or another of the matrix systems. This can be caused by some inherent limitation of the particular matrix design, but more often it results from the acoustic leakage of information from one track to another during the original recording session. Say, for instance, that there are trumpets on track twelve and trumpet sound leaks into the violins on track three. If, during the mixdown to produce a quadraphonic (four-track) master, it seems best to put the trumpets in the right rear and the violins in the left front, you may find it impossible to separate them adequately, with the result that the trumpets

Figure 1. A straightforward approach to matrix recording involves going from the mixing console directly to the matrix encoder, and then to the tape recorder that drives the lathe.



two encoded tracks. If a tape encoded on either machine was played back on the *same* machine, fine; but if the tape was played back on *any other* machine, decoding was strictly a hit-or-miss affair. (Incidentally, this is one of the reasons that we haven't been seeing any *matrixed* prerecorded tapes.) This result was naturally cause for great concern, because when a lacquer disc is cut (the first step in converting a master tape into a disc), the tape is always played on a machine other than the one on which it was made. The problem was gotten around somewhat by requiring that high-frequency test tones (usually 10,000 Hz) be recorded at the beginning of every encoded tape so that the head azimuth of the playback machine can be carefully aligned to these tones.

There are, of course, other sources of minor phase shift besides unmatched azimuths. One such source is simply the motion of the tape past the heads. Tape motion across the surface of a head, even on a professional studio machine, is not really as uniform as it appears to be. The tape continually rides up and down on the head face because of variations in tape width, and it also proceeds in a subtle stick-slide manner because of friction. As a result, any single point on the surface of the tape, if tracked very closely, would be seen to follow a rather serpentine path across the heads, and such a path can be the cause of visible phase shift at high frequencies when observed with an oscilloscope.

The net effect of phase shift is a general blurring of the directional properties of the sound image, with the locations of instruments on the encoded tape never sounding as fixed and clearly focused as they were on the four-channel tape from which it was made. Also, it should be kept in mind that part of this loss in definition is inherent in the design of the matrix itself. When the original four channels are combined into two in the encoding process, some of the information is lost forever and can never be retrieved.

Once the playback machine that feeds the disc-cutting lathe has had its tape-head azimuths properly aligned, the cutting of the lacquer can begin. This is done with the same type of cutting lathe used for stereo discs. No special equipment is needed because all the processing (encoding) has been done on the tape. But even under the best of conditions, disc cutting is a tricky business. The cutting engineer, usually a patient, unexcitable type, has to trade off signal level on the tape against the playing time on the disc side and come up with the optimum groove-pitch and groove-depth settings for his equipment. Groove pitch is the spacing between adjacent grooves on the disc, and is usually expressed in lines per inch. If the pitch is too fine it can cause an "echo" from one groove to be heard faintly in another, and in severe cases where grooves touch or break into each other, it can cause the playback stylus to jump grooves. If the pitch is too coarse, there may not be enough space available to fit all the music on the disc.

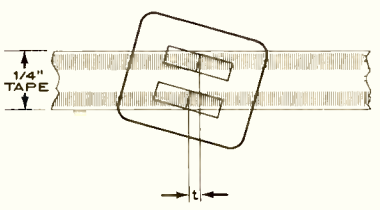
GLOSSARY: QUADRAPHONIC TERMS

● ***Azimuth:*** the orientation of the gaps of a tape head relative to the tape's line of motion. Ideally, all the gaps should be exactly perpendicular (form a 90-degree angle) to the edge of the tape (see diagram). If the *record* head's gaps are not exactly parallel to the *playback* head's gaps, the high-frequency response of the tape machine is affected. Also, though a machine's azimuth setting may provide maximum high-frequency performance, it may still require further adjustment to achieve minimum phase shift. The phase differences between channels are introduced because one playback or record head gap actually lags behind the other in scanning the tape.

In adjusting azimuth, care is taken to orient the gaps of the record and playback heads properly (that is, make them precisely parallel) relative to each other and to a third outside standard by means of a precisely recorded alignment tape.

● ***Lacquer:*** the disc on which a recording is originally cut; also, the recording produced thereby. A lacquer is an aluminum disc sheathed in an optically smooth coating of cellulose acetate. The disc-cutting lathe, which is fed the signal from the master tape, employs its cutting stylus to physically inscribe on the lacquer the spiral groove that carries the audio information. The lacquer recording is then electroplated (the plating process mentioned in the text) to produce metal molds that will press the ultimate vinyl records.

● ***Mixing/Mixdown:*** it is customary today to record a musical performance in great detail, often using separate microphones for each voice or instrument and even devoting an entire tape track to one sound. Later, at their leisure, the producer and engineer can "assemble" the composite performance from the individual tracks in a process called the "mixdown." This entails mixing various tracks together—as well as balancing them in level and adding equalization, reverberation, and any other effects desired—to create what will be the different channels of the final recording. During mixdown the instruments are assigned to a "location," as represented by any given pair of channels, according to where the producer wishes them to appear when the recording is played back; any problems brought about by the mixing of tracks are dealt with as well.



Azimuth misalignment results in time displacement t *between two channels.*

● ***Multitrack:*** the term for the recording technique described above. A modern multitrack tape machine, recording as a rule on 2-inch tape, usually has at least sixteen tracks that the engineer can utilize as he wishes to capture every sound that occurred during the musical performance. Then he mixes down from the sixteen channels to two or four, selecting as he goes along the material from the sixteen tracks he wishes to use.

● ***Submaster:*** in this context, a preliminary master recording from which the ultimate master will be prepared. When played on a four-channel tape machine, the submaster serves as a reference for what the engineer/producer wants the final recording to sound like, but it is not yet in the encoded form that will be used to cut the lacquer.

● ***Phase shift:*** a displacement in time of an audio waveform (or part of one) that may be too small to be significant audibly, but which can have a telling effect on the performance of an electronic device—such as a matrix decoder—that depends on phase accuracy for its operation. Matrix four-channel employs *deliberate* phase shifting as part of the encoding process. But further unintended phase shifts between the right and left encoded stereo signals, or between different frequencies in one channel, will cause the various waveforms to come together improperly when they are later added and subtracted in the matrix decoder (or in the adding and subtracting circuits of a CD-4 demodulator). The resulting complex interference brings about aberrations in the output signals and a loss of precise sound localization.

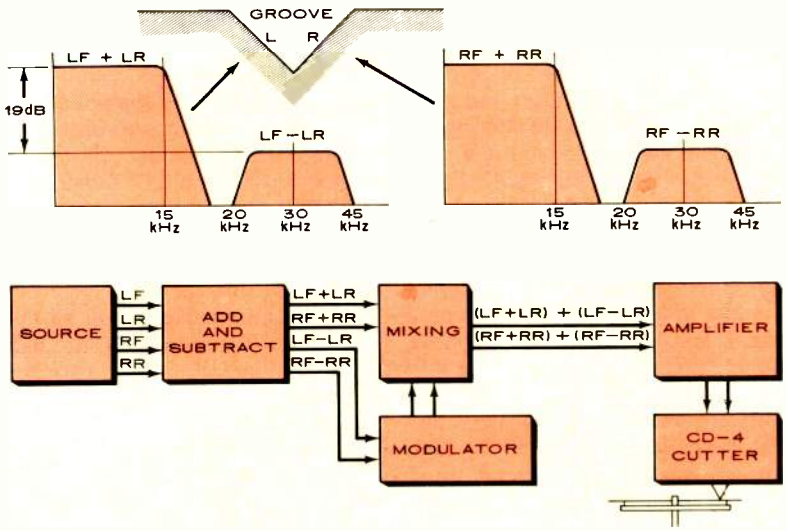


Figure 3. Two aspects of the CD-4 recording process. Top, the audio-frequency and carrier information for the two groove walls is shown. At bottom is a block diagram of the CD-4 recording chain from tape machine to disc cutter.

The allowable variation in groove *depth* is very limited in comparison to that allowed in groove pitch, because the acetate coating is only 5 mils (0.005 in.) thick. This limitation restricts the amount of signal that can be put on the lacquer in the vertical plane—a significant consideration, as we shall see, for a four-channel disc. The engineer must choose an average depth while cutting so that the stylus will not cut too deep (hitting the aluminum core of the lacquer and causing grievous harm to the cutting stylus and possibly the cutting head) or too shallow; the wrong choice can sometime cause the cutting stylus to lift entirely away from the lacquer surface.

It is important to know that the standard stereo cutting lathe places all in-phase (L + R or "sum") information in the horizontal plane and all out-of-phase (L − R or "difference") information in the vertical plane. Because of the way the matrix system works, an encoded tape contains a great deal more difference information than the average stereo tape, and this will be reflected in more vertical modulation on the disc. Over the years, various "tricks" have been developed to cope with high vertical groove excursions on stereo discs without affecting the stereo perspective and without audibly changing the sound level. Equivalent tricks have not yet been perfected for the four-channel disc. Most of the stereo tricks involve the use of equalizers or limiters on the difference signal, but this approach applied to an encoded tape can cause improper decoding. New techniques (or modifications of old ones) therefore still need to be developed so that a matrix disc can be cut as "easily" as a stereo disc. For now, the engineer usually gets around the vertical-modulation problem by reducing the overall level, which is fine as long as he doesn't lower it too much, for that will bring up background noise on playback when the volume is raised to provide an adequate sound level.

Vertical modulation poses another interesting challenge as well: distortion. One source of this distortion is simply the nature of the cutting process. Vertical cutting inherently has about twice as much second-harmonic distortion as lateral cutting, which is not necessarily an excessive figure if the cutting system is of high quality. Another source of distortion is the difference in the vertical *cutting* angle of the lathe and the vertical *tracking* angle of the playback cartridge. Analysis of test tones reveals that small differences between these angles can generate large distortion figures (as high as 30 per cent), but for reasons that are still unclear the distortion does not seem to be as bad with music.

ALL of this holds true for stereo discs as well, but when a disc (stereo or matrix) is played back *through a matrix decoder*, the distortion products tend to be decoded and interpreted as rear-channel information and to be amplified more than they would be under stereo playback conditions. This effect is also true of noise. Surface noise, mold grain, pops, and ticks are all exaggerated by the matrix decoding process. This means that extra care has to be taken during all the disc-manufacturing processes. This explains why a disc can be perfectly acceptable in stereo playback but still sound objectionably noisy when played through a decoder.

Discrete System

The CD-4 system of quadraphonics is similar in principle to the multiplex system of stereo FM broadcasting, except that it involves twice as many channels. The two (left and right) front channels are mixed in-phase with their corresponding rear channels. These two "sum" signals get recorded normally on the left and right groove walls of the disc and make it possible to play the CD-4 disc on stereo systems. However, the front and rear channels are also added together *out* of phase, and these "difference" signals are superimposed, via frequency modulation (FM), on 30,000-Hz carrier signals that are cut into the groove walls along with the "sum" signals mentioned above. A conventional stereo playback system ignores the 30,000-Hz carriers, but a CD-4 system uses them to recover the difference signals which, when properly recombined with the sum signals, reconstitute the four channels we started with. Both the sum and difference signals are limited to an upper frequency limit of 15,000 Hz so that the disc has a total bandwidth (signal plus carrier) of 45,000 Hz (see Figure 3). The very wide bandwidth requirement was (and still is) a major difficulty in the development of the CD-4 disc because the best disc-cutting equipment made has a usable bandwidth of only 24,000 Hz. However, if the disc is cut at one half the normal rotational speed (current practice), the highest frequency is held to 22,500 Hz—well within the limitations of current equipment. Of course, this means that the tape machine used for cutting must also run at one-half speed, and its playback-equalization electronics must be modified to suit the characteristics of a tape recorded at normal speed, especially at the low frequencies, which now go below 15 Hz! If the master tape is Dolby encoded, the playback Dolby electronics must also be modified to respond properly at half speed. And the cutting-head drive amplifier has to be capable of producing full power at sub-audible frequencies.

Now, while none of this is *impossible* to do, it does add to the cost of producing a disc—and these items, furthermore, represent only *some* of the additional costs. A complete CD-4 cutting chain, including cutting lathe, amplifiers, special CD-4 modulation equipment, tape machine, and four channels' worth of accessories such as

Dolby, equalizers, limiters, etc., costs quite a bit. This cost is an important factor for independent record companies, studios, or cutting houses to consider before taking the plunge into the wonderful world of CD-4, for they must ask themselves whether their sales (of discs or services) will cover such a large investment in equipment.

Half-speed cutting has two additional drawbacks. The first and most obvious is that it takes at least twice as long to cut a lacquer—assuming, of course, that the lacquer is cut perfectly on the first try. Generally, the tape is monitored first at normal speed to spot any potential problem areas, with the result that the total time spent per side can be as much as three to four times as much as for a normal stereo disc. (One hopes this time factor will improve as engineers become more familiar with CD-4 equipment or when normal-speed cutting equipment is developed.)

The other drawback is a psychological one. Take your favorite Beethoven symphony (or Rolling Stone album, if you prefer) and play it back at half speed. Sounds just *great*, doesn't it?!? Well the cutting engineer either has to get used to those moans and drones, turn off the monitor, or give up and become a used-car salesman.

But we're not through yet. In the experience of many engineers who have worked with the system, CD-4 has several problems in common with matrix recording. First there is our old friend Phase Shift. The phase relationship between the sum and difference channels must be carefully maintained. There is an 80-microsecond time delay (or phase shift) deliberately applied to the right and left sum-channel information to compensate for time delays that take place in the FM-modulated difference channels during cutting and playback. If the playback-head azimuth is not properly aligned, or if there is signal leakage between channels, this phase relationship can be disturbed, resulting in loss of separation, creation of distortion, or both. Again, as with matrix recording, the engineer must minimize all unwanted phase shifts in his equipment and all improper signal leakage between channels on the master tape to avoid problems during the cutting process.

Another common problem is that of cutting level—except that with CD-4 the engineer has to watch *all* signals and not just those that wind up in the vertical plane. If the sum-signal level is too high, it can drive the cutting stylus so fast that its velocity, combined with the accelerations required for the 30,000-Hz carrier, can exceed the response capabilities of the cutter head, causing a momentary dropout of the carrier. Further, an excessive level in any *one* channel can cause overmodulation of the carrier signal: remember, CD-4 involves the addition and *subtraction* of audio signals, and it is possible to add in more than you can ever subtract out. Fortunately, with CD-4 the engineer has freedom to modify each channel with limiting or equalization to minimize a cutting problem, though this freedom must be exercised with some moderation. Too great a change in level or frequency response in any one channel can also cause loss of separation.

There are several other sneaky kinds of distortion that are caused by high dynamic levels, so the general trend with CD-4 discs has been to keep the level down. The levels on early recordings were as much as 10 dB below the average stereo disc, but with improved equipment and cutting techniques, levels are now typically within 2 to 3 dB of the comparable stereo disc and may occasionally (usually on a Japanese pressing) exceed it.

"New processes and products do not spring totally perfected out of the lab..."

The one remaining restriction facing the cutting engineer is the amount of space he can use on the lacquer while cutting. As the cutter approaches the center of the disc, it is subject to the so-called "scanning-loss" phenomenon which causes a loss of high frequencies. This is caused by the edge of the cutting stylus becoming, in effect, too blunt for the tiny undulations it is supposed to cut. Since the cutter has to inscribe signals as high as 45,000 Hz, the farther from the center it stays, the better. Typically, this means that the grooves will end ½ to 1 inch farther from the center than on the ordinary stereo disc, and less space of course means less time and/or less level on the disc.

Noise has also been a nagging problem in CD-4 recording. Those tiny 30,000-Hz undulations have resulted in extremely meticulous procedures that must be followed in preparing molds and pressing the discs, as well as in the development of special vinyl compounds that reduce surface noise and improve the wear characteristics of CD-4 discs. There is even a separate noise-reduction system built into every cutting system and demodulator. The JVC ANRS process (similar to the Dolby B system) is applied to the carrier signals during cutting and again during demodulation in playback. Without ANRS, a CD-4 disc would be about 10 to 15 dB noisier (at frequencies above 1,000 Hz) than a standard stereo disc.

If you have looked upon all the preceding and despaired of four-channel's ever making it, look again. What we have been examining are simply those inherent problems that must be discovered, understood, and overcome. And as anyone who has recently heard a good four-channel recording well reproduced will tell you, the problems *are* being overcome.

New processes and products do not spring totally perfected out of the lab; all must go through a "wearing in" process, a polishing off of the rough edges through day-to-day use by intrepid early birds. It takes time, of course, and we should try not to let our insatiable appetite for sonic perfection makes us too impatient—there are, remember, any number of people who will tell you that even stereo, after close to twenty years on the market, can stand some improvement.

Four-channel reproduction is a valid new approach to both the art and the science of recorded music, which *does* sound better when played through four properly working channels. And let us not be too quick to dismiss all the positive developments quadraphonic sound has already brought to the recording industry:

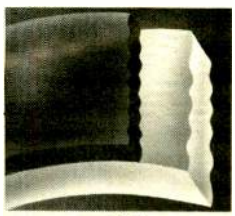
1. Extension of the bandwidth of the phonograph-disc system to 45,000 Hz.
2. The development of new vinyl compounds for improved wear and surface noise.
3. Higher standards of quality for the disc-manufacturing process.
4. Tightening of engineering practices and studio procedures.
5. New studies in psychoacoustics and the hearing process.
6. New phono-cartridge technology.

That's quite an impressive list. And the best part of it is that all these new techniques and procedures are filtering down to the production of ordinary stereo discs and bringing benefits to *all* recordings, and the effect of this technological "fallout" will continue as long as four-channel continues to grow and improve. □

Charles Repka, *a recording engineer with Vanguard, also has a background in aerospace work. He has been active in professional and amateur audio for fifteen years.*

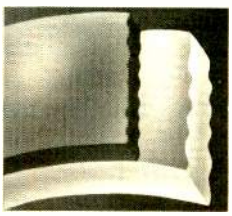
Up to now you've only been getting half the cassette tape performance you need.

You may not have realized it, but it's true. For instance, when you record music with a lot of high frequencies you use chromium oxide tape. Right? But when you do that you sacrifice dynamic range at the lower frequencies.



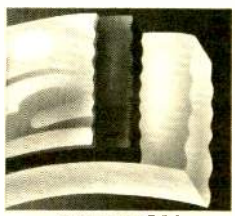
FERRIC OXIDE

And with ferric oxide tape it's just the reverse; you sacrifice dynamic range at the highs.



CHROMIUM OXIDE

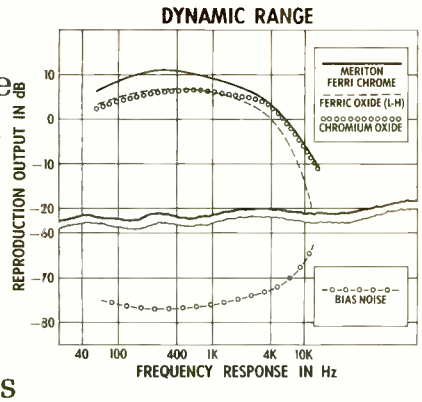
Either way, you're losing half the music. Extended frequency response without wide dynamic range is not, in itself, good sound. Well, at Meriton we don't like doing things by halves. So we put the lows and the highs together on one tape.



MERITON FERRI-CHROME

Notice how it's made. First, we have a polyester base. On that we put a layer of ferric oxide five microns thick for low frequency response. On top of that we put a layer of chromium oxide one micron thick, mirror polished for superior high frequency response. Of course, without our advanced coating technology that crucial one-micron layer might not have been possible.

You can get an idea of the way it reproduces sound from this chart. The top line is Meriton's Ferri-Chrome Tape. As you can see, it performs as well for high frequencies as it does for lows. Note its wide dynamic range as well as its low noise characteristics. At all frequencies its dynamic range is far superior to plain ferric oxide (L-H) tape, and it is better than chrome oxide at low and middle frequencies.



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Fine amplifiers produce excellent square waves.

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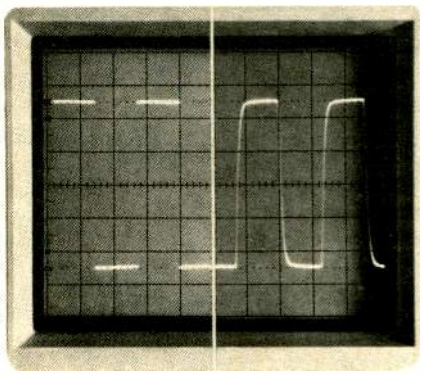
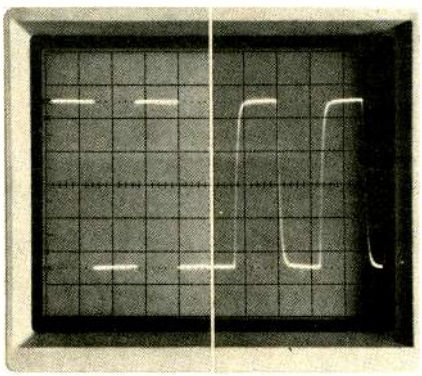


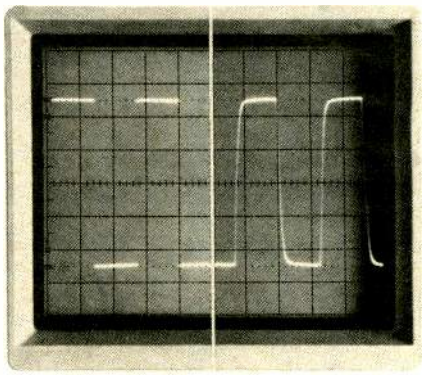
20 Hz 20 kHz

HARMAN KARDON CITATION 16



20 Hz 20 kHz

CROWN DC-300A



20 Hz 20 kHz

The finest separate power amplifiers produce excellent square waves. Quality oriented designers and engineers know that square wave response is profoundly useful because it is a precise projection of musical quality.

Not only does the square wave "mirror" the quality of sound, but it is, in a unique way, sound itself. The square wave possesses the complexity of a musical wave form. Both have a fundamental and a series of harmonics that have a set relationship to one another. The square wave must be able to pass through the amplifier without damage if the musical wave is to pass through undamaged.

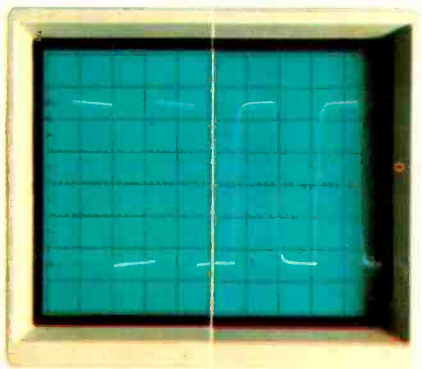
Square wave measurements do not replace conventional methods of testing components. Yet it can be said that an instrument which fails to produce excellent square waves is limited in musical authenticity.

All square wave measurements 10V peak to peak

harman/kardon

One receiver matches the square waves of fine amplifiers.

HARMAN KARDON 430



20 Hz 20 kHz

The new Harman Kardon 430 receiver displays square wave response that is indistinguishable from the finest power amplifiers. A listening test will reveal that the 430, in all but absolute power levels, is the sonic equivalent of any individual component system your dealer can demonstrate.

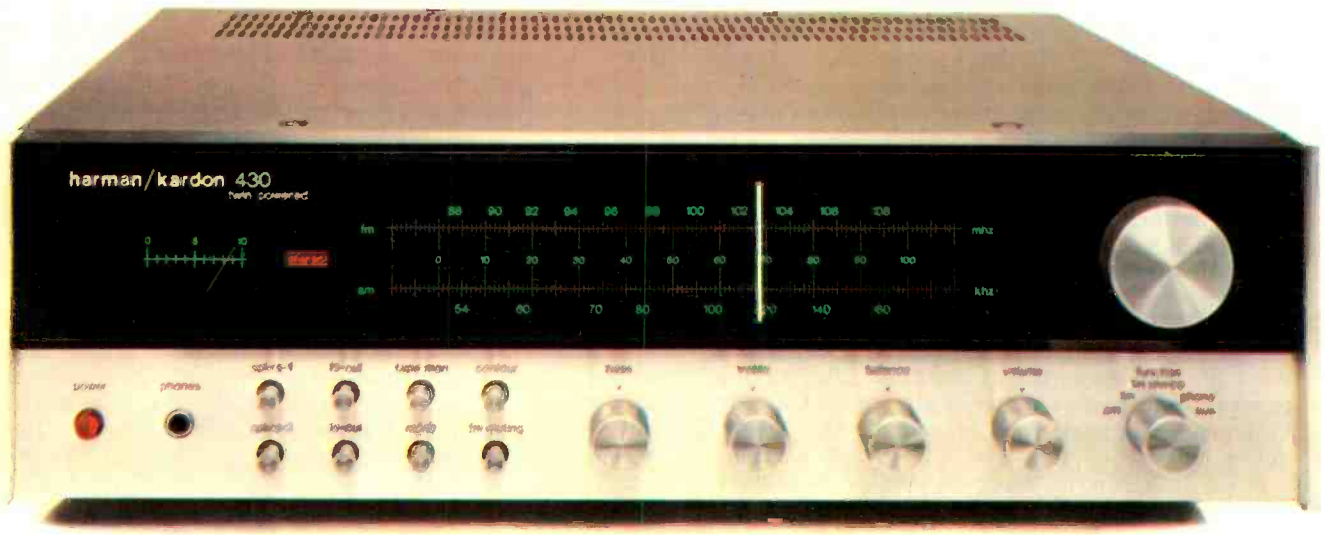
The implication of a comparison with conventional receivers is obvious.

The square wave reproduced here is not that of the 430 power amplifier section alone. Amazingly, it is the square wave achieved by the 430 amplifier and preamplifier operating together!

The 430 AM/FM tuner is consistent with the outstanding performance quality of the amplifier and preamplifier. It is sensitive, receiving even distant stations with ease and without distortion. The tuner is also characterized by excellent selectivity and signal-to-noise ratio.

The 430 functions with two separate power supplies, one for each channel—the Harman Kardon "twin-power" concept. No matter how much energy is called for by dynamic music passages, performance of one channel is not affected by the other.

At Harman Kardon, technical advances are pursued not for their own sake, but as methods of predicting and improving music quality. It is in this context that we have prepared our literature on the 430 as well as our booklet: Square Wave Analysis of Audio Amplifier Performance. Your Harman Kardon specialist dealer can supply both. Or write to us directly at Harman Kardon, 55 Ames Court, Plainview, N.Y. 11803.



MAURICE RAVEL

"... he is a great composer because he had the ability to translate an extraordinary power of imagination into very concrete musical terms."

WHO, someone asked me recently, is the most influential composer of the twentieth century? Schoenberg or Stravinsky? Would you count Mahler? Or would it be Debussy? Varèse or Ives coming up fast? What did I think?

None of the above, I had to admit ruefully. The correct answer would have to be Ravel.

How a highly aesthetic, aristocratic, and reserved Frenchman of a rather elitist temperament and ambiguous outlook came to be not just the most influential but also the most outright *popular* composer of the century is one of the oddities in the history of modern taste. Even now, a century after his birth, Ravel's position in the stylistic canon is curiously unclear. Impressionist? Neo-Classicist? Modernist *manqué*? Or what?

The one thing you will get everyone to agree on is that Ravel was a great orchestrater, perhaps the greatest of the century. Yet not a single one of his works was conceived as pure orchestral music. Paradox on paradox. We know his music, but not the man: as a personality, Ravel remains distant, an enigma. We know a great deal about the lives and personalities of most of the great pioneers of twentieth-century music. They have established public images, and a store of anecdotes embellishes their musical accomplishments. But Ravel, the sensual classicist who died in a madhouse, is still elusive and mysterious. There is a "lost-profile" sketch by the Diaghilev designer Benoit of Ravel at the seashore in his native Basque country; he is curiously—typically—looking away so we cannot see his glance. In all his pictures, the thin, bony, refined, quizzical features seem to hide rather than reveal; and so, in some ways, does the music.

Ravel's name and his music are associated in the popular mind with Claude Debussy and Impressionism. Certainly Ravel was, for a while, very much under the spell of the older master, but he began as a classicist with works like the early *Menuet*, the ever-popular *Pavane pour une Infante Défunte*, and the String Quartet of 1902-1903. Here is one basic aspect of Ravel's musical personality: rich, modern (post-Wagner, post-Franck, that is) chord progressions; an original, supple melodic sense; great clarity of expression; and a very careful, even traditional sense of form. But beginning in 1901 with the famous *Jeux d'Eau* for piano, continuing with the *Miroirs* for piano, the one-act opera *L'Heure Espagnole*, and *Gaspard de la Nuit* for piano, and culminating in the Diaghilev ballet *Daphnis et Chloé* (1909-1911), Ravel entered on his Impressionist phase. Though a great deal is owed to Debussy, Ravel was always his own man. His piano style is quite independent and partly anterior to that of Debussy, and, ironically, it is his *Daphnis et Chloé* as much as any work of Debussy that provides the perfect model of musical Impressionism. No modern work of art has been more plundered; only in the last few years, since Hollywood composers stopped imitating Ravel and Debussy, have we been able to listen to it again with fresh ears. Of course, a man's work should not be judged by its crassly debased imitations, but it is easier to believe that in theory than to accept it in practice, for the bad often does debase the good—for a while, at least.

That Ravel's brand of Impressionism was singularly susceptible to cheap imitation must have come to the composer's attention rather quickly. At any rate, and for whatever reason, he abandoned an extraordinarily successful style quite early and returned to chamber music and classicism with the *Trois Poèmes de Stéphane Mallarmé* (voice, piano, string quartet, two flutes, and two clarinets), the Piano Trio, and the wonderful *Le Tombeau de Couperin*, originally written for piano but later orchestrated.

The products of the last ten years of Ravel's creative life contain more surprises: two popular dance works, *La Valse* (noisy, rousing waltz music) and *Boléro* (his great and enormously successful flirtation with vulgarity); two dissonant-modern pieces (the Violin and Cello Sonata and the *Chansons Madécasses* for voice, piano, flute, and cello); an opera with Colette, *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges*; and two jazzy piano concertos. At this point it becomes difficult (if not impossible) to generalize about his music, for there is no real stylistic consistency—and yet, somehow, everything he wrote is unmistakably Ravel.

To understand Ravel better, we have to know a bit of history. The Debussyian revolution—make no mistake, it was as big an upheaval as the more scandalous Schoenbergian and Stravinskyian uproar that followed—was the first real challenge to the Italian-German tonal system since its codification (by a Frenchman named Rameau!) in the eighteenth century. Debussy freed chords from their tonal functions, dissonance from the necessity for resolution. At the same time, he departed significantly from the Germanic tradition of counterpoint and part writing. In short, he moved away from the linear, directional, hierarchical forms of older music toward a music based on symmetrical, floating patterns of harmonic and instrumental color.

In works like *La Mer*, the piano *Préludes*, and *Jeux*, Debussy let the new nature of his material generate new forms that are, in fact, much further from the tradition of fugues and sonatas than most of the work of Schoenberg and Stravinsky. Indeed, the fluidity, the nondirectional qualities, and the formal originality of Debussy's music made it perfect material for the movie-music composers who were to follow several decades later. Nevertheless (and in spite of the one or

Right, Alexandre Benoit's "lost profile" sketch of Ravel at Saint-Jean-de-Luz, near his native village of Ciboure on the Basque coast of France.

By Eric Salzman

Meyer Collection, Paris

"Ravel's brand of Impressionism was singularly susceptible to cheap imitation"

two overfamiliar Debussy numbers), there is a difficult and even forbidding aspect to Debussy's music. It is, to put it bluntly, very difficult to follow—I mean with real concentration, not just dreamy absorption—through his longer trains of thought; I know that I have succeeded myself only a few times.

Ravel? No such probelm. Ravel is a classicist; everything is clarified, made to work for us. Debussy is mystical, profound; Ravel is charming, witty, a great conversationalist, a maker of beautiful things. Even when he is dead serious he is amusing. Ravel was a refined classicist who loved to be vulgar—but always in an aesthetic way. All those gorgeous, suspended, unresolved, floating, dreamy chords are only superficially like Debussy, for we always know where we're going, don't we, and we know we're going to be entertained all the way!

Perhaps Ravel's flirtation with banality, with dread vulgarity, is not so strange after all, but merely *noblesse oblige*. More recently we have learned to call it camp. Ravel's campiness is not the dry wit of a Satie or the rowdyism of Poulenc or Milhaud—it is more a wry smile and knowing wink than a horse laugh—but it is nonetheless for real. *Boléro* is, of course, its epitome: an entire orchestral piece written as a take-off on the old exotic-dancer routine. Even when Ravel hits you over the head, he does it with overwhelming style and finesse.

In short, Ravel stylized, popularized, even vulgarized the Debussyian revolution, and he did it with such facility and success that this musical vocabulary became the *lingua franca* of the twentieth century. For if this much-maligned century *has* a common vocabulary, it is that brand of freely connected, nonlinear tonal sevenths, ninths, and elevenths—added tones, parallel chords, passing chromatics, and what not. Added to the tradition of modal folk melody, this came to be the harmonic language of American (and, eventually, world) popular music in its entire spectrum from Broadway to jazz. Even rock and soul music, with their primary modal triads, did not knock out the other tradition, which has already returned in full force in a great deal of recent pop music.

Ravel's influence was not, of course, restricted merely to pop, movie, or show music. In fact, in the earlier twentieth century, many composers outside central Europe were looking for ways to escape from the hegemony of German music; the discovery of Debussy and Ravel was ear-opening for them. Composers as disparate as Vaughan Williams in England, Falla in Spain, and Bartók in Hungary were able to use the new harmonic techniques in conjunction with modal melodic ideas. While Debussy was a prime influence here, Ravel's clarity and precision were often the better—and certainly the easier—models.

Ravel's music is so assured and so masterly that it never seems to create any sense of doubt or despair—such as we find in, say, the music of Schoenberg. Yet Schoenberg fixed his path straight and true and pretty much followed it throughout his entire life, while Ravel's work, viewed from a distance, betrays a restlessness and a searching. In some sense, the externals of Ravel's work—the assurance, the wit, the high style, the cleverness, the parade of immense talent in various guises—is something of a façade. We are rarely *moved* very deeply by Ravel's work. Even the *Chansons Madécasses*, with their thrilling evocation of African folklore, the *Tombeau de Couperin*, with its glorious recall of French classicism, and the intensity of *Le Gibet* in *Gaspard de la Nuit* provide the pleasures that come from a kind of *intellectual* sensuality—something which is, indeed, very French. And through it all I hear too a vein of restlessness, of nervousness, of that search for identity which is so characteristic of our century. Ravel looks everywhere—to the antique, to Debussy, to Couperin, to Spain, to America, to childhood—for inspiration.

There are three basic positions in twentieth-century art: a composer may deal with the present (realism, political or *engagé* art), retreat inside (expressionism, surrealism), or escape (art for art's sake, formalism, exoticism, neo-Classicism). Ravel fundamentally belongs in the third category; his Impressionism, his flirtation with exoticism and picturesqueness, his neo-Classicism are all flights.

ALL of this somehow creates a rather negative impression, and in a way that is unfair. It is wrong to criticize an artist for what he did not do or could not be. Ravel was not unaware of the present—listen to his wonderful piano concertos and the avant-garde dissonance of some of his chamber music of the Twenties—and, if he never bared his soul, well, that is just not a very French thing to do. Yet he is a great composer because he had the ability to translate an extraordinary power of imagination into very concrete musical terms. In the end, it is the quality of fantasy that is Ravel's strong card. He is the fairy-tale composer *par excellence*, and, like all great fairy-tale creators, his wildest fantasies are cast in the most traditional forms. Here is the real essence of Ravel's popularity and greatness: when he reaches back, with that special quality of fantasy and rightness, to some essential simplicity—perhaps best of all, the images of childhood in *Mother Goose* or *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges*—he strikes some deeper chord of intensity, sincerity, and wonder that, for me, represents the finest aspects of his musical character. Ravel the aristocrat, Ravel the vulgarian, Ravel the classicist—all of these pale before Ravel the fantasist, the fairy-tale composer, the great musical escape artist. □

. . . Said Ravel to Gershwin. . .

ONE of the few well-known Ravel anecdotes (it has been told about others, but this *seems* to be the original) concerns an alleged meeting between the French composer and George Gershwin. The American, who was certainly influenced by the Frenchman, expressed a desire to study with him, and there was a discussion about what the fee might be. "Pardon me," asked Ravel, "but how much do you earn in a year?" After hearing Gershwin's answer, Ravel thought a moment. "In that case," he said, "I should study with you."

Portrait of Ravel by Ouvre

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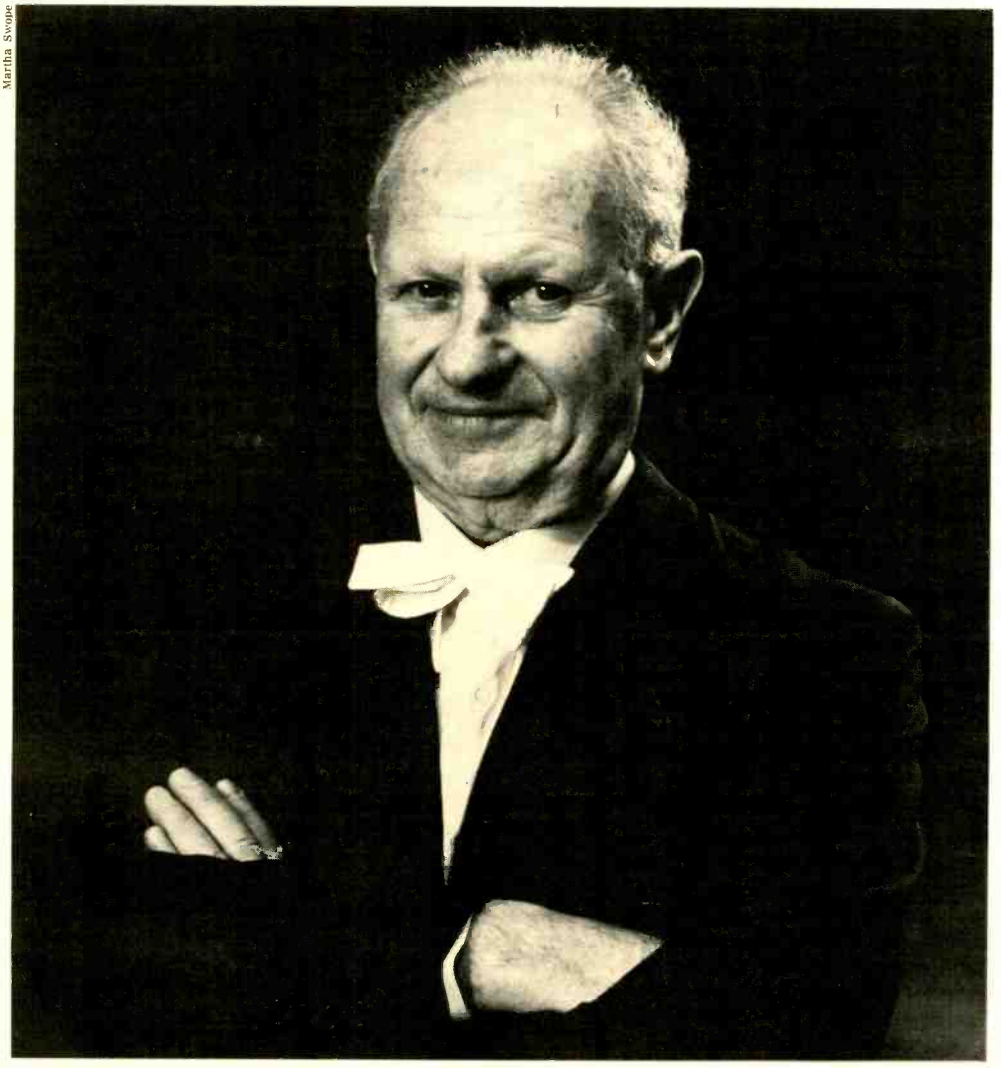
By Harold Lawrence



Martha Swope

"I was the only one of Ravel's four pupils who was considerably younger than he—the others were Alexis Roland-Manuel, Maurice Delage, and Ralph Vaughan Williams."

RELAXING after an intensive three-week stint as guest conductor in the New York City Ballet's Ravel Centennial Festival, Manuel Rosenthal reminisced about his years with Maurice Ravel. He sat in an antique rocking chair in the small Manhattan apartment on upper Madison Avenue where he, his wife, and his artist-son were staying with friends.

A vigorous, clear-eyed, sharp-nosed man with the mellow, resonant voice of a leading actor in a Sacha Guitry play, Rosenthal, at seventy-one, was clearly enjoying his success in New York. Referring to the New York City Ballet's "Hommage à Ravel," Rosenthal pointed out that it was the first major Ravel centennial celebration this year. "In December, the Paris Opéra will begin a big Ravel Festival. Rolf Liebermann (general manager of the Paris Opéra) is in New York to see which of the New York City Ballet works

should be brought to Paris. Liebermann is a close friend of Balanchine, and the three of us collaborated together when Liebermann took over the Paris Opéra. In fact, that's where I first met Balanchine. Our first production there was Gluck's *Orphée*. A year ago, Balanchine wrote to me about mounting a Ravel festival at the New York City Ballet and eventually asked me to conduct the first program."

To most Americans, Paris-born Manuel Rosenthal is chiefly associated with the music for the ballet *Gaîté Parisienne*, which he arranged and reorchestrated from the music of various Offenbach operettas. Record collectors remember him also as the conductor of what was probably the first integral recording of Ravel's orchestral works, released in 1959 on Westminster. Rosenthal has conducted orchestras in Europe and in America; he was music director of the Orchestre National in 1944-1947 and of the Seattle Symphony from 1949 to 1951, and he has, at one time or another, directed most of the leading orchestras in France. Just now, he devotes much of his time to the Paris Opéra.

"Last year it seems that I was working there every day for a three-month period, conducting performances of Schoenberg's *Moses und Aron*, *Le Sacre du Printemps*, the Prokofiev ballet *The Prodigal Son*, and an all-Stravinsky program." Clearly Rosenthal's interpretative sympathies are broad.

But Rosenthal has been a serious *composer* as well. A quarter of a century ago, Virgil Thomson was championing the Frenchman's works in the pages of the New York *Herald-Tribune*: "As always in the work of this composer, the orchestral score [of *Magic Manhattan*] is of an originality, an accuracy of effect, a virtuosity incomparable. . . . In these composers [Messiaen and Rosenthal], France has produced a new kind of music, beautiful, wonderfully expert, and, as always when there is novelty, a little shocking." Rosenthal is still a prolific creator and has just completed an orchestral work, in memory of Ravel, called *Le Temple de Mémoire*. "All during the composition of this piece," he said, "I kept hearing, so vividly, Ravel's voice."

I asked Rosenthal how he first met Ravel. "That is a complicated story. It all began when I was studying violin at the Paris Conservatoire. My teacher asked me to write a piece for 'first hearing' at the Société Musicale Indépendante, a prestigious organization whose members included Bartók, Ravel, Prokofiev, and Stravinsky. I was not then a composer, but it amused me to write something. So I produced a sonatina for two violins and piano, which, incidentally, has been played many times in the United States.

"Much to my surprise, I received a note from the S.M.I. informing me that my sonatina had been selected for performance at the society's centenary concert. It appears that my teacher had shown my manuscript to some members of the society. Everyone was at the concert, including Ravel. Now, Ravel was a chain-smoker who could not go for more than half an hour without having some puffs. So while the stage was being prepared for my piece—attendants had to move the piano and set up the stands—Ravel took advantage of the break to slip out of the hall. When the music started and the doors shut, Ravel found himself trapped in the lobby. At intermission he asked his friend Alexis Roland-Manuel about the work he had just missed. Manuel spoke well of my sonatina and later praised it highly in an article he wrote on the concert.

"Ravel was no less innovative than Debussy, but he was new in a much... less obvious way."

"Two years passed," Rosenthal continued. "Shortly after I left for my military service, some piano works of mine, Eight Bagatelles, were published. I sent the sheet music to Milhaud, Roussel, and Ravel, asking them for their opinions. The first two replied, saying nice things. But from Ravel, nothing.

"Another year went by. I was still in the army, in Saarbrücken. The year was 1925; I was twenty-one. I went to Paris on a two-day leave and traveled to a friend's home for dinner on my first night out. My friend had just returned from a visit to Ravel in Montfort-L'Amaury where she told the composer she couldn't dine with him because she had an appointment with a young musician, mentioning my name. Ravel instantly remembered that he had received some piano pieces from me and had wanted to tell me how much he admired them. 'Tell him I lost his address and didn't know how to reach him,' he said.

"At a song recital a few weeks later, I finally met Maurice Ravel." Rosenthal grinned: "He offered to take me as a pupil, but he warned me that composing was no easy matter. His words were strong for such a fastidious person: '*Vous allez voir comme c'est* emmerdant *d'écrire la musique.*'"

For the next eleven years, until Ravel's death in 1937, Rosenthal commuted almost daily between Paris and Montfort-L'Amaury. "Sometimes I would spend weekends at Ravel's house where I had a little room in the attic all to myself. I believe I had a special relationship with him since I was the only one of his four pupils who was considerably younger than he—the others were Roland-Manuel, Maurice Delage, and Ralph Vaughan Williams—and, being so much younger, I was privy to some of his more private thoughts. He often talked more openly with me than with his contemporaries."

What sort of teacher was Ravel? "He was much more than a professor, he was a real *master*," Rosenthal said. "But he was also terrible, so stern. He reduced me to tears many times. One day, when I was twenty-two, he was so harsh with me that I left early without saying good-bye, vowing never to return. In those days, one took a *diligence* (stagecoach) to the railroad station. It was a windy, rainy November day. Suddenly I saw a kind of shadow moving behind the glass partition in the *diligence*. Some knocking followed. I opened the door and there was Ravel, without a coat, shivering and thoroughly drenched. 'Why did you leave without saying good-bye?' he asked me. 'I know that I am awfully severe, but it's for your own good. You should know that I am just as hard on myself.'"

Later Rosenthal learned personally of Ravel's self-critical approach: "One day I arrived for my lesson and found Ravel in a foul mood. 'What's wrong, *Maître*?', I asked. 'Look there,' he said, pointing to a wastebasket filled with manuscript paper. 'All of that's going into the fireplace; it's the last movement of my sonata for violin and piano.' I protested: 'But that's ravishing music.' 'Yes, it's not bad,' Ravel said, 'but it does not fit with the rest of the sonata. And it's the *form* that counts.'"

Ravel sometimes confided in Rosenthal about other works he had destroyed. One of the more intriguing of these was a piano piece originally composed for *Le Tombeau de Couperin*: "Rejected for military service in World

War II because of his height, Ravel enlisted in the auxiliary corps and drove ambulances in the front lines. One day he came upon what looked like a moonscape: everything in sight had been destroyed except for a lone tree with a single branch. Perched on the branch was—amazingly—a nightingale. And the nightingale was singing! Inspired by this dramatic scene, Ravel later wrote a piano piece called *Le Rossignol Indifférent*. He never explained why he discarded the work."

There were times when Ravel relented and kept a doubtful work. When his teacher, Fauré, expressed doubts about the finale of his string quartet, Ravel thought of rewriting it or dropping it altogether (he had dedicated the work to Fauré). In a letter to Ravel, Debussy urged the young composer "not to touch a single note of what you have written."

Martha Swope

Rosenthal with Violette Verdy and Pierre Bonnefous of the New York City Ballet.

Debussy's open support of Ravel was unusual. Journalists and hangers-on encouraged a split between the two composers, and for a while the Parisian musical world was in fact divided between the *Debussystes* and *Raveliens*. Passions have long since cooled, although critics continue to debate the respective merits of Ravel and Debussy. The general belief is that Debussy is the more revolutionary of the two and therefore the more "important." Rosenthal bridled at this description: "Ravel was no less innovative than Debussy, but he was new in a much more *secret*, less obvious way. His music does not go up to you like this [Rosenthal leaned forward suddenly and spread his arms]. It's very . . . tactful. You must meet it halfway to understand it."

But the public was not prepared to meet Ravel halfway. Rosenthal recalled that when *Valses Nobles et Sentimentales* was first performed by the S.M.I. with the composer's identity withheld from the audience, it was "unanimously booed; people laughed, screamed. Even Ravel's closest friends sneered at and scorned this delightful work." *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges* suffered the same fate at its première, with the result that Ravel asked Rosenthal to give a concert performance of the work so that he (the composer) could hear his own music "undisturbed by noisy demonstrations."

Critics, too, joined in the attack. Following the first performance of the Sonata for Violin and Cello, whose first movement is dedicated to the memory of Debussy, Émile Vuillermoz, who was a close friend of Ravel, went so far as to accuse him of "disrespect toward Debussy for having deposited such ugly music on the master's grave."

Why did so many of Ravel's works provoke catcalls from the audience and the critics? Was it because of their innovative qualities, and, if so, how would you describe them? "I will give you a few examples from *L'Enfant*," Rosenthal said. "When the Child gets furious and says, 'What do I care . . .' etc., tonality is resolutely put aside and all the chords are very daring for their time (1924-1925). In the same work, during the duet between the Tea Pot and the Chinese Cup (a fox-trot) where the orchestra alone plays the theme, there is a wonderful play of 'polytonality' which, for some time, created noisy scandals in Paris. The duet between the Frog and the Squirrel, a delightful mixture of chords and tonalities and quite advanced for Ravel's time, is another case in point. The same goes for the use of '*sprechgesang*' before the final chorus."

Ravel's limited excursions into the world of atonality—for example, the *Trois Poèmes de Stéphane Mallarmé*—were directly influenced by Schoenberg, but they never led him down the road to twelve-tone composition. Rosenthal recalled that Ravel compared Schoenberg's music to "a beautiful sunset, a marvelous sunset, but only a sunset. And what follows a sunset? Darkness, night."

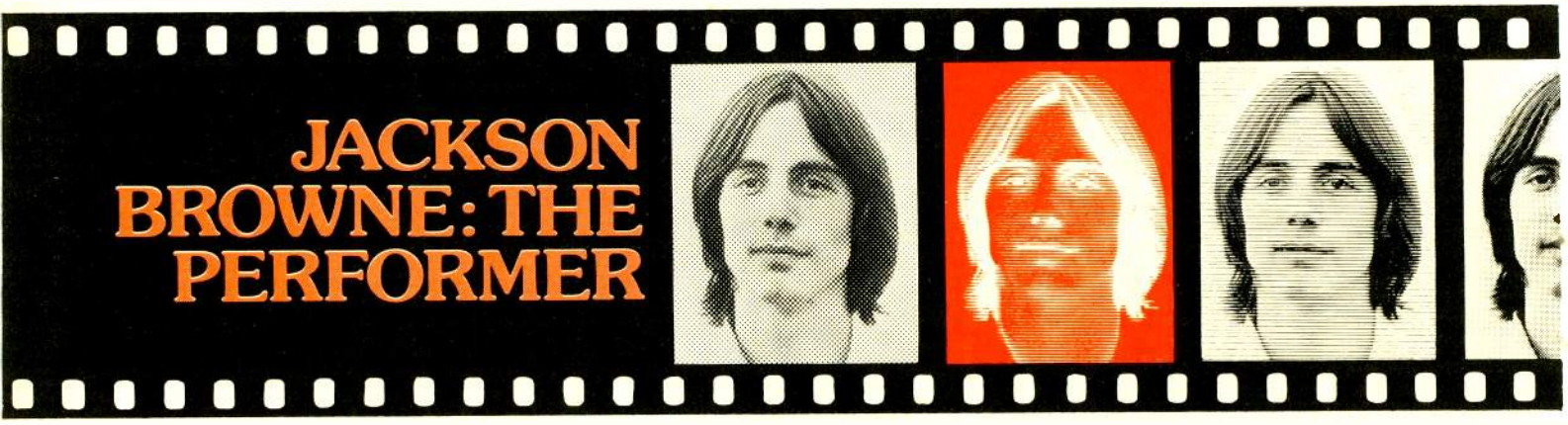
How well did you get to know Ravel? "He was a very reticent man," Rosenthal said. "If he had lived during the time of Louis XIV, I suppose he would have been called an '*honnête homme*.' In those days, that expression was used to describe someone who preferred not to talk about himself. Ravel was such a person. But sometimes he spoke his mind freely to me. I remember one time in 1928—Ravel had just returned from a trip to the United States—we walked for a while together and he was completely silent. I always respected his silences. Suddenly he began to speak about marriage. 'It is so difficult to live with someone,' he said. 'When you are an artist, you never know how difficult it is for the companion of your life to live with *you*.' That's all he said. Ravel never married. He had asked the violinist Helène Jourdan-Morhange to marry him, but she preferred a painter. In musical matters, however, Ravel revealed a great deal to me over those years."

Who were his influences? "In orchestration we all know how important Rimsky-Korsakov was to Ravel. Less well known is how much he admired Bellini, Puccini, and Weber for their ability to float long-lined melodies. Ravel knew *Norma*, *Tosca*, *Euryanthe*, and *Freischütz* by heart and played the scores for me at the piano. As a pianist, he was greatly influenced by Chopin and by Liszt. Other influences were Hayden, Couperin, and, above all, Mozart."

WHAT about Debussy?, I asked. Rosenthal smiled and touched my arm. "I will tell you a story. In the last year of Ravel's life, I often tried to distract my master. I once suggested that he think of writing his will and preparing the musical program for his funeral." Rosenthal winced. "It was a very bad joke, but you must remember that I was young and tactless and thought this would amuse him. To my surprise, Ravel took it quite seriously and said, 'That's simple. I would play the *Prélude à l'Après-midi d'un Faune*, the only perfect piece of music ever written. Even my dear Mozart did not achieve that.'" □

Harold Lawrence, *formerly manager of the New York Philharmonic and the London Symphony and classical director of Mercury Records, is now president and general manager of the Buffalo Philharmonic.*

JACKSON BROWNE: THE PERFORMER



By Josh Mills

"I have a Polish rhythm section from Detroit, a bluegrass harmony section, and a jazz pianist"

JACKSON BROWNE first came to our attentions as a songwriter. The response to his first album was "Wow, what beautiful songs," not "Hey, what a great, great singer." His first hit song was not his, but the *Eagles'* version of his *Take It Easy*. But times are changing. Through three major tours in the last couple of years, Browne has built up an audience that comes to see *him*: Jackson Browne the Performer. And the price he has paid for it is that the songwriting comes harder now.

"When I finally feel comfortable, when I feel like I can write, is when I find a comfortable place—which is *not* out on the road—and when I sort of disconnect myself from the world. I take myself off the hook, and that's when I write. I even stop answering the phone. My wife picks it up and says, 'Hello. No.' and I know it was for me."

Browne has gained something of a reputation as the poet laureate of Southern California, an Orange County boy who has lived in that area most of his life and whose life style and music reflect the "mellowness" of the laid-back West Coast. But while the facts are right, the interpretation is wrong. His music is far too eclectic to be labeled simply "Southern Californian." *Take It Easy* was a country-style rocker. His best rock-and-roll song, *Doctor My Eyes*, had both melody and lyrics that might have come from the Who or the Kinks. Browne is not so much a child of Southern California as he is a child of the Fifties and Sixties, a child of the Pop Radio Generation who was weaned on rock-and-roll even though he didn't know it.

"I *hated* the radio and the music that was on it, you know. There was my younger brother, and he'd walk around with a transistor radio just glued to his temple. I mean, it was just *always* there. And my sister, who was older, had another one stuck in *her* ear. I didn't like it.

"What I got into at the time was comedy records, like Stan Freberg. And so I grew up thinking that I never listened to rock-and-roll. But when I sit down to write, I hear myself coming out with all these old rock-and-roll lines. So on some deep level, I was absorbing it, whatever it was.

"By the late Fifties I had come around for a while. I remember the first rock-and-roll record I bought. It was *Big Boy Pete* by the Olympics. I was getting more interested in rock. By the Sixties, though, the time I was in high school, I was a folkie. That was my scene. I think I am still very much influenced by the AM radio I heard in high school, but I sure wouldn't have admitted it then! I thought rock wouldn't last, and that folk music would. But I find it's the doo-ron-ron that's had the longest-lasting effect on me as a songwriter."

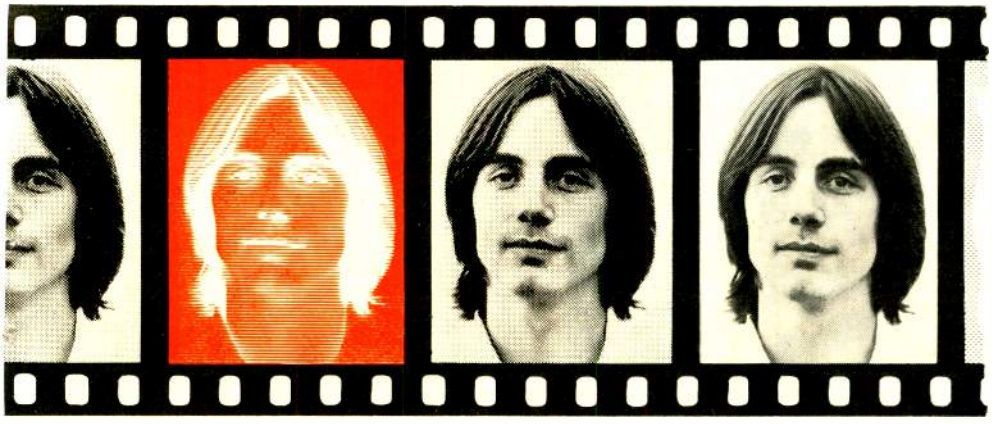
Part of being a folkie in the Sixties was the civil rights movement. Every week, it seemed, there was a benefit concert somewhere with Pete Seeger or Joan Baez or Judy Collins or Tom Paxton or Phil Ochs or Gil Turner or Dave Van Ronk. Browne was not an activist, but it was the civil rights music that introduced him to blues, to gospel.

"Mississippi John Hurt and Dave Van Ronk were probably my two greatest musical influences in the mid-Sixties," he says. The old and the new—the gentle old man from the South and the gruff, cranky, New York City eccentric—they were the two most distinctive blues pickers of the decade. And they spurred Browne on, so that he worked his way from folk strums to complex finger-picking blues. It's hard to look now into his current music and see a hard-core blues influence there, but he probably came out of the blues scene the same way Dylan did.

"Dylan was the second-generation influence of the civil rights movement," he says. "He showed me what could be done with a simple tune if the lyrics

were right. He made me more of a songwriter." Browne, along with Bruce Springsteen and Loudon Wainwright III, was one of several "Young Dylans" around when the label was in vogue two years ago. Of course, when Dylan threw off his recluse act and re-emerged, the media needed no replacements; the Original Thing was back, so "Young Dylan" hasn't been heard for a while. Just as well, for Browne certainly doesn't need the tag; his songs stand by themselves.

Some people disagree. They would say his songs stand by *it*self: that his melodies are far too similar from song to song, from album to album. And so, when his current album "Late for the Sky" came out, some critics—and some fans, too—said, "Oh yeah, this one's the *Doctor My Eyes* cut, and that one's the *Take It Easy* cut." And yes, it's true; the melodies *are* similar. If his band were not so full of punch, so tight and precise, so entertaining, if his lyrics were not so direct, his concerts might just be boring. But they're not. Each time Browne has toured, the crowds have been bigger, the screams louder, the calling out of requests a little more demanding.



A second criticism of his music comes from within the music industry: *no hit singles!* Browne doesn't feel that as any kind of pressure, though. "A lot of people in the business—at the company [Elektra-Asylum], my manager, my publicist, session men, friends—they say, 'Hey, man, I love your music. Imagine how well it would do with a hit single! Okay. That's straight. I feel that way too sometimes. My last album went gold. It was my first gold album. So I'm doing okay. But I'll wake up some morning in some hotel in some city and I'll think, if I had a hit single, where would this album be now? *Could* I be Number One? I'd like to find out. But what can I do? I don't think in hit-single terms. Maybe the AM-radio part of me will pop something into place one of these days and a hit single will come out. I sure wouldn't mind.

"There's quite a bit I feel I have to say. I mean, that I haven't said, haven't been *able* to say yet. I'm really pretty far from it, from being able to design a vehicle for myself that will allow more of what's inside of me to come out. For example, there are two or three ideas I've had for quite a while, since I was about twenty [he's thirty now]. Songs I wanted to write, but couldn't. Songs I want to write, but can't, because I don't know how.

"It's hard to put into words. The music in these things would be less accessible to people, more subtle. Let me give you an example. I used to love the Incredible String Band. They were marvelous musicians, they had great ideas. And they started going into different places musically, they went places nobody could follow. . . and they kind of faded out. I want to go to those places too, though they might be different places for me than for the String Band, but I *don't* want to just fade away."

No, when you've worked as hard as Brown has worked, you don't just want to fade away. It was too difficult getting there in the first place, particularly the early years. The first instrument Jackson Browne played was trumpet—Dixieland trumpet.

"See, my folks were really into Dixieland, and my dad wanted me to be able to play it like I would in a band. So I used to sit around—I was about eight years old—and he would play me a record, and I would cop the licks. I used to cop Red Nichols' licks all the time, and Louis Armstrong's. I had Louis Armstrong solos down to the note. Of course, it was more like a *Reader's Digest* version of his solos. But listen, where all this broke down, where my father and I couldn't communicate, was around what it *meant*. Jazz . . . well, I just missed the whole point!

"I would sit around and he would be telling me about progressions and fifths, and I didn't care. I just wanted to learn to cop other people's solos. I just didn't understand. I never understood that jazz was a system of people digging one another. I didn't understand until I was in a band myself—and I mean that. I didn't understand what it meant to be in a band, to dig on and cooperate with the other musicians, until just about two years ago when I started having a regular group to play with.

"So, anyway, I got totally fed up and frustrated as a kid. I wanted to trade in the trumpet. I wanted a piano. But my folks wouldn't let me. It was 'play the trumpet, play the trumpet.' So eventually, I just felt trapped with it, and I gave it up. It faded right out of my life—and I don't mean just the trumpet, but music too."

So it was a difficult road. That early ambivalence—was he doing the right thing, could he get away with doing what he wanted, did it look good, did it sound right, was he doing what was expected of him?—left a mark. Jackson Browne is a star today, an acclaimed songwriter, an exciting performer who has assembled the driving band he leads, and a moving singer. But he's always doubting it, sometimes just a bit, sometimes a lot.

Recently, during the last song of his set one night, he reached down and disconnected his electric guitar from the phaser (a distortion device) that he had been using occasionally. "Every once in a while," he said after the show, "the guitar pulls the cord out of the phaser while I'm playing. It's because the damn cord is too short, not because I'm doing anything wrong. But each time it happens, I feel exposed. I feel like a dope, like a fool, standing there in front of a crowd with my guitar unhooked, with no sound coming out. And it's more than an embarrassment, it's a reminder that I'm still learning my way around here, that I'm still just an initiate."

An initiate, yes, but a veteran, too, caught between the success of what he's doing and the need to do more. But just how, in a practical sense? Well, Browne's got a few ideas. First of all, there's his band, which gives him lots of opportunities to experiment. "I have a Polish rhythm section from Detroit, a bluegrass harmony section that plays banjo, acoustic guitar, and pedal steel, and a jazz pianist. And I'm really interested in seeing what happens, say, to bluegrass people when they fall in love with reggae. That's starting to happen, and that's only *one* way music could be changing." □

Some notes on the future of JENNIE TOUREL

"...hard to believe that Ravel, or indeed French music, ever had a greater friend."

All photographs by the author

By Robert Offergeld

RECENTLY I had occasion to revisit Ravel's two great exotic landscapes—the alternately sultry, violent, and languorous *Chansons Madécasses* and that even more spacious and turbulent conception for an enormous orchestra and a solo voice, the *Shéhérazade* song cycle based on poems by Tristan Klingsor. The soloist in each was the late Jennie Tourel, and, as with infinite subtlety she made real song out of poetic speech (and the most persuasive speech imaginable out of song), it was hard to believe that Ravel, or indeed French music, ever had a greater friend.

Vocally, of course—the recordings I refer to date from 1950 and 1951—Tourel had coloristic resources that were simply not to be matched elsewhere. In the same sensuously radiant song she could give you the velvet depths and distances of the desert night and the delicate nasality of a Bedouin flute. But I think even more important was her refusal to approach Ravel with the narrowed perspectives of a specialist. It is amusing now to recall that back in those days it was not fashionable to *sing* a French art song. You were supposed to "speak" it, and at least one critic thought that perhaps Tourel had "too much voice" for French music. It was therefore nice, recently, to hear the distinguished French baritone Gérard Souzay remembering Tourel with admiration because "she really *sang*."

She did indeed, on the biggest possible scale—she was never a miniaturist—a scale that was consonant with a sovereign musicality. What this meant, given her stylistic range and her emotional resources, can be heard on the Odyssey memorial album (Y2 32880) that appeared last fall, just a year after

the singer's death. Titled "A Tribute to Jennie Tourel," the album is a four-sided anthology of the great mezzo's earlier recordings (Ravel's *Chansons Madécasses* and *Vocalise* among them), and insofar as any such selection can be said to represent a career so fruitfully prolonged and a musicality so grandly venturesome, this one does so handsomely.

The album does not go into Tourel's recorded orchestral Berlioz, Mahler, Ravel, or Offenbach—or, indeed, into any of the more recent things. It omits the great scene from Prokofiev's *Alexander Nevsky* with which in 1945 she first electrified a postwar record-collecting generation (this writer included) who had never before heard of her. Absent also are the opera arias with orchestra and the French songs with piano that she recorded in London for English Columbia. And, of course, this album cannot represent at all certain historic performances of still other Berlioz and Mahler, a sumptuous Bach *Trauer-Ode*, some resplendent Purcell opera arias (plus a complete concert *Dido*), and a fairly staggering complete Hindemith *Marienleben*, none of which were ever legally recorded (though I am pretty sure some of them will eventually turn up somewhere on pirated tapes).

However, barring these and other possible underground examples, and barring too Tourel's long-celebrated *Mignon*, Columbia's memorial album represents just about everything else of importance, including four *Carmen* arias (recorded in 1952) which, simply as examples of histrionic vocalism, recall in the context of a modern and very different vocal art the legendary dramatic force of singers like Emma Calvé, Mary Garden, and the great Spanish mezzo Conchita Supervia. Here too are the big-scale Debussy that Tourel recorded with piano in 1951, the vivid South American songs with which from 1945 on she gave a welcome new dimension to our concert life, and the Moussorgsky *Songs and Dances of Death* in a somber and monumental interpretation some consider not only the height of Tourel's art but a milestone in the vocal history of the period.

Altogether, what with its dazzling stylistic variety and its incredible linguistic virtuosity, the album restores to us as a permanent possession that exhilarating time of twenty-five years ago when any of Tourel's appearances might (and most did) turn out to be a triumphant invasion-with-banners of some previously unconquered and even perilous musical territory. The fans of other and less intrepid divas were often quite upset about this as-

I began photographing Tourel at the end of the Forties, and the first pictures simply tried to document some of the answers to a question: What, when she isn't actually queening it away up there on stage, does a Queen of Song *do*?

Well, for one thing she spends a lot of time being totally unrecognized in cavernous terminals, waiting for planes, trains, buses, boats, and taxis. Weather permitting, she takes walks near her hotel, also mostly

unrecognized. She tries out the acoustics of unfamiliar, empty, and unheated auditoriums.

(Continued on page 81)

pect of Tourel's success. "Really, now," I recall one of them wanting sniffily to know, "who does she think she is – Maria Malibran?"

As it happened, Tourel did *not* think that, even though no other contender for that particular honor came anywhere near her. On the other hand, neither did she afflict us all with false modesty. "You see," she once remarked helpfully to a reporter from a newsmagazine who wasn't quite sure what all the commotion was about, "it isn't just boiled potatoes, what I do."

There is really no comparing singers a century apart – there won't be, at least, until a hundred years or so after the perfection of high-fidelity recording – but we may guess that the traits wherein Tourel most resembled Malibran were not her phenomenal sight-reading, or her interest in the piano, or her voracious absorption of languages, or her expressive sorcery, but her fantastic capacity for work and her systematic preference for challenging projects. I have an idea that Tourel's early determination to master Rossini's coloratura in the original mezzo register (as both Malibran and Tourel's friend and idol Supervia had done) established habits of mind and work that were conclusive for her later career, and in this context I find especially moving the four delicious Rossini arias that open the Columbia memorial album.

These arias were recorded almost thirty years ago, and on the evidence it was at the second Rossini session (July 17, 1946) that Columbia's engineers, in an apparent fit of inspiration, discovered what to do about the characteristic Tourel *sound*. The "*Non più mesta*" from *Cenerentola* had been very fine, and in fact the "*Una voce poco fa*" from *Il Barbiere* may well remain a classic nonsoprano version for generations to come. But it is the "*Cruda sorte!*" from *L'Italiana in Algeri* that really sets us back on our heels. It is like suddenly rounding a corner onto a big and brilliantly lighted Veronese painting – the sumptuous coloration, the heroic outlines, the superb theatricality, the thrilling immediacy.

Around 1949 all this was right up my alley. I was out to prove that Tourel had as much sheer *voice* as anybody going (she hadn't, of course, though she could make it seem so), and I was once going on about her Rossini in much these terms when she overheard me. "Ah!" said she, all bright-eyed amiability. "So you think *Cruda sorte!*" is the best?"

The only wise reply to a question like that from a diva, even an enlightened one, is to profess yourself unable to choose between three or four of her equally celestial performances – ignoring which axiom I sailed happily on about "*Cruda sorte!*". I was quite emphatic until I noticed just a touch of frost and paused inquiringly.

"Hmmmm," said Tourel, not exactly noncommittally.

"Well, then," I countered, "which do *you* prefer?"

As well ask Medea which of her children she preferred to destroy first. I got a faint flicker of the vivid Tourel brows, a faint shrug of the eloquent Tourel shoulders, but no confidential disclosure, then or later.

And of course she was right to be impatient, for the terms of my rave evaluation were not the really relevant ones. I know now what miracles of mobilized will and conscious art – no other terms will do, and with Tourel one keeps reverting to them as critics of an earlier day did with Malibran and Pauline Viardot-García – are involved in her conquest of Rossini, and most particularly "*Non più mesta*" and "*Una voce poco fa*." What took the most nerve of all was to emulate Supervia, of all possible models, in just these great virtuoso set-pieces. Supervia not only possessed a big glittering voice of hair-raising agility, but a timbre of a peculiar and unforgettable plangency. There are moments, on the other hand, when Tourel, particularly in Rossini's more florid measures, not so much sings the passage out as she lightly – and, in fact, wittily – sketches it. Which is *not* to say that she fakes it, for the music is all there, spun out swiftly before us with wonderful verve and spontaneity in delicate lines of ravishing, silky sound. But in place of glitter and force there is glow and intensity, so that presently, as so often with Tourel, we wind up convinced that we have understood the composer's expressive intention as never before.

> "You see, it isn't just boiled potatoes, what I do."

The upshot is that I find myself thinking of Tourel's Rossini almost as if it were something she had invented herself (Virgil Thomson felt exactly the same way about her Moussorgsky *Songs and Dances of Death*). I remember also her remarking to somebody that it was after she heard Supervia in *Cenerentola* that she went home and began really to work. And when she added "I made up my mind not to be discouraged," it is clear that she knew even then how long and tough and peculiarly lonely the road ahead of her would be.

Not the least interesting reaction to Columbia's Odyssey album was a perceptible sense in musical circles that this recording could scarcely be bettered as providing instant musical documentation for Tourel's new – which is to say her historical – future. Important niches in vocal history are not come by automatically, particularly in the case of singers more celebrated for their art than their decibel count. But it begins to seem likely that Tourel will occupy one. Probing biographical questions have been asked in reviews, articles, and liner notes. The singer's peers seem inclined to reminisce. Substantial updatings are in preparation for the standard musical reference works, and a book is being talked of. People involved with Tourel's life and work have expressed to investigators a due responsibility with regard to their own recollections and the singer's papers, music, and iconography. It is to be hoped that these and other aspects of Tourel's story will go forward promptly. With the best will in the world, people still forget, and the initial reports as published already contain many factual discrepancies.

Some of the more serious of these are noted herewith. In addition to my own recollections, I have consulted those of a member of Tourel's family, those of many of her friends, early and late, and those of her long-time personal manager and confidante Friede Rothe (the last named, particularly, has been and necessarily will continue to be a reference of first importance to any realistic account of Tourel's career). None of these persons are to be held responsible for the dates, questions, or conjectures advanced below, which are in any case not offered as being anything but the most tentative kind of biographical sketch, and one gladly subject to whatever corrections can be substantiated.

When she died, the obituaries gave Tourel's age as sixty-three, stating that she was born in 1910 in Montreal, during the alleged Canadian travels of her parents. The genesis of this curious tale is noted below, and astonishing though it may be to those who heard her sing just a few weeks before her last illness, Tourel was actually seventy-three. Those with special knowledge of her passports place her birth in the year 1900 in Russia, the country in which she resided in 1918, the year she and her family left it as refugees from the Revolution.

Thereafter the family lived for a time in or near Danzig, and Tourel's early friends recall her accounts of girlhood

summers spent on the Baltic at Sopot (since 1945, Zoppot, and part of Poland), a summer resort with a fashionable gambling casino. The fact that Tourel's family could manage such summers after their flight from Russia would seem to indicate they were not in want. Sopot was then part of the Danzig Free City territory, which was virtually a German city, and Tourel's flawless German probably derives from those years.

At this time, encouraged by a proud father, she had begun her study of both voice and piano (not violin, apparently, although one source mentions it). But to date the names of her early teachers have not been discovered. The first teacher officially credited so far is Anna El-Tour in Paris, in the Thirties, and there is some doubt whether that association was the unalloyed satisfaction for Tourel that El-Tour later alleged it to be. In at least one account Tourel reportedly denies the widely circulated tale that her own professional name was invented as an anagram for El-Tour. The professional association Tourel appears to have found most rewarding came many years later with the lieder singer Maria Freund, for whom she reportedly had a respect amounting to veneration. There is no evidence that she worked with Supervia or Madeleine Grey or her friend Eva Gauthier.

We also come upon early references to Berlin and Switzerland at the age of "fourteen or fifteen," but until we know which chronology was involved (the real or the assumed one), they remain impenetrable. If Tourel's parents actually took her to Switzerland and Germany at fifteen, it could only have been in the course of a pre-Revolutionary visit. But if we apply the ten-year correction noted above, she would have been twenty-four or twenty-five and the year would have been 1924 or 1925.

These dates seem in a general way to suit the provisional picture of her early career, for after "many" concert appearances in Paris and elsewhere (she already programmed songs in many languages, and liked to open with early Italian things by Monteverdi and Stradella), her first known operatic appearance in Paris came with her 1931 debut at the Opéra Russe, singing the Polovtsian Maiden in *Prince Igor*. Here also she heard Feodor Chaliapin, and her impression of his overwhelming communicative power deeply influenced her own subsequent conception of the art of song.

The conductor of the Opéra Russe was Emil Cooper (eventually heard at the Met from 1943 to 1947, a capable if not incendiary conductor of everything

She also pays visits of respect to eminent composers and conductors, and sometimes when she entertains her own friendly peers informally, professional give-and-take unexpectedly turns into a real work session at the piano, crackling with the excitement of unrehearsed and venturesome music-making.

Necessarily, too, she spends much time fitting high-fashion gowns, training them at the mirror to her own posture and movement. And then there are the strangest moments of all when, dressed and coiffed and made up far beyond or outside her quotidian self, she is alone in her dressing room just before her performance. It was only with reluctance that she permitted herself to be photographed at one such moment, and then both the photographer and the camera noted that in a sense she had become a stranger—a stranger perhaps even to herself, for she seemed to search her mirrors a little desperately, demanding from them something more than simple reassurance about her appearance.

Then this strange inquiry ended as she walked on stage, where for almost half a century she found the strength to give her audiences answers, not questions. *–R.O.*

In a review deliberate, measured, and unequivocal, the most distinguished critic since Berlioz hailed the most distinguished concert singer since Malibran: "...an honest-to-God Queen of Song."

from *Pelléas* to *Parsifal* to *Aïda* and *Gioconda*). It was Cooper who in 1931 was instrumental in bringing Tourel to Chicago for the 1930-1931 season where she appeared first in Ernest Moret's *Lorenzaccio*. Subsequently she sang Lola in *Cavalleria Rusticana* and appeared with both Mary Garden and Claudia Muzio. Amusingly enough, in Chicago Tourel also made an unscheduled appearance in *Die Walküre*, of all unlikely things. Her costume, and especially her helmet, was much too large for her, and one critic noted the odd little misfit among the hefty sisterhood as "an unidentified pony Valkyrie."

It appears to have been at this point in her career, certainly with the knowledge of Cooper and possibly with his advice, that Tourel decided to establish her birthplace as Montreal, for it was so reported in the Chicago papers. It is not now known whether as a Russian refugee she was traveling with a so-called "Nansen passport." If she was not, this expedient may have simplified her entry into the United States. Once she established the Montreal story, however—and for whatever reason—Tourel was stuck with it, and today those loyal to her are understandably reluctant to submit it to the correction of history. "That is the way Jennie wanted it," a long-time friend objected recently. Of course, but that was then, and to perpetuate fictions that no longer serve any useful purpose will simply detract from the real monument she now deserves to have.

AFTER 1931, Tourel's operatic career, although never fully documented, is increasingly accessible to review, and I sketch it briefly only to dispel the notion that she was an opera singer failed or flawed. Her operatic successes were, in fact, many, and her distinction was from the beginning noted everywhere. What mainly was lacking (and perhaps happily so, in view of our subsequent delight in her special achievements as a concert star) was the snowballing popular success that creates a readily identified operatic figure of international dimensions.

Following her Chicago experience in 1931, Tourel's great success as Carmen came at the Opéra-Comique in 1933, and thereafter until World War II she sang regularly and with stellar rank at the Comique and other European houses. Her principal roles other than Carmen included Cherubino, Mignon, Charlotte (in *Werther*), and the title role in Bizet's *Djamileh*.

Tourel's Metropolitan Opera debut came earlier than many people suppose. While she was still based in Paris she sang Mignon for the Met's anomalous spring season in 1937. Her next New York appearance came in 1941-1942 when she sang Lisa in *Pique Dame* with the New Opera Company, and in 1944 she sang Carmen for the New York City Opera's pilot season.

Her second appearance at the Met came on March 16, 1944, in *Mignon*, just seven years after her debut with the company in the same opera. But the Tourel who returned was not the one who had left, for her career meanwhile had undergone a transformation as remarkable as any known in our times.

In 1942, Toscanini chose Tourel as soloist in the Berlioz *Roméo et Juliette* for the centenary of the New York Philharmonic, and in short order Koussevitzky chose her for Debussy's *La Damoiselle Élue* and Stokowski for the American première of Prokofiev's *Alexander Nevsky*.

In 1943, Tourel made her concert debut at Town Hall, singing her early Italian things, Mozart, Rossini, Debussy, some Russian songs, plus an unprecedented assortment of North and South American composers. And it was at this point that career lightning struck. In a review deliberate, measured, and unequivocal, the most distinguished critic since Berlioz hailed the most distinguished concert singer since Malibran with a rave that became a classic. Tourel and Kirsten Flagstad, wrote Virgil Thomson, belonged together "in the top category of living vocal musicians—together and virtually alone." He concluded by finding Tourel "unequalled among living singers for the high concentration in one artist of vocal skill, sound musicianship, and stylistic flexibility," and on a subsequent occasion he proposed that we recognize Tourel for what she obviously was—"an honest-to-God Queen of Song."

And it was *this* Tourel who returned to the Met. There, in the years 1944 and 1945, she sang four Mignons (succeeding Risë Stevens), two Carmens (succeeding Lily Djanel), two Adalgisas (succeeding Bruna Castagna), and a Rosina (succeeding Lily Pons). By the time she gave the Met a final Carmen on April 3, 1947, everyone in the house knew who and what she really was. She was the concert soloist of choice, insofar as anyone might be, for the world's ranking conductors and composers, from Toscanini to Koussevitzky to Stokowski to Beecham—and, as time went on, to Bernstein to Hindemith to Poulenc to Stravinsky.

TOUREL was not a very big person, and even people who knew her well sometimes found it hard to reconcile the unaffectedly simple (and often mischievously funny) little woman she privately was with the towering artist she turned into when she sang. It helped of course that *all* the noises she made, including her speech and laughter, were unavoidably musical ones, so that even a phone conversation with her was a kind of musical event.

The bells never pealed more merrily in her voice—and anyone hearing her sing "*Ah, quel diner!*" from *La Périchole* will know what I mean by "pealed"—than when, relaxing among close friends after a concert, she told naughty stories, which she could do in several languages. You didn't have to understand the language, and the story didn't have to be very good or particularly new. What made it irresistible was her own hilarity, which mixed in the funniest way the propriety of a perfect lady and the earthiness of a sort of half-pint Rabelaisian comedienne.

Once in Philadelphia as she was about to go on stage (as Adalgisa to Stella Roman's Norma), I told her all she had to do was sing like an angel "just a little bit fallen." I was rewarded with a delighted giggle, for the allusion was to one of her own stories—a long dialect classic that originated back in the great days of burlesque. Everybody knew the tag line, and all the art was therefore in the telling. It concerned the old Jewish merchant trying to marry off his youngest and most beautiful daughter, and a problem has arisen because she happens to be "just a little bit pregnant." There are many lost performances I yearn for, but I'd give a lot to have a tape of Tourel's performance in *that*. □

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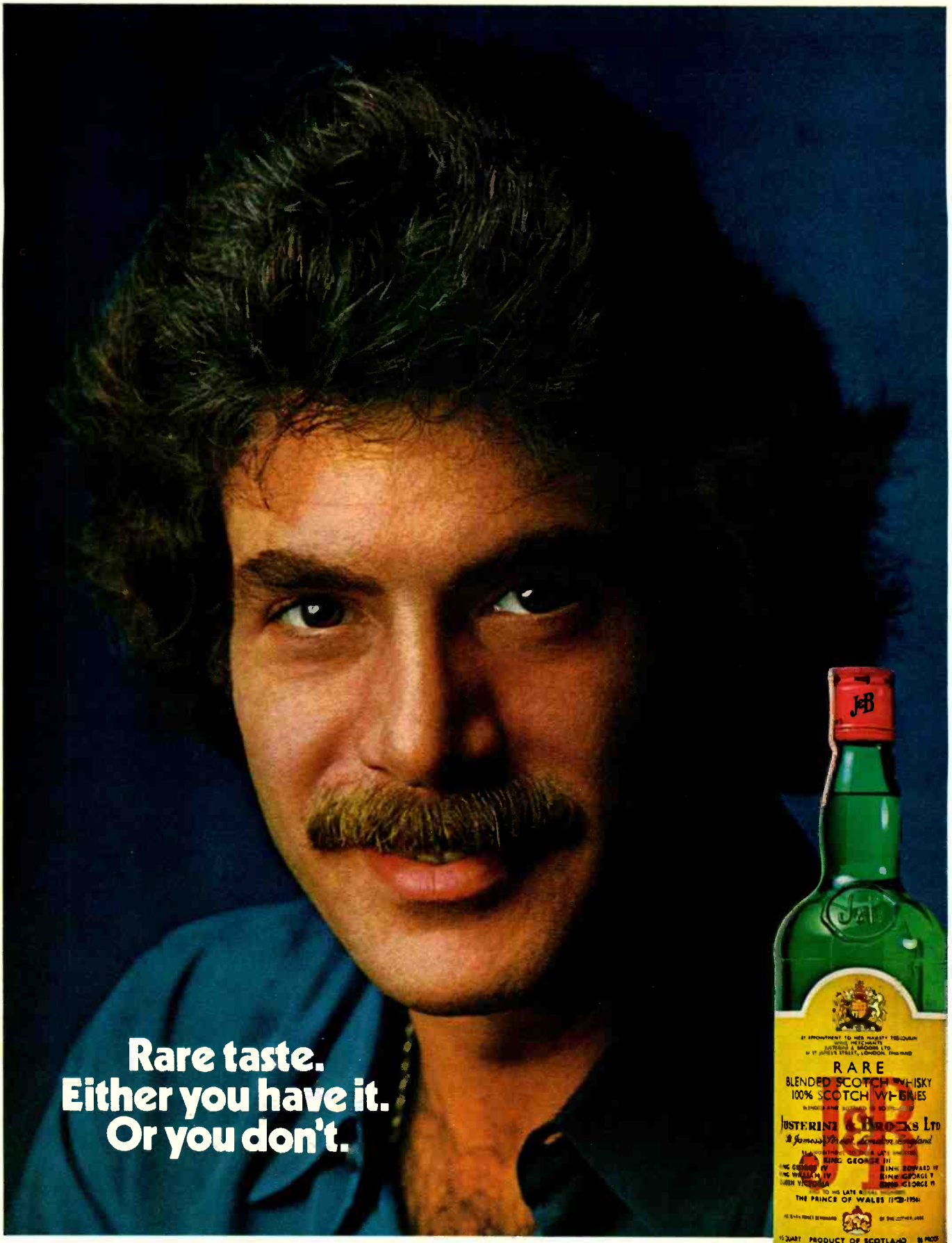

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STEREO REVIEW'S SELECTION OF RECORDINGS OF SPECIAL MERIT

BEST OF THE MONTH

Mike Evans/Phonogram International

LAMBERTO GARDELLI: *distinguished service in the cause of Verdi*

Verdi's *I Masnadieri*: Where Has This Prize Operatic Package Been All Our Lives?

FEW of Giuseppe Verdi's operas (there are a couple dozen of them) remain still unrecorded at this writing, and, to make this encouraging state of affairs even more pleasing, the newly discovered early operas have been reaching us in recorded performances of exceptional quality. Recent years have brought us stirring versions of *I Lombardi*, *Attila*, and *Un Giorno di Regno*, all on the Philips label and all conducted by Lamberto Gardelli. We now have *I Masnadieri* (*The Bandits*) from the same source, and—why beat around the bush?—it may be the prize package of them all.

The opera was written in 1847, the year Verdi's friend, the poet Andrea Maffei, turned the composer's dramatic attention to Shakespeare and Schiller. *Macbeth* and *I Masnadieri* were the results of those new and important explorations, and just as English critics have long maintained a patronizing attitude toward the former, Germans are likely to be condescending about the latter for being a necessarily compressed treatment of the broader dramatic view contained in Schiller's classic *Die Räuber*. No matter: both are striking examples of Verdi's maturing powers, and *I Masnadieri*, with its tighter and more unified musical outlook, may even be the better of the two.

Musical riches abound: the vocal writing is superb, with arias of first-rate inspiration for all the principals, and ensembles written with an expertness rarely matched in Verdi's earlier operas. Indeed, the quartet that ends the first act is not far behind the celebrated one from *Rigoletto*. Aside from the richness of melodic invention, Verdi hardly ever fails to give us here the kind of music that sketches a character or defines a situation. Some of the choral numbers, though undeniably effective, are not terribly distinguished, but the orchestral writing is remarkable, from the melancholy Prelude with its melting cello solo to the turbulent music accompanying the villainous Francesco's terrified vision in Act III.

In short, this is *quite* an opera, and it has received quite a performance. Lamberto Gardelli should long since have been awarded a Grand Order of something or other for his distinguished services in the cause of Verdi, and this time he has outdone himself with a performance that cannot be overpraised. Furthermore, his felicitous musical leadership is supported by a cast of outstanding singers. Carlo Bergonzi is ideally cast as the melancholy, Robin Hood-like, Plutarch-reading nobleman-turned-bandit. His tones may have lost some of their old luster, but they are delivered with sensitivity, refinement, and a touching elegiac expression. As his evil brother Francesco—for whom Verdi wrote the kind of magnificent

Vanguard Records

COUNTENORS ALFRED AND MARK DELLER: *living up to Purcell's demands*

music such dastards do not deserve—Piero Cappuccilli summons tones saturated with stylistic rightness and dripping with appropriate venom. Montserrat Caballé has some pitch problems in the recitative of her first aria, but handles the aria itself ("*Lo sguardo avea degli angeli*"), with its difficult coloratura writing, exquisitely, just as she does the exciting "*Carlo vive!*" outburst in the second act. Ruggero Raimondi is also superb in the role of the old Count, the father of the warring brothers. His duet with the heroine in Act I is one of the score's many gems.

Maurizio Mazzieri's Priest (his duet with Francesco in the last act foreshadows the Grand Inquisitor scene of *Don Carlo*) is the best characterization among the supporting singers. The others are adequate, and the redoubtable Ambrosian Singers manage to deliver their choral music without making it sound too much like anticipated Gilbert and Sullivan.

"A noble and sincere work with moments of genuine greatness," sums up Julian Budden in his excellent annotations. I concur, adding only a special bow toward Philips, Gardelli, and the singing principals. Where has this opera been all our lives? *George Jellinek*

VERDI: *I Masnadieri*. Ruggero Raimondi (bass), Massimiliano; Carlo Bergonzi (tenor), Carlo; Piero Cappuccilli (baritone), Francesco; Montserrat Caballé (soprano), Amalia; John Sandor (tenor), Arminio; Maurizio Mazzieri (bass), Moser; William Elvin (baritone), Rolla. Ambrosian Singers; New Philharmonia Orchestra, Lamberto Gardelli cond. PHILIPS 6703 three discs $23.94.

Henry Purcell's *The Fairy Queen*: A Fine Recording Of a Superb Work

DURING the early years of the seventeenth century, when the Italians and the French were developing opera, English composers were having a rough time of it because of the Commonwealth's extreme distaste for theater and church music. In fact, the doors to both of these important cultural institutions were clapped firmly shut and were not reopened until the monarchy was restored in 1660. Although several attempts were made to devise an all-sung type of entertainment, London audiences firmly rejected them, not because they disliked music (quite the contrary, they adored it), but rather because they distrusted recitative as a vehicle for dramatic expression and because they found singers lacking in the histrionic ability a century's tradition of acting in English had taught them to expect. They therefore developed a unique type of opera in which actors spoke but never sang and singers sang but never spoke. Perhaps the summit of this genre was reached in Elkanah Settle's *The Fairy Queen*, with music by Henry Purcell, just now available on Vanguard's Everyman label in a recording by the Alfred Deller Consort and other forces.

Although the music of *The Fairy Queen* is incidental in that it does not further the telling of the story (that is left up to the actors) but merely serves as diversion, the score is substantial in itself and reveals Purcell's genius to the fullest. Basically, the music consists of five masques, one for each act. The masques vary in their content, and two are comic: the Masque of the Drunken Poet, in which three versifiers blunder into Titania's private bowers and are tormented and ultimately driven out by a group of pinching fairies, and the outrageous masque in Act III in which Mopsa (an early drag role) and Corydon make a mockery of courtship. The three other masques are of a more serious nature. The Masque of the Seasons, with its massive choruses and use of trumpets, presents us with the Purcell who so influenced Handel. The Masque of Night, however, is very intimate with its solos for Mystery, Secrecy, and Sleep. The final chorus is a miracle of rests—one of the less-appreciated materials of music—designed to signify the silence Titania wishes for her repose. The last-act masque is a strange mixture of Juno's Epithalamium and a utopian scene laid in China. Each of these splendid productions contains solos, ensembles, choruses, and contagious dances as well as magnificent symphonies and descriptive music. Purcell's greatest utterances are to be found in his theater music, and *The Fairy Queen* is undoubtedly his most splendid score.

Until the issue of the new Vanguard recording, the only *complete* recording of this work available was a three-disc album on L'Oiseau-Lyre (OL 50139/41, later available in electronic

stereo as OLS 121/3). There is also a well-sung abridged version, much modified, conducted by Benjamin Britten. Although the new recording consists of only two discs and omits the First and Second Music and two songs Purcell added for a revival, it has the advantage of brilliant stereo sound. One remembers the beautiful performances of Jennifer Vyvyan, Elsie Morison, and Peter Pears on the older recording, but these were offset, alas, by some rather poor performances by the lesser singers. Although the singing on the Everyman issue does not reach the heights of the best of the older set, all of it is extremely good; further, the advantage of having a vocal ensemble that has worked together for some time is apparent in the precise ensemble work.

Another feature to recommend the album is the imaginative instrumentation employed. As was typical of the Baroque composer, Purcell did not always specify what instruments were to play in many numbers. In such cases, the Oiseau-Lyre performance resorted safely to strings and always used the cello for continuo. Research has taught us that this was not always the case, and Deller has therefore given us a great variety of timbres with his use of recorders (especially effective in the descriptive Bird Music of Act II), oboes, and an alternation of bassoon and cello for continuo work. Also, Deller's tempos are well chosen so that nothing drags and nothing is frantic either—the performance is well paced throughout. My only complaint is that there should be a little more support from the harpsichord. In short, this is a fine recording of a superb work. The music is the very essence of Purcell's theatrical genius, ranging from the lowest comedy to the highest reaches of rhetorical magnificence. The performance lives up to these demands and brings to the listener a concept of theater music that he will probably never have the opportunity of experiencing in the theater itself. *Stoddard Lincoln*

PURCELL: ***The Fairy Queen.*** The Deller Consort; Stour Music Festival Chorus and Orchestra, Alfred Deller cond. VANGUARD/EVERYMAN SRV 311/12 SD two discs $7.96.

Another Display Of Questionable Taste from the Monty Python Group

If five men and one woman in dogged pursuit of the nonsensical, the unedifying, and the absurd week after week on TV are not your cup of Oolong, then please switch to another review. Do so because I am in a highly contagious state, having suffered from Pythonomania now for over a year, and you might catch it. If you do, then you too will be glued to your television set every Sunday watching the veritable dregs of society, in antic merriment, engaged in acts that defy reason, confound common sense, and outrage our most sacred notions of what we know to be adult good taste.

John Cleese, Michael Palin, Grahame Chapman, Eric Idle, Terry Jones (he seldom appears, but he is responsible for the wildly imaginative, improb-

Something totally different, usual order: Jones, Chapman, Cleese, Idle, Gilliam, Palin

Buddah Records

Island Records

GEORGIE FAME:
a justified confidence

ably grotesque animations that so firmly pin the show down in a post-Orwell world long since gone completely bananas), and Carol Cleveland are the Python's "perpetrators," as the tin ear of the law would so quaintly have it, and their targets are our ofttimes puncture-proof pomposity and fetid sentimentality. There's *The Pet Shop* skit, for example, in which the store's owner blandly denies having sold a dead parrot, suggesting instead several other possibilities: the bird is resting; it has had an attack of homesickness; it has been terrified by the new owner's frantic efforts to wake it up. One doesn't, of course, generally *joke* about any kind of animal suffering in England, where these Pythonomaniacs reside, much less about the *death* of anyone's "dear little Polly." But the Python crew could not, apparently, care less about what offends or what doesn't, as witness their hilarious parody of one of those flatulent BBC documentaries addressing itself to a pressing "social issue" entitled *The Mouse Problem*. It seems that all over England there are men who . . . sshhh!. . . secretly want to be *mice*. They all know each other by means of some nasty underground network, and they often gather in one another's houses to indulge their sickening vice. Not quite as funny here on records as it was on TV, where tantalizing glimpses of a mousy bachanal could be seen as flickering shadows, all ears and tails, on discreetly drawn curtains. And not what you would call a conventional comic routine either, but funnier by far, to my mind, than anything short of Elizabeth Regina herself reading *morceaux choisis* from the Wolfenden Report to the assembled chaps in Parliament.

There are seventeen such pieces of disgusting impertinence included in this Pye Python disc, and among them you will surely discover a favorite. You may then be grateful, as I am, to Pye Records for making these glorious recorded graffiti available to us hapless foreigners. *Peter Reilly*

MONTY PYTHON'S FLYING CIRCUS. Original material from the TV series. John Cleese, Michael Palin, Grahame Chapman, Eric Idle, Terry Jones, and Carol Cleveland (performers). PYE 12116 $6.98.

Georgie Fame: The Right Approach, The Right Songs, The Right Time

DURING the early Sixties, English singer Georgie Fame started doing lead vocals with the Blue Flames, an experienced rock back-up band which became a British sensation once he assumed its captaincy and started injecting some yeasty ideas about jazz-rock fusion. In January of 1965, for example, his *Yeh Yeh* was so big a single that it displaced even the Beatles on the English record charts. The Blue Flames burned brightly until 1967, when the band broke up amicably, Fame's last wheeze with the group being *The Ballad of Bonnie & Clyde*—sadly untypical of his best work, but spurred to chart success nonetheless by the popularity of the movie.

Georgie Fame moved on to what, for want of a better name, might be called the middle of the road, active, popular, and successful whether singing with a big band (Count Basie's), on TV, or in clubs. "Survival," a new album on the Island label, represents his return, freighted with a good deal of valuable experience, to the jazz-rock-pop style that first established him. It is not, however, in any way intended as a "comeback" album; it is rather like the recent "Today" collection from Elvis Presley, no less than a *recital* by a craftsman, a seasoned, confident, professional entertainer.

It takes a lot of earned and justified confidence to be as good as Fame is here. Everything about the album—the high-polish arrangements, the instrumental (augmented Blue Flames) and vocal performances, and the material itself (mostly Fame's)—is just about perfect. The disc is therefore timeless; good today, it will be as good twenty years from now. It is a model of taste, discretion, and judgment in the field of popular music, the right approach to the right songs at the right time. Absolutely beautiful. *Joel Vance*

GEORGIE FAME: ***Survival.*** Georgie Fame (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *Everlovin' Woman; Don't 'B' Movie Me; Donut Man; Ozone; Leaving the City Behind; Country Morning; Johnny Too Bad; That Ol' Rock & Roll; Survival.* ISLAND ILPS 9293 $6.98.

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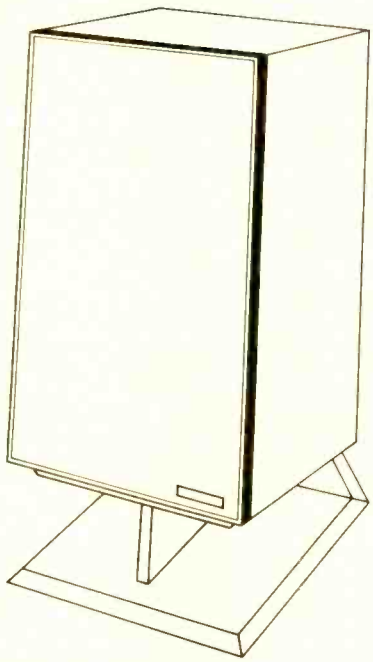

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CIRCLE NO. 53 ON READER SERVICE CARD

POPULAR DISCS AND TAPES

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

LAURIE BOGIN: ***The Exceptional Laurie Bogin.*** Laurie Bogin (vocals, guitars, celeste, bass, piano, recorder, autoharp); instrumental accompaniment. *All I Want to Do Is Dance; I Love to Love You; The Song Makes Me Crazy; Take Me Down Again; Standing Still; To Give You a Smile*; and five others. BUDDAH BDS 5633 $6.98, ⑧ 8320-5633H $7.98.

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

Ms. Bogin is not exceptional, but she is pretty good. Her songs are all hard rock, female division, which means they express one of two sentiments: "Let's boogie and get it on, you hunk o' beef" or "My dolly lost her shoe, goddammit." She displays much skill in her guitar work, which owes something to almost everyone after Jimi Hendrix. Her vocals are screechy but controlled. Beyond that, nothing else to report. *J.V.*

FELIX CAVALIERE: ***Destiny.*** Felix Cavaliere (vocals and piano); orchestra. *Destiny; Light of My Life; Love Came; I Can Remember; Hit and Run*; and five others. BEARSVILLE BR 6958 $6.98, ⑧ M8 6958 $7.98, Ⓒ MS 6958 $7.98.

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

Felix Cavaliere sounds a bit like Tony Orlando. Well, perhaps not *that* bad, and the songs he composes are better than anything in Orlando's moth-eaten repertoire. But still there lingers that faint touch of con artist on the loose no matter how intense or "feeling" his performing manner. Your Gullibility Quotient will be an important factor here. *P.R.*

Explanation of symbols:

Ⓡ = *reel-to-reel stereo tape*
⑧ = *eight-track stereo cartridge*
Ⓒ = *stereo cassette*
□ = *quadraphonic disc*
R = *reel-to-reel quadraphonic tape*
8 = *eight-track quadraphonic tape*

Monophonic recordings are indicated by the symbol Ⓜ

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

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

ODIA COATES. Odia Coates (vocals); orchestra. *Showdown; The Charmer; Heaven and Hell; Do I Love You*; and seven others. UNITED ARTISTS UA-LA228-G $6.98.

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

At last, here's a newcomer who lives up to the hype being given her. Odia Coates has a big, free-floating voice, secure from top to bottom, and a dynamite commercial style. Paul Anka, whose company coproduced (glitteringly) this album, and who has contributed six of the eleven songs, has a thoroughbred here. She possesses a fiery musical attack and the kind of concentrated poise in her lyric readings that marks the performer who can heat an audience up or cool it down at will. She's at her best in two Anka songs, *Don't Leave Me in the Morning* and *The Woman's Song*. Neither one is much above the level of the typical Anka potboiler, but both tracks are irresistible in the sense that they are such splendid examples of the kind of super-professional, commercial record-making there will always be room for in pop music. In what can only be thought of as an excess of loyalty or a temporary loss of reason, Coates also performs Anka's dreadful hit of last year, *(I'm) Having Your Baby*, which would defeat even a Peggy Lee. Otherwise, it's "Curtain up!/Light the lights!/You've got nothin' to hit but the heights. . ." for Odia Coates. *P.R.*

ROGER DALTREY: ***Ride a Rock Horse.*** Roger Daltrey (vocals); Russ Ballard (piano, organ, guitar); Dave Wintour (bass); Stuart Francis (drums); other musicians. *Come and Get Your Love; Heart-S Right; Oceans Away; Proud; World Over; Near to Surrender*; and four others. MCA MCA-2147 $6.98, ⑧ MCAT-2147 $7.98, Ⓒ MCAC-2147 $7.98.

Performance: **Off the pace**
Recording: **Average**

It must do someone some good, this practice of stepping out of a famous band to do "solo" albums, but that someone is seldom one of us listeners. Roger Daltrey cannot, of course, really solo, since he is a lead singer and not an instrumentalist or much of a songwriter; what he does here, one supposes, is run things his own way. He comes off better letting Pete Townshend run things and the Who do the playing—which is hardly surprising, since the Who may be the best rock band there is. This is rather dull by comparison; the (temporary) rock-band backing is just too usual, and most of the tunes are worse than that. The one cut that strikes me as out of the ordinary is *Milk Train*, which uses the undertone of violence in Daltrey's straining, rangy voice a little differently from how Townshend might have used it. The rest is Daltrey's trip, perhaps a necessary one for him, but it isn't mine. *N.C.*

YVONNE ELLIMAN: ***Rising Sun.*** Yvonne Elliman (vocals); orchestra. *Walk Right In; Best of My Love; Bad Weather; Sweeter Memories; Small Town Talk*; and five others. RSO SO 4808 $6.98, ⑧ TP 4808 $7.98, Ⓒ CS 4808 $7.98.

Performance: **Spotty, but often very good**
Recording: **Good**

Yvonne Elliman could be a lot better than she often is—but then again, couldn't we all? What she does accomplish here is to rough in the outlines of a personal style. It's a style that mixes intensity, a langourous serenity, and a tendency to belt it out vigorously whenever the mood strikes her. When it all comes together, as it does in *From the Inside* or *Steady As You Go*, you can feel the excitement of an artist about ready to break through. She's still very tentative in some areas, particularly in the matter of lyric shadings, but it all seems to be there just waiting to blossom with the aid of the right song. *P.R.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

FAIRPORT CONVENTION: ***Rising for the Moon.*** Sandy Denny (vocals, guitar, piano); Dave Swarbrick (vocals, fiddle, mandolin, autoharp, guitar, dulcimer); Dave Pegg (guitar, bass, vocals); Jerry Donahue (guitar); Trevor Lucas (vocals, guitar, harmonica); Dave Mattacks (drums); Bruce Rowland

(percussion). *Rising for the Moon; Restless; White Dress; Let It Go; Stranger to Himself; What Is True; Iron Lion; Dawn; After Halloween; Night-time Girl; One More Chance.* ISLAND ILPS 9313 $6.98, ⑧ Y8I-9313 $7.98.

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

Sandy Denny (sigh) is back (exclamation point) with Fairport Convention, so don't go calling the middle Seventies a total loss. Better still, the Fairport personnel shuffle seems to have quieted down without the exit of the first-class male vocalist the band had landed in Trevor Lucas, Sandy's husband and a member of her fine and defunct band, Fotheringay. Anything approaching a decent song is going to get the very dickens sung out of it is what all this means, and that's what this album demonstrates. It begins so well, with the charming title song written and sung by Sandy, that it isn't until the fourth track—*Let It Go*, with an irritating tune and a vocal (by Dave Swarbrick, the one who always stayed a member of Fairport) just a little messy around the edges—that the idea of human fallibility gets any consideration at all. Eventually you may, as I did, settle into the notion that the songs aren't really super, just better than the average—it's the vocals of Denny and Lucas that are technically and (especially) emotionally tuned up to make the songs *seem* super. And the arrangements are good, as Fairport arrangements usually are; Swarbrick in particular deserves credit for hanging in there and seeing to the fiddling and the mandolins and other little things that mean a lot. The album is a fine one, but if this band can hold together for longer than the usual few weeks, you ought to hear the *next* one! *N.C.*

GEORGIE FAME: ***Survival*** **(see Best of the Month, page 90)**

RACHEL FARO: ***Rachel Faro—II.*** Rachel Faro (vocals, piano, guitar); orchestra. *Wonderous Love; Free Grace; Greyhound Bus; Ridin' High; Jambalaya*; and seven others. RCA APL1-1105 $6.98, ⑧ APS1-1105 $7.98, © APK1-1105 $7.98.

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

Rachel Faro projects a world weariness that sometimes slips into plain exhaustion as she flicks through a collection of her own and other people's songs here. She can be quite affecting, in her dead-pan way, in such things as *I Will Love You More*, for which she has provided French lyrics, or in guiding that rickety old tugboat of pop, *Jambalaya*, around the bend and into the Seventies. Too often, however, her muted approach turns the mood to taupe, the material to interior dialogue, and the listener's patience off. Production and arrangements are by John Simon, who should do more albums of his own. *P.R.*

JOSÉ FELICIANO: ***Just Wanna Rock 'n' Roll.*** José Feliciano (vocals and guitar); orchestra. *No Jive; Twilight Time; Suspicions; Ain't That Peculiar; Marie*; and six others. RCA APL1-1005 $6.98, ⑧ APS1-1005 $7.98, © APK1-1005 $7.98.

Performance: **Poor**
Recording: **Overdone**

José Feliciano's been slipping downhill for so long now that it may be hard to remember the time when he was a spectacular new talent whose guitar work was enthralling and whose vocals were urgent and exciting. For the last several years he's been releasing a series of really poor recordings, most of them overloaded with gimmicks and ham-fistedly overproduced. This newest, no exception, is a grandiose exercise in vacuity. All that remains is his amazing facility on guitar, and it's *only* that these days: facility. Another disappointment from an artist whose career has apparently lost direction for good. *P.R.*

FLASH FEARLESS: ***Versus the Zorg Women, Parts 5 and 6.*** Alice Cooper, Elkie Brooks, Jim Dandy, and others (vocals); orchestra. *Trapped; I'm Flash; Sacrifice; To the Chop; Supersnatch*; and five others. CHRYSALIS CHR 1072 $6.98.

Performance: **Forget it, Flash**
Recording: **Good**

This is a dimwitted collection of songs that presumably fit some sort of libretto for a pop space opera assembled and written primarily by Steve Hammond and Dave Pierce (and apparently anyone else who dropped by the studio that day) and performed by such luminaries as Alice Cooper and Jim Dandy. Even Alice can't do much with the material and would have been better advised to stay home. The package includes a large and elaborate comic book that is even more weak-minded and unamusing than the songs. A total waste of time, money, and, in Alice Cooper's case, talent. *P.R.*

FLEETWOOD MAC. Mick Fleetwood (drums); John McVie (bass); Christine McVie (vocals, keyboards); Lindsey Buckingham (vocals, guitar); Stevie Nicks (vocals). *Monday Morning; Warm Ways; Blue Letter; Rhiannon; Over My Head; Crystal; Say You Love Me*; and four others. REPRISE MS 2225 $6.98, ⑧ M8 2225 $7.98, © M5 2225 $7.98.

Performance: **Soft and nice**
Recording: **Very good**

Fleetwood Mac now has two female vocalists (Christine McVie and Stevie Nicks) up front and a male vocalist (Lindsey Buckingham) who plays the guitar as well, so the emphasis clearly has shifted to the singing. In this album, it makes for a pleasant impression that doesn't last too long, possibly because the singing has a smooth, low profile, as the instrumentation now has—but more likely because the songs have a lighter-than-meringue quality that attracts but doesn't satisfy. They're nicely constructed, but if you really concentrate, they sound like inconsequential banter between lovers or would-be lovers or have-been lovers or some people like that. It all sounds rather austere, needing more highlights. It's tasteful, though, and after a few adjustments you may be able to profit by listening to vocal and other textures instead of the words and chord changes. *N.C.*

SANDY DENNY: *saving the Seventies with a glorious return to Fairport Convention*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

JEFFERSON STARSHIP: ***Red Octopus.*** Grace Slick (vocals, piano); Paul Kantner (vocals, guitar); Marty Balin (vocals); John Barbata (drums, vocals); Craig Chaquico (guitar, vocals); Papa John Creach (violin); Pete Sears (bass, keyboards, vocals); David

(Continued on page 98)

THE NEW PHASE-LINK™ SPEAKERS BY BANG & OLUFSEN PUT MUSICIANS IN THEIR PLACE.

When music is well-recorded, it is not too much to expect that, during playback, your loudspeakers will reflect the same dynamics and ambience that were present at the original event. Re-creating the placement of instruments as well as they re-create the character of each note.

If your loudspeakers can't do all that, there's a very legitimate reason: audible phase distortion.

After years of research, Bang & Olufsen has created a speaker system that provides the missing link in speaker engineering by virtually eliminating audible phase distortion.

The Beovox® Phase-Link™ loudspeaker.

Now you can hear musicians on your stereo sound stage (your listening area) as they were recorded: from front to back, as well as from side to side. With excellent transient response, definition and clarity.

But let's backtrack and see exactly how Bang & Olufsen got so far ahead.

The problem of phase distortion.

Phase distortion occurs in multiway conventional speakers at the crossover point when the same note is being reproduced simultaneously by two drivers. It is most noticeable at lower frequencies and during transients (sudden variations in volume). What you hear is a blurred sound picture, lacking definition.

There are two characteristics to phase distortion: one is fixed, the other is variable. In conventional crossover filters, alternating driver units are fixed mechanically and electrically 180 degrees out-of-phase (to compensate for amplitude "suck out"). (See Diagram A.) Variables in phase shift are due to passive filter components.

Today's high-quality loudspeakers have virtually solved the problems of frequency response, as well as harmonic and intermodulation distortion.

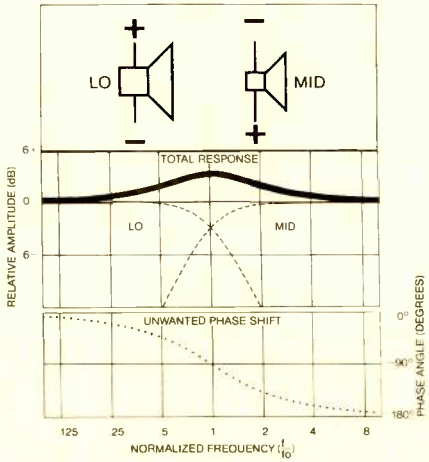


Diagram A: Conventional 12dB/oct. crossover filter.

Which makes the study and correction of phase distortion, the final hurdle in speaker perfection, all the more important and meaningful.

A discovery we really listened to.

At the 1973 AES convention in Rotterdam, two Bang & Olufsen engineers, Madsen and Hansen presented a paper on audible phase distortion that represented three years of research.

They had created an electronic crossover, tri-amplified speaker which totally eliminated phase distortion. From it, they concluded that phase distortion is the remaining main source for sound coloration in conventional speakers.

That it is, indeed, audible at lower frequencies and higher volume levels.

The solution: the Phase-Link method.

Madsen and Hansen's electronic crossover speaker was, of course, cost-prohibitive to the consumer. So Bang & Olufsen set about creating a practical solution.

E. Baekgaard, head of the Bang & Olufsen electrical engineering department, developed a mathematical computer simulation of the loudspeaker's electro-acoustic

transfer function. And he began experimenting.

Instead of placing alternating drivers 180 degrees out of phase, he put them all in the same phase, "curing" the fixed phase shift. This created an audible amplitude "suck out," (See Diagram B) which led to the discovery of the missing link:

An additional narrow band filler driver at the crossover point. It "cured" both the amplitude "suck out" and the variable phase shift by providing a compensating signal between the woofer and midrange.

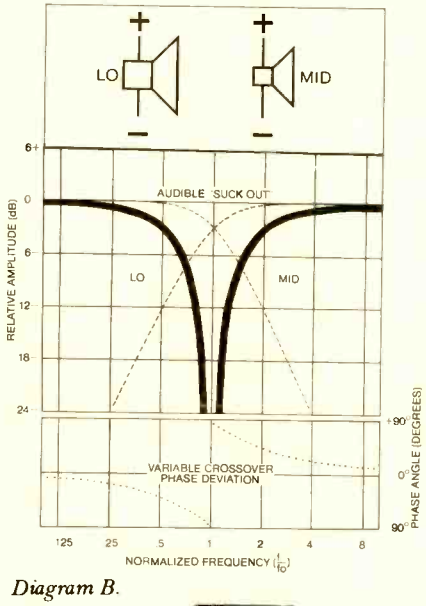
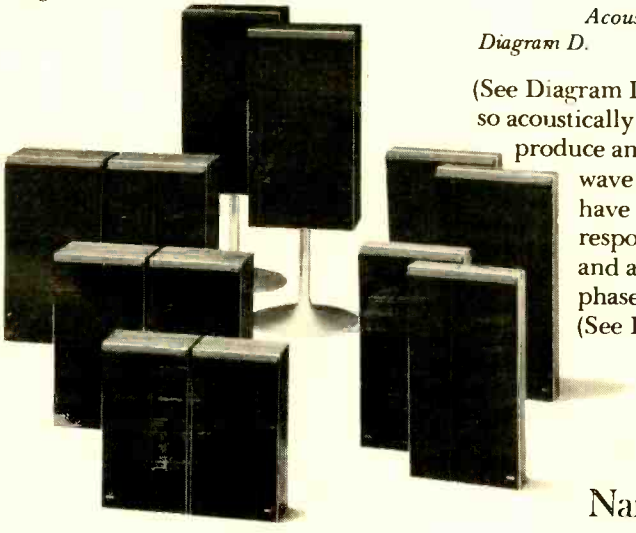


Diagram B.



Because the ear is sensitive to phase distortion mainly in the lower frequencies, phase link is only used between the low-frequency driver and the midrange unit in the high-power, 3-way (M70, S60) systems and not between the midrange and the tweeter. In medium-power, 2-way speaker systems, one phase link is used in 12dB/oct. (S45, P45) filter combinations. Low-power, 2-way speaker systems can be made without phase distortion through a sophisticated 6dB/oct. filter technique (S30).

Cabinets are supplied in genuine rosewood, teak and oak veneers or white lacquer over birch applied to tough, rigid particle board.

BANG & OLUFSEN

PHASE-LINK

Diagram C: The Bang & Olufsen new dynamic filler driver eliminates phase distortion.

And it made the audible output identical to the electrical input. (See Diagram C.)

Today, our Beovox Phase-Link loudspeakers have even further refinements. The drivers are mounted to form a common, angled baffle, acoustic axis to ensure that the sound generated from each driver will reach the ear simultaneously.

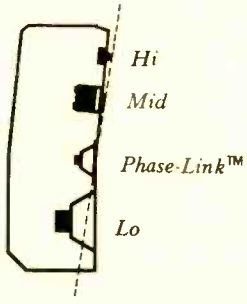


Diagram D.

(See Diagram D.) These speakers are so acoustically accurate, they can reproduce an electronic square wave signal. Proof that they have excellent frequency response, low distortion, and are free of audible phase distortion as well. (See Diagram E.)

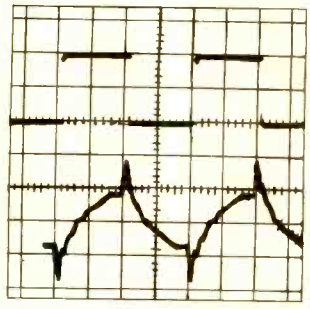
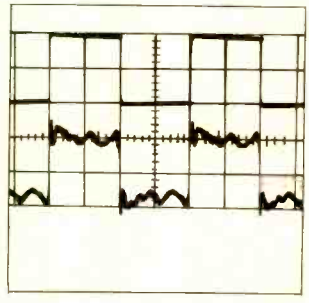


Diagram E: 1. A good conventional speaker with wide, flat frequency response and low distortion still cannot reproduce the original square wave signal.



2. Beovox Phase-Link loudspeakers can reproduce square wave accurately by virtually eliminating phase distortion.

Your Stereo Sound Stage.

More than stereo separation, Beovox Phase-Link loudspeakers produce a total stereo sound picture. With notes retaining their clarity, free from hangover because of excellent transient response. Which means that in a fine recording, you'll be able to sense where every instrument and section is located.

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He'll be happy to put your musicians in their place.

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CIRCLE NO. 10 ON READER SERVICE CARD

What happened in the pink house in West Saugerties eight years ago?

The Basement Tapes

"THEM old days are gone forever," Bob Dylan scribbled on the "Planet Waves" album jacket, "and the new ones ain't far behind." Them old days included times when, as Tom Wolfe was saying, one hardly knew what was journalism and what was art, when we became so involved in either the current events or the media turning events into prime entertainment that all our reference points got equalized, memories got too crowded, and our feeling for the passage of time grew increasingly vague and subjective.

In pure, abstract, objective, meaningless, geophysical fact, it was only ten years ago that they booed Dylan for appearing with an electric band known then as the Hawks and later as the Band and saying, in effect, so much for protest songs. It could have been a century ago, if your perspective has you looking back at it against a splay of happenings more historically significant, or, if your viewpoint is in the thick of feelings people continuously express about Dylan, it could have been last month.

By 1967, in any case, Dylan had regained part of the folkie audience and had found a new one that *liked* electric guitars, and by then he and the Band had toured much of the world. As critic Greil Marcus has it, they had pushed their thing together to a certain limit. That summer and fall, Dylan and the group experimented with possible new frontiers in some home-taped sessions in the basement of the Band's now-famous pink house in West Saugerties, New York, and now, eight years later (whatever that means), we have the *product*; Columbia calls it "The Basement Tapes."

These aren't just *any* old tapes. The earlier (or, in a sense, later) Columbia adventure, "Dylan," is an example of what just any old tapes coming from Dylan sound like. Those came from Dylan in studios and other corporate or formal settings; "The Basement Tapes" came from home, which can make a big difference. Singing in the kitchen, as country troubadour Bobby Bare recently recognized (and capitalized on, recording a song by that very name), can be a very special thing—even if it is usually a thing in dire need of editing. When you go electric, you move to the basement or the garage, but it's still home, and it's still music you are making for yourselves and no one else, and there's no need to worry about little compromises that might please this or that audience.

THE eight selections by the Band without Dylan (Dylan sings sixteen times here) are new to us too—new to me, anyway—and in some of those you'll hear what the Band is supposed to be all about: notice particularly Levon Helm's rock-singer's rock singing in *Yazoo Street Scandal*, Robbie Robertson's electric guitar just about everywhere, and the way the whole group plays like a small army with a single consciousness in *Ain't No More Cane*. But the group seemed even better at backing Dylan in those days, and the performances of three of his standards, *Tears of Rage*, *You Ain't Goin' Nowhere*, and *This Wheel's On Fire*, are particularly moving. "Timeless," Marcus says of these two discs—I suppose that means they still sound up-to-date—and I agree with that assessment of the two-thirds or so of it where the songs are strong. Even one that took a chance on dating itself—the hilarious *Clothes Line Saga*, which seems to be a parody of Bobbie Gentry's *Ode to Billy Joe* (in Dylan's story only the most mundane things happen, except a neighbor does happen by to say the Vice President has gone nuts)—remains sly enough and wry enough to work now.

The other thing about jamming at home, though, is that it can get awfully sloppy, undisciplined, even silly as the night wears on. You tend to play a song for ten minutes, you get so engrossed trying to fan a little spark, and, while a few of those minutes are very exciting indeed, some of them grow pretty corny before someone leads the way to an ending. That, in the case of "The Basement Tapes," was where Columbia's engineers came in, perhaps, for *someone* kept these tunes tight and concentrated. The endings are abrupt in many cases, a bit frizzled in others, and I wouldn't be surprised to learn that someone just cut away some junk and threw it out. There are a few *songs* here of questionable worth, mostly emanating from Dylan's freakier-than-thou absurdist streak (but notice, if you haven't already, that Dylan's freaks are more like circus freaks than hippie freaks, and notice too that Dylan didn't stop being topical when he stopped protesting), songs that have a tired *sound* to them, mostly, such as *Yea Heavy and a Bottle of Bread* and *Nothing Was Delivered*. Playing with feelings slops over into melodrama only once when it involves a pretty *good* song: *Too Much of Nothing* is separated from too much of its melody at too young an age.

THIS old music is not gone forever the way them old days are, though; the sound of this should put the final touches on anyone's feeling for the passage of time. Best, perhaps, to just give up and rely upon devices, start writing things down on the calendar instead of keeping it in our heads—if something like this album can happen the way this album seems to have happened, we're never going to keep it straight anyway. The past is just a story, and none of us ever tells it the same way twice. You can play this thing on your turntable right now and confirm that musicians in the act of surrendering to the music are living in the present, whenever that may be.

—*Noel Coppage*

BOB DYLAN AND THE BAND: ***The Basement Tapes.*** Bob Dylan (vocals, guitar, piano); Rick Danko (bass, mandolin, vocals); Garth Hudson (organ, saxophone, accordion); Richard Manuel (vocals, piano, drums); Robbie Robertson (guitar, vocals); Levon Helm (vocals, drums, mandolin, bass). *Odds and Ends; Orange Juice Blues; Million Dollar Bash; Yazoo Street Scandal; Goin' to Acapulco; Katie's Been Gone; Lo and Behold!; Bessie Smith; Clothes Line Saga; Apple Suckling Tree; Please Mrs. Henry; Tears of Rage; Too Much of Nothing; Yea Heavy and a Bottle of Bread; Ain't No More Cane; Crash on the Levee; Ruben Remus; Tiny Montgomery; You Ain't Goin' Nowhere; Don't Ya Tell Henry; Nothing Was Delivered; Open the Door, Homer; Long Distance Operator; This Wheel's On Fire.* COLUMBIA C2A-33682 two discs $7.98, ® C2A-33682 $9.98, © C2T-33682 $9.98.

Freiberg (bass, keyboards, vocals). *Fast Buck Freddie; Miracles; Git Fiddler; Al Garimasu (There Is Love); Sweeter Than Honey; Play on Love*; and four others. GRUNT BFL1-0999 $6.98, (8) BFS1-0999 $7.98, (C) BFK1-0999 $7.98, [8] BFT1-0999 $8.98.

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

It is difficult now to *care* who's the Best Rock Band in America, but you can sit back with the new Jefferson Starship album and temporarily forget how difficult it is. Although it is somewhat late for the Airplane regrouped as the Starship to be getting it together again (this is far and away the best album committed in the name of Starship, is among the things I'm saying), I've been having a good time returning to those thrilling days of yesteryear, even if I can't stay in them. Grace Slick and Marty Balin are among the most gifted vocalists ever to mess with rock (*strangely* gifted, too), and their odd interweavings with an occasional burst of textural variety from Paul Kantner or one or two of the other fellows make it seem like the old heyday is still going on. The subject matter is, of course, updated (there's not a single threat here to get the rascals by first taking over outer space) and concentrates, as we do, on complex personal relationships. Still, the lyrics may be a little vague at times: Grace's *Fast Buck Freddie*, for example, seems to hint at dabbling in the real politics of *this* time (simplified, as it must be if rock is ever to deal with it, it amounts to the rich being much more blatant in how they exploit the poor), but it only hints and dabbles before turning refrain-happy. The material is pretty strong, though, by and large, and Slick's touchy throat is in great shape, and her strange vocal lines soar without the self-consciousness that harmed them in her solo album. Having Balin back in the group probably was catalytic; neither Slick nor Kantner plays off anyone else as well. Craig Chaquico seems to have found himself as a lead guitarist here, too, flashing the same kind of whacked-out feeling for harmony that Slick does vocally. The selections I particularly like include Slick's *Al Garimasu (There Is Love)*, Balin's *Miracles* (which sounds like something from another planet, speaking of outer space), and the Kantner-dominated *There Will Be Love*. Ah, if rock bands had written and played like this all along. . . . But later, of course, the Seventies do creep back in: I suppose much of the charm of this is anachronistic—it doesn't answer the question of what it's doing here now. *N.C.*

VAN McCOY: *From Disco to Love*. Van McCoy (piano, arranger): instrumental accompaniment. *I'm in Love with You Baby; Now That You're Gone; Don't Rock the Boat; Let Me Down Easy*; and four others. BUDDAH BDS 5648 $6.98.

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

Van McCoy is a pianist-arranger-producer who has had scattered success over the years in the soul music field. His most recent success is *The Hustle*, a disco-soul record. In an attempt to skim some sales from McCoy's current notoriety, Buddah has reissued this album, which is at least two years old. There is nothing startling on it, although it is well made within its limits—the usual ooo-baby stuff with sighing strings and ghetto guitar rhythm. Unless you are a Van McCoy idolizer, there is no reason to listen to or purchase this album. *J.V.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

RALPH McTELL: *Streets*. Ralph McTell (vocals, guitar, harmonica, marimba); Danny Lane (drums); Dave Pegg (bass); the Goldrushers (backing vocals); other musicians. *Streets of London; You Make Me Feel Good; Grande Affaire; Seeds of Heaven; El Progresso; Red Apple Juice*: and five others. 20TH CENTURY T-486 $6.98.

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

The difference between the number of coffeehouse habitués who know *Streets of London* by heart and the number who know who *wrote* the song (in 1970) is the kind of thing Pogo used to call a cry and shame—and it somehow seems slightly worse when you consider how many of those same habitués are young women too attractive for my own good. Perhaps this new Ralph McTell album, leading off with that (speaking pop-world language) underground classic, will make the needed correction. McTell does a stunning job of singing it, as if he just came in off those streets himself, and maybe now those lovely habitués will realize the versions they've been hearing were 'way too sweet. Maybe. Actually, I don't know *what* it will take to make America notice McTell if the whole "Streets" album doesn't do the trick. All it

(Continued on page 100)

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Most high fidelity manufacturers watch each other to find out what's new. At Pioneer, we keep our eye on the audio enthusiast to find out what he wants. That's what keeps us ahead of all the others who are watching all of the others.

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offers is a small passel of truly outstanding songs and a voice that's strong, romantic, compassionate, and not likely to be confused with anyone else's.

Grande Affaire deserves considerable attention all by itself, being an excellent treatment of how wistful you can remain even after you become jaded (the Seventies in a nutshell, if you ask me), but neither is it easy to resist McTell's beautifully crafted tongue-in-cheek Latin fling, *El Progresso*, or the wonderful arrangement and singing of *Red Apple Juice* (the one song here that is, as people thought *Streets* was, "traditional"), or the stark, black-and-white cinematography he puts into your head with *Heron Song*. Through all this the acoustic instrumental backing does its job, stays out of the way so the singer can do his, and conveys the sense that nobody is being so careful as to create tension in the wrong places. McTell's voice is miked closely for a strong one, but all that does is make the recording even better with headphones. This is the kind of thing that keeps me betting on troubadours. *N.C.*

POCO: *Head Over Heels.* Poco (vocals and instrumentals); other musicians. *Keep On Tryin'; Lovin' Arms; Let Me Turn Back to You; Makin' Love; Down in the Quarter; Georgia Bind My Ties; Us*; and four others. ABC ABCD-890 $6.98, ® 8022-890 H $7.98, © 5022-890 H $7.98.

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

Occasionally there comes a Poco recording whose flesh is willing but whose spirit is bleak, and it's like having nothing in the house to drink but water. It ought to happen more often than it does, considering how much better the Poco men perform than they write. Their lyrics slide toward moon-June rhymes in the best of times, and their tunes tend to be flat. But they *have* turned out some of the best country-flavored rock albums of recent years; usually there are just enough exceptions to what I said about their writing to inspire *them*, if not me, and they're the ones who have to play it. This time, though, I don't think they managed to do anything but bore themselves. The lyrics here aren't terrible, they just lack emphasis and contrast. The tunes are a little flatter than usual. Small wonder that the performances, while they remain technically more than most rock bands could manage, seem clinically disinterested. *N.C.*

THE POINTER SISTERS: *Steppin.* The Pointer Sisters (vocals); Pointer Sisters Band. *How Long; Sleeping Alone; Easy Days; Chainey Do; I Ain't Got Nothin' But the Blues*; and three others. BLUE THUMB BTSD-6021 $6.98, ® 8307-6021 H $7.98, © 5307-6021 H $7.98.

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

The Pointer Sisters—Anita, Ruth, Bonnie, and Jane—are the latest in the long series of siblings whose close harmonies have crowded the airwaves through the years, supplemented by those inevitable appearances on TV variety shows and by record albums that sell like hotcakes and are sluiced over with just as much syrup. This is their third album for Blue Thumb. Much of it glitters like junk jewelry, but occasionally a real gem gleams amid the rhinestones. The Pointers certainly

(Continued on page 102)

DC servo control is about the only feature better turntable manufacturers agree on. You could spend more than $400 for it.

Or you could spend under $200 for a Philips 212. And get a manual turntable that spins out all the top quality you want.

DC servo control is responsible for most of this quality. It means your 212 will run at the calibrated speed you select even with the power fluctuations we live with. Cleaning-brush drag, cartridge tracking force and stylus friction can't cause slow-down, wow or flutter either.

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Rumble: −62 dB DIN B (ARLL)
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Blue Thumb Records

THE POINTER SISTERS: *those are real gems among the rhinestones*

have energy. Too much of it, I began to feel, as *Going Down Slowly* (the Pointer Sisters' answer to Ravel's *Boléro*) seemed to take forever to sink into the silence. But there's a medley in tribute to Duke Ellington called *I Ain't Got Nothin' But the Blues* which comes over as a real tour de force and shows off the sisters at their charged-up best. There's also a comic eating song named *Save the Bones for Henry Jones* that's a delight. Most of the time, though, the sisters just take turns as lead vocalists in routines that are saved from routineness only by Tom Salisbury's orchestrations and the terrific soloists in the "Pointer Sisters Band"—which just happens to include Stevie Wonder on electric piano on one track and Herbie Hancock's clavinet on another. *P.K.*

MALVINA REYNOLDS: ***Malvina Held Over.*** Malvina Reynolds (vocals, guitar); instrumental accompaniment. *If You Love Me; On the Rim of the World; Rosie Jane; World in Their Pocket; Look on the Sunny Side; Magic Penny; The Whale*; and five others. CASSANDRA CFS-3688 $5.50 (from Schroder Music Co., 2027 Parker St., Berkeley, Calif. 94704).

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

The enthusiasm of protest singers who go back to the Thirties often reminds me of the disgusting, clammy enthusiasm of sing-out leaders at 4-H meetings, vacation Bible schools, and summer camps. Not only that, but there is sometimes the same kind of forced, phony naïveté in their songs; their melodies are really quite interesting sometimes, so craftily childlike are they—and so, one grudgingly admits, were the tunes to some of those certified-wholesome fun songs back at camp. Malvina Reynolds, known to comparative youngsters as the writer of *Little Boxes* and to all Joan Baez fans as the writer of *What Have They Done to the Rain* (included here), is still writing that kind of melody, apparently, and still getting that quality into her words—but always putting that little twist in them ("God bless the grass . . . that grows through cement"), always prodding the mealy-mouthed to think a little about toughening up their minds. In my left-handed way, I consider her a songwriter to be reckoned with beyond the three or so generations with which she somehow manages simultaneously to identify. I doubt that her stuff will often be admired for the best reasons, but I do like the irony she has contrived to add to it by giving most of her songs the sound of antiques. She is not, however, a *singer* that ought to have to be reckoned with right now. Her vocal range can't cover the notes she writes; she repeatedly botches the highs and lows and can't stay on many that need to be held. I have disproportionate regard for the act of singing, perhaps, but I wouldn't like paying to have this sort of mess made of it, even by a sweet little old lady. Maybe I'm similarly hung up on good writing, so I do appreciate the knack Malvina has, and the cool, calm way she goes on with her work. *N.C.*

TODD RUNDGREN: ***Initiation.*** Todd Rundgren (vocals, keyboards, synthesizer, guitar, sitar, percussion, keyboard computer); instrumental accompaniment. *Real Man; Born to Synthesize; The Death of Rock and Roll; A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*; and three others. BEARSVILLE BR 6957 $6.98, ® M8 6957 $7.98, © M5 6957 $7.98.

Performance: **Socko boffo**
Recording: **Good**

As writer, performer, musician (several instruments), engineer, and producer, Todd Rundgren has won a not undeserved reputation as a rock whiz kid. But whither all this whiz? Rundgren is a master of teenage music, which today is much more sophisticated and has more recording-studio gimmickry available to it than at any other time. But I don't see any real difference between what he is doing and things from the early and middle Sixties like *Woo-Hoo* by the Rock-A-Teens and *Psychotic Reaction* by the Count Five.

Rundgren's showmanship camouflages the shallowness of most of his writing, but his sense of melody is fitful at best. It takes a while to catch on that there really isn't much

(Continued on page 104)

Introducing the BSR Silent Performer

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CIRCLE NO. 12 ON READER SERVICE CARD

here, since his style of sounding busy and dazzling the listener with his expertise keeps things going at a rush. He probably *is* a prodigy of some kind, and it will be interesting to see what he does when he ages a bit. Until then, I pass. *J.V.*

SOUTHER-HILLMAN-FURAY BAND: ***Trouble in Paradise.*** Souther-Hillman-Furay Band (vocals and instrumentals). *Trouble in Paradise; Move Me Real Slow; For Someone I Love; Mexico; Love and Satisfy*; and four others. ASYLUM ☐ EQ-1036 $7.98.

Performance: **Freeze-dried**
Recording: **Very good**

Well, there's no spontaneity in this at all, that's what's *wrong* with it, and there must be a reason. My guess is it's the songs. The material is crackly-dry indeed and wouldn't inspire *me* to come up with those little unplanned, unexpected, extra dabs of feeling in the middle of a phrase or thereabouts. But then there must be a reason why they chose these songs. The band wrote them, and perhaps they like being identified as songwriters too much to have considered anything else. You can't have your cake and eat it too, if I may be permitted to make about these songs the kind of deep and profound observation they make about life. *N.C.*

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN: ***Born to Run*** **(see The Simels Report, page 48)**

RAY STEVENS: *Misty.* Ray Stevens (vocals and keyboards); orchestra. *Misty; Over the Rainbow; Lady of Spain; Sunshine; Deep Purple*; and six others. BARNABY BR 6012 $6.98, ® 8190-6012 H $7.98, © 5190-6012 H $7.98.

Performance: **Unusual, to say the least**
Recording: **Good**

Ray Stevens seems to possess a rather unusual talent. Just how unusual can be sampled in this album, in which he dismantles several pop classics with the glee of an Attila first glimpsing the Colosseum. *Misty*, for instance, may never recover from his version, which is taken at a tempo somewhere between a march and a rag and fitted out with a Hawaiian guitar background. *Indian Love Call*, Jeanette and Nelson's old mating call, really brings out the Mahler in Stevens: sylvan doo-whack-a-doo while he provides a throbbing "call" that starts with a grunt and ends with a scream. By the final track, *Lady of Spain*, his creative fires seem banked, so that he settles for a simple *notturno* rendition by what sounds like a washboard and jug band. Hang in there, Ray; remember, Berlioz wasn't exactly a hot ticket in the beginning either. *P.R.*

SYNERGY: ***Electronic Realizations for Rock Orchestra.*** Larry Fast (synthesizer). *Legacy; Slaughter on Tenth Avenue; Synergy; Replay Breakdown; Warriors.* PASSPORT PPSD-98009 $6.98, ® PST 8167-98009 H $7.98.

Performance: **Amateurish**
Recording: **Okay**

Larry Fast, a young man who operates the synthesizer, decided to be an operator-performer after building some synthesizer equipment for Rick Wakeman. Mr. Fast has, to his credit, said of other synthesizer recordings that they were mostly technique and very little music. He inclines toward music, which is commendable. But the machine defeats him.

The proof is *Slaughter on Tenth Avenue.* This is a marvelous ballet score written by Richard Rodgers in 1936. It contains bittersweet, exhilarating melodies as well as harmonies and colorings which, when rendered by an orchestra of human beings—for which the piece was written to be played—make it a minor masterpiece. Filtered through Mr. Moog's invention, however, *Slaughter* is reduced to a flat, one-dimensional "showpiece" for a machine that is either very misunderstood or inherently incapable of reproducing anything more musical than a modern teenager's version of *Chopsticks.*

The rest of the album is made up of long, meandering pieces in which the operator latches onto any musical ideas he can remember from someplace else. It all sounds like a travelogue score. *J.V.*

Barnaby Records

RAY STEVENS
Gleefully dismantling pop classics

TANGERINE DREAM: ***Rubycon.*** Edgar Froese, Chris Franke, Peter Baumann (keyboards, synthesizers). *Rubycon, Parts I and II.* VIRGIN VR 13-116 $6.98, ® TP 13-116 $7.97, © CS 13-116 $7.97.

Performance: **What performance?**
Recording: **Good**

The squeaks, moans, coos, bellows, simperings, and assorted mechanical throat clearings it is possible to bring forth from the synthesizer prove it to be the Better Mousetrap of the age. That it catches few mice is politely overlooked—one mustn't say boo to anything modern. Many of those horrors of mechanization poets and social thinkers have been warning us of have come true, especially in music, where over the last two decades artists and promoters have been emphasizing form at the expense of content. How else explain the 90 per cent of rock that is phony, incompetent, and plain noisy?

Content gets easier and easier to disguise as form gets more and more attention, a lesson that seems to have been well learned by Tangerine Dream, three young Teutonic bloods who operate various types of synthesizers. They have given a long, rambling piece called *Rubycon* a slick, quasi-classical overlay, plucking phrases, half-themes, and harmonic ideas from the works of various composers. From time to time the piece slides into a

(Continued on page 106)

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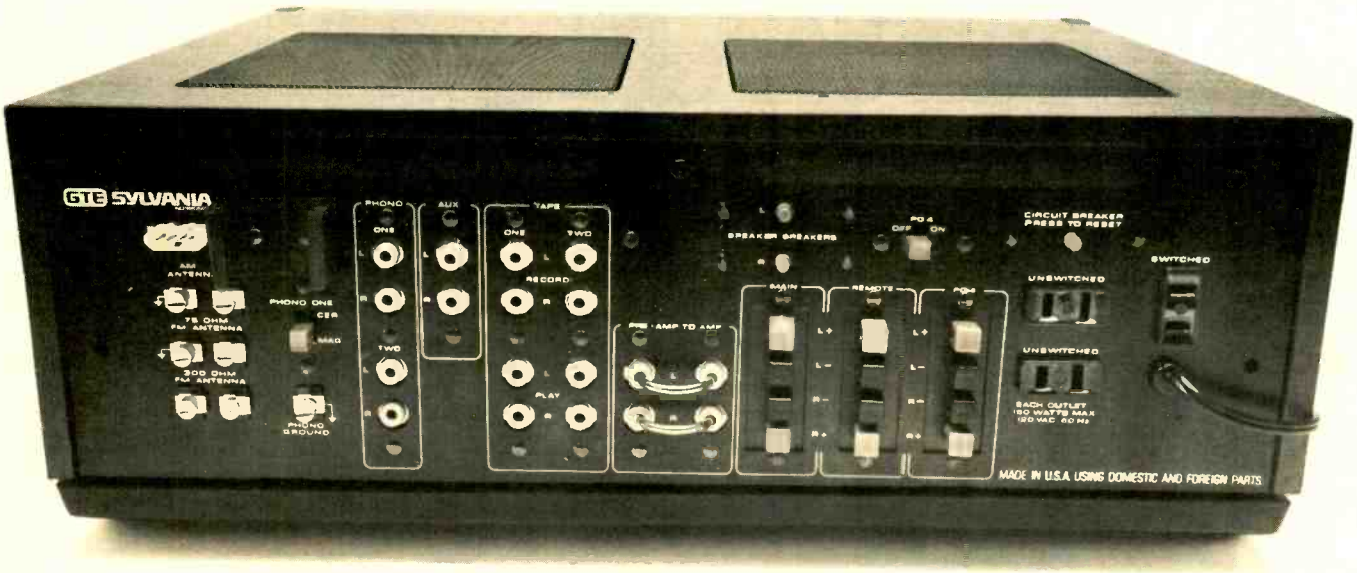

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*Popular Electronics, December 1974 Issue.

GTE SYLVANIA

CIRCLE NO. 24 ON READER SERVICE CARD

rhythmic riff that seems based on the sound a hydroelectric generator makes when it has just gotten oiled. The ideas are shabby, but the performance is efficient—a cross between Goethe and Rommel, between the *Ode to Joy* and *Deutschland uber Alles*. *J.V.*

RAY THOMAS: ***From Mighty Oaks.*** Ray Thomas (vocals, flute, harmonica); orchestra. *High Above My Head; Hey Mama Life; Adam and I; Play It Again*; and five others. THRESHOLD THS 16 $6.98, ® THS O-816 $7.98, © THS O-516 $7.98.

Performance: **Low-key and well done**
Recording: **Good**

Ray Thomas, of the Moody Blues, has his first solo album, and it is an interesting, well thought-out effort. *High Above My Head* is the finest track here, and Thomas spins it out almost perfectly in his low-key, gentled style. Most of the songs were composed in collaboration with Nicky James, who, along with B. J. Cole, Richard Hewson, John and Trevor Jones, Mike Moran, Dave Potts, and Mike Silver, backs Thomas superbly. The main problem here is that the material has an eventually deadening sameness of conception and performance, no matter how beautifully it is done. Recommended—but in bits and pieces. *P.R.*

THE THREE DEGREES: ***International.*** The Three Degrees (vocals); orchestra. *Another Heartache; Together; Long Lost Lover; Here I Am; Distant Lover*; and five others. PHILADELPHIA INTERNATIONAL KZ 33162 $5.98, ® ZA 33162 $6.98, © ZT 33162 $6.98.

Performance: **Blue-plate, not so special**
Recording: **Good**

Here's another steaming plate of goulash from the busy Philadelphia kitchens of Gamble-Huff. That mini-Motown production outfit found its basic recipe several years ago, and this new release is just another routine addition to the menu. The Three Degrees are three girls, who may or may not sing well since they are subjected to the standard overproduction that is a Gamble-Huff trademark, barging through mostly mediocre house-written material. *Lonelier Are Fools* is the best here: tacky and forgettable as the other songs, but performed with a kind of careless sincerity that is oddly touching. *P.R.*

THREE DOG NIGHT: ***Coming Down Your Way.*** Three Dog Night (vocals and instrumentals). *'Til the World Ends; You Can Leave Your Hat On; Good Old Feeling; Mind over Matter; Midnight Flyer*; and five others. ABC ABCD 888 $6.98, © 8022-888 $7.98, © 5022-888 $7.98.

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

Three Dog Night's average is slipping some: time was when almost every cut on an album was a gem, but these days we get only one or two sparklers. Here they are Randy Newman's *You Can Leave Your Hat On*—a funny, clammy song about a fetishist—and Allen Toussaint's *Mind over Matter*. Given first-class material, the group always turns in crack performances. They should pay a little bit more attention to what songs they are going to lavish their energy and talent on; lately they have been giving too many second-raters the royal treatment. *J.V.*

THE TROGGS. The Troggs (vocals and instrumentals). *I Got Lovin' If You Want It; Good Vibrations; No Particular Place to Go; Summertime; Full Blooded Band*; and five others. PYE 12112 $6.98.

Performance: **Bare essentials**
Recording: **Good**

The Troggs were, and are, a definitively mediocre band whose old fame depended on their getting away with songs in which the hero expresses his desire to peel off the slight clothing of a bunny-bird and perform all kinds of groovy acts upon her. This is not a new or necessarily dishonorable tradition in song. But the Troggs' version of sensuality is so vulgar and so feeble that it cannot be taken seriously *or* sensually—a point made by Greg Shaw, editor of *Who Put the Bomp*, a California fanzine devoted to the minutiae of rock history. His intelligent and well-written liner notes to this, the Troggs' first LP since 1968, state the case for the band's existence as a deliberate joke on rock 'n' roll and the social styles associated with it. Shaw finds the Troggs hilarious, pointing out that they expose the works of such holies as the Rolling Stones and the Beach Boys for what they really are. In this I think he is absolutely right. Nobody but the steadfastly incompetent Troggs could show *Good Vibrations* for the patchwork, goony non-tune it is, or expose *Satisfaction* as the noisy, boring "anthem" of what he calls "a public whose appetite for tastelessness has yet to be overestimated."

(Continued on page 110)

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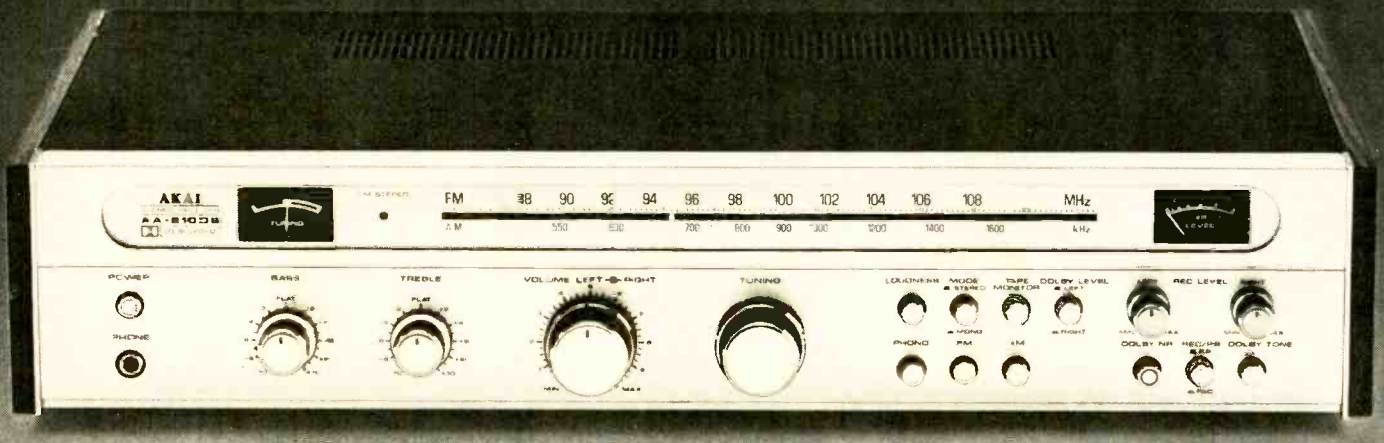

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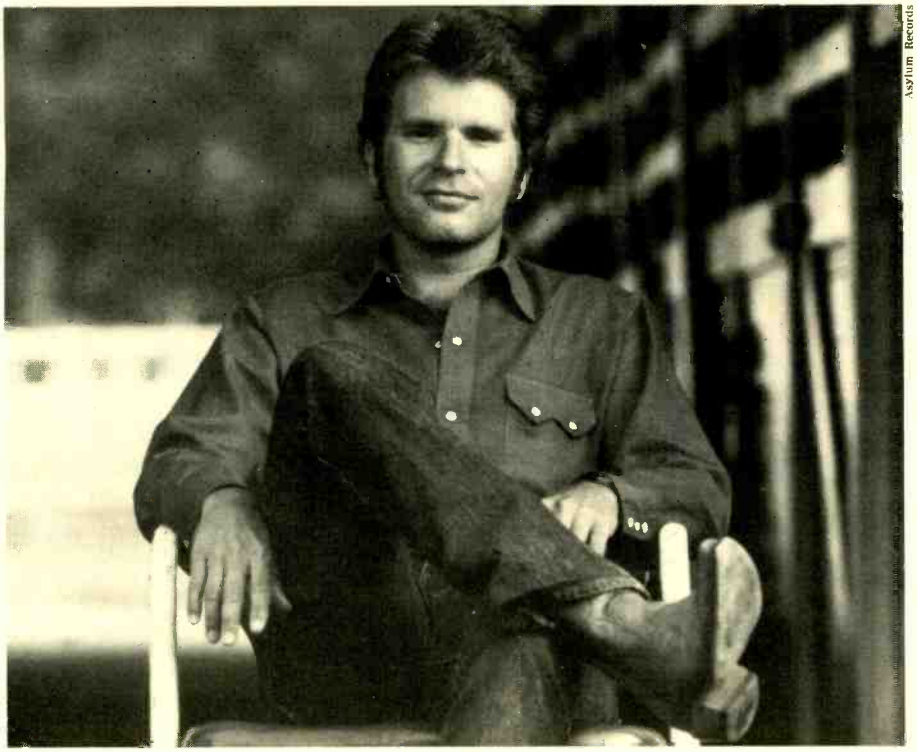

The Return of John Fogerty

JOHN FOGERTY is rock-and-roll's most prominent Invisible Man. For several years he led Creedence Clearwater Revival, which had an unbroken string of superb hit singles (many of them double-sided!), made some of the most vivid albums in American music, and was, at the time the group broke up (in the early Seventies), the biggest concert attraction in America. Nonetheless, hardly anybody knew who Fogerty was—this despite the fact that he wrote all the band's material, produced and arranged their records, and did all the lead guitar, keyboards, saxes, harmonicas, lead vocals, and (in most cases) the background vocals as well. Rumor had it he even swept out the studio at night.

But Creedence broke up at the height of their popularity, partly because the other three members of the band began to resent the fact that they were, basically, dispensable, mostly because none of them could reconcile their enormous success (they were beloved of critics and audience alike) with the fact that nobody seemed to take them as seriously as that level of success would seem to demand. Why, they wondered, didn't people treat them like the Beatles, or Bob Dylan? Why didn't people pore over their lyrics, and, more important, why didn't people *know their names*?

After the breakup, Fogerty's reaction was a retreat to *total* anonymity—an album entitled "The Blue Ridge Rangers," in which he attempted to pass himself off as the producer of a mythical band of the same name doing country and rockabilly standards. Following the surprise success of a couple of the tracks on AM radio (was *Jambalaya* really a hit at the same time David Bowie and the other Glam-Rockers were supposedly warping our children forever?), the secret leaked out; yes, it really was John Fogerty playing all those instruments, and a few people began to realize just what a talent he was. Then came another Rangers hit (this time with new Fogerty originals), and then, his courage apparently restored, he released *Coming Down the Road* under his own name. It bombed. Fogerty, blaming the record's failure on Fantasy, the label he and Creedence had singlehandedly turned into big business, packed up his bags and disappeared in a huff.

Until now, that is. Safely ensconced at Asylum Records, he has delivered his first official solo album to us, and, since it contains the same mix of oldies and originals as all his previous group productions, it can legitimately be looked upon as the first Creedence LP since early 1972. That should be about reason enough for dancing in the streets, and when he screams a Hello! to all of us at the beginning of the new album's first track, and when those familiar guitars ring out reassuringly, I for one am tempted to do just that. Unfortunately—and I've played the album over and over again in an attempt to figure out just where it goes wrong—it simply isn't the masterpiece I anticipated. In fact, I haven't had such ambivalent feelings about a record since "Goat's Head Soup."

There are several ways of looking at it. Could the album's dispirited lifelessness be the result of Fogerty's lack of interaction with the other musicians, of biting off more than he can chew? No, Creedence was always a one-man show, and frankly John plays bass and drums just as well as his departed colleagues Stu Cook and Doug Clifford did. Maybe better.

Is it—aha!—the Time Warp Factor? Given all that's gone on musically since Creedence bit the dust, is it simply that this stuff is out of date, old-fashioned? No again; I pulled out my favorite Creedence records for comparison, and they sound as vital as ever, and there's next to no *stylistic* difference between them and the 1975 model.

Is it that John has run out of ideas? Has he lost his songwriting chops? Well, maybe. With one or two exceptions, though most of these are very *good* songs, they don't exactly strike me as inspired. The opener, *Rockin' All Over the World*, is a perfect example. It's a catchy marriage of his own *Coming Down the Road* with the Stones' *It's Only Rock 'n' Roll*, and given the gunk cluttering up the airwaves lately it would be wonderful if it were a hit, but somehow it simply doesn't have that spark, that indefinable something that great rock has to have. The oldies don't work particularly well either, with the exception of a good-humored Fats Domino-ish *You Rascal You*. Though I'm sure John's always wanted to sing *Lonely Teardrops*, he can't, great a singer as he is, approach the Jackie Wilson original; and *Sea Cruise*, which should have been fun, is so faithful to *its* original as to be pedantic.

THERE are moments, of course. *Almost Saturday Night* and *Where the River Flows* are lovely, mournful, country-flavored things with real feeling, and *The Wall* is a nice Chicago blues workout in which John pays his respects to his most profound musical influence, Howling Wolf. And finally there is *Dream/Song*, the one unqualified triumph. It's the reason I keep returning to the album, hoping to find some avenue of approach I've missed. It's indescribably lovely, with a loping gospel feel, superb harmony singing, and, on one verse (as John re-creates New Orleans for you, complete with a Dixieland band appearing out of nowhere), it approaches the sublime—a kind of hymn, and a love song as well.

And that's it. Maybe I'll feel differently in a few weeks, but for the moment, what we've got here, I think, is a flawed record from a great talent. The flaws wouldn't have been so apparent if the wait hadn't been so long, but welcome back anyway, John . . . a lot of us have missed you. Let's have a sequel in short order. Creedence never waited a year between albums, and now that you're finally on your own, neither should you.—*Steve Simels*

JOHN FOGERTY. John Fogerty (vocals and instrumentals). *Rockin' All Over the World; You Rascal You; The Wall; Travelin' High; Lonely Teardrops; Almost Saturday Night; Where the River Flows; Sea Cruise; Dream/Song; Flyin' Away.* ASYLUM 7E-1046 $6.98, ® ET 81046 $7.98, © TC 51046 $7.98.

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The question is whether or not the joke is worth $6.98. *J.V.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

WAR: ***Why Can't We Be Friends?*** War (vocals and instrumentals). *Don't Let No One Get You Down; Lotus Blossom; Heartbeat; Leroy's Latin Lament (Medley); Smile Happy;* and four others. UNITED ARTISTS UA-LA441-G $6.98, ⑧ UA-EA441-H $7.98, © UA-CA441-H $7.98.

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

War is a remarkable band, and it's good to hear them *sounding* remarkable again. They are generally more successful on the instrumental parts of their efforts than on the vocals except when the vocals are casual, as in the title tune here. The high point of the album is a treasurable seven minutes and twenty-two seconds of *Smile Happy*, in which the richness and variety of the arrangement match the eloquent performances. There's a lot of juicy, tasty music here. *J.V.*

United Artists Records

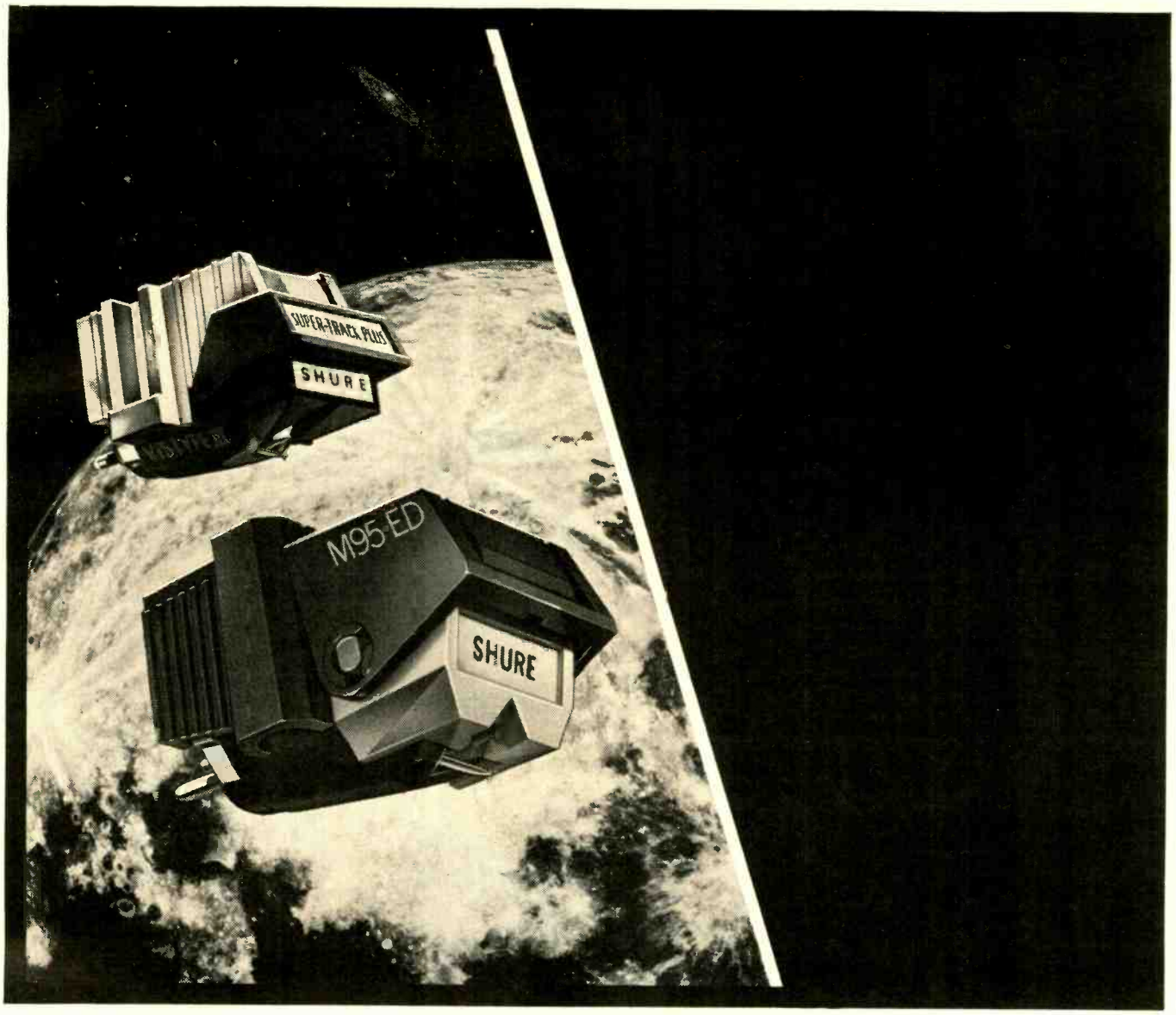
WAR: *eloquent performances from a remarkable group*

RON WOOD: ***Now Look.*** Ron Wood (vocals, guitar); instrumental accompaniment. *I Got Lost When I Found You; Big Bayou; Breathe On Me; If You Don't Want My Love; I Can Say She's Allright; Caribbean Boogie;* and five others. WARNER BROS. BS 2872 $6.98, ⑧ M8 2872 $7.98, © M5 2872 $7.98.

Performance: **Average**
Recording: **Average**

Ron Wood's solo album, like his playing with the Rolling Stones, seems mostly something to promote in connection with the Stones' tour—his playing with them may have significance of some kind when the history of the band is told and studied, but I doubt that any significant musical history, or any other kind, was being made with this album. Wood's vocals, mixed down below the electric guitars, seem better than he and his co-writer and co-producer Bobby Womack realized—sounding a little like one of Dylan's gravelly voices—and the songs aren't particularly bad if you don't mind dead serious, straight-ahead rock and nothing else. But "Now Look" is just another album, an average job on the same old material we've been hearing for ten years or longer. Wood's guitar is a little harsh for my taste, too, always has been, but he can move his hands around; it's just that the format has worn a little thin, and Wood is no Eric Clapton at the job of hiding the threadbare spots. There is a lot of mindless boogieing which I find as exciting as a vanilla milk shake. *N.C.*

(Continued on page 112)



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JAZZ

BILLY COBHAM: ***Shabazz.*** Billy Cobham (percussion); Randy Brecker (trumpet); Glenn Ferris (trombone); Michael Brecker (saxophone); Milcho Leviev (keyboards); John Abercrombie (guitar); Alex Blake (bass). *Taurian Matador (Revised); Red Baron (Revised); Tenth Pinn; Shabazz.* ATLANTIC SD 18139 $6.98, ⑧ TP 18139 $7.97, © CS 18139 $7.97.

Performance: **Dynamic**
Recording: **Very good remote**

This is drummer Billy Cobham's fourth album under his own name, and the first one to be recorded in public performance. The players are those who formed the basic personnel on Cobham's last album, "Total Eclipse," and two of the four selections are new and different versions of *Taurian Matador* and *Red Baron*, Cobham originals that first appeared on "Spectrum," his initial album. "Shabazz," recorded in July of last year at the Montreux Music Festival and London's Rainbow Theatre, demonstrates that this remarkable drummer does not have to rely on overdubbing or other studio gimmickry to get his message across. If you like Cobham's previous offerings, this one will not disappoint you. *C.A.*

JESS STACY: ***Stacy Still Swings.*** Jess Stacy (piano). *Lover Man; Doll Face; Lookout Mountain Squirrel; I Would Do Anything for You; How Long Has This Been Going On;* and three others. CHIAROSCURO CR 133 $6.98 (from Chiaroscuro Records, 173 Christopher St., New York, N.Y. 10014).

Performance: **Lithe and lovely**
Recording: **Good**

Pianist Jess Stacy was a veteran of seventeen years of professional playing in 1938 when he recorded his most memorable performance, the classic solo on *Sing, Sing, Sing* at Benny Goodman's historic Carnegie Hall concert. Originally from Missouri, Stacy became identified with the Chicago school of jazz before entering the swing era as a formidable band pianist; he eventually made California his home and all but disappeared from the scene until last year when he participated in the Newport Jazz Festival in New York. It was then, at the age of seventy, that he made this album, which marks a return to the recording studio after a fifteen-year absence.

Stacy's style is virtually intact, he is agile, and his technique seems unimpaired by the intervening years. This is a pleasant, relaxed set devoted evenly to standards and originals. Stacy suffers only from poor pressings, which seem to be the nemesis of small labels such as Chiaroscuro. Don't let those intermittent extraneous noises discourage you, though. They're annoying, but if you like good jazz piano, you won't let them deter you from adding this album to your collection. *C.A.*

BUDDY TATE: ***Swinging Like Tate.*** Buddy Tate (clarinet, tenor saxophone); Buck Clayton (trumpet); Dicky Wells, Eli Robinson (trombone); Earl Warren (alto and baritone saxophones); Everett Barksdale (guitar); Aaron Bell, Joe Benjamin (bass); Herbie Lovelle, Jo Jones (drums). *Bottle It; Walk That Walk; Miss Sadie Brown;* and three others. MASTER JAZZ MJR 8127 $6.98 (from Master Jazz Records, Box 579, Lenox Hill Station, New York, N.Y. 10021).

Performance: **Great Tate**
Recording: **Dated stereo**

Reed man Buddy Tate's style is steeped in the best swing tradition, and his background includes stints in the bands of Andy Kirk, Count Basie, Lucky Millinder, and Hot Lips Page. In more recent years, his own band has moved feet and stirred emotions at Harlem's Celebrity Club, and Tate himself has played numerous record dates, including the recent (and rather over-publicized) Helen Humes album.

This is another reissue from the generally excellent series of mainstream jazz produced for the Felsted label by Stanley Dance in the late Fifties. It consists of two 1958 sessions, one side with Tate's Celebrity Club band (except for pianist Skip Hall and drummer Herbie Lovelle, who replace regulars Sadik Hakim and Fats Donaldson), the other with a group that includes Tate's fellow Basie alumni Buck Clayton, Dicky Wells, Earle Warren, and Jo Jones. Skip Hall's piano gives both

(Continued on page 114)

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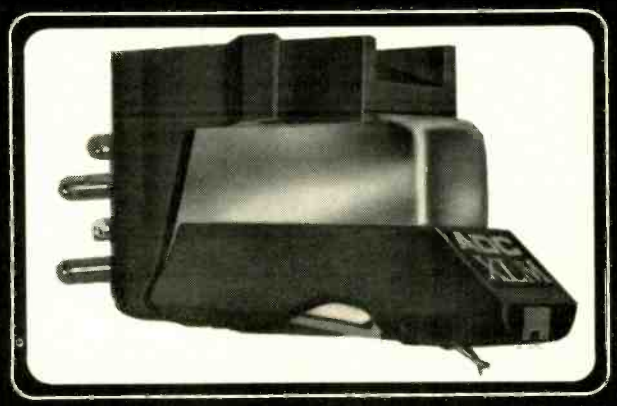

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Hi-Fi News and Record Review

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CIRCLE NO. 8 ON READER SERVICE CARD

sides a Basie flavor, and there's some good swinging throughout. In the 1975 addenda to his notes, Mr. Dance regrets not having devoted the entire album to the Celebrity Club band and bemoans his decision to replace drummer Fats Donaldson (Hall had held the piano chair before Hakim); that would, of course, have made this a more interesting album from a historical standpoint, but no apologies are needed for what we have here. *C.A.*

CEDAR WALTON: *Mobius.* Cedar Walton (keyboards and synthesizer); other musicians. *Blue Trane; Soho; Off Minor; The Maestro; Road Island Red.* RCA APL1-1009 $6.98.

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

Jazz has had to make certain concessions to rock over the last decade in order to find a new, larger audience. The concessions usually involve a rhythm section, or at least a guitarist, that plays rock. Such temporizing has often led to complete surrender, where the rhythm section overpowers the soloist and the main effort of the recordings is to sneak some jazz in without calling it such—don't want to alienate the kids, y'know. Then there is the quasi-jazz soloist, such as Herbie Mann, who uses various back-up musicians in the pop, rock, and jazz styles to come up with a music that is as lumpy and unappetizing as cooled porridge.

Still, jazz used to be (and this is almost always forgotten) a *popular* music. It was not only the Ethos of a People and all that; it was lively, funny, good to dance to, and exciting to hear. Only recently have jazz musicians—so hesitant to sell out to rock-and-roll and then so caught up in the selling—found that there is a way to keep their consciences clear and still be "contemporary" in the popular sense.

RCA Records

CEDAR WALTON
A delightful attempt to repopularize jazz

That way is exemplified here: take a bona fide jazzman such as Cedar Walton and back him with experienced musicians who can, no doubt, play any style, but who know their jazz and can combine it with the higher achievements of rhythm-&-blues (as distinct from rock). Nobody is compromised that much, and there is room to get some good work done. In "Mobius," the horns and reeds blow lustily, lazily, and confidently in Thelonious Monk's *Off Minor* and John Coltrane's *Blue Trane* while Walton plugs up the holes neatly and cheerfully. Of the five numbers in the album, three are Walton's. *Road Island Red* and *Soho* sound very much the same, but *The Maestro* is a bouncing, charming tribute to Duke Ellington with a delightful vocal.

Jazzmen get fewer recording dates than popsters or rockers do, and so they are more likely to insist on doing their own material. But, as in rock, the best performances seem to come from musicians applying themselves to the tunes of others: the ego is less likely to get in the way, and more music is likely to be made. I would like to hear a Walton album made up of material he admires by other jazzmen. From what he does here with Coltrane's and Monk's compositions, I think such an album is worth waiting for. *J.V.*

COLLECTIONS

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

THE GREATEST JAZZ CONCERT IN THE WORLD. The Oscar Peterson Trio: *Smedley; Some Day My Prince Will Come; Daytrain.* Coleman Hawkins with the Oscar Peterson Trio: *Moonglow; Sweet Georgia Brown.* Zoot Sims, Paul Gonsalves, Clark Terry, Benny Carter, the Oscar Peterson Trio (jam session): *Now's the Time; Wee; The Ballad Medley; Memories of You; Misty; I Can't Get Started.* Coleman Hawkins, Johnny Hodges, Benny Carter, Oscar Peterson, Sam Jones, Louis Hayes (jam session): *C-Jam Blues.* T-Bone

(Continued on page 116)

THE END OF THE DOUBLE STANDARD.

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CIRCLE NO. 71 ON READER SERVICE CARD

Walker, Clark Terry, Johnny Hodges, Paul Gonsalves, the Oscar Peterson Trio: *Woman You Must Be Crazy; Stormy Monday.* Duke Ellington and His Orchestra (with guest soloists): *Swamp Goo; Hurdle Gurdle; Night Flock; Rue Bleu; Salome; Chromatic Love Affair; Maharissa; Blood Count; Rockin' in Rhythm; Very Tenor; Onions; Take the "A" Train; Satin Doll; Tutti for Cootie; Up Jump; Prelude to a Kiss; Medley—Mood Indigo/I Got It Bad and That Ain't Good; Things Ain't What They Used to Be.* Ella Fitzgerald, Duke Ellington and His Orchestra, the Jimmy Jones Trio: *Don't Be That Way; You've Changed; Let's Do It; On the Sunny Side of the Street; Cotton Tail.* Ella Fitzgerald, the Jimmy Jones Trio: *It's Only a Paper Moon; Day-Dream; If I Could Be with You; Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea.* PABLO 2625 704 four discs $24.98.

Performance: **Uniformly excellent**
Recording: **Very good remotes**

This album is not dated, nor does the liner so much as hint at a location for this "concert"; annotator Benny Green carefully avoids giving any clues; and, indeed, "the greatest jazz concert in the world" never took place as such. It is a Norman Granz fantasy: more than three hours of splendid performances by a dazzling array of talent, assembled from various sources and skillfully edited into a believable whole. Actually, the Duke Ellington portions were recorded during 1967 in New York City and at the Hollywood Bowl, and it is possible that the entire set is culled from the same two sources. So much for the where and when. The Ellington band is in good form, with Johnny Hodges still on hand, and, of course, the addition of such guest soloists as Benny Carter, Oscar Peterson, and Zoot Sims makes some of the Ellington selections particularly interesting.

Ella Fitzgerald, who is on nine selections with either the Jimmy Jones Trio, the Ellington orchestra, or both, is in better form than in her more recent recordings. The Oscar Peterson Trio performs with characteristic excellence, and Peterson's accompaniment for blues singer T-Bone Walker makes up for that veteran's somewhat failing voice; Walker's guitar playing shows no signs of age, however. There are good moments in both jam-session segments, one of the highlights being Benny Carter's alto sax on *I Can't Get Started.* Coleman Hawkins, captured here before his sad deterioration, gives a truly fine performance with the Peterson trio on *Sweet Georgia Brown,* though he is somewhat disappointing with his slightly disjointed solo on the jam-session warhorse *C-Jam Blues.* But that is one of the very few weak spots in this collection of a truly great concert that never was. *C.A.*

JAZZ FROM OHIO, VOLUME 3: *Ohio Theater Concert.* Waldo's Gutbucket Syncopators: Edith Wilson, Terry Waldo, and Attorney General William Saxbe (vocals). *Some of These Days; How Could Red Riding Hood?; Am I Blue?; The Entertainer; I Would Do Anything for You;* and six others. BLACKBIRD C6002 $5.98 (plus 50¢ postage and handling from Lakco Record Co., 3902 N. Ashland Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60613).

Performance: **Hot time in the old town**
Recording: **Very good**

Could any good come from a concert given by a group with a name like Waldo's Gutbucket Syncopators? You'd better believe it! Terry Waldo and his group were scheduled for a concert at the Ohio Theater in Columbus on April 13, 1974, with ninety-one-year-old ragtime composer and pianist Eubie Blake. Blake couldn't make it (he was sick), but Attorney General William Saxbe could, and what we have here is one terrific record put together from the tapes of that concert. The Gutbucket Syncopators turn out to be one of the liveliest Dixieland jazz groups you ever heard. Their vocalist, Edith Wilson, has been setting the rafters ringing since she started making phonograph records—which was a couple of years before Bessie Smith—and she can still match styles with any blues singer in the business. Mr. Waldo, whether he's playing master of ceremonies or disinterring some old number like *How Could Red Riding Hood* (once banned from the air because the lyrics were considered suggestive), is no slouch either. The program itself turns many an unexpected corner—from chestnuts like Sophie Tucker's hallmark *Some of These Days* in a carefree Dixieland treatment to a faithful transcription of Ellington's *The Mooche* to Joplin's *The Entertainer,* which still somehow manages to sound fresh. And Mr. Saxbe? Well, the former attorney general is on hand to greet the crowd and belt out an item called *Ace in the Hole.* He's a little flat here and there but right in the spirit of the occasion, and he deserves all the cheers and applause he gets—as does everyone else involved. *P.K.*

(Continued on page 120)

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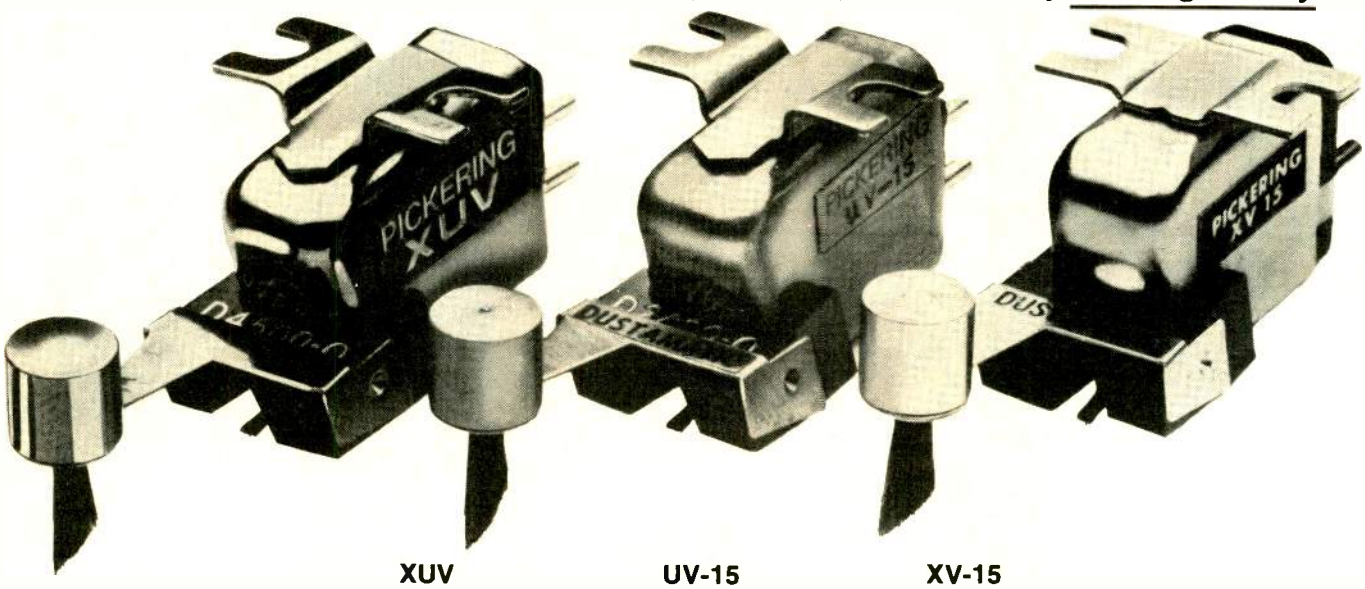

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CIRCLE NO. 41 ON READER SERVICE CARD

Can puttering help you age more gracefully than marking time does?

Columbia Records

Stephen Stills And Neil Young: Separated Again

Warner Bros. Records

OLD friends, close friends, and, according to the ink spilled on the subject, also old rivals: Stephen Stills and Neil Young. Theirs was supposedly the ego clash that helped, as much as any single thing helped, determine what the Buffalo Springfield sounded like. The reports seemed to favor Young; it was always Stills—obviously the better musician—who seemed to be trying to catch up, or who seemed to want what Young had, or something. At first, Stills couldn't play the guitar very well and had to bide his time and thump along quietly while Young was out there swaying about in his fringed jacket and gathering in the glory. Boy, did that burn Steve (according to the reports), and he did do something about it; he quickly became a better guitarist than Young, not just faster but stylistically closer to purity. But then it *still* seemed to be Young who attracted all the attention. He could be in or out of a group and it didn't seem to matter: a definite personality came through—he had his own solo act going all the time and he had style. Stills opted to stay in a group, and probably deserves most of the credit for how Crosby, Stills, and Nash turned out. The difference between how they worked and how the Buffalo Springfield or any of Young's solo-with-back-up acts has worked can be heard again in their latest albums, Young's "Tonight's the Night" for Reprise and "Stills" on Columbia.

It seems easier now, though, to hear the difference in their methods, maybe even the difference in their personalities, than it used to seem. Stills works things out and figures and adjusts and corrects and plans and schemes, and Young simply cuts and tries. It says in the limited but useful jacket information that comes with "Stills" (almost no useful information comes with the Young album) that it took twenty hours to get the vocal-harmony dubs right in *Love Story*, a song Stills kept around for four years before trying to record. Between the lines there it tells you why CS&N couldn't do on stage the things they had done in the studio, and why they loosened up for better (the stage act was livelier) or worse (the studio discipline eroded) when Young joined them. Young's work says, a little more strongly this time than it usually does, that it is more the result of being than of doing, that its perpetrator is instinctive, reflexive, and not much of a showman of any sort. Some have remarked that he seems to ignore the audience when he's in the middle of certain songs. I doubt that, but he does seem to be one of those who doesn't have to alter his offstage behavior in order to make it suitable on-stage behavior. Stills' work, even if you didn't know about the twenty hours, strongly suggests it came from a mind that is analytical, meticulous, and, if need be, methodical. His songs turn into productions, and productions, of course, have to be staged.

Young dedicates his album to Danny Whitten and Bruce Berry, former associates who, he says, "lived and died for rock-and-roll," and he has put it in a black jacket and given it a black label and even included a version of *Come On Baby Let's Go Downtown* as he and Whitten sang it back at the old Fillmore East when Young was backed by Crazy Horse. But it is not a particularly mournful album compared to Young's other albums—they are all mournful to some degree. The main thing about it is how spontaneous it sounds. Aesthetically, this is not all to the good, for it keeps lapsing beyond Spontaneous into the area of Unrehearsed. The main thing about "Stills" is just the opposite—what a workmanlike finish it has!

Young has written more good songs than Stills has through the years, though these albums suggest he's not doing it now. There are a lot of contrivances in Stills' songs, even in a watershed piece like *Suite: Judy Blue Eyes*, possibly because Stills' tendency to try harder causes some overshoot in the songwriting end of it. Or perhaps Young has profited from a viewpoint that lets him quickly catch the silhouette of the thing Stills is up close to and studying the details of: Young, when he's up to it, can knock out a melodic line that *takes* you somewhere, while Stills' melodies seem to spring, though not very far, from a chord-change pattern that has him temporarily engrossed. Young's lyrics have the same kind of direct, unguarded, free spirit about them; Stills' lyrics, quality aside, are more nearly literary and rational. What their work suggests is that temperamentally Young is just that, compared to Stills: young. This may help explain why Stills, when he used to try the traditional rock-and-roll-brat antics on-stage, looked silly . . . maybe he was already old enough in his mind to regard it as silly.

Youth, of course, has had a lot of muscle in the marketplace and elsewhere in the culture (if there *is* any elsewhere in the culture) for a while, but Time always beats it. Today we have Young still making rock-and-roll for the kiddies and Stills at least able to roam a bit in the little pasture he has staked out for himself, still able to turn over a detail or two.

Stills' province is not far from where Crosby, Stills, and Nash ended, as fussy about the accented trills and so forth as the group was, but operating in a little more space and with an occasional female sound to some of the dubbed voices. The ambiance Stills created with *Change Partners* is still pretty much in-

tact in his work, but "Stills" stretches out in it a little, in spite of *Love Story*, which is structurally a contrivance that would look very ugly if you represented it with an Erector set. Stills is using his and other people's voices in inventive ways, shuffling those old overlays and overlaps in and out, and the hours it took don't really show all that much—an accomplishment in itself. He and his gang also use stereo separation well, while Young, like most rockers, seems to pay it little heed. Stills' songs remain weaker than his performances, and Stills' melodies still tend to be weaker than the chord changes he had such hopes for, but he is using the language with greater authority and he is not down-and-out tuneless the way he used to be sometimes. Young's new album is not bad, but it's too primitive-sounding for Young to want to be at this late date, and it is the second or third in a row that seems to catch him feeling not particularly passionate about something. But you expect him to be interesting, and he's still that, and you listen for the kind of lines you catch in *Roll Another Number*: "I'm not going back to Woodstock for a while/Though I long to hear that lonesome hippie's smile. . . ." Considering the charm of his better songs, though, he hasn't really turned it on for you here. When he isn't up to knocking out a melodic line that can soar, Young tends to settle for any damned thing—but he's candid enough that he'll *tell* you he has, as happens in *Borrowed Tune*.

COMPARING the albums and personalities naturally reinforces the idea that the old rivalry is still going on, but my guess is that both men outgrew it some time ago. Stills here does a respectful job of recording a new Young tune, *New Mama*, which is the kind Young always does better than Stills, and does again in *his* new album, but there's more friendship than rivalry in all that. Young seems to be between silhouettes, marking time and waiting for the next big peek, while Stills continues to putter with the details he gleaned from the last one. Each approach has its advantages, but when the interim between silhouettes is dragging on the way it is these days, puttering seems to help you age more gracefully than marking time does.—*Noel Coppage*

STEPHEN STILLS: ***Stills.*** Stephen Stills (vocals, guitar, bass, keyboards); Donnie Dacus (guitar, vocals); Leland Sklar (bass); Russ Kunkle (drums); other musicians. *Turn Back the Pages; My Favorite Changes; My Angel; In the Way; Love Story; To Mama from Christopher and the Old Man; First Things First; New Mama; As I Come of Age; Shuffle Just as Bad; Cold, Cold World; Myth of Sisyphus.* COLUMBIA PC 33575 $6.98, ⑧ PCA 33575 $7.98, © PCT 33575 $7.98.

NEIL YOUNG: ***Tonight's the Night.*** Neil Young (vocals, guitar, piano, harp); Nils Lofgren (guitar, keyboards); Ben Keith (steel guitar); Billy Talbot (bass); Ralph Molina (drums); other musicians. *Tonight's the Night; Speakin' Out; World on a String; Borrowed Tune; Come On Baby Let's Go Downtown; Mellow My Mind; Roll Another Number; Albuquerque; New Mama; Lookout Joe; Tired Eyes.* REPRISE MS 2221 $6.98, ⑧ M8 2221 $7.97, © M5 2221 $7.97.

FOLK

HUNGARIAN SONGS. László Szalay (baritone); the Imre Magyari Jr., Lajos Boros, and Gyula Kóczé Gypsy Bands. *My Mother Is Angry; The Bird Called Three Times; My Love Wears Yellow Boots; I've Never Stolen in Life*; and twenty others. QUALITON LPX 10132 $6.98.

Performance: **Lively and authentic**
Recording: **Very good**

Ostensibly to please the tourist trade, gypsy bands are a must in the better cafés and restaurants of Budapest. Many tourists indeed love them, and so do even occasionally returning ex-Hungarians, but I doubt that the omnipresence of gypsy music is really *insisted upon*. I found an elegant café on a recent visit, and I was assured that no gypsy music would intrude on my privacy. Indeed, there were no gypsies; their place was taken by a rock combo which left me yearning for the dulcet sounds of fiddles and cimbalom.

In any case, since gypsy music is inevitable, the next time you visit my native city I hope you will be serenaded by one of the three bands featured on this record. They play some fine old songs and some new ones modeled on the traditional styles. There is good variety, and the performers take a heartwarmingly straightforward approach to the music: plenty of spirit without excessive frills. László Szalay, evidently an old hand in this repertoire, is also refreshingly unmannered and equally effective, whether in the fiery *csárdás* or the melancholy "listening songs."

George Jellinek

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

SALLI TERRI: ***Songs of the American Land.*** Salli Terri (vocals); Jack Halloran Quartet; instrumental accompaniment. *Bound for the Promised Land; On Springfield Mountain; My Old Kentucky Home; Sacramento; Erie Canal; Medley—Sourwood Mountain/Goin' to Back to Georgia; The Long Prairie*; and seven others. ANGEL S-36085 $6.98.

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

Salli Terri may not have the biggest or the most beautiful voice in the world, but it's an ardent one of exceptional clarity, and she makes the most of it. For what she *does* have is a feeling for style and a sense of programming that have made each of her recordings a delight. Her three albums of "Duets with the Spanish Guitar" with Laurindo Almeida wear exceptionally well, and recently she turned her attention to another idiom when she teamed up with the Roger Wagner Chorale for a lively program of Stephen Foster songs. Now, in "Songs of the American Land," she proves that American folk music, even though brutally subjected of late to bicentennial overexposure, need not be the dull, dimity stuff of those "authentic" folk records that tend to go on forever unrolling the same thin goods from start to finish. With the adroit Jack Halloran Quartet at her side, and surrounded by instrumentalists playing such apt items as the fiddle, guitar, banjo, harmonica, and accordion, she makes even *Dixie* sound like real music and transforms *America* into something much more than a school-auditorium exercise.

Miss Terri has chosen her material well and triumphs over any threat of drabness through taste and versatility. Moods and tempos shift intriguingly as the spiritual *Bound for the Promised Land* yields to the poignant strains of *Shenandoah* or the cowboy tones of *Colorado Trail* are replaced by the high-spirited "Low bridge—everybody down!" of *Erie Canal*. Even home on that tired old range turns out to be a less stifling place than it usually is, *Red River Valley* becomes a haunting tune instead of a grating accompaniment for a clumsy square dance, and the penultimate *Geography Lesson*, linking American towns to the rivers they're on, is absolutely painless pedagogy. Terri's way with an American song may seem a bit refined for the material as we're used to it, but the results are as fresh as a prairie breeze. The instrumental arrangements by Lyn Murray and Robert Thompson are particularly buoyant and agreeable. *P.K.*

VOODOO CEREMONY IN HAITI. *Voodoo Drums; Nibo Rhythms; Prayer to Shango; Petro Rhythms; Nago Rhythms; Invocation to Papa Legba; Dahomey Rhythms; Maize*

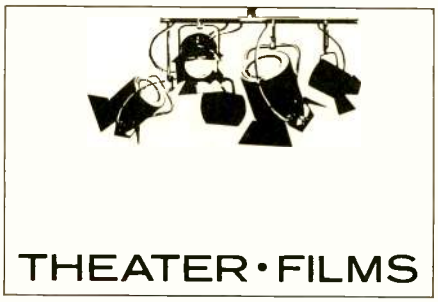
(Continued on page 122)

Rhythm; Diouba Rhythm. OLYMPIC 6113 $6.95.

Performance: **The real thing**
Recording: **Fair**

There are certain days in Haiti when the drums begin to pound in the mountains that look down on Port-au-Prince and you know it's time for a voodoo ceremony. Tonight the peasants in the hills will sing and dance to the throbbing rhythms of the drums until a god enters an initiate and he or she *becomes* the god. Here is a hut hung with red and gold flags where two gods fight to possess the same body. Elsewhere young women clad in white pound the mud with their feet, while a *hougan*—a priest—holds out a gourd filled with stones and seeds and the bones of snakes. The initiates pray to the god of fire, the god of virility, the goddess of love. The dancing grows more fevered as the dancers are possessed.

There are varying traditional rhythms and ceremonies in these rites that hark back to Africa, and with the permission of the local priests, Maurice Bitter has been able to record the actual sound of them on location in Haiti and on the island of La Tortue. Here are the moans and the throbbing of the drums, the songs of prayer to the gods, the cries of initiates in moments of possession. Compared to the descriptions of its ceremonies, the sound alone of voodoo is a bit of a letdown; they do these things more effectively when they hype them up for the movies. But this is the real thing, and after a while the trance-like rhythms, the poundings, the shouts, and the chants are indeed infectious, and the power of this sound and music becomes unmistakably evident. *P.K.*



THEATER • FILMS

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

BEN BAGLEY'S BALLET ON BROADWAY. Alice Ghostley, June Carroll (vocals); orchestra, Lehman Engel cond. *High Button Shoes: The Bathing Beauty Ballet. Jamaica: Beach Ballet. Look Ma, I'm Dancin': Mlle. Scandale Ballet. Shangri-La: Father Perrault Ballet. Can-Can: Garden of Eden Ballet. The Girl in Pink Tights: Pas de Deux. L'il Abner: Sadie Hawkins Ballet. Leonard Sillman's New Faces of 1952: Time for Tea.* PAINTED SMILES PS-1364 $6.98 (from Painted Smiles Records, 1860 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023).

Performance: **On its toes**
Recording: **Excellent**

Some years ago the people who think up ideas for albums at RCA got the laudable notion of putting together a record made up of the big ballet numbers from Broadway musicals. Musical comedy's best Broadway conductor, Lehman Engel, was summoned for the job, a nameless orchestra assembled, and the whole

The Basic Orchestral Repertoire

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thing put on tape—where it languished in the vaults until Ben Bagley negotiated for the album he has just released on his own Painted Smiles label. One can immediately think of material conspicuously absent—the great ballets from Bernstein's *On the Town* and *West Side Story*, for instance, and *Slaughter on Tenth Avenue* from *On Your Toes*—but those have been available for some time on records; the material here has *not* been available up to now even on the original Broadway-cast recordings.

Not every band that is here is a winner. But the experience as a whole is exhilarating and brings back many a pleasant memory of dazzling production numbers and delightful dance interludes. Some of the music is played just as it was in the theater; a few pieces have been spruced up for the occasion by arranger Sid Ramin. For openers, there's the *Bathing Beauty Ballet* from *High Button Shoes*, a chase scene in which every tourist on the beach in Atlantic City sets out in dizzy pursuit of two crooks carrying a suitcase full of the green stuff. Here is the real sound of old Broadway at its musical-show-biz best! The *Sadie Hawkins Ballet* from *L'il Abner*, in which every girl pursues a man in the annual race in Dogpatch and is entitled to marry her captive, is big, bang-up, and brassy in the best tradition. In fact, the only downright dreary stretch is a pompous reconstruction of the narration that opened *Shangri-La*, a ghastly stage version of *Lost Horizon*, in which the story of the Dalai Lama of Tibet is introduced to music more suitable for a Charlie Chan movie.

As a bonus, the record offers a touching ballad about two spinster sisters remembering their "debut in 1902" from Leonard Sillman's *New Faces of 1952*, which Mr. Bagley has also been able to rescue from the RCA morgue. The singers are June Carroll and Alice Ghostley, and they're wonderful. *P.K.*

MONTY PYTHON'S FLYING CIRCUS **(see Best of the Month, page 89)**

RANCHO DELUXE (Jimmy Buffett). Original-soundtrack recording. Jimmy Buffett (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. UNITED ARTISTS UA-LA466-G $6.98, ⑧ UA-EA 466-H $7.98.

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

I thought *Rancho Deluxe* was a pretty good *little* movie; it did have an idea in it, but Frank Perry's direction was so loose and slaphappy that what survived was a fun flick with a lot of fine Montana scenery and Elizabeth Ashley in it. Jimmy Buffett's music had a specialized role of its own; it was supposed to be the kind of twangy stuff ranch hands were exposed to in saloons on Friday nights, and it was supposed to bear, where possible, on the theme. It was *not* supposed to represent Buffett's idea of the music that ought to go into an album. So it is a fairly successful soundtrack effort but not. Buffett's abilities and range considered, very successful as an album. There isn't enough variety in it when you remove it from the film, nor enough style when you know Buffett is the one who gets country harmonica, country steel, and Caribbean vibes to sound good in the same song. I'd sooner spend my album money on a real Buffett recording and shop around for a theater where *Rancho Deluxe* can be seen, and this stuff heard, for two dollars or so. *N.C.*

CHOOSING SIDES

By IRVING KOLODIN

EVERYBODY'S "PICTURES"

WHAT in the world, other than the common calling of musician, could affiliate Sir Henry Wood, Leopold Stokowski, Michael Tuschmalow, Leonidas Leonardi, and Maurice Ravel with Isao Tomita? The first two achieved great fame as conductors; the third and fourth were also conductors, though of modest fame; the fifth was a master composer; the sixth a contemporary Japanese just beginning to become known. The answer is that all, over a period now only fifteen years short of a century, have played a part in the orchestral stretching and reframing, the varnishing, hanging, and rehanging of the *Pictures at an Exhibition* Modest Moussorgsky originally wrote for the piano.

The latest of the orchestrations in the sequence above to make its appearance on disc in America is, paradoxically, the earliest of them. This is the effort of Tuschmalow, a Rimsky-Korsakov pupil, to liberate through the medium of the orchestra the prismatic values of Moussorgsky that could not be realized on the piano. The Tuschmalow score has been known to exist for decades—Philip Hale, prince of annotators, mentions it in a program note he wrote for the first performance in America of the Ravel transcription of the *Pictures* in 1924—but it has remained for the enterprising BASF label to produce at long last a recording (BC 22128) by the Munich Philharmonic under the direction of Marc Andrae.

Tuschmalow was only thirty-six when he died in 1896 after a conducting career that had included appearances in Warsaw and Tiflis. Five years earlier he not only accomplished the orchestration of seven of the ten *Pictures* (omitting *Gnomus*, *Tuilleries*, *Bydlo*, and all of the *Promenades* after the first), but heard it in a performance in St. Petersburg conducted by his eminent instructor. The index of Rimsky-Korsakov's *My Musical Life* is bereft of references either to Tuschmalow's or to Moussorgsky's *Pictures*, but the record credits read "M. Tuschmalow/N. Rimsky-Korsakov."

Tuschmalow tends to retain a right-hand/left-hand separation of content in his orchestral disposition, with a recurrent use of low brass to reinforce the low strings, and high woodwinds to give the upper octaves another five fingers, so to speak. The combination of woodwinds and pizzicato strings in such fast-moving sections as the *Ballet des Poussins dans Leur Coques* and *Limoges* has a good deal of the ballet-scherzo quality of Tchaikovsky. This is by no means a bad thing to have, especially when it is as well realized, orchestrally, as it is here under Andrae's direction. Indeed, had Tuschmalow expanded his idea to include the whole gallery tour originally laid out by Moussorgsky, it might have merit as a homespun, slightly tweedy alternative to Ravel's more subtly woven texture. As it stands, however, it is an absorbing treatment, from an 1891 viewpoint (when Impressionism was hardly yet in flower), of an original that had possibilities not wholly realized even by Moussorgsky. The general utility of the disc is much enhanced by the inclusion on side two of such little-known examples of Moussorgskiana as a dancy Scherzo in B-flat (1858), which relates to later Moussorgsky in about the same way Stravinsky's E-flat Symphony does to *Petrouchka*; an *Intermezzo in modo classico* (1867) which is closer to the mature Moussorgsky but not much; and a march for the pageant *The Capture of Kars* (1880), a piece of exotica in the manner of Glinka's *Chernomor's March* from *Russlan and Ludmila*. Individually and collectively they add depth to our total perspective of Moussorgsky, something not at all easy to attain.

Wiener

Sir Henry Wood heard Ravel's orchestration of Moussorgsky's Pictures --and promptly withdrew his own

TUSCHMALOW's version, for all its obscurity, is the first orchestral *Pictures* of which there is record of an American performance (by the Chicago Symphony in 1919). Sir Henry Wood's effort was initiated in 1915 at the urging of the celebrated English authority on Russian musical matters, Rosa Newmarch. We don't hear anything of this version today, and for a very good reason: Ravel. The mystery of how Serge Koussevitzky came to ask the one man perfectly suited and seemingly pre-ordained for the task to execute his orchestral transcription turns out on investigation to be no mystery at all. In the program commentary previously mentioned, Hale relates that Ravel, whose knowledge of Russian music was encyclopedic, was discoursing one day in 1922 on his admiration for the Moussorgsky *Pictures*. Koussevitzky, already a famous interpreter of Ravel, was prompted to ask if he would be interested in making a transcription of the work for him. The answer, "*Avec plaisir*," was the beginning of the making of the masterpiece with which we are all now familiar.

So familiar, indeed (there are more than twenty versions of it in the current Schwann catalog), that an appreciation of the conscientiousness as well as the craft with which Ravel fulfilled his task has all but vanished. He brought to it, in the first place, the special skills developed in converting into orchestral form not only piano works of his own, but those of Chabrier and Debussy. Next, he determined to avoid the swollen post-Straussian orchestra of the early Twenties and restrict himself (with a few deviations) to the ensemble utilized by Rimsky for *Boris*. He expended every effort to acquaint himself with Moussorgsky's *own* text, not one that had passed through the hands of some other arranger or editor. Finally, he set for himself the most difficult challenge of all: to leave the music exactly in the register in which Moussorgsky had written it (with negligible exceptions, he did so scrupulously).

The results, of course, have put the world's orchestras and conductors on their mettle ever since Koussevitzky made his own pioneering recording of it on October 28, 1930, a recording that can still be found, very clean and extraordinarily bright-sounding, on French RCA (731025). And there have been other results as well, both positive and negative. One of the positive ones was the amiable Wood's decision, immediately after he had heard Ravel's transcription, to have his own suppressed. Negative ones were a succession of other versions.

The first of these was commissioned by the music-publishing firm of Bessel, which claimed copyright to Moussorgsky material. They agreed to permit Koussevitzky to proceed with his Ravel project if he restricted

the results to his personal use. They then assigned a little-known conductor-arranger to make a transcription they would themselves publish. The result, by Leonidas Leonardi, when premiered in Paris in 1925, prompted the French composer and critic Gustave Samazeuilh to describe him as "temerarious"—a polite way of saying that he had a hell of a nerve. More recently, there has been a Stokowski version which might most accurately be described as the brother of "Fantasia," and which, in its newest incarnation (London Phase 4 21006) is the loudest of them all. It begins with a *Promenade* that sounds like the changing of the guard at Buckingham Palace, and it goes charging on from there. The Lucien Cailliet orchestration, made in the image of the Philadelphia Orchestra when Eugene Ormandy first began to conduct it (the sole recording dates from 1940) has gone the way of most of those who then played it: Ormandy now directs and records the Ravel.

Of the dozens of versions of the Ravel *Pictures* I have heard, the strongest competitor for the first Koussevitzky in imagery and orchestral virtuosity is the Reiner-Chicago Symphony recording of 1959 (RCA LSC 2201). I suggest that those still of a mind to look elsewhere arm themselves first with one infallible spot-check for fidelity to Ravel: listen closely to the opening brass solo in the low register in *Bydlo*. If it isn't the authentic, laboring wheeze of the tuba, which gave Ravel exactly the ponderous sound he wanted for the peasant cart of the title, but is instead the lighter baritone horn substituted by some conductors because it is easier to play and guarantees a quick tape in the recording studio, go no further. The guilty conductor is no man to be trusted with a work scored by a genius who knew precisely why he did everything he did.

Another who has a reason for what he does is Isao Tomita, who has put the *Pictures* through a synthesizer and brought out a collage of voices and electronics which cross a Japanese silk-screen painting with a tin can by Andy Warhol (RCA ARL1-0838). There are "real" chick sounds in the Ballet, and a clatter of bells in *The Great Gate* that lacks only a trumpet fanfare to justify its being called *Carnival of Kiev*. The reason here would appear to be that such arrangements do sell records. I notice that the Japanese company that produced the original tape in its laboratories is called Plasma Music Inc. Some transfusion!

And where does all this leave the original Moussorgsky *Pictures* for piano? Safe in the hands of Sviatoslav Richter, whose inimitably imaginative and spacious conception may be heard on Odyssey Y 32223 precisely as it was played in Sofia, Bulgaria, on February 25, 1958. You might, from the very fast pace Richter adopts in the first *Promenade*, wonder what he is up to. But when he stops abruptly and goes into a very vivid *Gnomus*, you realize that one more picture has been added to Viktor Hartmann's original ten: it is a self-portrait of Richter himself as the peripatetic promenader, making the rounds of the exposition, now hurrying, now lingering, now studying. This is a highly sophisticated conception, one realized to perfection. Now, if Richter could only be persuaded to go back to his early passion for conducting and convert these pianistic insights into a fulfillment of Ravel's instrumental glorification. . . .

CLASSICAL DISCS AND TAPES

Reviewed by RICHARD FREED • DAVID HALL • GEORGE JELLINEK • PAUL KRESH
STODDARD LINCOLN • ERIC SALZMAN

BERG: ***String Quartet, Op. 3; Lyric Suite.*** Alban Berg Quartet. TELEFUNKEN SAT 22549 $6.98.

Performance: **Echt Wienerisch**
Recording: **Very good**

The history of the Alban Berg Quartet is of interest. In 1970, four Viennese musicians—on the young side but well established performers and professors in Viennese musical life—organized a quartet and obtained the permission of Berg's widow to use her husband's name. Subsequently, the group came to Cincinnati for a year to study with the La Salle Quartet, widely regarded in Europe as the outstanding protagonists of twentieth-century quartet music. The liner notes for this album even state that "it would be going too far at this stage to say that the musicians from Cincinnati have been surpassed," but that the new Quartet brings a special Viennese quality to their performances of this music. This is undoubtedly right. Of the three masters of the modern Viennese School—Schoenberg, Berg, and Webern—it is only Berg who commands real affection in his native town. Schoenberg wrote four string quartets and a string trio (as opposed to Berg's two quartets), but the name of this group is the Alban Berg Quartet, not the Arnold Schoenberg Quartet. (They do, however, perform Schoenberg, Berg, Webern, and other twentieth-century music in their concerts). One might well describe their playing as Bergian: rich, always on the verge of some kind of torment or ecstasy, but always in tight control. *E.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*

Monophonic recordings are indicated by the symbol Ⓜ

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

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

BLOW: ***Coronation Anthems and Symphony Anthems.*** *I was glad; God spake sometime in visions; Cry aloud, and spare not; O sing unto the Lord; Blessed is the man.* Choir of King's College, Cambridge; Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, David Willcocks cond. ARGO ZRG 767 $6.98.

Performance: **Very English**
Recording: **Resonant**

John Blow enjoys somewhat the same historical relationship to Purcell that Haydn had to Mozart: Blow was Purcell's senior, taught him the craft of music, and outlived him. Although the two younger men of this comparison turned out to be composers of genius, their older and longer-living contemporaries were giants in their own way. Haydn has finally come into his own, but Blow is only gradually being recognized as one of the top-ranking English composers. Unfortunately very little of his music has been recorded or, for that matter, issued in modern editions, but those who know his *Venus and Adonis* and *Ode on the Death of Henry Purcell* realize that they are dealing with a composer of passion and breadth. This Argo disc, then, is a welcome addition to the catalog; it offers us five splendid anthems written for such glamorous occasions as the coronation of James II and the opening service of Wren's St. Paul's Cathedral.

The symphony anthem as a form of music is a product of the Restoration. Music had been banished from the Chapel Royal during the Commonwealth. When Charles II returned to the throne in 1660, he not only reinstated music in the chapel, but he also profoundly changed the style by frowning on the old solemn contrapuntal manner of writing and insisting that his composers turn to the French grand motet as their model. He wished royal grandeur to be displayed in opulent choruses, brilliant solo singing, and, above all, in lively instrumental interludes or "symphonies" (hence the term "symphony anthem"). Blow served his king well: out of a hundred-plus anthems, some thirty use orchestral forces.

Typical of the Restoration, Blow's harmonies sound strange on first hearing. The music is full of cross relations, unusual progressions, and wild experiments with chromaticism. The choral writing is massive and thick, while the solo passages, using combinations of countertenor, tenor, and bass, are ornate in their detail. The prosody is exquisite, and lavish care is given to underlining each word with its own particular musical expression. Thus this music is strong, full of surprises, varied in its textures, and never dull.

The Choir of King's College has a sound all its own, the product of boy sopranos, countertenors, and mature male voices in an echoey, resonant ambiance. The soloists sing from their places in the choir, not from special places in front of the ensemble as in theater performances. This very English sound is perfectly caught on this record. Although one might wish for stronger soloists at times, the overall musical effect is one of splendor. *S.L.*

CHOPIN: ***Twenty-four Preludes, Op. 28; Prelude in C-sharp Minor, Op. 45; Prelude in A-flat Major, Op. posth.; Barcarolle in F-sharp Major, Op. 60.*** Garrick Ohlsson (piano). ANGEL S-37087 $6.98.

Performance: **Restrained**
Recording: **Flawed**

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

CHOPIN: ***Twenty-four Preludes, Op. 28; Prelude in C-sharp Minor, Op. 45; Prelude in A-flat Major, Op. posth.*** Claudio Arrau (piano). PHILIPS 6500 622 $7.98, Ⓒ 7300 335 $7.95.

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

Garrick Ohlsson, as he has shown in earlier recordings, is a fine Chopin player, as sensitive as he is skilled, and also both knowledgeable and articulate as a commentator. In his annotation for his latest release he describes the barcarolle as "perhaps even my favorite in the whole piano literature," and he seems to offer an insightful performance of it; unfortunately, the entire second side of the Angel disc is disfigured by wavery tone—whether from tape stretch or off-center pressing I cannot tell, but it makes for uncomfortable listening. Side one is not so affected, but, even without the sonic distortion, I find Ohlsson's

way with the music less fetching than I like: it is as if the pianist had consciously rebelled against the "salon" context in which the preludes are so often approached and sought to replace it with a somewhat dry, "scholarly" restraint and deliberate tempos, emphasizing (or striving for) a Bach-like quality. It is an interesting concept, but it dissipates the essential romanticism of the music—a quality transmitted with both power and eloquence in Ohlsson's splendid set of the polonaises. Angel, incidentally, has not put any separating scrolls between the numbers in Op. 28, which means that the only ones that can be spotted visually are No. 1, of course, and No. 17, which opens side two.

Claudio Arrau, unencumbered by any self-consciousness about the romantic nature of the preludes, plays with the natural expressiveness and unforced intensity that have always marked his Chopin, mellowed now by decades of affectionate familiarity. Some of his tempos may in fact be slower than Ohlsson's in the respective pieces, but I never feel that Arrau has too tight a rein: everything moves at a natural and apparently self-determined pace, and even the tiniest of the preludes are fully characterized—always with eloquence, frequently with poetry. Arrau's way of countering the "salon" image is a big, uninhibited tone which some listeners, I'm sure, will find a bit larger than life, but which I find agreeably consonant with the whole grandly proportioned approach. This is a simply marvelous revivification of thrice-familiar material, music-making on a level which, as so often with Arrau at his best, renders comparisons meaningless. The piano sound, rich and unrestricted, is about the most realistic Philips has yet provided for the instrument, and there *are* bands separating the pieces. *R.F.*

CRUMB: *Black Angels*. RAXACH: *String Quartet No. 2*. LEEUW: *String Quartet No. 2*. Gaudeamus String Quartet. PHILIPS 6500 881 $7.98.

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

This recording has several interesting points, not the least of which is that it is one of the rare European recordings of an American work. George Crumb's *Black Angels*, for string quartet, is one of the most striking pieces in recent years for the medium, partly because Crumb really breaks the boundary lines. His quartet is amplified, plays percussion instruments, and vocalizes. Crumb specifies (if I'm not mistaken) that in live performance the players should be masked. The music, full of traditional rhythmic and melodic bits and pieces surrounded by Crumb sonic fantasies, is a series of morbid, obsessive, fascinating reflections on death. The subtitle gives the mood: "Thirteen Images from the Dark Land." Brrrrr!

Gaudeamus is the name of a Dutch foundation for contemporary music as well as of an excellent string quartet. The Dutch works by Enrique Raxach and Ton de Leeuw have a number of aspects in common with Crumb's music. The former subtly amplifies and alters the string sound with electronic extensions. The latter—which also exists in an electronically extended version *not* heard here—carries a motto from Dylan Thomas: "And death shall have no dominion." It has some of the dramatic concerns of the Crumb quartet (including the requisite references to the *Dies Irae*), although it is not as highly charged. *E.S.*

HILLER: *Quartet No. 6 for Strings* **(see JOLAS)**

JANÁČEK: *Suite for String Orchestra* **(see SUK)**

JOLAS: *Quatuor III*. HILLER: *Quartet No. 6 for Strings*. Concord String Quartet. COMPOSERS RECORDINGS INC. CRI SD 332 $6.95.

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

It may seem strange to find far-out composers still working in such a traditional medium as the string quartet, but when you have an ensemble as good and as dedicated as the Concord it must be irresistible to write for them.

Betsy Jolas, born and resident in Paris, is partly American by background and education. Her Third Quartet is a set of etudes on contemporary string playing. The Hiller piece is a set of etudes of a different sort. Its three movements are based on environmental sounds reworked by various methods into string-quartet music. At least that's what the composer tells us; I doubt that anyone could have figured it out from the music alone. Still, there is a crazy, disconnected quality that could, presumably, only stem from real life itself. This music (like real life) makes no sense to me whatever, but its insane humor has life's nutty appeal. *E.S.*

LEEUW: *String Quartet No. 2* **(see CRUMB)**

LISZT: *Piano Adaptations*. *Polonaise from Eugen Onegin; Illustration No. 2 ("The Skaters") from Le Prophète; Waltz from Faust; Reminiscences de Norma*. Michele Campanella (piano). PHILIPS 6500 310 $7.98.

Performance: **Unexciting**
Recording: **Clear**

A Liszt pianist by the name of Campanella is

almost too good to be true: I will regretfully omit the obvious puns and repertoire recommendations. Here is still another set of Liszt arrangements—Tchaikovsky, Meyerbeer, Gounod, and Bellini testify to Liszt's incredibly catholic (and just wonderfully bad) taste—in very precise, dry, competent, unexciting performances. The playing is solid, but it never rises in spirit to any of those Lisztian Grand Moments. *E.S.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

LISZT: ***Tasso, Lamento e Trionfo; From the Cradle to the Grave; Mephisto Waltz No. 1.*** Orchestre de Paris, Sir Georg Solti cond. LONDON CS-6925 $6.98.

Performance: **Sensational**
Recording: **Outstanding**

The combination of conductor and repertoire here is such a "natural" that one can only wonder why London/Decca didn't come up with it years ago. Georg Solti's Liszt is sensational in the best sense—incomparably brilliant and exciting, but also making the most of these works musically. Mawkishness and bathos are utterly banished; even the gondolier's tune in *Tasso* is invested with something reasonably close to nobility, and the whole piece comes off with incredible freshness. The initial statement of the *Mephisto Waltz* theme may not have the voluptuous lilt of the famous old Koussevitzky version, but Solti's eruptive drive is otherwise all-surpassing.

From the Cradle to the Grave, Liszt's very last work for orchestra, followed his other dozen symphonic poems by some twenty-five years and is probably the most original of the lot, with a stormy middle section framed by a quiet beginning and end. Solti brings such intensity and conviction to his performance as to persuade the listener that this is really great music; at the very least, it is unarguably beautiful in the extraordinary outer sections.

London's outstandingly rich sound compounds the irresistibility of this package. Now we must have more of Solti's Liszt—if not all the symphonic poems and the two symphonies, at least his revitalization of *Les Préludes* and *Hungaria*. *R.F.*

MOUSSORGSKY: ***Pictures at an Exhibition*** **(see Choosing Sides, page 124)**

MOZART: ***Piano Concerto No. 20, in D Minor (K. 466); Piano Concerto No. 21, in C Major (K. 467).*** Géza Anda (piano); Vienna Symphony Orchestra, Géza Anda cond. RCA ARL1-0610 $6.98, Ⓠ ARS1-0610 $7.98, Ⓒ ARK1-0610 $7.98.

MOZART: ***Piano Concerto No. 20, in D Minor (K. 466); Piano Concerto No. 21, in C Major (K. 467).*** Géza Anda (piano); Vienna Symphony Orchestra, Géza Anda cond. EURODISC ☐ 86947 MK $7.98.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

MOZART: ***Piano Concerto No. 12, in A Major (K. 414); Piano Concerto No. 21, in C Major (K. 467).*** Radu Lupu (piano); English Chamber Orchestra, Uri Segal cond. LONDON CS 6894 $6.98.

Performances: **Lupu more elegant**
Recordings: **London cleaner**

Back in the Sixties, Géza Anda, doubling as soloist and conductor, recorded all twenty-five Mozart piano concertos for Deutsche Grammophon, maintaining throughout a generally excellent standard of musicianship and backed by an orchestra of properly modest proportions and a knowledgeable recording crew. He fares less well, in my opinion, in the two concertos he has recorded anew for the German Eurodisc label, with RCA issuing an American mastering and pressing from the same sessions. The positive characteristics of Anda's solo performances remain essentially the same as those in the Salzburg series—at best endowed with rhythmic urgency in the fast movements and a nice singing line in the slow ones—but they are also afflicted occasionally by a curious woodenness of phrasing and a touch of mannerism, the latter evident in his handling of the lyrical subject in the first movement of K. 466. Anda's own cadenzas in K. 466 strike me as being on the perfunctory side.


London

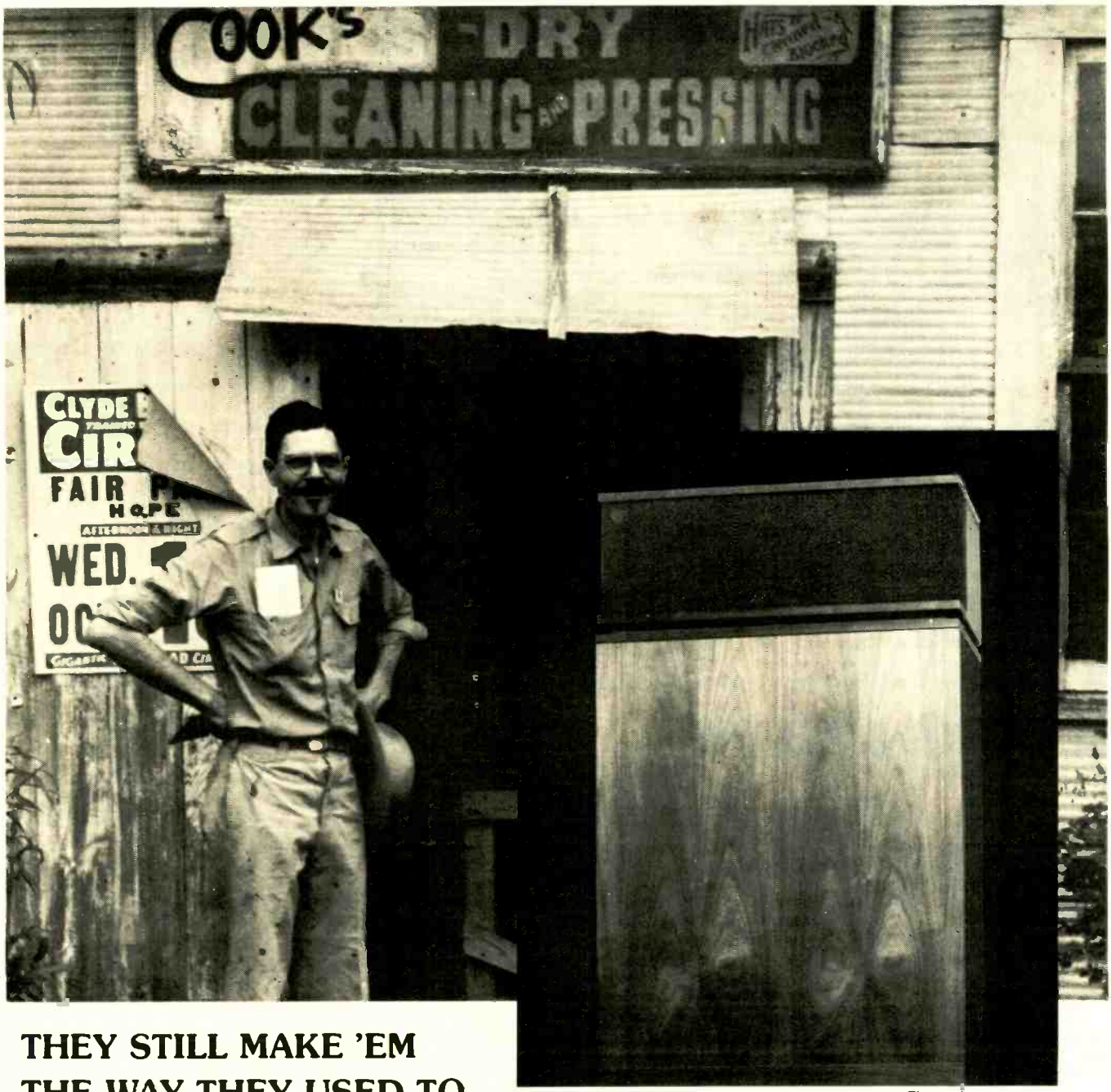
RADU LUPU
Vital, warm Mozart concertos

I also find the Vienna Symphony, an apparently larger body than the Salzburg group, somewhat less responsive; the strings tend to overpower the woodwinds, and the piano is placed rather far forward of the orchestral ensemble. The recording was made in the reverberant Baumgarten Casino, just outside Vienna, which makes for a pleasant sonic ambiance, but not for the ultimate in crisp and clear textures called for in Mozart.

The difference in sound between the Eurodisc quadraphonic pressing (SQ matrix) and the RCA two-channel disc is marked—not because of the quadraphonics per se, which are of the ambiant type, but because of equalization curves adhered to in tape-to-disc mastering: Eurodisc is distinctly bass-heavy, while RCA is lighter on the low end, brighter, and a bit cleaner.

For my taste, however, the Mozart of Radu Lupu and the English Chamber Orchestra is far preferable on every count. Crispness, elegance, vitality, and warmth characterize the performances. Lupu has a light hand, even in the symphony-dimensioned C Major, but never to the point of becoming precious. His finales are vibrant, his slow movements lyrical, and he has a truly luminous piano tone. The woodwind-string balance of the English Chamber Orchestra under Uri Segal's baton is ideal, and the sound reproduction is excellent. In short, this recording leaves almost nothing to be desired. *D.H.*

(Continued on page 130)



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RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

ORFF: ***Catulli Carmina.*** Ute Mai (soprano); Eberhard Büchner (tenor); Jutta Czapski, Günter Philipp, Wolfgang Wappler, Gerhard Erber (pianos); Leipzig Radio Chorus and Symphony Orchestra, Herbert Kegel cond. PHILIPS 6500815 $7.98.

Performance: **Top-drawer**
Recording: **Very fine**

Some years ago, in comparing Ormandy's and Jochum's versions of Orff's *Catulli Carmina*, I noted the essentially theatrical quality of the German rendition as against the concert presentation style of Ormandy and his forces. I found the soloists on Jochum's Deutsche Grammophon disc superior, but I had reservations about both the chorus and the technical quality of the recording.

Now Philips, with this 1974 East German recording, seems to give us the best of everything, superb soloists, an absolutely wonderful chorus (which must bear a very heavy part of the musical load), and a quality of recorded sound remarkable in its sense of depth and lateral space as well as in its conveyance of every detail of solo and choral vocal timbre.

Like Jochum's, the Leipzig performance is played as *theater*; the voices assume primacy throughout, the four-piano/percussion ensemble providing support and vivid splashes of color but never taking the spotlight. The Rutgers Choir in Ormandy's version is full of zest and vigor, but the Leipzig Choir adds refinement, tonal luminescence, and subtlety of nuance quite beyond what I have heard elsewhere, on or off records, in this piece.

In the Orff scores succeeding *Carmina Burana*, theatrical and word-magic elements assume more importance than the musical content, which probably is what enrages a good many people. If you are among those responsive to a certain type of ritual magic theater, however, this recorded realization of the *Catulli Carmina* is well worth your while.

D.H.

PURCELL: ***The Fairy Queen*** **(see Best of the Month, page 88)**

RAVEL: ***Gaspard de la Nuit; Prélude; Menuet sur le Nom d'Haydn; À la Manière de Borodin; Menuet Antique; Pavane pour une Infante Défunte; À la Manière de Emmanuel Chabrier.*** Pascal Rogé (piano). LONDON CS-6895 $6.98.

Performance: **Brilliant, but . . .**
Recording: **Excellent**

This is the second installment in Pascal Rogé's complete Ravel cycle. Like the first, issued about a year ago (on London CS-6873, comprising the *Sonatine, Le Tombeau de Couperin*, and the *Valses Nobles et Sentimentales*), it is an impressive package. Rogé, who is only twenty-four now, is a *musical* pianist, with power, taste, and a fine feeling for color, and the idea of coupling his brilliant *Gaspard* and sensitive *Pavane* with the four little pieces usually confined to three-disc packages of Ravel's piano music may be a further enticement to collectors trying to avoid duplications. These excellently recorded performances seem just a bit superficial to me, but there are many who regard that as quite in keeping with Ravel's alleged coolness. I find no less brilliance, and a good deal more inner fire, in the *Gaspard* of Vladimir Ashkenazy (London CS-6472), Ruth Laredo (Connois-

(Continued on page 134)

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"the work sounds as if it had been composed only yesterday..."

Dancer Vaslav Nijinsky and composer Maurice Ravel play the score of Daphnis et Chloé *four-handedly. Ravel wrote the ballet for Nijinsky and the Ballets Russes; it had its première in Paris in 1912.*

Maurice Ravel's "Daphnis et Chloé"

RAVEL's magical choreographic symphony has had very distinguished recorded performances over the years, those of Munch, Monteux, and Dorati springing most immediately to mind. Lorin Maazel's new release with the Cleveland Orchestra belongs with the best of them, and it has the benefit of London's very finest recording. I find Maazel's traversal of the opening scene through Dorcon's dance a bit on the offhand side, but from that point on, performance and recorded sound are simply magical. There is no question that Maazel has kept the Cleveland Orchestra up to the level achieved under George Szell; all the old zing and precision are there, together with utterly dependable first-desk playing in the many treacherous passages Ravel wrote into the score (I think particularly of the French horn passages that come after Dorcon is laughed off the scene).

Particular plaudits are due the Cleveland Orchestra Chorus and its director Robert Page for the lovely phrasing and unerring intonation they bring to the *a cappella* episode that precedes the entrance of Bryaxis and his band of pirates. Here is exactly the disembodied quality I found lacking in the recent Minnesota Orchestra recording of the excerpts. The London recording engineers are to be praised, too, not only for the excellence of the orchestral sound achieved here, but especially for careful maintenance of the extremely critical choral-orchestral balances throughout.

—David Hall

RAVEL: *Daphnis et Chloé*. Cleveland Orchestra and Chorus, Lorin Maazel cond. LONDON CS 6898 $6.98.

It should, in theory, be difficult, when one has just welcomed a superb new recording of a major masterpiece to the catalog, to summon up a comparable enthusiasm for another new recording of that work which follows hard on the heels of the first. In the present case, though, despite my agreement with everything David Hall says about the new Maazel recording of Ravel's *Daphnis et Chloé*, the even newer Pierre Boulez recording is something too special to let pass with only subdued praise.

Frankly, the Boulez simply does not sound like the same piece of music. I hasten to inform the reader, first of all, that I am reviewing the disc from a stereo acetate, pressings not yet being available; and second, that my reactions are to the overall impact of the disc, for I cannot in this instance separate out the impact of the performance from that of the recording. Just why Boulez's recording should sound totally different from any other of the work is difficult to say. He plays the same score, his tempos are not significantly different, the details at any given point in the score are not strikingly unusual. But the work sounds as if it had been composed only yesterday: that is to say, it sounds new and fresh and modern and important, not a work that is a known part of any tradition of composition or of performance but one that might well *begin* such a tradition.

In specifics, there is an enormous amount of low bass to be heard (performance or recording?) which adds an undercurrent of menace and a feeling of strength I have never experienced in this music before. There is no "Impressionist" haze over the work, but rather than gaining thereby in orchestral brilliance (the aim of conductors who prefer to conduct only the second suite and that as a virtuoso showpiece), the music simply takes on openness and clarity. The chorus is extraordinary, because at times it is so integrated into the total texture that it is unrecognizable *as* a chorus, and because at other times it adds just the precise touch of human involvement that the score seems to demand at that moment. Rather than being an *ad libitum* appendage, it has become the most subtle of musical instruments and very nearly the tonal core of the work.

I would not disparage other recordings of *Daphnis*. I got to know the piece through Ansermet's first recording and still admire both that and his later one; I found things in the Bernstein performance that I had not found elsewhere, and I fell totally in love with Monteux's marvellous rendition—as I did with Maazel's. But Boulez's is something very special: unique, powerful, and in a strange way disturbing. Like a number of his other recordings, it makes one wonder if one has ever really understood the music before. I only hope that the incredible sound that producer Andrew Kazdin has captured so brilliantly gets through to the final pressing. The disc will also be released in SQ quadraphonic format, and I look forward to hearing the additional sense of spaciousness that mode can provide.

—James Goodfriend

RAVEL: *Daphnis et Chloé*. Camarata Singers; New York Philharmonic, Pierre Boulez cond. COLUMBIA M 33523 $6.98, ☐ MQ 33523 $7.98.

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seur Society CS-2005), or Abbey Simon (Turnabout TV-S 34397). Simon's, I think, may be the most magical of all, and is surely the one most enlivened with a sense of *involvement*. His budget-price three-disc set of *all* of Ravel's music for solo piano (Vox SVBX-5473) was justly extolled in these pages by Irving Kolodin last May. *R.F.*

RAVEL: *Le Tombeau de Couperin* **(see The Basic Repertoire, page 54)**

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

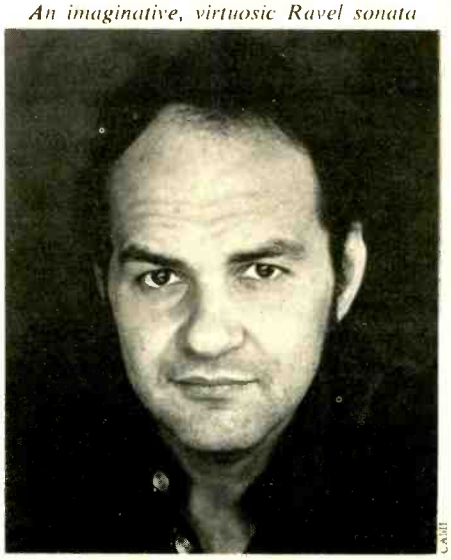
RAVEL: *Trio in A Minor; Sonata for Violin and Cello.* Ruth Laredo (piano); Jaime Laredo (violin); Jeffrey Solow (cello in Trio); Leslie Parnas (cello in Sonata). COLUMBIA M 33529 $6.98.

Performance: **Top-drawer**
Recording: **Excellent**

Ravel's Trio in A Minor has always been a special favorite of mine among the French master's slim output of chamber works, and it has had some distinguished recorded performances, including still-available monophonic versions by Rubinstein-Heifetz-Piatigorsky and Oborin-Oistrakh-Knushevitzky. This latest recording of it not only stands up to the finest previous recordings in warmth of phrasing and rhythmic alertness but also has the benefit of recorded sound that enhances the music's lyrical aspect without in any way diluting the crispness of such movements as the rhythmically intricate *Pantoum*. Particularly felicitous in the recording is perfect balance of the three instruments, making for a truly well-woven musical fabric from beginning to end.

The formidable Sonata for Violin and Cello is one of the masterpieces of its particular genre, but it is difficult in its virtuosic demands as well as in its musical substance. Neither of the two recorded performances I have heard previously (Oscar Shumsky with Bernard Greenhouse and the Schoenfeld Duo) can match in imaginative flair and virtuosic brilliance the achievement of Jaime Laredo and Leslie Parnas, which does much to dissipate the reputation of this sonata as a somewhat sterile creation. In this realization the music emerges as one of Ravel's most vital and fascinating works, even if it is worlds removed from his more overtly sensual creations of the pre-World War I era. *D.H.*

JAIME LAREDO
An imaginative, virtuosic Ravel sonata



RAXACH: *String Quartet No. 2* **(see CRUMB)**

SAINT-SAËNS: ***Symphony in A Major; Symphony in F Major ("Urbs Roma").*** Orchestre National de la ORTF, Jean Martinon cond. ANGEL ☐ S-37089 $6.98.

Performance: **First-rate**
Recording: **Good**

Camille Saint-Saëns began writing symphonies at the age of fifteen and wrote one every three years till he was twenty-four; he then waited nearly thirty years before writing the one that is in the active repertoire now, the one numbered 3, not 5, because the first and third of those early efforts were never published. It is these unpublished symphonies that we have on this record, in what may well be their first performances since the 1850's. (Orchestral parts were copied out from manuscripts at the Bibliothèque Nationale for these recordings.) Only a few months ago Angel released Jean Martinon's disc of Saint-Saëns' "official" Symphonies Nos. 1 and 2 (S-36995), and now the conductor's wish to record all five of the symphonies is fulfilled. The performances are on the same high level as those of the other early pair and the exceptional one of the "Organ" Symphony on MHS 1232; if these youthful works fail to become as popular as, say, the Symphony in C by the seventeen-year-old Bizet, it will not be Martinon's fault—but to expect them to would be most unrealistic, for, while Saint-Saëns need not have been reluctant to publish these symphonies, they are hardly memorable.

In their own way, though, they make for agreeable listening. I especially enjoyed the earlier one, with its echoes of Mozart (literal ones of the *Jupiter* in the first movement), Mendelssohn, Schubert, and Schumann, and a particularly imaginative finale filled with elfin touches. The forty-minute F Major is at once more original and more strongly reminiscent of Schumann; it is also less concise and less consistent in its appeal. The first movement, introduced by an impressive theme in the brass, is succeeded by a virtuosic scherzo whose trio is a most effective display piece for the winds, but the remaining movements tend to sprawl: they add up to twenty-three minutes, and could have done with some pruning.

Angel has been quite generous and has managed to get both works conveniently on a single disc; side one, containing the A Major and the first movement of the F Major, plays nearly thirty-seven minutes, but it doesn't sound at all cramped. This is one of Angel's crypto-quadraphonic releases, yielding a pleasant, if unspectacular, sonic picture in both two-channel and SQ playback. *R.F.*

SCHUBERT: ***String Quintet in C Major, Op. 163 (D. 956).*** Mstislav Rostropovich (cello); Taneyev Quartet. WESTMINSTER GOLD WGS-8299 $3.49.

Performance: **Expressive**
Recording: **Pretty good**

SCHUBERT: ***String Quintet in C Major, Op. 163 (D. 956); Quartettsatz in C Minor (D. 703).*** Dietfried Gurtler (cello, in Quintet); Weller Quartet. LONDON STS-15300 $3.49.

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

Since there is no really outstanding full-price recording of Schubert's Cello Quintet listed in Schwann at present, both of these half-price releases are assured of special attention, and

one or the other of them, I think, might easily go to the top of anyone's list of current versions. I had never heard of the Taneyev Quartet, but it is clearly a first-rate ensemble, and its 1963 recording of the quintet with Rostropovich suggests that all participants had lived long and lovingly with the work; they take some risks in their expansive approach, but it cannot be categorized as idiosyncratic. The first side of the Westminster disc plays nearly thirty-six minutes, each of the first two movements accounting for half of the total. I was not aware of any unusual deliberateness in the first movement, which moves along at a pace that seems determined by the melodic contours themselves, but the conspicuous slowness of the adagio (more like *Lento* as performed here) is the biggest of the interpretive risks. It serves an intensely expressive end, and the tension is for the most part well sustained, but there are moments when the momentum comes very close to disappearing. This static effect is beautifully achieved, but it will not be to every listener's liking. In this movement, too, the engineering is less well focused than in the other three: those magical pizzicatos are turned into bumptious thuds, and Rostropovich's cello is given a perhaps understandable but nevertheless unnatural prominence. The scherzo and finale are exemplary in their strength and conviction.

The Weller version, recorded in 1970 but not released in this country until now, is a safer recommendation—in fact, it strikes me as the finest thing this ensemble has done on records. It is less overtly intense than the Russian version but, in its comfortably straightforward way, perhaps more idiomatically Schubertian. In the matter of tempo, all four movements are just about ideal. If the first two movements are somewhat less expressive than the Taneyev makes them, they are still splendidly effective—and unlikely to provoke any controversy: the slow movement hangs together more securely at the Weller tempo, and the excellent sound presents the five instruments in a thoroughly natural, well-balanced perspective. A further enhancement is the inclusion of a splendid performance of the *Quartettsatz*. (The liner notes discuss three works, not just two, the section on the quintet having been picked up unedited from an earlier London release that included the the String Trio, D. 471.) *R.F.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

SHOSTAKOVICH: ***Piano Concerto No. 1, Op. 25; Piano Concerto No. 2, Op. 102; Three Fantastic Dances, Op. 5.*** Christina Ortiz (piano); Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, Paavo Berglund cond. ANGEL S-37109 $6.98.

Performance: **Highly poetic**
Recording: **First-rate**

One hardly thinks of these two lightweight piano concertos from the youthful and the mature Shostakovich as exactly poetic: one keeps remembering the fun and high jinks of the final movements—the First with its brilliant trumpet *obbligato* (nicely done here by Rodney Senior), the Second with its anticipation of Bernstein's *Candide* Overture. But it is to the poetic elements in the slow movements that the young Brazilian pianist Cristina Ortiz is most responsive. Yet she lacks nothing in the way of sparkle and brilliance to bring out the wit and zest in the end movements or the delicious whimsey in the Fantastic Dances.

(Continued on page 139)

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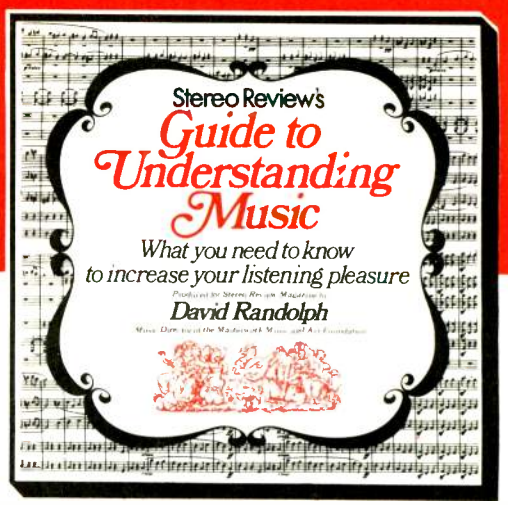

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Outside of Shostakovich's own remarkable recording issued on Seraphim from a 1958 taping, this is the only currently available disc that combines these three works. It is most enjoyable, beautifully played, and beautifully recorded throughout. *D.H.*

JOHANN STRAUSS, JR.: *Overtures* (see SUPPÉ)

R. STRAUSS: *Capriccio, Op. 85—Introduction* (see SUK)

STRAVINSKY: ***Concerto in E-flat ("Dumbarton Oaks"); Concerto in D for String Orchestra; Danses Concertantes.*** Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, Neville Marriner cond. ANGEL S-37081 $6.98.

Performance: **Delectable**
Recording: **Superb**

Neville Marriner is best-known to record buyers as the director of the Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields in London, but for the last five years he has directed the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra as well. He is also known as a classicist, a term that can easily be expanded to include the chamber-orchestra music of Stravinsky.

This new disc, recorded in England during a European tour, makes a nice pendant to Marriner's recent attractive recording of *Apollon*. None of the pieces here are great music—Stravinsky's neo-Classicism ran pretty thin in the late Thirties and early Forties—but they are redeemed by a wonderful trashy danciness. Stravinsky's reputation as a classicist and intellectual is very misleading; this is great *bad* music, all of it in lively, well-appointed performances. And, except for the occasionally too-loud timpani in the *Danses Concertantes*, the recordings are excellent. *E.S.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

SUK: ***Serenade for Strings in E-flat Major, Op. 6.*** **R. STRAUSS:** ***Capriccio, Op. 85—Introduction.*** **JANÁČEK:** ***Suite for String Orchestra.*** Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, Neville Marriner cond. ARGO ZRG 792 $6.98.

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

Neville Marriner's American ensemble, with which he recorded for both Argo and EMI during a visit to Britain last year, bears his stamp no less clearly than his English one, the Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, and the repertoire in this collection is intoxicatingly attractive. The adorable E-flat Serenade of Josef Suk, who composed it when he was only eighteen, had not been available on records in this country for a decade or more until the release, only a year ago, of Karl Münchinger's recording on London CS-6737, and Münchinger's disc also includes the Strauss piece that is on the new Argo. I think Münchinger finds more of the warmth and good nature in both works (without ever being obvious about it) than Marriner, who seems more content to revel in the brilliance of his superbly polished ensemble. Yet Marriner is by no means deficient in charm, nor Münchinger in exuberance: it is only a matter of relative emphasis. Münchinger brings a more ingratiating quality to the scherzo-like second movement of the serenade, and to its finale, too, in which he is careful to note Suk's marking "*ma non troppo*

presto." Marriner really is a bit too fast in this final movement, but the sparkle and zest of the playing are hard to resist.

What could well be the deciding factor is the third item on the disc. Münchinger offers a handsome performance of Hugo Wolf's *Italian Serenade*, a work that has been generously represented on records, while Marriner, rather more imaginatively, includes the splendid Janáček Suite for String Orchestra, which has not been available for at least twenty years. Like the Suk, it is an early work—Janáček was twenty-three when he wrote it—and its chief characteristic is charm. It comprises six brief movements, the last being not the expected brilliant allegro, but an andante of surprising depth. I do prefer Münchinger's handling of the Suk, but I think I could learn to live with Marriner's zippy tempo in the finale in order to have the Janáček suite. Both discs are excellently recorded. *R.F.*

SUPPÉ: ***Overtures: Light Cavalry; Poet and Peasant; Morning, Noon, and Night in Vienna; Boccaccio.*** **JOHANN STRAUSS, JR.:** ***Overtures: A Night in Venice; Blindekuh.*** Johann Strauss Orchestra of Vienna, Willi Boskovsky cond. ANGEL S-37099 $6.98.

Performance: **Mellow**
Recording: **Marvelous**

The prospect of listening to still another *Light Cavalry* Overture, not to mention that chestnut most of us wearied of while still in childhood—I mean the dear old *Poet and Peasant*—filled me with gloom. There are days, after all, when a single *Morning, Noon, and Night in Vienna* can seem to go on for a month. Moreover, these are the kinds of works that have been getting the quadraphonic once-over recently from Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia in RCA CD-4 spectaculars. What could Willi Boskovsky possibly add? The answer is, plenty. Ormandy's Suppé resounds with all the rich orchestral coloring the Philadelphia can give it; Boskovsky finds something else in the same scores—a mellowness, topped with just the right amount of Viennese *Schlag* to lend flavor to these mammoth portions of musical pastry. And Angel's engineers provide gallant assistance; the sound of deep basses, for example, is almost below the range of hearing, and the balance of orchestral tone brings transparency even to the heavy scoring of *Boccaccio*.

Sandwiched between each set of heavily upholstered Suppé overtures are two lighter ones by Strauss—the spirited overture to a *Night in Venice*, rife with gaiety and abundant tunes that promise more than the operetta itself can ever deliver, and the relatively obscure overture to one of Strauss' flops, *Blindekuh*, which abounds with lovely tunes in a jeweled setting, for all the world like another *Fledermaus*. At least, that's what Boskovsky is able to coax out of it. *P.K.*

TAKEMITSU: ***Corona—London Version; For Away; Piano Distance; Undisturbed Rest.*** Roger Woodward (keyboards). HEAD 4 $6.98.

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

Toru Takemitsu has emerged as perhaps the leading Japanese avant-garde composer. One of the unlikely places where his music has been appreciated is London, where Roger Woodward, the local specialist in crazy modern piano music, gave an all-Takemitsu concert (including *For Away*, which was written for him) from which this recording was drawn. Takemitsu talks a good deal about "inner, personal" qualities, about "nature," about not being afraid of the past, about the unknown, about East and West, about new freedoms. I am very sympathetic to all of this, but what I find in the music is a very beautiful, vague, static, floating, sonorous quality that suggests the music of Morton Feldman as much as the inevitable Buddhist rock garden. Well, why not? All of it is very well performed on a multiplicity of keyboards, and it has been recorded with care. *E.S.*

VERDI: ***I Masnadieri*** **(see Best of the Month, page 87)**

NEVILLE MARRINER
Brilliant and not without charm

COLLECTION

GERARD SCHWARZ: ***Baroque Chamber Music.*** **Telemann:** *Trumpet Concerto in D Major.* **Albinoni:** *Trumpet Concerto in C Major.* **Hertel:** *Concerto a Cinque.* Gerard Schwarz (trumpet); Ronald Roseman, Susan Weiner, Virginia Brewer (oboes); Ronald MacCourt, William Scribner (bassoons); Edward Brewer (harpsichord). CMS/DESTO DC 6438 $6.98.

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

Although the sound produced by the unlikely combination of trumpet, oboes, bassoons, and harpsichord may become taxing to some listeners after a bit, the timbre is intriguing. These fine performers, and probably the recording engineer, deserve congratulations for such a beautiful balance. Even though I suspect that not all the music was originally scored for this combination (the Telemann and Hertel works were, but the jacket offers no information on the subject), the concertos come off with a sparkling brilliance which is typical of this joyous genre. The performances are rhythmically strong and surefooted, and the players' ornamentation and embellishments are especially good. The album is for lovers of Baroque music who will settle for elegance and wit rather than continue to seek profundity. *S.L.*

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Collection James Goodfriend

A Dazzle of (Early European) Dances

THERE are two types of dance music, and we might label them "applied" dance music and "art" dance music. The former is written to be danced to. It is down-to-earth music with a solid beat that guides the dancers through their intricate slides, leaps, or formal patterns, as the case may be. It is music in which the body revels; hearts beat, toes tingle, and torsos sway—proper decorum, naturally, permitting. "Art" dance music is more refined, however, for in it the composer is evoking stylized impressions of movements recalled from a perhaps rarefied past. It is music which the brain follows through its intricate patterns and convolutions; the intellect delights in its artfully conceived melodies, its controlled modulations, and its sudden rhythmic surprises.

At hand are four recently released albums of early European dance music devoted, for the most part, to the "applied" sort, and they take us on quite a terpsichorean trip from the Middle Ages, through the Renaissance and early Baroque, and on to the high Baroque of the mid-eighteenth century. All four discs offer excellent performances by an abundance of ensembles and artists who handle their ancient instruments not only with technical ease but, what is more important, with great sophistication and musicianship.

"Golden Dance Hits of 1600" is a sampler put together from previously issued records made by the Ulsamer Collegium and the Collegium Terpsichore, plus some excellent guitar playing by Siegfried Behrend accompanied by percussionist Siegfried Fink. Don't let the title fool you: not all the music was popular around 1600. I seriously doubt, for example, that the distinctly medieval *Lamento di Tristano* with its *Rotta* was even heard *of* in the seventeenth century.

Despite many silly discrepancies between record and jacket, "Golden Dance Hits" is an excellent sampler of early dance music because of its wide range of repertoire and instruments. The medieval monophonic dance, judiciously accompanied by hypnotic drones, is represented by the *Istampita Ghaetta* and the *Lamento di Tristano*. The Italian sixteenth century is represented by Dalza and Negri. The contagious charm of the French Renaissance is well shown off by works from the *danceries* of Gervaise, Phalèse, and Susato. Nor are the Germans neglected: there is a generous sprinkling of "hits" by Widmann, Haussmann, and the ubiquitous Praetorius. Of particular interest is the group of guitar solos with imaginatively improvised percussion accompaniment. The playing is delicate, and the percussion adds a whole new dimension of subtle timbres to the music.

The scores for this early dance music typically give no indication as to which instruments should be used. It is, rather, left to the performers to choose the instrumentation. Praetorius (bless him), in his detailed and informative *Syntagma Musicum*, not only described just about every musical instrument that confronted the musicians of the Renaissance and early Baroque, but also offered deep insights into their proper usage. Both the Ulsamer Collegium and the Collegium Terpsichore know their Praetorius well (as must any ensemble playing music of this period) and offer us an enticing variety of "loud," "soft," and "broken" consorts to choose from.

In the full ensemble pieces, the Ulsamer Collegium shows a preference for using one sound throughout a piece and achieves its variety by changing the instrumental combinations from work to work and also by using some of its members as soloists. In contrast, the Collegium Terpsichore produces a light, silvery sound and shies away from solo performances. Its variety is achieved by carefully worked-out changes from one type of consort to another within the course of a single dance. This approach creates a lively mosaic effect and also underlines the structure of the music. One of the rewarding aspects of this disc is that one can contrast these two different approaches. One is as valid as the other, and both Collegia present them in excellent performances. It is more the pity, then, that the jacket notes wantonly omit a list of the instruments played, an omission which will undoubtedly frustrate the layman who hears an unfamiliar exotic sound and quite rightly would like to satisfy his curiosity as to just what is producing it.

BUT on with the dance. If you come across a Vanguard Everyman record titled "Les Menestriers," buy it! This group of young Frenchmen (the name is French for "minstrels") is astonishingly talented; they bring to early music all the lusty zest it probably possessed in its original conception, before it accrued that dulling patina of scholarly dust. Their many skills give them command over recorders, crummhorns, racketts (not "ranketts," as the jacket carelessly has it), viols, rebec, vielle, lute, pandora, cittern, and a package of percussion instruments. Add to this the fact that they sing with seductively natural voices in exquisite French (modern, not old, from what I could tell), and one can begin to imagine the variety, vivacity, and charm of this album.

The first side takes us from the thirteenth century through the Burgundian school. The medieval pieces are wildly oriental, with their sinuous melodies leaping and whining over unyielding drones and punctuated by erratically syncopated percussion. Especially exciting is the sound of the rebec in the rotta *La Manfredina*, which is played in one great *accelerando* and evokes a vision of a mid-Eastern belly dancer. One also realizes the profound stylistic harmonic change that revolutionized the sound of music between the anonymous thirteenth-century *La Ronde du Jaloux*, with its harsh quartal chord structures, and the sweet triadic sounds of the fifteenth-century's Gilles Binchois and Hayne van Ghizeghem.

On side two Les Menestriers prove their grasp of contrasting styles in the spirited *Branle de la Reine* and the smooth, sombre *Pavane d'Espagne*. Even more amazing is the suave unaccompanied singing of the two Jannequin *chansons*, each of which is followed by an instrumental rendition of the same music. Very few groups are able to produce such beautiful playing *and* singing by the same personnel. Also included are two English dances by Cutting and Byrd, and Neusiedler's *Juden Tanz* is chosen as a rousing conclusion because of its outrageous polytonality: a melody in C-sharp is cast over D Major harmonies! Here a little homework might have been in order. Despite the fact that this piece is often transcribed this way—see the *Harvard Anthology of Music*, Volume I—it is now generally accepted that the top string of the lute in this particular case was tuned a half-tone higher than usual. This, of course, brings melody and harmony into a more conventional relationship, and the Arabic and Persian ele-

ments referred to in the jacket notes are thus quickly tamed to banality.

Almost every album of early dance music includes works from *Terpsichore*, Michael Praetorius' arrangements of over three hundred French dance tunes popular at the court of Henry IV. The Early Music Consort of London, conducted by David Munrow, brings us an Angel disc titled "Music of Praetorius" which not only includes a side of dances, but also reveals this composer's other face: motets from the stupendous *Musae Sioniae* and other collections.

The album includes a leaflet which is scrupulously documented. There is a fine essay on Praetorius which, as one peruses it, tempts one to compare this prolific and eminently practical musician with Telemann. Each performer and what he plays is listed, the maker of each instrument and his dates are given, texts and translations are supplied, and after each piece the instrumental forces used are given so that we can identify what device is producing which timbre. To listen to Munrow's side of Praetorius' dances is to be led knowledgeably into the world of early Baroque sound. One will never hear such a wheeze as that emitted by four crummhorns, nor such a snarl as that of four racketts, those incredible cans of tubing furnished with a double reed and holes that so indecently break the sound barrier. And in contrast we have the sweet consorts of recorders, buttery sackbutts, and golden viols.

The motets of side two hearken back to the polychoral techniques of early seventeenth-century Venice, which the Germans so much admired. The term "choir," as Praetorius made clear in his *Syntagma*, referred not only to groups of voices, but could also include various instrumental doublings or even the substitution of instruments for some of the voice parts. Here Praetorius is being his most practical and simply saying, "use what you've got." The Early Music Consort of London is made up largely of instrumentalists, and its vocal forces are limited to seven fine singers. Munrow must, perforce, take Praetorius' advice seriously in order to perform works written for several choirs. Thus the forces of the Consort are divided into various groups, or choirs, each consisting of several voices and contrasting combinations of instruments. The resulting sonority is spacious and the effect breathtaking, especially in the seventeen-part "*Erhalt uns, Herr.*"

For those who have enjoyed the Ulsamer Collegium, either on "Golden Dance Hits" or on other discs, Archiv's "Tanzmusik des Hochbarock" is a superb album, handsomely packaged. The notes, in three languages, are lucid in their detailed discussion of the instruments and the many composers involved. As is usual with Archiv, the instrumentation of each piece is given as well as its printed source. Although this apparatus might appear a bit clumsy, it is of great help to student and scholar—and perhaps more than mildly interesting to the casual listener.

The basic repertoire is French with a smattering of English, Spanish, and German thrown in. The object of the record is to demonstrate the folk tradition on side one and the art tradition on side two. The lesson is strikingly made as we listen to four dances from John Playford's *Dancing Master* (including *Greensleeves*) played on such folk instruments as musette and vielle. The solo vielle playing is particularly fascinating, and one really has a chance to get a feel for its strange sound. The dances of Gaspar Sanz open up fresh aural areas in this field because of their almost flamenco sound. Konrad Ragossnig, a guest on this record, dramatically demonstrates through these pieces the difference between the earthiness of the guitar and the subtle contrapuntal implications of the lute. The side ends with a Reusner suite which presents the established order of dances during the high Baroque: allemande, courante, sarabande, an optional dance (in this case a gavotte), and a final gigue. The second side gives us some of the highly sophisticated dances of the French court and ends with an engaging taste of theatrical dancing: the final entrée from Lully's *Une Noce du Village*. This is a superb album which not only offers pleasure in casual listening but also presents a historical sequence if one wishes to follow it.

—*Stoddard Lincoln*

GOLDEN DANCE HITS OF 1600. Mainerio: *Schiarazula Marazula; Ungarescha-Saltarello.* **Caroubel:** *Courante; Volte; Courante; Volte.* **Neusiedler:** *Welscher Tanz Waschamesa/Hupfauff.* **Dalza:** *Calato alo Spagnola.* **Anon.:** *Istampita Ghaetta; Saltarello; Basse Danse La Magdalena; Lamento di Tristano/Rotta; Branle de Bourgogne.* **Susato:** *Ronde.* **Haussmann:** *Tantz; Galliard; Catkanei.* **Gervaise:** *Branle de Bourgogne; Branle de Champagne.* **Phalèse:** *Reprise/Galliard.* **Praetorius:** *Galliarde de la Guerre; Reprinse; Galliarde de Monsieur Wustron.* Ulsamer Collegium. **Schein:** *Allemande-Tripla.* **Praetorius:** *Gavotte; Spagnoletta; La Bourrée.* **Widmann:** *Magdalena; Agatha; Regina.* Collegium Terpsichore. **Behrend (arr.?):** *Tanz im Aicholdinger Schloss; Eichstatter Hofmühltanz; Riedenburger Tanz.* **Anon.:** *Italiana.* **Milan:** *Pavan.* **Negri:** *Balletto.* Siegfried Behrend (guitar); Siegfried Finck (percussion). DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON ARCHIV 2533 184 $7.98.

LES MENESTRIERS. Anon.: *Chançoneta Tedesca.* **Moniot de Paris:** *Vadurie.* **Anon.:** *Saltarello; Voulez-vous que je vous chante; La Ronde du Jaloux; La Manfredina; La Spagna.* **Jannequin:** *Il était une fillette; Ma peine n'est pas grande.* **Anon.:** *Branle de la Reine; Pavane d'Espagne.* **Praetorius:** *La Rosette.* **Cutting:** *Galliard.* **Byrd:** *My Lord of Oxenford's Mask.* **Neusiedler:** *Der Juden Tanz.* **Binchois:** *Adieu m'amour.* **Hayne van Ghizeghem:** *Gentil gallans.* Les Menestriers. VANGUARD EVERYMAN SRV 316 SD $3.98.

PRAETORIUS: *Terpsichore: Passameze; Spagnoletta; La Bourée; Pavane de Spaigne; Courante M. M. Wüstrow; Suites de Ballets; Reprinse secundam inferiorem (Gailliard); La Sarabande; Suite de Voltes.* **Motets:** *Resonet in laudibus; Erhalt uns, Herr, bei deinem Wort; Gott der Vater wohn uns bei; Aus tiefer Not; Allein Gott in der Höh sei ehr; Christus, der uns selig macht.* Boys of the Cathedral and Abbey Church of St. Alban; Music Consort of London. David Munrow cond. ANGEL S-37091 $6.98.

TANZMUSIK DES HOCHBAROCK. Sanz: *Canarios; Passacalle de la Cavalleria de Napoles; Espanoletas; Gallarda y Villano.* Konrad Ragossnig (guitar). **Anon.:** *Four Country Dances.* **Corrette:** *Menuet I and II.* **Hotteterre:** *Bourrée.* **Bouin:** *La Montauban.* **Chédeville:** *Musette.* **Reusner/Stanley:** *Suite.* **Poglietti:** *Balletto.* **Desmarets:** *Menuet; Passepied.* **Fischer:** *Bourrée; Gigue.* **Anon.:** *Gavotte.* **Loeillet:** *Corente; Sarabande; Gigue.* **Lully:** *Une Noce de Village—Dernière Entrée.* Ulsamer Collegium. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON ARCHIV 2533 172 $7.98.

Stoddard Lincoln, *a harpsichordist and professor of music at Brooklyn College, is a specialist in Baroque and Classical music and has been a critic for the London* Financial Times.

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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

Chris Albertson

In Iceland, where I was born, the government radio station still offers monophonic tangos as Saturday night entertainment, and I don't recall hearing any black music until I was seventeen and living in Copenhagen. That was 1948, I was studying commercial art, and a Bessie Smith record, casually played on the Danish Radio, turned my career around. From then on, all my spare change went for jazz records and my spare time was spent reading anything I could find on the subject.

By 1953 I was working professionally as a commercial artist. I had come to the realization that, despite my cornet practice, I would never be Bix II, but I accidentally found myself running something called the Storyville Jazz Club. When B&O brought out its first tape recorder, I—being gadget-minded—immediately acquired one and took it to London where I pretended to be working for the Danish Radio and thus obtained permission to record the Humphrey Lyttelton band at a club session. My little lie became the truth when the Danish Radio accepted my tapes and commentary as a program. A burst of activity followed: I did more radio work, wrote jazz articles, and recorded what became the initial releases on the Storyville/Sonet label. I also began conducting all-night jam sessions with such visiting stars as Lionel Hampton, Red Norvo, Quincy Jones, and Clifford Brown. Commercial art was fast taking a back seat to jazz, and in 1954 I moved to Iceland as a first step in the direction of New York.

My visa finally came through in late 1957, and I began a five-month period of futile job-searching and starvation in New York. When I took my last $10 to Greyhound and asked for "the nearest big city," I ended up in Philadelphia, and a week later I was a producer/writer at WCAU Radio, the local CBS station. Next I became a disc jockey on WHAT-FM, the city's all-jazz station, and in the fall of 1960 I found myself back in New York as a record producer/liner-note writer for Riverside Records. Trips to New Orleans and Chicago in 1961 yielded the "Living Legends" series. I also produced records for Prestige in the early Sixties, helped re-launch the careers of such old-timers as Lonnie Johnson and Elmer Snowden, brought blues singer Ida Cox back into the studio, and wrote countless forgettable liner notes.

In 1964 I became an announcer at WBAI-FM, rising the following year to the position of general manager. It was an exciting station in those days, but by 1966 I had had enough of running out on Friday afternoons to borrow money to meet the payroll, so I went to work for the BBC in London. A year later, finding I had grown weary of working for other people and was getting too far removed from jazz, I decided to tackle free-lance writing. In 1970, after two years of hounding Columbia Records while I struggled to make ends meet as an occasional writer for *down beat*, John Hammond obtained the go-ahead for a complete reissue of Bessie Smith's records. I spent the next couple of years producing those albums, was awarded two Grammys, and was asked by a publisher to write a biography of Bessie. That took another two years.

I was about to embark on a national promotion tour for my book when Stereo Review came into my life, an association which, for my part at least, has been (except for this assignment) a happy one. I am currently working on a biography of Louis begun fourteen years ago in cooperation with the late Lil Armstrong. *Bessie*, my first book, will be made into a feature film starring Roberta Flack this fall, and my second book, a songbook entitled *Bessie Smith: Empress of the Blues*, was published last April. Possibly significant addenda: my Doberman-Pinscher, Bessie, recently ate a nineteenth-century collection of poetry (hardcover), I am addicted to a soap opera called *All My Children*, my album collection had reached 15,000 at last count (only four of which are Bessie Smith), I converted to quadraphonic sound this year, and I hope I never again have to write about myself.

—*Chris Albertson*

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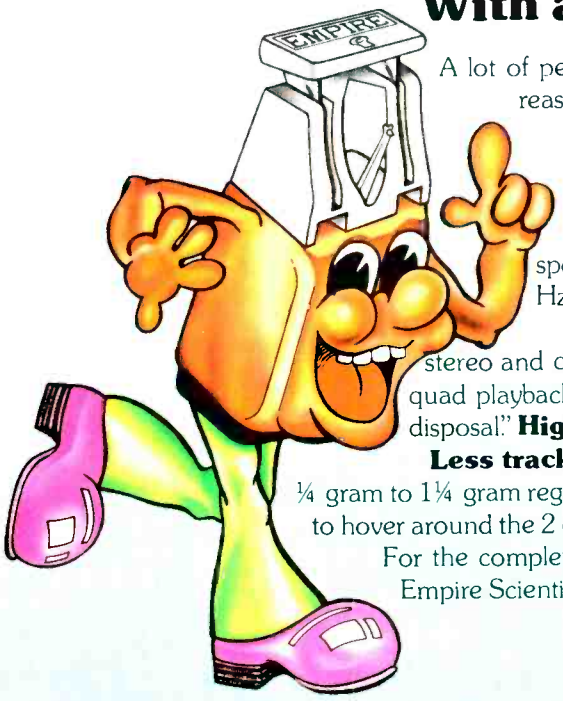

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