

RECORD OF THE YEAR
AWARDS FOR 1978

FEBRUARY 1979 • \$1.25

Stereo Review

THE PHONO CARTRIDGE: the bumblebee that couldn't fly

JANIE FRICKE: the real live singer behind those singing commercials

EQUIPMENT TEST REPORTS: ADC Sound Shaper Two Mk 1 Equalizer

Avid Model 230 Speaker System • Signet TK7E Phono Cartridge

Threshold CAS 1 Stereo Power Amplifier • Toshiba PC-5460 Stereo Cassette Deck

BEVERLY SILLS: What do you do after you've done it all?



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Stereo Review



**TO FULLY APPRECIATE PIONEER'S
NEW DIRECT-DRIVE TURNTABLE,
YOU HAVE TO TAKE APART
THE COMPETITION.**

All turntables are pretty much the same on the outside.

But if you look carefully inside, you'll see the things that separate Pioneer's new PL-518 from others.

Things that add up to a turntable that can reproduce music perfectly, free of audible distortion, acoustic feedback and rumble.

A REMARKABLE DRIVE SYSTEM.

Obviously, all direct-drive turntables have an extremely accurate drive system.

Each offers an immunity to fluctuations in line voltage, pitch control, and a built-in strobe unit to help you regulate the speed of the platter.

But we believe the drive system of the PL-518 is the most accurate found on any turntable selling for under \$175. Because the 16-pole, 24-slot brushless DC Servo motor is much the same as those found in turntables selling for \$250, if not more.

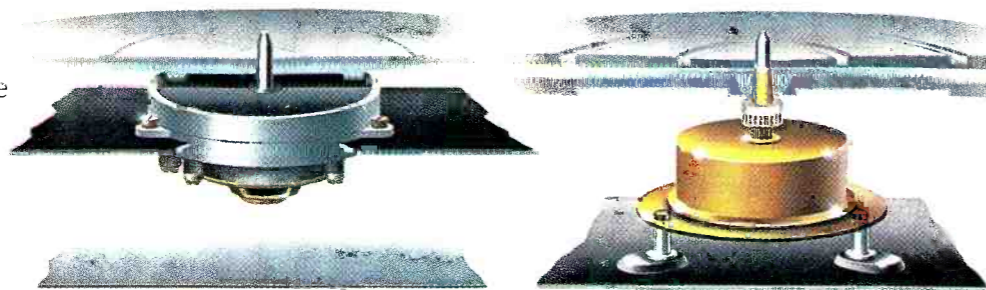
Equally important is the fact that this motor is anchored to a metal bottom plate, instead of suspended from the base, where vibration can affect your music.

SOMETHING YOU RARELY SEE IN A TONE ARM: THINKING.

To give you further insight into the virtues of our PL-518 you only have to look at the way some tone arms are mounted. On piano wire. Or cheap plastic casings.

Instead, ours is gimballed on steel pivot bearings. So it can't vibrate.

A great deal of thought also went into developing an auto-return mechanism with fewer moving parts. It imposes less load on the motor and is more reliable



Instead of suspending the motor, Pioneer has anchored it so vibration can't affect the music.

than the auto-return on most turntables.

Then there are two separate ball bearing assemblies used in the tone arm for greater stability as it passes over the record.

A plastic headshell is good enough for most tone arms. It's nowhere near good enough for the PL-518. Tests show plastic tends to



Flimsy plastic and metal headshells can distort music, so Pioneer's is made of glass fiber, which eliminates all resonance above 75 hertz.

resonate at frequencies between 75 and 300 hertz. By using a glass fiber shell, resonance above 75 hertz is all but eliminated.

In fact, nothing vibrates on the tone arm with the exception of the stylus. So nothing comes through the tone arm but music.

A SOLID ARGUMENT FOR THE 2-PLY PARTICLE BOARD BASE.

The base on many turntables is nothing more than a hollow plastic shell. Or worse, sheet metal neatly hidden beneath imitation wood veneer. Both seem harmless enough, but

they tend to vibrate and cause acoustic feedback when the volume is turned up.

The base on the PL-518, however, is made of two solid blocks of compressed wood, each 20 millimeters thick. When the two are



Unlike the hollow plastic base, our solid 2-ply particle board base is far less susceptible to vibration.

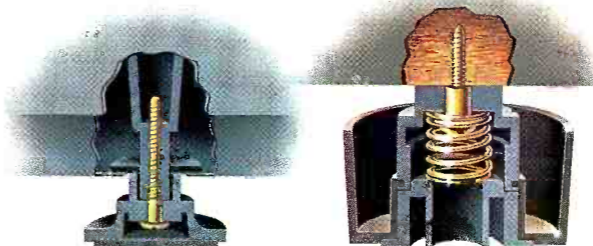
joined it not only gives the base greater density, the glue between the pieces acts to damp vibration. So when you're listening to a record, you won't hear the turntable.



Common staples can work themselves loose, which is why Pioneer uses aluminum screws to mount the base plate to the base.

THINKING ON OUR FEET.

Instead of skinny screw-on plastic legs, Pioneer uses large shock mounted rubber feet that not only support the weight of the turntable,



Stiff plastic legs merely support most turntables, but Pioneer's massive spring-mounted rubber feet also reduce feedback.

but absorb vibration and reduce acoustic feedback. So if you like to play your music loud enough to rattle the walls, you won't run the risk of rattling the turntable.

FEATURES YOU MIGHT OTHERWISE OVERLOOK.

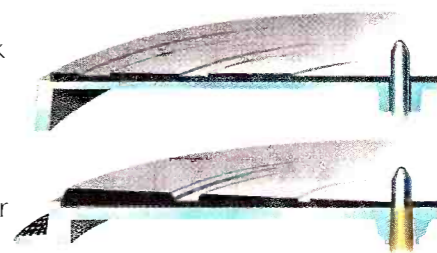
Besides the big things, the PL-518 has other less obvious advantages.

Our platter mat, for example, is concave to compensate for warped records.

The platter itself is larger than others in this price range, which means it stays at perfect speed with less strain on the motor.

Even something like our spindle is special. It's .8 microns larger than most, so that the record is always perfectly centered.

And instead of flimsy staples, we use sturdy aluminum



The ordinary platter mat is flat. Ours is concave to compensate for warped records.

Smaller, conventional platters are more subject to speed variations than our massive platter.

screws to seal the base plate to the base.

It's details like these as well as advanced technology that gives the PL-518 an incredibly high signal-to-noise ratio of 73 decibels. And an extremely low wow and flutter measurement of 0.03%. Performance figures you'd be hard pressed to find on any other turntable for this kind of money.

So if you want to get the most out of every piece of music, you should have the turntable that gets the most out of every part that goes into it.



Our spindle is .8 microns larger than others, to keep your records perfectly centered.

PIONEER
We bring it back alive.

CIRCLE NO. 1 ON READER SERVICE CARD

WHEN YOU PUT IT ALL TOGETHER, YOU CAN'T BUY A BETTER TURNTABLE FOR UNDER \$175.



PIONEER DIRECT DRIVE AUTOMATIC RETURN MODEL PL-518

THE PL-518.



INTRODUCING THE EMPIRE EDR.9 PHONO CARTRIDGE. IT SOUNDS AS GOOD ON A RECORD AS IT DOES ON PAPER.

It was inevitable . . .

With all the rapid developments being made in today's high fidelity technology, the tremendous advance in audible performance in Empire's new EDR.9 phono cartridge was bound to happen. And bound to come from Empire, as we have been designing and manufacturing the finest phono cartridges for over 18 years.

Until now, all phono cartridges were designed in the lab to achieve certain engineering characteristics and requirements. These lab characteristics and requirements took priority over actual listening tests because it was considered more important that the cartridges "measure right" or "test right"—so almost everyone was satisfied.

Empire's EDR.9 (for Extended Dynamic Response) has broken with this tradition, and is the first phono cartridge that not only meets the highest technological and design specifications—but also our

demanding listening tests—on an equal basis. In effect, it bridges the gap between the ideal blueprint and the actual sound.

The EDR.9 utilizes an L. A. C. (Large Area Contact) 0.9 stylus based upon—and named after—E. I. A. Standard RS-238B. This new design, resulting in a smaller radius and larger contact area, has a pressure index of 0.9, an improvement of almost six times the typical elliptical stylus and four times over the newest designs recently introduced by several other cartridge manufacturers. The result is that less pressure is applied to the vulnerable record groove, at the same time extending the bandwidth—including the important overtones and harmonic details.

In addition, Empire's exclusive, patented 3-Element Double Damped stylus assembly acts as an equalizer. This eliminates the high "Q" mechanical resonances typical of other stylus assemblies, producing a flatter response, and lessening wear and tear on the record groove.

We could go into more technical detail, describing pole rods that are laminated, rather than just one piece, so as to reduce losses in the magnetic structure, resulting in flatter high frequency response with less distortion. Or how the EDR.9 weighs one gram less than previous Empire phono cartridges, making it a perfect match for today's advanced low mass tonearms.

But more important, as the EDR.9 cartridge represents a new approach to cartridge design, we ask that you consider it in a slightly different way as well. Send for our free technical brochure on the EDR.9 and then visit your audio dealer and listen. Don't go by specs alone.

That's because the new Empire EDR.9 is the first phono cartridge that not only meets the highest technological and design specifications—but also our demanding listening tests.

Empire Scientific Corp. **EMPIRE**
Garden City, N.Y. 11530

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CIRCLE NO. 18 ON READER SERVICE CARD



Stereo Review BULLETIN

Edited by William Livingstone

● THE COMMERCIAL RELEASE OF THE MAGNAVISON VIDEODISC system, announced by Magnavox in mid-December, may well be the first shot in a long-awaited "battle of titans" between several giant firms and consortiums backing (mostly) incompatible videodisc systems. MCA has assembled a catalog of about two hundred feature programs, most with prices in the \$6 to \$15 range, for use with the Magnavision player, which sells for about \$700. At least three other major electronics companies, including RCA, also have working, production-ready videodisc systems waiting in the wings.

● THIS YEAR'S GRAMMY AWARDS SHOW will be telecast from Los Angeles by CBS-TV on February 15. According to the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences, the show's theme will be a salute to San Francisco. John Denver is the host.

● THE FIRST MICROCASSETTE WITH HI-FI SPECS has been introduced to the Japanese market by Sony. The new matchbox-size microcassette, which uses a metal-particle tape formulation and has a total playing time of three hours, is compatible for playback with a number of miniature recorders already on the market. Since the performance specifications of the new microcassette are comparable to those of a conventional cassette of high quality, this introduction demonstrates for the first time the potential of the micro format for hi-fi use. The new microcassette is expected on the U.S. market later this year.

● ELVIS COSTELLO AND HIS PRODUCER NICK LOWE are, as everybody knows, bosom buddies. And everybody knows that Elvis likes to wear funny disguises. But not everybody knows that he has impersonated Lowe on records. The B-side of Lowe's new single is actually performed by Elvis and his band. A remake of the Brinsley Schwarz tune (What's So Funny 'Bout) Peace, Love, and Understanding?, it will be included on Costello's forthcoming Columbia "Armed Forces."

● DU PONT'S FIRST ENTRY INTO THE CONSUMER TAPE FIELD will occur shortly with their introduction of blank videocassette tape in the Betamax format. Du Pont is a major manufacturer of industrial videotape, as well as the major producer of the basic powder formulation used in the manufacture of chromium-dioxide audio and video tapes. Trial marketing of the Betamax cassettes will take place the first quarter of this year in New York City. Additional consumer tape products in the form of VHS videocassettes are also expected from Du Pont later in 1979.

● OUTSTANDING MUSICAL TELECASTS this month on the Public Broadcasting Service include a February 7 program of Bruckner's Seventh Symphony played by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Georg Solti at the Royal Albert Hall in London. A Vienna State Opera performance of Beethoven's Fidelio will be shown on February 21. Leonard Bernstein conducts, and the cast includes Gundula Janowitz, Lucia Popp, René Kollo, Hans Sotin, and Manfred Jungwirth--the same artists featured in the recording of Fidelio reviewed in this issue's "Best of the Month" section. Check local listings for time of the telecast.



Stereo Review BULLETIN

Edited by William Livingstone

● ALLEGEDLY ANTICOMPETITIVE PRACTICES IN THE AUTOSOUND INDUSTRY will be investigated later this year in hearings to be conducted by the Senate Antitrust and Monopoly Subcommittee, chaired by Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-Mass). The Senate hearings will examine two types of tactics said to be used by auto makers to assure that most consumers buy factory-installed radios and tape systems: coercion of auto dealers by the auto makers to sell only factory-supplied automotive sound systems, and "tied-in" sales of sound equipment that force consumers to accept automobiles with equipment already installed or else suffer long waiting periods and other sanctions.

● COLUMBIA RECORDS has received Grand Prix du Disque awards for Andrew Davis' recording of the Duruflé Requiem, for Leonard Bernstein's of the Poulenc Gloria, and for Pierre Boulez's first volume of the complete works of Webern. The French Académie Nationale du Disque Lyrique selected Columbia's new Mignon as the best 1978 recording of a French opera and the Duruflé Requiem as the best choral release. Renata Scotto received an award from the Académie for her role in Columbia's Madama Butterfly. Can it be coincidence that, with the exception of Scotto's, all of these awards were to recordings of French works or performances by French artists?

● TOGETHER AGAIN! Pioneer Electronics has begun its second nationwide fund-raising program to aid the Metropolitan Opera. Donations made to the Metropolitan Opera/Pioneer Fund will be matched by Pioneer and matched again by a special grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, giving triple value to contributions from the public. Collection boxes will be placed in Pioneer's four thousand dealer outlets, and ads in newspapers and magazines will solicit contributions. Pioneer's 1977 campaign raised more than \$275,000 for the Metropolitan. The goal this year is \$500,000.

● IN THE FBI'S RAIDS ON EAST-COAST RECORD PIRATES last December, agents seized an estimated \$100 million worth of albums and duplicating, printing, and pressing equipment that had been used in producing counterfeit copies of such popular discs as "Saturday Night Fever" and "Grease." Estimates of the annual volume of sales of counterfeit records in this country range from \$200 million to \$350 million. The December raids were the result of the Justice Department's biggest investigation into record piracy, and it is thought that they wiped out 50 per cent of the country's illicit recording industry. One of the raided plants in New Jersey was called Super Dupers. Indeed.

● CALLING COLONEL PARKER: Robert Gordon, America's leading under-thirty exponent of rockabilly, has realized a long-time dream: signing with RCA. His first set for the House That Elvis Built, tentatively titled "Rockabilly Boogie," has both session-legend Chris Spedding and Henry (Shannon) Gross filling in for the now departed Link Wray. It should be available shortly, and RCA will also reissue Gordon's two earlier Private Stock albums.

FISHER INTRODUCES THE RECEIVERS THAT LISTEN TO YOU.

Ever since 1937, when Fisher introduced the world to the first high fidelity system, we've been constantly looking for ways to make sound even better.

One of our biggest improvements came in 1959 with the world's first stereo receiver — the famous Fisher 500.

Now, we proudly announce our latest major advance: the all-new RS2000 Studio Standard series — the receivers that listen to you.

Sound the way you like it. With the RS2000 series, you're not limited to only simple bass and treble controls like other receivers. Instead, you tell the receiver exactly how you want the sound tailored by setting its built-in graphic equalizer's slide controls. By boosting or cutting each of the five equalizer controls, you can transform ho-hum sound into the most exciting you've ever heard. You get sound that exactly matches your taste, your moods, and your environment.

Say you want to really feel the drums on a disco record. Just push up the 50 Hz (low bass) slider, and you get just the effect you want — without disturbing the tonal color of voices and other instruments. Want to really bring a vocalist "up front"? Add a little 1 kHz (midrange) boost. And so on. In a few seconds, you can make such a dramatic improvement in the sound of all your records, tapes, and FM broadcasts that you won't want a receiver without this fabulous built-in feature.

There's logic to our front panel. Most sophisticated receivers keep you guessing when it comes to operating the controls. Not the Fisher RS2000 series. We've engineered a unique "Panel Logic" system with an illuminated, computer-like display that tells you at a glance what the receiver is set up to do.

The RS2010, below, has great performance specs like superb $1.7 \mu\text{V}$ (9.8 dBf) FM sensitivity, and plenty of power (100 watts min. RMS per channel, into 8 ohms, 20-20,000 Hz, with no more than 0.09% total harmonic distortion). Other models are available from 30 to 150 watts per channel.

Listen to the Fisher RS2000 series receivers. Once you do, you'll never be satisfied with the sound of a receiver without an equalizer.

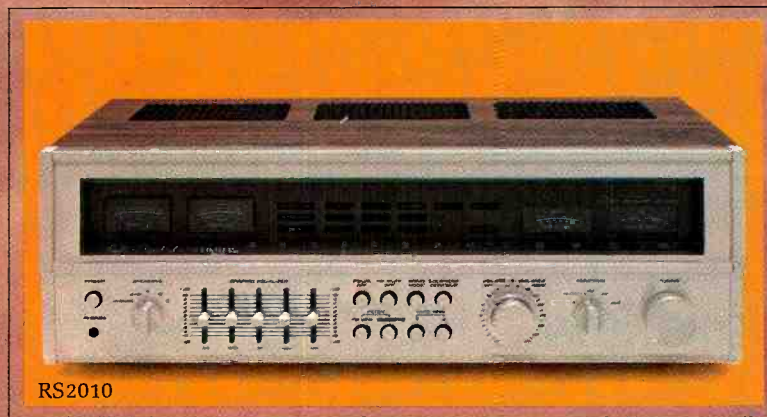
The RS2010 is about \$700* at selected audio dealers or the audio department of your favorite department store.

For a copy of the new Fisher guide to high fidelity, send your name and address and \$2 to: Fisher Corporation, Dept. H, 21314 Lassen St., Chatsworth, CA 91311.

*Manufacturer's suggested retail value. Actual selling price is determined solely by the individual Fisher dealer.

FISHER

The first name in high fidelity.



Speaking of Music...

By William Anderson



SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL CIVILIZATION

"**S**TRIKE a blow for civilization!" was the broadcast exhortation, effectively underlined by an encouraging burst of Verdi-chorus background voices, as the Metropolitan Opera went about its ticket-selling and fund-raising campaign last season. The campaign was a success, but one can't help wondering whether striking a *blow* is precisely what we ought to be doing in the service of *civilization*. "Re-elect Civilization!", "Vote Civilization!", and even "Support Your Local Civilization" seem, under the circumstances, to strike (there we go again) an appropriately nonviolent note, but then they also sound more like mere bumper-sticker, T-shirt, or lapel-button sloganeering than anything one might consider an imperative summons to serious action.

Nonetheless, there seems to be something about opera itself that engages our immediate, sober attention whenever the subject comes

up. Example: New York City Democrats decided last month that it was time to get serious about some \$250,000 in 1977 campaign debts still hanging over the head of former mayor Abe Beame, so they threw a \$2,500-a-couple shindig for two hundred big spenders at the Met (smoked salmon, roast sirloin, Big Apple sherbet, and *Aida* as a kind of second dessert), invited President Jimmy Carter, and got the kind of TV coverage politicians dream of. I do not doubt that the affair worked—in economic, social, political, artistic, and publicity terms—because it was opera and therefore *serious*; there would be no point even in sending out invitations if the same price tag were tied to, say, a Broadway show, a disco, a football game, or a movie premiere. The only surprising thing about it is the fact that it was the first time a sitting President ever visited the Met. About time.

The arts would have a much easier time of

it in this American civilization if more politicians—and, indeed, the general public—grasped their importance as clearly as Beverly Sills does in an interview appearing in this issue: "... the arts are a vital part of our civilization and should be represented by someone in a cabinet-level position who would have as much voice in government as the Secretary of Commerce or the Secretary of the Air Force."

I would like to harp on that word "civilization" a bit because it is the only effective net my mind has been able to throw around the awful events of last November. We customarily speak of the "veneer" of civilization, but it would perhaps be more accurate to call it a membrane. It is stretched with terrifying thinness over the void, and its maintenance ought to be the untiring business of every rational mind. The rational mind was nowhere in evidence in Guyana, and the resulting rupture of the membrane of social order gave us all a glimpse of chaos from which we are still recoiling. The mind tries to find someone, something to blame—the Left; the Right; poor, long-suffering California—but comes to rest finally at the universal human predicament: we apparently need—God help us—periodic, horrifying reminders that the dark is kept at bay only by an alert, ever-questioning scepticism, an independent rationality so skilled in *how* to think that it neither desires nor can be told *what* to think.

THIS is not, I hasten to add, to exalt unilaterally the life of the mind; Apollo has no more claim on us than Dionysus—it's just that he can always use a little more help. The goal is to create and sustain a balance between the two, a delicate, difficult, civilized skill that the arts—opera conspicuous among them—are particularly adept at inculcating. We ought therefore to encourage the arts simply as a matter of practical public policy, recognizing that they contain an important part of the answer to the question of what it is to be—and to remain—a human being.

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Circulation Office
P.O. Box 2771, Boulder, Colorado 80323

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But even with changes, the Model 301 retains its conventional personality.

It is, after all, a Bose Direct/Reflecting® loud-speaker system. Which means it utilizes a carefully produced balance of reflected and direct sound to give you the spatial realism of a live performance. From nearly every location in your listening room, you hear accurate stereo balance. Accurate location of each instrument, each note. Clearly, precisely. And with a fullness and richness you may have thought

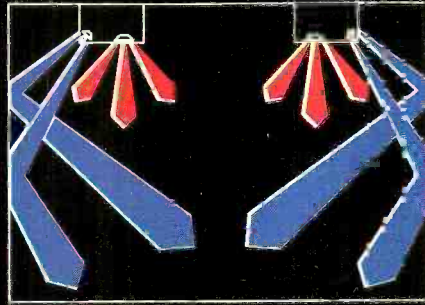
impossible from such a compact enclosure.

As a matter of fact, the Model 301 delivers a level of performance which simply astounds first-time listeners.

It could happen to you. Ask your Bose dealer to demonstrate the Model 301 against any bookshelf speaker, regardless of price.

Then ask him to demonstrate the Model 301 against even much larger speakers. In each case, you will hear an open, spacious sound that expands the confines of your listening room. Suddenly, you are in a larger, more open space, listening to music as if you were hearing it for the first time.

No other bookshelf speaker even approaches the spatial realism of the new Model 301. See your Bose dealer for a demonstration and hear what we mean.



The new Model 301.

BOSE

For complete technical information on the new Model 301 speaker system, write Bose, Dept. T, The Mountain, Framingham, MA 01701

Covered by patent rights issued and pending

Yamaha goes its separates performance,

We've never done things the conventional way. Witness our legendary B-1 and C-1 separates. These components, utilizing Yamaha-developed Vertical-FET technology, brought into being a new level of natural, accurate sound, advanced features and dramatic styling. Our new C-4 and M-4 separates follow in this tradition, while doing some precedent setting of their own.

C-4 We were determined that the performance of the C-4 should put you in touch with the outermost limits of the audio art. So it has the most advanced circuitry imaginable to give you sound so real and true, you'll swear it's live. State-of-the-art DC circuitry in the phono preamp section reduces distortion to a miniscule 0.0035% at 2V output. Signal-to-noise ratio has been tamed to the virtually inaudible level of 97dB at 10mV. Plus we've added an exclusive Current Noise Reduction Circuit to maintain this high S/N ratio regardless of varying impedances caused by using different cartridges. But the sound of the C-4 goes beyond super specs and state-of-the-art circuitry. You have to hear the sound to believe such pure, musical tonality could pass through a piece of electronics.

The C-4's features put you in total command of its superb sound. Unheard-of tone control is yours with the exclusive, continuously variable turnover frequencies for the bass and treble controls. No need to hook up an expensive outboard parametric or graphic equalizer to make meaningful tone adjustments. The C-4 gives you the

best of both at the twist of a finger. And with the C-4, you don't have to settle for anything less than the absolute optimum performance from your choice of phono cartridge. Select from five ranges for both capacitance and resistance to perfectly

match the amp's load resistance to your cartridges' characteristics. You also have the luxury of indulging in the beautifully transparent highs available from a moving coil cartridge, because we've outfitted the C-4 with its own head amp. It provides the boost necessary for a moving coil cartridge, saving you the expense of buying a separate head amp or transformer. Completely independent Input and Output selectors give you the freedom of listening to a signal from one source while recording a signal from another. Features

like these make the C-4 a super-sophisticated device whose possibilities and applications are limited only by your imagination. With graceful, yet bold styling, executed with ease-of-operation in mind, the C-4 is a marvel of modern technology leaving nothing to be desired but its ownership.



way. With unprecedented features and price.

M-4 Our passion for pure tonality reaches toward perfection in the M-4. To deliver the cleanest, most musical sound possible, we built it with DC circuitry in a dual mono amp configuration, each with its own signal path from input to output. The input section consists of dual-FET's in a differential configuration with a cascode bootstrapping circuit. So you get the unbeatable advantages of DC circuitry—minimal low frequency phase shift and maximum low frequency accuracy and musicality—while beating the inherent instability of DC circuitry.

The M-4's specs are nothing short of spectacular. THD takes a bow at an incredibly low 0.005% at rated output

0.005% THD

of 120W per channel into 8 ohms, 20Hz to 20kHz. Signal-to-noise ratio is, (please

plause) an utterly silent 115dB.

Again though, specs can't do the sound of the M-4 justice. When it comes to doing justice to amplifying a signal from a preamp (especially the C-4) we feel the M-4 deserves a standing ovation. If you love musically accurate sound coming from your speakers, you will be equally enthralled with the sound of the M-4.

And with its functional features.

Visually arresting LEDs monitor your amp's power output, while overload indicators allow you to see when you're pushing it beyond its intended limits. The M-4 is a musical experience you participate in. Drive two sets of speakers independently or simultaneously with the simple push of a computer-grade switch, as well as select

the DC or AC operating mode with the back panel switch.

And while you are driving your M-4, its drilled metal-mesh top allows the amp to "breathe." It's just one example of the unique design philosophy of form-follows-



function in styling, features and performance.

And that's what our new separates are all about. Unprecedented performance, features and styling. And price? Well, you can benefit from what we learned with our cost-no-object B-1, C-1. Without paying the price. Audition our new, rack-mountable (with optional kit), super separates, the C-4 and M-4, for yourself. It's an ear-opening experience you won't want to miss. For the name of your Yamaha Audio Specialty Dealer, check your Yellow Pages or write us.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Pseudo Time Delay

● Years ago, when the Hafler system discussed in December's "Audio Basics" first received publicity in *STEREO REVIEW*, I tried it out using for the "rear channel" two unmounted 5-inch speakers from an old tape recorder. It produced some great effects that I really enjoyed, but I disconnected it in hopes of one day having some "real" speakers to try it with. For the last year I've had a spare pair of Realistic MC-1000's. Now Ralph Hodges has jogged my memory and, with the speakers connected according to his diagram, I am completely delighted; those marvelous effects are there once again. Thanks, Ralph—and David Hafler, too. You made my Sunday.

DAVID GREEN
Houston, Texas

● Ralph Hodges' "Pseudo Time Delay" (December) is almost unbelievable in a magazine that usually advocates high standards in the field of audio. To suggest using the "Hafler system" to "preview" either time-delay or four-channel systems is like suggesting one use a stick with a nail on one end and an oatmeal box glued to the other to "preview" the latest in tone arms and amplifiers. The Hafler hookup is nothing more than an unusual way to run wire among four speakers and a stereo amplifier.

Mr. Hodges says that "technically, the method is quite legitimate." Legitimate for what?! It may produce something out of the rear speakers, due to out-of-phase signals from a stereo source, but it could not possibly approach the capabilities of a sophisticated time-delay system, much less the performance of a discrete four-channel system. In addition, good quad offers certain otherwise unattainable spatial arrangements in pop/rock music that are enjoyable to many listeners. This kind of "suggestion" from Mr. Hodges is unfair to the engineers and manufacturers who create the sophisticated time-delay and four-channel equipment, and it can be misleading to those who will try the "Hafler system" rather than the real thing.

RICHARD J. MARLEN
St. Louis, Mo.

Ralph Hodges replies: Personally, I see no

harm in experimenting with salmon roe to learn whether you can acquire a taste for expensive imported caviar.

Leon Redbone

● Thanks to Phyl Garland for her fine December review of Leon Redbone's "Champane Charlie." In this time of "New Wave" noise and the generally mindless cacophony of disco, Leon Redbone is a welcome denizen of the world of "soulful blues." His real name, by the way, is Dickran Gobalian. He was born on August 26, 1949, of Turkish-Armenian stock, and his first public performance was in the summer of 1971 at the Mariposa Folk Festival in Canada.

DAVID SECORD JR.
Port Edwards, Wis.

Public Defender

● Is there any truth to the rumor that Steve Simels is going to defend Sid Vicious?

TOM HUTSON
St. Louis, Mo.

No, but he is going to go four rounds against Gentle Ben.

Someone to Believe In?

● I felt as if I myself had written Paulette Weiss' December column, "All I Want for Christmas." She has hit the nail squarely on the proverbial head. I am sure she would have included George Thorogood and the Delaware Destroyers in the same category as the rockers she admires. However, considering all that Harry Chapin has given of himself to end world hunger, it is difficult to see how he could be placed in the "Do Not Believe" column no matter what one may feel about his musical talent.

ROBERT N. MORRIS
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

Popular Music Editor Weiss replies: Chapin's charitable activities are certainly admirable, but they earn him no points in the musical in-

tegrity department. Although his efforts may help feed thousands, his music offers only empty calories. But I agree that Thorogood is thoroughly good.

Hirsch Sense

● Hats off to Julian D. Hirsch for his realistic, down-to-earth approach to electronic equipment design ("Technical Talk," December). His thoughts on the matter really make sense!

R. M. HAVOURD
Chatham, N.J.

The Reviewers

● I'm not going to get into the dispute over what a record review should be or which of the *STEREO REVIEW* critics is best or worst. Just let me say that the reviews are highly entertaining—at least as much so as the latest "platinum" pop release. I don't care what anyone says about the reviewers; with all that wit, why change them?

DOUGLAS PENWELL
APO San Francisco, Calif.

● Like Mr. Larry Winter (December "Letters"), I am weary of all those letters from the great unwashed, outraged at some real or imagined slight to their current favorite pop star by one of *STEREO REVIEW*'s record reviewers. But I'm just as impatient with the supremely arrogant correspondents who nitpick minor details or, worse, airily dismiss a reviewer's opinion as "irrelevant." Personally, I think it is mostly a waste of time and effort to dignify with a "review" what passes for music these days (but perhaps I can be accused of a similar arrogance). When it comes to building or filling out a classical record collection, however, it seems to me that the reviewer performs a valuable service by aiding the buyer to select an especially worthy record from an often considerable number of offerings, particularly when one considers the high cost of discs today.

Truly fine performances almost always draw consistent acclaim from a number of reliable music reviewers, in which category I include those writing for *STEREO REVIEW*, who I think do a commendably objective job—often in only a paragraph or two, which is not at all an easy task. The reviews are signed (initialed), after all, and one soon learns whom to trust. And when two or more versions of the same work are suggested, subjective preferences aside, I tend to buy the product from a known quality house (e.g., Philips) offering better pressings.

And by the way, I think Steve Simels' review of Ronstadt's latest (December) was bang-on!

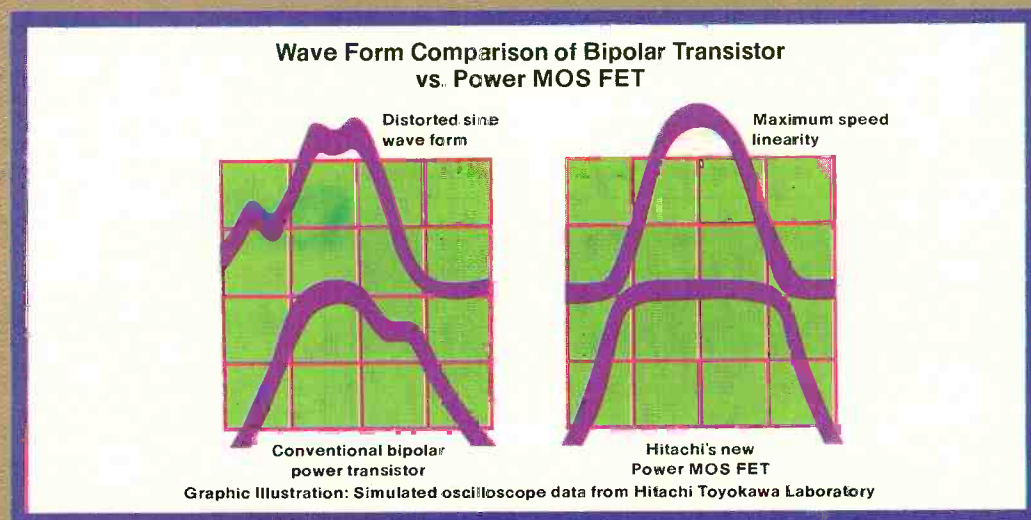
D. C. MILWARD
Larkspur, Calif.

Crassover?

● As a lifetime resident of Nashville, I found Noel Coppage's "Is Country Going to the Dogs?" (November) very interesting and in most cases right on target. What he says about the influence of TV and of other forms of popular music on country is obviously true.

(Continued on page 14)

The world's fastest power amplifier



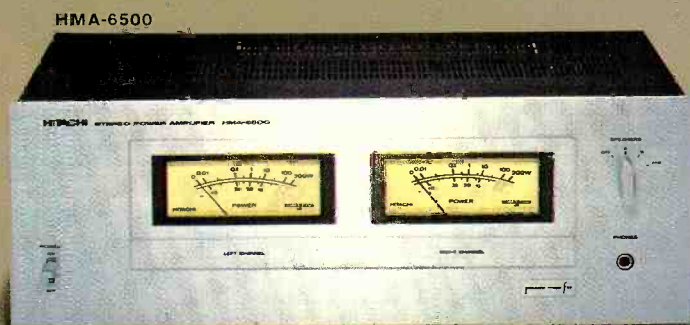
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CIRCLE NO. 25 ON READER SERVICE CARD

The exodus of Nashville's country superstars to management firms in New York or Los Angeles is dramatic proof of TV's influence; that's why it's being done, for more TV exposure. But Nashville has one big asset, and that is its roots. As long as there are producers, artists, and fans who respect those roots (and there are, more than a lot of people think), country and Nashville won't be swallowed up. Oh, sure, the exploiters, the phonies, the big-bucks-at-any-cost types will always be there, but we'll survive. There are always "sunshine patriots," but when the chips are down the true of heart stick it out and prevail.

What I dislike is the dishonesty and deception, like when a certain blonde singer goes before an Opryland audience and says, "It's

good to be home," then flies down to her ranch and rich oilman husband in Louisiana after the show. Friends like this Nashville doesn't need, and neither does a music that professes to be truthful and straightforward.

JAMES R. MACINTYRE
Nashville, Tenn.

⊗ Noel Coppage's "Is Country Going to the Dogs?" raised some interesting points. I can't really blame the Nashville "hard country" people for being angry with pop singers getting their start with country music. However, the so-called "crossover" goes both ways. One example would be Buck Owens' singing *Nights Are Forever*, a pop tune written by Parker McGee and made popular by England

Dan and John Ford Coley. As I write this letter, Owens' cover of *Nights Are Forever* is on the country charts. Another example is the pop tune *Bluer than Blue* by Randy Goodrum. Michael Johnson made it popular, but Beverly Heckle put it on the country charts. Dolly Parton, Linda Ronstadt, and Crystal Gayle all get lots of air play on pop/rock as well as country stations, but Emmylou Harris (one of my favorite singers), although called a pop singer by critics, gets no air play on pop/rock stations but does on country stations. As a pop/rock fan getting into country music, I am thoroughly confused. Is it possible to define the difference between pop and country?

KEVIN R. JONES
Springfield, Ill.

Sure: pop is what pop fans like, and country is what country fans like!

Marriner's Cottages

⊗ As much as I enjoyed Clair W. Van Ausdall's November article on Neville Marriner, I was surprised by the statement that the Marriners have "two cottages, one in Dorset, the other in Lyme Regis." A quick reference to an atlas shows that Lyme Regis is (unless it has recently seceded) itself located in Dorset.

PATRICK D. WRIGHT
Winnipeg, Manitoba

Mr. Van Ausdall replies: Sorry for the mix-up. Mrs. Marriner explains that the residence in Lyme Regis (which is, of course, in Dorset, formerly Dorsetshire) is actually a house, while their "real 'cottage' is in Devonshire, the heart of the cider country, where the men still get so drunk on Saturday night that quite a lot of them spend Sunday and Monday in jail."

Whatever Happened to?

⊗ In the November issue I read with particular interest Paulette Weiss' "Whatever Happened to . . . ?" and then Steve Simels' "Requiem for the Who" (about the tragic death of Keith Moon). The combination prompted me to wonder whatever happened to Ginger Baker. He was certainly one of the top drummers to come out of rock. He went from Graham Bond's band to Cream, then to Blind Faith, then to Air Force, and then to . . . what? I don't believe that I have seen a record with him on it released for seven or eight years. Does anyone have any notion what became of him?

CHARLES S. POPPLE
Overland Park, Kan.

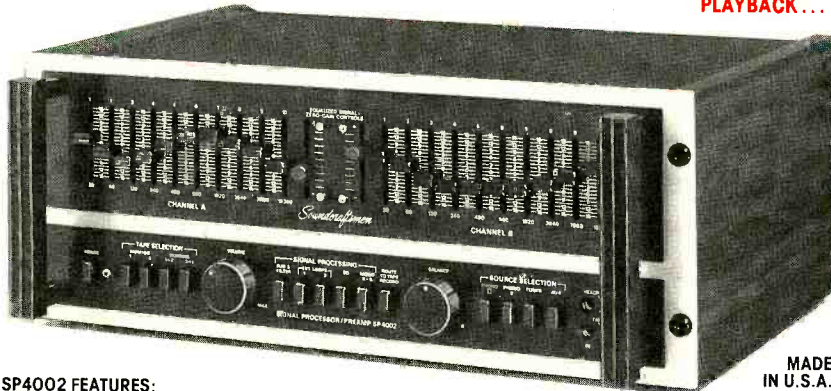
⊗ After I read Paulette Weiss' "Whatever Happened to . . . ?" I was checking through my LP collection and came across three albums by Gayle McCormick, formerly of the group called Smith. I have not seen any new material from her in over two years. Does anyone know what she's doing now and where she lives?

BRUCE ANDERSON
Toronto, Ontario

⊗ Hurray for Paulette Weiss! I really enjoyed her "Whatever Happened to . . . ?" Even though I don't know (and don't really care) what happened to Lena Zavaroni, I was
(Continued on page 16)

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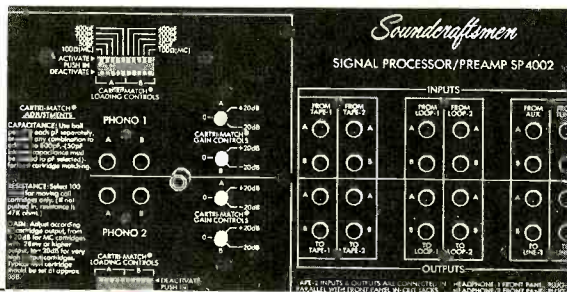


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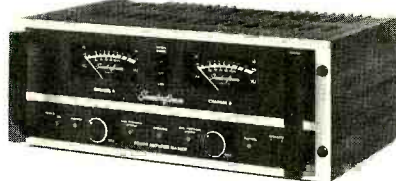
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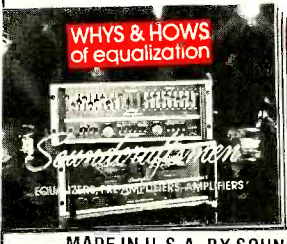
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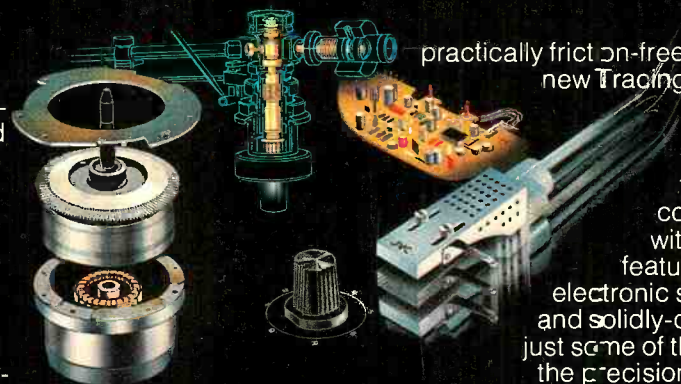
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CIRCLE NO. 30 ON READER SERVICE CARD

glad to hear about Emmitt Rhodes. His album "Emmitt Rhodes" (Dunhill DS 50089) was one of the best of the early Seventies. I was surprised to read that many people thought he was a "wimp" because he sounded like Paul McCartney. Back then (but not now) McCartney was great, and if Rhodes resembled him in any way it was only because he was performing good material. But what really made Rhodes' album spectacular was that it was a one-man project, a "Todd Rundgren" so to speak.

D. SCHRIMPF
Jefferson City, Mo.

Saintly Nonsense

☉ I have been making my living as a full-time dealer in deleted classical LP records for nearly six years, and the nonsense about Menotti's *The Saint of Bleeker Street* going for \$600 a copy (repeated in a September review by Paul Kresh and in the November "Letters") is beginning to get my goat. Of course, it is possible that somewhere, sometime, some crooked dealer managed to convince some rich sucker to shell out \$600 for that set, just as some people have managed to sell the Brooklyn Bridge. However, I feel that bandying such figures about does nothing but disservice to collectors. Many deleted classical albums command premium prices, otherwise I (and my few colleagues) would not still be in business. But those of us who deal primarily with serious collectors (as opposed to the shops in large cities that prey on tourists)

maintain far more moderate price levels than the \$600 tag would indicate. I've never heard of *The Saint of Bleeker Street* selling for more than \$100 or so, and the last copy I obtained went for \$60.

LESLIE GERBER
Parnassus Records
Saugerties, N.Y.

Picture Discs

☉ The November "Bulletin" item about the picture-disc/color-disc fad brought back childhood memories of 78- and 45-rpm discs pressed in yellow and red; I think there were some picture discs then as well. We seem to have come "full circle."

RUTH BLOCK
New York, N.Y.

"Disposable" Music

☉ I've just finished reading Peter Reilly's review of the new Shaun Cassidy and Cheryl Ladd albums in the November issue. I was astounded to find writing of this quality in a record review, and I knew within the first few sentences that it was going to be the best review I had ever read. Lately it seems I meet more and more listeners who are conscious of production techniques, instrumentation, the "sound" of an album and how "well done" it is, but who apparently care nothing for the content, the credibility, or the depth of the concept behind the work. Disposable music is

being presented as something to be taken seriously, and I fear its eventual acceptance as representative of this country's popular art. It is nice to know that when all this gets me down, I have Mr. Reilly's article to reread.

JOHN BOLLES
Ambler, Pa.

Buddy Holly

☉ After reading Steve Simels' review of "The Buddy Holly Story" (September), seeing the movie, and listening to Holly and the Crickets' "Twenty Golden Greats" until my turntable protests exhaustion, I am wondering whether my enthusiasm should be chalked up to nostalgia for my early teens or something more substantial. Holly has a distinctive voice and a clean, uncomplicated sound (I'll bet his studio sessions were short). His songs were almost exclusively bent toward the true-love message, but I'm sure they will be taken seriously, even though they're twenty years old, by people too young to remember them.

RON CAMPBELL
Teslin, Yukon

Wrong Hog

☉ December's "Pop Rotogravure" shows Meat Loaf posing on what the caption identifies as "a Harley-Davidson hog." Hogwash! It's a Triumph Trident.

GLENN WOODS
Palisades Park, N.J.



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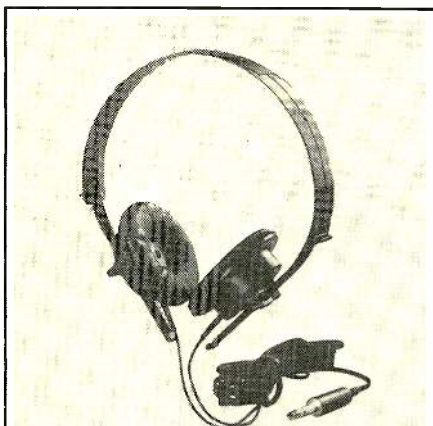
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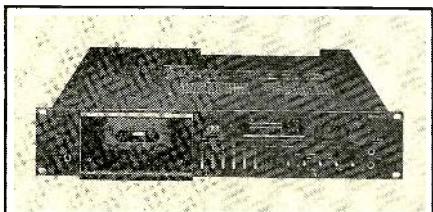
New Products latest audio equipment and accessories



Audio-Technica Headphone Uses Film Diaphragm

□ Audio-Technica's ATH-1 "Gram Cracker" is a lightweight (4¾ ounces without cord) open-backed headphone of the "supra-aural" (non-sealing earcup) type. It employs an unusual drive element that has a flat aluminum voice coil bonded to a plastic-film diaphragm that is in turn suspended between two perforated-disc magnets. Frequency response is 30 to 20,000 Hz, harmonic distortion at normal listening levels is below 0.8 per cent, and sensitivity at 1,000 Hz is 93 dB for a 1-milliwatt input. Nominal impedance is 4 to 16 ohms, and cord length is 8¼ feet. Price: \$29.95.

Circle 120 on reader service card



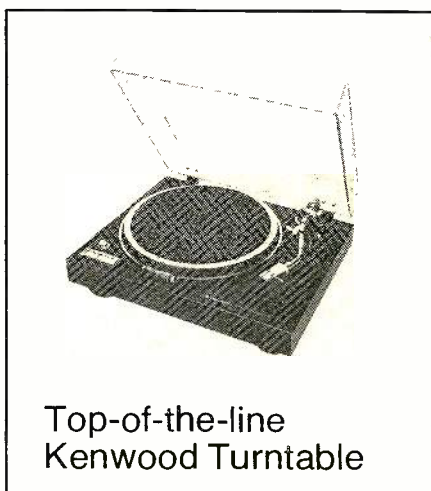
Technics Cassette Deck Is Long and Low

□ The Technics RS-M85 is a front-loading, low-silhouette cassette deck with a two-motor, logic-controlled transport mechanism. Cassettes are inserted and played spine upward. A direct-drive motor with speed governed by a quartz-crystal oscillator and a phase-locked loop drives the capstan, and a second motor turns the cassette hubs. The transport has a weighted wow-and-flutter specification of 0.035 per cent or less; fast-winding speed is approximately 80 seconds for a C-60 cassette. A Sendust-alloy head is used for record and playback functions. Frequency

response of the deck is 30 to 16,000 Hz ± 3 dB with ferrichrome or chromium-dioxide tape and 30 to 14,000 Hz ± 3 dB with conventional ferric tape. Signal-to-noise ratio with CrO₂ tape and the Dolby circuits operating is 69 dB.

The RS-M85 uses a fluorescent bar-graph level-metering system comprised of two rows of small squares that are illuminated to indicate relative levels. Two types of meter response, VU and faster-responding peak-reading, are selectable with a front-panel switch, as are two degrees of display brightness. Additional front-panel controls include a three-position tape selector, a fine-tuning bias-adjustment knob, and a memory-rewind function switch. A diagram on the top panel explains the signal path and details the frequency response. Dimensions are 19 x 3¾ x 15¾ inches. Price: \$700. A remote-control unit, the RP-9690-P, is available as an option for \$100.

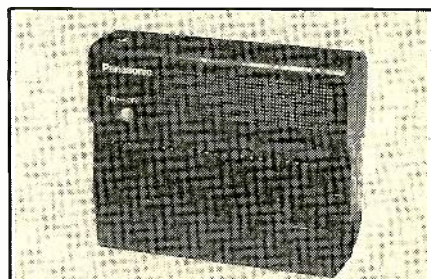
Circle 121 on reader service card



Top-of-the-line Kenwood Turntable

□ The Kenwood KD-750 turntable utilizes a direct-drive, quartz-controlled motor with a very high starting torque. This motor, in combination with an unusually large, heavy platter (13-inch diameter, 5.7 pounds), yields a wow-and-flutter specification of 0.02 per cent (weighted rms) and a rumble figure of -74 dB (DIN weighted). The rubber platter mat has a thick cross section designed to reduce resonance and vibration of the record itself. The tone arm incorporates a "stand-off" decoupling system that isolates the arm from the rest of the turntable. Effective mass of the arm is kept at a minimum through the use of a magnesium-alloy head shell, and friction is said to be extremely low by virtue of a dual-bearing system for both horizontal and vertical pivots. Additional features include an illuminated strobe for speed monitoring, light-touch controls, and a composite resin-concrete and particle-board base designed to eliminate vibration and acoustic feedback. Dimensions with cover are 18½ x 6 x 14 inches, and weight is 18.9 pounds. Price: \$495.

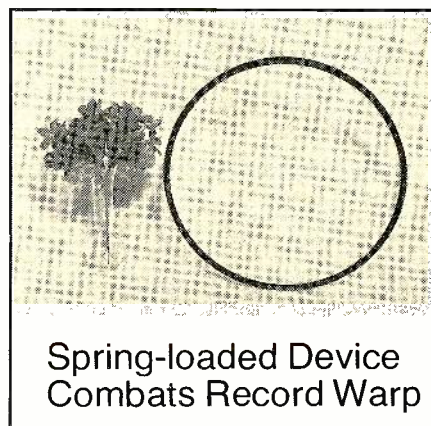
Circle 122 on reader service card



Battery-powered Record Cleaner From Panasonic

□ The Panasonic BH-651E record cleaner uses a rotary brush to collect dust from a record surface, depositing the particles in an attached dustbox. The bristles of the brush are made of vinyl, and they are said to be fine enough (0.05 millimeter in diameter) to reach into individual grooves and soft enough to prevent damage to the record surface. The brush turns at 3,000 rpm and is powered by two AA-size batteries (not included). Price: \$16.95.

Circle 123 on reader service card



Spring-loaded Device Combats Record Warp

□ The "Warp Out" is a spring-loaded, cast-metal ring designed for friction-fit over the edges of most 12-inch turntable platters so as to flatten warped records temporarily for playing. The device requires a horizontal clearance of ¼ inch beyond the record edge and a vertical clearance of ⅜ inch below the record's surface. The manufacturer also notes that a few turntables having the tone arm and platter assembly softly suspended from the unit's top plate are incapable of supporting an additional 400-gram weight and may therefore be subject to clearance problems. Price: \$15. Available from Equilibrium Systems, P.O. Box 301SR, Newtonville, Mass. 02160.

Circle 124 on reader service card

(Continued on page 21)



While the others were catching up, TDK was moving ahead.

Shortly after it was introduced in 1975, TDK SA, the world's first non-chrome high bias cassette, was accepted by most quality deck manufacturers as their high bias reference standard. This advanced, new cassette enabled their decks to perform to the limit of their capabilities. And because the decks are set in the factory to sound their best with SA, music-loving consumers made SA the number one selling high bias cassette.

The other tape makers set out in pursuit of SA, hoping someday to equal the performance of its Super Avilyn particle formulation and the reliability of its super precision mechanism.

But making the world's most advanced cassette was nothing new for TDK's engineers. They pioneered the high fidelity cassette back in 1968 and for more than a decade they've led the way in cassette tape technology. Over the last three years, they've refined SA and made

it clearly superior to the '75 version.*

That makes the music lovers happy; it means more music with less distortion. It makes the deck makers happy; they've been improving their decks and SA makes them sound better than ever. But for the competition, unhappily, it means a whole new standard to catch up to.

So if you'd like to raise your own recording standards, step up to TDK SA, the high bias reference tape backed by high fidelity's original full lifetime warranty.**

TDK Electronics
Corporation,
Garden City,
New York 11530

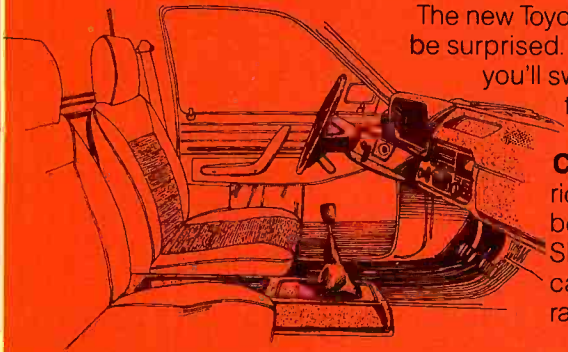
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*Today's SA has a maximum output level (MOL) more than 3dB better than that of '75 SA at the critical high frequencies, and improved sensitivity across the entire frequency range. **In the unlikely event that any TDK audio cassette ever fails to perform due to a defect in materials or workmanship, return it to your local dealer or to TDK for a free replacement. ©1973, TDK Electronics Corp.

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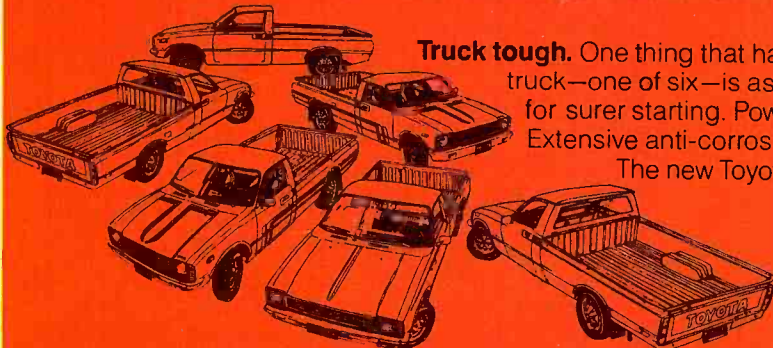
The new Toyota SR-5 Long Bed. If you find yourself calling it your new car, don't be surprised. This new Toyota truck has an all-new interior that's so comfortable you'll swear you're in a car. New softer-riding torsion bar front suspension too. The new Toyota SR-5. It's the truck that doesn't ride like a truck.



Car comfort. More comfort, thanks to an interior that's more padded and upholstered than before. More sound-deadening insulation too. SR-5 Sport Trucks also include wall-to-wall carpeting, bucket seats, even an AM/FM radio as standard equipment.



Car fun. This new Toyota truck may be the most fun car you've ever owned. It's powered by a gutsy 2.2 liter overhead cam engine. Shifted by a sporty 5-speed overdrive transmission. Rides on steel belted radial tires. And has great new styling.



Truck tough. One thing that hasn't changed is the toughness. This new Toyota truck—one of six—is as reliable as ever. With fully transistorized ignition for surer starting. Power assisted front disc brakes for surer stopping. Extensive anti-corrosion protection. And a cargo bed seven feet long. The new Toyota SR-5 Long Bed. It's more than your next truck.

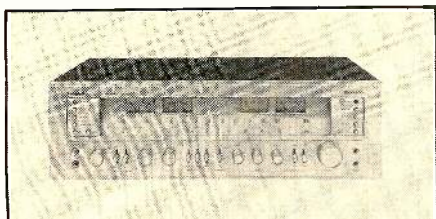
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New Products

latest audio equipment and accessories

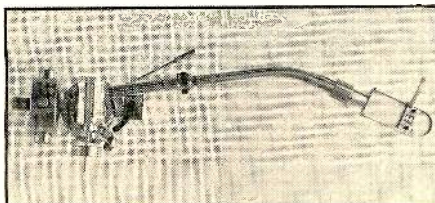


Lafayette's Most Powerful Receiver

□ At 120 watts per channel into 8 ohms (20 to 20,000 Hz) with a maximum of 0.09 per cent total harmonic distortion, the Lafayette LR-120DB is that company's most powerful stereo receiver. Its amplifier section has a signal-to-noise ratio of 90 dB. The FM usable sensitivity is rated at 1.8 microvolts; 50-dB quieting sensitivity is 2.8 microvolts. The tuner's ultimate signal-to-noise ratio is 74 dB (mono) and 70 dB (stereo); built-in Dolby circuits improve the figures to 84 and 80 dB, respectively. It has a 1.3-dB capture ratio, 55-dB AM rejection, and 80-dB alternate-channel selectivity. Image rejection is 80 dB and i.f. rejection 85 dB.

The LR-120DB's bass and treble controls have selectable turnover frequencies of 250 or 500 Hz and 2,500 or 5,000 Hz, respectively; they are augmented by a mid-range control centered at 1,000 Hz. The receiver accepts two tape decks and has two-way dubbing capability. There is provision for up to three pairs of loudspeakers; the loudness control can be switched to provide different degrees of contour. Dimensions are 21 x 7 x 17 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and the unit weighs just under 42 pounds. Price: about \$650.

Circle 125 on reader service card



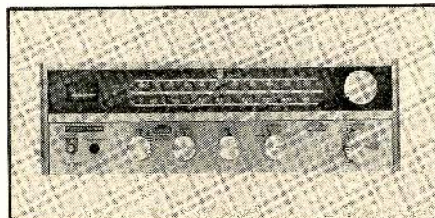
New Tone Arm from Fidelity Research

□ The Fidelity Research FR-12 tone arm has been designed primarily for use with low-compliance moving-coil cartridges such as those that make up the company's FR-1 series. Its solid machined-aluminum head shell (effective shell mass is approximately 30 grams) attaches to the arm by means of a standard four-pin universal "bayonet" connector, and it may therefore be replaced by

any standard low-mass head shell when a high-compliance cartridge is used.

The arm employs radial ball bearings for both lateral and vertical pivots and is said to have bearing friction of 5 milligrams or less in either plane. The arm is balanced by means of a counterweight with integral set screw; vernier-adjusted tracking force is applied over a range of 0 to 3 grams by sliding a small weight within the arm shaft fore or aft. Antiskating compensation is supplied by a weight-and-lever system. There is also an adjustable weight for lateral balance. Tone-arm cueing is viscous damped in both directions of travel. Arm height is adjustable. The FR-12 is intended for cartridges weighing between 4 and 12 grams. Installation involves only a single 1-inch hole drilled through the motorboard. Effective arm length is just over 9 inches. Price: \$400 post-paid from Fidelity Research of America, P.O. Box 5242SR, Ventura, Calif. 93003.

Circle 126 on reader service card



High-performance Budget Receiver From Harman Kardon

□ The Harman Kardon 340 is a moderately priced AM/FM stereo receiver said to have been developed using the same sonic performance criteria employed in the design of many esoteric components. According to Harman Kardon, the 340 and the other receivers in their new series eliminate transient intermodulation distortion through the use of power-amplifier sections having a very wide bandwidth. The 340 is rated at 20 watts per channel with total harmonic distortion of less than 0.1 per cent. Intermodulation distortion is rated at 0.09 per cent. The phono section can accept signals of up to 80 millivolts at 1,000 Hz before overload and has a signal-to-noise ratio of 85 dB. The FM usable sensitivity is 2.3 microvolts, 50-dB quieting in stereo is achieved with a signal strength of 39.5 microvolts, and ultimate signal-to-noise ratio of the tuner section is 65 dB. The 340 has FM distortion in stereo of 0.3 per cent or less, a capture ratio of 2 dB, and alternate-channel selectivity of 60 dB. The i.f. rejection is 90 dB, and AM suppression is 50 dB. Dimensions are 15 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 5 x 12 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches. Price: \$259.

Circle 127 on reader service card

(Continued overleaf)

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Every Allison speaker system you buy as new has actually been "used" for 20 minutes to a half hour. Spending this much time on our test program gives us the confidence to publish a most complete set of specifications for our products, and to provide a full warranty that every one will meet those specifications within ± 2 dB for at least five years.

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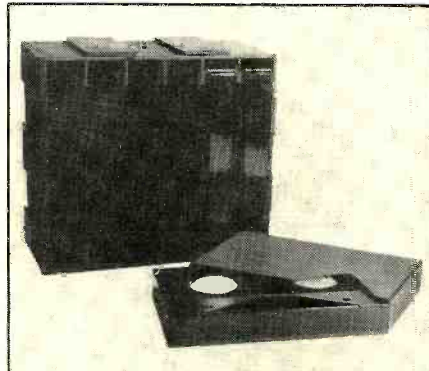
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New Products

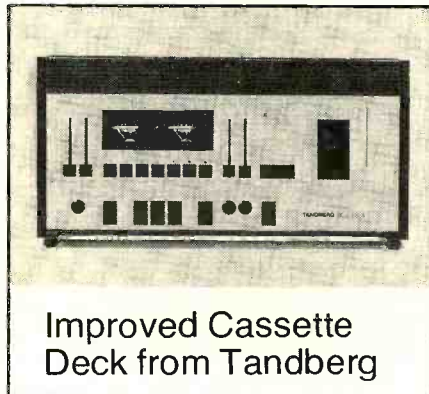
latest audio equipment and accessories



Videocassette Storage Modules Can Interlock

□ Royal Sound has expanded its line of Add 'n Stac plastic tape-storage units to include modules for videocassettes in both the Betamax (shown) and VHS formats. The modules each accept six cassettes, and they can be interlocked via dovetail side and top moldings to form either vertical or horizontal groupings. The units are available in black, brown, white, orange, blue, red, and translucent smoke. Dimensions are approximately 7 x 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 4 inches for the Betamax type and 8 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 7 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 4 $\frac{3}{8}$ for the VHS type. Price: \$7 each.

Circle 128 on reader service card



Improved Cassette Deck from Tandberg

□ Tandberg has introduced a three-motor, three-head cassette deck, the TCD-340A, utilizing the company's proprietary "Actilinear" recording system. The Actilinear system employs filters and additional active stages in the record section so as to increase the headroom of the recording amplifiers and minimize interference between the bias signal and the audio-signal circuits. Tandberg states that the 20 dB of additional headroom permitted by the Actilinear system will enable the deck to be adjusted for use with the higher-coercivity tape formulations, such as the pure-metal-

particle tapes, now being developed by tape manufacturers. A modification kit for the 340A will be supplied to dealers later this year. At about the same time, Tandberg will introduce production models of the TCD-340AM, which is designed from the start to play and record metal-particle tapes.

The transport mechanism of the TCD-340A has dual capstans and fully logic-controlled functions with solenoid switching. It incorporates a synchronous motor for record and playback functions and two servo-controlled d.c. motors for fast-forward and rewind operations. Weighted wow and flutter are 0.12 per cent or less. Frequency response is 30 to 18,000 Hz ± 3 dB. Signal-to-noise ratio with high-output ferric tapes and Dolby circuits is 65 dB. The TCD-340A's monitor head and two sets of Dolby circuits permit off-the-tape monitoring in fully Dolby-decoded form; a front-panel switch also permits recording of Dolbyized FM broadcasts. Other front-panel features include equalized peak-reading meters, a memory-rewind switch, and a two-position tape-type selector to alter bias and equalization appropriately. Approximate dimensions of the TCD-340A (which will be the same in the 340AM version) are 16 x 4 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 9 $\frac{1}{8}$ inches. Price: \$1,140. (The TCD-340AM will cost \$1,300.) An optional remote-control unit, the RC-9, is available for \$99.50.

Circle 129 on reader service card



Record Cleaner Made From Goat Hair

□ A Danish experimenter has announced that a record brush made from the hair of angora goats will clean records thoroughly without scratching or generating static. According to Elpa Marketing, importer of the device, trials with bristles of hair from weasels, squirrels, goats, and other animals have indicated that goat hair is the ideal material for removing dust from record grooves. The brushes have now been introduced under the trade name "Clean-Ol." Price: \$5.49.

Circle 130 on reader service card

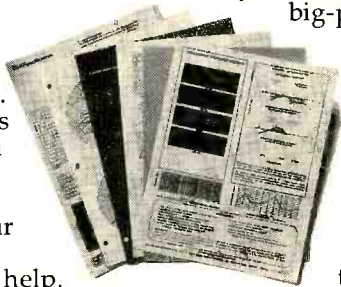
(Continued on page 24)

The secret to buying a loudspeaker is to keep your ears open and your eyes closed.

You're at any hi-fi dealer in Anycity USA. And you're staring at the lineup: Boxes. Big, little. Tall, short. Brown, black.

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You can't play a spec sheet. Stop. Put down your engineering reports. Set aside your biases. (That big-name, big-price loudspeaker may very well be just the thing you're not looking for.)

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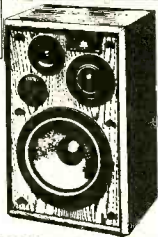
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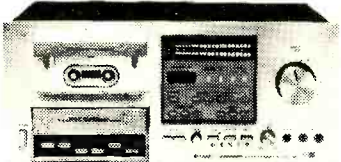
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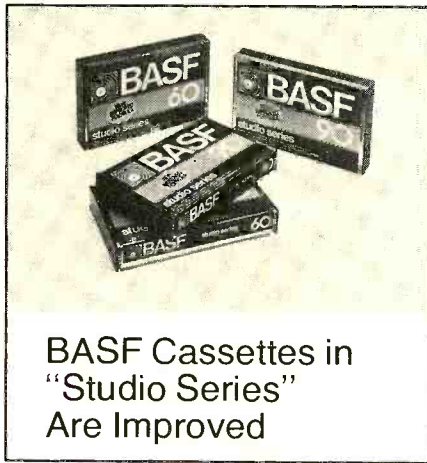
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New Products
 latest audio equipment and accessories



BASF Cassettes in
"Studio Series"
Are Improved

□ BASF has introduced an improved version of their "Studio Series" ferric-oxide cassettes. According to the manufacturer, the new Studio cassettes exhibit improved coercivity and bias characteristics due to a newly developed oxide formulation that also provides 1 to 2 dB greater output at higher frequencies. The cassette uses the "normal" bias and 120-microsecond equalization positions on conventional cassette decks. Packaging is in a standard Philips-style hinged box. Prices: \$2.99 for the C-60, \$4.49 for the C-90.

Circle 131 on reader service card



RTR's Subwoofer
And Satellite

□ The RTR Model DAC/1 Rhombus subwoofer and Model PS/1 Pyramid satellite speaker have been designed to be used together as a three- or four-component full-range loudspeaker system, although either model may also be used with loudspeakers of other types. The manufacturer notes that a wide variety of connection configurations are practicable with the DAC/1-PS/1 combination; these range from the use of the speakers' internal passive-crossover network and a single subwoofer enclosure to a dual-subwoofer and active-crossover arrangement. The DAC/1

employs one 12-inch woofer and two 15-inch passive radiators in a floor-standing walnut-veneer enclosure. The built-in crossover network rolls off the speaker's response above 120 Hz at the rate of 6 dB per octave. Frequency response of the system (without crossover) is 16 to 150 Hz ± 2 dB, nominal impedance is 6 ohms, and recommended amplifier power is 40 watts minimum, 125 watts maximum. Approximate dimensions are 29½ x 28 x 21¼ inches. Price: \$550.

The PS/1 satellite is a three-way acoustic-suspension system in a truncated pyramid shape. It employs an 8-inch bass/mid-range driver with a 1½-inch high-temperature voice coil, a 1½-inch soft-dome mid-range with a carbon-fiber diaphragm, and a 1-inch soft-dome fabric tweeter. Crossover frequencies are 1,500 and 9,000 Hz; the crossover has a continuously variable tweeter-level control, a circuit breaker to limit input power, and a switchable circuit to roll off the system's response below 120 Hz at 6 dB per octave when it is used with the DAC/1 subwoofer. Frequency response of the PS/1 is 40 to 20,000 Hz ± 2 dB, sensitivity is 90 dB for a 1-watt input, and nominal impedance is 6 ohms. The enclosure is finished in walnut veneer and measures 12¾ x 5 x 21⅞ inches. Price: \$295.

Circle 132 on reader service card



Series 20 Tuner
Has Touch-sensitive
Automatic Tuning

□ Series 20, a Japanese brand of "esoteric" audio components, is introducing its F-26 FM stereo tuner, a low-silhouette unit featuring a touch-sensitive quartz-locked automatic tuning system. The system is actuated when the listener's hand is withdrawn from the tuning knob, automatically fine-adjusting and then locking the station frequency precisely at channel center. Tuning meters are not used; rather, three front-panel LED's indicate correct tuning (center LED) or the direction of a tuning error (right LED for high, left for low). The F-26 also incorporates a circuit that automatically selects either a wide or narrow i.f. bandwidth, depending on the amount of noise and interference present in the signal, as well as a 19-kHz pilot-tone suppression circuit using cancellation techniques rather than a low-pass filter to avoid high-frequency losses.

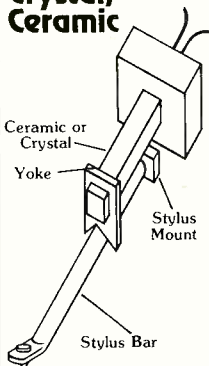
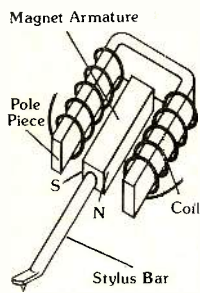
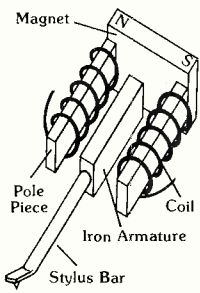
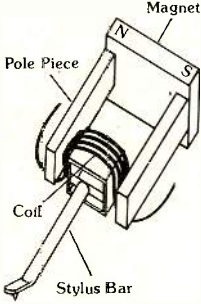
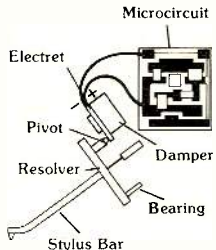
(Continued on page 26)

Phono Cartridges

A Buyer's Guide from Micro-Acoustics

The phonograph record is a mechanical replica of musical performance. The job of the phono cartridge is to convert complex undulations of the record groove into an electrical signal. Here's how the different kinds of phono cartridges compare in function, performance and manufacture. This chart has been

prepared to help you make the appropriate choice for your budget and music system. The information encompasses the range of performance characteristics for each type of cartridge. Data* is compiled from manufacturers' literature and the results obtained at Micro-Acoustics cartridge clinics held throughout the U.S.A.

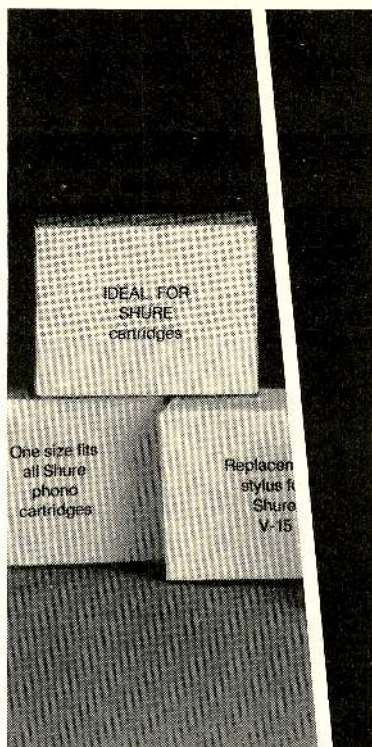
Performance Categories	Crystal, Ceramic 	Moving Magnet 	Moving Iron (Similar to Induced Magnet Type) 	Moving Coil 	Electret (Micro-Acoustics Direct-Coupled) 
Operation Principle	Stylus bar moved by record groove under heavy tracking pressure (3-8 grams). Bar's motion bends crystal element causing output signal.	Stylus bar moved by record groove. Magnet armature vibrates between pole pieces, causing change in flux, and inducing signal in output coil.	Stylus bar moved by record groove. Iron armature vibrates between pole pieces, changing reluctance of magnetic path, and inducing signal in output coil.	Stylus bar moved by record groove. As coil vibrates through magnetic field, signal is induced in coil and fed to step-up transformer or pre-preamp.	Stylus bar moved by record groove. Stylus bar vibrates electrets through resolver and pivots, producing signal which is fed to microcircuit.
Tracking Ability	Poor to Fair	Good to Excellent	Good to Excellent	Good to Very Good	Very Good to Excellent
Transient Ability <i>(rise time in microseconds)</i>	60 to 100	30 to 60	25 to 50	20 to 30	17 to 20
Freq. Resp. Variation Due to Loading with Pre-Amp, Cables	±4dB below 1000Hz <i>(plugs directly into amp input)</i>	-10dB to +6 above 3kHz	-12dB to +4 above 3kHz	±½dB over entire range	±½dB over entire range
Ability to Perform In Variety of Tonearms	Works in low-cost units only	Good to Very Good	Fair to Very Good	Fair to Very Good	Very Good to Excellent
Ability to Track Warped Records	Poor to Good	Fair to Good	Fair to Good	Fair to Good	Very Good to Excellent
Cartridge Body Weight	5 to 10 grams	6 to 8 grams	5.5 to 7 grams	7 to 11 grams	4 to 5.25 grams
User Replaceable Stylus	Yes	Yes	Yes	Usually Not	Yes
Method of Manufacture	Mass Production	Mass Production	Mass Production	Precision Handmade	Precision Handmade
Cost Range	Least Expensive	Inexpensive to Moderate	Inexpensive to Moderate	Expensive to Very Expensive	Moderate to Expensive
Warranty	90 days <i>(limited)</i>	90 days to 1 year <i>(limited)</i>	90 days to 1 year <i>(limited)</i>	90 days to 1 year <i>(limited)</i>	2 years <i>(full)</i>

*All cartridges show single channel only

© 1977 Micro Acoustics, Corp.

ma® **Micro-Acoustics**
8 Westchester Plaza, Elmsford, N.Y. 10523
In Canada, H. Roy Gray Ltd., Markham, Ont.

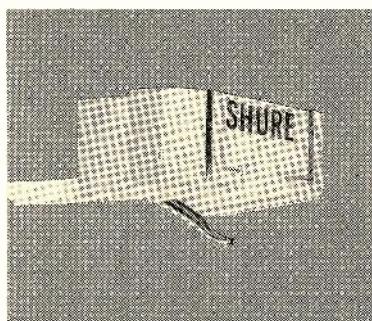
CIRCLE NO. 35 ON READER SERVICE CARD



Needle in the hi-fi haystack

Even we were astounded at how difficult it is to find an adequate other-brand replacement stylus for a Shure cartridge. We recently purchased 241 random styli that were not manufactured by Shure, but were being sold as replacements for our cartridges. Only ONE of these 241 styli could pass the same basic production line performance tests that ALL genuine Shure styli must pass. But don't simply accept what we say here. Send for the documented test results we've compiled for you in data booklet # AL548. Insist on a genuine Shure stylus so that your cartridge will retain its original performance capability—and at the same time protect your records.

Shure Brothers Inc.
222 Hartrey Ave., Evanston, IL 60204
In Canada: A.C. Simmonds & Sons Limited



Manufacturers of high fidelity components, microphones, sound systems and related circuitry.

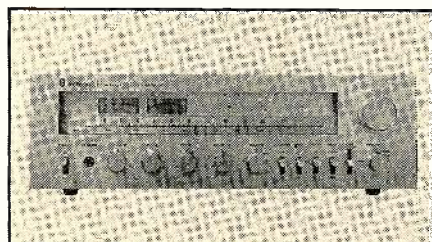
CIRCLE NO. 47 ON READER SERVICE CARD

New Products

latest audio equipment and accessories

Usable sensitivity of the F-26 is 10.8 dBf (1.9 microvolts); 50-dB quieting sensitivity is 35.7 dBf (33.5 microvolts) in stereo. Ultimate signal-to-noise ratio in stereo is 84 dB. Capture ratio in the narrow i.f. bandwidth mode is 2 dB, alternate-channel selectivity is 80 dB or greater, and AM suppression is 65 dB. Distortion (at 1,000 Hz) in the wide i.f. bandwidth mode is 0.05 per cent or less, and with the narrow i.f. bandwidth it is 0.3 per cent or less. The tuning dial of the F-26 spans almost the full width of the front panel, which along with the tuning, i.f.-bandwidth, and stereo-broadcast indicator lights has only three controls: a power switch, the tuning knob, and an interstation-noise muting switch. A rear-panel knob permits adjustment of the muting threshold. Dimensions are approximately 16 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 3 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 14 inches. Price: \$1,000.

Circle 133 on reader service card



Notarized Document Certifies Sherwood Receiver Performance

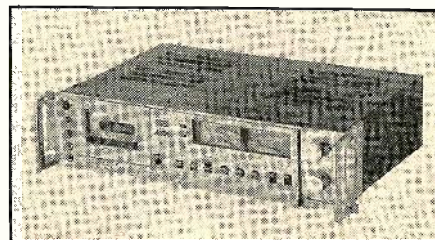
To underline the specifications guarantee of their new Certified Performance series of components, Sherwood ships each of its S-7650 CP receivers with an individual specification sheet certified and sealed by a public notary.

Power output of the S-7650 CP is 45 watts per channel, and total harmonic and intermodulation distortion are both 0.2 per cent or less. Sherwood notes that all of the components in the Certified Performance series actually have considerably lower distortion figures. However, their studies indicate that 0.2 per cent is the limit of audibility of both harmonic and intermodulation distortion, and all Sherwood electronic components are therefore specified at this figure. Phono-section signal-to-noise ratio is rated at 80 dB (IHFA) and phono-overload level at 160 millivolts or greater. The phono section incorporates a filter to prevent subsonic overload and is said to have minimal interaction with phono cartridges.

The tuner section of the S-7650 CP, which utilizes a phase-locked-loop multiplex section, has a usable sensitivity of 1.7 microvolts, alternate-channel selectivity of 70 dB (IHF), and a total harmonic distortion rating of 0.25 per cent or less (stereo). Dimen-

sions are 18 x 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 14 inches. Approximate price: \$400.

Circle 134 on reader service card



Cue-and-review Is Feature of New Aiwa Cassette Deck

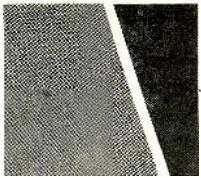
The Aiwa AD-6900U is a two-motor, three-head cassette deck utilizing touch-solenoid controls for its tape-transport functions. The servo-controlled capstan motor is speed-governed by a built-in oscillator; weighted rms wow and flutter are 0.04 per cent. The fast-wind motor is a d.c. servo design that winds a C-60 cassette in 65 seconds. Solenoid-operated controls include a cue-and-review button that permits the listener to hear the tape while it is in the fast-forward or rewind modes so as to locate a particular musical or speech passage.

Record-playback frequency response of the AD-6900U is 25 to 18,000 Hz with ferrichrome tape, 25 to 17,000 Hz with chromium-dioxide tape, and 25 to 14,000 Hz with conventional ferric tape. The signal-to-noise ratio with the Dolby circuits and ferrichrome tape is 68 dB. Both the record and playback heads are of the ferrite-faced type to provide extended head life. Front-panel controls include memory-rewind and timer functions, a bias-adjustment system that utilizes the level meters to fine-tune bias, and a three-position switch designed to vary the ballistics of the recording-level meters from standard VU to peak-reading characteristics. Three bias and equalization tape-selection controls are also on the front panel. A block diagram on the deck's top surface explains the control functions. Dimensions are 14 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 12 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches. Price: \$800. An optional rack-mount adapter is available.

Circle 135 on reader service card

NOTICE: All product descriptions and specifications quoted in these columns are based on materials supplied by the manufacturer.

Recent fluctuations in the value of the dollar will have an effect on the price of merchandise imported into this country. Please be aware that the prices quoted in this issue may be subject to change.



fact: dramatic freedom from distortion comes to a mid-priced cartridge: the new Shure M95HE...

the Shure M95HE



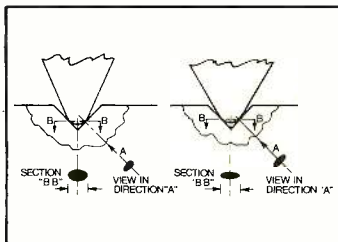
an affordable, audible improvement

One of the critically acclaimed advances introduced in Shure's incomparable V15 Type IV pickup is its revolutionary and unique distortion-reducing Hyperelliptical stylus. Now, you can enjoy this standard of sound purity in a new, ultra-flat frequency response, light tracking, high trackability cartridge that will not tax your budget: the new Shure Model M95HE.

the Hyperelliptical stylus tip



BIRADIAL (ELLIPTICAL) STYLUS SUCH AS IN M95ED

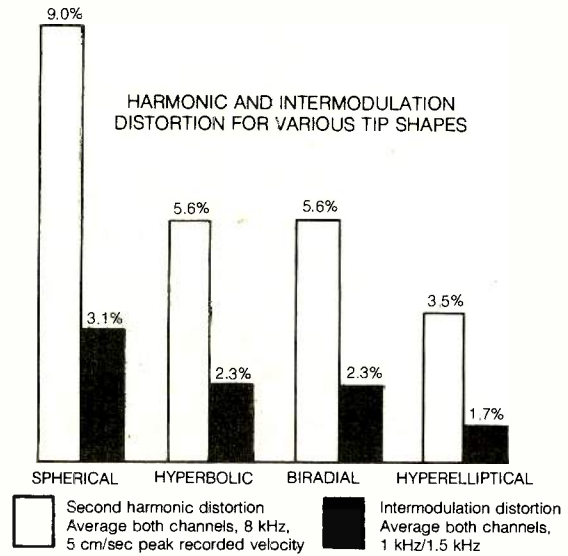


HYPERELLIPTICAL STYLUS OF THE M95HE

The Hyperelliptical nude diamond tip configuration represents a significant advance in tip design for stereo sound reproduction. As the figures show, its "footprint" (represented by black oval) is longer and narrower than the traditional Biradial (Elliptical) tip-groove contact area. Because the Hyperelliptical footprint geometry is narrower than both the Biradial and long-contact shapes such as the Hyperbolic, it is pre-eminent for reproduction of the stereo-cut groove.

SEND FOR FREE BROCHURE AL600:

HARMONIC AND INTERMODULATION DISTORTION FOR VARIOUS TIP SHAPES



a measurable drop in distortion

As a result of the optimized contact area of the Hyperelliptical tip, both harmonic distortion (white bars in graph above) and intermodulation distortion (black bars) are dramatically reduced.

upgrade your present M95 If you already have a Shure M95 Series Cartridge, you can improve its freedom from distortion right up to the standards of the new M95HE cartridge simply by equipping it with a Model N95HE stylus. The cost is extraordinarily low — yet the difference in sound will be immediately apparent. Takes only seconds to install — requires no tools whatsoever.

M95HE cartridge & N95HE stylus



Shure Brothers Inc., 222 Hartrey Ave., Evanston, IL 60204
In Canada: A. C. Simmonds & Sons Limited

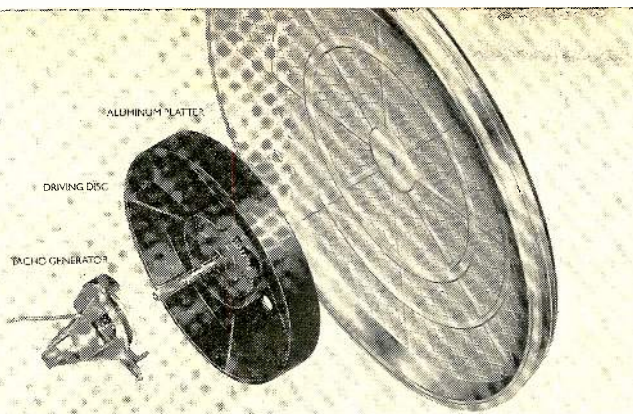
Manufacturers of high fidelity components, microphones, sound systems and related circuitry.

ASK ANY AUDIOPHILE ABOUT PHILIPS' REVOLUTIONARY PROJECT 7 SERIES. HE KNOWS.

	AF 877	AF 867	AF 777
Wow & Flutter	0.03% (WRMS)	0.05% (WRMS)	0.05% (WRMS)
Rumble	-70dB (DIN B)	-65dB (DIN B)	-65dB (DIN B)
Price	Under \$240**	Under \$200**	Under \$180**

**Suggested retail prices optional with dealers.





The World's First No-Compromise Turntables.

These are the turntables audiophiles have been waiting for. The world's first turntables to combine the specs and performance of direct drive with the proven advantages and value of belt drive. That's right – the Philips Project 7 Series turntables have wow & flutter and rumble specs as good as the most expensive direct drive systems. And the acoustic and mechanical isolation of a belt drive. Philips even designed two new tonearms to be perfectly compatible with the new drive system.

The Project 7 Series opens up a new era in turntable performance – the no-compromise era. Because Project 7 turntables compromise on nothing. And because of the incredible Project 7 prices, you won't have to compromise, either.

Did Philips Compromise on Performance? No!

The heart of the Project 7 revolution is a 160 pole tachogenerator that electronically monitors and controls the speed of the platter at the driving disc. Actually putting the driving disc right into the electronic feedback loop. This unique electronic Direct Control system means that variations in line voltage and frequency, variations in pressure on the platter, variations in temperature, even belt slippage – all have virtually no effect on platter speed. All Project 7 turntables maintain constant, accurate speeds – automatically and electronically.

Did Philips Compromise on Specs? No!

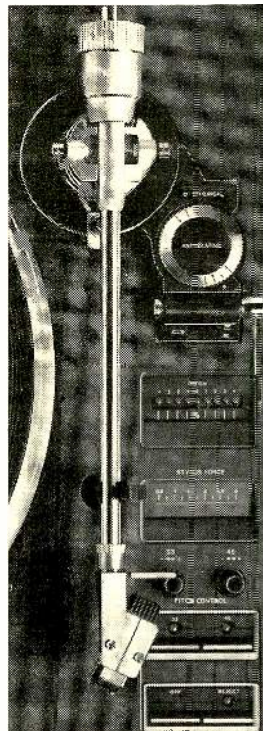
The wow and flutter on the Philips AF 877, for example, is a remarkable 0.05% (DIN) and 0.03% (WRMS). With a rumble figure of better than -70dB. No compromise there.

Did Philips Compromise on Construction? No!

The aluminum platter and the specially designed straight, low-mass, tubular tonearm are mounted on a separate, shock-proof, free-floating sub-chassis – which is suspended from the main chassis by three nickel chromium leaf springs with butyl-rubber dampers. And that mouthful translates into superb acoustic and mechanical isolation, excellent tracking characteristics, and exceptional stylus and record protection.

Did Philips Compromise on Controls? No!

Project 7 Series turntables are all-electronic, all the way. On the Philips AF 877, for example, four reliable electronic touch controls provide quiet, convenient, vibration-free operation. There are separate touch controls for starting, stopping, reject and speed selection – all with LED indicators. One touch is all it takes. And when the record is completed, you don't have to touch anything at all. Because electronic (not mechanical) controls lift the tonearm and return it to its rest.



Nine LED indicators also monitor platter speed – and help you vary pitch – with pinpoint electronic accuracy. No more cumbersome checking of the strobe rings on the platter.

And a convenient, built-in, accurate direct read-out stylus gauge makes stylus force adjustment as easy as turning the de-coupled adjustable weight on the tonearm. No extra gauges, gadgets, or paraphernalia needed.

Philips Won't Compromise. Neither Should You.

Four years ago Philips set out to build the best-performing, best-looking, best-priced turntables in the business. The Project 7 Series turntables more than meet all those goals. With no compromises.

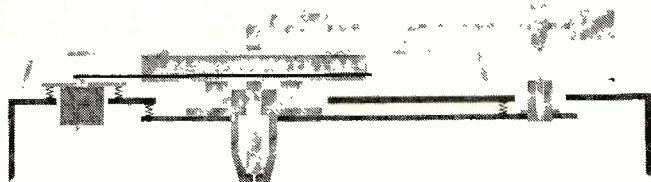
And we don't want you to compromise, either. That's why we've prepared a new, fact-filled 36-page brochure "Ask Us About High Fidelity. We Know." It's filled with dozens of tough questions and honest answers about everything from turntables and tape decks to amps, preamps, tuners and speakers. And it's yours, free. Just call us, toll-free, at **800-243-5000*** and we'll send you a copy. It can help you find the high fidelity equipment you're looking for. With no compromises. (In Conn.: 1-800-882-6500)

EVERYONE WHO KNOWS, KNOWS

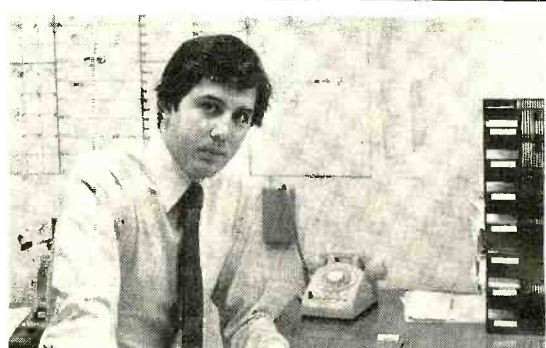
PHILIPS

High Fidelity Laboratories, Ltd.

CIRCLE NO. 41 ON READER SERVICE CARD



By Gary Stock



THE NEW RECORDING TECHNOLOGY

FOR several days in early November, New York's Waldorf Astoria Hotel, which played host to the 61st Audio Engineering Convention, had something of the flavor of a university administration building during a temporary take-over by a gleeful student radical group. The roles of the disconcerted faculty were played by the sales forces of the various manufacturers of professional recording gear, and those of the radicals by the raffishly dressed recording-studio and sound-reinforcement professionals who make most of the buying decisions on the expensive machinery displayed. Any suggestion of "straight" appearance, even a slender tie, marked one as either a member of the press or a simple gawker, in neither case worthy of the tender solicitude reserved for the professional-sound elite.

Very little in the way of equipment likely to be used in the home was shown, but as past conventions have proved, the indirect impact of the technical developments on display is likely to be substantial for the record listener and audio buff. Unquestionably, the two most newsworthy technical introductions at the

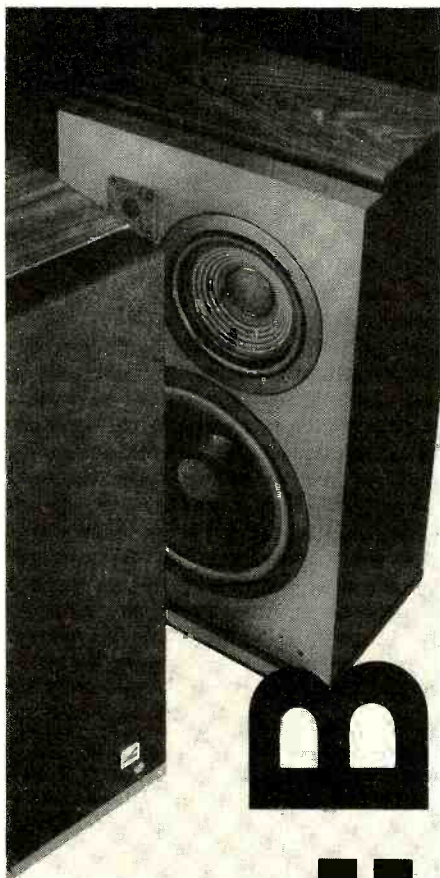
show related to the first generation of digital studio equipment. There was, for example, 3M's dazzlingly sophisticated electronics editing system for digital multitrack tape which, among other things, displays a video-screen picture of the digital musical waveform at the precise edit point to help the recording engineer in achieving audibly undetectable electronic splices. The editing system, in conjunction with 3M's thirty-two-track digital tape recorder now in use in several American studios, will make it possible to produce *in almost totally digital form* the complex multilayered master tapes that are the mainstay of American recording technique. This means, quite simply, that digitally mastered records of direct-to-disc quality, many from major artists who are already clamoring at the doors of the digitally equipped studios, should be on record-store shelves within the next year (the first four recorders were delivered in December; the editing system will probably be in place by next fall). Commercial digital recording has clearly passed beyond the experimental and "special product" stage.

(Continued on page 32)

Sony Industries' president Michael Schulhof auditions their professional digital-recording system: center, PCM processor above its editing console; left, videocassette recorder.



Wagner International Photos



It sounds like music

An incredibly solid 30 Hz low end gives you bass response not found in any other speaker of this size. This is clean bass. It isn't phony. There is no "hump" around 80 Hz to give the impression of bass when there really isn't any. What's on your source material is what you're going to hear - accurately.

There is no sacrifice at the high end either. Both front and rear-firing tweeters give you the uniform total acoustic power output that takes you into a "live-music" environment.

When you buy your next pair of speakers, do yourself a favor - audition the Interface-B's. If your criteria is musical accuracy, the Interface-B's are what you'll buy.



Electro-Voice®

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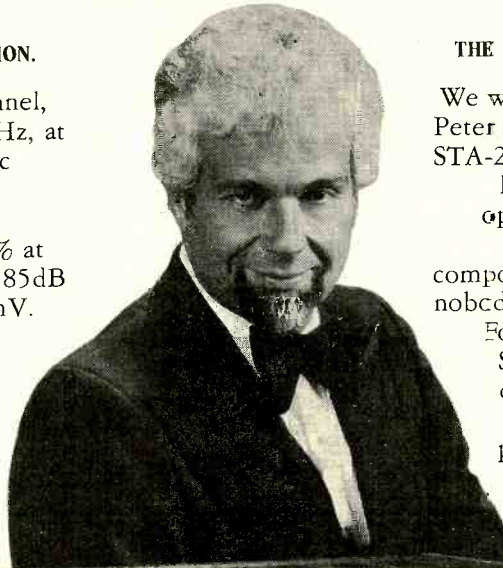
Interface-B™

The specs are superb,
but they can't say it all. The
proof is in listening to the music.

Last November 17th
Peter Nero listened.
And bought
our Realistic® 2100.

VERY HIGH POWER, VERY LOW DISTORTION.

Power Output: 120 watts per channel,
min. RMS at 8 ohms, 20-20,000 Hz, at
no more than 0.1% total harmonic
distortion. Amplifier Response:
15-70,000 Hz \pm 2dB at 10 watts.
Intermodulation Distortion: 0.05% at
85 watts. S/N Ratio: 65dB phono, 85dB
aux. Phono Input Overload: 220mV.
FM Sensitivity: 2.8 μ V for 50dB
quieting. Capture Ratio: 1.3dB.
FM Alternate Channel Rejection:
80dB. FM Channel Separation:
50dB at 1kHz. FM Stereo Total
Harmonic Distortion: 0.1%. FM
S/N Ratio: 70dB.



THE FINEST, MOST POWERFUL REALISTIC EVER.

We were elated when Pianist/Conductor
Peter Nero told us he was buying our new
STA-2100 receiver—which we build with
loving care in one of our company-
operated factories. What other audio
store engineers and makes its own
components? None that we know of. And
nobody builds 'em better. In a test in our
Fort Worth QC labs, we operated an
STA-2100 at full power, 24 hours a
day for three weeks, and it didn't fail
in any way. Test-listen to it soon—
perhaps the only hi-fi component of
this power and quality with
availability/service at over 6000
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About \$600.



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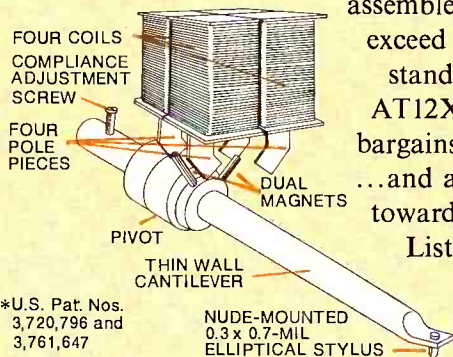
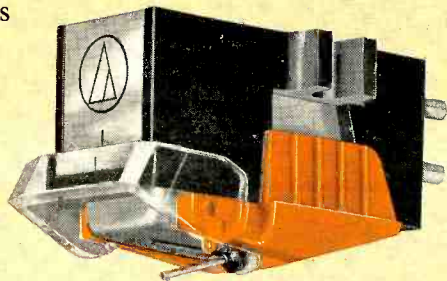
These two cards honored at most
Radio Shack locations.
Retail price may vary at individual
stores and dealers.

Q • Where should you start in your search for better sound?

A • At the beginning. With a new Audio-Technica Dual Magnet™ stereo phono cartridge.

Our AT12XE, for instance. Tracking smoothly at 1 to 1-3/4 grams, depending on your record player. Delivers smooth, peak-free response from 15 Hz to 28,000 Hz (better than most speakers available). With a minimum 24 dB of honest stereo separation at important mid frequencies, and 18 dB minimum separation even at the standard high-frequency 10 kHz test point. At just \$65 suggested list price, it's an outstanding value in these days of inflated prices.

Audio-Technica cartridges have been widely-acclaimed for their great sound, and for good reason. Our unique, patented* Dual Magnet construction provides a *separate* magnetic system for *each* stereo channel. A concept that insures excellent stereo separation, while lowering magnet mass. And the AT12XE features a tiny 0.3 x 0.7-mil nude-mounted elliptical diamond stylus on a thin-wall cantilever to further reduce moving mass where it counts. Each cartridge is individually



assembled and tested to meet or exceed our rigid performance standards. As a result, the AT12XE is one of the great bargains of modern technology ...and a significant head start toward more beautiful sound.

Listen carefully at your Audio-Technica dealer's today.

*U.S. Pat. Nos.
3,720,796 and
3,761,647

NUDE-MOUNTED
0.3 x 0.7-MIL
ELLIPTICAL STYLUS

audio-technica
INNOVATION □ PRECISION □ INTEGRITY

AUDIO-TECHNICA U.S., INC., Dept. 29F-1, 33 Shiawassee Avenue, Fairlawn, Ohio 44313
In Canada: Superior Electronics, Inc.

Audio News . . .

Of equal significance to the consumer was Sony's demonstration of a professional two-channel PCM processor designed to be used in conjunction with an industrial videocassette recorder such as their BVU-200A. When connected, these two units comprise a two-channel mastering recorder with technical specifications in the same range of excellence as the 3M system. Just as important, multiple recorders and processors can be connected and synchronized in daisy-chain fashion to permit digital recording of any number of channels. Tapes can be edited using a Sony videotape editing console (though it does not have the signal-displaying feature of the 3M unit). And since, like the 3M recorder, it is immediately available to the recording community, it is likely to be used in the mastering and mixing of commercial discs almost immediately—assuming professionals are not put off by the cassette format.

Sony also demonstrated a full line of prototype PCM studio equipment including a twenty-four-track recorder, an eight-channel mixer, and a reverberation processor. This combination of devices, when available some time in late 1979, will be capable of handling signals in digital form all the way from the microphone inputs to the console of the record cutter, with all the attendant benefits of reduced noise and distortion. The 3M system, as it is presently constituted, must convert musical information back into conventional analog form for the mixing stage of recording, with some resultant reduction in fidelity. The Sony prototypes at the show, when put into production, may therefore well represent the first totally digital studio.

Both Pioneer and Sony again demonstrated digital audio-disc players, though most industry observers now concede that the next major step on the digital-disc front will probably be one of standardization rather than of further technical innovation.

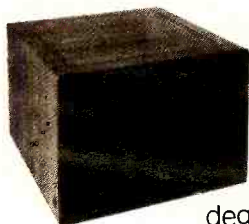
IN addition to all the new digital hardware, advances in conventional technology were still very much in evidence. As usual, new mixing consoles, sound-reinforcement equipment, and testing gear received a great deal of attention. Rugged professional versions of consumer products such as preamplifiers and power amplifiers, intended for upgrading of older amplifying stages in broadcast and recording situations, were on display from Sansui and SAE, among others. Neumann showed the first production version of their long-awaited VMS-80 cutting lathe, which uses an advanced on-board computer to determine groove spacing as well as a closed-circuit television system for the operator to observe groove geometry.

And of course there were numerous technical papers presented dealing with all aspects of the audio art. Some discussed cautious, evolutionary advances, and others (such as a paper by Dr. Matti Ojala which suggested that as little as 0.003 per cent transient intermodulation distortion could be heard by normal listeners) were the subject of much controversy.

It's safe to say that the 61st AES convention presented a preview of the technology and thinking that will influence the sounds we will be listening to in our living rooms for decades to come. □



New shapes of sound from RTR The Rhombus Subwoofer...The Pyramid Satellite



Now your speaker system can reproduce true bass.

With the new RTR DAC/1 Rhombus Subwoofer, low frequency instruments and deep tones emerge with a

degree of undistorted realism never before heard in a home system.

In Rhombus, RTR engineers have created the *only* enclosure which combines advantages of both vented and acoustic suspension systems — without their shortcomings. This is the Differential Area Coupler* system, the first all-new enclosure design in a quarter century.

Rhombus delivers flat frequency response from 16 Hz to 150 Hz. Below 16 Hz, the system cuts off rapidly to eliminate modulation distortion. Bass peaks and resonances are wiped out by impedance leveling circuits and the DAC* format.



Pyramidal design yields an advanced small speaker. The RTR PS/1 Pyramid Satellite loudspeaker solves most problems inherent in small speakers.

Geometrically, pyramid form follows function better than rectangular enclosures. Space for a major woofer in a minimal package facilitates lower frequency response and higher, undistorted

output levels. Non-parallel sides smooth bass reproduction and curtail internal resonance.

Capitalizing on this format, the RTR Pyramid Satellite incorporates an array of RTR components in a dynamic 3-way speaker system. A new total-immersion-damped woofer cone reduces sonic coloration and eliminates breakup. Carbon fiber impregnated soft dome midrange and soft dome tweeter offer superlative response with wide dispersion. All told, these are live performance audiophile speakers in a package destined to become classic.

New shapes combine into a formidable system. Match Rhombus Subwoofers and Pyramid Satellites. Be rewarded with hauntingly realistic sound reproduction. Attack and dynamics of actual performance reproduce with smoothness, accuracy and superb detail. This system defines new standards of performance for *all* sonic parameters. Equally startling, the price is well below other state-of-the-art contenders. Audition it soon at your RTR dealer...and believe your ears.

RTR Industries, 8116 Deering Avenue
Canoga Park, CA 91304

*Pat. applied for.



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you'll be hearing
more from RTR.**



Killer!

**That's a Jensen car audio system.
That's the thrill of being there.**

You've got to want the best. The max in music. The Killer. Then there's only one way to go.

The Jensen R430 car stereo receiver teamed with a Jensen Separates speaker system.

It all starts in the R430 Receiver. The AM/FM Stereo/Cassette unit that rivals many home receivers. Feather-touch electronic switches control Dolby[®] Noise Reduction, Loudness, Interstation Muting, and Local/Distance FM tuning.

A separate, trunk-mounted Power Amp gives you up to 60 watts RMS when you need it. The Bi-amplification mode distributes that power perfectly for knock-out realism.

More? Lots more. But look what the R430 teams up with.

The Jensen Separates. The revolutionary car speaker system that gives a faultless interpretation of everything the R430 sends it.

Imagine individual woofers, tweeters, and midrange units custom positioned throughout your car... for unparalleled sound reproduction. Coupled with an under-dash control unit that lets you balance the music to your personal taste. That's the Separates.

Touch the "Bi-Amp" switch on the R430 Receiver and each individual woofer, tweeter and midrange gets the precise frequency range and power to put you right in the concert.

This system's a killer. That's the Jensen R430 Receiver and Separates.

That's the thrill of being there.

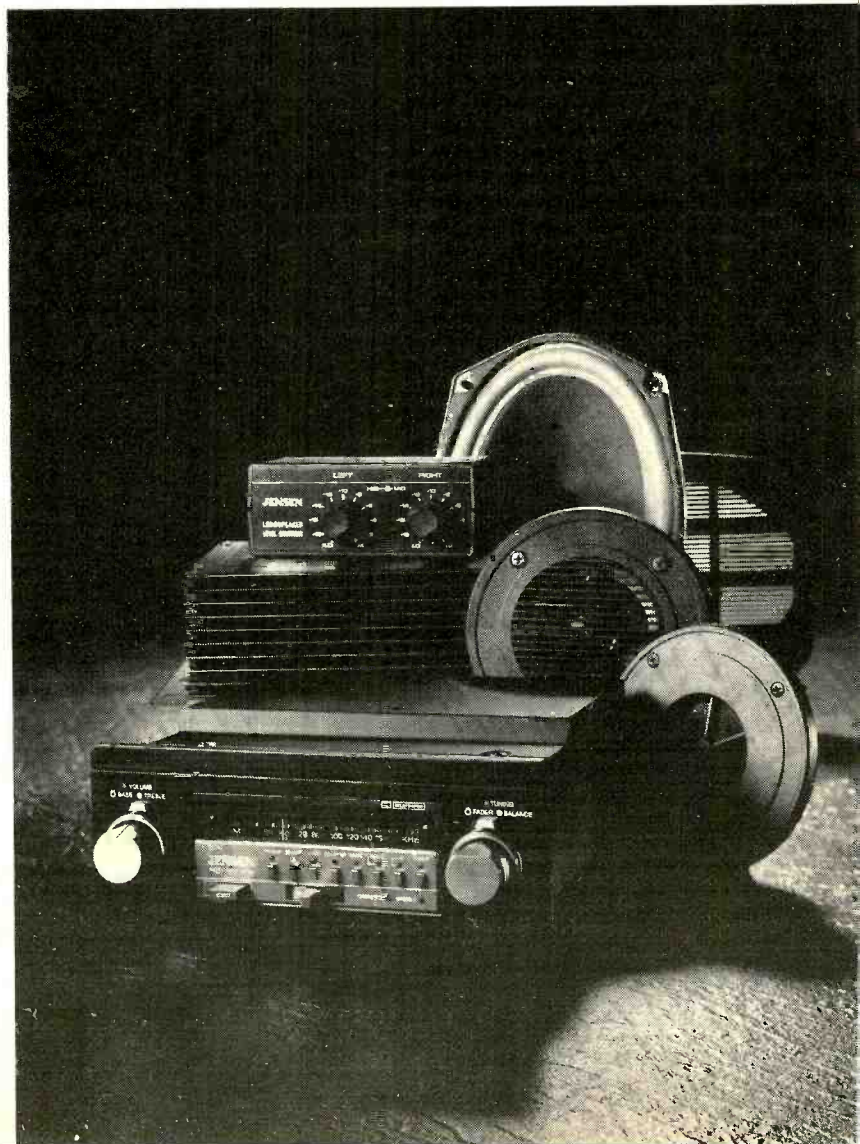
JENSEN

The thrill of being there.

For more information, write Jensen Sound Laboratories, 4136 N. United Parkway, Schiller Park, Ill. 60176

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CIRCLE NO. 29 ON READER SERVICE CARD



"The very excellence of sound on this most intriguing album may work to defeat its purpose—to evaluate equipment by ear alone."

Alan Penchansky, Audiophile Recordings Column, *Billboard*, 3/11/78

NCA check up your sounds vol.1 audio symphony



RVL-1 \$14.95

If the review doesn't convince you, the sound will. This recording, cut from 30 IPS tape masters, is specially composed to test the capabilities of your stereo system.

Included are demo cuts of individual instruments and a 16 page book with score excerpts. An expert was impressed. You will be too!

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INTERNATIONAL REFERENCE SERIES

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33 Shiawassee Ave., Fairlawn, Ohio 44313

"...jazz collectors as well as sound buffs will require this album."

Alan Penchansky, Audiophile Recordings Column, *Billboard*, 2/25/78



(45 RPM) RDC-3 \$14.95

Listen to an expert. Then listen to this sizzling contemporary jazz performance by the Lew Tabackin Quartet, captured by RCA/RVC direct-to-disc technology.

Direct-to-disc eliminates the tape recorder to insure maximum dynamic range, wide frequency response, minimum distortion and lowest surface noise. An expert was impressed. You will be too!

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CIRCLE NO. 9 ON READER SERVICE CARD

Audio Q. and A.

By Larry Klein



In an off-duty moment during a recent business trip to Japan, Larry Klein strikes a pose in Tokyo's Ueno Park.

Record Cleaning

Q. For quite a while now, I've been cleaning my records using a dishwashing detergent and distilled water, and then air-drying them in a rubber-coated dish drainer. Several friends have recently commented that such washing is harmful to the plastic that records are made from. What is the "bottom line" on record cleaning with detergents?

GEORGE DAVIDSON
Williamsville, N.Y.

A. There seem to be two opposite schools of thought on the subject of record cleaning. One group holds that fingerprints (which are actually oily deposits) and the dust and grit that normally find their way onto record surfaces can best be removed by fluids that emulsify or in some other way chemically break down oily substances. The primary agents used in the record-cleaning solutions supplied by these companies are wood alcohol and/or a variety of detergent solutions.

However, a second group of companies involved in record care view these same cleaning agents as highly hazardous to record health. They argue that both the polyvinyl chloride (the basic record material) and the other chemicals—plasticizers and stabilizers—added to the PVC to aid the molding and playing process are themselves petroleum-derived compounds and are therefore also subject to gradual breakdown by detergents and other cleaning agents. The ultimate effect of conventional cleaning compounds, in the view of this second group, is to leave the record-groove walls brittle and easily damaged. The record-cleaning solutions offered by this second group are therefore designed to remove dust and non-oily deposits simply by placing them in a liquid suspension with a trace of detergent which is then swept up or removed by some means. (The method is akin to removing floor dirt by damp mopping.) Some of these firms also claim to have developed cleaning agents targeted specifically at oily deposits that have no effect on the record compound itself.

So, as far as the commercial disc cleaners are concerned, "you pay your money and takes your choice." But, in any case, stay away from grocery-store dishwashing detergents because they generally contain a number of compounds intended to add a "lotion-y" feel to hands and an artificial gloss to

dishes. These compounds, once brought into contact with the record, can form a waxy second layer that is extremely difficult to remove. A third approach suggested by an adolescent of my acquaintance—the use of a facial cleaning pad such as Stridex to remove record "zits"—is also frowned on by experts, and for the same reasons.

FCC, Part 15

Q. Every FM receiver or tuner I've ever seen has a label of some sort on the back reading "Conforms to FCC Regulations, Part 15." What exactly are the FCC regulations governing stereo receivers?

HAROLD BENNETT
Ann Arbor, Mich.

A. The FCC regulation in question deals with a diversity of product types—including pocket radios, garage-door openers, and stereo receivers. In respect to FM receivers, the regulation establishes limits on the amount of spurious (unwanted) electromagnetic energy they are permitted to radiate. It may come as a surprise to many readers to learn that almost all receivers—AM or FM—are also capable of sending out (radiating) a signal. This comes about because a superheterodyne circuit is used in all AM and FM receivers, including both pocket portables and \$2,000 tuners. Briefly, the "superhet" circuit has a "local oscillator" whose purpose is to interact (beat) with the incoming signal to provide an intermediate frequency of 10.7 MHz. I won't go into the technical reasons for such an approach; suffice it to say that it is in virtually universal use in receivers of all kinds.

In any case, it is this so-called "local oscillator" that brings FM sets under the purview of the FCC, since any oscillator operating at radio (as opposed to audio) frequencies is likely to radiate a signal far beyond its circuit components and chassis unless preventive steps are taken. The FCC has established the maximum allowable external radiation (so as to prevent the receiver from interfering with the operation of other nearby receivers). Therefore, in order to market a receiver in the United States, a manufacturer must provide measurements to the FCC proving that their product does not exceed the legal limit. These

(Continued on page 38)

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CIRCLE NO. 19 ON READER SERVICE CARD

Audio Q. and A. . . .

measurements, by the way, are taken at the antenna terminals of the receiver and at the a.c. line cord, since it is possible for an unwanted signal to be transmitted from one receiver to another through the a.c. power line.

Installation of the Month

Q. *I have noticed that STEREO REVIEW occasionally runs an "Installation of the Month" feature showing equipment setups. What would you need from me in the way of photos and information in order to consider my installation?*

ARVIN ROBERTS
Chicago, Ill.

A. To answer Mr. Roberts and others who have inquired: any clear snapshot (color, black and white, or Polaroid) will be sufficient for us to make a preliminary evaluation of your installation. If it is judged acceptable, you will then be asked to submit some well-photographed, glossy, 8 x 10 black-and-white prints (or negatives from which such can be made) showing: (1) the installation in its normal environment, and (2) close-up details of points of interest. As for accompanying information, any past "Installation of the Month" can serve as a guide. In particular, we need details on the construction and special features of the cabinets (or whatever you've used), a complete and accurate list of the component names and model numbers, and a few personal notes, such as your occupation, audio background, and interests—musical and other. We also need your address and a phone number where you can be reached during business hours (these will not be printed).

Although we all appreciate systems with well-chosen components, "Installation of the Month" focuses more on the special approach taken to house or install the equipment rather than on the equipment itself. Send entries (including a stamped, self-addressed return envelope) to Gary Stock, STEREO REVIEW, One Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016.

Speaker Impedance

Q. *These days most manufacturers rate their speaker-system impedances at 4 or 8 ohms, but I remember when systems of 16 ohms and even higher were not uncommon. I've always been puzzled by the variety of speaker-impedance ratings. Can you provide some background on the matter?*

RONALD WEISS
Ithaca, N.Y.

A. Never having resolved the impedance matter to my own satisfaction, I submitted Mr. Weiss' question to a number of speaker manufacturers, and it provoked a surprising variety of responses. In their replies ADS and Wharfedale both took a historical approach. ADS stated that 16-ohm speakers were most suitable technically for tube amplifiers, that 4 ohms presented the most appropriate load for the early germanium output transistors (which could handle high currents but not high voltages), and that 8 ohms is a

reasonable choice today since it enables the user to parallel two systems without risking overload of the amplifier. On the other hand, a 4-ohm speaker (compared with an 8-ohm unit) can theoretically "draw" up to 3 dB more output power from the amplifier before clipping.

JBL pointed out that 8 ohms seems a good "natural" impedance level, as evidenced by the fact that it has become the standard load with which manufacturers rate their amplifiers' voltage- and current-output capabilities. Wharfedale stated that 6 ohms would be a logical and neat compromise between the opposing dangers of running out of current (low impedance) or running out of volts (high impedance), but that many amplifiers trip their protection circuits when faced with a paralleled pair of 6-ohm speakers. Koss would like to be able to use 2- or 3-ohm voice coils since the result would be lower-Q drivers (which they find to have great advantages), but practical amplifier limitations prevent this. Advent, however, claimed that most modern amplifiers are able to handle a speaker load that, over a narrow range of frequencies, falls as low as 2.5 to 3 ohms.

AR, Bose, and Celestion objected to the nonstandard ways speaker impedance is rated in most manufacturers' literature. Bose finds that various rating methods (each of which might provide different numbers) include: (1) d.c. resistance, (2) minimum impedance in the audible range, (3) impedance at a specified frequency, and (4) an "average" impedance. Methods (1) and (2) will give the lowest numbers and are therefore the most conservative. AR agrees, pointing out that the impedance rating depends simply on what the manufacturer chooses to regard as "nominal."

AR, Bose, Burhoe, Jensen, and Marantz made the additional point (which can have consequences in the showroom during A-B comparisons of speakers) that a 4-ohm impedance will not only provide greater output from an amplifier, but it will in addition cause the speaker to play louder at a given amplifier volume-control setting. But, as several manufacturers warn, this fact can be taken advantage of only if the amplifier can handle a 4-ohm load without strain. It is for that reason that AR's lower-cost speakers, which will most probably be used with lower-cost amplifiers, are all designed for 8 ohms.

As a sidelight, both Bose and Electro-Voice made the point that the virtues of a flat impedance curve are highly overrated. According to Bose, the only advantage of a flat impedance curve is that the amplifier's damping factor and the resistance of the speaker leads will have less effect on frequency response. They find that impedance tends to vary more with frequency with an efficient speaker and therefore more attention should be paid to assuring that the driving amplifier has a high damping factor (which Bose defines as "40 or above") and that adequately heavy speaker wire is used. And E-V observes pithily that well-designed power amplifiers are nowhere near as excited about constant-impedance speaker loads as some advertising copywriters are.

Because the number of questions we receive each month is greater than we can reply to individually, only those letters selected for use in this column can be answered. Sorry!

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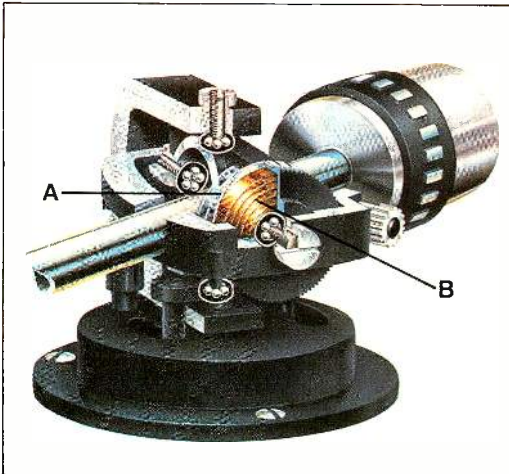
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The CS1237's tonearm is mounted in a four-point gyroscopic gimbal—widely acknowledged as the finest suspension system available. The tonearm is centered, balanced and pivoted exactly where the vertical and horizontal axes intersect. (A)

From pivot to tonearm head, the shape is a straight line, the shortest distance between those two important points. (Curved tonearms may look sexier, but at the cost of extra mass, less rigidity and lateral imbalance—none of which is consistent with good engineering practice.)

Tracking force is applied by a flat-wound spring coiled around the vertical pivot (B), and this force is maintained equally on each groove wall whether or not the turntable is level. The tonearm's perfect balance is maintained throughout play.

By contrast, tonearms which apply tracking force by shifting the counterweight forward are actually unbalanced during play and prone to mistracking. For example, on warped records the stylus tends to dig in on the uphill side of the warp and to lose contact on the way down.

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Or you might compare it with one of the higher-priced Dual turntables. You'll find a few additional refinements, but no difference in design integrity or manufacturing quality. Which is why no other turntable quite matches a Dual.

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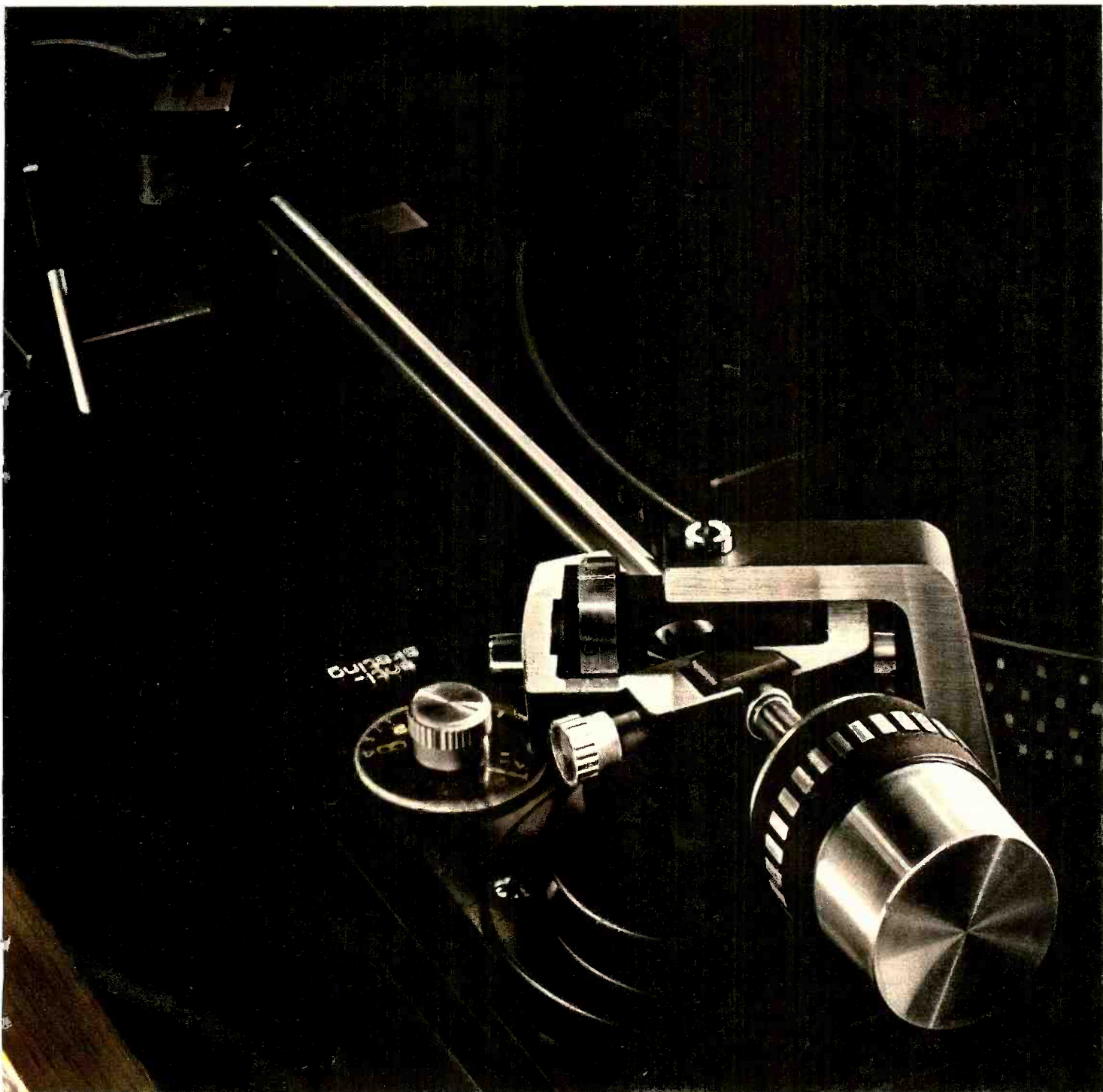
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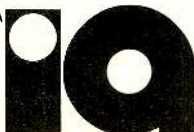
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CIRCLE NO. 26 ON READER SERVICE CARD

Audio Basics

By Ralph
Hodges



WORKING OUT THE ANGLES

READ over Bill Curtiss' feature article on phono cartridges in this issue (page 72) and you may appreciate how much successful record playing depends on good geometry. First there is a sort of "microgeometry" having to do with how the stylus comes in contact with the groove wall. Modern high-fidelity styli such as the Shibata and some of the modified ellipticals have edges, rather than points, that make contact with the wall surface; such styli should therefore be oriented so that the edges are precisely parallel to the plane of modulation. The accuracy with which the stylus has been shaped and mounted by its manufacturer is an important factor in this.

There is also another geometry, a "macrogeometry" if you will, that has to do with the orientation of cartridge, tone arm, and record relative to one another. If the details of this macrogeometry are correctly worked out, the cartridge will be held in a rather precisely defined angular relationship to the groove direction as it traverses the record side, a relationship that has been proved necessary for really accurate phono reproduction. If the macrogeometry is wrong, then distortion—measurable and sometimes even audible—increases. Furthermore, if the macrogeometry is wrong, microgeometry cannot be right except through the most freakish of circumstances: the accidental use of a phono cartridge manufactured with precisely complementary errors in alignment.

The importance of macrogeometry was not realized by the first designers of disc-record players. They often equipped their machines with perfectly straight tone arms, for exam-

ple. It took a rather subtle mathematical study by Benjamin Bauer and his colleagues at CBS Labs (now CBS Technology Center) to demonstrate that a straight tone arm is all wrong for playing a spiral groove cut in the manner recording studios employ. Record cutting is done with a lathe mechanism; a carriage bearing the cutting instrument travels from the outside edge of the rotating master disc toward its exact center in a straight line. But almost every popular tone arm *pivots* so as to describe an arc across the record's surface. The long axis of the cutting mechanism is always at a right angle to a radius of the disc in the case of a record-cutting lathe, but this angular relationship is constantly changing for a playback device mounted on an arc-describing pivot, and in the world of record-playing microgeometry this change inevitably produces distortion.

Bauer and his fellow researchers saw that a simple pivoted tone arm could not be made to preserve the ideal angular relationship at all times, but that it could approximate it with adequate precision if it were redesigned with that object in mind. So the tone arm acquired a bend that canted the cartridge at an angle relative to the general direction in which the arm "pointed." Buyers of these new arms were instructed how the cartridge should be positioned and, in the case of an arm bought separately from the turntable, how far the tone-arm pivots should be from the center of the platter.

Then came stereo and the need to consider another angular relationship. A mono record is a one-dimensional medium; the groove wig-

(Continued on page 44)



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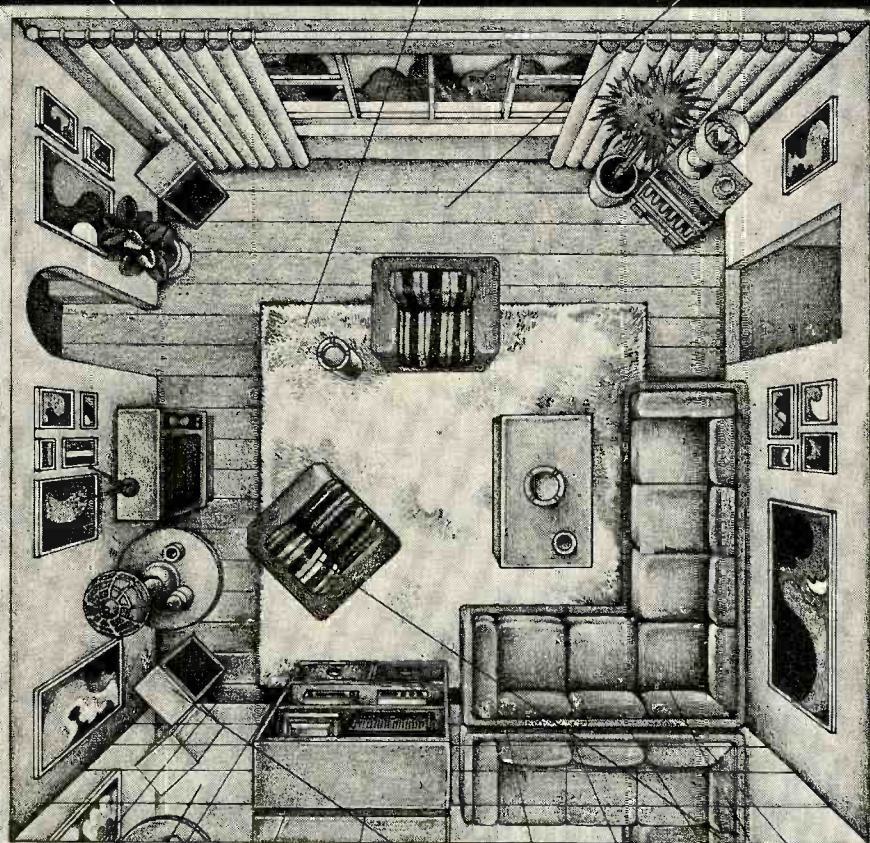
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Audio Basics . . .

gles from side to side and (ideally) in no other direction. But a stereo groove is formed so as to vibrate the stylus from side to side, up and down, and in all intermediate directions. It is this complex motion that gives it the capability of properly assigning audio signals between two stereo channels—and that dictated a re-examination of the macrogeometry of stereo record playing.

THE stylus assembly of a modern phono cartridge is itself a pivoted structure. Examine one closely and you'll note that it consists of a tiny jewel mounted (usually) on a thin tube of aluminum that is in turn supported within the cartridge by a block of rubber-like material that roughly defines the pivot point. Pretend for a moment that your elbow is this pivot, your forearm the aluminum tube, and your fist the stylus. Holding your forearm roughly horizontal, shake your fist up and down. It travels along an arc, of course, but its general direction of motion is in fact up and down, or vertical. Now incline your forearm downward to approximate the angle a typical stylus shaft forms with a cartridge body and repeat the shaking. This time the general direction of motion is at an angle to the vertical—the *vertical tracking angle* in phono-cartridge jargon. Since the record was cut with a similarly pivoted device (the cutting stylus), it has such an angle built into it for all vertical modulations. The trick is to get the cartridge to conform to this angle.

The vertical angle at which a record is cut and the vertical tracking angle of a phono cartridge are both quantities that are somewhat difficult to determine. Certain vagaries of the disc-cutting process alter the angle from what it would appear to be from a study of the cutter geometry, and imprecise pivot locations in most phono cartridges also introduce variables under actual record-playing conditions. The instructions issued by most manufacturers advise that the cartridge and arm should be adjusted so that, when the stylus is resting on a record, the top of the cartridge is perfectly parallel to the record's surface when viewed from the side. But laboratory investigations have shown that this is at best a rough approximation of the optimum alignment. What is more, repeated listening tests have indicated that under properly controlled conditions very small changes in this vertical alignment can be heard quite readily.

DEPENDING ON YOUR outlook, these technical uncertainties may come as discouraging news or as hopeful revelation. We know now that phono reproduction is rarely as good as it could be, and that the best possible reproduction is fairly difficult to achieve. But at the same time we are learning why our record players are falling short of the mark, and armed with that knowledge we can proceed in the direction of practical remedies. For the time being we can only observe scrupulously the alignment instructions given by cartridge and record-player manufacturers; certainly they will work out better than giving no attention to such adjustments at all. For the future, we can look forward to more sophisticated means of realizing the performance theoretically available with today's record-playing equipment. □

The A-800: A TEAC with features you can't live without at a price you can live with.

The TEAC A-800 gives you one of the best, most affordable combinations of precision, muscle and good looks around. It's a three head, two motor, dual capstan, solenoid-operated cassette deck that lists for less than \$800.*

The A-800 transport has a computer heritage... heavy, rock-steady, reliable. The closed-loop dual capstan system isolates the tape between the capstans to provide optimum tape-to-head contact. Result: better frequency response, fewer dropouts. An



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Power bandwidth at 8 OHMS	—	20–20,000 Hz
Signal to noise ratio at 2.5 MV (dB)	75	70
FM TUNER SECTION:		
Usable sensitivity Mono UV at 300 OHMS	1.8	2.5
50 db quieting sensitivity Mono UV at 300 OHMS	3	5
THD Mono & THD Stereo	0.2% & 0.35%	0.3% & 0.5%
Frequency response Hz	25 to 15,000	35 to 12,000
Alternate channel selectivity (dB)	60	50
Stereo separation at one kHz (dB)	45	35

Features:

Graphic Equalizer with LED Readout
 Relay Protection
 32 Detent Volume Attenuator
 Wattage Meters
 Two-Step High and Low Filters
 Deviation Meter

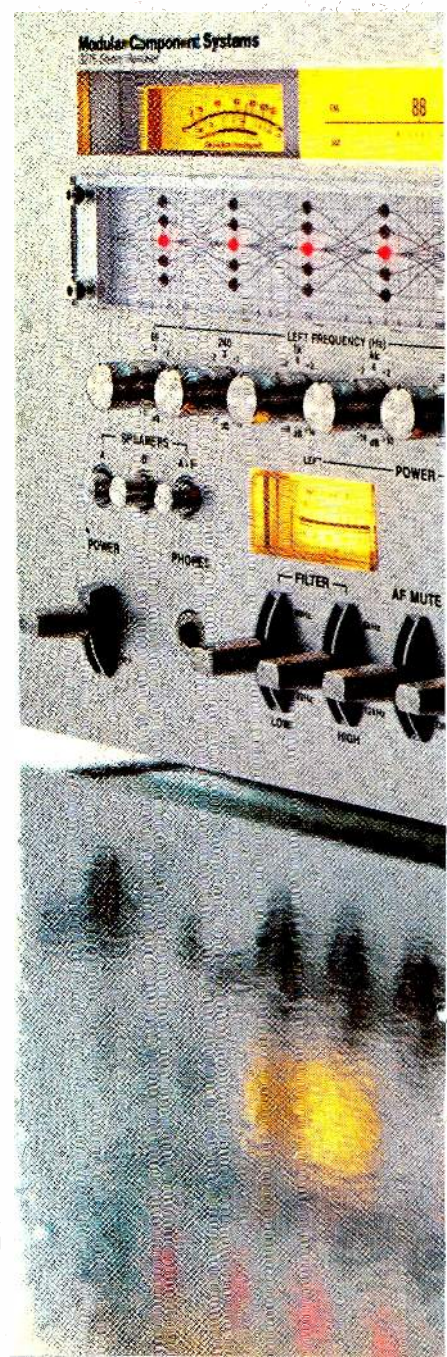
Multipath Meter
 LED Signal Strength Indicator
 AF Mute
 A JCPenney Warranty unsurpassed by any Hi-Fi manufacturer*

Comments: (STEREO REVIEW JANUARY 1979)

- "The excellent performance of the power amplifier was maintained across the full audio band."
- "It's capture ratio was so remarkably good that we rechecked it several times..."
- "The graphic equalizer can do a most effective job of correcting for broad response characteristics of speakers, listening room, or program material."
- "The audio performance of the 3275 is excellent, and we could hardly fault it in any respect."
- "The IHF slew factor exceeded 2.5, which is our measurement limit."

Price: \$599.95

*Within 5 years of purchase of speakers or 3 years of purchase of single or multiple play turntable, receiver, tuner, amplifier or tape deck of this Modular Component System, we will, at our option, repair or replace these items if defective in material or workmanship. Just return it to the nearest JCPenney facility.

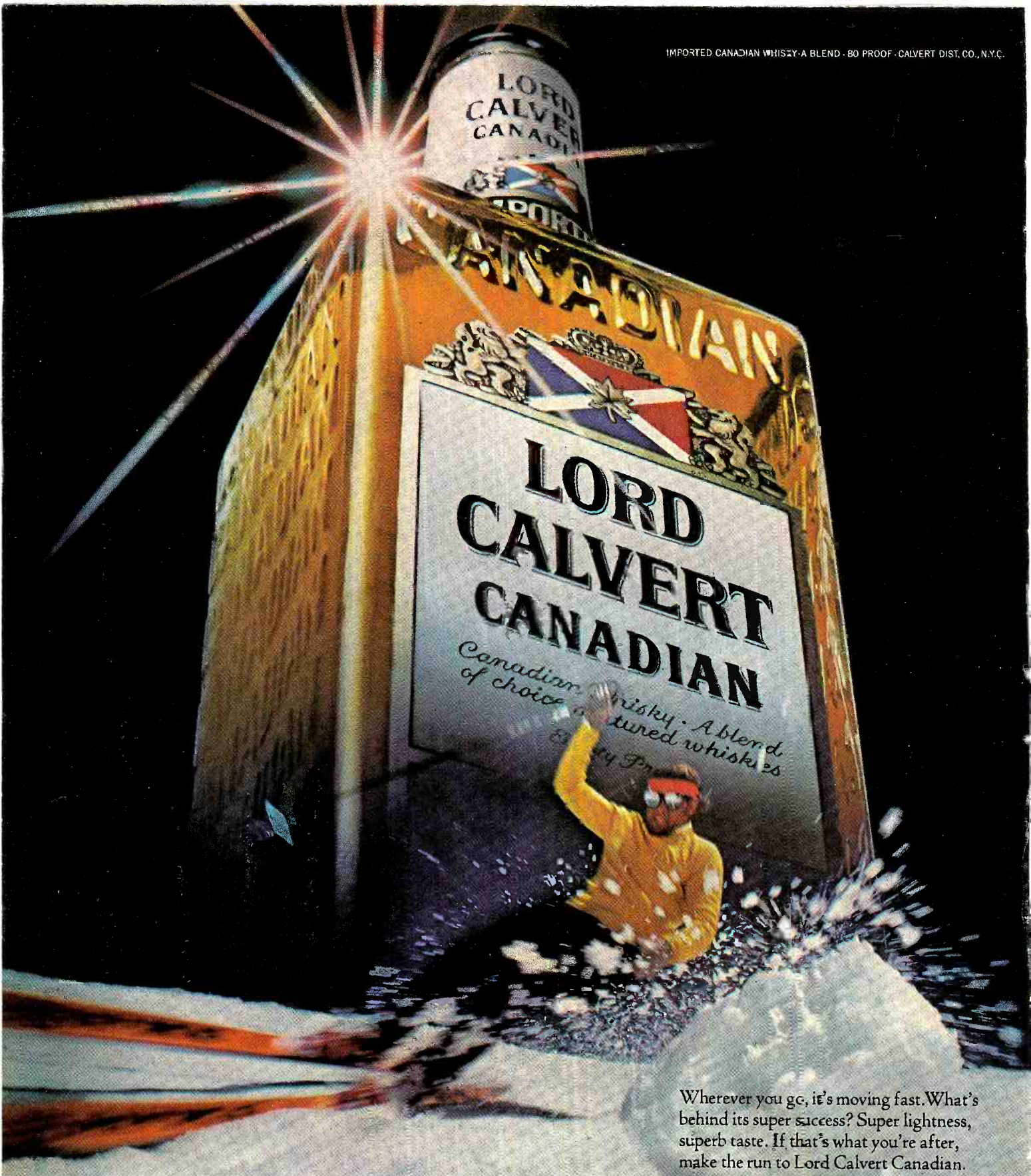


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Tape Talk

By Craig Stark



A special tape head fascinates Craig Stark during a recent trip to TDK Laboratories in Japan.

MICROPHONE SELECTION—1

UNLESS your recording interests extend no farther than dubbing from discs or FM, sooner or later you're likely to be shopping for a pair of microphones. Unless you stick to the specific recommendations, if any, of your tape-deck manufacturer, you may find yourself confronted with a bewildering array of terms and specifications. Since a number of readers have written me about different aspects of mike selection, it seems a good idea to handle them all together in a continuous format instead of breaking them up into separate questions and answers.

The first decision you'll probably want to make is whether you want a pair of *omnidirectional* ("omni") microphones (see illustration below), which, as the name implies, are equally sensitive to sounds coming from all directions, or whether your recording needs would be better served by *cardioid* ("unidirectional") mikes, which reject sounds coming from the rear. (There is a third classic microphone pickup pattern, the "figure eight," which is also illustrated below, but its use tends to be highly specialized and more suited to professional applications.)

Of the two major types, I personally prefer omnidirectional microphones (at least when noise from an audience isn't likely to be excessive), for on a per-dollar basis they tend to give the smoothest frequency response. On the other hand, cardioids are by far the most popular choice (also the most easily available), and you can frequently get a very good stereo image by physically taping the cases of

two cardioids together with plastic electrical tape to form an "X" in which the two mikes point about 90 degrees apart. (This also permits you to use a single microphone stand to support the pair of them.) However, if you intend to use cardioids with a vocalist who never holds a mike more than an inch away from his or her mouth, select a model with a built-in "bass-rolloff" switch. When operating very close to the sound source, unidirectional microphones produce an artificial bass boost, known as the "proximity effect," for which the rolloff switch will compensate.

Even the briefest reading of audiophile catalogs or manufacturers' literature will disclose the fact that, regardless of which pickup pattern you choose, you must next decide between *dynamic*, *electret* (or "electret condenser"), *ribbon*, *crystal* (or "ceramic"), or, if price is no object, *condenser* microphones.

Genuine condenser microphones are the professional's first choice for the widest, flattest frequency response. They frequently offer switchable pickup patterns (or interchangeable screw-on capsules to achieve this), but they generally cost \$300 and up, and they require an external power supply.

At the opposite end of the economic scale are the crystal or ceramic types, which are often available for under \$5. These are definitely not designed for high-fidelity music recording. In the \$50 to \$200 range, however, are to be found many excellent examples of the three other basic types: dynamic, electret, and ribbon. Ribbon microphones are relative-

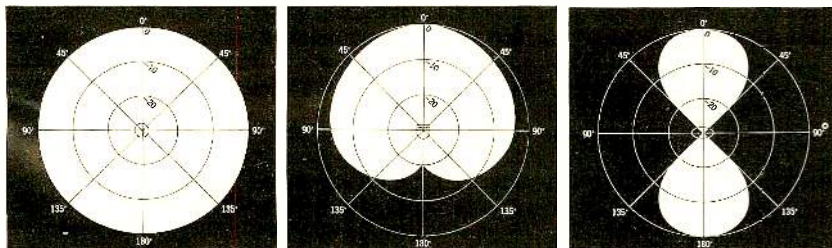
ly rare: they tend to be rather costly, have generally excellent transient response, and are often said by professionals to have a certain "warmth" in vocal recording that makes them an even better choice than the condenser type. Dynamics are the most abundantly available. They come on all quality levels, are rugged, capable of wide and smooth frequency response, and have long been the "workhorses" of the broadcast industry. They operate like a regular loudspeaker, only in reverse. Electrets are relative newcomers to the scene. They are, as a matter of fact, a type of condenser microphone, akin in operation to an electrostatic type of loudspeaker (again, in reverse). While, unlike dynamics, they do require a power supply, it normally consists of only a couple of "AA" cells installed inside the microphone case. Having had excellent results with dynamics, electrets, and ribbons, I don't recommend you make your choice simply on the basis of type, but, if possible, on comparisons between specific models.

The ideal "test," of course, involves actual use of different microphones under different conditions, but unless you have an extraordinarily obliging dealer, this is not likely to be a feasible option. Most microphones come with bare wires at the end of the cables supplied (so you can attach the particular type of connector your recorder or mixer input requires), but if you narrow your choice to a couple of models, you may find a dealer willing to rig a connection from one of each into his best recorder and demo system to permit a limited comparison. If so, here are two "quick and dirty" checks I found particularly useful.

FIRST, take a *male* friend with a normal speaking voice with you to the showroom. (Never use your own voice, however good, because nobody sounds the same to himself as he does to others.) Set up microphone "A" on a stand, adjust the level of the recorder to obtain normal readings, and let your friend read a paragraph or two from the morning newspaper at a normal speaking distance of 1 to 2 feet. Then check microphone "B" at the same recorder setting. On playback, listen for any trace of "chestiness" or nasality in your friend's voice. (This check will also give you a good idea of the mikes' relative outputs.)

Second, take a group of house keys on a key-ring or chain and walk around each microphone at a fixed distance of about 4 feet, shaking them vigorously. This will check the high-frequency response of the two contenders (again, you know what the keys sounded like "live") as well as give you an idea of their polar responses in comparison to each other. (Even omnidirectional mikes are not fully omnidirectional at high frequencies, and with cardioids you can determine approximately how wide an "acceptance angle" they have before the jangling keys change their tonal characteristics.) Again, the test is not which sounds "better" but which matches the live sound more closely. (I'm assuming all the other equipment is good enough and set up so as not to invalidate your judgments.)

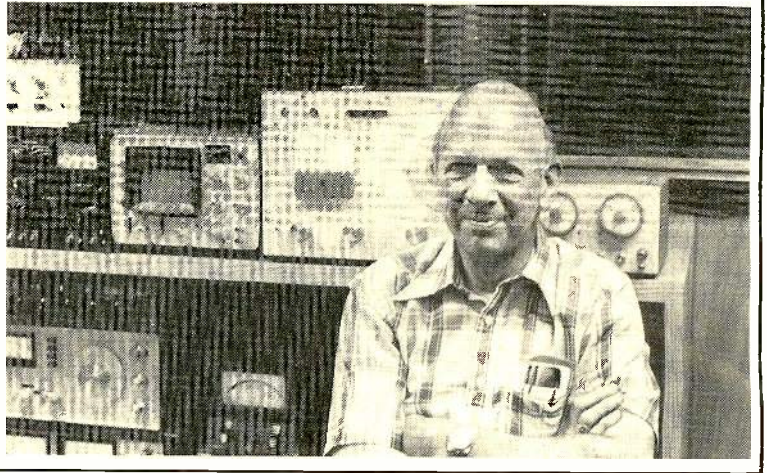
There are other important considerations that go into selecting microphones, having to do with balanced vs. unbalanced cables, microphone impedance, and output levels, all of which concern the "interface" between the mike and the recorder you intend to use it with. These will be the subject of my column next month. □



Left to right: omnidirectional, cardioid, and "figure-eight" pickup patterns. Note that these diagrams actually represent solid, three-dimensional shapes and not flat surfaces.

Technical Talk

By Julian D. Hirsch



• Amplifier Dynamic Headroom •

SHORTLY after the publication of our comprehensive report on twenty medium-price integrated amplifiers (STEREO REVIEW, November 1978) I received a call from a manufacturer who took exception to the entire concept of the "dynamic headroom" rating as defined in the new IHF Amplifier Test Standard, IHF-A-202 (1978), and especially as it applied to his amplifier and those of some of his competitors. To understand his concern a little better, let us review the significance of the dynamic-headroom rating and how it came to be created.

In general, an amplifier can deliver more power for a short period of time (in the order of milliseconds) than on a continuous basis. To some extent this is related to the thermal dissipation ratings of the specific output transistors used in a specific amplifier: they might be damaged by *extended* operation beyond a certain power level, but they can still deliver *short* peaks beyond that point without problems. The main cause of this effect, however, is in the d.c. power supply for the output transistors. The *regulation* of a power supply is a measure of how much its output voltage changes as it delivers current to a load. In a perfectly regulated supply, the voltage remains constant for any load from zero to the maximum rating. An amplifier powered from such a supply will have the same maximum power capability with both transient and continuous signals.

Power supplies—those, at least, of the kind used in consumer audio amplifiers—are rarely perfectly regulated. With no load or a very light load (which is the normal operating condition in most home amplifiers), the power-supply output voltage is near its maximum and the filter capacitors (which serve as energy-storage elements) are fully charged to that voltage level. The amplifier is then ready to deliver all the wattage of which it is capable to its loads (the speakers).

As current is drawn from a charged capacitor, the voltage across the capacitor drops. In a power supply, the capacitors are being continuously recharged, but not necessarily at the same rate they are being discharged into the load. Whenever a capacitor is being discharged faster than its charge is being replaced, the voltage output of the supply

drops, and so does the available power output from the amplifier. Since the power capability of an amplifier is proportional to the square of its supply voltage, a 30 per cent drop in voltage will reduce the maximum amplifier power by half, or 3 dB. A typical power supply delivering its maximum rated current continuously will have an output voltage about 10 to 20 per cent less than that which is available under no-load (or light-load) conditions.

As a rule, a regulated power supply, whose voltage changes little or not at all with rated load variations, is too expensive to be used in consumer products except where it is actually part of the circuit design. There is, in fact, some controversy among designers as to whether it is even *desirable* for an amplifier power supply to be well regulated.

THE question of the desirability of regulation arises because of the nature of music, speech, and most other sounds that a high-fidelity amplifier is called upon to handle. Such sounds have a high ratio of peak to average power. This is why an amplifier's power meters will read a few watts or less on average program levels, yet a peak indicator will show that it is delivering 100 or more watts on peaks. Since that is the case, it would seem that an economical amplifier design should have enough long-term output (continuous-power) capability to meet the needs of the program material, yet be able to deliver short-term signal peaks at a much higher level without clipping. The alternative is to design a heavy-duty, well-regulated supply whose

voltage is always about the same as the *no-load* voltage of the loosely regulated supply. This would exact a heavy toll in cost, size, and weight. Most amplifiers fall between these two extremes.

At one time, not too many years ago, a clever ad man realized that the higher short-term output-power capability of an amplifier would provide a larger wattage number and therefore be more impressive to prospective buyers. The result was that these "music-power" ratings were grossly abused, to the extent that all printed amplifier-power specifications became nearly meaningless. The FTC finally stepped in, and now the continuous-power output (with added qualifications) must be the dominant published power rating of an amplifier.

Nevertheless, the concept of a short-term power rating is still valid, and it has been incorporated in the new IHF amplifier standard in a way that—it was hoped—would prevent abuses such as had existed previously. To avoid the legal problems of "upstaging" the continuous-power rating, it is now expressed in *decibels*, denoting the ratio of the short-term power *under standardized test conditions* to the *rated* continuous power output of the amplifier. This figure is called the IHF Dynamic Headroom.

The key to the matter is in the use of the term "rated power," which is in a sense a legal rather than a technical one, to establish the dynamic-headroom rating. Each manufacturer has the option of selecting *any* continuous-power rating (at a chosen distortion level and frequency range) for his product, subject only to the requirement that the products meet that rating when tested according to FTC requirements. Different manufacturers are, to various degrees, conservative in rating their amplifiers, but most are careful to meet the government regulations with a comfortable safety margin.

An advantage of using decibel ratings instead of actual wattages is that they show at a glance just how much *real* added headroom is available for peaks and how two amplifiers compare in this respect. For some reason, many people have difficulty appreciating how insignificant a difference of one decibel really is. For all practical purposes, it matters not a

Tested This Month

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Toshiba PC-5460 Cassette Deck
Avid Model 230 Speaker System
Signet TK7E Phono Cartridge
ADC Sound Shaper Equalizer
Threshold CAS 1 Power Amplifier

whit whether two amplifiers with identical rated outputs have dynamic-headroom ratings of 1 or 2 dB. It is inconceivable that anyone would be able to distinguish between them in a listening comparison on the basis of that difference alone.

My "mistake" in the comprehensive amplifier report was in listing actual peak wattages as well as decibel figures. I did this to help bridge the conceptual gap between the two systems for many people. In doing so, I may have inadvertently negated much of the advantage of the new system. Even if a reader understands that differences of a decibel or so in any rating do not imply any real performance difference, it is hard for him to ignore the distinction between dynamic-power outputs of (say) 50 and 63 watts, for they seem to assume a greater importance in the mind than the equivalent (and virtually undetectable) 1-dB power ratio.

My caller was concerned lest a reader looking at the measured dynamic-power output as well as the decibel rating assume that two amplifiers delivering the same dynamic wattage are equivalent, even though their continuous (or clipping) output powers are different. The extent to which this is—or is not—true is illustrated by the following examples (the power figures are fictitious, and no specific amplifiers are implied).

Consider three amplifiers having identical dynamic-output powers of 70 watts. Amplifier A is a conservatively rated but relatively low-power unit with a loosely regulated power supply. Despite its modest FTC power rating

DYNAMIC HEADROOM MADE EASY

"When you have two amplifiers with the same continuous-power rating (and all other factors are equal), the one with the higher dynamic headroom is to be preferred. When you have two amplifiers with the same dynamic headroom, then the one with the higher continuous power is to be preferred." —Larry Klein

of 40 watts, it can deliver 55 watts at the clipping point, and its loose power-supply regulation results in a dynamic-power output of 70 watts. Amplifier B has a 60-watt rating (continuous), and its fairly heavy power supply allows it to deliver 65 watts at the clipping point with a dynamic output of 70 watts. Amplifier C has a stiff, regulated supply with about the same margin of safety in its ratings as amplifier B. It is rated at 65 watts and can deliver 70 watts under both continuous and dynamic conditions.

Here we have three amplifiers with exactly the same dynamic-power output and enough steady-state "continuous" output capability that they are, in truth, completely equivalent

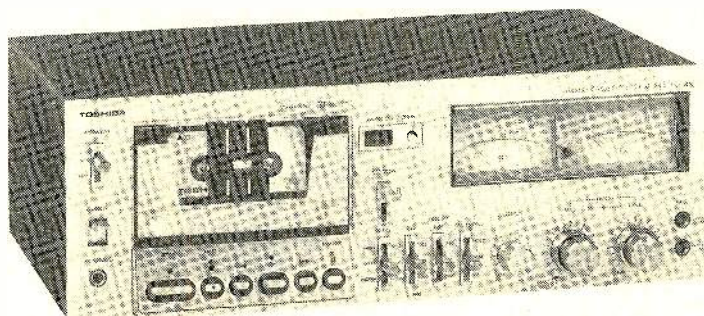
in their ability to handle the dynamics of any program up to their full peak abilities. This is in spite of their very different power ratings.

The respective dynamic-headroom ratings of amplifiers A, B, and C are 2.43, 0.67, and 0.32 dB. If the manufacturer of B feels that A has an unfair advantage because of his higher dynamic-headroom rating, he is free to rate his amplifier at any lower power that he chooses; if he opts for 40 watts, he will have the same 2.43-dB dynamic-headroom rating as his competitor. In fact, if he chooses to call his product a "35-watt" amplifier, he can boast of a full 3-dB dynamic headroom and possibly lead the field!

No matter what *rated* power a manufacturer chooses for his amplifier, the *true* performance of the unit will always be revealed by its clipping-headroom and dynamic-headroom decibel ratings. In the cases cited, the clipping-headroom ratings of amplifiers A, B, and C are 1.38, 0.67, and 0.32 dB, respectively. If the manufacturer of B chooses to down-rate his amplifier to 40 watts to obtain what he considers to be the more competitive dynamic-headroom rating of 2.43 dB, his clipping-headroom rating will rise to 2.11 dB, a clear indication of the conservatism of his rating. Keep in mind that a high clipping-headroom figure implies a conservative power rating, while a high dynamic-headroom rating means that the power-supply regulation is relatively loose. This is *not* necessarily an undesirable quality, nor does it reflect on the quality of the amplifier; it is more likely an expression of the manufacturer's design philosophy.

Equipment Test Reports

By Hirsch-Houck Laboratories



Toshiba PC-5460 Stereo Cassette Deck

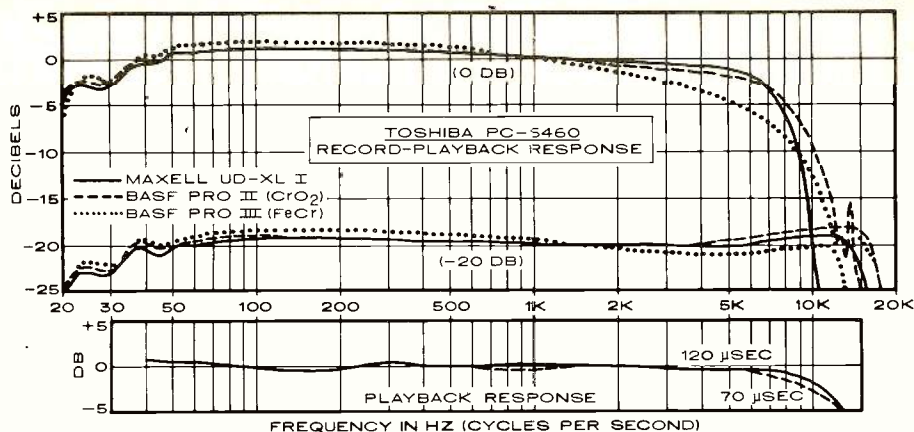
THE Toshiba PC-5460 is a front-loading cassette deck that features a laminated Sendust record/playback head and uses a single d.c. servomotor for its capstan and reel drives. A second motor, connected through a gear and multiple-cam arrangement, provides

a power assist for the transport-mode control buttons so that only a light touch is required to activate their functions, which can be executed in any sequence. Even the record mode can be entered directly at any time, including from high-speed rewind or play.

The cassette well is located on the left side of the panel, and the lid opens with oil-damped smoothness when the EJECT lever is pressed. Cassettes are inserted, tape downward, into slides on the back of the clear-plastic compartment door, which affords a complete view of the cassette label. Two thumb-screws permit removal of the front portion of the lid to give access to the heads for routine cleaning and demagnetizing. The transport-mode control buttons are immediately below the cassette-well doors.

Separate three-position lever switches select the proper bias and equalization for ferric-oxide (NORM), ferrichrome (FE-CR), and chromium-dioxide (CR₂) tape formulations. A similar switch turns the Dolby noise-reduction system on and off and provides an FM position that additionally changes the equalization from 75 to 25 microseconds to ensure proper reception and taping of broadcasts in which the Dolby system has been used. By placing the PC-5460 in its recording mode but leaving the PAUSE button depressed you can "de-Dolbyize" such programs and hear them through your receiver or amplifier (assuming it has no Dolby system of its own) even when the unit is not actually recording.

(Continued overleaf)



Another METER lever switch provides three different types of reading from the record-level meters. In one position of the switch the meters read average VU levels on a scale from -20 to +4 VU (Dolby level is indicated by a small dot at the +3-VU position). In the center position, the meters read peak signal levels from -40 to +10 dB. With the switch in its uppermost position, the meter needles hold the highest signal peak encountered so that you can, for example, audition a disc you intend to dub and determine its maximum level.

An OUTPUT control adjusts the listening volume for both channels simultaneously at the front-panel headphone jack and at the rear-panel phono-jack outputs. We found the listening levels satisfactory with headphones in the 8- to 600-ohm range. Separate concentric left- and right-channel controls are provided for microphone and line-level inputs, which can be mixed. Recommended microphone impedances range from 600 to 10,000 ohms.

One rather unusual feature on the front panel is a spring-loaded EDITOR lever which functions, in effect, as a master record-level control. As this lever is slowly pulled down (or released) during recording it fades the overall recording level down (or up), permitting gradual program transitions or the insertion of quiet passages between taped selections. The operation of the EDITOR feature does not affect either the indications on the record-level meters or the volume at the headphone or output jacks, so you must judge the proper rate of fade-out and fade-in without visible or audible clues.

The rear panel of the PC-5460 contains the usual input and output jacks of the phono-jack type, together with left- and right-channel calibration controls used to match the sensitivity of the deck to the level of a broadcast Dolby-level FM tone. (In its Dolby-FM mode, the regular front-panel recording-level controls are inoperative, but, once calibrated, the Dolby FM level should be the same for all stations broadcasting such programs unless you change your tuner or receiver.) Also on the rear panel is an FM-multiplex switch that will eliminate any residual 19-kHz stereo subcarrier products that might interfere with the proper operation of the Dolby circuits (whether the program is Dolby-encoded or not) of the deck when you tape off the air. The Toshiba PC-5460 cassette deck measures 16½ x 5¾ x 11 inches and weighs just under 14 pounds. Price: \$369.96.

● **Laboratory Measurements.** According to the manufacturer, our sample of the PC-5460 was adjusted for Maxell UD-XL I (Fe), TDK SA (CrO₂), and Denon DX5 (FeCr). Lacking a sample of the recommended ferrichrome tape, we tried the more readily available Sony FeCr, BASF Professional III, and 3M Master III, obtaining the best results with the BASF tape. For the ferric and chromium-dioxide formulations we followed the manufacturer's recommendations initially, though, as explained below, we found that we could obtain a somewhat flatter and wider frequency response in the CrO₂ position when using BASF Professional II.

The recommended ferric-oxide tape, Maxell UD-XL I, gave an extremely flat response—within ±1 dB—from 34 to 14,500 Hz, and the low-frequency undulations ("head bumps" caused by the physical contour of the playback head) were unusually well controlled. BASF Professional III (a fer-

richrome formulation) produced an overall record-playback frequency response (at the usual -20-dB level) of ±2 dB from 32 to 17,000 Hz. Overall response from the suggested TDK SA was within +0, -3 dB from 32 to 15,000 Hz, but the gradually increasing droop in response from about 3,500 Hz upward suggested to us that our sample of the PC-5460 might be *slightly* overbiased for this particular tape. So, we also checked the CrO₂ frequency response with BASF Professional II, a genuine chromium-dioxide formulation that experience has taught us generally requires a somewhat higher bias level than most tapes designed for the CrO₂ switch position. Sure enough, frequency response improved to ±2 dB from 32 to 17,000 Hz, and the curve was slightly flatter in the upper mid-range than with the ferrichrome tape, whose numerical rating was the same.

Dolby tracking of the PC-5460 was excellent at input levels of -30 and -40 dB, never deviating by more than 0.5 dB. At a -20-dB input the tracking was very good, following the non-Dolbyized response curve within ±1.5 dB up to 12,500 Hz, above which it dropped more sharply. This close match confirms the Dolby claim to be relatively tolerant of slight errors in absolute level, since when we checked the Dolby calibration with our 200-nWb/m Dolby-level test tape, we found the meter to be low by 1.5 dB.

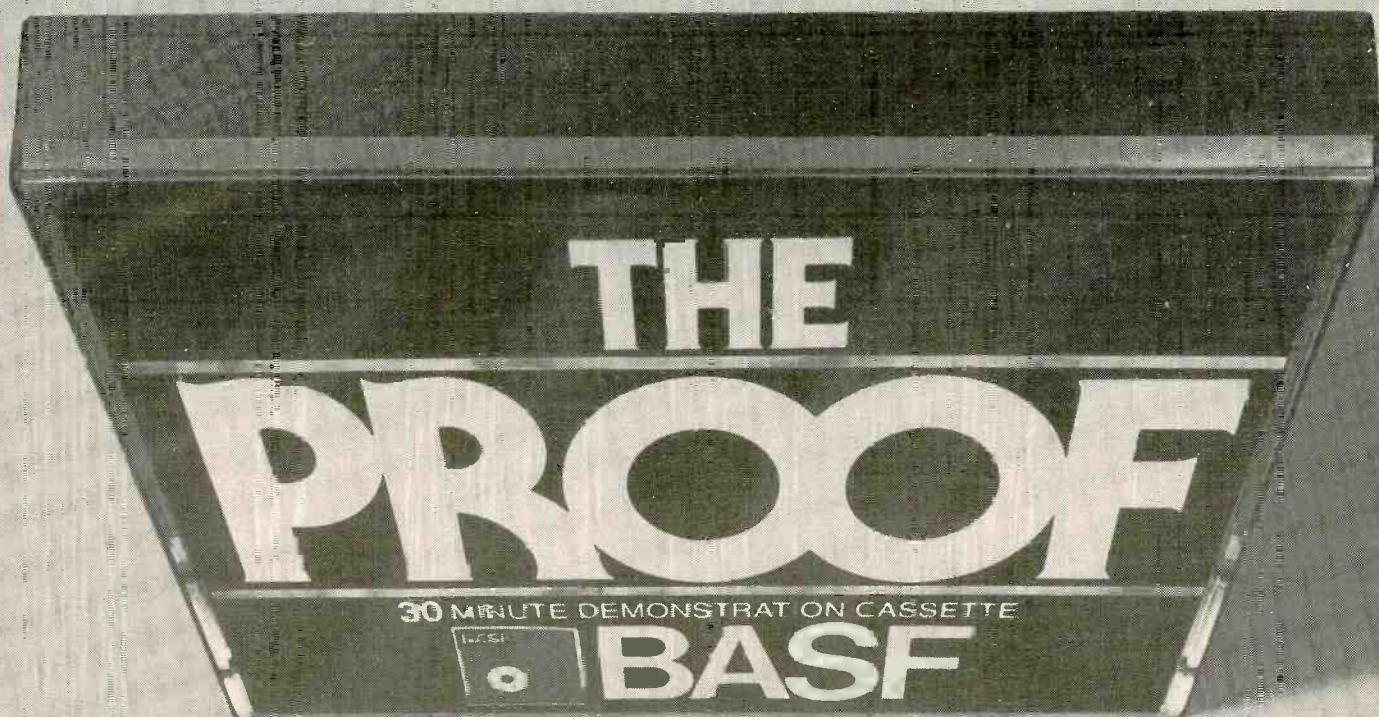
Playback response was checked with our TDK AC-337 test tape, which can be used directly to check the ferric (120-microsecond) equalization and can also be used to check performance in the 40- to 12,500-Hz range in the CrO₂ position by applying standard correction factors. In both cases the response sloped slightly downward at the highest frequencies. Since the overall record-playback response (which uses the same head for both

(Continued on page 54)



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BASF

THE INVENTOR OF MAGNETIC TAPE.

functions) was flatter over a much greater range with all tapes tested, we suspect that the head in our sample of the PC-5460 may have had a very small azimuth error.

From the line-level inputs, a signal level of 75 mV was required to obtain a 0-dB indication on the recording-level meters. A microphone input of 0.25 mV produced the same indication, and the overload point was 27 mV, making the inputs suitable for all but very high-output microphones.

Distortion at a 0-dB record level was only 0.46 per cent with the Maxell UD-XL I tape, a figure matched by the somewhat overbiased TDK SA. The BASF ferrichrome and chromium-dioxide tapes produced 1.15 and 1.3 per cent third-harmonic distortion, respectively, at this recording level. To reach the usual 3 per cent third-harmonic distortion level on playback, the four tapes required inputs of +7.5, +6, +4.2, and +3.1 dB. Referred to the playback outputs at the 3 per cent reference point, A-weighted signal-to-noise ratios without Dolby noise reduction were 59.4, 60.5, 61, and 58.5 dB, respectively. With the Dolby circuitry switched in and using the CCIR/ARM weighting curve, the signal-to-noise figures

improved to 66.4, 68.5, 69.2, and 66.6 dB, respectively.

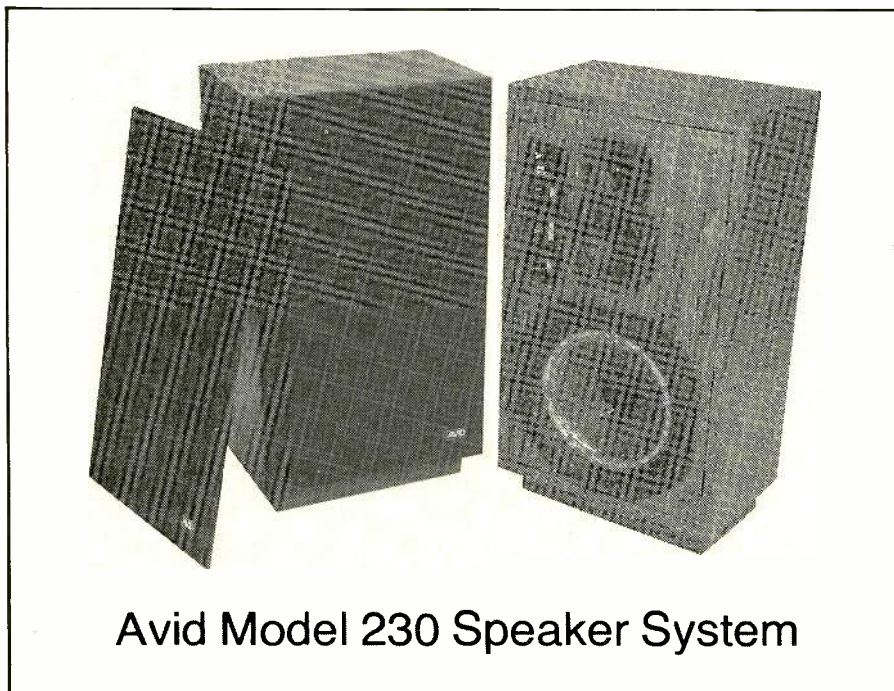
In their "average-responding" mode, the meters of the PC-5460—like those of most audiophile tape decks—do not conform to the ballistic characteristics of genuine VU meters. Tested with standard 0.3-second bursts, they under-read by 1.5 dB, and with 0.5-second tone bursts they overshot by nearly as much. What is likely to be of more interest to the home recordist, however, is the fact that in their peak-reading mode the meters not only hit the signal peaks exactly, but displayed a very slow return action that made them easier to read. And the peak-hold function held as long as our patience in waiting for it to recede.

Wow and flutter of the PC-5460 registered 0.062 per cent on a weighted rms basis and 0.12 per cent on a DIN-B weighted measurement when using the TDK AC-341 test tape. These figures increased, respectively, to only 0.075 and 0.14 per cent when recording and playing back from a blank cassette. Fast-forward and rewind times were a bit on the slow side, however; it took 105 seconds to go from one end of a C-60 cassette to the other.

● **Comment.** Once you become accustomed to the slight whirring noise produced by the motor-driven cams when you press the transport-mode buttons, the Toshiba PC-5460 is a delight to use. Its three-digit counter, though lacking a "memory rewind" feature, proved exceptionally accurate throughout the course of our measurements. The record and output controls have the silken feel of those found in the finest amplifiers and receivers, and, while obviously designed for rough rather than highly precise editing, the EDITOR function proved surprisingly easy to use and become accustomed to.

Our ears confirmed the measurements of frequency response, Dolby accuracy, and fine signal-to-noise ratios. For FM and disc dubbing using "normal" tapes, the PC-5460 is virtually flawless. For copying a direct-to-disc LP or master tapes you might (or might not) detect the improved high-frequency response provided by a CrO₂ or ferrichrome cassette. It is clear that the Toshiba PC-5460 is a fine machine that represents an excellent value within its price range.

Circle 136 on reader service card



Avid Model 230 Speaker System

THE Avid Model 230 is a three-way speaker system featuring "minimum-diffraction" design. The drivers are mounted on the front surface of the cabinet with their rims extending about $\frac{3}{8}$ inch in front of the cabinet's speaker board. The removable grille is made of $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch-thick particle board, routed out to let the speaker rims come flush with its front surface and contacting the cabinet front everywhere else. It is covered with brown cloth and has rounded edges that make a

smooth transition to the cabinet edges. The purpose of this design is to minimize the diffraction of sound waves from the edges of the speaker cutouts and their rims and from the cabinet edges.

The Avid Model 230 is meant to be mounted upright, either on the floor or on a stand, with the high-frequency drivers approximately at ear level. It can also be installed horizontally. It is a three-way system, with a 10-inch acoustic-suspension woofer crossing over at

475 Hz to a mid-range with a $4\frac{1}{2}$ -inch cone. At 4,000 Hz, there is a second crossover to a 1-inch fabric-dome tweeter. On a small panel to the left of the drivers are two three-position balance switches that vary the outputs of the mid-range and high-frequency drivers over a nominal ± 2 -dB range and a fuse that protects them against excessive drive levels. The spring-loaded binding-post input connectors are recessed into the rear of the cabinet, which is handsomely veneered in genuine walnut (coated with a protective vinyl) on the four sides and the front. The grille unsnaps readily for access to the balance switches or the fuse, or simply to expose the speakers and finished mounting board. The cabinet is 25 x 15 x 10 inches deep and the system weighs approximately 40 pounds. There is a five-year full warranty on all current Avid systems. Price: \$215.

● **Laboratory Measurements.** The frequency response in the reverberant field of our listening room was measured between 100 and 20,000 Hz with the balance switches set both to their mid positions and to their full-up settings. The bass response was measured separately with a closely spaced microphone. After we adjusted the high-frequency response against the curve of our calibrated room, we spliced the two curves to form a single composite frequency response. The frequency-response curve was changed only slightly at the extreme settings of the mid-range and tweeter-level switches, although their effect was much more audible than measurable. We used the center positions for our overall response plot.

The overall frequency response of the Avid Model 230 system was flat within ± 3 dB from 50 to 20,000 Hz, and over much of that range

(Continued on page 56)

The New ADS L620.

Unbelievable Performance, Very Believable Price.



(ADS 620s shown with optional stands F800)

Deep bass, full bandwidth, definition, clarity, dynamic range, musicality, efficiency, power handling...

These are the declared goals of good speaker design. A few designs come close -- and they cost dearly.

At last, there is an inexpensive solution: The new ADS L620.

It achieves these goals more precisely than any other loudspeaker under \$200, and better than many speakers costing twice as much. It represents a new state of the art, a new *LOW* in cost for *HIGH* Performance.

Rolling Stone reports in its 1978 Fall Audio Supplement, "The ADS L620...exhibits the smooth midrange and crisp well-dispersed treble for which ADS speakers are noted ...when a well-recorded organ pedal or electronic synthesizer comes along, the L620 reveals... extraordinary deep and low distortion bass response."

There should be a selected ADS dealer near you. Listen to the remarkable L620 and compare. Notice the absolute clarity, the deep, clean bass, and the powerful dynamic range.

For the smaller budget the new ADS L420 and L520. Not quite as powerful, but also less costly.

Affordable performance has finally become a reality.

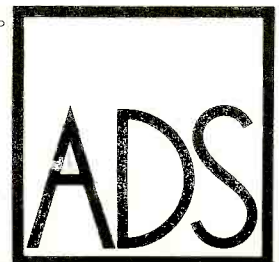
ADS, Analog & Digital Systems, Inc., One Progress Way, Wilmington, MA 01887, (617)658-5100

For more information on the new ADS L620, send this coupon to:
ADS, Analog & Digital Systems, Inc., One Progress Way, Wilmington, MA 01887. 620C - 78P

Name _____

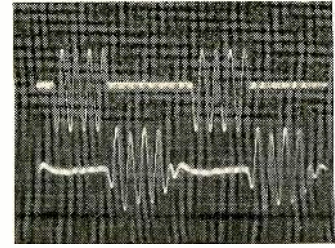
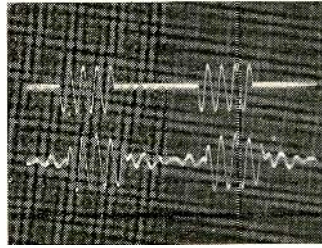
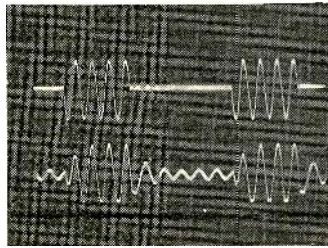
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SR-2

The tone-burst response of the Avid Model 230 is illustrated at (left to right) 100, 1,000, and 10,000 Hz. The upper trace is the input signal.



it was unusually smooth and free of the irregularities that one expects to find in a "live-room" measurement. There was a "bump and dip" in the measured mid-range response, between 200 and 1,000 Hz, that may have been related to the fact that we supported the speakers on low stands to place their tweeters closer to ear level. However, there was no doubt about their enhanced high-frequency response, which reached its maximum at 14,000 Hz, or the woofer peak at 75 Hz. Both were of moderate amplitude (3 to 4 dB) but were clearly and repeatably measurable as well as being audible. The dispersion of the tweeters was excellent up to about 12,000 Hz, with identical response curves being obtained from an on-axis measurement and one about 30 degrees off axis. Above 12,000 Hz, the two curves diverged, with a typical level difference of 8 to 9 dB from there to 20,000 Hz.

The woofer response fell at the rate of 12 dB per octave below about 70 Hz, and the bass rise of 4 dB at 75 Hz affected the output up to about 150 Hz. The speakers were tested 3 to 4 feet from the side walls, a foot from the back wall, and about 7 inches off the floor.

The impedance curve of the Avid Model 230 was notable for two things: it was remarkably flat, and it never fell below 15 ohms. There were broad maxima of 25 to 28 ohms at 56, 520, and 2,700 Hz, but elsewhere the impedance was 15 to 16 ohms. However, we used the manufacturer's rating of 8 ohms as a basis for our sensitivity and distortion measurements. The sensitivity of the Model 230 was exactly as rated. Driven by 2.83 volts (1 watt into 8 ohms) of random noise in an oc-

tave centered at 1,000 Hz, it produced a sound-pressure level of 88 dB at a distance of 1 meter in front of the grille. The woofer distortion was measured at inputs of 1 watt and 10 watts (again, based on an 8-ohm impedance) and we found very little difference between the two measurements. The distortion was extremely low (under 0.5 per cent) down to 60 Hz at 1 watt, increasing to 5 per cent at 35 Hz and 7.1 per cent at 30 Hz. A 10-dB power increase changed the distortion to a maximum of 0.8 per cent down to 60 Hz, 5.5 per cent at 35 Hz, and 9.5 per cent at 30 Hz. Even if allowance is made for the fact that the actual drive power was half of these levels, this is, considering the true impedance of the system, an excellent bass-distortion characteristic. Practically, this means that amplifier bass boost can be applied in judicious amounts when desired without risking excessive low-frequency distortion.

The tone bursts from the Model 230 were neither better nor worse than we have observed from most other comparable speaker systems. There were no frequencies at which severe ringing occurred, but neither were there many where the burst had a near-ideal shape.

● **Comment.** Our initial listening impression of the sound of the Avid 230 was of a bright, slightly thin character, particularly in comparison to our regular system, which has a relatively warm sound and extended low-bass response. Although the output in the lowest octave (30 to 60 Hz) was somewhat down, the Avid's relatively high woofer resonance pro-

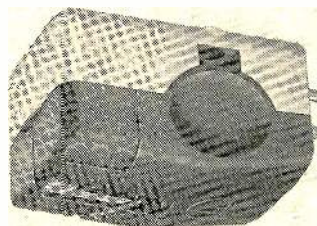
vided the impression of a reasonably good bass response. The high-end output, though strong and extended, was emphasized by a small peak that contributed crispness and a bit of "sheen" to the sound. Our subsequent measurements confirmed both opinions.

The portion of the measured response that was most difficult to correlate with what we heard was the mid-range irregularity. At times we could hear a "forward" character in the sound, but the measured effects were well below the usual "presence range" of frequencies. Since we could not listen to the speakers in a number of different environments, we could not definitely separate the effects of the room and the speaker placement from the intrinsic speaker response, and we will therefore withhold judgment on that point.

By and large, the Avid Model 230 is a flat and neutral-sounding system on most program material. Its high-frequency peak gives it a definite tendency toward crispness, but not to an objectionable degree (and in a heavily damped room this might not even be noticeable). The absence of low-bass distortion makes it possible to boost the response below 60 Hz with a graphic equalizer or equivalent and convert the speaker into a fairly formidable bass performer. And it should be possible to parallel two or even three pairs of these speakers without endangering the performance or life of almost any amplifier. We found the Avid Model 230 to be a very capable and certainly very listenable speaker in its price class.

Circle 137 on reader service card

Signet TK7E Phono Cartridge



THE hand-assembled Signet phono cartridges feature a moving-magnet design with a dual-magnet construction that is

claimed to have a lower effective moving mass than a conventional single-magnet system that provides the same output. The two

small magnets are mounted on the cantilever, at right angles to each other and as close as possible to the pivot.

The higher efficiency of the dual-magnet system makes it possible to use fewer turns of wire in the fixed coils of the cartridge, and the resulting lower inductance and resistance make the frequency response of the Signet cartridges less sensitive to changes in load capacitance and resistance. The stylus of the Model TK7E cartridge that we tested has an elliptical shape, with radii of 0.2 and 0.7 mils.

A novel feature of the Signet cartridge line is the variety of accessory or replacement stylus assemblies available for it. Three different stylus shapes are available (0.5-mil spherical, (Continued on page 58)



Our 120's do something unusual. They work.

Anyone who uses 120 minute cassettes knows the tape is not only a lot thinner than the tape in a 60 minute cassette, it's also more susceptible to stretching, buckling, and tearing.

Yet few people realize the fault lies not in the tape itself, but in poorly constructed

cassette housings.

At Maxell, we build our cassettes to higher standards than the industry calls for. We use heavy-duty styrene in our cassette housing, Delrin guide rollers with precision steel pins and Teflon slip sheets. All of which help

eliminate sticking and jamming.

So if you're looking for a 120, why look for trouble.

Try Maxell. The two hour cassette that's guaranteed to work.

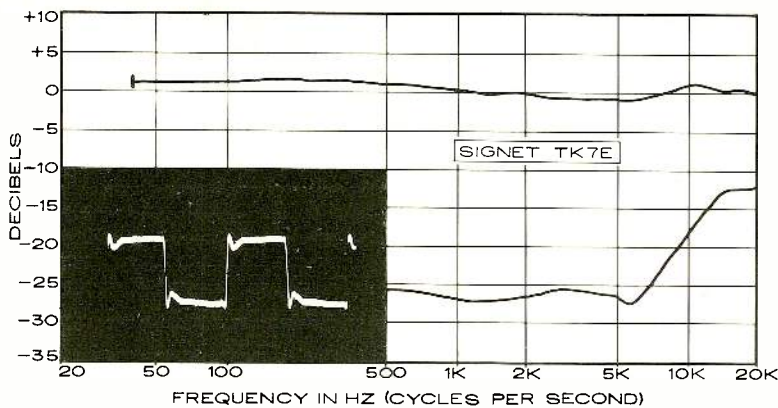
Forever.

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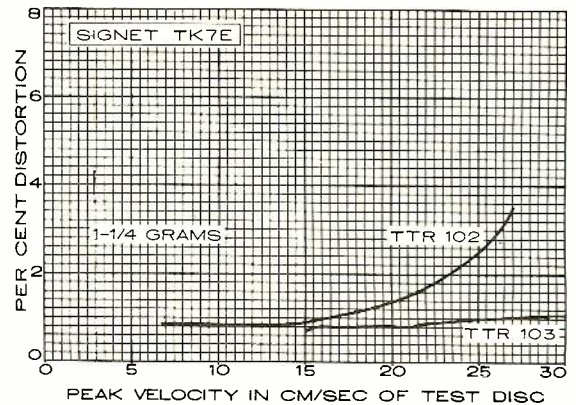


CIRCLE NO. 33 ON READER SERVICE CARD

Maxell Corporation of America, 60 Oxford Drive, Moonachie, N.J. 07074



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



TTR-103 test records. These high velocities provide a severe test of a phono cartridge's performance. The intermodulation-distortion (IM) readings for any given cartridge can vary widely, depending on the particular IM test record used. The actual distortion figure measured is not as important as the maximum velocity the cartridge is able to track before a sudden and radical increase in distortion takes place. There are very few commercial phonograph discs that embody musical audio signals with average velocities much higher than about 15 cm/sec.

0.2 x 0.7-mil elliptical, and Shibata), and each of these can be had in a cantilever formed of carbon fiber, beryllium, or titanium. Each of these materials has some presumed special qualities in addition to high rigidity and low mass, so that the audiophile who can hear the sonic subtleties provided by exotic cantilever material has the option of exercising his preference to a degree not available in any other cartridge line we know of. There is also an accessory stylus with a 0.5-mil spherical tip in a special low-mass aluminum cantilever, as well as a heavier aluminum cantilever with a 2.5-mil diamond for playing 78-rpm discs.

The Signet TK7E is rated to track at forces between 0.75 and 1.75 grams, with a rated frequency response of 5 to 30,000 Hz (no tolerance or test record specified). Price: \$150.

● **Laboratory Measurements.** Although the cartridge's instructions do not list a specific recommended load capacitance, they do suggest keeping the capacitance to a minimum. We installed the TK7E in the tone arm of a Dual 701 record player, loading each channel with 280 picofarads (pF) and 47,000 ohms. We then made frequency-response measurements with different load capacitances and resistances, varying each parameter while holding the other constant, and determined that the flattest overall response was obtained with the selected values. They were not at all critical, however, and good results can be expected with capacitances from under 200 pF to over 300 pF and with any resistance in the vicinity of 47,000 ohms. We operated the cartridge at 1.25 grams, in the center of its rated stylus-force range.

Measured over the 40- to 20,000-Hz range of a CBS STR 100 test record, the frequency response of the Signet TK7E was flat within ± 1 dB. The only deviation from flat response appeared as a broad, very shallow dip in output in the upper mid-range. It should be noted that these results apply *only* when the STR 100 record is used; other test records will give a different frequency response with this or any other cartridge. The channel separation, averaged for the right and left channels, was about 25 dB in the mid-range, 19 dB at 10,000 Hz, and 12 dB at 20,000 Hz. These separation

figures are even more dependent on the specific test record used than the frequency response, and so do not necessarily conflict with the Signet's rated separation of 30 dB at 1,000 Hz and 22 dB at 10,000 Hz.

The cartridge output at a velocity of 3.54 centimeters per second (cm/sec) was 3.65 millivolts—about average for a good-quality magnetic cartridge—and the channel balance of 0.2 dB was excellent. The vertical stylus angle is rated at 20 degrees (the current IEC standard) and was measured as 22 degrees. The compliance of the stylus system resonated with the moderately high mass of the Dual tone arm at 7 Hz with an amplitude of about 8 dB.

The tracking ability of the Signet TK7E was outstanding at all audio frequencies. At the 1.25-gram test force, the cartridge tracked the 90-micron level of the 300-Hz tones on the German Hi-Fi Institute's record, and at the rated maximum of 1.75 grams it played the

record's maximum level of 100 microns. With our other high-velocity test records, a force of 0.7 to 0.9 gram was usually sufficient.

The tracking distortion of the TK7E was measured with the Shure TTR-102 and TTR-103 records. The former has 400- and 4,000-Hz tones at velocities from 7 to 27 cm/sec and is used with an intermodulation analyzer to measure the IM distortion in the cartridge output. We measured the IM as the approximate residual level of the record (0.8 to 0.9 per cent) up to 15 cm/sec, and it increased smoothly to 2 per cent at 23 cm/sec and 3.5 per cent at 27 cm/sec. There was no obvious mistracking at any level when playing this record.

The shaped 10.8-kHz tone bursts of the TTR-103 record measure high-frequency tracking ability, using special filters to separate the 270-Hz repetition rate of the bursts from their carrier frequency. The "distor-

(Continued on page 60)



PHASE LINEAR SETS THE STANDARD FOR HIGH POWER.

Current loudspeaker design theory takes for granted the availability of a high power reserve. An idea once considered frivolous by many. Today it is considered essential for the best possible reproduction of recorded material.

To reproduce a musical peak, a loudspeaker requires up to 10 times the average power being delivered. If the amplifier lacks a sufficient power reserve, it will clip, producing distortion and audibly destroying sonic quality.

The Phase Linear D-500 Series Two Power Amplifier is capable of delivering 505 watts per channel from 20Hz-20kHz into 8 ohms, with no more than 0.09% Total Harmonic Distortion. That's unsurpassed power for unsurpassed realism.



CONVENTIONAL
OUTPUT
TRANSISTOR.

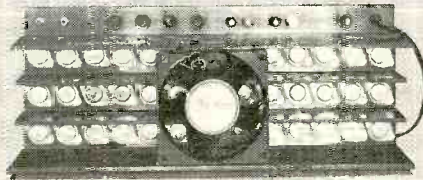


D-500
OUTPUT
TRANSISTOR.

The D-500 utilizes an advanced design in output devices to overcome the problems associated with amplifier clipping at realistic listening levels. As a result, the power handling capability is greatly improved. In fact, the power semiconductor complement of the D-500 features the highest power handling

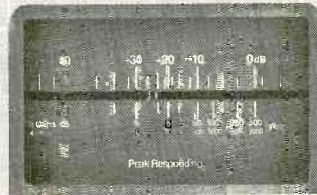
capability in the audio industry.

A massive rear mounted extruded aluminum heat sink assembly protects the 36 output devices against overheating and includes a self-contained, thermally activated forced



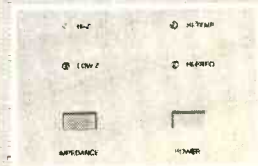
air cooling system. You don't have to worry about over-heating under normal operating conditions.

Instantaneous indication of output activity is easily maintained with an exclusive 32-segment LED display,



while a special 4-segment clipping indicator warns of hazardous overloads. High/Low Impedance Operation modes are automatically,

or manually activated for increased amplifier efficiency when using low impedance speakers.



HEARING IS BELIEVING.

See your local Phase Linear dealer for the most powerful argument for the D-500: a demonstration.

SPECIFICATIONS.

OUTPUT POWER: 505 WATTS
MINIMUM RMS PER CHANNEL
20Hz-20,000Hz INTO 8 OHMS,
WITH NO MORE THAN 0.09% TOTAL
HARMONIC DISTORTION.

CONTINUOUS POWER: 1000Hz per
channel, with less than 0.09% Total
Harmonic Distortion:
8 ohms - 600 watts
4 ohms - 800 watts

INTERMODULATION DISTORTION:
0.09% Max (60Hz: 7kHz = 4:1)

DAMPING FACTOR: 1000:1 Min

RESIDUAL NOISE: 120µV (IHF "A")

SIGNAL TO NOISE RATIO:
110dB (IHF "A")

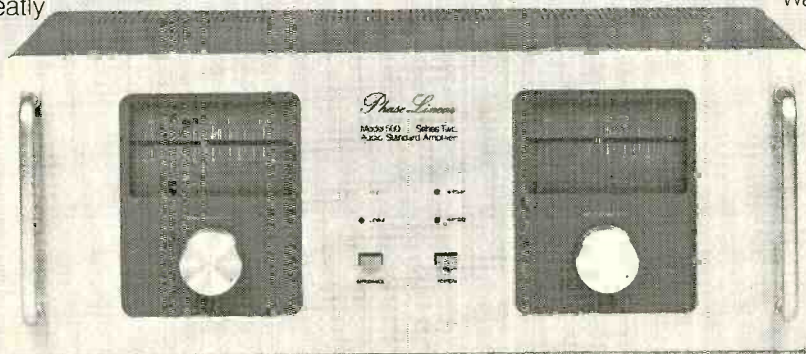
WEIGHT: 65 lbs. (32 kgs.)

DIMENSIONS: 19" x 7" x 15"
(48.3cm x 17.8cm x 38.1cm)

Optionally available in E.I.A. standard rack
mount configuration.

Optional accessories: Solid Oak or
Walnut side panels.

AGAIN.



Phase Linear Corporation
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Lynnwood, Washington
98036

Phase Linear
THE POWERFUL DIFFERENCE

tion" increased from 0.7 to 1.1 per cent as the velocity rose from 15 to 30 cm/sec; this is excellent performance, and very close to the best we have yet measured with this record. Playing the CBS STR 112 square-wave test record, we observed a single cycle of ringing whose frequency we estimate to be in the 15,000- to 20,000-Hz range.

The Shure "Audio Obstacle Course" records confirmed the above-average tracking ability of the Signet cartridge. The reproduction of the Era III record was marred only by a slight "sandpaper" quality on the highest level of the sibilance section, and this was corrected by an increase to a 1.75-gram force. The newer Era IV record could be played in its entirety without audible mistracking at 1.25 grams.

● **Comment.** A cartridge that measures as well as the Signet TK7E is almost always equally outstanding in its general listening quality. We say "almost" because we have, on occasion, encountered a cartridge that measures very well but sounds exceedingly unpleasant (this is not to be confused with the very *subtle* effects that seem to disturb some listeners to an inordinate degree).

In the case of the Signet TK7E, there were no inconsistencies. Rarely have we heard a cartridge with the utter smoothness and lack of coloration of the TK7E. It gave the impression of being absolutely unflappable, no matter how extreme the recorded modulation it was called upon to reproduce.

Anyone who buys a \$150 cartridge has the right to expect flawless listening performance

from it (although we have seen a few, at even higher prices, that did not fully live up to their promise). We would rate the TK7E as at least on a par with the other cartridges in its price class that lead the product lines of their manufacturers. Whatever differences may exist among them are quite subtle, not to say insignificant, under practical listening conditions. People who pride themselves on their critical hearing faculties may wish to experiment with the different accessory styli offered for the TK7E (although, at \$75 each, such experimentation can be an expensive pastime!). For our part, we were more than satisfied, both technically and aurally, with the standard version of the TK7E.

Circle 138 on reader service card



ADC Sound Shaper Two Mk 1 Equalizer

THE ADC Sound Shaper Two Mk 1 is a twelve-band stereo graphic equalizer which can be interconnected with an inexpensive sound-level meter (the ADC SLM-2) for equalizing room response or used in the conventional manner as a highly flexible program equalizer.

The frequency bands of the Sound Shaper Two are spaced slightly closer than one octave apart (just ten controls with a one-octave spacing would suffice for the audio band). Their center frequencies are 30, 50, 90, 160, 300, 500, 900, 1,600, 3,000, 5,000, 9,000, and 16,000 Hz. The level in each band can be adjusted over a ± 12 -dB range by a vertical slider control which is detented at its center (unity-gain) position. The positions of the slider knobs (twelve per channel, or twenty-four in all) indicate the approximate frequency response of the system; hence the term "graphic equalizer."

The ADC Sound Shaper Two Mk 1 (which we will abbreviate to "SS-2" for convenience) is a fairly large unit, measuring $16\frac{3}{8}$ x

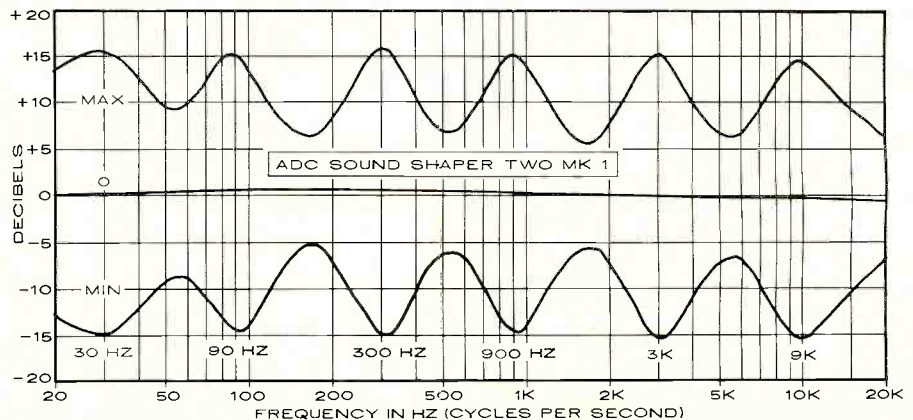
$6\frac{3}{4}$ x $6\frac{3}{4}$ inches high, and it weighs about 12 pounds. It is finished in black, with white panel markings and brightly finished handles. An optional rack-mount adapter kit and a walnut-

grain wooden cabinet are available from ADC.

Below the twenty-four sliders are push-button switches that can connect the equalizing circuits into the tape-output signal path or supply an unequalized signal to the recorder, connect either the line input or the tape-playback signal to the equalizer input (tape-monitor function), bypass the equalizer entirely, activate meter circuits, and control the primary power. In the lower center of the panel are two vertically oriented meters calibrated over a ± 12 -dB range about a 0-dB center reading. Next to each meter is a small LEVEL knob that adjusts its sensitivity (the controls have no effect on the signal levels in the equalizer circuits). The meters monitor the output levels of the two channels. There is also a phone jack, marked SLM, which accepts an input signal from the optional sound-level meter for display on the right-channel meter of the SS-2.

The ADC SS-2, like most equalizers, is designed to be connected in the tape-monitoring path of an amplifier or receiver. The tape-monitoring and recording functions are not lost since these jacks are duplicated in the rear of the SS-2, where there are also the main inputs and outputs and a single unswitched a.c. convenience outlet. The SS-2 can also be connected between the preamplifier and power-

(Continued on page 62)



Technics

by Panasonic

Introducing the Technics SA-1000. With more power and less distortion than any other receiver we've made: 330 watts per channel minimum RMS into eight ohms from 20 Hz-20 kHz with no more than 0.03% total harmonic distortion.

But that's only one reason to buy the SA-1000. Dynamic range is another. To capture the volume, clarity and sheer dynamics of a live symphony, you need an equally dynamic amplifier section. Like 72,000 μF worth of high-capacitance filtering, separate DC rectifiers, current-mirror loading and direct coupling. The results are impressive: tremendous reserve power, negligible transient crosstalk distortion and excellent stability.

And just for the record, the SA-1000's phono equalizer gives you everything from a super-high S/N ratio of 97 dB (10 mV, IHF A). To a phono input that can handle a 300 mV signal at 1 kHz.

On FM you'll get outstanding specs plus two RF stages with low-noise, 4-pole, dual-gate MOS FETs, Technics-developed flat group delay filters and a Phase Locked Loop IC in the MPX section.

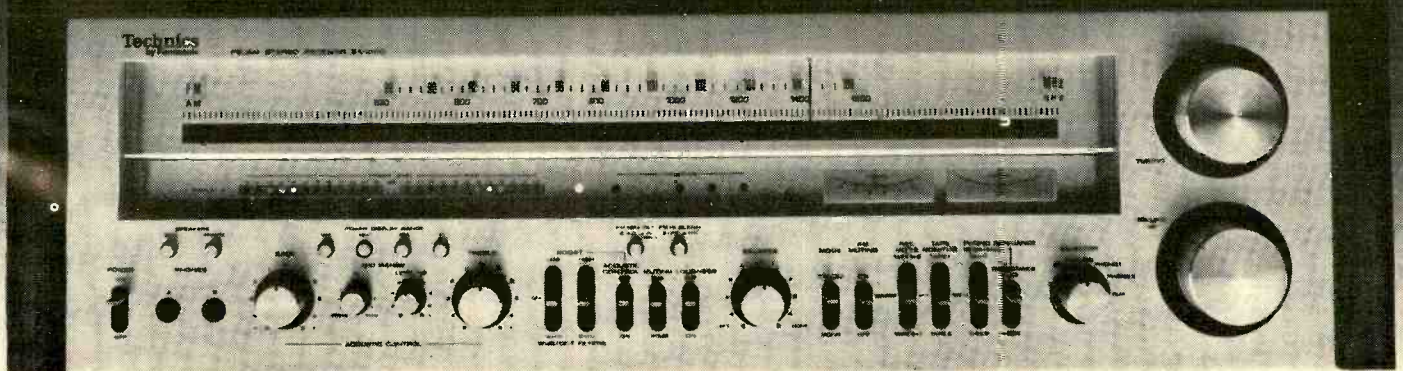
FM Sensitivity	FM Selectivity	Stereo Separation at 1 kHz
IHF '58 Stereo-50 dB*		
0.9 μV	36.2 dB†	85 dB
		50 dB

*IHF '75 standard.

As good as all that sounds, Technics Acoustic Control makes it sound even better, because it adds low and high range boost and filter switches which vary the way each tone control performs at a particular setting. There's also a midrange control with a variable center frequency. And 24 LED peak-power indicators that let you keep an eye on what your ears will hear.

The Technics SA-1000. In the world of receivers, it bats 1000.

A few receivers give you 0.03% THD. Only Technics gives it to you with 330 watts per channel.



CIRCLE NO. 60 ON READER SERVICE CARD

er amplifier, but this is less desirable because the equalization flexibility for tape recording is lost. Special care in operating the on-off and equalizer bypass switch is necessary to avoid possible damage to the speaker from switching transients.

The SS-2 has no level controls other than the equalizer levers themselves. It has a rated output of 9 volts rms into 10,000 ohms, so it will not be overloaded by program levels of 2 volts or so, even when a number of the equalizer band levers are set to maximum.

The SLM-2 accessory kit includes the sound-level meter, a test record with $\frac{1}{3}$ -octave bands of pink noise, and a 20-foot cable for connecting the sound-level-meter output to the right-channel meter circuit of the equalizer through the SLM jack. In use, the sliders are adjusted to provide the most uniform meter readings over the audio band when playing the test record through the speakers, with the sound-level meter placed at a usual listening position. When the test record is played, the sound levels of each band can be read either at the SLM's location or on the meter of the equalizer itself. The price of the ADC Sound Shaper Two Mk 1 is \$280. The Mk 2 version of the SS-2 will be available a short time after this report appears. We are told that the only differences between the two models are the use of LED indicators instead of meters and an increase in price to \$329.95. The SLM-2 price is \$60.

● **Laboratory Measurements.** We tested only

the ADC Sound Shaper Two Mk 1; the SLM-2 was not evaluated. Like other multiband equalizers, the SS-2 can create an almost infinite variety of response curves. The actual response will always be set by ear (or by watching the meters on the panel if the room is being equalized), so there is little to be said about the measured response curves available except that the center frequencies of each of the adjustable bands were exactly as specified and the maximum control range of ± 15 dB slightly surpassed the rated ± 12 dB.

With the controls centered, the frequency response of the SS-2 was within 1 dB from 20 to 20,000 Hz. The output clipped (with a standard IHF load of 10,000 ohms in parallel with 1,000 picofarads) at 11 volts at 20 Hz, 10.8 volts at 1,000 Hz, and 7 volts at 20,000 Hz (where the output amplitude was limited by slew-rate considerations rather than by peak clipping). The total harmonic distortion (entirely second and third harmonics) was about 0.018 per cent at a 1-volt output (0.032 per cent at 20,000 Hz). At the rated maximum output of 9 volts, the distortion was 0.05 per cent at 20 Hz, 0.19 per cent at 1,000 Hz, and 9 per cent at 20,000 Hz (where the linear output capability was 7 volts, as mentioned above).

The output noise, with centered controls, was less than 100 microvolts (-80 dBV) in an unweighted measurement. The SS-2 meter sensitivity, at the maximum setting of its level controls, was 63 millivolts for a 0-dB reading, and it was uniform over the 20- to 20,000-Hz range. The meters were heavily damped, pre-

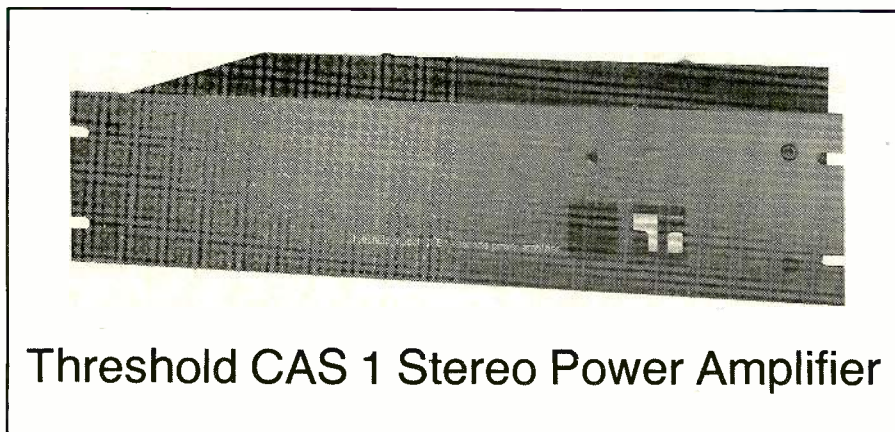
sumably as an aid to reading the fluctuating output of the SLM-2 with a pink-noise test signal.

● **Comment.** Having used octave-band equalizers before, both for program and room equalization, we could appreciate the ease of adjustment of the SS-2 and the extra flexibility provided by its two additional bands. The transition from a simple five-band equalizer to the ten controls of an octave-band equalizer can appear formidable, but the dozen bands of the SS-2 seemed no more difficult to handle than the usual ten bands.

The audible effect of adjusting the controls, when each covers less than an octave of the audio range, is quite unlike that of any ordinary tone-control system or even of a simple five-band equalizer. Relatively narrow peaks or holes can often be smoothed out with surprising success, although this takes time and patience. An equalizer can be used with complete success to do anything that tone controls (even those with flexible variable turnovers) can do—and much more.

Not everyone needs—or can use—a multiband equalizer to good effect. If you can, the ADC Sound Shaper Two Mk 1 is definitely one to consider, for it is at least as good as any of the others we have used in every respect. The metering system can be considered a bonus feature, although it plays no part in the normal operation of the equalizer.

Circle 139 on reader service card



circuit in brochures accompanying the CAS 1 amplifier. However, they freely admit that the CAS 1's "standard" performance specifications are not materially better than those of some conventional amplifiers that use large amounts of negative feedback to achieve their low distortion levels. Apparently relatively little feedback is used in the CAS 1. This, combined with the great bandwidth of its circuits, reduces slew-related distortions, such as "TIM," to very low levels. The result is said to be an exceptionally effortless "open" sound.

The Threshold CAS 1 is not tremendously powerful as amplifiers go today; it is rated to deliver 75 watts per channel to 8-ohm loads from 20 to 20,000 Hz with no more than 0.05 per cent harmonic or intermodulation (IM) distortion, and the distortion decreases with reduced power output. Harmonic distortion is claimed to be negligible above the third harmonic. The slew-rate specification is 40 volts per microsecond, and the low-level bandwidth is rated $+0, -3$ dB from 1 to 100,000 Hz. The CAS 1 is a compact, unadorned amplifier on whose black front panel is installed only a rocker-type power switch and a small LED pilot light. The panel, which is slotted for rack mounting, measures 19 x $4\frac{1}{4}$ inches. The chassis is about 10 inches deep, and the amplifier weighs approximately 25 pounds. Price: \$740.

THRESHOLD CORPORATION's "high-end" audio amplifiers are familiar to serious audiophiles, although limited distribution and high prices have kept them from becoming well known among the general hi-fi public. From a technical standpoint, they are characterized by innovative circuit design and the use of premium-quality parts and construction. This, in combination with state-of-the-art performance, helps to explain their substantial selling prices. The subject of this report is the CAS 1, which is the least powerful and least expensive of the Threshold basic power amplifiers.

The CAS 1, as its nomenclature might suggest, uses cascode amplifier stages throughout, and it is claimed to be the first power amplifier to do so. The cascode circuit is not new, having been used for many years in low-noise r.f. and audio amplifiers. It employs two active devices (in this case transistors) connected so that one serves as the load for the other. This configuration results in maximum gain, reduced distortion, and wide bandwidth compared with the operation of a conventional amplifier stage.

Threshold supplies a fairly complete technical explanation for their use of the cascode

(Continued on page 64)

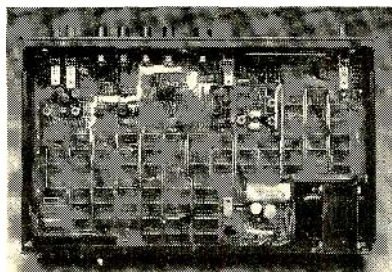
(The SoundSpace™ Control by Advent.)



Another Step Closer To Hearing It All.

Music sounds best in a space very unlike the usual listening room at home—a good-sized space where there is room for sound to expand and reverberate, and where the right proportions and right combination of sound-reflection and sound-absorption produce rich, warm and clear acoustics.

Advent's SoundSpace™ control, a new electronic product that uses the most sophisticated technology ever developed for home audio



The computer-grade construction of the SoundSpace control.

equipment, brings home the acoustic experience of good public listening spaces. It lets you hear music much as you would in good-sounding concert halls, cathedrals, night clubs, theaters, and auditoriums.

The SoundSpace control is a 32,000-bit computer—using the equivalent of more than 43,000 transistors. (In the days of vacuum tubes, its hardware would have filled an auditorium—and

required enough power to light up a city block.) It digitally processes signals from a preamp, integrated amplifier or receiver, and adds time delays that are multiply mixed and recirculated to model the ways in which sound is delayed, reflected and absorbed in good public listening spaces. The delayed sounds it creates—from standard stereo recordings and broadcasts—are meant to be fed to a second amplifier (which needs no controls) and heard over a second set of two or more speakers placed at the sides and/or rear of a home listening room.

With two simple basic controls, the SoundSpace control lets you choose how big a listening space you want to create and how reverberant you want it to be. (A digital "Size Index" display lets you see as well as hear how big a space you are creating.) As you make your choices, the SoundSpace control automatically puts you in the theoretical "best seat" of any space you create, and chooses a "stage depth" appropriate for the size of the space.

The effectiveness, simplicity, and sound quality of the SoundSpace control are far beyond those of any previous time-delay or other device for creating listening space. With very low noise and distortion (less than 0.1%), 80 dB of dynamic range, and tremen-

dous flexibility, it does what's really needed to create not just acoustic space but a whole series of *good-sounding* spaces in your living room.

Advent's SoundSpace control makes a far greater and more realistic difference in the way music sounds at home than anything you can experience by changing or improving conventional stereo components. It provides a three-dimensional "presence" that can't be achieved with tone controls, equalizers, reflective speakers or added amplifier power.

It enlivens the sound of *all* music—including the many rock and other recordings where the only original listening space is the one in the heads of the musicians, producer, and engineers.

The suggested price of the SoundSpace control is \$595.* For more information and a list of dealers, please send us the coupon.

Thank you.

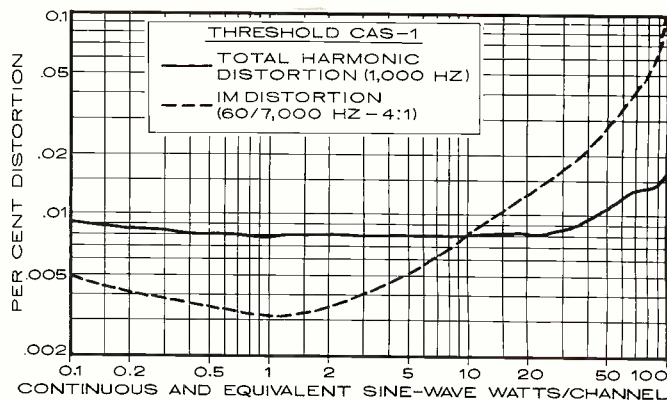
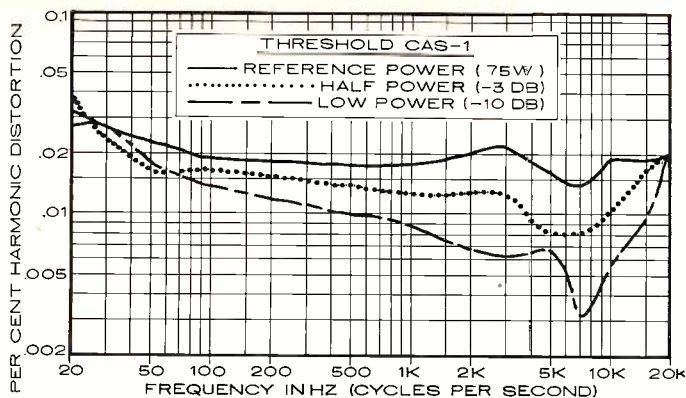
To: Advent Corporation, SR-2/79
195 Albany Street,
Cambridge, MA 02139

Please send me information on Advent's SoundSpace™ control and a list of your dealers.

Name _____
Address _____
City _____
State _____ Zip _____

*Subject to change without notice.

Advent Corporation, 195 Albany Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139.



● **Laboratory Measurements.** The Threshold CAS 1 proved to be an exceptional power amplifier on the test bench. The FTC-mandated preconditioning period left it only moderately warm, and its output clipped at almost exactly 100 watts per channel with both channels driven into 8-ohm loads at 1,000 Hz, which works out to an IHF clipping-headroom rating of 1.22 dB. The IHF dynamic headroom was 1.67 dB. Since the CAS 1 has completely separate power supplies for the two channels, the power ratings would be the same even if only one channel were driven. However, we drove both channels to produce maximum heating effect.

An input of 0.13 volt was required to drive the amplifier to a standard 1-watt output, and the noise level (unweighted) was better than 90 dB below 1 watt (actually too low for us to measure). The harmonic distortion at 1,000 Hz was about 0.008 per cent at all power levels up to about 50 watts, where it reached 0.01 per cent. It remained at 0.014 per cent from 75 to 95 watts, just before clipping occurred. As claimed, only the second and third harmonics could be detected (and usually only the second). The IM distortion was between 0.003 and 0.008 per cent from under 100 milliwatts to more than 10 watts output, reaching 0.027 per cent at 50 watts, 0.045 per cent at 75 watts, and 0.08 per cent at 95 watts.

The distortion was between 0.014 and about 0.02 per cent from 100 to 20,000 Hz at full power. At lower frequencies, the amplifier distortion was less than the residual level of our signal generator, which gave us total readings in the range of 0.02 to 0.03 per cent. At reduced power levels, the distortion was consistently lower than at higher power outputs.

We did not measure slew rate as such, but the IHF slew factor was 8, an exceptionally high figure. The amplifier was quite stable with high capacitive loads (one of its claimed points of superiority is the ability to drive a variety of complex load impedances without distortion or damage).

● **Comment.** As Threshold points out, the CAS 1 is in every way a "state-of-the-art" power amplifier. We had no doubt about that, both from our overall impression of the amplifier's construction (which is outstanding) and the obvious technical skill and dedication of its designers.

A basic question, it seems to us, is whether it sounds "better" than other amplifiers, or at least different from others, when driving conventional loads. We have made no secret of the fact that in our experience there are no audibly significant differences between power

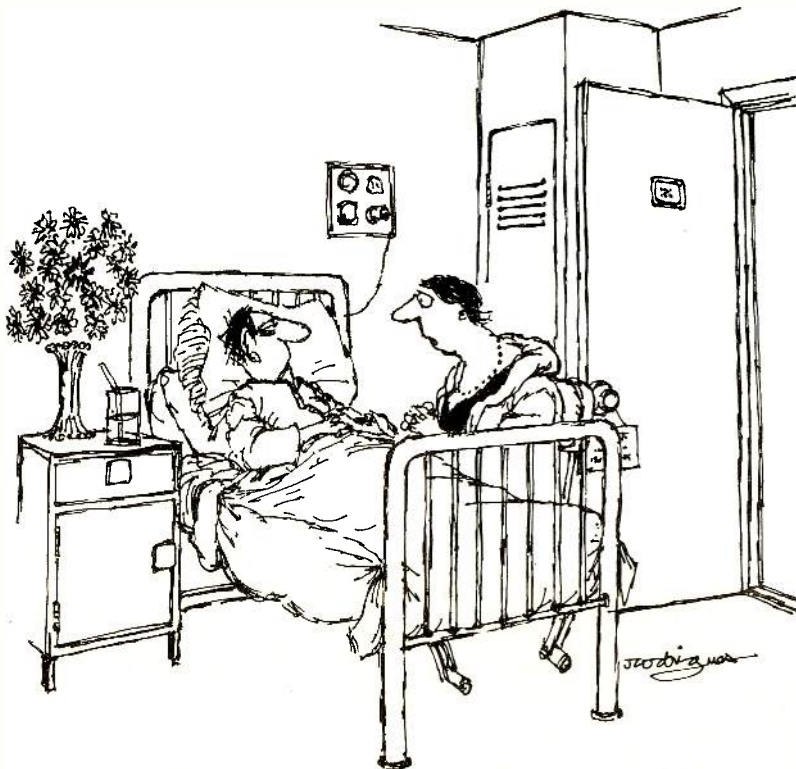
amplifiers having comparable measured performance qualities and operating within their power ratings. We recognize that there are certain load conditions presented by some esoteric speaker systems that will distress some amplifiers far more than others. However, we do not make a policy of testing amplifiers only with specially selected program sources and speakers that will show them off to their best or worst advantage. Instead, we are more concerned with a piece of equipment's general suitability for use in typical situations. (For the record, however, Threshold states that the CAS 1 will drive a purely capacitive load without loss of performance, and we have no reason to doubt their claim. This would make it ideal for use with some of the current "difficult-to-drive" electrostatic speaker designs).

All of which is to introduce our not-so-surprising finding that the Threshold CAS 1 sounds, in our listening room with our equip-

ment, exactly like any other fine power amplifier. This is not to denigrate it, but merely to point out that other distortions far greater than its own, which are present in every part of a high-fidelity music-reproduction chain (from recording microphone to playback loudspeaker), are more than likely, in our view, to prevent it from revealing its own uniqueness.

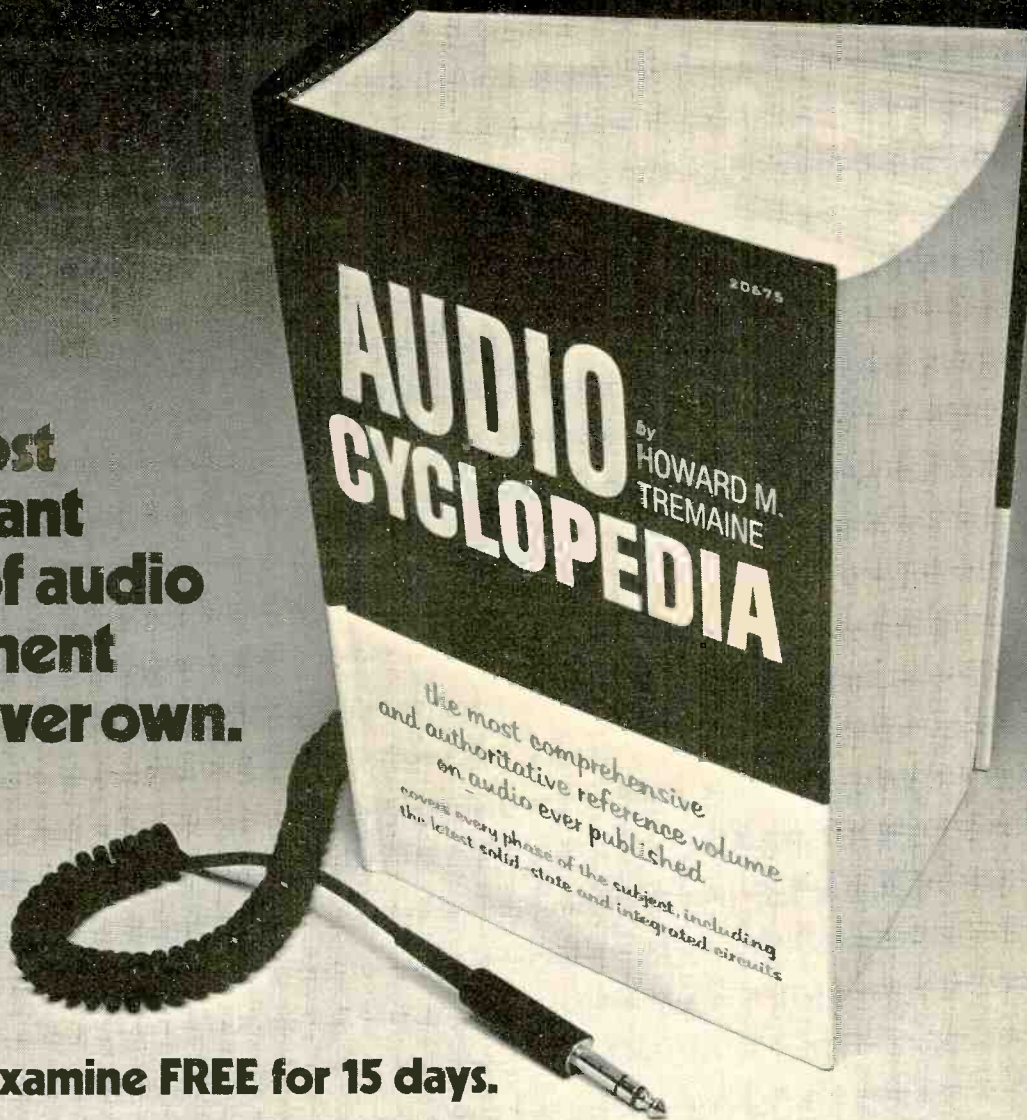
Many people will disagree (some vehemently) with this view. For someone who hears something special and desirable about this (or any other) amplifier, the choice is obvious, and we would be the last to argue with such a decision. In truth, the CAS 1 is built like a pocket battleship, and its performance within its power rating could hardly be surpassed. But we would expect nothing less from an amplifier with the credentials—and the price tag—of this one.

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The Pop Beat

By Paulette Weiss

The RIAA's Henry Brief explains to Pop Music Editor Weiss what it takes for a record to be certified gold.



"GOING GOLD"

A HAND-PRINTED sign on a large apothecary jar I saw the other day read: "There were 1,428 jellybeans in this jar." Although the empty jar stood in the window of a "sweets emporium" whose elegant atmosphere was a far cry from the corner two-for-a-penny candy store that kept me encased in baby fat until I was ten, it was obvious that some things have not changed: the jellybean guessing game for one, and our fascination with numbers for another.

The recording industry is conspicuously interested in numbers. It is constantly measuring sales in dollars, airplay in minutes, and perhaps reviews in inches. Hot discs earn not only megabucks and their time and place in the sun, but also the ultimate symbols of industry approval, gold and platinum awards.

Like many other behind-the-scenes functions of the music business, the presentation of gold and platinum records is rapidly becoming a public affair. This is hardly surprising in view of a 1977 survey taken by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA), which concluded that "recordings are now an ingrained part of the culture" and that "today's youth [as they age] will continue to buy records because their relationship with music is different from that of any other generation." But although the general public has become more aware of the awarding of gold and platinum records, it is still fuzzy about who presents them and on what basis.

To defuzz any readers whose interest has been aroused, I consulted an expert on the subject, Henry Brief, executive director of the RIAA. He gave me a concise history and explanation of both the awards and the RIAA, the organization that presents them. "Several years ago," he said, "we tried to trace the history of the gold-record award, and the furthest back we were able to go was 1942. That year a vice president of RCA Records appeared on a Glenn Miller radio show and said, 'Glenn, your single of *Chattanooga Choo Choo* has sold more than a million copies, and the best thing we could come up with to commemorate this singular occasion was to take that record and make it out of gold.'

"In the years that followed, many people realized that this had great value for promoting records and for schmaltzing [buttering up] an artist's ego. After a while, gold records

were being handed out so indiscriminately that they became the laughingstock of the industry." So, in 1958, the RIAA established a standard for the gold-record award and set up the certification procedure that exists today. All awards are now certified after an audit of the record company's books by an independent CPA to verify that the minimum required sale has been achieved.

"From the beginning," Brief continued, "the criterion for a gold single was—and remains to this day—one million copies sold. [Last year this was amended to cover a new category, the twelve-inch single, which will count as two units.] Albums were accounted for in terms of dollar value rather than units, because back in 1958 albums cost anywhere from 99¢ to \$4.98 and there was great reluctance to have a 99¢ album compete with a \$4.98 one strictly on a unit volume basis. So the original criterion for a gold-album award was set at a million dollars in sales, based on 50 per cent of list price."



In the late Sixties, tape sales became a complicating factor. A tape was obviously an additional unit, but its list price was considerably higher than that of the equivalent disc.

"Instead of raising the bridge [making a million and a half dollars the qualifying figure]," Brief said, "the RIAA lowered the water. A million dollars had a magical ring to

it" So it remained a million, but in 1968 it was decided that it would be based on one-third the list price of combined record and tape sales.

The criteria continued to evolve. In 1974, in response to a spiraling inflation rate, the gold-album standard changed to units, as it is today. A disc now "goes gold" with sales of half a million albums. At the same time, platinum records appeared, and they were given out by record companies as indiscriminately as gold ones once had been.

"A platinum record obviously was better than a gold one, but nobody knew what the heck it was supposed to represent," Brief admitted. Starting with new releases in 1976, the RIAA inaugurated its platinum award for records with sales double the requirement for gold: one million units for albums, two million for singles.

If the advance orders for a new record are large enough that its first shipments to dealers qualify it for a gold-record award, it is said to "ship gold." Brief said, "We check the actual shipments at the factory level. If record stores later return so many unsold copies that the net sales fall below the qualification mark, we can't exactly strip off the record company's epaulettes and break its sword. However, if a company overships in order to qualify for a gold record, that company won't be in business very long. Returns are rarely sufficient to disqualify the record. R.S.O.'s 'Sgt. Pepper,' for example, supposedly shipped four million upon release. Even if 75 per cent came back, it would still be platinum."

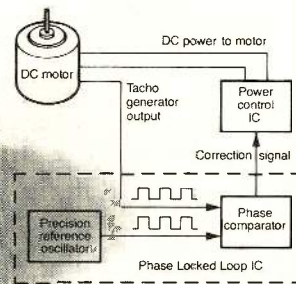
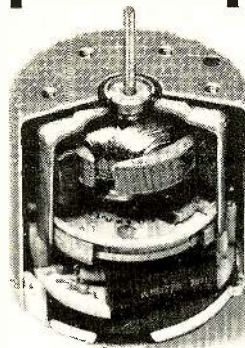
The RIAA's standards apply only to the United States, but there are organizations in other countries that function similarly, altering the criteria to fit their own markets. For example, because of Canada's smaller population, the Canadian Recording Industry Association has set 100,000 units as the requirement for a gold album in that country.

The expenses of RIAA certification, including the cost of the audit and the award plaques, are paid by the record companies. The companies conform to RIAA standards on a voluntary basis, and the organization has no policing arm. "If anyone claims a gold record without certification," Brief says, "there is nothing we can do about it. But the awards have acquired credibility and prestige, and artists themselves insist on validation, knowing that any unsubstantiated claim would be suspect." In 1958, the first year of RIAA certification, there were five gold album awards. In 1977 there were two hundred gold and seventy platinum awards, and when the RIAA tallies final figures for 1978, they will be much higher.

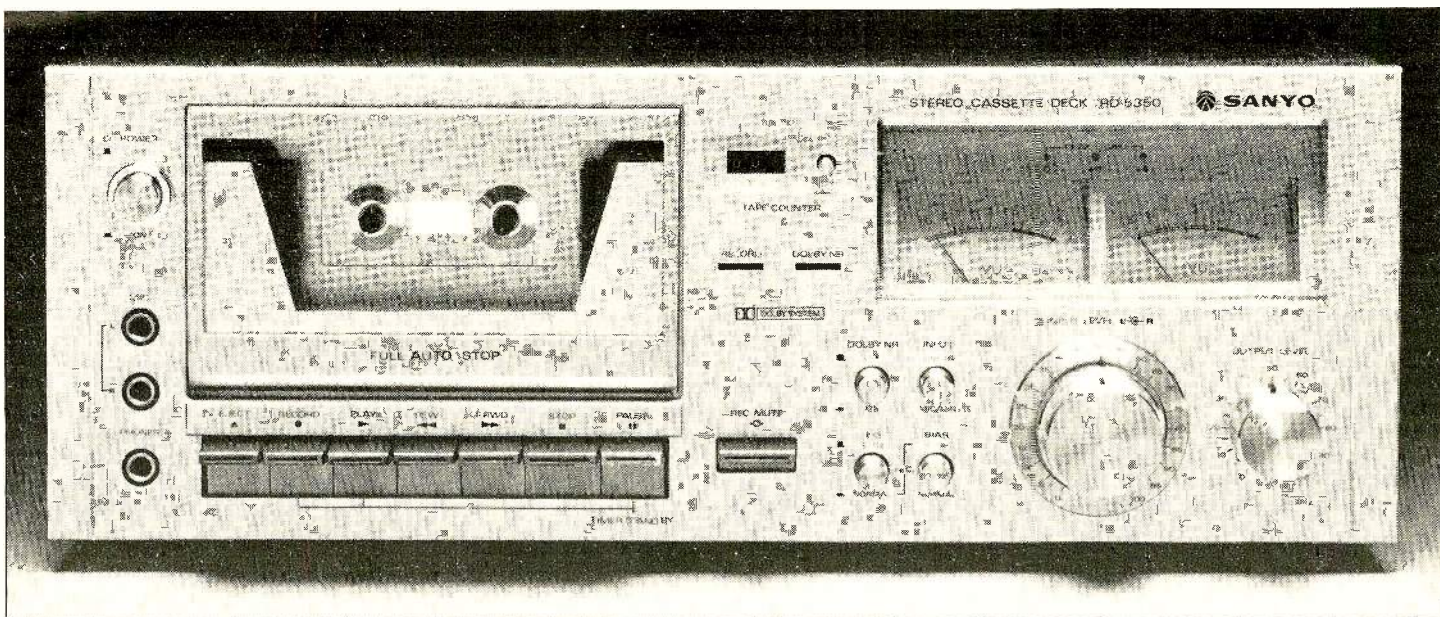
The certification process is the most visible activity of the RIAA, which was originally formed in 1952 to provide a unified voice for the scattered record industry and to help set engineering standards. (Back then it determined uniform sizes for 78-, 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ -, and 45-rpm discs.) Just as it recently adjusted its criteria to embrace the twelve-inch single, one day soon the association will be called on to create standards for the next big development: commercially produced video recordings. The simple days of the record business, like that of the corner candy store, are certainly gone, but jellybeans and music, whatever the forms they may evolve into, go on forever. □

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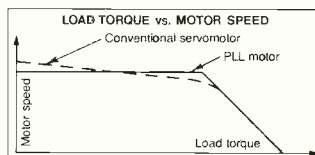


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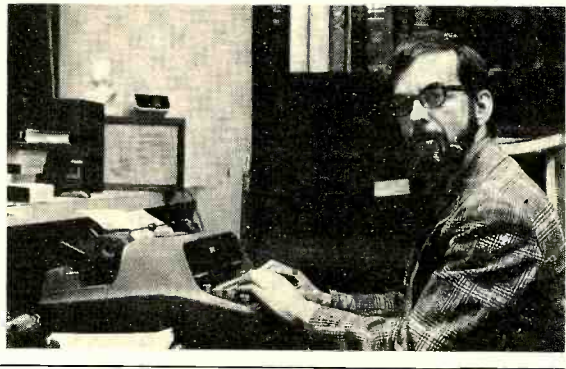
Which may be the most perfect thing of all about the RD5350.

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Going on Record

By James
Goodfriend



CENTEN- AND OTHER -ARIES

USUALLY become aware of centenaries just as they are ending: 1978 was the tricentenary of Antonio Vivaldi, and, though I count myself an admirer of Vivaldi, the anniversary quite escaped my notice until November. Centenaries are both important and unimportant. They are unimportant in the case of great composers whose genius is with us continually and whose anniversaries become merely excuses for rehashing known masterpieces. They are important in the case of small and neglected composers, for they offer an excuse (and an excuse seems to be needed) for reacquaintance and re-evaluation, a chance to decide what really was this man's contribution and what scrambled the message from him to posterity. At any rate, I have done my homework early this year and can pronounce on at least *some* of the anniversaries of 1979.

This year is the known, round-numbered anniversary of the birth of no great composer at all. Anniversaries of deaths I am not concerned with (for reasons made clear in another column), and most early composers are fated never to have anniversary celebrations, for they were born "circa," or were not even born but merely "flourished." 1979 is, however, the centenary of five interesting lesser composers: Frank Bridge (1879-1941), Joseph Canteloube (1879-1957), John Ireland (1879-1962), Ottorino Respighi (1879-1936), and Cyril Scott (1879-1970). Although three of them are Englishmen, there is virtually nothing except the numbers that ties these men together, but that, perhaps, makes it even more interesting to look at them separately.

Frank Bridge is best known as the man who supplied the theme for Benjamin Britten's *Variations on a Theme of . . .* Less well known is the fact that he was Britten's teacher. Still less well known is his music. My limited acquaintance with it leads me to the supposition that it falls into two distinct styles: the conservative folk and fairy-tale music that one might well expect of a student of Stanford, and a far more complex and "modern" music that still does not quite fit into any of the main currents of the century. The first style can be found in his *Sir Roger de Coverly* (conducted by Benjamin Britten) on London 6618; the second, at its most effective, in the String Quartets Nos. 3 and 4 (once available on Argo ZRG 714, now deleted).

What is particularly fascinating to hear in this later music (for Bridge's style changed at the time of, perhaps in response to, the First World War) is the open door to Viennese expressionism—a very new model for British music—and the mingling of those currents with ideas that still sound today specifically English. Such sounds are worth the hearing, and Bridge is certainly an unfairly neglected composer.

Joseph Canteloube is another matter altogether, for I, at least, have never heard a note of his original music. I know his magnificent *Chants d'Auvergne* and I know others of his folk-song settings, but of his symphonic works, his operas, nothing. His work is not much spoken of in the standard references beyond his folk-song researches, but he apparently had some success in his lifetime with performances at the Opéra and at the Con-

certs Colonne. Like so many of the lesser French figures, his music seems ripe for investigation today.

John Ireland continues to be venerated in Britain and all but ignored elsewhere, though, thanks to the British Lyrita company (and others) and the American HNH and MHS licensees, a fair amount of his music has come to be available here on records. It doesn't stay very long in the catalogs, however. In contrast to British opinion (*Grove's Dictionary* gives Ireland ten pages, Berg four, Copland under two), I have usually found Ireland a flawed composer, his music intriguing in places, beautiful in places, moving in places, and elsewhere rather dull. His vaunted literary taste I would not deny, but as a musical setter of literary texts he ranks, I think, far behind his countryman Peter Warlock and our countryman Samuel Barber. Still, his music is an imported product we get only in canned form. It might be revealing to hear it fresh.

Ottorino Respighi has been one of my pet musical peeves since I first heard his *Fountains of Rome* and wondered how any man could make such a fortissimo fuss over no substance at all. I haven't turned away from that opinion, but I do find Respighi's *Ancient Airs and Birds* and such pleasant enough, and I confess to a lurking impulse to hear again, after many years, that Roman trilogy—*Fountains, Pines, and Festivals*—just as I make a point of listening to *Scheherazade* once every two or three years to confirm my previously held opinion. I cannot count his birthday as one of the great centenaries, but if it gets me to listen to some of his works again, perhaps that is of some value.

Cyril Scott, the composer of the immortal (well, twenty or thirty years ago it was immortal) *Lotus Land*, was to me a salon composer, in the lowest sense, until I had the startling experience of hearing his piano concertos. Perhaps their orientalisms and general exotica still carry more than a hint of salon preciousness, but it is salon music grown large and complex and fecund beyond previous imagining. Rarely, I think, have I so quickly changed my estimation of a composer as I did with Scott. The concertos are in the catalog as HNH 4025 and 4051.

So much for centenaries. This year 1979 is the bicentenary of no one I can find, but it is the sesquicentennial of Louis Moreau Gottschalk and of Anton Rubinstein, two of the most flaming of the Romantics and, from the telling, two of the greatest keyboard virtuosos. Neither, it seems to me, is at present suffering any neglect. This year is also the tricentenary of Jan Dismas Zelenka, a composer totally unknown only a few years ago, who is about to receive quite the nicest birthday present ever in the form of a recording of his (apparently) complete orchestral works, DG Archiv 2710 026. And it is the two-hundred-fiftieth anniversary (bi-sesquicentenary?) of the birth of Padre Antonio Soler, he of the famous *Fandango*. If you don't know the work, the record number is Columbia M3X 31521, and you will thank me for almost everything else in the three-disc set as well. Igor Kipnis is the harpsichordist.

Finally, a brief bow to our own times: a very happy fiftieth birthday (semicentenary) to George Crumb, Toshiro Mayuzumi, André Previn, Yehudi Wyner, and all those others I have unfortunately missed. A long and productive life to you. □





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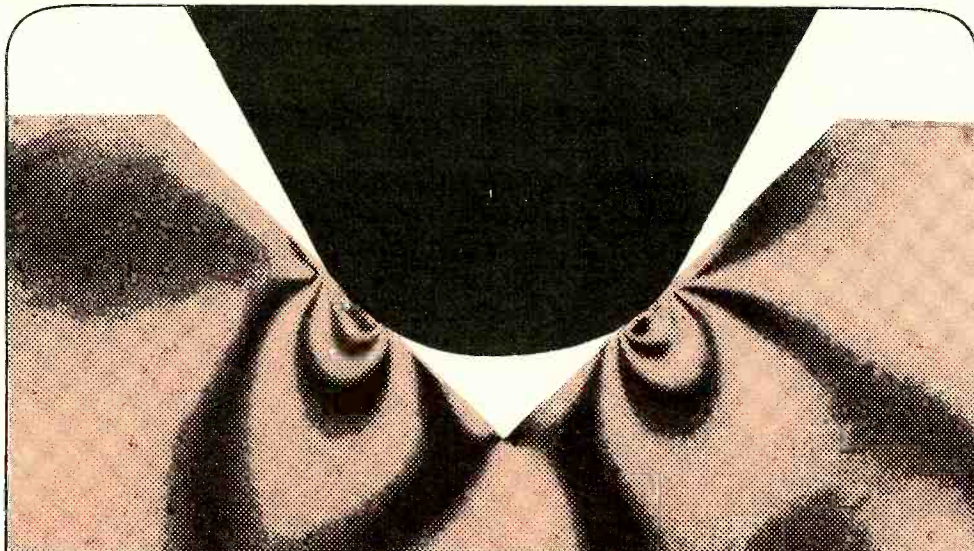
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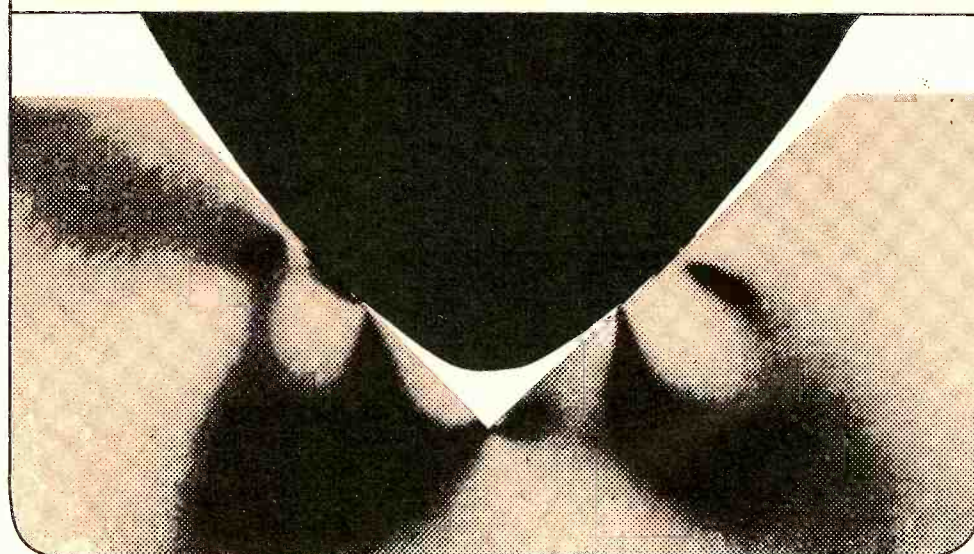
These simulations of record-groove stress patterns show a conventional elliptical stylus (above) making contact in two fairly small areas, producing narrow, extended stress patterns.

THE PHONO CARTRIDGE

To understand its operating principles is to appreciate the level of technological wizardry that produced it

By William Curtiss

A Shibata stylus (below) has an elongated contact area, which theoretically distributes the stylus force over more of the groove wall, reducing the pressure, as the broadened patterns show.



AMONG the more persistent popular myths is the one stating that, according to scientific theory, the bumblebee cannot fly. But, unaware of the aerodynamic theories involved, the insect, in his ignorance, manages to buzz about his business quite well. By the same token, the phonograph record can be seen, on the face of it, to be such a practical impossibility that if it hadn't yet been invented, it probably wouldn't be. A superficial analysis of the engineering problems involved would likely find it impossible (1) to convert sound waves into microscopic undulations in soft plastic material or (2) to subsequently "read" these undulations with an equally microscopic stylus so as to reproduce the original sound wave. The question would inevitably arise as to whether there weren't an *easier* way to store and reproduce sound, and it is more than a little likely that the phonograph record would be dismissed as a Rube Goldberg device of interest only to technical ignoramuses such as Thomas Edison and Emile Berliner.

Fortunately for us, these seat-of-the-pants inventors made the impractical practical simply by going ahead and doing it rather than worrying about whether it *could* be done. And it is rather heartwarming to remember that Edison himself was astonished when his crude tin-foil-coated cylinder device worked the very first time he tried it.

Early phonograph cylinders and discs were hardly "high fidelity," despite the enthusiastic testimonials in advertisements of the time that their sound couldn't be distinguished from the original. Yet, they did bring music reproduction to the homes of the day, and it was certainly better than nothing. As we all know, the phonograph shortly became immensely popular and the arduous job of refining the concept and improving the quality began; it continues to this day.

The Stylus

If you know anything about the task that confronts a phono stylus, you might agree with the theoreticians that it lies somewhere between the impractical and the impossible. In order to follow the undulations of the record groove, especially toward the center of the disc where wavelengths become microscopic (the groove-wall modulation produced by a 15,000-Hz tone is about half a thousandth of an inch), the stylus tip doing the tracing must be tiny. The task is complicated by the difference between the shape of the original cutting stylus and that of the playback stylus. To cut the master disc

cleanly and quietly, the cutting stylus must have a knife-like edge: it is shaped somewhat like a triangular chisel with facets on the edges to burnish the groove as it goes along. The playback stylus, however, must be rounded at the edges or it too will "cut" the disc. Unfortunately, rounded surfaces cannot follow precisely a path chiseled out by a triangular-shaped cutting instrument. The resultant inaccuracy is called *tracing distortion*, and it worsens as signal wavelengths get shorter.

The first experimental step toward reducing tracing distortion was the use of a smaller tip on the playback stylus. Unfortunately, as the stylus gets smaller, the pressure (force per unit area) exerted on the groove walls by its tracking force increases, and record wear becomes a real risk. The smallest practical diameter for a ball-type ("spherical") stylus tip is about 0.0005 inch—approximately the same dimension as the wavelength of a 15,000-Hz tone in the inner grooves of a record. Such a stylus will have difficulty play-

... the elliptical stylus was greeted with dire predictions of economic impracticality. Now, ten years later, all but the least expensive cartridges have elliptical styli."

ing some records since a 0.0005-inch (5-mil) spherical tip will ride low or even on the bottom of the groove (which is 0.001 inch or more wide) where it is likely to pick up more noise than signal. For this reason, the biradial or "elliptical" stylus was developed.

As its name implies, the biradial stylus has two different radii of curvature. It has a sharp curve where it contacts and "scans" the walls of the groove, but its width is such as to keep the stylus riding on the groove wall at an appropriate distance from the groove bottom. A typical elliptical stylus might have a scanning radius of 0.0002 inch and a supporting width of 0.0007 inch. It will trace short wavelengths with lower distortion than a 0.0005-inch spherical tip and support itself in a better position in the groove while doing so. The advent of the elliptical stylus was greeted with a mixture of enthusiasm and dire predictions of economic impracticality. Now, ten years later, all but the least expensive hi-fi cartridges have elliptical styli.

The introduction of CD-4 quadra-

phonic discs was made possible by the development of styli capable of tracing the extremely short wavelength of a 40-kHz signal. The "Shibata" stylus had a new and more complex geometry, and it engendered numerous offspring—the "Quadrhedron," "Stereohedron," "Hyperbolic," "Pramanik," and others. They are all similar to the extent that they are ground with yet a *third* radius: the curvature running from the very point of the tip and up along the stylus' sides to its top. This curvature defines the vertical length over which the sides of the stylus contact the groove walls. A longer vertical contact need not impair the effective "sharpness" of the stylus for tracing groove detail, but it will increase the overall contact area, thus reducing stylus pressure and consequent record wear. In fact, according to the Shibata theory, you can make the edge of the stylus even sharper than it is in the elliptical configuration—and still incur no penalty in stylus pressure *if the vertical contact is made long enough*. Although these complex (and still expensive) styli are certainly not required for adequate reproduction with ordinary stereo records, they can noticeably improve tracing.

While stylus geometry plays the major role in establishing the short-wavelength tracing ability of a cartridge, stylus mass ultimately establishes the high-frequency response of the system. The faster the stylus must reverse direction—that is, the higher the recorded frequency—the greater the force required to accelerate its mass. If this acceleration is to be accomplished without tearing up the vinyl, the effective stylus mass must be extremely small. And stylus mass has a further effect on high-frequency response. Vinyl has a certain amount of springiness; it is compliant, deforming and then springing back under the force exerted on it by the stylus. This compliance resonates with the effective mass of the stylus at some (usually high) frequency, just as any weight-and-spring system resonates. The resonant frequency of vibration of the stylus/vinyl-groove combination essentially determines the highest frequency to which the stylus can mechanically respond with accuracy. This can vary from perhaps 12,000 Hz in an inexpensive high-mass stylus assembly to more than double or triple that frequency with a quality stereo or CD-4 cartridge. And the vinyl material's compliance, which will vary from record to record, also has its influence.

Several factors combine to determine the effective tip mass of the stylus: the mass of the diamond itself (and

PHONO CARTRIDGE

“Not all cartridges receive the electrical loading for which they’re designed, and performance may consequently vary as much as 7 or 8 dB”

its mount), the mass of the shank or cantilever (and how that mass is distributed), and the mass of the moving element (the magnet, coil, piece of iron, or whatever) that generates the electrical signal. You can’t just *weigh* a stylus to determine its effective mass, because the figure must take into account not only the individual mass elements, but also *where they are located in relation to the pivot*. A relatively great mass near the pivot may contribute less to the total effective mass than a smaller one far from the pivot.

Being farthest from the pivot, the diamond and its mount contribute most to the effective mass. Next in importance is the shank or cantilever, especially at the far end near the stylus. Some manufacturers therefore use tapered cantilevers to provide less mass without loss of rigidity, or they fashion shanks from exotic materials such as beryllium or carbon fiber. Some have used extremely thin-walled aluminum with miniature internal reinforcing rods of beryllium, and some have used telescoped shanks.

Transduction System

Once the vibrations from the groove have been conveyed into the cartridge body via the stylus and cantilever, they must be converted or *transduced* into electrical signals. A variety of means can be used to accomplish this, although some form of magnetic transduction is by far the most common.

To consider other means first, the stylus can be coupled to a *piezoelectric* element—a substance such as barium titanate that generates a voltage across itself when twisted or strained. The resulting cartridge, called a “crystal” or “ceramic” type, produces a relatively high output voltage but is not likely to be of high-fidelity quality. However, miniature *strain-gauge* and *electret* elements have been used successfully as high-fidelity transducers. The strain gauge requires an external d.c. power supply, the current flow from which is modulated by imbalances in the strain-

gauge bridge that are caused by the stylus motion. The electret cartridges are roughly similar in operating principle to an electret microphone, and they require a passive or active internal circuit to buffer and otherwise process their output signals before they can be routed to the preamplifier.

Magnetic cartridges come in three basic configurations: moving-magnet, moving-iron, and moving-coil. Explained as simply as possible, both the moving-magnet and moving-iron types employ fixed coils of wire within the cartridge body and a voltage is generated within the coils whenever the magnetic flux passing through them varies. In a *moving-magnet* cartridge, the magnetic field is supplied by a tiny magnet attached to the rear of the stylus shank. As the stylus shank vibrates, the magnetic field impinging on the coils varies and an electrical signal is induced. In a *moving-iron* (sometimes called a *variable-reluctance*) cartridge, a small piece of iron alloy is attached to the stylus shank. It is not a magnet itself, but it varies or modulates the field (supplied by a fixed internal magnet) that impinges on the coils. These modulations generate the voltage in the coil. A variation on this theme is the *induced-magnet* cartridge, in which the magnetic flux of a fixed magnet is induced in an iron sleeve on the cantilever. The sleeve then operates as a moving magnet. There are numerous other variations on these principles employing several fixed and/or moving magnets and different coil arrangements. Almost all have user-replaceable styli.

Most of these “fixed-coil” types generate a comparatively high level of audio electrical signal—typically 3 to 5 millivolts at 1,000 Hz for a laterally recorded level of 5 centimeters per second. However, the cartridge’s output voltage varies with frequency and thus must be equalized—a job competently taken care of by the RIAA circuits in the phono-input section of your amplifier or receiver. Both types have relatively high output impedances and require proper “loading” from the phono-preamp section of your amplifier or receiver to function at their best. This is of sufficient importance to warrant an explanation.

As mentioned previously, the stylus assembly physically resonates with the vinyl groove walls at some relatively high frequency (beyond that frequency the output of the cartridge diminishes rapidly). At the resonance frequency there is likely to be a peak in the frequency-response curve. The amplitude of the peak, and the frequency range over which it occurs, is determined by the mechanical damping of the stylus.

This damping is provided mostly by the carefully controlled characteristics of the elastomeric bearing (the pivot) that supports the stylus assembly. No doubt it would be possible to design a stylus so that it would be critically damped inherently, and there would then be no peak in the output of the cartridge at resonance. However, to do so would require a substantial amount of internal damping, and the resultant friction would impede stylus motion and require additional tracking force. A less problematic approach—used in virtually all fixed-coil cartridge designs—is to make use of an *electrical* resonant circuit to compensate for the mechanical resonance and thus flatten out the response curve. This electrical circuit involves both (1) the inductance and resistance of the coils within the cartridge and (2) the load resistance and capacitance to which the cartridge is connected. The load resistance is determined by the input circuit of the preamplifier; the capacitance is that of the tone-arm wiring, the connecting cable to the preamplifier, and the preamp’s own input capacitance.

It is pretty much standard practice to design magnetic cartridges of this type for termination with a 47,000-ohm resistive load, and preamplifiers are designed to supply it. (CD-4 cartridges are designed for a 100,000-ohm load, a value provided by the CD-4 demodulator to which they are connected.) But the optimum load *capacitance* is not standardized, and cartridges range in their requirements from 150 to 450 picofarads. Furthermore, not all preamplifiers are designed in such a way that their input circuitry provides a pure resistance and capacitance, which means that the load they present to the cartridge can be somewhat in doubt. Not all cartridges receive the electrical loading for which they’re designed, and their mid- and high-frequency performance may consequently vary as much as 7 or 8 dB from flat response.

As a word of practical advice, if you know the recommended load capacitance for the cartridge (it’s generally given in the owner’s manual) and the input capacitance of the preamplifier (it will be appearing more frequently in specification sheets), the difference between the two can be made up with the capacitance of the tone-arm wiring and that of the interconnecting cables. Alternatively, a fixed capacitor purchased from an electronics store can be wired across the phono input to achieve the total recommended value. Record-player manufacturers are beginning to print data on the capacitance contributed by their products. If not provided in

PHONOGRAPH CARTRIDGES: A REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLING

Manufacturer	Model	Cartridge type	Standard output (millivolts)	Tracking-force range (grams)	Recommended load resistance (ohms)	Recommended load capacitance (picofarads)	Stylus shape	User-replaceable stylus	List price (dollars)
AKG	P8ES	Moving iron	3.75	¾ to 1¼	47k	470	E	yes	\$135
	P8E	Moving iron	4	¾ to 1¼	47k	470	E	yes	100
Acutex	M320III-STR	Moving iron	4	0.8 to 1.8	30k to 100k	50 to 500	Q	yes	175
	M310IE	Moving iron	4	1.5 to 2.8	30k to 100k	50 to 500	E	yes	75
ADC	ZLM	Induced magnet	5.5	½ to 1¼	47k	275	Alipitic	yes	80
	XLM MKIII	Induced magnet	5.5	¾ to 1½	47k	275	E	yes	55
Audio-Technica	AT20SS	Moving magnet	2.7	¾ to 1¼	47k	100 to 200	Shibata +	yes	250
	AT15XE	Moving magnet	2.7	¾ to 1¼	47k	100 to 200	E	yes	175
Bang & Olufsen	MMC-6000	Moving iron	4.25	1	47k	100	Q	no	145
	MMC-4000	Moving iron	4.25	1	47k	200	E	no	95
Decca	Mk VI Gold	Moving iron	5	1.5	50k	250 to 300	E	no	160
	Mk VI Plum	Moving iron	7.5	2	50k	250 to 300	S	no	140
Denon	DL-103D	Moving coil	0.25	1.5	100	N.C.	E	no	267
	DL-103S	Moving coil	0.3	1.8	100	N.C.	E	no	186
Dynavector	20C	Moving coil	0.18	1.2 to 1.8	47k	270	Q	no	350
	10A	Moving coil	2	2.3 to 2.7	47k	270	S	no	160
Empire	4000D/II	Moving armature	4.24	¾ to 1¼	47k to 100k	100	Q	yes	150
	2000Z	Moving armature	4.24	¾ to 1¼	47k	300	E	yes	125
Grace	SF-90	Moving magnet	5.5	1 to 2	47k	250	E	yes	250
	F9-F	Moving magnet	3.5	1 to 2	100k	80	Q	yes	175
Grado	G-1	Moving iron	3	1 to 1.5	N.C.	N.C.	"Grado type"	yes	150
	F-1	Moving iron	3	1 to 1.5	N.C.	N.C.	"Grado type"	yes	75
Great American Sound	Sleeping Beauty Shibata	Moving coil	0.27	1.8 to 2.1	50 to 1k	N.C.	Q	no	240
	Sleeping Beauty Super-Elliptical	Moving coil	0.27	1.8 to 2.1	50 to 1k	N.C.	E	no	200
Micro-Acoustics	530-mp	Electret	3.5	0.7 to 1.4	N.C.	N.C.	Micro-point	yes	200
	2002-e	Electret	3.5	0.7 to 1.4	N.C.	N.C.	E	yes	120
Nagatronics	HV-9100	Moving ribbon	0.04	1.6 to 2	10 to 30	N.C.	E	no	220
	360CEX	Induced magnet	4	1.7	50k	350	E	yes	125
Nakamichi	MC-1000	Moving coil	0.2	1.5 to 2.1	200	N.C.	Q	no	305
	MC-500	Moving coil	0.9	1.9 to 2.5	50k	N.C.	E	no	135
Ortofon	MC 20	Moving coil	0.07	1½ to 2	47k	N.C.	Q	no	185
	M20E Super	Variable magnetic shunt	5	¾ to 1¼	47k	400	E	yes	90
Osawa	300MP	Moving permalloy	4	1½ to 2	47k	N.S.	E	yes	100
	200MP	Moving permalloy	4	1½ to 2	47k	N.S.	E	yes	65
Pickering	XUV/4500Q	Moving magnet	4	½ to 1½	100k	100	Q	yes	140
	XV-15/1200E	Moving iron	4	½ to 1	47k	275	E	yes	80
Satin	M-18BX	Moving coil	2.5	½ to 1½	30	N.C.	Q	yes	190
	M-18E	Moving coil	2.5	½ to 1½	30	N.C.	E	yes	195
Shure	V-15 Type IV	Moving magnet	4	¾ to 1¼	47k	250	Hyperelliptical	yes	150
	M24H	Moving magnet	3	1 to 1½	100k	100	Q	yes	85
Signet	MK111E	Moving coil	0.4	1.0 to 2.0	N.C.	N.C.	E	yes	275
	TK7SU	Moving magnet	2.7	0.75 to 1.75	47k	100 to 200	Shibata	yes	175
Sonic Research	Sonus Gold-Blue	Moving iron	4	¾ to 1¼	47k	400	Q	yes	140
	Sonus Gold-Red	Moving iron	4	¾ to 1¼	47k	400	E	yes	125
Stanton	881S	Moving magnet	3	¾ to 1¼	47k	275	Stereohedron	yes	150
	780/4DQ	Moving magnet	3	1½ to 2½	100k	100	Q	yes	125
Stax	CP-Y/ECP-1	Electret condenser	240	0.9 to 1.6	20k	300	E	yes	560 (with equalizer-amp)
Supex	SD-900E + Super	Moving coil	0.2	1.2 to 1.7	N.C.	N.C.	E	no	200
	SD-901E + Super	Moving coil	2.0	1.2 to 1.7	47k	N.C.	E	no	175

CARTRIDGE SPECIFICATIONS

THE chart lists several models at or near the top of the lines of the major cartridge manufacturers, together with some of their more important specifications. Information on frequency response and channel separation has been omitted because the use of different test records by different manufacturers invalidates comparisons.

Of the specifications indicated, standard output is re-

ferred to a recorded lateral velocity of 5 centimeters per second at 1,000 Hz. Tracking-force range will give a rough idea of the tracking abilities of the various cartridges, although it is by no means an absolute indication of merit. The importance of load resistance and capacitance is explained in the text. The symbol "S" represents a spherical stylus, "E" an elliptical stylus, and "Q" a stylus that is specially shaped for CD-4 four-channel reproduction but will also serve well in conventional use. When a certain

stylus shape clearly does not fit into any of these categories, the manufacturer's nomenclature is used. N.C. = not critical; N.S. = not supplied.

The "Cartridge type" column indicates the internal electromechanical format of the cartridge; however, because of design and nomenclature variations the designations should not be viewed as anything other than approximate descriptions of operating principles, nor as any indication of quality or design superiority.

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“Specifications are useful only in a comparative sense, and then only when the cartridges in question have been tested under identical conditions.”

the player's instruction manual, this vital piece of information can be obtained at the cost of a letter or phone call to the manufacturer.

The other type of magnetic cartridge, the *moving-coil*, has a reputation for high-frequency definition and clarity superior to that of the fixed-coil cartridges—a reputation that persists although scientific support for it has yet to emerge. In a moving-coil cartridge the stylus is attached to miniature coils of wire that are immersed in a fixed magnetic field within the cartridge. The signal voltage is generated by the movement of the coils through the field. Obviously, only a very few turns of wire can be used in the coils if the effective mass at the stylus is not to become excessive. Accordingly, the signal-voltage output of these cartridges is very low, and an accessory transformer or a pre-preamplifier (frequently called a “head amp”) is usually required between the cartridge and the normal phono input. (There are a few “high-output” moving-coil cartridges on the market that can feed standard-

gain phono inputs directly, but even these have outputs significantly lower than that of the typical fixed-coil cartridge.) With a few exceptions, the stylus assemblies of moving-coil cartridges cannot be changed by the user; the entire cartridge must be returned to the factory for repair or periodic stylus replacement.

Since the output impedance of moving-coil cartridges is very low and the loading upon them is relatively uncritical, there are not likely to be any compatibility problems between the cartridge and the phono-input circuit. However, without the electrical resonant circuit to tame the high-frequency resonance, the cartridge designer must accomplish all of the “resonance compensation” within the cartridge itself. And so, when measured under laboratory conditions, moving-coil cartridges generally show a trace of a high-frequency resonant peak.

Specifications

In an ideal world, specifications would tell you how a phono cartridge—or any other component—sounds. Unfortunately, the world *isn't* ideal; specifications are useful only in a comparative sense, and then only when the cartridges in question have been tested under identical conditions.

Phono cartridges are measured using test records that themselves have questionable accuracy. Test records can be “calibrated” with a cartridge, of course, but that leads directly to the chicken-and-egg dilemma. The final fact of the matter is that the same cartridge will yield different results if a

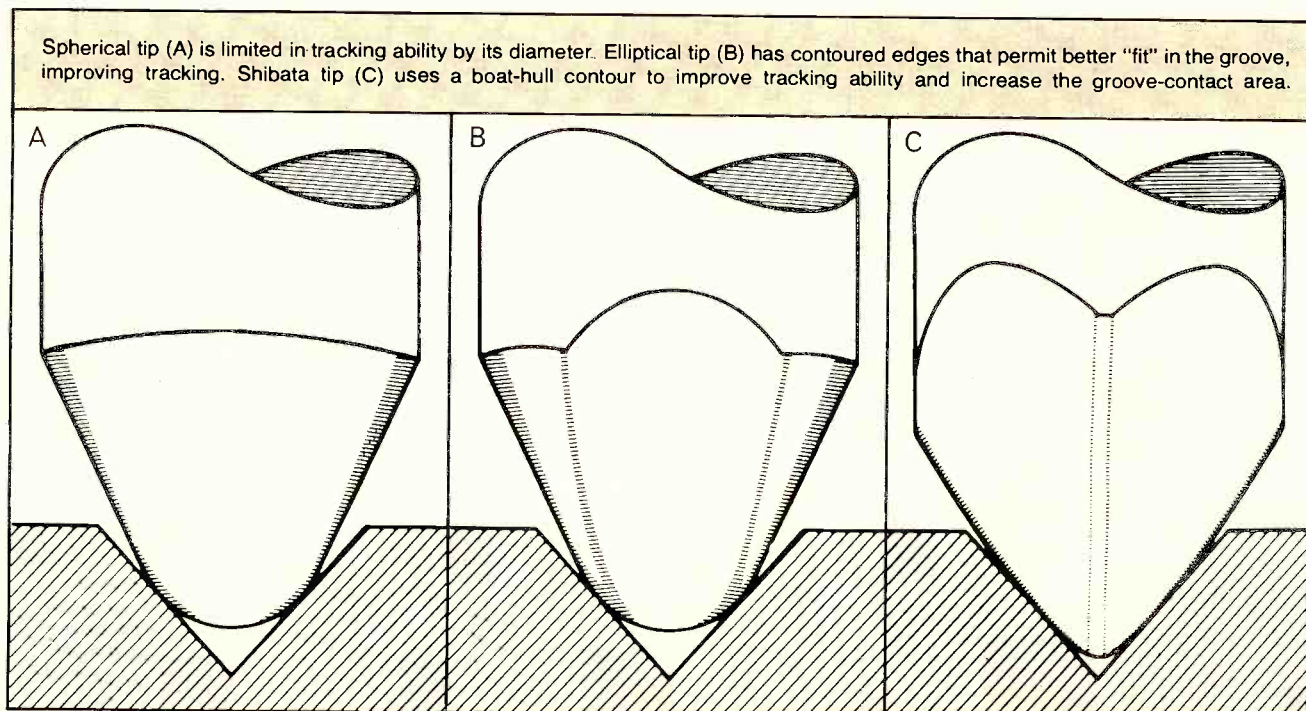
different test record is used, and, inevitably, different manufacturers use different records. For example, a cartridge that exhibits a flat frequency response measured with a JVC test record will frequently show a rise of 2 to 4 dB at 20,000 Hz when measured with a CBS test record. Which is correct? Is the difference really cut into the disc, or does it arise from variations in vinyl formulations and their effect on stylus/groove resonance? It's exceedingly difficult (but not impossible) to tell.

A similar situation exists in the measurement of crosstalk or, more properly, separation between channels. Different test records yield different results. Research suggests a tentative explanation having to do with the way the various test records were cut. But whatever the explanation, the implication is the same: a cartridge measurement is only as good as the test record, and the “goodness” of the record is not easily ascertained.

One of the most important cartridge specifications—if not *the* most important—is also one of the most difficult to pin down with numbers. This is *tracking ability*—a measure of how well the stylus maintains contact with the groove walls during their spectacularly tortuous undulations. Needless to say, if the stylus loses contact with the groove walls, the resulting sound will be at least somewhat distorted.

Tracking ability can generally be enhanced by selecting a tracking force toward the high end of the cartridge manufacturer's suggested range. In fact, for best results, *any* cartridge should probably be used at close to its max-

(Continued on page 78)



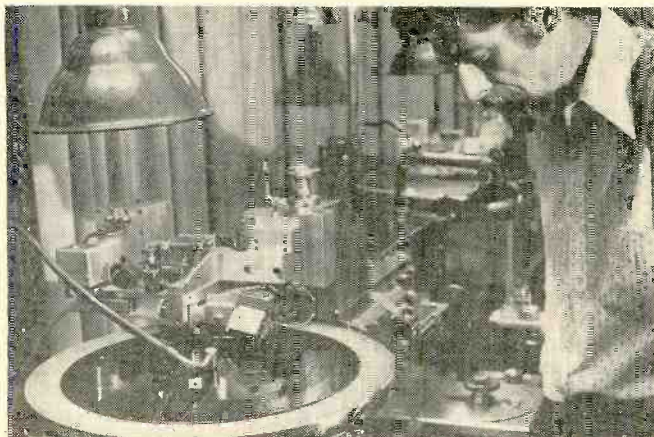
PROFESSIONAL

The New #1 in Professional Applications....

Stanton's Calibrated 881S Cartridge



Scanning Electron Beam Microscope photo of Stereohedron stylus; 2000 times magnification. Brackets point out wider contact area.



Mike Reese of the famous Mastering Lab in Los Angeles says: "While maintaining the Calibration Standard, the 881S sets new levels for tracking and high frequency response. It's an *audible* improvement. We use the 881S exclusively for calibration and evaluation in our operation."

No wonder this cartridge has achieved such dominance so swiftly. It has design, engineering and quality features that no other cartridge has. Stanton's new Professional Calibration Standard 881S cartridge is designed for maximum record protection. This requires a brand new tip shape, the Stereohedron,TM which was developed for not only better sound characteristics but also the gentlest possible treatment of the record groove. This cartridge also possesses a revolutionary new magnet. It is made of an exotic rare earth compound which, because of its enormous power, is far smaller than ordinary magnets.

Stanton guarantees each 881S to meet its specifications within exacting limits. The most meaningful warranty possible, individual calibration test results come packed with each unit.

Whether your usage involves recording, broadcasting or home entertainment, your choice should be the choice of the professionals... the STANTON 881S.

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CIRCLE NO. 44 ON READER SERVICE CARD

PHONO CARTRIDGE

"If the stylus mistracks, the groove-wall destruction will be much worse than that produced by a little additional tracking force."

imum recommended stylus force. This is not to say that a cartridge will not track *some* records at its minimum recommended force. But records are being cut at higher and higher levels, and chances are that in playing a significant part of your collection the cartridge will require all the help it can get, and a higher tracking force will provide that help. (Some records can't be tracked perfectly by *any* available cartridge, no matter what the force applied!)

Obviously, the lower the tracking force, the less will be the wear and tear on the record and stylus. But if the stylus mistracks, the groove-wall destruction will be much worse than that produced by a little additional tracking force. Notwithstanding this readily apparent fact, test laboratories still have a problem establishing the point at which mistracking occurs. Is it a matter of measured distortion exceeding some arbitrary percentage? Is it the onset of the gross "shattering" sound that accompanies the stylus' complete loss of contact with the groove wall? We can't say, for no standard exists.

Neither does any standard exist for optimum stylus compliance. Compliance is a measure of the "give" of a stylus assembly. A large amount of compliance is good for the tracking of low frequencies (provided the stylus assembly doesn't collapse altogether), and for years cartridge manufacturers vied to publish the most spectacular figures they could. Recently they've turned away from this sort of compliance race, and for good reason.

First, compliance is usually measured under static conditions: push on the stylus with a calibrated force and measure the amount of movement resulting. But the movements imposed by record grooves are anything but "static." At frequencies higher than very deep bass, the stylus needn't move very far, but the movements it does make must be very rapid. As the frequency goes up, the stylus' activity is controlled more and more by the frictional damping within the stylus assembly and, finally, by the effective mass of the stylus itself. Few good cartridges have difficulty reproducing organ-pedal

notes. But they run into trouble at higher frequencies where simple static compliance measurements tell us nothing at all about tracking ability.

Compliance can also harm as well as help, as when it unfavorably affects the tone-arm/cartridge resonance of the system. The tone arm has, of course, an effective mass of its own, and the stylus is essentially a spring as far as the arm is concerned. Thus the stylus compliance resonates with the tone-arm mass at a certain easily calculated frequency. This is not a happy situation. At that (usually infrasonic—somewhere below 15 Hz) frequency the stylus will undergo exaggerated motion that will be translated into low-frequency signals that tax amplifiers and speakers and generally muddy the sound with modulation effects. It will also tend to mistrack when so stimulated. Therefore, although this resonance may occur at a frequency too low to be perceived directly, its effects can easily communicate themselves up into the audio range.

This resonance cannot be entirely eliminated, but it can be controlled. For example, it can be purposely fixed around 10 Hz or so—a good place for the arm-cartridge resonance, because that is below the frequency of any recorded music and yet above the frequencies at which record warps and other perturbations usually occur. The way to adjust the resonance frequency of the arm-cartridge system is by "tuning" it—juggling the effective mass of the system and the compliance of the

stylus assembly: the lower the mass, the higher the resonance; the greater the compliance, the lower the resonance. For each model of tone arm there is an *optimum* range of cartridge compliance; neither more nor less is desirable.

This brings up the matter of matching the cartridge to the tone arm. A cartridge with very high compliance calls for an arm with very low effective mass, or the resonance will occur at a frequency within or very close to the major warp region (4 to 6 Hz or so). A low-compliance cartridge is therefore best served by an arm with greater mass, which prevents the resonance from occurring in the music region. But how can you determine the effective mass of a tone arm? In general, you can't, so avoid being taken in by appearances. Some arms *look* massy but have all their weight concentrated near the pivots where it doesn't affect matters. Other arms, though frail in general appearance, are overweight at the cartridge end of things.

WITH all these problems, it would be no surprise at all if some theoretician in the far-off future, never having heard of the phonograph, should gasp in astonishment at the idea of sound being stored in the form of physical undulations in a plastic groove. Indeed, even today, those who are best qualified to appreciate the electrophysical problems posed—and solved—by the concept remain somewhat amazed by the wonder of it all. □

Phono Cartridge Manufacturers

ACUTEX, 246 W. Broad St., Falls Church, Va. 22046

AKG, North American Philips, 100 E. 42nd St., New York, N.Y. 10017

AUDIO DYNAMICS CORP., 230 Pickett District Rd., New Milford, Conn. 06776

AUDIO-TECHNICA U.S., 33 Shiwassee Ave., Fairlawn, Ohio 44313

BANG & OLUFSEN, 515 Busse Rd., Elk Grove Village, Ill. 60007

DECCA, Rocelco, Inc., 1669 Flint Rd., Downsview, Ont., Canada M3J 2J7

DENON, American Audioport, 1407 N. Providence Rd., Columbia, Mo. 65201

EMPIRE SCIENTIFIC, 1055 Stewart Ave., Garden City, N.Y. 11530

GRACE, Sumiko, P.O. Box 5046, Berkeley, Calif. 94705

GRADO LABS, 4614 7th Ave., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11220

MICRO-ACOUSTICS, 8 Westchester Plaza, Elmsford, N.Y. 10523

NAGATRONICS, 2280 Grand Ave., Baldwin, N.Y. 11510

NAKAMICHI RESEARCH, 220 Westbury Ave., Carle Place, N.Y. 11514

ORTOFON, 122 Dupont St., Plainview, N.Y. 11803

OSAWA & CO., 521 5th Ave., New York, N.Y. 10017

PICKERING & CO., 101 Sunnyside Blvd., Plainview, N.Y. 11803

SATIN, Osawa & Co., 521 5th Ave., New York, N.Y. 10017

SHURE BROS., 222 Hartrey Ave., Evanston, Ill. 60204

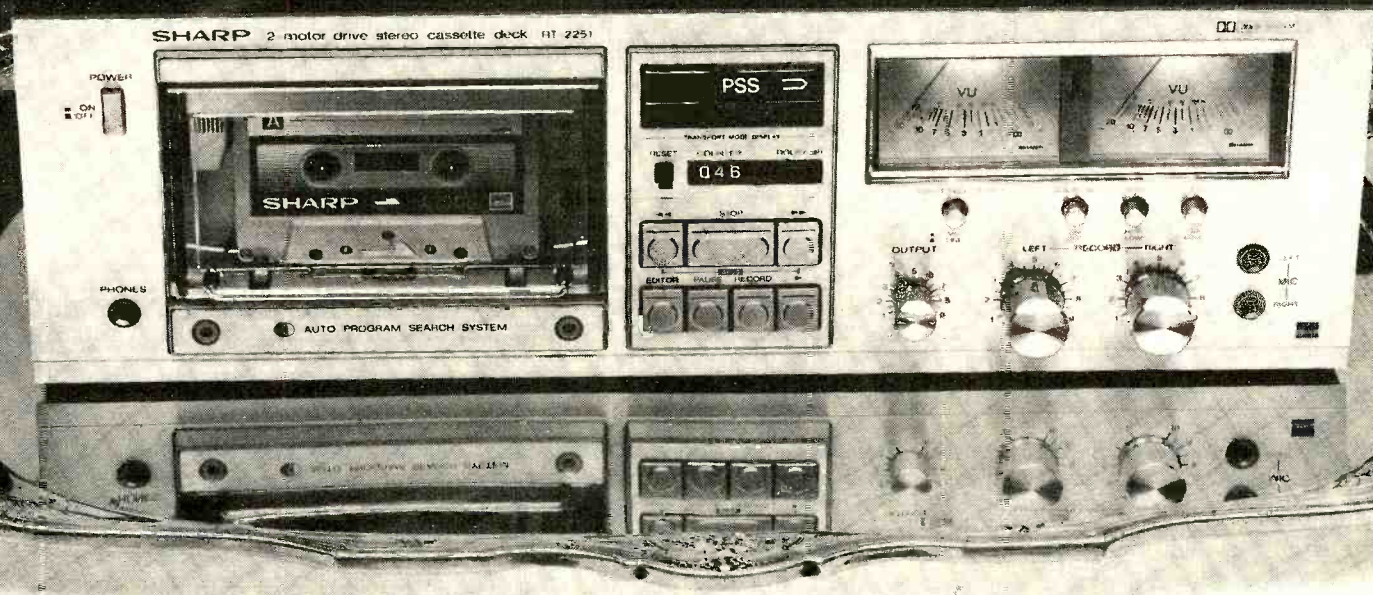
SIGNET, 33 Shiwassee Ave., Fairlawn, Ohio 44313

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CIRCLE NO. 45 ON READER SERVICE CARD

JANIE FRICKE

A fresh-voiced young singer finally steps out from behind all those ear-catching commercials

By Noel Coppage

THE Janie Fricke Saga may be the most interesting public thing going on in Nashville right now. It has such verve that you have to beware of losing track of the context of it all, you get so caught up in the nice turns of the narrative. So let's pin that much down right away: the context is that a new voice has arrived and it is a considerable one.

Janie Fricke has one album out—one, that is, featuring herself—"Singer of Songs," and from it three singles have made the country charts, the highest (*Please Help Me I'm Falling*) a so-so #12. Yet hers is one of the most frequently uttered names along Music Row these days, simply because she has knocked the pins out from under some of the toughest pros in a tough music business. The people at CBS/Nashville are jumping up and down like it's the end of the rainbow. She was nominated this year for best female vocalist (in the company of such as Crystal Gayle, Dolly Parton, and Emmylou Harris) and, with Johnny Duncan, for best duet in the Country Music Association's nationally televised awards show. She didn't win, but she was

nominated (and sort of aghast about it) and she was a Presenter. High visibility, from proverbial coast to proverbial coast.

A lot of people out there had already found out she was the one who made the *United We Fly* jingle soar, along with an *Undo It* one, a *Me and My R.C.* one (the one about the woman softball pitcher), a Coors one, and countless other jingles. And many are aware that Johnny Duncan came out of left field to make three straight number-one country singles when Janie started singing with him, first doing step-out lines from the back-up and then moving to full-fledged duets. In the last two years she has backed a string of country and pop stars, up to and including some dubbing—just before and just after his death—on Elvis Presley's last live-concert album. And she has been discovered by *People* magazine. And so forth.

In short, she is, as crossover-happy Nashville is saying, too much for country or any other single category to hold—even as she tells me "Now, when a lot of people who've been hard country for years are looking for crossover songs, I'd just like to find some

good, straight country songs to record." Even if she does, she's still going to be too big for one category. Bruce Lundvall, president of CBS Records Division, said after Fricke had drawn three standing ovations from the CBS Records Convention that she is "the artist who is going to break down all categories in the year ahead." And she only came to town in the first place to be a back-up singer.

SHE still is one, too. She's having to work seven days a week to do it, touring now on weekends with the likes of Duncan, Vern Gosdin, and Charlie Pride, and she's staying attached to the studios partly because she has "stardom" and "career" doped out as not necessarily the same thing. Hard work is nothing new to her, nor is the attitude that must be behind her seeming so down-to-earth and peaceful at a time when her career is being eyed from all angles as something like a lit fuse. Her attitudes go back to the farm where she grew up near South Whitley, Indiana, thirty miles from Fort Wayne.

Now she seems peaceful but not passive. Sitting, she is fidgety. She tells me



(we've borrowed the office of producer Billy Sherrill, one of the tough pros who is sold on her) that she has always been active, a doer rather than a spectator. "I don't read much," she says, "don't read newspapers or listen to the news, don't even watch TV shows. I've been on enough film sets to know exactly how they do it, and all I can do at a movie is sit there and watch the background moving and know it's a roll of paper along the wall. And I don't go to clubs. I'm not a very sociable person. I just live in my own little world, it seems like. We do so much music and we're involved with so many people all day long that when I get through all I want to do is go home to my quiet house and sweep the floor or sew or cook or just work on some little artsy-craftsy project."

A studio musician's life, she says, is a lot more normal than a road musician's life is, "and I want to live a normal life."

That's partly why she stands out; she's such a normal person in a field that's basically weird. She not only sounds like the quintessential farm girl, but she looks the part—one of the long-

legged, pretty ones, five-foot-nine, a real blonde, and rosy-cheeked healthy-looking in the midst of the general palor of musicians. Looking, in other words, like the milkmaid of a farm boy's dream after the boy grew up somewhat. She has that mixture of innocence and levelheadedness such dreams demand.

She is also, says a friend at CBS, straight—"in the old sense of the term. A square dealer. Utterly reliable, and you don't know how rare that is in this business. If she says she'll be somewhere at 2:30, she'll be there on the dot. I walked into somebody's office at twenty minutes to three one afternoon and Janie was sitting there, poised over the telephone, staring at her watch. I asked her what she was doing and she said she had to call a disc jockey in Texas to do a telephone interview at 2:45. She wouldn't call five minutes earlier because the man said 2:45."

JANIE describes herself as an organizer, a planner: "I make lists, lots and lots of lists. What does that mean, I wonder. I like to get things done and I like to do a lot of things . . . I never

sit still for very long." She's a planner but she says she is not goal-oriented. In fact, Janie says, "I don't even like to answer the question when people ask me what my goals are. I didn't plan what my goals were five years ago or ten years ago or one year ago, so why should I sit down now and say a year from today I want this and this and this?"

She sang first for fun, then to help pay her way through college (a bachelor's degree in elementary education after two hitches at Indiana University), then for a jingle company in Memphis (at first singing the call letters for radio stations), actually punching a time clock at 8:30 every morning (and eventually earning \$300 a week) "because it was a fun job and an experience." Then she sang as a back-up singer in Nashville (mostly with the Lea Jane Singers) because producers were already after her to do that, and finally she began singing as a solo performer because such people as Billy Sherrill were after her to do *that*.

There was one stretch of sixteen months when she tried to be goal-oriented and when people didn't come to

JANIE FRICKE

"I remember I'd never sing hymns the straight way. I'd always kinda jazz them up or sing them in a folk style"

her. After college, which she managed to sandwich around some jingle work, she went to Los Angeles "to try to get in with the clique of studio singers out there, to be a back-up singer. . . . I never could get in with them. I was struggling the whole time, waiting for the phone to ring, substitute teaching, hoping. I only got to sing on a session every two weeks."

By and large, though, the Janie Fricke Saga has involved one thing leading to another, hard work and steadily increasing recognition adding up to one of those rare true-life adventures in which virtue actually seems to be rewarded and the system actually seems to work. But first, of course, there was the talent, and, like all real talent, where it came from is essentially mysterious. Janie Fricke's background doesn't satisfactorily explain it. She says her first semiprofessional interest was in folk music, but by that she means the pop-folk of the Sixties, at least one remove from the roots. She didn't listen to records or the radio much as a child either ("We were outdoors most of the time"), but her mother taught her to play the piano and read music and her father taught her the basics of the guitar. "I started out doing the Joan Baez ballads," she says, "Judy Collins, Ian and Sylvia type stuff. I didn't buy very many records, but when I started doing folk music in college I would do the songs that were current. I'd also do Neil Diamond songs and Rita Coolidge songs, when she was starting out."

She was steeping herself in secondary influences, that is (Rita Coolidge was clearly one of her heroines). She was not bathing her soul in our vaunted elemental folk musics, white or black, but was listening to folk "hits" and occasionally to top-40 stuff from WLS, Chicago, and playing such stuff as *Misty* from the sheet music her mother brought home. Yet, when she sings something soulful (*Please Help Me* will do nicely as an example, although anything approaching gospel is even better), she seems tapped into something beyond all this, something basic and or-

ganic. The sound isn't just pretty notes; it has body to it, character, red Georgia clay and Delta backwater. It's almost as if she got certain influences with little or no direct exposure to them.

But there was *one* place "I was raised singing hymns in church," Janie says. The Frickes were Lutherans, but the nearest Lutheran church was thirty miles away so they went to a nearby Church of Christ. "My mother was always pushing me out to sing and then out farther to take solos. I remember I'd never sing hymns the straight way. I'd always kinda jazz them up or sing them in a folk style . . . put a little style into them. I think the folk music and the hymns blend into the country music I'm doing now."

She was singing solos in front of an audience so long ago that she can no longer remember exactly what stage fright feels like. She remembers a clue: "When I was eight years or younger, my sister and her friends would want me to sing for them and I didn't want to do it in front of them, so I'd go into the closet and close the door and just sing my heart out." Probably there is a connection between how early she got rid of self-consciousness about singing and how long she has been able to retain a certain innocence, a childlike freedom from inhibitions about playing with a song, as in "jazzing it up." The mystery behind the richness of her voice, I'm convinced, is tied in with this quality of innocence.

AND NOW, of course, there is an overlay of solid professionalism. Singing is connected with feelings, and a back-up singer, always having to play a role, portray a prescribed mood, has to learn a lot about self-motivation. "It

can be very hard to do when you're in a bad mood," Janie says. "You have to program yourself. You just have to *make* yourself smile. Lots of times we draw little happy faces on our papers so we'll remember to smile and *sound* happy. When I did commercials and had to sound energetic first thing in the morning, I'd have to get my hands moving around, make myself feel up."

The dubbings on the Elvis album, she says, took all the professionalism she could muster.

"It was just awful," she says. "A week before he died we were called to the studio and did voices over what he had done on that live show in Rapid City, his last concert, when he was real overweight, that TV special. We did voices over what they had done to enhance the tracks for the album. We didn't finish the session, and I kept thinking he's going to come walking into the studio, I just know he is. Then we heard he had died, and they called us back to finish the project. We had to go out and sing and put earphones on and we heard his voice and we were all just really, really sad. His producer was there, Felton Jarvis, and Felton was really upset. It was just a terrible feeling, just awful."

But she did it. She always does her job. And the movers and shakers and prognosticators around Nashville see this professionalism, this straightness in the old sense of the term, and they see the talent, the innocence, the level-headedness, the modesty, the healthy look—who can blame them for going out and ringing bells? The most important thing about it all may turn out to be this: that if ever anyone were equipped to keep those bell ringers and the people and things beyond them from eating her alive, Janie Fricke is. □

Janie Fricke and Johnny Duncan, co-nominees for the Country Music Association's Best Duet award, during WSM's 51st-anniversary Grand Ole Opry broadcast.



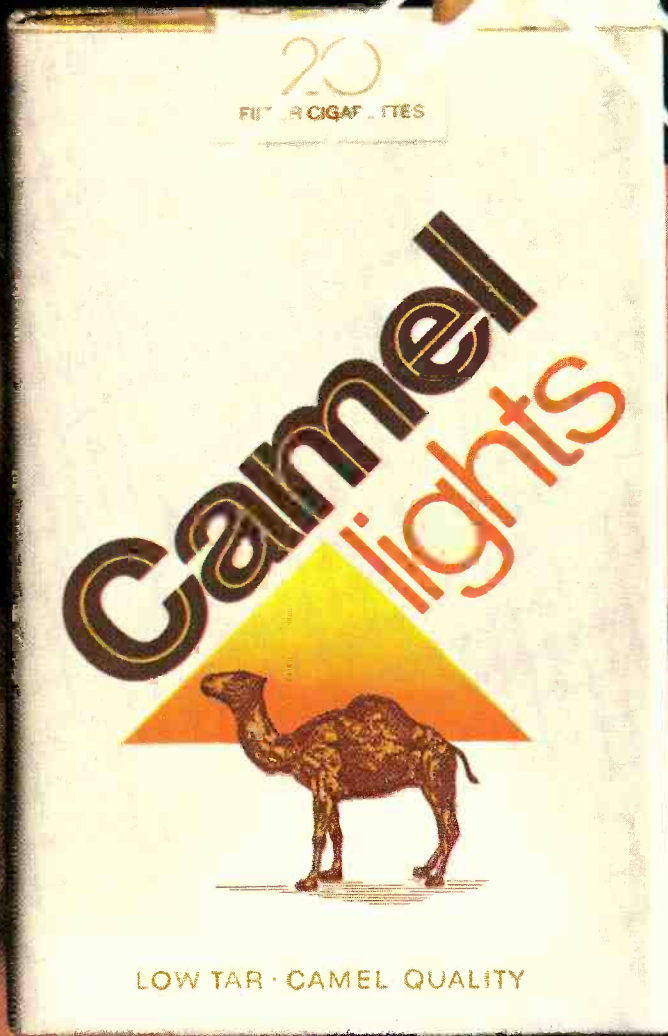
Charlyn Zlotnik

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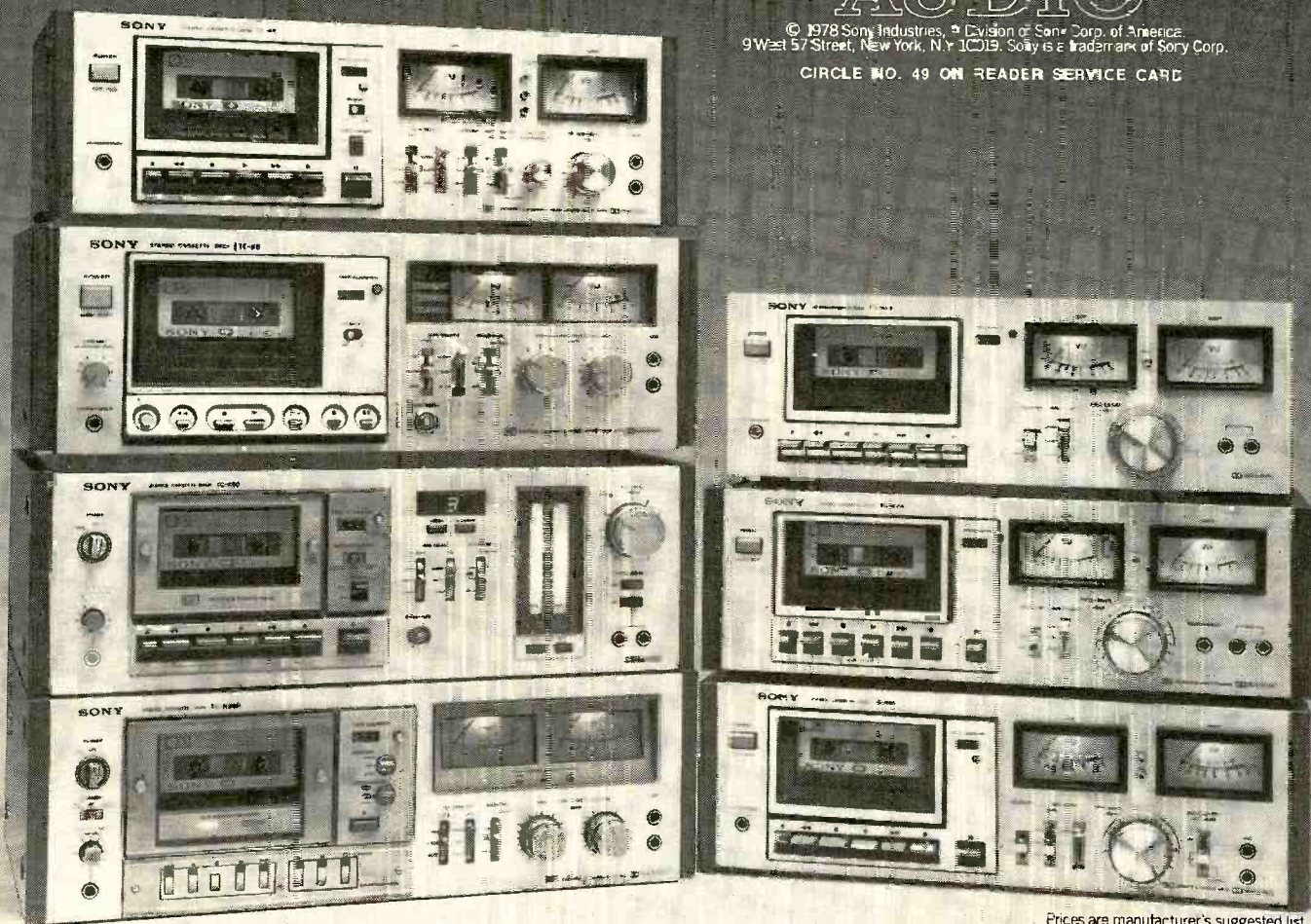
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And start at the place you'd end up anyway.

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CIRCLE NO. 49 ON READER SERVICE CARD



Prices are manufacturer's suggested list.

Stereo Review's Record of the Year Awards for 1978

in recognition of significant contributions
to the arts of music and recording
during the 1978 publishing year

THIS issue marks the twelfth year of STEREO REVIEW's annual awards for outstanding records of the year, and it seems virtually impossible to find anything new to say about them. But, as each year brings us new readers (our circulation now is in excess of 525,000; twelve years ago it was 150,000), it seems necessary to reiterate the basic premises.

The awards are given strictly for musical and technical excellence to records we consider to be real contributions to the recorded literature. That a record may not sell well has no influence on the voting. Nor do we fall the other way (all too common in this business) of equating a *commercial* success with *artistic* accomplishment. We call them as we hear them, not as we read their positions in the charts. The voting is done by the critics and editors of STEREO REVIEW, and they are free to vote for any record that pleased them during the year, subject only to the conditions that the record was reviewed some time between January 1978 and January 1979 or that it wasn't but temporally could have been. This limits the eligible records to those issued during our *publishing* year, and though that may not correspond to the chronological year or to the record companies' release year, it is the only rational procedure under the circumstances. Those records released too late in 1978 to be included will have their chance in the voting the next time around.

Most of our reviewers are specialists of sorts, and they will naturally tend to hear more records within their area of specialization than outside it. Nevertheless, the really outstanding discs seem to attract votes from all over, and

when they are tabulated there is rarely a shortage of clear-cut choices. But we do, as mentioned in previous years, tend to lean (especially in the pop area) toward younger, less established performers. The award is a boost for a developing career, and it pleases us to be able to offer that boost at the time it is needed, rather than waiting until the artist has already made it. Anyway the quality is there to be heard at the beginning; it is only the success that takes time.

SOME readers may be surprised to see that not all the year's winners were accorded a "Best of the Month" when they first came out and that, correspondingly, not all the BOM's during the year receive awards or honorable mentions. Obviously, this is partly due to chance; some months had more and better records than others. But it is also due to the inevitable ripening of opinion after the fact. There are some records that simply stand up better over the months and some others that, while they continue to impress, seem not to attract as they did at first. So the awards are a form of second thoughts, though not necessarily final thoughts.

The lesson buried here is only that no award and no review, however favorable, should be taken on an exclusionary basis. These are fine records—there is no doubt about that—but there are many others that are also fine, and, for those who love music, the time to discover them is when they are available, not after they have become impossible-to-find collectors' items. A word to the wise, so to speak.

—James Goodfriend, *Music Editor*

Record of the Year Awards for 1978

SELECTED BY THE EDITORIAL STAFF
AND CRITICS FOR THE READERS
OF STEREO REVIEW

Certificate of Merit
awarded to
Beverly Sills
for her outstanding contributions
to the quality of American musical life

Honorable Mentions

BEETHOVEN: *Piano Sonata No. 18*.
SCHUMANN: *Fantasiestücke*. (Arthur
Rubinstein, piano). RCA ARL1-2397.

BEETHOVEN: *Nine Symphonies* (Berlin
Philharmonic Orchestra, Herbert von
Karajan cond.). DEUTSCHE
GRAMMOPHON 2740 172.

BRAHMS: *Violin Concerto* (Itzhak
Perlman, violin; Chicago Symphony
Orchestra, Carlo Maria Giulini cond.).
ANGEL SQ-37286.

CARLENE CARTER. WARNER BROS.
BSK 3204.

RAY CHARLES: *True to Life*. ATLANTIC
SD 19142.

RY COODER: *Jazz*. WARNER BROS.
BSK 3197.

ELVIS COSTELLO: *This Year's Model*.
COLUMBIA JC 35331.

EARTH, WIND & FIRE: *All 'n All*.
COLUMBIA JC 34905.

EGBERTO GISMONTI: *Sol Do Meio
Dia*. ECM 1-1116.

HAYDN: *Piano Sonatas Nos. 31-33*
(Charles Rosen, piano). VANGUARD/
CARDINAL VCS 10131.

BILLY JOEL: *The Stranger*. COLUMBIA
JC 34987.

ALICIA DE LARRCCHA: *Mostly
Mozart, Vol. III* (Alicia de Larrocha,
piano) LONDON CS 7085.

LECOQ: *La Fille de Madame Angot*
(Mady Mesplé; Opéra-Comique, Jean
Doussard cond.). CONNOISSEUR SOCIETY
CS2-2135.

NATI MISTRAL Y LOS GEMELOS.
ALHAMBRA CPS 9553.

NIELSEN: *Maskarade* (Danish Radio
Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, John
Frandsen cond.). UNICORN
UN3-75006.

PROKOFIEV: *Piano Concerto No. 3*.
RAVEL: *Piano Concerto in G Major*.
(Tedd Joselson, piano; Dallas
Symphony Orchestra, Eduardo Mata
cond.). RCA ARL1-2910.

PUCCINI: *Madama Butterfly* (Renata
Scott, Placido Domingo;
Philharmonia Orchestra, Lorin Maazel
cond.). COLUMBIA M3 35181.

SCHUBERT: *String Quartet No. 15*
(Quartetto Italiano). PHILIPS 9500 409.

SCHUBERT: *String Quintet in C Major*
(Melos Quartet, Stuttgart; Mstislav
Rostropovich, cello). DEUTSCHE
GRAMMOPHON 2530 980.

SHOSTAKOVICH: *String Quartets Nos.
4 and 12* (Fitzwilliam Quartet).
L'OISEAU-LYRE DSLO 23.

PATTI SMITH: *Easter*. ARISTA AB4171.

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN: *Darkness on
the Edge of Town*. COLUMBIA JC 35318.

DONNA SUMMER: *Once Upon a
Time*. CASABLANCA NBLP 7078-2.

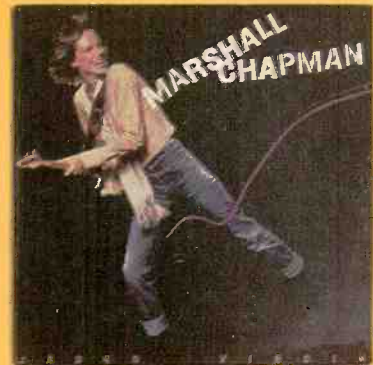
WARREN ZEVON: *Excitable Boy*.
ASYLUM 6E-118.



NYIREGYHÁZI PLAYS LISZT (Ervin Nyiregyházi, piano). INTERNATIONAL PIANO ARCHIVES/DESMAR IPA 111.



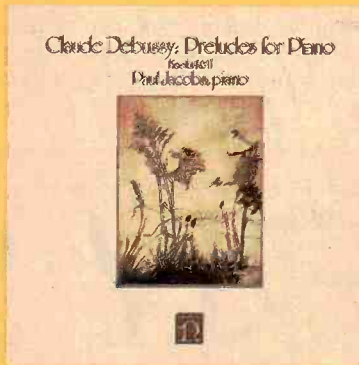
HAYDN: *Orlando Paladino* (George Shirley, Elly Ameling; Lausanne Chamber Orchestra, Antal Dorati cond.). PHILIPS 6707 029.



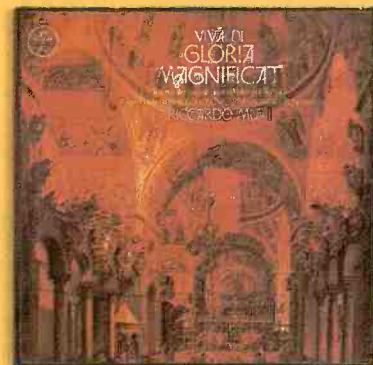
MARSHALL CHAPMAN: *Jaded* Virgin. EPIC JE 35341.



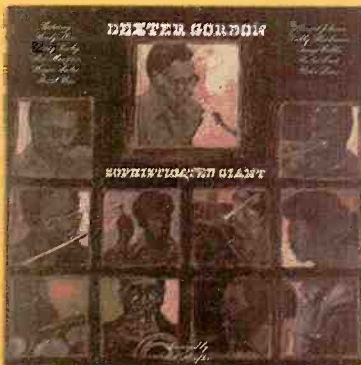
AIN'T MISBEHAVIN' (Fats Waller-Luther Henderson). Original Broadway Cast. RCA CBL2-2965.



DEBUSSY: *Preludes for Piano, Books I and II* (Paul Jacobs, piano). NONESUCH HB-73031.



VIVALDI: *Gloria; Magnificat* (New Philharmonia Chorus and Orchestra, Riccardo Muti cond.). ANGEL S-37415.



DEXTER GORDON: *Sophisticated Giant*. COLUMBIA JC 34989.



CILÉA: *Adriana Lecouvreur* (Renata Scotti; Philharmonia Orchestra, James Levine cond.). COLUMBIA M3 34588.



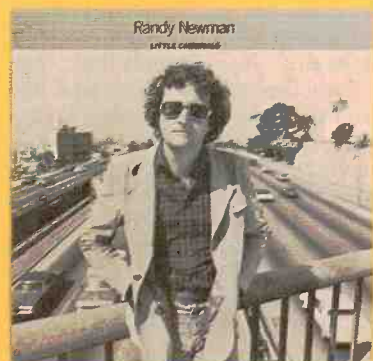
JACKSON BROWNE: *Running on Empty*. ASYLUM 6E-113.



PETER ALLEN: *It Is Time for Peter Allen*. A & M SP-3706.



MAHLER: *Symphony No. 4* (Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Claudio Abbado cond.). DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 966.



RANDY NEWMAN: *Little Criminals*. WARNER BROS. BSK 3079.

THE sidewalks of the main streets of Hollywood are of pink and gray terrazzo and have large brass stars embedded in them to honor great personalities in the performing arts. Since the Sidewalk of Stars is in Hollywood, it is understandable that the most conspicuous names are those of movie actors and actresses, but on North Vine Street in front of the Capitol Tower, where Angel Records has its headquarters, there is a star that bears the name of opera singer Beverly Sills.

Returning from lunch one day, the president of Angel Records, Raúl Montañó, was startled to see an attractive young girl sitting on the sidewalk and working away at something. "What are you doing?" he asked. She turned around, held up a cloth and a can of brass cleaner, and said, "I am polishing

result of good looks, a gift for gab, and an engaging personality. Miss Sills' fame rests primarily on solid professional achievements in opera houses, concert halls, and recording studios around the world. Like every important singer, she has had her detractors, but she has had more than her share of music critics among her supporters. In his book *Divas* (Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, 1973), Winthrop Sargeant, who was for years the distinguished critic of the *New Yorker* magazine, examined the careers of Joan Sutherland, Marilyn Horne, Birgit Nilsson, Leontyne Price, Eileen Farrell, and Beverly Sills. After extravagant praise for the beauty of Miss Sills' lyric coloratura voice, the security of her technique, and the breadth of her repertoire, Sargeant went on to say, "Miss Sills is, in

the dancing began, the TV commentator turned to Miss Child and exclaimed, "Wasn't that a wonderful show, Julia?" With disarming candor Miss Child said, "Well, no, I didn't think so. I didn't think it was up to the occasion. We should have had one of our opera stars, like Beverly Sills."

The United States has produced many great singers. A number of them, such as Lillian Nordica, Emma Eames, and Geraldine Farrar, had important international careers. Some of them, such as Minnie Hauk and Rosa Ponselle, were, like Sills, American-trained as well as American-born. But since the death of Enrico Caruso, no singer of any nationality—not even Maria Callas—has brought opera more to the consciousness of the general American public than Beverly Sills. And no one

BEVERLY SILLS

"Everything I set out to do in my career, I have done."

this star." Since then she has returned regularly, and she sometimes brings a friend to help.

Such devotion is not unusual among the many thousands of Sills fans, but in actuality Beverly Sills' star shines with such brightness in the American firmament that it hardly needs any polishing. Having reached the absolute top of her profession, she has become the nation's leading spokesperson for the arts, a tireless worker for government and private support of cultural institutions, and an ardent champion of the American singer.

She is also an intelligent, articulate woman. Famous for her humor as well as her beauty—her coppery hair, her pretty face, her narrow waist, and her *belle poitrine*—she has become a favorite on television talk shows. Last October when she was the guest host on the Johnny Carson show, a rerun of her performance in Rossini's *The Turk in Italy* was being broadcast simultaneously in Exxon's Live from Lincoln Center series on the Public Broadcasting Service, and this was not the only time Sills watchers have had to switch back and forth as she dominated more than one TV channel.

Her public prominence is not just the

my opinion, the greatest actress currently on the operatic stage; in fact, I would go further and say that she is a greater actress than even the fabled Maria Callas."

Born in Brooklyn as Belle Silverman, the daughter of Jewish immigrants from Europe, Miss Sills enjoys a very special relationship with the city of New York. She is the home-town girl who made good, and New Yorkers are very proud of her. Many of them may not understand what her art is all about, but they lavish on her the kind of esteem and affection usually reserved for winning baseball teams. It sometimes appears, indeed, that as a symbol of her native city she rivals the Statue of Liberty.

Throughout the country she has come to represent what is finest in the performing arts in America. When the Queen of England was a guest at the White House, a state dinner for her was televised. Julia Child was on hand to talk about the food that was served. A light entertainment was put on for the guests, and when that was over and

has ever done as much as she has to make the public understand that opera, an imported art form, can flourish in our soil in precisely the same way that the greater part of the American people, whose ancestors were also imported, have flourished in this country.

THIS year Miss Sills is receiving STEREO REVIEW's Certificate of Merit for Outstanding Contributions to the Quality of American Musical Life. The previous recipients of this award have been artists in their seventies or eighties—Mabel Mercer, Jascha Heifetz, Arthur Fiedler, and Richard Rodgers—recognized for a lifetime of achievement. Beverly Sills is still only in her forties. Opera singers, like athletes and ballet dancers, depend on their bodies as their instruments, and they have to make their greatest achievements before middle age takes its physical toll. Miss Sills, having reached in her profession the equivalent of climbing Mount Everest, has announced that she will become director of the New York City Opera Company in July 1979 and will retire from the stage as a singer in 1980.

I called on her recently to talk with her about her plans for the next few

By William Livingstone





Christian Steiner/Angel Records

"You have regrets only if you say to yourself, 'If only I could have ... if only I would have'"

years and about anything else that was on her mind. In private life she is Mrs. Peter Greenough (pronounced GREEN-o). Her New York home is a large apartment facing Central Park, and she lives there with her husband, a retired journalist and publisher, their daughter Meredith (known as Muffy), and an affectionate Welsh Corgi terrier.

The apartment is a comfortable and gracious setting for a prima donna, but its luxury is understated. There are plants everywhere, including a series of white orchids in bloom in the foyer and living room. Although Miss Sills is undeniably glamorous, she is warm and charming off stage, and she has struck a happy balance between her sober responsibilities as a superstar and her high spirits and good nature. She has a small fortune in diamond rings on her fingers, but she wears *them*; they do not wear her. When she was appearing on the radio as a child someone commented, "Wind her up and she sings." These days you don't have to wind her up to get her to talk.

SHE arrived from hearing auditions at the New York City Opera, where she is already spending some time in the offices although she does not join the administration for several months. "My mother asked me why I announced my retirement two years in advance instead of waiting until just six months before the actual date," she said. "I couldn't do that. At the time I decided to stop singing by the end of October of 1980, I was being booked four or five years in advance. When opera companies invited me to sing, I couldn't continue telling fibs and saying I was fully booked. They wanted to know *where* I was going to sing, and they picked at me and picked at me until I told them I was not booking past 1980.

"But I didn't want it to come out piecemeal in papers in San Diego or Houston that my performances there would be my farewell appearances. I don't want farewell appearances. I wanted to take the onus off it. So I made the announcement that I would be

all done in two years, the *New York Times* was nice enough to put it on the front page, and that's the end of it.

"Now when I sing somewhere for the last time—and I'm going to a lot of places for the last time—nobody gives any kind of awful, maudlin farewell party. When I sang *Manon* in Philadelphia in October, they were my last *Manons* and the last performances I will ever sing in Philadelphia. Because I had announced my retirement, Eugene Ormandy asked me to sing with the Philadelphia Orchestra one more time, and I was asked to open or close Robin Hood Dell again. That proved to me that I had done the right thing. They're not saying, 'It's a good thing she's retiring. Now we're rid of her.' They're saying, 'Please come back and sing more.'

"And the audience in Philadelphia, sure, they threw the flowers, but it was a very 'up' occasion. There was nothing sad or tragic about it. I threw them a kiss goodbye, took my bouquet, and went off to a party. That's the way I want to finish."

Her curtain calls at the end of a performance have never been the carefully choreographed and rehearsed deep bows that are a part of the repertoire of most sopranos. She has always come out, smiled at the audience, bobbed her head a few times, and gone off again. Apparently, that's all she intends to do now. When I asked, however, if there was not a moment of sadness in singing her last *Manon*, an opera so closely associated with her, she answered with professional pride, not sentimentality.

"No, there wasn't. The first *Manon* in Philadelphia was almost like the ones I sang seven years ago. I was excited that I could still pull off a *Manon* like that, and it pleased me a lot. The second one was almost as good—not quite—but there was no sadness. You have regrets only if you say to yourself, 'If only I could have . . . if only I would have . . .' But I don't have that. Everything I set out to do in my career, I have done."

THE story of Beverly Sills' career has been made familiar to the American public through countless articles and broadcast interviews. She has even written a volume of memoirs, using her nickname as the title (*Bubbles*, Bobbs-Merrill, 1976). There is something very appealing about the story of the child prodigy who grew up to have phenomenal success on the stages of the world's greatest opera houses—the Vienna State Opera, Covent Garden in London, La Scala in Milan, the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires, and both the New York City Opera and the Metropolitan in her own home town.

She joined City Opera in 1955 and worked in repertory there and as a guest with other American companies from coast to coast until she came to international attention as Cleopatra in City Opera's 1966 production of Handel's *Julius Caesar* with Norman Treigle. It was a turning point in her career, and another one came in 1969 when she made her La Scala debut in Rossini's *The Siege of Corinth*, replacing Renata Scottò.

Miss Sills has sung more than fifty operas of varying styles and periods and has been particularly active in the bel canto revival. Works especially associated with her include, in addition to Massenet's *Manon*,

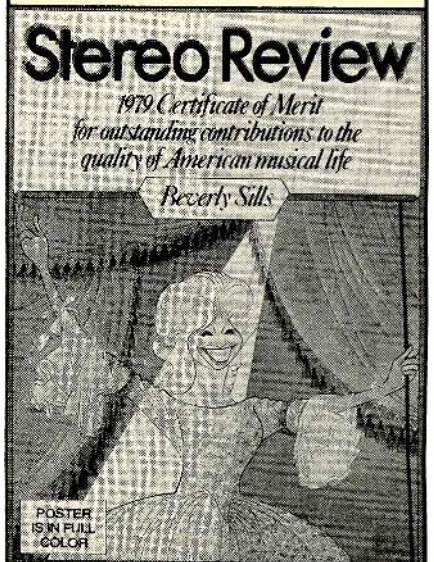
Verdi's *La Traviata*, Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor* and *The Daughter of the Regiment*, and Offenbach's *The Tales of Hoffmann*. Among her greatest triumphs have been her portrayals of the three Tudor queens in Donizetti's *Anna Bolena*, *Maria Stuarda*, and *Roberto Devereux*, which were mounted for her by her home company, to which she has remained intensely loyal.

After she had been singing regularly in New York for twenty years, Miss Sills finally made her Metropolitan Opera debut in April of 1975. Her vehicle was the same as for her Scala debut, Rossini's *The Siege of Corinth*, mounted for the first time at the Met and this time mounted specifically for Sills. Overwhelmed by the publicity given to that event, I commented in *STEREO REVIEW* that there had been a feature story about Sills in every publication edited in New York except the telephone book. A California reader promptly sent me the cover of the San Diego directory, which showed her in performance with the local opera company, as well as the story that was inside.

The afternoon I talked with her, Miss Sills was too involved with what she is doing now and her plans for the future to dwell much on the past. "I can't remember my performances well enough to say this one was a 'goodie' or that one was a 'baddie.' There are only two I can remember totally from beginning to end. One was my first Cleopatra in *Julius Caesar*. After I sang my first

THIS MONTH'S COVER

is being made available in a limited-edition poster version, in full color, for operaphiles, Sills fans, and other art lovers to commemorate Stereo Review's 1979 award of the Certificate of Merit to Beverly Sills. Send \$2 to Beverly Sills Poster, Stereo Review, 1 Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016. Remember: limited edition—first come, first served. Price includes handling, mailing tube, tax, and postage.



EVEN without ancient Chinese, Japanese, or Indian examples, we have sufficient evidence in our later Western culture to make a good case, if not perhaps actually to prove, that the idea of the musical play—a story told in, or accompanied by, song—as a form of entertainment is apparently firmly rooted in some basic impulse of human psychology. Opera is certainly a prime exhibit; whatever it is today, it began as a popular art, and it continues to coexist almost four hundred years later with its still-proliferating offspring—operettas of the Viennese (Lehár, Fall, Straus, Friml), Spanish (zarzuela), English (G & S), and American (Herbert, Romberg) varieties, Broadway musicals, movie musicals, right down to the latest revival of *Hair*, *J. C. Superstar*, and *Evita*.

Our American musicals, whether of the Broadway or Hollywood stripe, were for a time (they may still be) the envy of the world, though it must be admitted that the operettas of Victor Herbert and Sigmund Romberg that inspired them were based on European—specifically Viennese—models. *Naughty Marietta*, *The Desert Song*, and the like are seldom mounted these days, but it would be a mistake to imagine that they are forgotten by a host of passionate partisans. I am proud to count myself among them, prouder still that we tireless enthusiasts and demon proselytizers for a senselessly neglected repertoire can field such champions in its behalf as Beverly Sills and Sherrill Milnes. Miss Sills first made her voice heard in this campaign back in 1975 with her phenomenally and deservedly successful “Music of Victor Herbert” album (Angel SFO-37160), and she is back now (assisted by Mr. Milnes) with “Up in Central Park,” a program that covers a lot (but far from all) of the ground between Oscar Straus’ *Chocolate Soldier* (1910) and Leonard Bernstein’s *Wonderful Town* (1953).

I grew up with most of this music (sheet-music versions of the hit songs in the family piano bench, Jeanette and Nelson on the silver screen) and make bold to say that I have never heard it sung better. Though MacDonald and Eddy still occupy a secure niche in the pantheon of my musical affections, and though I remain grateful for many past pleasures, it doesn’t take more than a single A-B check of the *Indian Love Call* from *Rose-Marie* (and a tight rein on sentimentality) to realize that they have been surpassed, that Sills and Milnes have discovered both musical and dramatic dimensions here, and have applied vocal and interpretive skills, that the Hollywood sweethearts knew not of.

The most remarkable thing about these songs is the marriage between melody and lyric. The naturalness, the inevitability with which the words accommodate themselves to the notes—and vice versa—is of course the result of art, not accident, and it should be cause for public lamentation that this art has been allowed to disappear utterly from our popular music. One cannot find a decent match between words and music anywhere these days, even (especially?) in singing com-

Christian Steiner/Angel Records



“Up in Central Park” with Sills and Milnes

George Jean Nathan, who flourished as a drama critic (for, among other publications, the *New Yorker*) during American operetta’s heyday, was snobbishly contemptuous of the apparent ease with which operetta composers in general and Romberg in particular could transport audiences with the “mechanical contrivances” of their sentimental songs. It was apparently a sin even then to please the public, but Mr. Nathan could discover no punishment other than to observe snidely that by doing so “Mr. Romberg has become a rich man, able to play pinochle with Rudolf Friml.” I can only add that for this delightful album Beverly Sills and Sherrill Milnes deserve to do the same in equivalent company.

MISS SILLS’ voice may not have the soaring power it once had (and she ought to eschew such ballads as *It’s Love* and *Close as Pages in a Book*), but right now it is so perfectly, so ravishingly suited to the operetta repertoire that she must give us more; Mr. Milnes is, as usual, the very definition of musicianly machismo; and the two voices blend like watercolors. Conductor Julius Rudel and the New York City Opera Orchestra lend support of the kind few singers deserve, and the whole rests elegantly on the stylish arrangements of Eric Knight, who merits some kind of medal for harmonic invention (check the duet on *Thine Alone* and I think you’ll hear what I mean).

—William Anderson

BEVERLY SILLS AND SHERRILL MILNES: *Up in Central Park—Duets from Operetta and Musical Comedy*. Herbert: *Sweethearts*: title song. *Naughty Marietta*: ‘Neath the Southern Moon; *It Never, Never Can Be Love*. Eileen: *Thine Alone*. Bernstein: *Wonderful Town*: *It’s Love*. Romberg: *The Desert Song*: title song. *Up in Central Park*: *Close as Pages in a Book*; *The Fireman’s Bride*. Friml: *Rose-Marie*: *Indian Love Call*. Straus: *The Chocolate Soldier*: *My Hero*. Beverly Sills (soprano); Sherrill Milnes (baritone); New York City Opera Orchestra, Julius Rudel cond. ANGEL □ S-37323 \$7.98, © 8XS-37323 \$7.98, © 4XS-37323 \$7.98.

BEVERLY SILLS

"...this whole profession is based on whether you can perform a somersault in midair..."

aria, the house came down, and I thought, 'Well!' And I became totally aware of everything. The other was the opening night of *Roberto Devereux*. After the second act, the whole audience just *rose*. They seemed to feel a need to breathe. That had never happened to me before. At the end of an opera, yes; but not in the middle like that.

"I've come to the conclusion that this whole profession is based on whether you can perform a somersault in midair without a net underneath you. I think my Cleopatra attracted so much attention because I was taking so many chances. All the ornamentation. With the exception of Philine [in Thomas' *Mignon*] or perhaps *The Tales of Hoffmann*, this was the first time I was doing somersaults without a net. But in a Handel opera there's very little to fall back on other than sheer vocal technique. Either you get the audience excited with what you're doing vocally or that's the end of the story.

"After the first Cleopatra, I went home very elated, happy with the way I had sung, but I wasn't aware that anything special was going to happen. In those days we were the kind of repertory company in which the repertoire was chosen first and the company's artists were fitted into it. Before Cleopatra, I had never asked for a role at the City Opera. When Julius Rudel offered me all three parts in *Hoffmann*, I did all the parts.

"But when I learned from Norman Treigle that *Julius Caesar* was going to be in the repertoire and that a singer who had left the company and gone to the Met was being brought back to sing Cleopatra, I hit the ceiling. To bring somebody back implied that nobody now in the company could sing it. Julius and I really went at it. For me it was a matter of principle, and besides I really wanted that part. I threatened to quit and actually sent a letter of resignation to the company. I had a lot of clout because of the number of performances I was scheduled for. If I walked out, with me went Donna Anna, Queen of the Night, Constanze, and the three roles in *Hoffmann*."

SHE got her way, needless to say, and her success as Cleopatra changed her relationship with the company. "After Cleopatra, Julius called me in and said, 'Okay, what would you like to do next?' And I said, 'Manon.' From that point on, our relationship was one of 'What would you like to do next?'"

These days Miss Sills feels that she no longer has to perform somersaults in midair without a net or construct more mountains for herself to climb. Her husband once gave her a gold ring inscribed "I Did That Already" to remind her that she can put some things behind her, and she has done so. She

is currently singing Donizetti's *Don Pasquale* at the Met and says that it is easy for her. "Except for the forthcoming world premiere of Menotti's *Juana La Loca*, all the things I'm involved with now are things that are easy for me and that I enjoy. I'm having a lot of fun. There's no more Queen Elizabeth in my life, no more Anna Bolena. Perhaps in *Juana La Loca* Menotti has a few surprises for me, but I'm willing to do that. As for the repertoire I sang for a long time, I did that already."

She was scheduled to sing *Rigoletto* at the Met in the season of 1979-1980, but she has canceled. "I decided the *Pasquale* should be my last Met production. It's a new one—light and gay—and it's better for me to go

what I did five years ago because I can't, nor do I want to. I did that already.

"The Menotti work is constructed differently, and I was able to talk with him before he finished it so that he could keep it light for me. It comes in June in San Diego, right after my fiftieth birthday. I'm very much aware of that."

A future project she speaks of gleefully is a return to San Diego in October of 1980 to appear in Johann Strauss' *Die Fledermaus*, alternating in the roles of Rosalinda and Adele with, of all people, Joan Sutherland. Miss Sills thinks this inspired casting was dreamed up by Tito Capobianco, director of the San Diego Opera.

"Having worked with both of us, he knows that we are rather funny ladies, and I think the idea appealed to both of us immediately. He won't say which he approached first. I'm sure he phoned one and said the other had agreed and within sixty seconds called the other one with the same story."

Angel (Sills' label) and London (Sutherland's label) both stand ready to record highlights of the San Diego *Fledermaus*, each with its own soprano as Rosalinda and the other as Adele, but nothing has been decided. "We'll have to wait and see how it goes," Miss Sills says. "We'll alternate roles in the performances, but I'll have to talk with Joan. She may only want to record Rosalinda."

Miss Sills has sung Rosalinda many times. It was her debut role with the New York City Opera, with which she has also sung Adele, a role she is particularly fond of. "I play her in a peculiar way, as the klutzy maid who knocks over pictures and coffee cups as she dusts and then goes off to Orlovsky's ball and gets quite tight. I really enjoy doing that. I have a lot of Rosalindas coming up in places like Miami and Memphis, but I love Adele."

HER Adeles and Rosalindas with the San Diego Opera will be Miss Sills' last staged performances, and that company was chosen for them because of her long and close association with Capobianco, who directed her greatest successes at the New York State Theater. She regards Capobianco and his wife as members of her family.

But Julius Rudel feels that her last performance belongs to the New York City Opera. A gala farewell at the State Theater has been proposed with an oil-firm sponsor in the background ready to televise it and make it a million-dollar benefit for the opera company. It has taken on proportions that make Miss Sills uncomfortable, and she has not yet agreed to the proposal.

"If I go on the stage of the State Theater for a gala farewell, everybody will expect a Cleopatra aria and excerpts from *Roberto Devereux* and *Manon*, and I don't want that. If the public remembers me well in those roles, I would like them to keep their memories. The roles are documented on records and on television as well. In the past, before we had these means of communication, perhaps it was necessary for people who had become great personalities to give farewells. But if you want to know what Beverly Sills was like, buy the record or play the video

(Continued on page 94)



Fig Wilson/Angel Records

... as Violetta in La Traviata

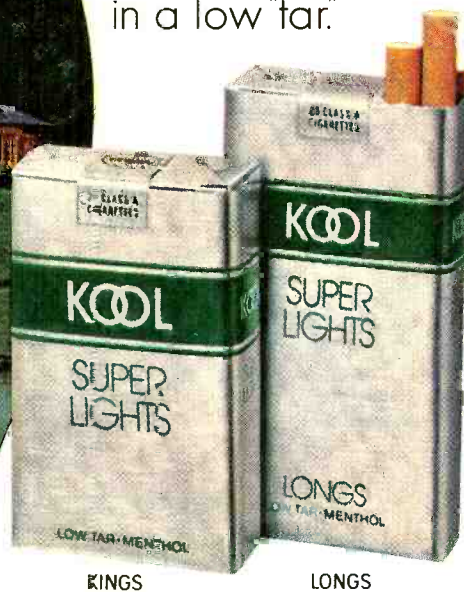
out that way. Laughing. I don't want to stay around right up until the last minute doing everything. That's why I'm pulling out of places earlier. I'll probably be finished singing at the City Opera this year, before I return as an administrator."

The new Menotti opera was written specifically for Miss Sills, and at the City Opera she was scheduled to create the title role in Dominick Argento's *Miss Havisham's Fire*, also written for her, but she has withdrawn from it. "When Argento and I agreed to collaborate on this, I thought my voice would get heavier and darker when I grew older, but it hasn't. I'm still most comfortable in light coloratura singing and quite uncomfortable in dark heavy music. I don't have the physical stamina I had ten years ago or even five years ago, and I certainly don't have the vocal stamina I had five years ago. Argento's work is a tour de force, a superb work, a really sensational opera, and I don't want it to be presented under any but the best circumstances—and I didn't want to present impossible challenges for myself. I'm not trying to prove that I can still do

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BEVERLY SILLS

"... when the orchestra started 'Neath the Southern Moon, you had three thousand people in the performance!"

tape. Don't circulate a pirated recording of my farewell."

Her recording contract with Angel runs to the end of 1979. Last summer she completed recordings of *Don Pasquale* and *Rigoletto*, and in the fall she made an album of operetta duets with Sherrill Milnes (reviewed on page 91). She had not yet heard the *Rigoletto*, but she was pleased with the *Pasquale*, and she was extremely enthusiastic about the operetta album. "When I signed my current contract, I was very much aware that its last year would be my fiftieth year, and I said that if I wished to remove my voice earlier from the cruel scrutiny of the microphone, I hoped Angel would not insist on more recordings. They've been wonderful, and we've proceeded very slowly.

"Ordinarily, I'm relieved when a recording is finished. I find it confining, and I can't wait to get out of the studio. But Sherrill and I had such fun making 'Up in Central Park.' I love working with him. He's the best colleague in the world. Always with you. So supportive. He's a very serious man about his singing and his art, but he has a sense of humor, and we had such a wonderful time making the record that at the end I kept saying, 'Is it really over?' Finally, Sherrill said, 'Well, we'll make another one.' We agreed that we'd wait and see how the public likes this one, but I hope we can make another because there are so many wonderful things in the operetta repertoire that we didn't record."

THIS is not Miss Sills' first recording of American operetta. Her "Music of Victor Herbert" (Angel SFO-37160), which won a Grammy award, is among the best-selling albums in the history of the Angel label. I asked her how she acquired her enthusiasm for music of this kind. "I was raised on it!" she exclaimed. "Was there anything in the whole world more beautiful than Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy?

"City Opera did *Naughty Marietta* this season. It was a box-office triumph. Sold out for two solid weeks. But we didn't quite have the hang of it. It seemed corny and a bit funny because we didn't take a definite stand. We neither modernized it nor presented it as an art form from an earlier period. We took a middle path, and that never works. What saved it was the enchanting music. In the overture, when the orchestra started 'Neath the Southern Moon, you had three thousand people in the performance! The whole audience was humming and singing, and when Gianna Rolandi started singing the *Italian Street Song* you'd have thought it was the Mad Scene from *Lucia*. The audience went WILD!

"Victor Herbert was a genius. There was one enchanting tune after another. So I would like to make it a tradition with the company that every fall season would start with two weeks of an operetta. I would love to take the things that Sherrill and I recorded excerpts from and present the whole works. And do it with respect as an art form. Here we are with all that young American talent, and there's nobody who can touch 'em in this stuff. Americans singing in their own language, singing music that was made for them. When Sherrill and I began to sing those duets, it came so naturally that we realized this music belongs to us. It's part of us. That's why I'm extremely enthusiastic about it."



National Foundation March of Dimes

... at Columbia University's baby hospital

Milnes is not the only colleague who merits her praise. She speaks well of a great many others, and spoke with particular admiration for the Spanish tenor Alfredo Kraus. In addition to her official best friend Carol Burnett and her second-best friend Eydie Gormé, she includes many opera singers among her close friends, even some who are sopranos. She's a good friend of Birgit Nilsson, for example. "Whenever something was written about me in a city where she was singing, she would send it to me, pointing out that I had the most expensive clipping service in the world. When she was in Chicago, there was a review of another lady singing *Lucia*, and I was favorably mentioned in it. Birgit sent it to me and wrote, 'How did you manage? Even when you don't sing, you get mentioned.'"

More common in opera are the legendary rivalries between sopranos, such as the one between Maria Callas and Renata Tebaldi.

But Sills has escaped such feuds, even with other bel canto specialists who sang the same repertoire she did. In the early Seventies a waggish friend said to me, "The important men in Beverly Sills' career have been her conductor Julius Rudel, her director Tito Capobianco, her press agent Edgar Vincent, and Lorenzo Anselmi." I asked why Lorenzo Anselmi was on this list. "Because he's Renata Scotto's husband," my friend answered. "That Scala production of *The Siege of Corinth* in which Beverly's success put the international seal of approval on her career was originally scheduled for Scotto. Renata had to withdraw because she was pregnant, so you see what an important influence her husband had on Beverly Sills' career."

Actually, Sills had already become an international star in Europe and South America before she sang at La Scala. Still, Scotto cannot have been precisely thrilled that her production of *The Siege of Corinth* turned into the *Siege of the Americans*. (In addition to Sills, the cast included Marilyn Horne and Justino Diaz, and the late Thomas Schippers conducted.) And the American soprano and mezzo mopped up Milan with their success. But Scotto and Sills are friendly. Scotto speaks well of Sills, and Beverly says, "I wrote to her when she had the baby. And when I took over Bob Sherman's talk show *The Listening Room* [on WQXR in New York], Scotto was the first guest I asked for." The result was a very sugary dialogue.

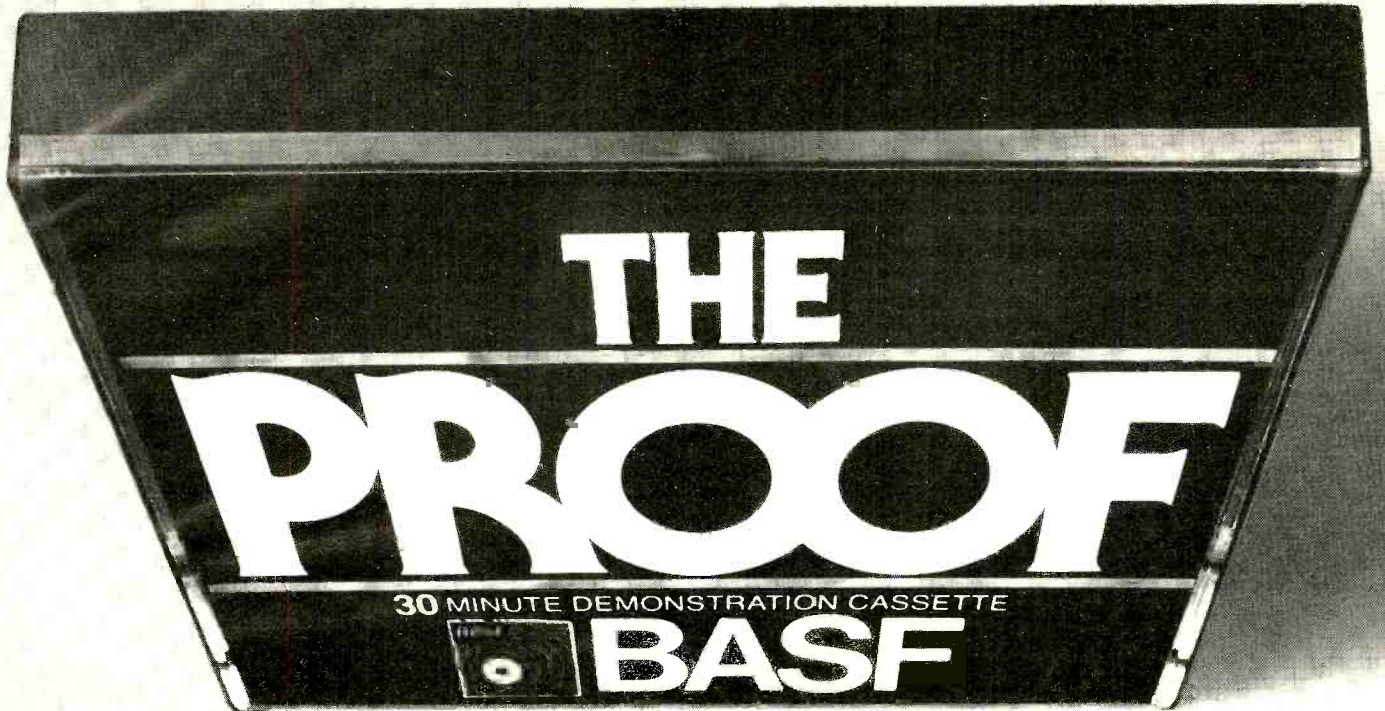
Beverly says that if a big rivalry had sprung up in her career, it would have been with Joan Sutherland. "But if anybody ever came to me with the kind of gossip that starts such feuds, I've forgotten it," she said. "And if anybody went to Joan with it, I think she would have laughed it off. As I told you, we're both very funny ladies."

It's not clear where Miss Sills' determinedly positive attitude comes from. Some say it is from her mother. Perhaps she acquired it in the years of polishing her craft before she reached the top in her field. Or it may be a result of learning to cope with the private tragedy that her daughter has been deaf from infancy and that her son had birth defects that made him severely retarded. Or it may be an intrinsic component of her irrepressibly sunny personality. Whatever it is, it has enabled her to view with dignity, humor, and aplomb her retirement as a singer, simply as the end of a phase in what is going to be a long career in the performing arts.

"When I wrote my funny book," she said, "I ended by saying 'The fun is just beginning.' People thought I meant there was so much more to sing. That wasn't it at all. What I meant was that I was ready to move on to something else. I can't wait to get to the City Opera, and I have these television shows. The opera board wants me to continue to be a public figure as much as possible, and I enjoy these other things. I've made a pilot for a CBS talk show that makes my *Lifestyles* show pale by comparison. CBS would like it to be an hour-a-day, five-day-a-week magazine show that would upgrade the intellectual level of late-afternoon television. Mother advised me to keep it simple,

(Continued on page 96)

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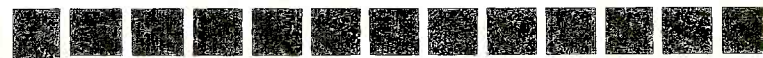
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BEVERLY SILLS

"We no longer have to take a back seat to any country as far as the opera singer is concerned...."

so I start the pilot [it aired December 6] perched on the trunk of an elephant and go on from there."

She grew very serious as we discussed her role as a spokesperson for the arts and her work for other public causes. "My husband and I have two 'charities.' One is the area of handicapped children and birth defects. We contribute elsewhere only financially, but to this we give our time and personal involvement." The other is the whole area of the arts, and she participates there as much as time permits, lending the weight of her fame as a performer wherever it will help. "But I've asked the National Endowment not to make me the spokesperson for everything, because after a while people will say, 'Is that woman *never* going to stop talking, and does she talk about *everything*?'"

But how does she judge where to direct her energies? How, for example, did she get involved in the gala benefit concert for the International Piano Library in 1970? "Oh, when I heard about the vandalism of that library, I was so incensed that I simply had to participate in the efforts to save it." Her participation consisted of a charming and very amusing bravura number, *Sillsiana*, a mélange of coloratura warhorse arias arranged by her coach Roland Gagnon. Fortunately, it is preserved in a live recording of excerpts from that concert (IPL 5005/6, available from International Piano Archives, P.O. Box 303, Ivor, Virginia 23866).

Gregor Benko, president of IPL, said to me recently, "We have given two gala benefit concerts, one in New York and one in London, involving many artists of international stature. The only one who never presented us with a single problem was Beverly Sills. She arrived totally prepared, calm, and ready to go on. She even went around backstage soothing the nervous pianists."

HER ability to soothe nervous artists should stand her in good stead as director of the New York City Opera. "I hope I can make my enthusiasm contagious, and I think I can since I will be 'new blood' as an administrator, but having come up through the ranks of that company will also help. There is no aspect of it with which I am not familiar. I know the costume department, the lighting department. I can look into the pit and see faces in the orchestra that I grew up with, men who have been playing for me for twenty-three years."

The New York City Opera has its identity and Miss Sills has no intention of trying to change it, but she has a lot of plans. She would like to use repertoire not performed elsewhere to lure or keep singers the compa-

ny needs and to reduce duplication of repertoire with the Met. She hopes to set up a program of master classes for members of the company, calling on the talents of such directors as Capobianco, Frank Corsaro, Harold Prince, and George Balanchine. Her plans include a national auditions program to comb the country for young American singers in need of further training and experience, and she wants to find a summer home for the company where an apprentice program can be set up.

"I'm very chauvinistic," she said, "So I'd like to go to Germany and bring back all those American singers who have settled in places like Lübeck and Kiel to get experience. There was no reason for Tatiana Troyanos, a singer with a great voice, to have to make her career abroad. They belong *here*. They can get experience *here*."

SILLS ON RECORDS

FOR someone who would like to start sampling Beverly Sills' long list of recordings, I would recommend starting with the following operas and recitals. —W.L.

- **BELLINI: *I Capuleti e i Montecchi***. ANGEL SX-3824.
- **DONIZETTI: *Roberto Devereux***. ABC AUDIO TREASURY ATS-20003.
- **HANDEL: *Julius Caesar***. RCA LSC-6182.
- **MASSENET: *Manon***. ABC AUDIO TREASURY ATS-20007.
- **MOORE: *The Ballad of Baby Doe***. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2709 061.
- **ROSSINI: *The Siege of Corinth***. ANGEL SCLX-3819.
- **BELLINI AND DONIZETTI HEROINES**. ABC AUDIO TREASURY ATS-20001.
- **MUSIC OF VICTOR HERBERT**. ANGEL SFO-37160.
- **MOZART AND STRAUSS ARIAS**. ABC AUDIO TREASURY ATS-20004.

They are *our* product. I think it's tragic that all these young people have to spend so much time abroad. The time has come for us to take some pride in our artists. We no longer have to take a back seat to any country as far as the opera singer is concerned. My goal for the New York City Opera is to make it 98 per cent American and to make it the dream house for the young American singer."

She is extremely voluble on the subject of increasing opportunities for American singers and getting equality of treatment for them. "In our own opera companies a European artist performs for a fee *and* a per diem. The American artist performs for a fee only. And many other accommodations are made for foreign artists here that are not made for Americans."

"Please don't misunderstand me. By all means let's have the Birgit Nilssons, the Joan Sutherlands, and the Montserrat Ca-

ballés. We thrive on the enrichment of that cultural exchange. But once you have your superstar Carmen, could we please have young Americans as Micaëla, Frasquita, and Mercedes? If you have Pavarotti in *La Bohème*, let us please have Americans to sing Mimi and Musetta, since the packed house is guaranteed. In this way we can rally round the American artist by utilizing the superstar international singer and surrounding him or her with American talent, which is damn fine talent."

THERE is no shortage of potentially great voices in America, she insists, but they are like diamonds and require the proper setting and polishing. She is critical of American conservatories which turn out excellent instrumentalists but do not train young singers in stage deportment and in the art of performing. "We need to be more realistic in preparing them for what it is to sing for two thousand people, hoping that half of them will like you." And she finds a tremendous lack in language training for young singers. "They come to auditions singing French and German that is not recognizable, simply *not* recognizable."

"When I started out there were no guidelines for me, and twenty-five years later there are not many more. I think it's shocking that we have not gotten a strong program for young people to help them make solid steps toward an operatic career."

Contemplating Miss Sills' career, some people have been so awed by her accomplishments, her drive, and her energy that they have suggested she might become our first woman president. I asked if she would consider a government post, and she answered that she didn't see one that interested her.

"But I do think we should have a minister of cultural affairs," she said. "We have an agency, an instrument, in the National Endowment, but the arts are a vital part of our civilization and should be represented by someone in a cabinet-level position who would have as much voice in government as the Secretary of Commerce or the Secretary of the Air Force."

WHEN Beverly Sills stops singing, her voice will continue to be heard in other ways. We have not seen the last of her contributions or the last of her achievements. Just as Geraldine Farrar was a symbol of liberation for the Gerryflappers of the 1920's, a great many young women now see Miss Sills as a symbol of what a woman can achieve today. For anyone who aspires to a career in the arts, her career should be an inspiration. It will be interesting to see what happens when she diverts to other channels the time and energy that have gone into singing.

She has shown that she has a way of reaching the goals she sets. It may be a while before we see many more American opera singers' names embedded in the terrazzo sidewalks of Hollywood. But I don't think it will be long before Beverly Sills sees to it that more American names appear on the rosters of our opera companies, and to honor these native artists properly she will probably make us build a Sidewalk of Stars that stretches from coast to coast, passing through, say, Davenport, Iowa. □



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STEREO REVIEW'S SELECTION OF RECORDINGS OF SPECIAL MERIT BEST OF THE MONTH



At the recording session: Adolf Dallapozza (*Jaquino*) and Gundula Janowitz (*Leonore*)

Fidelio, Beethoven's Unique Operatic Venture, in a Triumphant Performance under Leonard Bernstein

IN 1970, Leonard Bernstein, who had previously impressed old Vienna with his Mahler, was invited to direct the Beethoven bicentennial production of *Fidelio* at the Theater an der Wien, the site of its first performances. Bernstein fared a lot better with *Fidelio* than the composer did originally. The 1805 production was a failure, but the new one was a great triumph, a success that was repeated a few years later at the Vienna Opera, on Austrian television, and now in a new Deutsche Grammophon recording.

Extraordinary as all this is, it should not really be so surprising. Bernstein is the man with exactly the right combination of theatricality, musicality, and, yes, the common touch to bring this

work to its proper music-theater dimensions. Let me explain: Beethoven agonized over his only opera as over no other work—hundreds of pages of sketches, a year in the actual composition, two major revisions, and no fewer than *four* complete overtures! Even so, *Fidelio* has always been accounted deficient dramatically and operatically (no one dares question the music *per se*). But I think it is also clear—and this recording particularly points it up—that *Fidelio* contains some of the most dramatic and stageworthy music ever written. A most interesting paradox.

Beethoven's troubles resulted from his trying to do something essentially new: express dramatic conflict, moral principles, and theatrical action in mu-

sic. Furthermore, he was trying to do it in the popular form of a musical comedy! Call it operetta, *opéra comique*, *Singspiel*, or what you will, the fact is that *Fidelio* is written as a comprehensible *play with music*, in the local language, with dialogue alternating with musical numbers, and with definite popular elements in the scoring.

It starts out exactly in the manner of a musical comedy (for which it has often been criticized). Afterwards it turns serious—but then there have been other “serious” musical comedies, from *The Magic Flute* and *Don Giovanni* down to *Carousel* and *West Side Story*. Mozart obviously provided Beethoven with some models, but, in contrast to Mozart's eighteenth-century wit and sophistication, Beethoven preferred a high moral purpose and quite straightforward emotions. The true subject of *Fidelio* is freedom and liberation through love and moral steadfastness;

almost all the great musico-emotional moments are overwhelming expressions of this on an almost visionary level. The extraordinary thing about much of the writing—particularly for the leads—is the way the music sweeps up detail to create tremendous, long, rushing phrases that peak only at the highest level of exaltation and vision.

Though there are two or three monumental arias, *Fidelio*, in its present form, is an opera of ensembles. Of the sixteen numbered pieces, only five are arias, and from the Prisoners' Chorus in Act I to the end of the opera there is only one solo number: Florestan's famous dungeon aria. The rest is ensemble: duets, trios, a quartet, and the two extended major finales. These ensembles are not abstract expressions of feelings; they stay close to the drama, and the result is a work virtually as through-composed as any by Wagner.

Everything in this present production is designed to follow these long musico-dramatic lines. Spoken dialogue has been cut to a minimum, and the Leonore Overture No. 3, performed in its traditional place, is overlapped by the end of the preceding scene of which it then becomes the culmination (and not the entr'acte to the last scene). Bernstein's tempos are almost always held back; the energy is there, but reined in to be unleashed at the last possible moment. Everywhere the most careful attention is paid to the dynamics and phrasing of the vocal

parts in an excellent collaboration between singers and conductor.

The cast is superb. With the exception of Manfred Jungwirth, whose Rocco is in character but musically unfocused, this is a most impressive *Fidelio* cast. The women—Gundula Janowitz as Leonore and Lucia Popp as Marzelline—are particularly strong; Ms. Janowitz's performance is both moving and thrilling. Hans Sotin is a fierce but musical villain. René Kollo, the traditional *Heldentenor* Florestan, is very good, but I would like some day to hear what that difficult role would sound like in a more lyric manner. Chorus and orchestra are also excellent, and the recording is vivid.

Bernstein's is a very special view of *Fidelio*, at once held back and hurtling forward. It is also a highly theatrical reading, but the theatricality is derived in all its essentials from the music itself. In short, an interpretation of one of the earliest and greatest attempts, however flawed, to create a modern music theater. —Eric Salzman

BEETHOVEN: *Fidelio*. Gundula Janowitz (soprano), Leonore; René Kollo (tenor), Florestan; Hans Sotin (baritone), Don Pizarro; Manfred Jungwirth (bass), Rocco; Lucia Popp (soprano), Marzelline; Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (baritone), Don Fernando; Adolf Dallapozza (tenor), Jaquino. Vienna State Opera Chorus and Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Leonard Bernstein cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2709 082 three discs \$26.94, © 3371 039 \$26.94.

Klaus Tennstedt's Mahler First Is a Revelation of Insight And Spontaneity

CONDUCTORS who come from abroad to appear with American orchestras are usually preceded here by their recordings. The late Hermann Scherchen's reputation in this country was made through his Westminster recordings for nearly fifteen years before he made his only Atlantic crossing to conduct the Philadelphia Orchestra in 1964. The Europe-based Argentine Carlos Païta, scheduled to make his U.S. debut as guest conductor of the Houston Symphony as this issue of STEREO REVIEW goes to press, has been recording major orchestral works with the big London orchestras for London/Decca for ten years or so.

A rare reversal of this pattern is the case of the German conductor Klaus Tennstedt: hardly anyone in America had heard of him when he first conducted the Boston Symphony Orchestra five years ago, but his return engagements with that orchestra and his appearances with the others in our "Big Five" left no doubt in anyone's mind that Tennstedt is an absolute master. Since he has especially distinguished himself as an interpreter of Bruckner and Mahler, it is only fitting that the first of his recordings to be issued in this country should be a Mahler symphony, the First, played by the London Philharmonic on a new Angel disc. I confess I was a little disappointed that it was this most popular of Mahler's works that was selected for the debut recording instead of, say, the Seventh, which is still the least familiar of the nine completed symphonies, but the freshness with which this thrice-familiar work comes off here is perhaps more remarkable and unexpected than a similarly exciting presentation of one of the lesser-known symphonies would have been.

The freshness is not in terms of "different," but simply "better." Tennstedt, it seems, is the sort of musician who, without eccentricity of manner or interpretive approach, is revelatory in the insight he brings to his material; who does not set out to upset or flout tradition, but rather seeks to clarify and intensify the sense of the work as he perceives it, to find his own way rather than follow in someone else's footsteps. Thus, if his Mahler First strikes me as the most "idiomatic" realization of the work I have ever heard,

KLAUS TENNSTEDT: *an absolute master*



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DONNA SUMMER:
a versatile
performer

either on records or in the concert hall, it is not because it is the most like Bruno Walter's, the most like Kubelik's or Horenstein's, but because it simply gives me more of Mahler's First than I have ever received from any other single performance.

How does one pin this down? Tennstedt is not flashy, and he is not heavily mystical; he is superbly musical and obviously has a great instinctive feeling for Mahler's style. His pacing and phrasing exude spontaneity; he knows how to build climaxes convincingly and without obviousness, and he manages to get every note subtly inflected without fussiness. In short, he knows where the music has to go and that is where he takes it. I am quite sure I have never before felt such a sense of continuity in this symphony, and yet none of the individual episodes is in any way slighted. The orchestral playing is on the very highest level, and the sound, while it might have been a good deal more open (I have not heard the disc in four-channel playback), lets every detail come through clearly and presents a fine orchestral balance. Perhaps there cannot be a single "definitive" version of so vast and many-faceted a work as the Mahler First, but what Tennstedt has given us seems closer to that elusive ideal than even the rightly revered statements on this subject by Kubelik, Horenstein, and Walter. The record, in short, is an absolute must, and further recordings by this exceptional conductor should find a most receptive public.

—Richard Freed

MAHLER: Symphony No. 1, in D Major. London Philharmonic Orchestra, Klaus Tennstedt cond. ANGEL □ S-37508 \$7.98.

Donna Summer: the Uncrowned Queen of Disco Summarizes Five Years of Stardom

THERE'S a great irony in a Donna Summer live album, but also a certain justice. As the first disco superstar to make it to the status of prime-time TV talk-show guest, Ms. Summer gained the distinction of bringing to millions "live" performances of an entertainment that, by definition, is *supposed* to be canned.

So how does disco sound live? Well, when you have the good sense to use the same engineers who painstakingly created your highly electronicized recordings in the studio for an on-the-spot recording at the Hollywood Bowl, the results can sound surprisingly right. Sides one and three of the two-record "Live and More" concert set on Casablanca are filled with Donna Summer's top disco hits. Included are three songs from her classic album "Once Upon a Time"—the title song, *Fairy Tale High*, and *Faster and Faster*—all done here at a faster tempo than the originals. Judging from the crowd's enthusiastic response, the song everyone at the concert had been waiting for was *Last Dance* (there's a wonderful moment when what sounds like the entire audience, knowing the arrangement by heart, anticipates the return of the up-tempo section of the song with a great roar).

Throughout all of these disco performances, Summer is less overwhelmed by the orchestration than she is in the

studio versions. This is perfectly appropriate for a live performance. Otherwise, the arrangements are very close to the originals, and so is the effect. What surprises me is how well the songs hold up to listening without dancing. There's a richness of melody in them and an attention to the lyrics that most disco lacks.

Side two of the album presents a different aspect of the singer. Here, she sings her way through decidedly non-disco arrangements of such songs as *The Man I Love*, *Some of These Days*, and *The Way We Were*, and in the process proves her versatility. She minces through some rock-'n'-roll like an Annette Funicello, then belts like a Dolores Gray (when she really lets go, the Dolores Gray effect is thrilling). I could do without the between-numbers patter, but it's nice to know that Summer's still looking to expand her performing horizons.

The "and More" in the album title refers to the last side, which was studio recorded. It consists entirely of one new piece, a disco version of Jimmy Webb's song *MacArthur Park*, recorded very successfully a few years back by Richard Harris and already Donna's newest hit. For myself, I don't much like *MacArthur Park* and find its maudlin sentiments at odds with the mood I want when I'm dancing. But the arrangement is high pop artistry, Donna sings the pants off it, and the two new Summer/Pete Bellotte/Giorgio Moroder songs woven into it (making it the *MacArthur Park Suite*)—*One of a Kind* and *Heaven Knows*—are simply terrific.

So "Live and More" is a summary of a remarkable five years, a showcase for a remarkable talent, and what ought

to be a brand new hit all in one. Quite an achievement. —Edward Buxbaum

DONNA SUMMER: *Live and More.* Donna Summer (vocals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Once Upon a Time; Fairy Tale High; Faster and Faster to Nowhere; Spring Affair; Rumour Has It; I Love You; Only One Man; I Remember Yesterday; Love's Unkind; My Man Medley (The Man I Love/I Got It Bad/Some of These Days); The Way We Were; Mimi's Song; Try Me; Love to Love You Baby; I Feel Love; Last Dance; MacArthur Park Suite (MacArthur Park/One of a Kind/Heaven Knows).* CASABLANCA NBLP 7119 two discs \$9.98, © NPL8 7119 \$9.98, © NPL5 7119 \$9.98.

New Columbia Recording Suggests a Reevaluation Of Thomas' *Mignon* May Be in Order

AMBROISE THOMAS' *Mignon* was a very popular opera a generation ago. Risé Stevens virtually owned the title role at the Met, Gladys Swarthout and Jennie Tourel sang it in Chicago, Ezio Pinza frequently sang Lothario, and Richard Crooks and James Melton appeared as Wilhelm Meister. And I recall a 1943 performance, with Sir Thomas Beecham conducting, in which the very young Patrice Munsel made her debut as Philine. But during the postwar years—bountiful for recordings but lean for this opera—*Mignon* was virtually ignored. Its only previous complete recording dates back to the mono era, and a subsequent stereo highlight disc (Deutsche Grammophon 136 279) did not last long in the catalog.

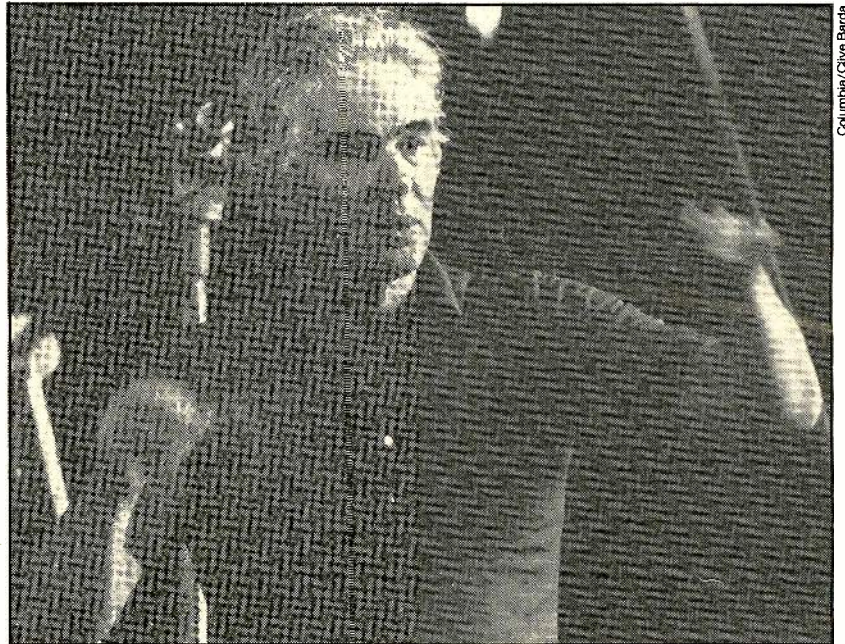
Truth to tell, *Mignon* is far from being a great opera. Yet, it is better than many others that enjoy wide acceptance in different recorded versions. This is not an opera that can sustain a mediocre performance, however, for its story (concocted from Goethe's overplotted and disjointed novel *Wilhelm Meister* by Messrs. Barbier and Carré, the expert streamliners and Gallicizers of Gounod's *Faust*) is preposterous and its musical treatment uneven. Fortunately, the first stereo *Mignon*, just released on Columbia, rises so high above mediocrity that it may lead to a reevaluation of the opera and a new appreciation of its estimable qualities.

The role of Mignon, like that of Car-

men, can be comfortably encompassed by mezzos and sopranos alike. (The first Mignon, Marie Galli-Marié, was later to create the role of Carmen.) There have been some admirable soprano Mignons in modern times (Ninon Vallin and Lucrezia Bori among them), but mezzos have by and large appropriated the role. One problem with this is that naiveté and childlike simplicity are not qualities usually associated with ripe mezzo tones. And so, in the present case, given the commanding vocal presence of Marilyn Horne, our credulity is severely tested in being

cola Zaccaria exhibits some breathiness in the high range, but he sings smoothly and movingly, successfully creating a character that is both credible and poignant.

Antonio de Almeida attempts no miracles with a score in which passion is restrained. While some of his tempos seem just a shade too deliberate, he does impart to the opera an appropriately pastoral, fairy-tale aura through a sensitive and refined reading. The performance ends with the finale as revised by the composer, but on the last side we are treated to an alternative



ANTONIO DE ALMEIDA: conducting a sensitive and refined *Mignon*

asked to accept *Mignon* as a forlorn waif. This cannot be held against Miss Horne, of course, who sings with consistent tonal beauty (if with a hint of strain in Act III) and remarkable agility, coming into her dramatic own for the big scene near the lake in Act II.

It is a rare pleasure to find in Alain Vanzo a tenor who can bring to French opera the right sound and style. The voice is light but well equalized and expertly weighted so that it can soar into the upper register without thinning out; there is tenderness as well as elegance in his singing. Frederica von Stade, in another of those trouser roles for which disbelief must be suspended, sings the familiar Gavotte with lightness and charm; she is altogether excellent. So is Ruth Welting as the coquettish Philine. Her Polonaise may not be delivered with quite the daredevil flourish one might like, but it is accurate and capped with a scintillating high F. Ni-

opening to Act II as well as the original finale. The latter is certainly worth hearing, for it contains a showy aria for Philine (excellently sung by Ruth Welting), which forms part of the opera's potpourri overture.

The recorded sound is good without being special in any way. The annotations are informative and neatly produced, but Columbia is packaging the four discs in a container barely thick enough to accommodate three.

—George Jellinek

THOMAS: *Mignon.* Marilyn Horne (mezzo-soprano), Mignon; Alain Vanzo (tenor), Wilhelm Meister; Ruth Welting (soprano), Philine; Nicola Zaccaria (bass), Lothario; Frederica von Stade (mezzo-soprano), Frederick; Claude Méloni (baritone), Jarno; André Battedou (tenor), Laertes; Paul Hudson (bass), Antonio. Ambrosian Opera Chorus and Philharmonia Orchestra, Antonio de Almeida cond. COLUMBIA M4 34590 four discs \$31.98.

The Heath Brothers: Enduring Jazz Artistry In a Laid-back Album Of Elastic Classics

HEATH has been a respected name in jazz for over thirty years, starting with the emergence on the New York scene of brothers Percy and Jimmy—now fifty-five and fifty-two, respectively—in the late Forties. Both brothers

Modern Jazz Quartet, an association that would last until the group disbanded in 1974.

The Heath Brothers group was formed shortly after the breakup of the MJQ. Originally it included a third brother, drummer Al "Tootie" Heath (also known as Kuumba), but he left to form his own band, rejoining his brothers only as "special guest" on two of the tracks in Columbia's new "Passing Thru . . ." At forty-three, Al Heath is the youngest Heath brother, but an even younger member of the family—Jimmy's son Mtume, whose own funk

any group (just listen to his kalimba solo on *A New Blue* and his crisp, ever-so-logical piano work on *In New York*, Percy Heath's reworking of *Body and Soul*).

Percy Heath plays beautifully throughout, and when you hear his wonderfully elastic work on *In New York* and Charlie Parker's *Yardbird Suite* you will know why Ron Carter named him among his three favorite bass players. Jimmy Heath's tenor comes to the fore on *Changes*, cooking moderately, and on *Light of Love*, a slowly simmering ballad. He plays the soprano with equal effect on *A New Blue* and *Mellowdrama*, and the flute on *Yardbird Suite* and *Artherdoc Blues*.

Except for *Artherdoc*, an earthy, toe-tapping blues, and *Prince Albert*, credited to Kenny Dorham (but actually a paraphrase of *All the Things You Are*), this is a fairly laid-back album, but that is not meant as a criticism. "Passing Thru . . ." is the Heath Brothers' first Columbia album (the group has previously recorded for the small, musician-owned Strata-East label); I hope it will get sufficient response to interest the company in exploring further the enduring artistry of these men.

—Chris Albertson

THE HEATH BROTHERS: *Passing Thru . . .* Jimmy Heath (flute, soprano and tenor saxophones); Percy Heath (acoustic and baby basses); Stanley Cowell (keyboards, kalimba); Albert "Tootie" Heath (drums); other musicians. *Yardbird Suite*; *Changes*; *A New Blue*; *Mellowdrama*; *Light of Love*; *Artherdoc Blues*; *Prince Albert*; *In New York*. COLUMBIA JC 35573 \$7.98, © JCA 35573 \$7.98, © JCT 35573 \$7.98.



JIMMY AND PERCY HEATH: only the very best associations

were then members of a group led by trumpeter Howard McGhee, a bebop sextet with which they traveled to Paris in 1948, giving enthusiastic Frenchmen their second taste of this modern jazz idiom (Dizzy Gillespie had given them their first when he played in the French capital just weeks before).

Within months of leaving their home town, Philadelphia, Percy and Jimmy Heath established themselves as top-ranking musicians. Their associations—either jointly or separately—included the very cream of the bop crop: Dizzy Gillespie, Charlie Parker, Miles Davis, Thelonious Monk, Sonny Rollins, Stan Getz, John Coltrane. But though circumstances occasionally brought them together, Percy and Jimmy pursued separate careers; between 1965 and 1968 Jimmy was co-leader, with trumpeter Art Farmer, of a quintet, and Percy spent over ten years as a member of the enormously successful

group has recorded for Epic—is also present as a percussionist.

Percy and Jimmy Heath are firm believers in jazz as an art form that stands on its own and should not be fused with simplistic pop. "Your bass player only plays three notes," Percy once told Herbie Hancock after hearing his latest funk album, "so you could just as well have made a tape loop of the three notes and sent him home." No mere three notes in this album, however, and—except for Tony Purrone's guitar—no electronic instruments either. Purrone, whose considerable talent was spotted by Jimmy, makes an impressive recording debut with "Passing Thru . . ."—his solos on *Mellowdrama* and *Changes* bode well for his future. Pianist Stanley Cowell has been a regular member of the group since its formation; a versatile player whose impressive background belies his thirty-seven years, Cowell is a strong asset to

Telemann's Wind Music Gets What It Needs: Solid Performances by Topflight Musicians

CONSIDERING the number of groups that play early music in New York City, the high quality of their work, and their importance in the city's cultural life, it seems ironic that most of the recordings of early music I review are European. It certainly bears out the fact that the New York commercial scene is not favorable to native early music making; most of it takes place in churches and very little of it reaches



GEORG PHILIPP TELEMANN (1681-1767)

the recording studio. It is therefore with considerable pleasure that I address myself to a disc of Telemann works played by five of New York's finest instrumentalists and recorded by one of the city's most adventurous recording companies.

The purpose of Messrs. Samuel Baron, Ronald Roseman, Arthur Weisberg, Timothy Eddy, and Edward Brewer is a modest one: to record a group of sonatas by a composer, Georg Philipp Telemann, whom they obviously admire. They make no apology for playing modern instruments rather than old ones, they make no fuss about authentic performance practice, nor do they even give themselves a fancy *musica antiqua* name. They simply play superbly.

Each one of these musicians is keenly aware of the early versions of his instrument, and that each is knowledgeable in Baroque performing tradition is obvious in the fine articulation and richly inventive ornamentation. Each also demonstrates his own individual personality in the solo sonatas and his excellence as a chamber musician in the precise ensemble and subtle balance of the quartet. Not only do they make Telemann sound like a million, but they have also selected for their recording stunning works of this much maligned master. This is what early music desperately needs at the moment: solid performances by well-informed, top-flight musicians.

—Stoddard Lincoln

TELEMANN: *Music for Wind Instruments. Trio Sonata in E-flat Major for Oboe, Harpsichord, and Continuo; Sonata in F Minor*

for Bassoon and Continuo; Sonata in C Minor for Flute and Continuo; Quartet in D Minor for Bassoon, Flute, Oboe, and Continuo. Samuel Baron (flute); Ronald Roseman (oboe); Arthur Weisberg (bassoon); Timothy Eddy (cello); Edward Brewer (harpsichord). NONESUCH H-71352 \$4.69.

Waylon Jennings: About as Unbuttoned As It's Wise for Anyone to Get

WAYLON JENNINGS seemed to be trying for more looseness, more spontaneity, in his last two or three albums, and now with "I've Always Been Crazy" for RCA he's started to arrive at what he must have had in mind. The album has an open, unfussy sound and a natural, flowing feel about it. And Jennings himself is as unbuttoned as it's wise for anyone to get, to the point of dealing (wryly) in song about his cocaine bust, ad libbing (wryly) over his guitar break, and (it sounds like) live-mixing some of the

takes. He does a surprisingly knowing job with snatches of Buddy Holly hits, with the old Crickets reassembled and sounding great behind him. He finds something in *Tonight the Bottle Let Me Down* not already appropriated by Merle Haggard or Emmylou Harris. And he virtually rewrites *I Walk the Line*, making the song not only worth listening to but pushing it almost to the verge of the substantial.

"I've Always Been Crazy" is not perfect, of course; it goes out a little weak with Waylon's *Girl, I Can Tell* and Shel Silverstein's *Whistlers and Jugglers*. But generally it uses the throwaway, whether it be a single line or a whole song, the way a throwaway is supposed to be used, and it has that touch of wildness in the instrumentals one wants from Waylon and the Waylors. Last and far from least it has the voice of Waylon Jennings. And that's a lot.
—Noel Coppage

WAYLON JENNINGS: *I've Always Been Crazy.* Waylon Jennings (vocals, guitar); the Waylors (instrumentals); other musicians. *I've Always Been Crazy; Don't You Think This Outlaw Bit's Done Got Out of Hand?; Billy; A Long Time Ago; As the 'Billy World Turns; Buddy Holly Medley; I Walk the Line; Tonight the Bottle Let Me Down; Girl, I Can Tell; Whistlers and Jugglers.* RCA AFL1-2979 \$7.98, ® AFS1-2979 \$7.98, © AFK1-2979 \$7.98.

WAYLON JENNINGS: a touch of wildness



Sheri Lynn Behr

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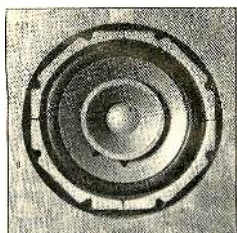
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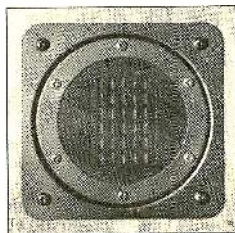
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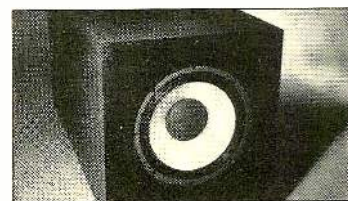
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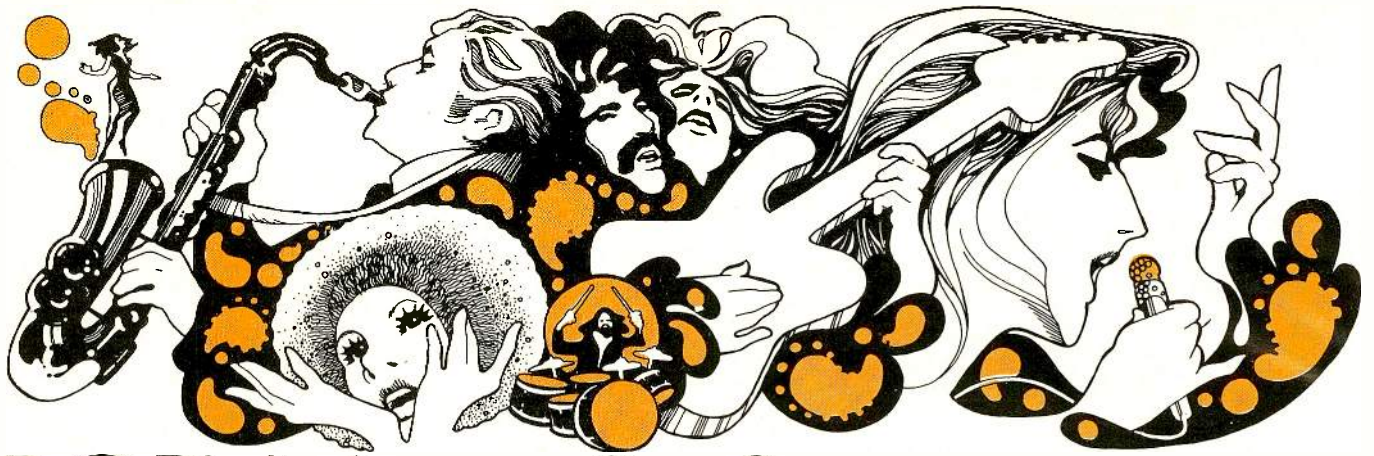


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POPULAR DISCS AND TAPES

Reviewed by CHRIS ALBERTSON • EDWARD BUXBAUM • NOEL COPPAGE • PHYL GARLAND
PAUL KRESH • PETER REILLY • STEVE SIMELS • JOEL VANCE

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

BOBBY BARE: *Sleeper Wherever I Fall*. Bobby Bare (vocals, guitar); Gunnar Gelotte (drums); Jack Williams (bass); Shane Keister (keyboards); Steve Gibson (guitar); other musicians. *Sleep Tight Good Night Man; Hot Afternoon; What Did It Get Me; Goin' Up's Easy, Comin' Down's Hard; The Way I Feel Tonight*; and five others. COLUMBIA KC 35645 \$7.98, Ⓜ KCA 35645 \$7.98, © KCT 35645 \$7.98.

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

Some people at CBS, Nashville, think Bobby Bare is the best catch they've landed since Willie Nelson. Naturally they are thinking bigger than just the hard-country audience, and with Bare they can afford to. Here he is—with five songs produced by England Dan and John Ford Coley's producer, Kyle Lehning, and five by Steve Gibson—making a fine shambles of the distinction between country and rock. Bare has always been more of an individual than most, so when he does the Byrds' *I'll Feel a Whole Lot Better* and the Rolling Stones' *The Last Time*, it seems in keeping with his enigmatic nature. Anyway, he does those and the others so well they seem natural for him. And he is one of the most "natural" singers around, so you don't worry much about categories with him. You

can worry about that with the ones who don't have his personality, punch, and humor in their music. The only (very minor) complaint I have about "Sleeper Wherever I Fall" is that the production is tightened up around Bare a little too much, he behaves himself a little too much. Still, he's managed to make an album that is one of his best yet, one that almost makes eye contact. There are bad shambles, you know, and then there are good shambles. This one might be nominated for the Shambles Hall of Fame. N.C.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

STEPHEN BISHOP: *Bish*. Stephen Bishop (vocals, guitar); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *If I Only Had a Brain; Losing Myself in You; Looking for the Right One; Everybody Needs Love; When I Was in Love*; and seven others. ABC AA-1082 \$7.98; Ⓜ 8020-1082H \$7.95, © 5020-1082H \$7.95.

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

Stephen Bishop won nearly every Best New Artist award in 1977, as well as quite a few fans, with his debut album, "Careless," so his follow-up disc carries the burden of proving that the first was no fluke. Good news: "Bish" is even more impressive than "Careless." Bishop's lush romanticism, grace, good humor, and sense of the unpredictable are showcased here in a musical hybrid of the Thirties and Seventies that just might even give us a glimpse of what Eighties pop music will sound like.

The album begins with a heavily orchestrated instrumental of *If I Only Had a Brain*, and in a later tribute to that song's lyricist, E. Y. Harburg, Bishop sings his own lovely *What Love Can Do*. (Surprisingly, the music conjures up Wizard of Oz composer Harold Arlen's style better than the lyrics evoke Harburg's.) *Bish's Hideaway* is an out-and-out follow-up to *On and On*, the big hit single from his first album (he even manages to sneak in a quick "on and on" at the end). His songs are mainly full-bodied pop ballads, although there are exceptions, notably the

glowing r-&-b *A Fool at Heart*, with the gorgeous vocal duo of Natalie Cole and Chaka Khan backing him up. The songs of loving and losing on "Bish" take a modern pop approach to the stuff of a musical past that, at twenty-six, Bishop is too young to have lived through. He'd better watch it; a contemporary pop style like this just might give middle-of-the-road music a good name. —Rick Mitz

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

JIMMY BUFFETT: *"You Had to Be There."* Jimmy Buffett (vocals, guitar); Coral Reefer Band (instrumentals). *Son of a Son of a Sailor; Pencil Thin Mustache; Miss You So Badly; Dixie Diner; Morris' Nightmare; Havana Daydreamin'; Margaritaville; Come Monday*; and eleven others. ABC AK-1008/2 two discs \$11.98, Ⓜ 8020-1008T \$11.95, © 5020-1008T \$11.95.

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

Taken from live performances in Atlanta and Miami, Jimmy Buffett's newest album is a jumbo smorgasbord of his current repertoire. His live performances of some of his standards, such as *Pencil Thin Mustache* and *Son of a Son of a Sailor*, are so exuberant that he changes the lyrics from the original whenever the mood strikes him. But he is, of course, still the perfect master of the subtle, romantic ballad (*Why Don't We Get Drunk [And Screw]*) and the darting sociological *aperçu* (*Morris' Nightmare*), the keen observer of the existential nature of free-floating anxiety (*A Pirate Looks at Forty*). His audiences seem to be as riotously good-humored and every bit as unbuttoned as he is, with the result that the album gets funnier and funnier as it slouches along. After four sides and twenty songs, however, I began to feel like a closet glutton waddling across the parking lot after one of those Howard Johnson's Eat-All-You-Want-of-Whatever nights: too much, too much, too much. . . . So, in this era of Sensible Living, I recommend only two sides at a time—but I do recommend the entire album unreservedly.

P.R.

Explanation of symbols:

- Ⓜ = reel-to-reel stereo tape
- Ⓢ = eight-track stereo cartridge
- ⓐ = stereo cassette
- = quadraphonic disc
- Ⓣ = digital-master recording
- Ⓛ = direct-to-disc recording

Monophonic recordings are indicated by the symbol Ⓜ

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

ERIC CARMEN: *Change of Heart*. Eric Carmen (vocals, piano, synthesizer, drums, percussion); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Desperate Fools; Haven't We Come a Long Way; End of the World; Heaven Can Wait; Baby I Need Your Lovin'*; and four others. ARISTA AB 4184 \$7.98, Ⓞ AT8 4184 \$7.98, Ⓞ ATC 4184 \$7.98.

Performance: **A songwriter's sampler**
Recording: **Good**

Eric Carmen is more a songwriter than a performer, and his singing has more technique than style. Acting as his own producer gives him control over how his material is presented, but this album amounts to no more than a demonstration of his current song catalog; he shows little ability to tie things together stylistically, so each selection is left very much on its own.

Haven't We Come a Long Way is the disco number, *End of the World* has its catch phrase repeated endlessly, with background vocals like the Bee Gees' nasal harmonies, and *Heaven Can Wait* is just a very pleasant ballad. *Baby I Need Your Lovin'* is, of course, the Holland/Dozier/Holland warhorse from early Motown days. Why Carmen has recorded it isn't clear; perhaps he just had fun with the tune. *Change of Heart* is a hit single, but the song isn't much, with the production carrying the music instead of the other way around. *Hey Deanie* and *Someday* are both teen-pop items (Shaun Cassidy had a hit with the former), but they are well constructed and cleverly presented. Carmen's own favorite of the batch appears to be *Desperate Fools*, since the album opens with a string ensemble playing a *Desperate Fools Overture* and closes with the song itself. It has nice modulations and reminds me somewhat of *Heliotrope Bouquet*, the piano rag begun by Louis Chauvin and completed by Scott Joplin; but although Carmen sings it with grace and restraint, it is still more a demonstration of material than a performance. "Change of Heart" might make you feel you're being shortchanged, unless demos are your thing.

You would certainly have a right to feel shortchanged when it comes to the album's playing time—slightly more than twenty-eight minutes total. The album can't even be sold at the normal price in Scandinavia (and maybe in some other European countries), since there are laws there that records must be at least forty minutes long in order to retail at the standard album price (about \$12 American).

J.V.

VALERIE CARTER: *Wild Child*. Valerie Carter (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *Crazy; Da Doo Rendezvous; What's Become of Us; Lady in the Dark; Change in Luck*; and five others. ARC/COLUMBIA JC 35084 \$7.98, Ⓞ JCA 35084 \$7.98, Ⓞ JCT 35084 \$7.98.

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

I've been looking at pictures of Valerie Carter. She looks pretty young, though sometimes her eyes look a lot older than the rest of her. Sometimes they don't. Her voice has a similar ambiguity; it is sweet and smooth and childlike, but there's something behind it that seems a lot older. The material she has chosen (and partly written) for "Wild Child," her second Columbia album, is r-&-b-influenced and vaguely jazz-influenced in spots, but it is not very interesting and is, in fact, tuneless

for long stretches. But she has something and figures to have time to develop it. I don't expect to play this album much on my own time, but neither do I expect to forget Valerie Carter right away.

N.C.

CHICAGO: *Hot Streets*. Chicago (vocals and instrumentals). *Alive Again; The Greatest Love on Earth; Little Miss Lovin'; Hot Streets; Take a Chance*; and five others. COLUMBIA FC 35512 \$8.98, Ⓞ FCA 35512 \$8.98, Ⓞ FCAT 35512 \$8.98.

Performance: **Déjà vu**
Recording: **Very good**

Chicago—the group, that is—is like Silly Putty; no matter how it is stretched and squeezed, no matter how it changes shape, it stays basically the same. Even though there are a lot of changes on this new album—a new producer, a new guitarist (to replace co-founder Terry Kath after his death in 1977), and even the addition of the ubiquitous Bee Gees as back-up vocalists on one cut—it all comes out the same: predictably good.

But even good can be pretty boring if it's the same stuff you've been hearing since 1969. Chicago is one of those formula groups, a band with a recipe as unchanging as a Betty

Crocker cake mix. Twelve albums into their career, there isn't much difference between, say, the sixth one and this one. Chicago has consistently repeated its hits year after year, starting ten years ago with *Does Anybody Know What Time It Is?* By now the group has made more than \$160 million, and "Hot Streets," with its *déjà vu* sound, should make for more hot sales.

—Rick Mitz

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

THE CLASH: *Give 'Em Enough Rope*. The Clash (vocals and instrumentals). *Safe European Home; English Civil War; Tommy Gun; Julie's in the Drug Squad; Last Gang in Town; Guns on the Roof; Drug-stabbing Time*; and three others. EPIC JE 35543 \$7.98, Ⓞ JEA 35543 \$7.98, Ⓞ JET 35543 \$7.98.

Performance: **Flawed but exciting**
Recording: **Appropriate**

The thing you have to understand about the Clash is that, good as they are, you must take them with a grain of salt. God knows, we need bands that have more on their minds than a fat royalty statement, but I'm old enough to remember the revolutionary rhetoric of a lot of Sixties musicians, and while I doubt that the



Al Jarreau: Freshness on the Soul Scene

AL JARREAU, the man who uses his velvet voice like the finest of instruments, has brought a fresh sense of integrity to a soul scene that has, with a few exceptions, been wallowing in banality lately. Since Stevie Wonder began lapsing into long periods of silence, peaks of pleasure in soul music have been few and far between. Some of the most memorable have been provided by Jarreau, even though his latest album, "All Fly

Home," is only his fourth release. That may be one of the keys to his success, in fact: he records only when he has something fresh and meaningful to offer, when he's ready to open a path that others can and should follow. In a time when the contrived and frantic funkiness of it all is often more than one can bear, he provides, in stark contrast, songs that are coolly introspective, buoyantly exuberant, and uplifting, songs that leave the listener grinning and fulfilled. What more can I say, except that hearing Al Jarreau gives me a special glow, the kind of feeling that comes on balmy days of azure skies when all things seem possible?

AFTER his stunning previous set, "Look to the Rainbow" (Warner Bros. BZ 3052, a STEREO REVIEW Record of the Year award winner for 1977), one would have expected anything else to be anticlimactic. But "All Fly Home" is a most worthy follow-up with a subtle change of pace. Here Jarreau minimizes the vocal acrobatics that made "Rainbow" such a sparkler, concentrating instead simply on singing in his boyishly captivating style. A sense of tenderness prevails. And since Jarreau is more laid-back, there is ample scope for improvisation by some of his excellent accompanying musicians, particularly Tom Canning on keyboards and Freddie Hubbard sitting in on flugelhorn. "All Fly Home" is the latest gospel (in the sense of "good news") from a musical messenger of no mean accomplishment.

—Phyl Garland

AL JARREAU: *All Fly Home*. Al Jarreau (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *Thinkin' About It Too; I'm Home; Brite 'n' Sunny Babe; I Do; Fly; Wait a Little While; She's Leaving Home; All; Sittin' on the Dock of the Bay*. WARNER BROS. BSK 3229 \$6.98, Ⓞ M8 3229 \$7.98, Ⓞ M5 3229 \$7.98.



THE CLASH: head and shoulders above the American heavy-metal brigade

Clash will wind up their career singing million-selling love songs à la the Jefferson Starship, that prospect does help put things in perspective somewhat. So the Clash's political commitment, however well intentioned, does not impress me particularly.

Actually, given that most of their concerns are not terribly relevant to an American audience (and it is supremely arrogant for a Yank rock critic to pretend he understands the complexities of the English social climate), the Clash are already being presented here not as an especially political band, but rather as keepers of the rock-and-roll flame, sort of like Bruce Springsteen, and on that level I find them quite exciting. Oh, they have a lot of growing to do; their lack of polish in the great, early Who/Kinks tradition seems less an act of homage and more like simple inexperience. But most of the hype about Mick Jones' refreshingly raunchy guitar work is justified, and as an ensemble the Clash has energy to burn. They've got real melodies too, which already puts them head and shoulders above the American heavy-metal brigade. In short, anyone who remembers with affection a neat little working-class combo of a few years ago called Mott the Hoople will have little trouble liking this record.

S.S.

JIMMY CLIFF: *Give Thankx*. Jimmy Cliff (vocals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Bongo Man; Footprints; She Is a Woman; Meeting in Afrika; Wanted Man*; and five others. WARNER BROS. BSK 3240 \$7.98, © M8 3240 \$7.98, © M5 3240 \$7.98.

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

Jimmy Cliff's intense performances are as dynamic and as gutsy as ever. The problem now is that his agit-prop material is getting as shopworn and tiresome as another Jane Fonda fire-side chat on the meaning of revolution in our time—as seen from the star's dressing room. Cliff is still pounding at the same old themes; *Stand Up and Fight Back, Wanted Man*, and *Universal Love (Beyond the Boundaries)* are all dismayingly self-explanatory titles. *Lonely Streets* and *Love I Need* are about Isolation, and *Meeting in Afrika* is about Peace. So what else is new? Cliff races through all of this

tapioca with the same fervor he's been displaying since the days of "The Harder They Fall." But if he doesn't change his scripts pretty soon, no amount of intensity will save him from becoming a radical bore. P.R.

DONNA FARGO: *Dark-Eyed Lady*. Donna Fargo (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *Another Goodbye; Everybody Has a Dream; Reach; Tomorrow Child; Somebody Special; Sweet Sexy Guy; I Saw the Light; Changes in My Life*; and three others. WARNER BROS. BSK 3191 \$7.98, © M8 3191 \$7.98, © M5 3191 \$7.98.

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

Donna Fargo has a flair for the dramatic, a penchant for coming on like gangbusters with a rousing chorus, and a sense about when to let her voice crack on a sad phrase. So her records seem emotional, but here's another in which she's so doggedly professional you can't tell whether she means it or is just pushing buttons. In any case, the range of emotions she conveys is not great. This may be because a voice is versatile in inverse proportion to the degree it is stylized, and hers is pretty stylized. On the other hand, a voice is identified with by most people to the degree it is stylized, if the artist isn't too gross about it. Given the limited emotional palette she's using, Fargo does a good job of connecting with the listener, whether it comes from the heart or not. And the saving grace of "Dark-Eyed Lady" is that it is tuneful, without which quality its histrionics would be bad news. The non-Fargo songs are fairly well selected, and the production is that offend-nobody sort that is neither country nor pop, but it is more tasteful than most of its kind and contains an interesting jangle here and there. Donna Fargo has known how to handle an audience and how (with her husband's help) to run herself as a business for some time; now there's little doubt she also knows how to make albums.

N.C.

FIREFALL: *Élan*. Firefall (vocals and instrumentals). *Strange Way; Sweet and Sour; Wrong Side of Town; Count Your Blessings; Winds of Change*; and five others. ATLANTIC

SD 19183 \$7.98, © TP 19183 \$7.97, © CS 19183 \$7.97.

Performance: **Low-profile**
Recording: **Good**

Firefall has one nice track here, *Strange Way*, but their murmur, always low performing profile and the gush-mush content of their lyrics eventually leave you with a saccharin headache. The point of view is consistently sad-sweet, and *Goodbye, I Love You* just about sums it all up: "You need someone who's gonna be there all the time/Someone to treat you better/Someone to see you through/Someone who'd never say/Goodbye, I love you." Seems like an awfully long way to say "Catcha later," doesn't it? P.R.

FUNKADELIC: *One Nation Under a Groove*. Funkadelic (vocals and instrumentals). *One Nation Under a Groove; Groovallegiance; Who Says a Funk Band Can't Play Rock?; Into You; Maggot Brain*; and four others. WARNER BROS. BSK 3209 \$6.98, © M8 3209 \$7.98, © M5 3209 \$7.98.

Performance: **A funkmare**
Recording: **A little feeble**

There's a whole lot of something going on here, but I'm not quite certain what it is. Some segments of this album and a half (there's a seven-incher called a "Heavy Maggot Disk" tucked inside) are pretty repellent, particularly one extended track called *Promentalshitbackwashpsychosis Enema Squad (the Doo Doo Chasers)*. If you care to nose up to it, be prepared for childish dirty lyrics about "mental diarrhea," "the unflushables," "the mental musical bowel movement," and a "neurological enema." Not exactly dinner music. To compound the confusion, these phrases are chanted loudly enough to drown out some poor female singer warbling a rather appealing melody in an ultrahigh voice. You can almost but not quite hear a song that is much better than what you do hear. Tucked amidst the tomfoolery that abounds throughout are bits and pieces of better-than-average r-&-b fare, with classy blues-derived guitar work featured on both sides of the seven-incher. *One Nation Under a Groove, Into You, and Groovallegiance* stand out above the clutter.

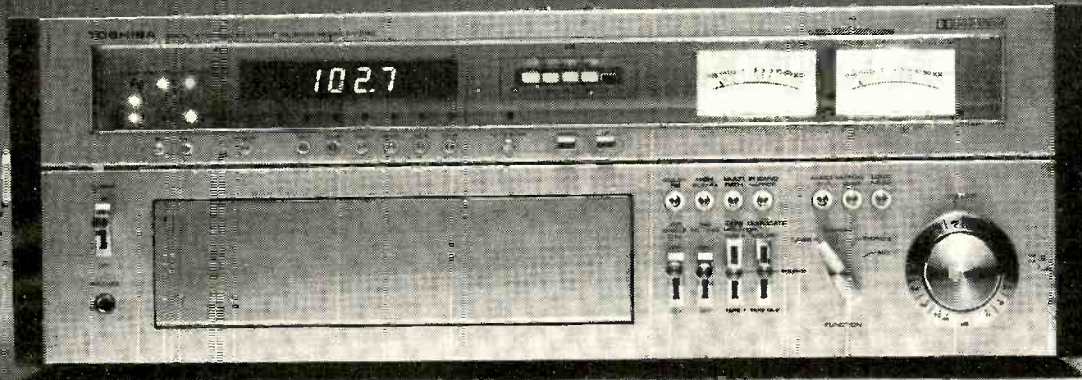
If some of this sounds vaguely familiar as a recording approach, it might be because the heavy hand of William "Bootsy" Collins is involved, along with George Clinton, who produces Bootsy as well as Funkadelic. Both seem to lack all restraint in their attempts to be seen and heard, as this album's nightmare of a cover will attest. Yet they might not be too far off base in overusing the word "funk" to define their efforts. Among blacks back in the Forties and Fifties, "funk" or "funky" was used to describe something, especially a human body, that was unclean, repellantly odorific, and badly in need of a bath. P.G.

HEART: *Dog & Butterfly*. Heart (vocals and instrumentals). *Cook with Fire; High Time; Hijinx; Straight On*; and four others. PORTRAIT FR 35555 \$8.98, © FRA 35555 \$8.98, © FRT 35555 \$8.98.

Performance: **Nice enough**
Recording: **Excellent**

Heart, like Boston, is a band that would have been made to order by record-company execs (Continued on page 112)

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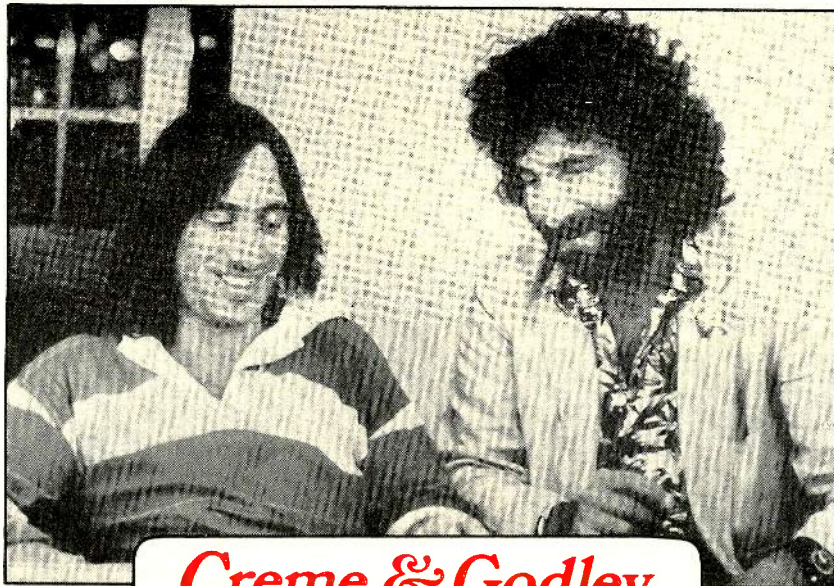
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Creme & Godley

WHEN guitarist Lol Creme and drummer Kevin Godley left the internationally popular group 10cc late in 1976 in order to work on their own, the move raised eyebrows in the pop world. But it was typical of the duo that their interest in one project would wane as it developed in another (they have been friends and artistic partners for the past eighteen years, ever since Creme auditioned for the part of Igor in a Godley production of *Dracula*), and they left 10cc in part to devote more time to a musical invention they call the "Gizmotron."

The product of eight years' work, the Gizmotron is an electromechanical bowing device for the guitar that makes polyphonic playing practicable, produces indefinitely sustained notes and chords, and can simulate the sound of an entire string section. Since their school days Godley and Creme have tended to make ambitious plans and to think on a grand scale, so to demonstrate the Gizmotron, as well as their own compositional talents, they made a three-disc concept album titled "Consequences" (Mercury 1700) on the theme of nature running amok (it included some hilariously surreal dialogue written and performed by Peter Cook).

Godley and Creme were in New York last November to promote the Gizmotron and their new Mercury album, "L." In Britain "L" is the symbol for a learning driver ("We wanted," Godley explained with a slow smile, "to have a cover that was instantly recognizable"), and the music on this "L" is mostly free-form rock with very funny lyrics. *The Sporting Life* presents suicide as a spectator sport, *Sandwiches of You* (released in England as a single) is a soft-core seduction song of cynical wit, *Art School Canteen* mocks the pretensions of the students' role playing, *Group Life* and *Hit Factory/Business Is Business* take on the music industry, *Foreign Accents* is a somewhat clinical instrumental, and *Punchbag* describes the brutality and anti-Semitism the singers encountered in their early school life.

While Godley and Creme's music may not swamp the pop charts, it is conceived and performed by two fellows of intellect, wit, and a fine sense of drama. Asked how "Consequences" fared critically and financially, Lol said: "The reactions were extreme. People either loved or hated it. There was generally good critical reception, and it was praised for the sound quality, but commercially it didn't do well. In England the price was £11 [\$22] and people there don't have eleven quid to spend."

Kevin explained their leaving 10cc: "We reached a point where we thought the group had peaked artistically even before it did commercially, so it was time for us to leave. You start with a certain standard that you want to reach; once you reach it you have to maintain it, and at some point you're not maintaining it any more. You may not realize it because you're working so hard, but once you do realize it you have a choice: do less than your best or stop. We stopped." To which Lol added: "It came to the point that 10cc could have released a single where all we did was burp and it would have sold." Kevin looked across the room at him, blinked, smiled, paused a beat, and said, "But only if it was a three-minute burp."

THEY admitted that *Group Life* is about their days with the band. "It's a warning song," Lol said. "Something starts out as fun and ends up as a trap." They have no contact with 10cc today. "It was quite a shock when we said we were leaving, much like a divorce," Lol said. It also caused a significant dip in their income. "But Kev and I are used to being hungry," Lol said with a shrug. "We do our best work when we're hungry," his partner added.

I asked if the lyric "Only the numb survive" (from *Hit Factory/Business Is Business*) was their comment on music today. Kevin answered: "New groups, kids starting out today—their ambition is to get a recording contract, and the labels tell them what kind of

music they must play, what the market will bear. So commercially acceptable music perpetuates itself."

"It's too bad punk never really broke through," Lol said. "It seemed like a way for young musicians to have a style of their own. One of the hopes we had for 'Consequences' was that, if it was commercially successful, it might encourage labels to invest in other musicians who play experimental music. But it didn't do well financially, so . . ."

Lol is blunt about the emotional exhaustion of rock. "Rock is mostly a physical music," he said. "Often it's no more than three or four chords. The emotional possibilities were always slight. It depends on physical energy—youthful physical energy, which is easily expendable. It's not meant to be an intellectual or subtle style."

Kevin remarked, "Communication is too easy these days. The beginning of a new style comes along, and it's instantaneously revealed to the mass audience through records and broadcasting. It's culture shock. There's no time for small groups of people to discover it and spread the enthusiasm. Perhaps music has had its share of cultural shocks. The next big cultural shock might not even come from music."

THE Gizmotron may very well come as a pleasant culture shock to guitarists. Jerry Garcia, Bob Weir, and Tommy Tedesco have already ordered units, and the device will become available internationally early in 1979. Though they hope to make some money on it, Lol and Kevin play down any excitement they may be feeling. "The Gizmotron was one of our projects," Lol summed up, "and we're glad it's on the market, but now we'll go on to something else. You'll notice it takes a back seat on 'L.' We feel it can take its place alongside other instruments." Then he laughed. "Besides, we're going to be ripped off. There'll be a competitive model on the market shortly after ours appears. We know because we've demonstrated it at several trade shows and some enterprising Japanese gentlemen came up very close and took pictures. One of them even said, 'Move your hand, please, so I see. Thank you.' And his little camera clicked happily away. They were politely relentless. But, as the walrus said, the time has come."

He leaned over and picked up a guitar with the Gizmotron attached, then played the introduction to the Beatles' *I Am the Walrus*. The effect was terrific; it sounded like the string section of the London Philharmonic. The Gizmotron is, indeed, a wonderful thing, and it will probably become standard equipment for rock groups, just like the keyboard synthesizer. Messrs. Godley and Creme—art students, musicians, and inventors—will have contributed another notable addition to rock weaponry.

—Joel Vance

LOL CREME AND KEVIN GODLEY: *L.* Lol Creme and Kevin Godley (vocals and instrumentals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *The Sporting Life*; *Sandwiches of You*; *Art School Canteen*; *Group Life*; *Punchbag*; *Foreign Accents*; *Hit Factory/Business Is Business*. MERCURY SRM-1-3752 \$7.98, © MC8-1-3752 \$7.98, © MCR4-1-3752 \$7.98.

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if they'd only been smart enough, and that is what does them in, for me anyway. Putting two extremely attractive young ladies in front of a competent, unremarkable bunch of Led Zeppelin clones may be the sort of idea that is, on the face of it, unbeatably commercial, but it is worth noting that Heart's success story is at least partly the result of the kind of grass-roots support from the kids that the punk bands should have been able to garner. In other words, Heart may be bland, but they're not a hype. For all the slickness of the package, though, there's nothing on "Dog & Butterfly" that indicates the band has much to offer beyond derivative heavy metal and the gimmick of Ann Wilson's willowy vocals. There's a lesson here, I think; maybe it's that if you're going to rewrite Led Zep, you'd better come up with your own *Stairway to Heaven* before you start making a stadium-attraction nuisance of yourself. S.S.

WAYLON JENNINGS: *I've Always Been Crazy* (see Best of the Month, page 104)

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

JULES AND THE POLAR BEARS: *Got No Breeding*. Jules and the Polar Bears (vocals and instrumentals). *You Just Don't Wanna Know; Black Fever Sleep; Lovers by Rote; Shadows Break; Convict; Got No Breeding*; and five others. COLUMBIA JC 35601 \$7.98, © JCA 35601 \$7.98, © JCT 35601 \$7.98.

Performance: **In a jugular vein**
Recording: **Excellent**

A lot of music critics have gone off the deep end about this album, largely because it's supposed to represent some definitive rejection of the solipsistic Me Decade school of California mush-rock. I'd agree, except that when the subject of California rock comes up I'm not quite sure who we're talking about. Warren Zevon? The recent Jackson Browne? The Eagles since the arrival of Joe Walsh? Steely Dan? That's a pretty diverse and cynical list, and while I'm not about to defend either the cultural advantages of Los Angeles or any of those sensitive singer/songwriters who, in Frank Zappa's phrase, make millions out of

their deep personal hurt, it's a colossal bit of snobbery to suggest that any music made in the California environment is by definition irrelevant. Even if a lot of it is.

But no matter. The truth is that Jules and the Polar Bears are a bracing little outfit, and their debut album is funny, angry, and altogether a delight. Leader Jules Shear does the Dylan stream-of-consciousness vitriol bit with real panache (he's a wicked punster to boot), his singing is charmingly reminiscent of Ray Davies though not so fey, his tunes are an addictive amalgam of California pop-rock and British rave-up, and his band is bedrock solid. The whole thing is comparable to Graham Parker, perhaps, or Fleetwood Mac if they all had chips on their shoulders. Questions of geographical politics aside, this is an album more than worth hearing. Anybody who can write a line as snide as Shear's "The nice thing about true hopelessness is that you don't have to try again" has obviously got his head screwed on right and deserves support. S.S.

KANSAS: *Two for the Show*. Kansas (vocals and instrumentals). *Song for America; Point of Know Return; Paradox; Icarus/Borne on Wings of Steel; Portrait (He Knew); Carry On Wayward Son*; and eight others. KIRSHNER PZ2 35660 two discs \$11.98, © ZAX 35660 \$11.98, © ZTX 35660 \$11.98.

Performance: **Yes and no**
Recording: **Very good**

I'm not fond of live albums, but I must say the performances on this double-disc set are as good, generally, as the studio versions. The music is something else again. Kansas is billed as a "progressive" rock group. Strictly speaking, this means only that they don't play blatant top-40 pop or heavy-metal. Some of their music is interesting, and a few of their tunes stick with you—*Dust in the Wind* has a catchy melodic construction—but a lot of it sounds like ambitious flapdoodle, especially the gratuitous keyboard runs and note clusters. Moreover, the seriousness with which Kansas takes itself sometimes spoils their admirable energy by turning it into browbeating. Most of all, I get the feeling that they seldom

do anything instinctively, that they are overconcerned with presenting an image. Some talent occasionally wiggles out from underneath all the "progressive" gobbledegook, but not often enough. J.V.

LINDISFARNE: *Back and Fourth*. Lindisfarne (vocals and instrumentals). *Run for Home; Warm Feeling; Woman; Only Alone; Get Wise; You and Me*; and five others. ATCO SD 38-108 \$7.98, © TP-38-108 \$7.98, © CS-38-108 \$7.98.

Performance: **Agile and expensive**
Recording: **Lush**

Lindisfarne, newly re-formed after breaking up six years ago, has produced a debut album for Atco that is easily as slick as anything you're likely to hear in the coming year. As in the past, this British group's media image is on the brooding, introspective, "serious" side. Once in a recording studio, however, they are as stylish, agile, and perfectionistic as a troupe of Monte Carlo acrobats. One carefully crafted and highly polished little set-piece after another comes rolling out of their workshop, so that even as they intone such lyrics as "I've seen all the frowns/On the faces of the clowns/And the downs that they take/Just to be free..." (from *Run for Home*) in a lush and expensive arrangement, it's all about as harrowing as being smothered by a sable trenchcoat in a crowded elevator. There's much more Riviera and Vegas in Lindisfarne's material than the heath and moors they would have you believe their work springs from. P.R.

THE OUTLAWS: *Playin' to Win*. The Outlaws (vocals and instrumentals). *Take It Anyway You Want It; Cry Some More; You Are the Show; You Can Have It; Dirty City*; and four others. ARISTA AB 4205 \$7.98.

Performance: **Dry competence**
Recording: **Good**

The Outlaws play well technically, but they don't originate much. You'll hear a Pete Townshend guitar lick here, a Burton Cummings vocal mannerism there, an Eagles rhythm-guitar technique over yonder, and so on. Similarly, the songs in this album seem based on other songs rather than firsthand observations. It's all so tasteful, though, that one tends to be forgiving. I don't know that the Outlaws ever claimed they were originators, and even if they did, con men are bonafide outlaws, same as your swashbucklers are. Swashbucklers are just more fun. N.C.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

QUEEN: *Jazz*. Queen (vocals and instrumentals). *Mustapha; Fat Bottomed Girls; Jealousy; Bicycle Race; If You Can't Beat Them; Let Me Entertain You; Dead on Time*; and six others. ELEKTRA 6E-166 \$7.98, © ET8-166 \$7.98, © TC5-166 \$7.98.

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

I've admired Queen's discipline and punch on previous albums, but this delightful package can stand by itself as a rare (from a star group) lampoon of rock, the rock audience, and society in general. They seem to be saying, "Don't you people realize this is all an act? How can you let us get away with it?"

(Continued on page 116)



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Video Review

IN these inflationary days, fewer and fewer music lovers can afford the tabs involved in seeing favorite singers do their night-club acts. By the time you figure in the charges for drinks (usually there's a minimum), the cover or "music charges" (as they're euphemistically labeled), sundry tips (quarters are no longer enough for either coatchecks or wash-room attendants), plus cab fare and/or tolls and parking-lot expenses—well, the sum for two can equal what a week's take-home pay used to be not too long ago. Little wonder, then, that so many former clubgoers are staying home to watch TV.

When they do, it may be cheaper but it is not necessarily as satisfying. Not that there aren't good programs on TV now and then—if you like situation comedies, police adventures, space fantasies, doctors, lawyers, etc. For the music lover, however, the pickings are generally slim—except for late-hour weekend specials starring rock and pop stars and the occasional classical broadcast in the "Great Performances" series on PBS. But few and far between are the shows offering even a glimpse of such MOR greats as Peggy Lee, Lena Horne, Tony Bennett, Eartha Kitt, Jack Jones, Margaret Whiting, Morgana King, and others who used to pack us into places like New York's Basin Street East, Chicago's Mr. Kelly's, or San Francisco's Fairmount.

Into the breach has come the Visiondisc Corporation, which has already filmed and released several videocassette albums featuring jazz and contemporary pop performers (see STEREO REVIEW, July and October 1978 issues). Its latest—an hour-long, club-type performance by Eartha Kitt called simply "Eartha"—could well be the forerunner of a whole series of albums capable of turning our own living rooms into the night clubs of tomorrow. Instead of going out (often into noisy if not actually offensive environments), we'd invite a few friends in, put on an album—and everyone gets a ringside seat for a taped performance not available on either commercial TV or cable TV's Home Boxoffice. This could be an expensive showing, of course, if you played the album only once, but chances are you'll spread the initial album cost over many evenings of showings, even years if it's a performer you really like and the album is one that bears repeated viewings.

This last is the heart of the matter. How many times are we going to want to watch any one album? A major argument I've long heard against videocassettes and videodiscs (mostly from people who haven't actually seen one in action) is that you'll get tired looking at the same scene or visuals over and over again. That's not necessarily so—any more than you get tired of hearing the same audio recording of a song, an opera, or any musical work over and over as compared to hearing it "live." True, something of the spontaneity of a first hearing is lost with both audio and video recordings, but there are compensating factors—such as really getting to know, understand, and appreciate the artistry of the performer(s), or just the joy one gets from repeated contact with a great performance. That joy is certainly not diminished by seeing it. For example, I can't imagine anyone who's worn out his copy of the "Judy Garland at

Carnegie Hall" album (audio version) or any of Frank Sinatra's live-performance albums not equally enjoying seeing as well as hearing the performance any time he so desires. My own experience in videotaping many dozens of things off TV verifies this: the really great ones easily hold up with each viewing, no matter how frequent.



Not all performances are great ones, of course, but they can at least function as learning experiences for videocassette producers. "Eartha" is a case in point. Eartha Kitt is certainly a great performer in my book, and she looks great in the show that Visiondisc taped before a live audience at the Westport Coun-

try Playhouse in Connecticut. But the presentation of the show and the camerawork are routine, being generally an imitation of the Home Boxoffice type of personality show you can see regularly on cable TV, and for my money more ideas, new ideas, and greater (perhaps different) skills are going to be required in this new medium.

Apparently the program (which runs a full hour) was put together from two or more different performances—Eartha's gown changes suddenly from red to white during the 15-second round of applause that follows her third song, and then just as suddenly switches back to red again in the middle of her dialogue between the sixth and seventh songs! Eartha has worked many wonders on stage during her career, but never a costume change that fast. Also, a plush chaise longue, surrounded by three or four large, fluffy pillows, crops up in camera view for Eartha's penultimate song without ever being used (hinting, maybe, that her classic *Monotonous* number was coming—and then got cut out?). Just as bothersome is the "busy-ness" of some of the camera work. In several places (most especially in Stephen Sondheim's *Could I Leave You?*), the intensity of her interpretation is thrown off by the constant fading in and out of different camera angles, where just letting the camera stay put on her changing expressions would be more effective.

THESE reservations aside, the musical portions of *Eartha* are unreservedly wonderful. There are few performers around who can belt out one line of a lyric with such hair-raising venom and then purr the next line with the most insinuating of whispers. She is a spellbinder whether singing old, familiar songs in distinctively Kittish ways (*I Can't Give You Anything But Love Baby*, *Ten Cents a Dance*, *C'Est Si Bon*, *Surabaya Johnny*) or doing the same with some new songs (including special self-parodying lyrics for Sondheim's *I'm Still Here*). And she switches languages—from English to French to Turkish to Hebrew—as easily (and quickly) as she switches the color of her vocal line.

The production values of "Eartha" may be visually routine, but there's nothing routine about the quality of an Eartha Kitt performance—and, in the last analysis, that's what will make this videocassette worth having if you're among her fans or just a collector of the best pop artists. The sound is necessarily mono (until stereo TV comes along), but played through my stereo system's amplifier and speakers it is excellent. —Roy Hemming

EARTHA. Eartha Kitt (vocals); orchestra. *I'm Still Here*; *An Old-Fashioned Girl*; *How Could You Believe Me When I Said I Loved You*; *Guess Who I Saw Today*; *Could I Leave You?*; *Üsküdar*; *Sholem Aleichem*; *The French Charleston*; *I Can't Give You Anything but Love*; *Little Baby*; *Surabaya Johnny*; *Ten Cents a Dance*; *All I Want Is All There Is*; *C'Est Si Bon*; *Santa Baby*; *I Want to Be Evil*. VISIONDISC EKA 482 5949 R; VHS 2 and Beta 2, \$49.95; VHS 1 and Beta 1, \$59.95; also available in a limited edition of 1,000, special packaging autographed by Miss Kitt, \$75 (from Visiondisc, P.O. Box 102, Cooper Station, New York, N.Y. 10003).



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Mustapha opens with Freddie Mercury imitating the wail of a muezzin calling the faithful to prayer and proceeds to imitate Arabic musical forms. Well, we've had Jesus rock, why not Islamic rock? *Fat Bottomed Girls* is supposedly a tribute to adoring female fans but seems also to be (pardon the pun) a cheeky rebuke. *Let Me Entertain You*, which closes side one, is practically a declaration that the audience is a bunch of suckers projecting their fantasies onto Queen (or any major group), which Queen thinks is stupid and hilarious. Not all the other selections are so bold in their dismissal of rock and rock culture, but there are moments aplenty when the band—always maintaining their usual high standard of performance—takes a surgeon's pleasure in dissecting both themselves and the audience.

Disclaimers such as Queen's are rare. When John Lennon was asked in 1964 how good a group he thought the Beatles were, he answered: "Average, just average. We'll last about two years, but by that time we'll have made our money." At thirty the garrulous Pete Townshend was quoted as saying he felt like a fool still prancing about on a stage for the benefit of teenage girls. Queen is one of the few top groups to say that rock's excesses are as much the audience's as the performers' fault, that rock is not an art form but a form of entertainment that has gotten rather out of hand. Musical quality has never been held at a premium in rock. The last ten years of fads and hypes—from "glitter rock" to "punk"—have been filled with musical poseurs, poetasters, and politicians. With "Jazz" Queen has

summed up a mediocre and self-deluding decade with blunt vaudevillian humor, and for that I respect them. J. V.

RAMONES: *Road to Ruin*. Ramones (vocals and instrumentals). *I Just Want to Have Something to Do; Don't Come Close; I Don't Want You; Needles and Pins; I'm Against It; I Wanna Be Sedated*; and six others. SIRE SRK 6063 \$7.98, © 8147-6063 \$7.98, © 5147-6063 \$7.98.

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

Look, I've tried, I've really tried. I know the Ramones are supposed to be cartoons, and I know that their minimalist stance has a certain theoretical validity, but, after all is said and done, the music they make does not justify the theorizing, at least to this traditionalist. Basically, what it boils down to is whether an oldie like *California Sun*, which the boys from Forest Hills covered previously, is a rock archetype worthy of stripping down and revving up for the Seventies or merely an amusingly trashy period piece. As you may have guessed, I think the latter is the case, and that's just one more reason I get a little teed off when otherwise sane critics attempt to pass the Ramones off as the Beach Boys of our age.

This album finds them attempting to put back a lot of the elements they deliberately left out of their first three LP's: acoustic guitars, solos, rudimentary melodies. There's even a cover of the Searcher's venerable *Needles and Pins*, though with the group harmo-

nies omitted. I suppose we'll have to wait another two albums before they get around to returning that little trick to their musical arsenal. Meanwhile, I steadfastly refuse to believe that this is the only reasonable alternative to the overblown pomposity of Queen or Kansas. Less, at least as the Ramones practice it, is not always more. S.S.

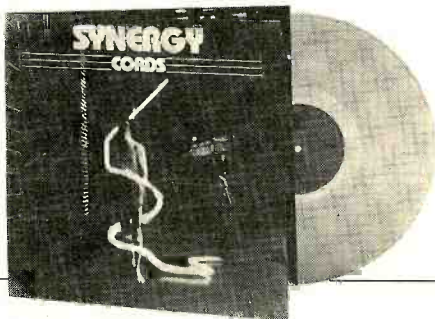
PHOEBE SNOW: *Against the Grain*. Phoebe Snow (vocals, guitar); instrumental accompaniment. *Every Night; In My Life; The Married Men; Random Time; Oh, L.A.*; and five others. COLUMBIA JC 35456 \$7.98, © JCA 35456 \$7.98, © JCT 35456 \$7.98.

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

Phoebe Snow's press handout for this album ends with, "And her quirky sense of humor always surfaces through it all, as when she considers her ultimate goals, and paraphrases an Irish rock 'n' roll mate of hers—'I want to get rich and be made love to a lot!'" Well, rich(er) she will certainly get from this album. Her middle-class, middle-brow audience will go joyfully bananas over this beautifully produced (by Phil Ramone and Barry Beckett) Snow job, an album designed to mark her entrance into Outright Rock-and-Roll. That it is merely a paraphrase of real rock won't matter much to her fans. They probably won't even bother to question why a singer who in the past has shown a real flair for projecting a lyric with poignancy and feeling has made such an awkward and clumsy turnabout. (Even with all of the production and arranging props

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Composer Larry Fast is a one-man synthesizer show, called Synergy. And, he's made a brilliant new album—"Cords."* "The title," says Fast, "refers to patch cords and musical chords. On 'Cords,' I'm trying to combine prototype technology—including the first recorded use of a revolutionary guitar synthesizer—with a musical approach that will affect people emotionally.... If a listener can hear "Cords" and be transported, then I've succeeded."



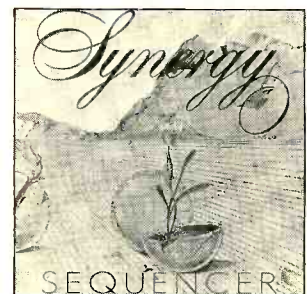
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so artfully scattered about her performances here, her forced Wild Woman act is often as embarrassing to hear as it would be to see Virginia Graham attempt a strip-tease.) Snow has revved up and goosed such already familiar things as *Every Night* and *Do Right Woman*, *Do Right Man*, and one horror of her own, *Mama Don't Break Down*, to absolutely no effect at all—except perhaps to show that she can do it, sort of. As for the last part of her wish, good luck, Phoebe! P.R.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

AL STEWART: *Time Passages*. Al Stewart (vocals, guitar); Peter Wood, Peter White, Peter Robinson, Pete Solley (keyboards); other musicians. *Time Passages*; *Valentina Way*; *Life in Dark Water*; *A Man for All Seasons*; *Song on the Radio*; and four others. ARISTA AB 4190 \$7.98, © AT8 4190 \$7.98, © ATC 4190 \$7.98.

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

Let's face it: any album with four keyboard players named Pete couldn't be too bad. Al Stewart, a commercial success without having had to change the quiet, contemplative way he has always done things, has this time done what he does about as well as I ever expect to hear it done. His work is not very deep, but it does have a poetic ring to it, along with certain interesting thematic patterns (he keeps returning to history, among other things; here we drop in on Sir Thomas More), and he has a gentle but definite style about ev-



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AL STEWART
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everything he does. In this album, the instrumental backing seems exceptionally compatible with that style. There's some fine guitar playing, but no showing off—and, of course, not much of the spontaneity that buds around other kinds of musical personalities. It's Al Stewart again, doing the Al Stewart thing. That means you can hear a little midnight oil in some of the songs (*Valentina Way*), but stuff that would sound convoluted from other people (including *Song on the Radio*) some-

how doesn't from Al Stewart. In any case, it's civilized and unique. N.C.

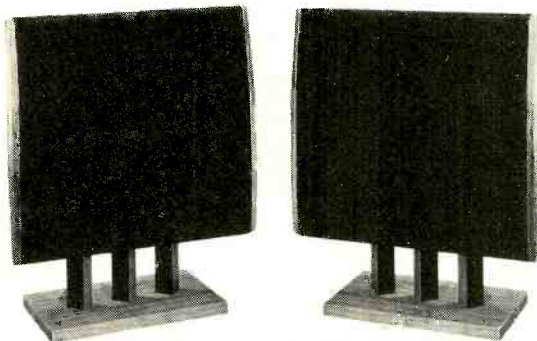
STEPHEN STILLS: *Thoroughfare Gap*. Stephen Stills (vocals, guitar, bass, keyboards); instrumental accompaniment. *You Can't Dance Alone*; *Thoroughfare Gap*; *We Will Go On*; *Beaucoup Yumbo*; *Midnight Rider*; *Not Fade Away*; and four others. COLUMBIA JC 35380 \$7.98, © JCA 35380 \$7.98, © JCT 35380 \$7.98.

Performance: **World-weary**
Recording: **Very good**

The title song here is a throwback to the way Stephen Stills used to write songs—back, one almost says, in his heyday—but almost everything else reflects the would-be worldly, would-be eclectic, would-be mature Stills we've come to know in recent years. I don't know how much naïveté Stills has in him as a personality trait, but this juxtaposition seems to confirm what his older fans must suspect: artistically he's better off writing a naïve song. He needs some semblance of a cause, that is, though not a political one. Most of all, he needs to write in the humble spirit that goes with concocting a naïve song, to avoid smugness and the don't-give-a-damn attitude that seems to go with it. He needs to write about something he cares about. Stills is not, as some people have suggested, burned out, but he seems to be coasting and in need of some motivation outside his own apparently complicated ego. At the same time, his voice is less versatile than it used to be, but also

(Continued on page 120)

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It was about four o'clock when she walked into my office, dressed in a mourning suit that made her look like a road-show Ligeia.

"Are you Marlowe?" She wiggled slightly as she sat down, which meant either she liked me or she'd noticed that my furniture is upholstered in mohair.

I looked up. "That's me, like the sign says. Chris Marlowe, Aesthetic Investigator. What can I do for you, Miss —?" She looked vaguely familiar, but I couldn't place her under the widow's weeds.

"The name's unimportant, but call me Ms."

"Frankly, I don't care if you want to be called late for dinner. You have a job you want done, spill it."

"Oh, a tough guy, huh?" She tossed four black record jackets onto my desk.

"The results of your Wasserman test?" I asked.

"No, shamus. Albums by Gene Simmons, Ace Frehley, Peter Criss, and Paul Stanley, members of a rock band called Kiss. You'll notice they're all wearing disguises on the covers."

"Nowadays who doesn't?"

"Never mind. My employer wants you to find out why. What have these guys got to hide? You've got twenty-four hours to run down the answers."

"And if I don't?"

"Front-row seats for the Al Martino farewell tour. Get the picture?"

"I'm trembling in my Capezios."

"Don't crack wise with me, turkey. Remember, you've got twenty-four hours."

With that she was out the door. I reached for the bottle of Scotch in my desk. Mysterious liberated women, rock-and-roll... suddenly I felt very tired.

I spent the evening listening to the four records and staring at the covers. After I polished off the Scotch I had most of the scam doped out; the rest I glommed after a few phone calls to some friends of mine in the low-life end of the music business. Rack jobbers. AM jocks. The scum of the underground. Nice people you know, Marlowe. What a world.

True to her word, she was back the next day at four.

"You look beat," she said coolly. "A rough night?"

"Rough enough," I said. "But I found out what you wanted to know. These Kiss guys have never appeared out of make-up. The records are their first solo efforts, and the idea is that they're supposed to give the poor slob who buys this stuff a chance to find out what kind of music these guys might make if they weren't limited by the group concept. It's a symbolic dropping of the mask."

"That's pretty good, Marlowe."

"I'm not finished. The thing is, it doesn't add up; these records could be by anybody. Frehley does a bad punk imitation, Simmons has pop tendencies, Criss is a closet MOR wimp, and Stanley tries to be a guitar hero. In other words, it all still sounds like Kiss—slick, dumb, and inconsequential."

"Good job, Marlowe," she said nervously. "Write it up and send it to this address; your check will be in the mail." She started to get up, but I beat her to the door.



The Kiss-off



"Not so fast, sister. Like I said, it doesn't add up. So I began to think. Who in her right mind would be so interested in all this that she'd hire a broken-down private dick to figure it out? And why the time limit?"

I ripped the veil and sunglasses off her face. "I knew it. You're Paulette Weiss of STEREO REVIEW."

"I had to do it, Marlowe," she sobbed. "None of my regular reviewers would touch the stuff, and I had a deadline. It was the only way."

"You're good, sweetheart," I said, putting on my coat. "But not that good."

"You mean . . .?"

"That's right. I won't write the review for you. Understand?"

"But, Marlowe . . ."

"I won't do it, do you hear? Get Simels, or Vance, or Coppage; they'll write anything for free albums. But not me."

I started out the door. "Where are you going?" she asked in a voice as quiet as the grave.

"I don't know," I said. "Computer school, maybe. Anywhere I don't have to intellectualize over loud noises."

"You can't run out on me like this."

I shook my head. "You should have thought about it before you got into the editing racket. See you around, sister."

I walked slowly down the five flights of stairs to the street and thought about her. She wasn't the first "good girl" to miss a deadline, and she wouldn't be the last. Still, somehow I knew I'd never hear from her again. Like I said, what a world. —Steve Simels

KISS—GENE SIMMONS. Gene Simmons (vocals, bass); other musicians. *Radioactive; Burning Up with Fever; See You Tonite; Tunnel of Love; True Confessions; Living in Sin; Always Near You/Nowhere to Hide; Man of 1000 Faces; Mr. Make Believe; See You in Your Dreams; When You Wish Upon a Star.* CASABLANCA NBLP 7120 \$7.98, Ⓢ NBL8 \$7.98, © NBL5 7120 \$7.98.

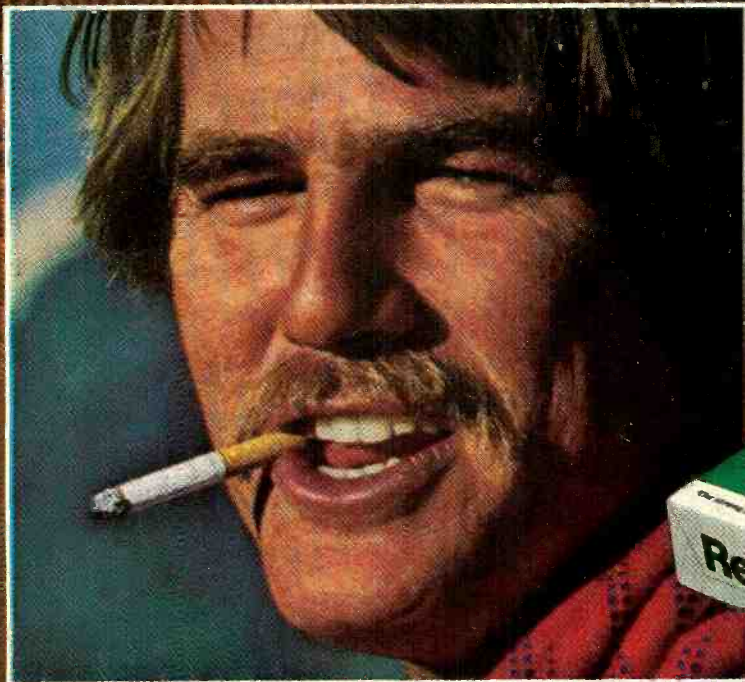
KISS—ACE FREHLEY. Ace Frehley (vocals, guitar); other musicians. *Rip It Out; Speedin' Back to My Baby; Snow Blind; Ozone; What's on Your Mind?; New York Groove; I'm in Need of Love; Wiped-Out; Fractured Mirror.* CASABLANCA NBLP 7121 \$7.98, Ⓢ NBL8 7121 \$7.98, © NBL5 7121 \$7.98.

KISS—PETER CRISS. Peter Criss (vocals, drums); other musicians. *I'm Gonna Love You; You Matter to Me; Tossin' and Turnin'; Don't You Let Me Down; That's the Kind of Sugar Papa Likes; Easy Thing; Rock Me, Baby; Kiss the Girl Goodbye; Hooked on Rock 'n' Roll; I Can't Stop the Rain.* CASABLANCA NBLP 7122 \$7.98, Ⓢ NBL8 7122 \$7.98, © NBL5 7122 \$7.98.

KISS—PAUL STANLEY. Paul Stanley (vocals, guitar); other musicians. *Tonight You Belong to Me; Move On; Ain't Quite Right; Wouldn't You Like to Know Me; Take Me Away (Together as One); It's Alright; Hold Me, Touch Me (Think of Me When We're Apart); Love in Chains; Goodbye.* CASABLANCA NBLP 7123 \$7.98, Ⓢ NBL8 7123 \$7.98, © NBL5 7123 \$7.98.

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more interesting, somewhat battered and believable. He knows his business; after going through the motions of songwriting, he can maximize his holdings, so to speak, in the studio. The result is an acceptable album, except that this is not some rookie, this is Stephen Stills. N.C.

STYX: Pieces of Eight. Styx (vocals and instrumentals). *Great White Hope; I'm OK; Sing for the Day; The Message; Lords of the Ring; Blue Collar Man (Long Nights)*; and four others. A&M SP-4724 \$7.98, © AAM-4724 \$7.98, © AAM-4724 \$7.98.

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

Styx is a good hard-rock band as hard-rock bands go, which isn't very far. Most of the performances here are energetic for the sake of being energetic, and that is really what rock is all about, even in its dotage. The trouble with bands of the Styx type is that, for lack of any other subject matter, they continually draw on their own insecurities and lingering immaturity for song material. Either that, or they take cues from their youthful audience. Thus Styx sings *Great White Hope*, about the audience waiting for them to flop, and *Lords of the Ring* (a reference to the Tolkien fantasy novels), about a pure world where violence is righteous and children can be children forever. Remind you a little of the Woodstock Nation kids who thought they'd never reach thirty? The wheel turns and, yes, it goes nowhere. Nor, I fear, does Styx. J.V.

TEMPTATIONS: Bare Back. Temptations (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *Mystic Woman (Love Me Over); I Just Don't Know How to Let You Go; That's When You Need Love; Bare Back; Ever Ready Love*; and four others. ATLANTIC SD-19188 \$7.98, © TP-19188 \$7.97, © CS-19188 \$7.97.

Performance: **Rejuvenated**
Recording: **Satisfactory**

Evidently something has come along to breathe new inspiration into the current crop of Temptations, and I think I know what/who it is: the executive producer here is Eddie Holland, who also co-composed most of the

songs. He worked with the Temps back in the old Motown days, though they more commonly collaborated with Norman Whitfield and Barrett Strong. Working along with brother Brian, also a veteran of Berry Gordy's old tuneshop, Holland has come up with a sprightly and tasteful album carefully balanced between catchy up-tempo numbers such as *Mystic Woman (Love Me Over)* and pleasant softies like *Wake Up to Me*. The Temptations are in fine voice here and exhibit a cohesion that has been lacking in their recent albums on Atlantic. Let's hope they're on their way back up the ladder. P.G.

10CC: Bloody Tourists. 10cc (vocals and instrumentals). *Dreadlock Holiday; For You and I; Take These Chains; Shock on the Tube; Last Night; The Anonymous Alcoholic; Reds in My Bed; Everything You've Wanted to Know About!!! (Exclamation Marks)*; and four others. POLYDOR PD-1-6161 \$7.98, © 8T-1-6161 \$7.98, © CT-1-6161 \$7.98.

Performance: **Good, but...**
Recording: **Clean**

There's much to admire here, but something's missing. The plot, characterizations, and lyrics of the songs are of the quality I've come to expect from 10cc. The performances are sophisticated, the arrangements often ingenious. But nothing leaps out at you; there's no high point to the album, not one song of outstanding quality for it to hang on.

The group's last studio album, "Deceptive Bends," released in March 1977, was crammed with such memorable material as *The Things We Do for Love, Marriage Bureau Rendezvous, Honeymoon with B Troop, I Bought a Flat, and You've Got a Cold*. While there are several good songs on this present outing, none measures up to any on the above list. Indeed, some of the material on "Bloody Tourists" sounds like "Deceptive Bends" pieces rewritten without the spark of off-the-wall humor that for so long distinguished 10cc. Maybe what's missing is a sense of fun; perhaps the group is now writing and performing under pressure to maintain their reputation and prestige. "Bloody Tourists" isn't a failure or inferior to most pop albums, but from 10cc it is a disappointment. J.V.

THIRD WORLD: Journey to Addis. Third World (vocals and instrumentals). *One Cold Vibe (Couldn't Stop Dis Ya Boogie); Cold Sweat; Cool Meditation; African Woman; Now That We Found Love*; and three others. ISLAND ILPS 9554 \$7.98, © M8 9554 \$7.98, © M5 9554 \$7.98.

Performance: **Afro-Caribbean fusion**
Recording: **Good**

The music of the Bahamian group Third World might be called reggae, or at least a close relative of it, though they do not hail from Jamaica, home of the musical Rastafarians. They use steel drums and Caribbean percussion in combination with electric guitars, keyboards, and other instruments to create rolling waves of calypso rhythms, and they sing, robustly, lyrics that contain mysterious smatterings of religion and politics. It is possible to enjoy these songs without listening too carefully to the words or attempting to understand them, and that is part of their appeal.

Caribbean music has long influenced popular American forms, with reggae being merely one of the later arrivals. But Third World seems to offer something many of the other modern Caribbean musicians do not. This group has fused the instrumental and vocal approaches of North American soul music with their own, finding a common ground and tilling it well. They use fleshy arrangements with emphasis on the bass and offer imaginative guitar work and ensemble singing built on full harmonies; furthermore, they vary their pacing to avoid any static quality. The fusion here is most complete on *African Women*, where Third World sounds somewhat like the North American group War at its very best. Recommended. P.G.

TOM WAITS: Blue Valentine. Tom Waits (vocals, guitar, piano); instrumental accompaniment. *Somewhere; Red Shoes by the Drugstore; Christmas Card from a Hooker in Minneapolis; Romeo Is Bleeding; \$29.00*; and five others. ASYLUM 6E-162 \$7.98, © ET8-162 \$7.98, © TC5-162 \$7.98.

Performance: **Street-poet's recital**
Recording: **Good**

Tom Waits is a throwback to the "poetry-and-jazz" experiments in San Francisco in the mid-1950's, a time when leading figures of the Beat Generation—Kenneth Rexroth, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, and Jack Kerouac—recited their free verse to the accompaniment of neo-bop combos. Waits takes the role of a kind of contemporary François Villon who chronicles and celebrates the mean lives and bad ends of three-time losers and fourth-rate people. Waits' folk, like Villon's, are penny-ante crooks, sluts, winos, brawlers, and vulgar buffoons. They have little or nothing to recommend them except the humanity the poet gives them through his talent.

There are barely any tunes here; Waits recites his often brilliant lyrics while a combo plays blues or mild jazz. His hoarse, back-alley voice may strike some listeners as offensively pretentious, but if you are willing to work past it and listen to the lyrics you will hear some brutally beautiful free verse. J.V.

JERRY JEFF WALKER: Jerry Jeff. Jerry Jeff Walker (vocals, guitar); instrumental accompaniment. *Eastern Avenue River Railway*

THIRD WORLD: left to right, Cat, Willie, Carrot, Ibo, Richie, Bunny



Blues; Lone Wolf; Bad News; Boogie Mama; I'm Not Strange; and four others. ELEKTRA 6E-163 \$7.98, © ET8-163 \$7.98, © TC5-163 \$7.98.

Performance: **Flawed excellence**

Recording: **Good**

Well, buckaroos, sounds like Jerry Jeff got even more drunk-up than usual to cut *this* sumbitch. That's not all bad, as there's a free-wheeling spontaneity here you can't get much any more, and there's some of the boldest, best singing Walker has put on records. But it would have been good if somebody sober had looked after structuring the thing, as it just about turns out to be a lesson in how not to do it. After starting with a nice wordy-mellow song by Mike Reid (and, unfortunately, hamming up the ending), Jerry Jeff runs through three straight rockers too similar in tempo, attitude, and two or three other qualities, and then into Keith Sykes' semi-bawdy novelty song, *I'm Not Strange*, also a blues derivative structurally. The second side is calmer—spiritually, thematically, and sonically. A little tinkering with the sequencing would have worked wonders for the album's overall effect (on me, at least), since the rock stuff is welcome; it draws Walker out—especially Lee Clayton's *Lone Wolf*. And the mellower stuff, starting with a rerecording of Walker's *Her Good Lovin' Grace* (he has written nothing new for this), is the kind of material that responds well to being playfully mauled by Walker's growly-bear approach. The instrumental backing sounds a lot more, um, professional than Walker's road band. There's a good recording here, if you don't mind doing a little mental editing. N.C.

YES: Tormato. Yes (vocals and instrumentals). *Future Times; Rejoice; Don't Kill the Whale; Madrigal; Release, Release*; and four others. ATLANTIC SD 19202 \$7.98, © TP 19202 \$7.98, © CA 19202 \$7.98.

Performance: **What performance?**

Recording: **Good**

There's a difference between being grandiose and being pompous. The former can be corny yet entertaining, but the latter is either irritating or silly. Yes tends to be pompous, dispensing atavistic birdfeed as though it were manna straight from heaven. The printed lyrics on the "Tormato" jacket are unintelligible unless you willingly suspend disbelief and accept them as blowsy "prose poetry." The subject matter includes creativity, brotherhood (oops! I mean *personhood*), flying saucers, whale-saving, the cosmos, and visitations from heaven. Why they left out Mom, apple pie, and rugby scores I'll never know.

The singing is hopelessly stilted and forced, the lyrics are crammed into amorphous, expedient melodies without regard for syllabification or meter, and the accompaniment is raucous razzmatazz. Since Yes has an interest in flying saucers, I will quote from *New Lands*, a book by saucer enthusiast Charles Fort, to sum up my impression of this album: "We have reached, not the heart of crisis, but the crotch of quandary." J.V.

JESSE COLIN YOUNG: American Dreams. Jesse Colin Young (vocals, guitar); David Hayes (bass); Scott Lawrence (keyboards); Jeff Myer (drums); Jim Rothermel (reeds). *Rave On; Slow and Easy; Maui Sunrise; Re-*

(Continued on page 124)



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Kate and Anna
The McGarrigles

ONE of the most gratifying aspects of working as a reviewer is the chance to evangelize (in the original Greek meaning of "bringing the good news") for artists who don't immediately capture the public's ear or don't get the mass audience their work deserves. So it is with a great deal of pleasure that I tell you that Kate and Anna McGarrigle have created an enchanting new album for Warner Bros. titled "Pronto Monto," and if you don't beat feet over to your nearest record store and get a copy you are going to miss a unique and lovely listening experience.

If you are, in your fashion, a faithful reader of this magazine you will know that everyone who has listened to the previous albums by this pair of sisters from Canada has rushed into print to go publicly bananas about the haunting beauty of their work. This includes Noel Coppage in his May 1976 review of their first album and Penelope Ross, whose jubilant addendum to that rave began "You Must Hear This Record!" and concluded with the hope that the album would be the beginning of great things.

Putting its reputation where its convictions were, the magazine awarded one of its coveted "Record of the Year" awards to that debut album. Rick Mitz's portrait of Kate and Anna in the November 1977 issue showed that even his enthusiastic review of their second album in June of that year left them as calm and unimpressed by their own talent and achievements as Helen seems to have been at the sacking of Troy.

The main problem in trying to describe the McGarrigles in cold print to those who haven't heard them at all or listened closely enough to them is the elusive beauty of their voices—Kate's is perhaps a bit more memorable—and the moods they are able to create with their songs. Their performances have a surface ease and simplicity, so that if you listened for only a phrase or two, or if you just heard them in the background, you might shrug them off with a quick So What Else Is New? What the McGarrigles lack, if indeed it is a lack, is any kind of bombast or attention-getting gimmick. They work instinctively, assuredly, and often with enormous dramatic

intensity, but they refuse to grab you by the lapels and force themselves and their performances on you. Now, we live in a lapel-grabbing age in popular music (in rock they grab you harder, further down), and the McGarrigles have paid the commercial price. They are not cult figures—they are too real-life to have developed a cult—and they do have a group of fans, but . . . well, let's just say that the accountants over at their record company don't exactly plan to work nights when they hear that a new McGarrigles release is coming up. The great record-buying public being what it is, the McGarrigles have yet to break through. And that really is a pity.

Just how much a pity you can judge for yourself when you listen to "Pronto Monto." From the title song, a little number by the sisters and one Phillippe Tartarcheff, through the side-splitting *Side of Fries* by Kate and Phillippe, through Anna's *Oh My Heart*, even through Galt MacDermot and William Dumas's *Cover Up My Head*, there is a presence, a style, a quiet elegance, that belies their homespun attack and their casually unselfconscious (but incredibly well-crafted) performances.

Everyone else has taken a whack at attempting to describe them in musical comparisons, none of which seem quite to do the McGarrigles justice (I myself, for some strange reason, kept thinking of Lotte Lenya in her album of "American Theater Songs" while I was listening to this album—a suggestion that would put you totally off the track). But let me try another kind of comparison on you: Helen Hayes is a rather plain, *Hausfrau*-ish woman who would pass unnoticed in any crowd, but in her performance as Queen Victoria Miss Hayes finally made clear to American audiences just what Majesty really is; with a flick of her humdrum, everyday voice, she can bring you to attention in your seat; she can establish character and mood so effortlessly that you seldom realize you are watching *acting*. And though she never seems to reach for an effect she nonetheless achieves thunderous ones. Hayes' theatrical magic is of the prestidigitator's kind: she palms the emotional ace in full view of the audience only to present it, in triumph, at the correct moment. And it is this kind of magic that the McGarrigles have. There they are, just sweetly singing along . . . and BAM! they've got you on the ropes. Their art, like Miss Hayes', is made of the small gesture, the minute inflection, the sudden powerful surge.

KATE and Anna McGarrigle's albums are Listening Experiences, which is why I haven't tried to define their songs or lyrics in any great detail. What I invite you, ask you, urge you to do is, please, just listen!

—Peter Reilly

KATE & ANNA MCGARRIGLE: *Pronto Monto*. Kate and Anna McGarrigle (vocals, piano, other instruments); other musicians. *Oh My Heart*; *Side of Fries*; *Just Another Broken Heart*; *NA CL*; *Pronto Monto*; *Stella by Arctis*; *Bundle of Sorrow*; *Come Back Baby*; *Tryin' to Get to You*; *Fixture in the Park*; *Dead Weight*; *Cover Up My Head*. WARNER BROS. BSK 3248 \$7.98, M8 3248 \$7.98, M5 3248 \$7.98.

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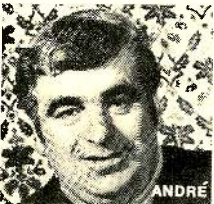
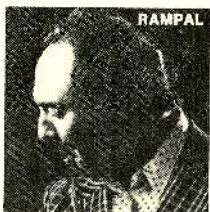
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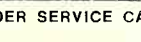
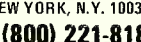
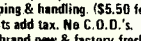
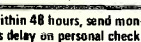
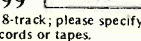
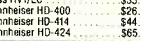
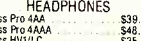
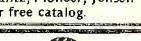
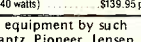
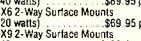
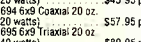
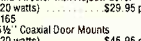
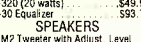
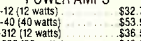
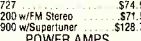
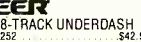
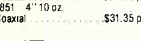
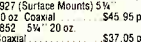
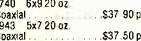
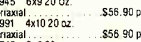
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veal Your Dreams; Knock on Wood; and five others. ELEKTRA 6E-157 \$7.98, ® ET8-157 \$7.98, © TC5-157 \$7.98.

Performance: **Smooth, smoother . . .**
Recording: **Very good**

Jesse Colin Young and this edition of his band have refined their act to the point where they've taken all the suspense out of it. The elements of "American Dreams" range from good (most of the songs) to excellent (Young's vocals), and the thing would be a knockout if it didn't sound so pat. The *American Dreams Suite*, sounds as if Young had his head in the Sixties when he wrote it—although it is good to see someone still showing some faith in lyrics, somebody besides Dylan, that is. But he is neither a very profound nor a particularly deft lyricist, even though his language does have a certain grace. Singing is what he does best, and I don't think it's his singing that makes this one seem canned. It's a combination of things, the sequence of certain melodies and the instrumental riffs attached thereto probably leading the pack. But when it is good, as in *Reveal Your Dreams*, a Young original, it's very good indeed. And, of course, if your thing is vocals, disregard everything else and buy it. N.C.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

NEIL YOUNG: *Comes a Time*. Neil Young (vocals, guitar); Ben Keith (steel guitar); Carl Himmel (drums); Tim Drummond (bass); Spooner Oldham (piano); other musicians. *Goin' Back; Comes a Time; Look Out for My Love; Lotta Love; Peace of Mind*; and five others. REPRISE MSK 2266 \$7.98, ® M8 2266 \$7.98, © M5 2266 \$7.98.

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

"Comes a Time" will pass in the rock environment, I suppose, for Neil Young's country album. It is his simplest, most acoustic, and best produced disc since "Harvest." It is not melodramatic and fancy like "Harvest," however, but down to earth and direct. It is also rather laid-back, not in a country way, but in a way having to do with a specific mood. He doesn't exactly set the tone for it with the line in the first song that goes, "I feel like going back to where there's no place to stay," but he comes close. So the one thing it could use is a little more energy. The place where it has this energy is in a surprisingly good rendition of Ian Tyson's *Four Strong Winds*. Young's roots are partly in Tyson, and this is a country album in the sense that most Canadian albums are a bit country.

It's a good one, anyway. It has the familiar Young Angst hanging over it, but this time with a healthier look on its face, almost rosy-cheeked sometimes. Young sounds healthy, the least zonked-out he's sounded in some time, and his new songs have variety without sacrificing style. *Lotta Love* is the only one that sounds contrived to fit a market (one of the new know-nothing markets), and even there Young has done a more than competent job of writing to specifications. I find it only mildly distasteful. *Goin' Back*, the first song, though poignant, is a bit tedious, so you have to give the album a little time to get to you. When it does, you'll have some rewarding experiences with texture and mood, some real tunes, and the real personality Young puts into his work. N.C.



RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

BIONIC BOOGIE: *Hot Butterfly*. Bionic Boogie (vocals and instrumental). *Chains; When the Shit Hits the Fan; Paradise*; and three others. POLYDOR PD-1-6162 \$7.98, ® 8T1-6162(A) \$7.98, © CT1-6162(A) \$7.98

Performance: **Splited**
Recording: **Fine**

I like Bionic Boogie best when they are on their own. The title song in this new album is sung by guest Luther Vandross, and it is a totally misleading introduction to the record. *Hot Butterfly* isn't a bad song, but it's not disco as far as I'm concerned. So just wait for *Chains*, the album's second song, and for *Paradise* and *Fess Up to the Boogie*. They're all written and arranged by Gregg Diamond, engineered and mixed by Godfrey Diamond, and they are (you guessed it) gems—hard-driving disco with just a touch of erotic fever. Special plaudits to the handclaps on this album, credited to "the Disco Dykes" in the liner notes. E.B.

CHIC: *C'est Chic*. Chic (vocals); instrumental accompaniment. *Chic Cheer; Le Freak; Savoir Faire; Happy Man*; and four others. AT-LANTIC SD 19209 \$7.98, ® TP 19209 \$7.98, © CS 19209 \$7.98.

Performance: **Disappointing**
Recording: **Fine**

No sah, no sah, no sah! Chic rocketed to the top with their very first single, *Dance, Dance, Dance (Yowsah, Yowsah, Yowsah)*, and followed that with another hit, *Everybody Dance*. But they trip badly with their second LP. Monotony has set in in every one of these arrangements.

Worse, the opening song, *Chic Cheer* ("Give me a C," etc.), is so self-serving that it's embarrassing. That's what's wrong with the whole album; it's precious, filled with material that shouts "Look at us! We've made it!" And it's rarely fun to dance to. Two exceptions are the album's best number, *Sometimes You Win*, and about half of the overlong (or underimaginative) *I Want Your Love*, but neither is worth getting the whole package for. E.B.

PARIS CONNECTION. Paris Connection (vocals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Eloise; K's Theme; You've Lost That Loving Feeling; Trident Suite*; and three others. CASABLANCA NBLP 7116 \$7.98, ® NBL8 7116 \$7.98, © NBL5 7116 \$7.98.

Performance: **Splited**
Recording: **Splendid**

In true Alec R. Costandinos fashion, "Paris Connection" is filled with whirling, swirling dance music, soaring voices, electronic

effects, and arrangements that take you up, up, UP! Unfortunately, the songs themselves don't amount to much.

The latest standard-turned-disco, *Unchained Melody*, simple though it is, out-classes every new song here. But it is woven into such a complicated medley of four other songs that it never has a chance to develop into a full-fledged number on its own. Its good moments are my favorites on the entire album. Running a close second are a few bars of *Lansdowne Suite*, a purely instrumental rumba-samba-inflected section of that same song medley. One last quibble: the songs, the sound, and the accent are about as French as hush puppies. *E.B.*

VIVIAN REED: *Another Side*. Vivian Reed (vocals); orchestra. *Start Dancin'*; *Sweet Harmony*; *It's Alright*; *You Came*; and five others. UNITED ARTISTS UA-LA911-H \$7.98, © UA-EA911-H \$7.98, © UA-CA911-H \$7.98.

Performance: **Routine**
Recording: **Fair**

Vivian Reed is the brilliant dancer and singer who shot comet-like to stardom in the original *Bubbling Brown Sugar* and briefly made Broadway seem as bright as it was in the glamorous old days. She deserves a lot better than this, "this" being a routine disco album unimaginatively produced and brimming with hackneyed arrangements and wan gimmicks. The whole unfortunate enterprise droops around her lovely shoulders like a drip-dry feather boa. Forget this one. *P.R.*

DONNA SUMMER: *Live and More* (see *Best of the Month*, page 101)

VILLAGE PEOPLE: *Cruisin'*. Village People (vocals and instrumentals). *Y.M.C.A.*; *Hot Cop*; *My Roomate*; and three others. CASABLANCA NBLP 7118 \$7.98, © NBL8 7118 \$7.98, © NBL5 7118 \$7.98.

Performance: **Relentless**
Recording: **Fine**

I still find the Village People purveying relentlessly driving disco with none of the subtlety in arrangement or variety of melodic invention that makes dancing such fun. But who can sneer at such success as theirs? In truth, the biggies from this third album—*Y.M.C.A.* and the medley of *The Women and I'm a Cruiser*—are both a lot more interesting than *Macho Man*, the group's first super-hit. (True, too, they trade off of the same aggressively gay sensibility.) But the whole second side suffers from Victor Willis' invariable shouting delivery of silly lyrics backed up by monotonous, thumping vocals from the rest of the People. "Cruisin'" left me exhausted, as much from the tiring, tiresome arrangements as from dancing. *E.B.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

DEBORAH WASHINGTON: *Any Way You Want It*. Deborah Washington (vocals); vocal and instrumental accompaniment. *Love Shadow*; *Standing in the Shadow of Love*; *Fire*; *Ready or Not*; and four others. ARIOLA SW 50040 \$7.98, © 8XW 50040 \$7.98.

Performance: **Promising**
Recording: **Satisfactory**

This may be standard disco fare in its familiar pounding beat and formula instrumentals, but

it is lifted above the ordinary by the teasingly appealing quality of Deborah Washington's vocals. She has a high, light voice that gracefully dances about the notes. One of the most appropriate selections here is *Baby Love*, an early vehicle for Diana Ross, whom Ms. Washington frequently resembles in her breathy sensuality. There are no dogs among the songs, which are a pleasant mix of stompers and sweeter fare. A trace of reggae on the title track extends the limited mold into which Ms. Washington has been cast, indicating that her musical potential is considerable. *P.G.*

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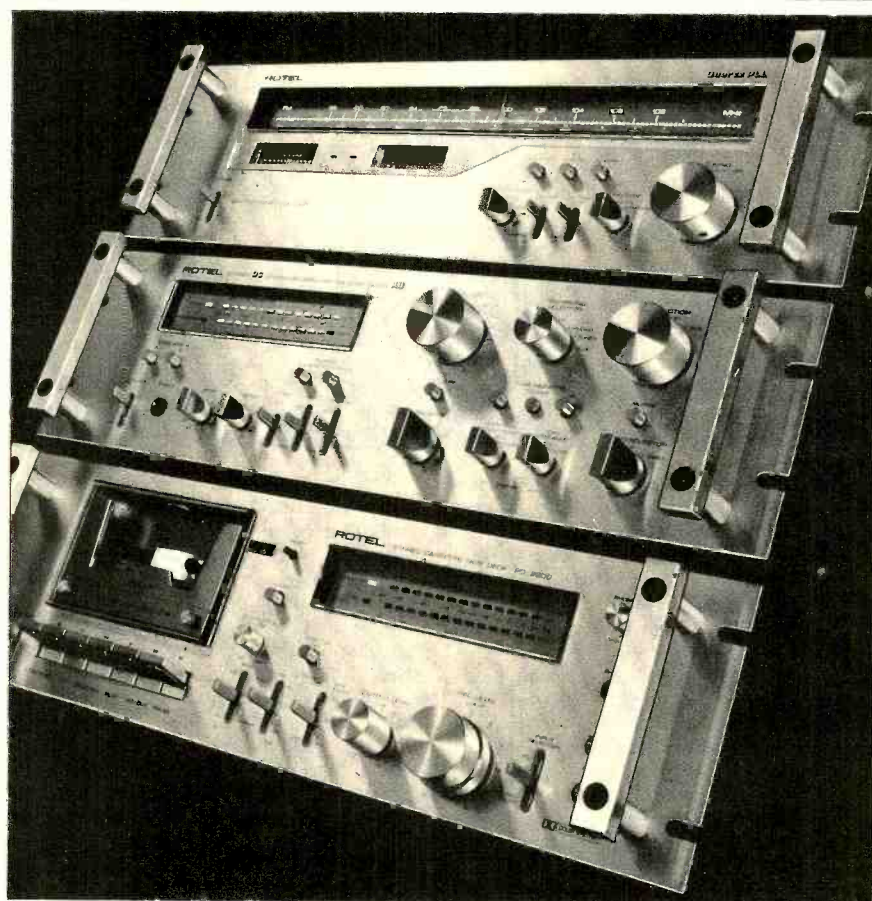
● **MIQUEL BROWN: *Symphony of Love*.** POLYDOR PD1-6183 \$7.98, © 8T1-6183 \$7.98, © CT1-6183 \$7.98.

● **GLORIA GAYNOR: *Love Tracks*.** POLYDOR PD1-6184 \$7.98, © 8T1-6184 \$7.98, © CT1-6184 \$7.98.

● **VOYAGE: *Fly Away*.** MARLIN TK MA2225 \$7.98, © CT2225 \$7.98.

(List compiled by John Harrison.)

(Continued on page 127)



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THE acoustic jazz guitar—which is to say the American guitar, with a few notable foreign exceptions—has had a distinguished and exciting history, but one that has been largely overlooked, partly because in jazz groups the instrument has usually been assigned a rhythmic-support role with only occasional solos. There would really *be* no jazz guitar today (or rock guitar either, for that matter) were it not for the efforts of several pioneers whose names are now known mostly to specialists and connoisseurs: Eddie Lang, Dick McDonough, Carl Kress, Lonnie Johnson, Tony Mottola, and George Van Eps. All of them are celebrated in a series of three reissues on Yazoo Records that anyone who calls himself a jazz fan ought to own.

placing the banjo as the rhythm instrument in jazz orchestras in the late Twenties.

It has been said that Lang didn't "swing," and he probably didn't possess the rhythmic feeling inherent in many jazzmen. But he was not unduly concerned about this—nor should we be. Lang was more interested in the harmonic and compositional potential of the guitar and, in an almost atavistic sense, in the *honor* of the instrument. He thought like an Italian and played like an American, and while his music may not always have been "pure jazz," it was always successful as music in ways that antedate and transcend jazz.

Carl Kress shared Lang's compositional sense and was almost his equal in technique. They recorded two duets in 1932—*Pickin' My*

adding an extra "top" string to his instrument), agility, good ideas, and a thrilling verve. He was one of the most popular blues singers and guitarists of the Twenties, and in jazz he was admired by Armstrong and Ellington, who used him on their early recordings. Johnson was too talented to be *merely* a blues guitarist, but he never quite made the commitment to a broader view of jazz, electing to think mainly in blues terms. He called his duets with Eddie Lang his "greatest musical experience," and they are indeed fascinating: Johnson emotes while Lang thinks (a kind of Watson/Holmes relationship). Not the least of the pleasures in listening to their duets is hearing how two musical poets learned from each other. O Pioneers! —Joel Vance

Jazz Guitar Pioneers

Left to right: Lonnie Johnson, Eddie Lang, and Carl Kress



Photo Files

Nearly all the selections in these albums are originals, and it is impossible to miss the pride and confidence with which they are presented. The playing of these artists reveals a love for their instrument—and a fidelity to it—that is almost entirely lacking in later jazz and rock musicians associated with the guitar.

The most important of these reissues, both historically and musically, is the one devoted entirely to performances by and with Eddie Lang. Born in South Philadelphia in 1902 as Salvatore Massaro, Lang took his professional name from that of a high-school basketball star. His schoolmate and musical pal was an audacious genius, the first and greatest jazz violinist, the late Joe Venuti. By the mid-Twenties the two had become a professional team, inventing "chamber-music jazz" as they recorded. As boys they had played waltzes, tarantellas, and classical pieces, and this experience gave the duo a technique and a catholic taste unmatched by other jazzmen before or since.

"Jazz Guitar Virtuoso" includes almost all the recordings on which Lang soloed. The range is remarkable, from a Rachmaninoff prelude to three astonishing duets (out of the ten he made) with black blues guitarist Lonnie Johnson, recordings in which Lang masqueraded as "Blind Willie Dunn," plus waltzes, two avant-garde duets with Carl Kress, a love song to his wife, various pop items, and such Lang originals as the aptly titled *Perfect*. To hear these recordings is to understand how Lang, despite his untimely death in 1933, for decades continued to dominate jazz-guitar playing and composing. Indeed, it was Lang's success and prestige that were mainly responsible for the guitar's re-

placement of the banjo as the rhythm instrument in jazz orchestras in the late Twenties. Both are included in "Jazz Guitar Virtuoso," the latter in a previously unreleased take, and *Feeling My Way* is also in one of the other reissues, the collection "Pioneers of the Jazz Guitar.") Both men were adept at single-string lead, chord/rhythm lead, and chord/single-string support. Kress' usual partner was the frisky and wistful Dick McDonough (heard here on "Pioneers" and the third album, "Fun on the Frets"), who played lead with an elfin sense of humor. When McDonough died in 1938 Kress was devastated, but he later teamed up with Tony Mottola, who played a sprightly and inventive lead to Kress' rhythmic eminence through the early Forties. George Van Eps, featured in four tracks on "Fun on the Frets," studied with Kress and evolved a legato style—termed "orchestral guitar"—that was brisk, deft, and charming.

Among the minor figures represented on these albums is Nick Lucas, noted more as a vocal star than as an instrumentalist. His *Picking the Guitar* and *Teasing the Frets* here are 1932 rerecordings of his decade-older originals, the first solo semi-jazz recordings of the instrument ever made. They are "novelty" pieces, admirable mainly for technique. A word should also be said for the team of John Cali and Tony Guttuso, who played in the Kress/McDonough style but with more emphasis on sheer energy and dash. Despite frequent references to their models, their work can stand on its own.

Finally, there's Lonnie Johnson, who was certainly a major figure in American music, but not a major jazz guitarist. He had a distinctive sting-and-hum tone (due in part to his

PIONEERS OF THE JAZZ GUITAR. Lonnie Johnson/Eddie Lang: *Handful of Riffs; Hot Fingers; Have to Change Keys to Play These Blues*. Eddie Lang/Carl Kress: *Feeling My Way*. Nick Lucas: *Picking the Guitar; Teasing the Frets*. John Cali/Tony Guttuso: *A Study in Brown; Hittin' on All Six; Satan Takes a Holiday*. Carl Kress/Dick McDonough: *Heat Wave; Stage Fright; Chicken à la Swing*. Dick McDonough: *Dick Bernstein Ramble; Chasing a Buck*. YAZOO 1057 \$7.98.

JAZZ GUITAR VIRTUOSO. Eddie Lang: *Prelude (Rachmaninoff Op. 3, No. 2); Rainbow Dreams; April Kisses; I'll Never Be the Same; Eddie's Twister; Perfect; A Little Love, a Little Kiss; Melody Man's Dream; Church Street Sobbin' Blues*. Eddie Lang/Carl Kress: *Pickin' My Way; Feeling My Way*. Eddie Lang/Lonnie Johnson: *Blue Guitars; Blue Room; Midnight Call Blues*. YAZOO 1059 \$7.98.

FUN ON THE FRETS (EARLY JAZZ GUITAR). Carl Kress/Tony Mottola: *Fun on the Frets; Jazz in G; Sarong Number; The Camel Walks; Blonde on the Loose; Serenade; Squeeze Box Swing; Sharp as a Tack; Nobody's Idea; Boogie Woogie for Guitar*. Carl Kress/Dick McDonough: *Danzon; I've Got a Feeling You're Fooling*. Carl Kress: *Peg Leg Shuffle; Sutton Mutton (Taking It on the Lamb)*. George Van Eps: *I Wrote It for Jo; Kay's Fantasy; Tea for Two; Once in a While*. YAZOO 1061 \$7.98.

(Available by mail from Yazoo Records, 245 Waverly Place, New York, N.Y. 10014. Allow 50¢ per disc for postage and handling.)

JAZZ



RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

ART BLAKEY: *In This Korner*. Art Blakey (drums); the Jazz Messengers (instrumentals). *Pamela*; *Dark Side*; *Light Side*; *Blues for Two*; and three others. CONCORD JAZZ CJ-68 \$7.98.

Performance: **Hard-boiling jazz**
Recording: **Excellent remote**

If one were to list the musicians who were at one time or another members of Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers, it would be a most impressive assemblage of names. Chances are that you have never heard of Valery Ponomarev, Robert Watson, David Schnitter, James Williams, or Dennis Irwin, the current members of Blakey's group, but it's a safe bet that you will hear a great deal about these gentlemen in the future.

This album was recorded last May before an audience at Keystone Korner, a San Francisco club. It swings consistently and hard, from the Blakey solo that opens it to *Blues for Two*, the Ponomarev original that ends it. There are outstanding solo and ensemble performances by all six men, especially tenor saxophonist David Schnitter, who has been a Jazz Messenger since 1974, and pianist James Williams, a marvel who takes no back seat to such illustrious predecessors as Horace Silver, Bobby Timmons, and Cedar Walton. Williams is also a noteworthy composer, as exemplified by *Unlimited* and the whimsical *In This Korner*. He'll go far, and so should you, if you have to, to get this album. C.A.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

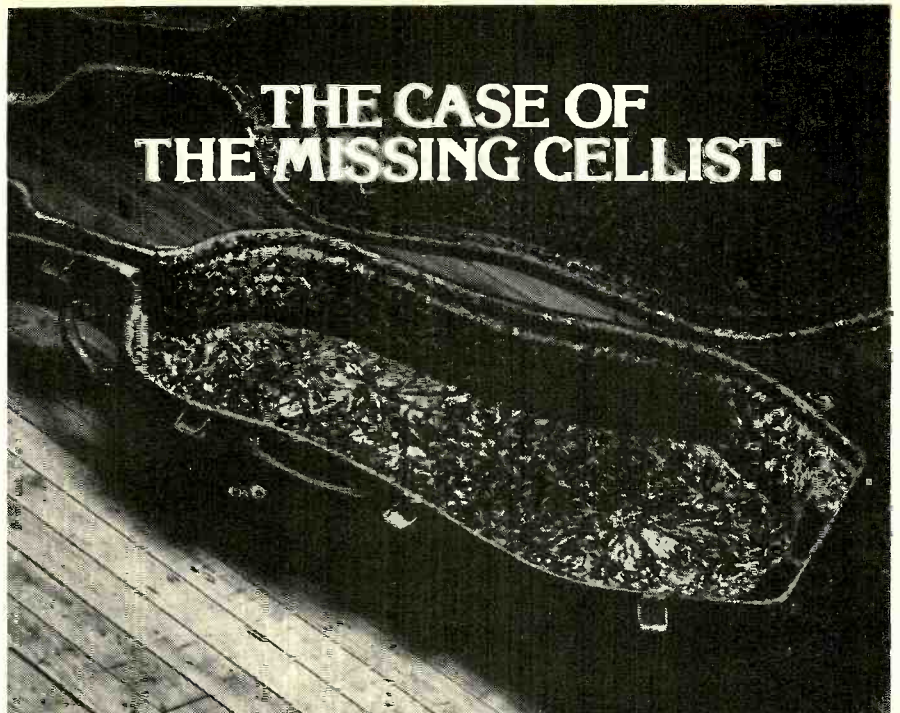
RON CARTER: *A Song for You*. Ron Carter (acoustic and piccolo basses); Kenny Barron, Leon Pendarvis (piano); Jay Berliner (guitars); Jack DeJohnette (drums); Ralph McDonald (percussion); other musicians. *El Ojo de Dios*; *Someday My Prince Will Come*; *A Quiet Place*; and three others. MILESTONE M-9086 \$7.98, © 8161-9086(H) \$7.95, © 5161-9086(H) \$7.95.

Performance: **Still batting a thousand**
Recording: **Excellent**

With "A Song for You," his fourth Milestone album, bassist extraordinaire Ron Carter offers further proof that "commercial" jazz doesn't have to be banal. Carter's music—whether the quartet playing it is augmented with woodwinds (as on his "Peg Leg" album), or, as it is here, with cellos—is as accessible as an André Kostelanetz footlight favorite, yet it has all the sophistication of a Miles Davis quintet date. If any music is going to win fusion fans over to the real thing, this ought to do it.

Produced and arranged by Carter himself, "A Song for You" is skimpy as far as running time goes (under thirty-five minutes), but ev-

THE CASE OF THE MISSING CELLIST.



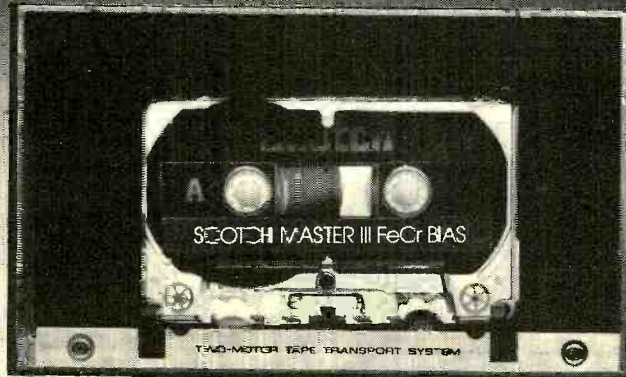
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ery precious minute is filled with beautiful sounds that virtually demand repeated listening. Of the quartet's other three members only pianist Kenny Barron is present, but guitarist Jay Berliner is on hand to match the contribution he made to "Peg Leg," and the percussion is handled tastefully by Jack DeJohnette and Ralph McDonald. Barron, the least dispensable quartet member, does not appear on *A Song for You*, but he is sublime on the rest of the tracks, and the cellos, though more prominent than the woodwinds on the last album, keep an appropriate distance. By way of multiple tracking, Carter walks his bass behind his own unique, often twangy solos. Some jazz purists frowned on such technical ploys, but Carter's sound is a natural. C.A.

CHICK COREA: *Circulus*. Chick Corea (piano, vibes, bass marimba, percussion); Anthony Braxton (clarinet, contrabass clarinet, soprano and alto saxophones); Dave Holland (bass, guitar, percussion); Barry Altschul (drums, bass marimba, percussion). *Quartet Piece No. 1; Percussion Piece; Drone*; and two others. BLUE NOTE BN-LA882-J2 two discs \$9.98.

Performance: **Half bad**
Recording: **Good**

Just why this music has been released in Blue Note's Jazz Classic Series is not easy to understand, and just why half of it has been released at all is even more perplexing. Except for *Drone*, which takes up side one and features a trio, this is an album by Circle, the celebrated quartet whose February 1971 Paris concert (ECM 1018/19 ST) truly is classic. Recorded in August 1970, the quartet sides actually represent Circle's birth, which was evidently not an easy one. *Quartet Piece No. 1* hangs together and has an air of seriousness about it, but what follows (on sides three and four, *Quartet Piece No. 2, Quartet Piece No. 3, and Percussion Piece*) is just so much sophomoric nonsense, bits and pieces of sound that have Chick Corea, Anthony Braxton, Dave Holland, and Barry Altschul sounding more like music-school dropouts than the professionals they are.

Drone, recorded without Braxton almost four months earlier, is the album's saving grace, a twenty-two-minute exercise in musical compatibility that yields peak performances from all three men, but is dominated by Corea. Listening to the marvelously intricate, brilliant piano improvisation on *Drone*, it seems both incredible and sad that this is the same artist who was later to assault our ears (and intelligence) with a group called Return to Forever, but even that group is to be preferred over the noise that makes up the second half of "Circulus." C.A.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

DEXTER GORDON: *Manhattan Symphonie*. Dexter Gordon (tenor saxophone); George Cables (piano); Rufus Reid (bass); Eddie Gladden (drums). *As Time Goes By; Moment's Notice; Body and Soul*; and three others. COLUMBIA JC 35608 \$7.98, ® JCA 35608 \$7.98, © JCT 35608 \$7.98.

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

You would think the Columbia people would have electrified Dexter Gordon by now, but it

seems that it is he who has electrified Columbia with his playing, at least to the extent that we now have the label's third Gordon release, a first-class quartet session of enduring quality. With additional releases by such groups as the Heath Brothers and the Woody Shaw Quintet, and promises of more unadulterated sessions by the likes of Arthur Blythe, Columbia just might redeem itself for having encouraged some of our top jazz men to walk the fusion plank.

Dexter Gordon's two previous Columbia albums featured a quintet and an eleven-piece band, respectively, so there is more Dexter in this new one, and there is nothing wrong with that. The born-again saxophonist, from whom both John Coltrane and Sonny Rollins learned a trick or two, might—if the label continues to push his records—inspire a new generation of players to go the jazz route. His work on "Manhattan Symphonie" is certainly among his best efforts in recent years, and the quartet setting shows his artistry off most impressively. My particular favorite is *Body and Soul*, the 1930 ballad Coleman Hawkins turned into a tenor classic in 1939. Gordon gives it an altogether different translation with a wonderful, unaccompanied final statement. The rhythm section keeps up with Gordon, and pianist George Cables delivers some of his most impressive work to date. He is someone we can expect a great deal from, both as a player and composer, in the future. An excellent disc. C.A.

HEATH BROTHERS: *Passing Thru . . .*
(see Best of the Month, page 105)

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

EARL HINES: "Fatha" *Plays Hits He Missed*. Earl Hines (piano); Red Callender (bass); Bill Douglass (drums). *Birdland; Blue Monk; Humoresque; Squeeze Me/Ain't Misbehavin'; Sophisticated Lady*; and three others. M&K REALTIME ⊕ RT-105 \$15.

Performance: **Exquisite**
Recording: **Superior**

I consider Earl Hines the greatest jazz pianist of all time, in any style, and it amazes me that he continues to be so some fifty years after he started. The conception, imagination, technique, and majesty are all still there in his playing, which is still firm, still wondrous.

It seems marvelously appropriate to assign Hines material not ordinarily included in his repertoire while using the direct-to-disc method of recording the performances—in effect making records the way they did in the 1920's when Hines first began recording. The sound is excellent and Hines' performances exquisite. This is billed as "limited edition" (as all direct-to-disc records must be), so I advise you to get your copy fast. J.V.

WOODY SHAW: *Stepping Stones*. Woody Shaw (cornet, flugelhorn); Carter Jefferson (soprano and tenor saxophones); Onaje Allan Gumbs (piano); Clint Houston (bass); Victor Lewis (drums). *In a Capricornian Way; Seventh Avenue; It All Comes Back to You*; and two others. COLUMBIA JC 35560 \$7.98, ® JCA 35560 \$7.98, © JCT 35560 \$7.98.

Performance: **Inspired**
Recording: **Very good remote**

This is good, straightforward jazz from the same Woody Shaw quintet that gave us the

excellent album "Rosewood" (Columbia JC 35309) early last year. This time we hear the group in live performances at New York's Village Vanguard last August.

The quintet offers a winning combination of technical skill, imaginative and well-constructed solos, tight ensemble work, and spirit. But annotator Jim Fishel—who, it should be noted, is on Columbia's staff—stretches loyalty a bit too far when he suggests that the sound of this quintet "could be a new musical direction." It is a good, unadulterated sound that represents the more conservative type of modern jazz well, but there is nothing innovative about it. C.A.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

DICK WELLSTOOD/MARTY GROSZ: *Take Me to That Land of Jazz.* Dick Wellstood (piano); Marty Grosz (guitar, vocals); Sam Parkins (clarinet, tenor saxophone); Mickey Golizzio (bass); Tommy Benford (drums). *Snowy Morning Blues; We're in the Money* (two versions); *T'Ain't No Sin; Isn't Love the Strangest Thing?; Sleep;* and five others. AVIVA 6001 \$7.98 (from Aviva Records, P.O. Box 156, Hicksville, N.Y. 11802).

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

Besides being gifted, dedicated musicians, pianist Dick Wellstood and guitarist Marty Grosz have in common a profound affinity for the music of Fats Waller. Teaming them up seems most logical, and it was first done for a recording session (for the defunct Jolly Rogers label) twenty-eight years ago. For some strange reason, however, the two were not to get together again until 1977, when they did a tribute to Fats Waller at Michael's Pub in New York. That led to an as yet unissued album for Chiaroscuro and, shortly thereafter, this delightful collaboration on Aviva.

Grosz's bouncy acoustic guitar—a propellant of the group Soprano Summit—is a perfect partner for Wellstood's Wallerish piano, and to hear them romp and stomp their way through a well-chosen program of tunes extracted from the past is simply exhilarating. Aiding them rhythmically is bassist Mickey Golizzio, whose father, Matty, played guitar behind Frank Sinatra in the early Fifties, and Tommy Benford—now approaching seventy-four—who participated in the aforementioned Jolly Rogers session and counts both Jelly Roll Morton and Fats Waller among his past associates.

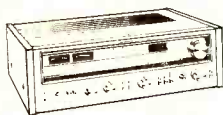
Rounding out the quintet is Sam Parkins, who put aside playing music in 1967 to become a record producer. Judging from his clarinet and tenor-saxophone performances here, however, he should put his stopwatch aside more often. Parkins' years as a performer were mostly spent playing in Dixieland bands, but his musical tastes are catholic. He had not played in eight months when he was called to do this album, but one would never know it; he has a wonderful, rich tone, especially on the tenor, and he plays with imagination, swing, and joy. Indeed, joy is the key word here, for this album is permeated with it. Add to the rollicking music Marty Grosz's characteristically humorous interpretations of such off-beat songs as *T'Ain't No Sin* and *I Nearly Let Love Go Slipping Through My Fingers* and you have an album of resounding, refreshing echoes of an era when jazz musicians actually enjoyed themselves. C.A.

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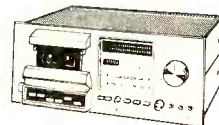
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CLASSICAL DISCS AND TAPES

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

BEETHOVEN: *Fidelio* (see Best of the Month, page 99)

BOCCHERINI: *Concerto No. 2, in D Major, for Cello and Strings* (see VIVALDI)

BRAHMS: *Symphony No. 2, in D Major, Op. 73*. Chicago Symphony Orchestra, James Levine cond. RCA ARL1-2864 \$7.98, © ARS1-2864 \$7.98, © ARK1-2864 \$7.98.

Performance: **Well thought-out**
Recording: **Good**

BRAHMS: *Symphony No. 2, in D Major, Op. 73; Variations on a Theme of Haydn, Op. 56a*. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Karl Böhm cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 960 \$8.98, © 3300 960 \$8.98.

Performance: **Variations better**
Recording: **Better in Variations**

James Levine, with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, has now completed his first traversal of the Brahms symphonies on record; I am sure that it will not be his last. By and large, this performance of the D Major is well turned out—more convincing in conception and execution than his First, which is the only other one of his cycle that I have heard. If the opening pages seem a trifle cool, the lambency of the music shines forth ever more warmly as things progress, and in the first-movement coda, with its wonderful horn solo, Le-

vine really comes into his interpretive own. The slow movement comes off very well indeed, with Levine rightly making the most of its dramatic aspects. The two final movements are handled with neatness, dispatch, and no little brilliance. The recording is fine.

Eighty-four-year-old Karl Böhm regrettably offers an old man's account of the Brahms D Major, stressing the autumnal aspects of the first two movements. The slow movement is certainly *adagio*—without the *non troppo* indicated by Brahms. Things liven up momentarily in the third movement, where Böhm elicits some beautifully perky playing in the *presto* middle section. The symphony performance is presumably from the integral Deutsche Grammophon album of 1976, while that of the Haydn Variations, added to this disc as a filler, was done at another time. Not only does the violin tone have more body than in the symphony recording, but the performance (except for a rather heavy-handed Variation No. 4) has more life altogether, with a good many especially felicitous moments. *D.H.*

COPLAND: *El Salón México; Rodeo, Four Dance Episodes; Appalachian Spring, Suite*. Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Eduardo Mata cond. RCA ARL1-2862 \$7.98, © ARS1-2862 \$7.98, © ARK1-2862 \$7.98.

Performance: **Crisp and trim**
Recording: **Slightly cramped**

The choice of Copland repertoire for this disc is appropriate in more ways than one: Eduardo Mata's senior compatriot, the late Carlos Chávez, conducted the world première of *El Salón México* in Mexico City in 1937, and the first recording of the *Rodeo* episodes was done by the Dallas Symphony Orchestra during the Antal Dorati regime in the late 1940's. Mata chooses to emphasize the poetry rather than the facile brashness of Copland's south-of-the-border counterpart to Chabrier's *España*, and, on the whole, it works. The same holds true for much of the *Rodeo* music until the final *Hoedown*, which Mata and his players bring off with tremendous verve. The *Appalachian Spring* music is the familiar concert version, and here Mata tries for leanness of

texture and rhythmic tautness, much to the benefit of the music in its symphonic guise. There is, of course, considerable competition from Leonard Bernstein and Copland himself in their recordings of these pieces, but this is the only single-disc coupling of all three at present. RCA's recording is clean-cut, slightly lacking in string body—which may be inherent in the orchestra itself—and just a mite lacking in acoustic spaciousness, a quality that also can affect the apparent body of string tone. *D.H.*

DVOŘÁK: *Four Romantic Pieces, Op. 75* (see Collections—Sergiu Luca)

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

G. GABRIELI: *Sacrae Symphoniae (1597). Canzoni II, III, and VII; Sonata Octavi Toni; Sonata Pian' e Forte. Canzoni et Sonate (1615). Canzoni I, IV, VII, and VIII; Sonate XIX and XXI*. London Cornett and Sackbut Ensemble, Andrew Parrott cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON ARCHIV 2533 406 \$8.98.

Performance: **Glorious**
Recording: **Dry**

Ah, the sackbut! What a loss to the language when it became the trombone, and what a loss to the ear when its velvety sound became strident and brassy! Now you can hear nine sackbuts playing beautifully in tune, with perfect ensemble, and with a musical sensitivity equal to that of a body of strings. But that is not all: add four cornetts for a clarion upper register. The cornett, a wooden-bodied instrument capped by a brass mouthpiece, has traditionally been the scourge of early-music performing. As attested by the first years of its appearance on records, it can be excruciatingly out of tune, raucous to the point of turning one's teeth around in their sockets, and musically stiff-necked. On this disc, however, the cornetts put on a good show even if now and then there is a rather broad pitch fringe. The sackbut and cornett ensemble has been supplanted here by Baroque strings, dulcian, theorbo, and organ. The resultant sonorities are rich and noble and bring off these multi-

Explanation of symbols:

- Ⓜ = reel-to-reel stereo tape
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The first listing is the one reviewed; other formats, if available, follow it.

grouped works of Giovanni Gabrieli in a thrilling manner.

One tends to think that once one has heard one Venetian canzona, one has heard them all. Part of this attitude is, of course, due to conductors who *treat* them as though they were all alike. Andrew Parrott sees each sonata or canzona as an individual work and brings out its unique character. The range of moods is remarkable, moving from the somber colors of the *Sonata Pian' e Forte* to the high-spirited rhythms of the *Canzon III Septimi Toni à 8*. Although the engineers have beautifully caught Gabrieli's antiphonal effects, always a delight to hear in stereo, the sound is rather too dry to create a true blend of the various groups. Recording in a church would have helped the blend, and it would certainly have been appropriate for these works written for St. Mark's. Nonetheless, this is one of the finest records of the grand Baroque available today. Let us hope that the cornetts and sackbuts will join up with one of London's fine choral groups and give us some of Gabrieli's motets. S.L.

GLAZUNOV: Concerto for Saxophone and Orchestra. Lev Mikhailov (saxophone); ensemble of soloists of the All-Union Radio and Television, Alexander Korneyev cond. **Quartet for Saxophones in B-flat Major, Op. 109.** Lev Mikhailov (soprano saxophone); Alexander Oseichuk (alto saxophone); Yuri Vorontsov (tenor saxophone); Vladimir Eremin (baritone saxophone). ODYSSEY/MELODIYA Y 35205 \$3.98.

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

Russian Romantic saxophones? It is easy to forget that the saxophone was invented in the mid-nineteenth century to enrich—I almost said “lushen up”—the rather crisp sound of symphony woodwinds. Not that it ever caught on in that guise; it was the marching band and, later, jazz that brought the sax into its own.

This is Russian Romantic music, all right, but it was written in the 1930's in Paris by an old, bitter man whose heyday had long since passed. The concerto, by far the better of the two works, was written for Sigurd Rascher, who has done as much as anybody to make the saxophone “respectable.” (The second professional review I ever wrote was of a concert by Rascher; too bad *he* didn't record the work.) The Russian Lev Mikhailov is also a very respectable player, and this odd Soviet recording must rate at least a footnote in the history of Russian Romanticism. As for the Saxophone Quartet, I will say that it provides one of the most horrendous ensemble sounds it has ever been my misfortune to hear. If you can get past that sound and the unbelievably anachronistic effect of hearing Brahmsian Russian music of 1932 played on saxophones—well, I suppose there is some musical interest there. E.S.

HINDEMITH: Das Marienleben. Roxolana Roslak (soprano); Glenn Gould (piano). COLUMBIA M2 34597 two discs \$15.96.

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

“... I firmly believe that *Das Marienleben* in its original form is the greatest song cycle ever written.” So writes Glenn Gould in the liner notes to his recording of the work with

the Ukrainian-Canadian soprano Roxolana Roslak. I don't think very many lieder enthusiasts will be ready to push aside *Die Schöne Müllerin* or *Frauenliebe und Leben* (or *Winterreise?*). Nevertheless, whatever its difficulties and shortcomings, this is one of the most powerful vocal works of the twentieth century.

These settings of poems from Rainer Maria Rilke's *Life of Mary* were originally composed in 1923 in Hindemith's most intense and free early style. In spite of the fame that the difficult cycle enjoyed, in 1948 Hindemith revised—actually rewrote—most of it in line with his later notions about coherence, practicality, and comprehensibility. Informed opinion has always favored the original, however,

and Glenn Gould makes a very persuasive case for it in his notes and in his performance. Ms. Roslak does not have a tremendously beautiful voice, but she is a sensitive, highly musical singer who makes this rather anguished literary poetry surprisingly lyrical. Indeed, it is clear from the fluency of this performance that a great deal of the pain we used to hear in this music was actually in the struggle to perform it! Nothing like that here. Everything is so beautifully performed that I almost hate to add that I wasn't overwhelmed. With the anguish and exaltation subordinated to lyricism, the work seems less moving than I remember it. E.S.

(Continued overleaf)



Pollini's Beethoven

ARTUR SCHNABEL's teacher, the great Theodor Leschetizky, is supposed to have told him: “You will never be a pianist; you are too much a musician.” I had to wonder, after hearing Maurizio Pollini's extraordinary presentation of Beethoven's last sonatas, what Leschetizky would have said of this pianist. Pianistically and interpretively, his performances are staggering; all things considered, I do not think any of the five sonatas has been better served on records—though, of course, they may have been served with similar distinction in different ways. These performances of the Opp. 109 and 110 sonatas were first issued on Deutsche Grammophon 2530 645 more than two years ago; reviewing the disc in the December 1976 STEREO REVIEW, David Hall cited Pollini's “linear purity and dramatic volatility,” and these are certainly operative terms for the three new performances as well. One is struck by the exceptional clarity and balance in Pollini's playing, his perfectly graded dynamics and rhythmic precision, his marvelous tone even in the thunderous passages. This is pianism

at its most impressive, but what makes it more impressive still is the exalted, probing, and poetic—if somewhat objective—musical approach it serves. Pollini does not approach the sonatas as some mystic rite; he seems to distill the message out of the pianistic medium itself. He does not allow himself to be carried away but remains always in control, following a very clear vision. This sort of poise and objectivity may strike some listeners as cold, but to my mind there is no question about Pollini's deep and extraordinarily productive involvement. Emil Gilels, hardly less patrician, manages to show a warmer heart in Op. 101 (DG 2530 253), and Vladimir Ashkenazy is a bit more expansive and eloquent in the arietta of Op. 111 (London CS 6843), but Pollini is just as compelling in his way, and in the *Hammerklavier*, a work which has had its share of exceptional recordings, I think he is simply all-surpassing. There is surely nothing that could be called cold or remote in his expressive playing of the slow movement, and the finale in particular is a marvel of both virtuosity and poetry, with dramatic points made by the most subtle shadings of tone and a judicious use of power giving the impression of limitless reserves.

WHEN we return to, or simply remind ourselves of, the aforementioned Gilels and Ashkenazy discs, Solomon's superb performances of these five sonatas plus the *Waldstein* in Turnabout Ⓜ THIS-65068/70, or Schnabel's recently unearthed American recordings of Opp. 109 and 110 (Victrola Ⓜ AVM1-1410), we have to remember that at this level of music-making comparisons are meaningful not in terms of better and best but only for the different light each masterly approach throws on the many-faceted subject. Pollini's light is brilliant in the best sense, and its power and clarity are underscored by DG's well-nigh perfect reproduction and flawless surfaces. This is an expensive set, but it is one that no one who takes this music seriously should be without. —Richard Freed

BEETHOVEN: Piano Sonatas: No. 28, in A Major, Op. 101; No. 29, in B-flat Major, Op. 106 (“Hammerklavier”); No. 30, in E Major, Op. 109; No. 31, in A-flat Major, Op. 110; No. 32, in C Minor, Op. 111. Maurizio Pollini (piano). DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 709 072 three discs \$26.94, © 3371 033 \$26.94.

HINDEMITH: *Sonata for Unaccompanied Viola, Op. 25, No. 1* (see SHOSTAKOVICH)

JANÁČEK: *Sonata for Violin and Piano* (see Collections—Sergiu Luca)

KETĚLBAY: *In a Monastery Garden; In a Persian Market; In a Chinese Temple Garden; In the Moonlight; In the Mystic Land of Egypt; Gypsy Lad; The Clock and the Dresden Figures; Bells Across the Meadow; Sanctuary of the Heart.* Vernon Midgley (tenor); Jean Temperley (mezzo-soprano); Leslie Pearson (piano); Ambrosian Singers; Philharmonia Orchestra, John Lanchbery cond. ANGEL □ S-37483 \$7.98.

Performance: **Too lavish and too late**
Recording: **Superb**

Way back when, longer ago than you would believe, at P.S. 173 in the upper reaches of Manhattan Island, the high point of our musical-appreciation sessions in the school auditorium was invariably Albert W. KetĚlbey's *In a Persian Market*. I didn't know then, and probably neither did anybody else at P.S. 173, that his real name was William Aston, that he was born in Birmingham, England, in 1875, or that he composed a piano sonata when he was

eleven, was for years musical director at London's Vaudeville Theater, wrote several comic operas, and at one time headed the Columbia Gramophone Company. I knew only that he had written *In a Persian Market*, with all that local color, and that was enough for me. There was a time when I actually liked it almost better than *In the Hall of the Mountain King*. Had I known there were such truffles as *In a Monastery Garden, In a Chinese Temple Garden, In the Moonlight, and In the Mystic Land of Egypt* to be chosen from the same musical chocolate box, I would have been beside myself with joy.

Now, some of the best musicians in England have assembled to record all these and more KetĚlbey "masterworks" in all their atmospheric glory and in overwhelming quadrasonic sound. The Ambrosian Singers chant the monks' "Kyrie eleison" in the monastery garden, the Philharmonia Orchestra (under John Lanchbery, no less) plays its heart out, birds twitter in the trees, bells tinkle in the Chinese temple garden and toll out over the meadow. Too late! The Maxfield Parrish of music, with his primitive tonal palette and cloying melodies, meant his stuff for the more innocent ears of another day. The composer himself retired to the Isle of Wight, where he

lived until his death in 1959. The silent films that made lavish use of his tone poems have gone into reruns on public television. Maybe someday there will arise a new generation ready for *In a Persian Market*. Or is it already here? Hark! Methinks I hear the camel drivers, and the beautiful princess on a curtained litter being ushered in by a perfumed melody on cello and clarinet P.K.

MAHLER: *Symphony No. 1* (see Best of the Month, page 100)

MOZART: *Clarinet Concerto in A Major (K. 622); Sinfonia Concertante in E-flat Major for Wind Quartet and Orchestra (K. 297b).* Dieter Klöcker (clarinet); Gernot Schmalfluss (oboe); Hermann Baumann (horn); Karl Otto Hartmann (bassoon); Salzburg Mozarteum Orchestra, Leopold Hager cond. TELEFUNKEN 6.42131 \$8.98.

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

These are certainly agreeable performances, though I do not find them quite as satisfying as some others. Dieter Klöcker is a fluent soloist in the Clarinet Concerto, and Hermann Baumann's presence in the Sinfonia Concertante is an indication of the high level of the entire solo quartet. For his part, conductor Leopold Hager has both works neatly in hand: tempos are extremely well judged and the string body sounds just the right strength. The recording itself is very good, too, though the soloists are a little farther forward than ideal. If the coupling (which seems to be unique in the current catalog) is especially appealing, the disc may be recommended safely enough, but otherwise I would prefer the more eloquent recording of the Clarinet Concerto by Gervase de Peyer and Peter Maag on London CS 6178 and the more ebullient and subtle, gorgeously recorded version of the Sinfonia Concertante under Neville Marriner on Philips 6500 380. R.F.

MOZART: *Concert Arias. Aspri Rimorsi Atroci (K. 432); Mentre Ti Lascio, O Figlia (K. 513); Alcandro, Io Confesso . . . Non So d'Onde Viene (K. 512); Ich Möchte Wohl der Kaiser Sein (K. 539); Per Questa Bella Mano (K. 612); Un Bacio di Mano (K. 541); Rivolgete a Lui lo Sguardo (K. 584); Io Ti Lascio, O Cara, Addio (K. anh. 245).* József Gregor (bass); Szeged Symphony Orchestra, Pál Tamás cond. HUNGAROTON SLPX 11870 \$7.98 (from Qualiton Records, Ltd., 65-37 Austin Street, Rego Park, N.Y. 11374).

Performance: **Generally good**
Recording: **Good**

Most of these concert arias for bass have been recorded by such specialists as Italo Tajo, Fernando Corena, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, Walter Berry, and even Ezio Pinza (K. 513), but previous versions have been either withdrawn or scattered through the catalog. Every one of the arias is a gem, and it is good to have so many of them on one disc.

József Gregor (b. 1940), a leading Hungarian opera artist, has sung in some oratorio recordings, but this is his first recorded solo recital. He has a flexible, well-centered voice that he uses with great skill over an extended range. His intonation is unfailing, and he executes the florid runs in K. 512 with virtuosic ease and accuracy. Vocally he copes with the substantial challenges in an impressive man-

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ner. Interpretively, however, he deals better with the comic arias (K. 539, 584, 638) than with the serious ones, in which he sounds somewhat bland and uninvolved (particularly in K. 513). Still, Gregor is a singer with distinct potential. The Symphony Orchestra of Szeged provides solid, routine support with an able double-bass assist by Béla Ruzsonyi in K. 612. There are some inconsistent balances in the recording, but the overall effect is quite satisfactory. G.J.

MOZART: Symphony No. 40, in G Minor (K. 550); Serenade in G Major (K. 525, "Eine Kleine Nachtmusik"). Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, Zubin Mehta cond. LONDON CS 7066 \$7.98, © CS5 7066 \$7.98.

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

In contrast to the "fat" sound he has cultivated in his Los Angeles Philharmonic recordings, Zubin Mehta draws from the Israel Philharmonic a fine, transparent sonic texture. In *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik* the sound seems particularly transparent because of a reduced string body, and the rhythmic pulse is vital. But Mehta has also tried to expand the dimensions of Mozart's delightful music by being as generous as possible with repeats, including even the first-movement development. He avoids mooning over the *Romanze*, but I would have liked more shapely phrasing. The finale, however, comes off in fine style.

The G Minor Symphony is a low-tension affair here, with emphasis on the lyric line and the kind of phrasing in the menuetto's middle section that I wished for in the slow movement of the serenade. But I'm not altogether happy about the "pull-ups" that Mehta allows himself in this movement. For a Mozart G Minor performance with a remarkable synthesis of the dramatic and freely lyrical approaches, I still turn to Furtwängler's Vienna Philharmonic recording. The sooner that one is made available again, the better. D.H.

RACHMANINOFF: Symphony No. 1, in D Minor, Op. 13. St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, Leonard Slatkin cond. CANDIDE □ QCE 31099 \$4.98.

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

A budget-price issue of the Rachmaninoff First Symphony—and in matrixed four-channel sound at that—is most welcome. In many respects, this highly dramatic work is my favorite of the Rachmaninoff symphonies, though the composer withdrew it following its disastrous 1897 premiere (it was then lost and reconstructed from the orchestral parts in Russia only in 1945). Leonard Slatkin and the St. Louis Symphony come through here with a spirited and well-disciplined reading. I was particularly pleased to hear no needless broadening of tempo at the development climax of the first movement. I would prefer the greater string and lung power of, say, the Philadelphia Orchestra, especially at the opening of the finale, but this disc is a good buy nevertheless, graced as it is with the excellent recorded sound we've come to expect from the Aubort/Nickrenz production team. D.H.

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

RACHMANINOFF: Symphony No. 2, in E Minor, Op. 27. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra,

Yuri Temirkanov cond. ANGEL □ S-37520 \$7.98, © 4XS-37520 \$7.98.

Performance: **Impassioned**
Recording: **Superb**

RACHMANINOFF: Symphony No. 2, in E Minor, Op. 27. Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, Edo de Waart cond. PHILIPS 9500 309 \$8.98.

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

Yuri Temirkanov makes a most auspicious disc debut on Angel with his reading of the uncut version of Rachmaninoff's Second Symphony. My experience with this symphony is of long standing, and the recording I have chosen to live with up to now is the 1956 mono Deutsche Grammophon disc by Kurt Sanderling and the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra (released here by Decca). Despite a minor cut in the finale (the only one actually sanctioned by the composer) and an *accelerando* treatment of the first-movement introduction, the fiercely urgent character of this reading has stayed with me through the years. Well, Temirkanov provides that urgency in spades, and with gloriously full-blooded recording to match. Unlike Sanderling, his first-movement introduction is magnificently controlled, with the dynamic tension and release flawlessly timed, so that the entire episode emerges melodically and dynamically as one unbroken line. This sets the tone for all that follows: the interlaced counterpoint of the scherzo's midsection comes off exactly right, and the great clarinet solo in the slow movement has seldom been more poignantly moving. The finale, of course, with its apotheosis of the motto elements in the final bars, is a real smasher. Angel's recording team has contributed enormously to the end result with an acoustic perspective that yields full-bodied presence and all the richness of detail that the score demands. And the Royal Philharmonic players transcend themselves, as one must in music as complex, lengthy, and impassioned as this. I have found this recorded performance a supremely gratifying experience.

As in all his other Rachmaninoff recordings, Edo de Waart gives his very best in his reading of the Second, but I still find that care and refinement of detail are less than sufficient to give us Rachmaninoff entire. The notes are all there, in the right places, and beautifully recorded, but compared with Temirkanov, and even Previn and Ormandy, De Waart fails to capture the grand scale and opulence of Rachmaninoff's music. D.H.

REGER: Suite No. 1, in G Minor, for Unaccompanied Viola, Op. 131b (see SHOSTAKOVICH)

REUTTER: Lieder. Three Hölderlin Songs; Three Monologues of Empedokles; Seven Russian Songs, Op. 68; My Dark Hands (settings of Langston Hughes and Arna Bontemps); Ein Füllen Ward Geboren; Chamber Music (settings of James Joyce); Sankt Sebastian Tryptichon. The Passion in Nine Inventions, Op. 25, for Piano. Oscar J. McCullough (baritone); Hermann Reutter (piano). EDUCCO 4027/28 two discs \$11.

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

I knew virtually nothing of the German composer Hermann Reutter before I received this

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Rossini: The Barber of Seville. Milnes, Gedda, Capecchi; Levine.

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Rossini: The Siege of Corinth. Verrett, Theyard, Díaz; Schippers.

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★ ★ ★
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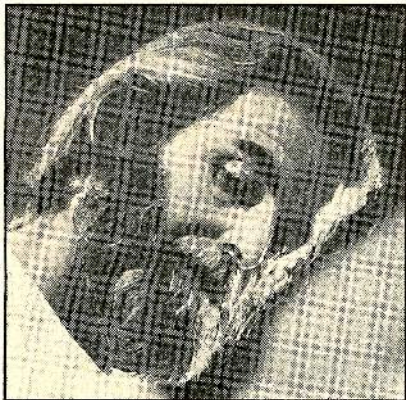
Arias (from Barber, Traviata, others).
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Verdi: Rigoletto. Milnes, Kraus; Rudel.

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CIRCLE NO. 4 ON READER SERVICE CARD



TownHall Records

Composer-arranger William Malloch

Art of Fuguing

THE title "The Art of Fuguing" conveys better than the nine-page apologia by arranger William Malloch the point of view implicit in a highly entertaining and stimulating new realization and elaboration of Bach's *Die Kunst der Fuge*, or *Art of the Fugue*. Not only is this reworking intended as an antidote to the sometimes deadly monumentality of more "scholarly" treatments (whether for a keyboard instrument or an instrumental ensemble), it is also clearly meant to underline the fantastic rhythmic vitality in this supposedly most abstract of Bach's musical compositions. By the very sequence of its twenty numbers and the instrumentation and performing styles employed, this metamorphosis of the art of fugue into the art of fuguing cries out for choreographic treatment.

Malloch's arrangement calls for some forty instrumentalists—a string body of chamber-orchestra proportions, flutes, alto flutes, piccolos, oboes, English horns, bassoons, piano, celeste, timpani, and additional percussion for four players—plus a boys' choir at the end. The product of this layout in performance is a beautifully transparent texture that is perfectly suited to limn Bach's multilinear sorcery—though I must say that for me the most monumental and granitic of the fugues come off best in an organ realization.

Still, percussion in Bach? Here's where some of the elaboration—as opposed to just realization or transcription—comes in. The sounds are almost wholly of the high metallophone or woody type, designed to add spots of coloration similar to that of a Baroque organ's *Zymbelstern* or to give sharp accent to the rhythmic stresses. Certainly in the recording they fit in marvelously well with the elemental rhythmic urgency of the conducting by Lukas Foss. The brisk tempos he adopts for most of the work are poles apart from what most of us have become used to, and the players in the *ad hoc* Los Angeles ensemble meet in stunning fashion the hair-raising demands on their virtuosity. Some idea of the pace of this performance can be gotten from a comparison with Walcha's recording on Archiv (2708 002), which like this one includes the mirror fugues and the four canons. Whereas Walcha requires nearly eighty-six minutes,

Foss gets through all twenty pieces, including some four minutes' worth of interpolations by Malloch, in sixty-three minutes! Having listened to these records with score in hand, I can assure you that all the notes are indeed there—and then some.

Perhaps the most unexpected element in Malloch's instrumentation is his use of timpani—seven of them, in fact—as a *melodic* element rather than solely for rhythmic punctuation. Having timpani glissandos carry the chromatic bass line in Contrapunctus XI is sure to raise a few purist hackles, but it is unquestionable that timpanist Karen Ervin performs miracles of agility with her wrists and feet. Another startler is the jazzy cadenza Malloch provides at one point. He describes it frankly as "circusy," which it is—and great fun, too; I'll bet that side two, band one of this album will remain a sure-fire musical party play for years to come.

THE most imaginative and touching of Malloch's "elaborations" comes at the end, where the final gigantic fugue breaks off in the manuscript after "spelling out" in key signatures the name of the composer, B-A-C-H. Using the basic motive of the work as a kind of *basso ostinato*, Malloch fashions what he calls an "unfinish": "As Bach's notes come to an end, the orchestral sections go their separate ways, fuguing away forever, past the horizon line; Bach ascends to Heaven, and we hear his sweet admonition to us to begin anew." That "sweet admonition" comes in the form of a boys' choir singing, with restrained orchestral accompaniment, the chorale that Bach dictated on his deathbed, *Vor Deinen Thron Tret' Ich Hiermit*.

Aside from the arrangement and the brilliant performance (including the lovely work by the choir in its brief appearance), the recording is of more than usual interest technically, since two different microphone setups were used and the results are being issued as separate albums. One is the product of a relatively close-up multiple-microphone arrangement; the other was done with a comfortably distant single-capsule stereo pickup. Quite frankly, I prefer the latter, since it provides some welcome "air" around the notes that adds transparency without compromising the clarity of the individual polyphonic lines. The multimiking adds an element of close detail, but it also adds a degree of acoustic density that music of this complexity doesn't need, even with Malloch's airy instrumentation.

As a listening experience, I thoroughly enjoyed "The Art of Fuguing." I wouldn't want to do without a first-rate Baroque-organ realization of *Die Kunst der Fuge*, but this is certainly a stimulating and delightful supplement, even if it does at times verge on the kooky.

—David Hall

THE ART OF FUGUING. J. S. Bach (arr. Malloch): *Die Kunst der Fuge (BWV 1080)*. California Boys' Choir; Ensemble of Forty Los Angeles String, Woodwind, and Percussion Players, Lukas Foss cond. TOWNHALL S-20 (multiple-microphone version) two discs \$12.98; S-21 (single-microphone version) two discs \$12.98 (from TownHall Records, P.O. Box 5332, Santa Barbara, Calif. 93108).

generous documentation of his compositions. Since I found the annotations only partially satisfactory, I turned to *Grove's Dictionary*, where an impressive list of his works accompanies a two-column biography. That list has since grown, for this contemporary of Paul Hindemith, Ernst Křenek, and Kurt Weill is still alive (at seventy-eight) and eminently productive. Although he resides in his native Stuttgart, he spent some time in the United States, which, I suppose, explains the Langston Hughes settings (1957).

Vocal music has always been the principal focus of Reutter's activity. He must have written at least ten operas; this collection includes three severe-sounding monologues from what appears to be his latest, *Der Tod des Empedokles* (1966). In his songs—which number over two hundred—he has shown a preference for poems of literary merit and philosophical and humanistic concerns (Hölderlin, Rilke, Joyce, and St. John Perse are among the poets he has set). I find the ones here to be generally effective, at times forbiddingly austere, but frequently absorbing. Though Reutter's melodies are not the soaring kind, there is a distinct lyrical bent to his idiom. His harmonic language must have gone through many stages during the past fifty years: on these discs it ranges from modal elements to a kind of expressive, lyrical atonality. Reutter's angular pseudo-melody is hardly the ideal medium for the tersely eloquent muse of Langston Hughes, but his Joyce settings neatly match the simplicity of the poems. In the Russian cycle (Reutter's third, from 1948), a nostalgic Tolstoy poem gets an ill-fitting musical guise, but the settings of Sergei Essenin's angry and defiant poems are masterly.

The composer for many years pursued a career as accompanist to some of the best German singers, and he here assists at the piano in the vocal works and plays his quite effective tone poem *The Passion in Nine Inventions* as well. Baritone Oscar J. McCullough performs the demanding music with great dedication and varying degrees of success, but never less than competently. Full texts and translations are supplied. Produced under a grant from the Hollins College Mellon Humanities program, this is a laudable effort. Hermann Reutter deserves to be better known.

G.J.

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV: *The Snow Maiden*. Irina Arkhipova (mezzo-soprano), Spring Beauty, Lel; Alexander Vedernikov (bass), Grandfather Frost; Valentina Sokolik (soprano), the Snow Maiden; Lidya Zakharenko (soprano), Kupava; Alexander Moksyakov (baritone), Mizgir; Anton Grigoriev (tenor), King Berendey; others. Moscow Radio Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, Vladimir Fedoseyev cond. COLUMBIA/MELODIYA M4 34599 four discs \$31.98.

Performance: **Generally excellent**
Recording: **Very good**

You don't have to be Russian to enjoy Russian opera, but when it comes to Rimsky-Korsakov's *The Snow Maiden* it helps. The work is based on a fascinating folk legend: the Snow Maiden, daughter of the Spring Fairy and Grandfather Frost, discovers human love. She makes it possible for the sun to return to the freezing kingdom of Berendey, but pays with her life to achieve her mission. The score is full of musical beauties, particularly

the nature paintings on which Rimsky-Korsakov lavished all his imagination and the riches of his orchestral palette. Unfortunately, he did it without a judicious sense of form and balance. To put it bluntly, *The Snow Maiden* is just too long. An opera in which not much happens should not last as long as Verdi's *La Forza del Destino*, in which everything happens.

For the most part, the performance here is excellent. In the double role of Spring Beauty and the shepherd Lel, Irina Arkhipova has the most grateful arias in the score, and she sings them with tonal opulence. Since some of her music is unaccompanied, her immaculate intonation is a special blessing. In the title role, soprano Valentina Sokolik reveals a pretty voice, with some shrillness but an easy access to the high regions. Alexander Vedernikov handles the part of Grandfather Frost in the lusty, sonorous Russian basso tradition, and tenor Grigoriev capably copes with the long-spun cantilena of Tsar Berendey's music. In the part of Mizgir, the Snow Maiden's unhappy lover, baritone Alexander Moksyakov sings vigorously but at times loses tonal focus. The chorus and orchestra are excellent. Less might be more, but *The Snow Maiden* is still very enjoyable—one act at a time. *G.J.*

SAINT-SAËNS: Cello Concerto No. 1, in A Minor, Op. 33 (see SCHUMANN)

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

SCHUMANN: Cello Concerto in A Minor, Op. 129. SAINT-SAËNS: Cello Concerto No. 1, in A Minor, Op. 33. János Starker (cello); Philharmonia Orchestra, Carlo Maria Giulini cond. SERAPHIM S-60266 \$3.98.

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

Seventeen or eighteen years ago János Starker cited the Angel disc on which these two performances first appeared as the record he was prouder of than any other he had made. Since he had by then recorded the Complete Works of Everybody for cello, that was quite a recommendation, but his enthusiasm was not misplaced. There have been many recordings of both concertos since then, including remakes of both by Starker, but none, I feel, excel these elegant performances, which ought never to have left the active catalog in the first place. They are most welcome returnees on the lower-price label. There was a certain magic in the collaboration of Starker and Carlo Maria Giulini, a thoroughgoing mutual-ity of approach manifest in terms of aristocratic assurance, impeccable taste, obvious respect and affection for the material, and a give-and-take that builds and deepens through each work. Here, in short, are not merely style and virtuosity to burn, but the sort of commitment that turns "vehicles" into the most deeply satisfying listening experiences. The sound is not as fresh as that of my old English pressing of Angel 35598, but it is good enough to belie its age. The packaging leaves a bit to be desired—the cover drawing of Starker is ghastly, and the biographical puff might have been updated—but who cares? The record itself is a classic in the best sense.

R.F.

SCHUMANN: Symphony No. 2, in C Major, Op. 61; Konzertstück in F Major for Four Horns and Orchestra, Op. 86. Dale Clevenger,

Richard Oldberg, Thomas Howell, Norman Schweikert (horns); Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Daniel Barenboim cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 3520 939 \$8.98, © 3300 939 \$8.98.

Performance: **First-rate**
Recording: **Excellent**

This is the last of the three discs in Barenboim's Schumann symphony set to be made available on its own, and, as David Hall indicated in his review of that set last September, it is the strongest of the three. The slow movement of the symphony, in particular, as *D.H.* observed, is "simply marvelous," and there is an appropriately Schumannesque flexibility throughout the work, in which the great orchestra and DG's engineering team are at their very best. No one can pretend that the *Konzertstück* is a great work, but it makes a very impressive and enjoyable filler, with Chicago's magnificent horns exulting in the challenges Schumann set forth for them and Barenboim shaping the performance with affectionate spontaneity. *R.F.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

SCRIABIN: Piano Sonata No. 2, in G-sharp Minor, Op. 19 (Sonata Fantasy); Piano Sonata No. 7, in F-sharp Major, Op. 64 ("White Mass"); Piano Sonata No. 10, in C Major, Op. 70; Quatre Morceaux, Op. 56; Two Dances, Op. 73; Two Poems, Op. 32. Vladimir Ashkenazy (piano). LONDON CS 7087 \$7.98.

Performance: **Superb**
Recording: **Realistic**

Vladimir Ashkenazy's splendid earlier record of Scriabin solo works (London CS 6920) included Sonatas Nos. 3, 4, 5, and 9. Volume Two has a more interesting as well as a more varied program, and the playing is, if anything, even more remarkably brilliant than in the all-sonata collection. Here Ashkenazy is very nearly a match for Horowitz's incredible performance of the Tenth Sonata (Columbia M 31620), and the superiority of London's exceptionally realistic sound rather effectively closes the narrow gap. The dazzling presentation of the Seventh Sonata alone would make the record a must for admirers of pianistic wizardry as well as for Scriabin devotees: every diabolical/ecstatic phrase is ablaze with an almost terrifying intensity, enhanced by the most subtle regard for tone color. The seldom-heard miniatures that constitute Op. 56 will be a stunning discovery for most listeners, while the fresh realization of the Two Dances (the first of which is *Guirlandes*) is no less revelatory. Each work in this collection has its own distinct character, and Ashkenazy is thoroughly inside every one, with all the power and imagination to present them whole. The entire sequence is superb. *R.F.*

SHOSTAKOVICH: Sonata for Violin and Piano, Op. 147. REGER: Suite No. 1, in G Minor, for Unaccompanied Viola, Op. 131b. HINDEMITH: Sonata for Unaccompanied Viola, Op. 25, No. 1. Zahari Tchavdarov (viola); Albena Zaharieva (piano). B1s LP-81 \$8.98 (from Qualiton Records, Ltd., 65-37 Austin Street, Rego Park, N.Y. 11374).

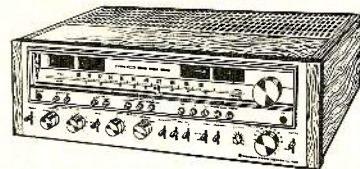
Performance: **Strong**
Recording: **Very good**

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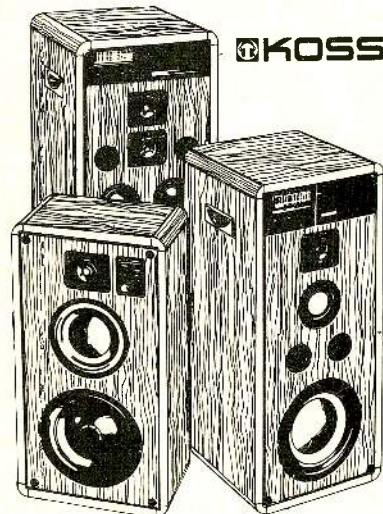
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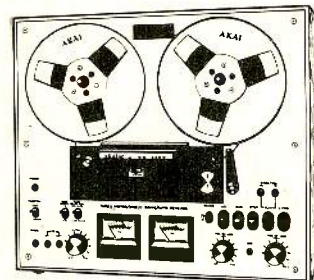
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TELARC has released what I understand to be the first digital recording made by a symphony orchestra in this country; it is an impressive demonstration of Thomas Stockham's Soundstream process (exhibited earlier in Frederick Fennell's Cleveland Winds program on the same label—reviewed by David Hall last month) and, by no means incidentally, a stunning showcase for the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and the fine chorus formed by the orchestra's conductor, Robert Shaw. The material on display comprises Stravinsky's *Firebird Suite* (the standard 1919 version) and the *Overture* and *Polovetsian Dances* from Borodin's *Prince Igor*. The colors and textures created by Stravinsky, Glazounov (in the *Igor Overture*), and Rimsky-Korsakov (in the dances) are of course ideally suited to such a demonstration, or test, since all of the music utilizes the resources of the large orchestra at just about every level of strength imaginable, from solo winds to hushed strings to the entire ensemble in full cry.

The superiority of the digital process to conventional recording has been demonstrated before—most notably in the Denon PCM series from Nippon Columbia, with its dozens of chamber-music and solo instrumental recordings as well as a few orchestral items—and the advantages of this approach over direct-to-disc in the practical sense need no further citing here. The feeling that comes to the listener (using adequate playback equipment) of virtually unrestricted dynamic range and total freedom from even the thought of distortion is no less thrilling than the impact of the bass-drum thwacks at the end of *The Firebird*. It is especially gratifying to be given real music to show off what the digital process can do, instead of the Ping-pong games and rushing trains that were felt appropriate to usher in the stereo disc. Denon's concentration on chamber music is itself a sort of validation of high musical purpose, and so is the way Telarc has presented Mr. Shaw and his associates.

Aside from the digital process itself, recording producer Robert Woods and engineer Jack Renner have done an exemplary job in achieving a full and natural orchestral balance, and the performances they have so handsomely captured are absolutely first-rate. I don't think I had ever heard the Atlanta Symphony before, and the quality exhibited

here—by the various choirs and section soloists as well as the orchestra as a whole—came as the most pleasant sort of surprise. The flute, oboe, and horn solos, the juicy clarinet, the crisp brass and full-bodied strings (especially the creamy cellos) sound like the proverbial million before inflation devalued such references. Shaw himself has a fine grasp of the material. His *Firebird* is competitive with the best, and his handling of the *Igor Overture* is just about ideal: those fanfares at the beginning of the allegro evoke just the sort of depth, distance, and mystic imminence one hopes for, and the lyrical sections are bathed in a tasteful voluptuousness.

The *Polovetsian Dances* presented here are those from the end of Act II (No. 17 in the score), without the earlier *Girls' Dance* (No. 8) which is sometimes included. The pacing, articulation, and inflection on the part of both orchestra and chorus add up to a really exciting performance, one filled with beautiful moments as well as heady momentum. The chorus (whose excellence should surprise no one) sings in Russian; the annotation gives the text in English, with a helpful breakdown of the sequence. There are, of course, other outstanding recordings of both of the works presented here (with more generous selections from *Prince Igor* among them), but none is vastly superior to these in performance and none can compare with the sonic realism achieved here.

ON the basis of the two Soundstream products I've heard on Telarc (this record and the aforementioned Fennell disc), I would be reluctant to essay a comparative evaluation against Denon's PCM: both are marvelously successful sonic breakthroughs which must leave the listener with some sense of loss when he returns to conventional recordings. One observation I can make, though, is that the German-pressed Telarc discs, while superior to our domestic norm, are not quite as quiet and free of pops and clicks as what Nippon Columbia has been doing for Denon.

—Richard Freed

STRAVINSKY: *The Firebird—Suite* (1919 Version). BORODIN: *Prince Igor: Overture* (arr. Glazounov); *Polovetsian Dances* (orch. Rimsky-Korsakov). Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, Robert Shaw cond. TELARC ● DG-10039 \$14.95.

Sweden, from whence the excellent BIS records originate. Zahari Tchavdarov has that big, robust, gritty viola sound that seems to have survived in Eastern Europe better than in the west, where suavity is the style in violas, oboes, and related matters. This interesting and well-played program is a bit on the heavy side, however. The three works have perhaps too much in common. The Shostakovich sonata—the composer's last completed work—might seem to be an exception, but like the others it is full of gravity and homage to the past. In fact, the big adagio finale is a curious mélange of semi-quotations from the *Moonlight Sonata* and other nineteenth- and twentieth-century works. Reger, like Hindemith, combined modernity with neo-Classicism, and Hindemith, who was a professional violist, was influenced by Reger. A solo viola sonata of Reger's followed by one of Hindemith's is not exactly light programming. But no matter. The playing has real character and strength. *E.S.*

SMETANA: *From My Homeland* (see Collections—Sergiu Luca)

STRAVINSKY: *Pulcinella Suite; Scherzo Fantastique; Symphonies of Wind Instruments.* New York Philharmonic, Pierre Boulez cond. COLUMBIA □ M 35105 \$7.98, © MT 35105 \$7.98.

Performance: **Symphonies best**
Recording: **Sounds good**

The first side of this recording, one of Boulez's last with the New York Philharmonic, has received a truly remarkable amount of air play—at least in the Northeast in range of my car radio. But, although I'm a fan of both Boulez and *Pulcinella*, I don't think the combination is ideal. The performance is dry; it never sparkles and it never cooks. For a real sample of what Boulez can do with Stravinsky, try the overside *Symphonies for Wind Instruments*. This remarkable work of the post-World War I period is, in its way, one of Stravinsky's most original scores, and it is treated here with the gravity and the ear for sonority that it deserves. The *Scherzo Fantastique*, written in 1908-1909, is a novelty. Inspired by the life of the bee (!), the score has self-confessed debts to Rimsky and Mendelssohn ("by way of Tchaikovsky") as well as unacknowledged ones to Debussy and, especially, Dukas. These Francophile qualities are important because they impart to the music a wonderful lightness and sonorous ingenuity that are also right up Boulez's own *allée*. *E.S.*

RECORDING OF SPECIAL MERIT

SUPPÉ: *Overtures to the Operettas. Light Cavalry; Pique Dame; Poet and Peasant; The Beautiful Galathea; Morning, Noon, and Night in Vienna; Boccaccio.* London Philharmonic Orchestra, Neville Martinson cond. PHILIPS 9500 399 \$8.98, © 7300 612 \$8.98.

Performance: **Splendid**
Recording: **Superb**

Franz von Suppé overtures—I just counted twenty-three collections of them in Schwann! Evidently no record company ever went broke issuing still another album of his curtain-raisers for *Poet and Peasant, Light Cavalry, Pique Dame, The Beautiful Galathea, and Morning, Noon, and Night in Vienna*. Here they all are again, along with that rather

fragile flower among such hardy perennials, the interesting, surprisingly understated, but scarcely sleepy overture to *Boccaccio*. Well, is Neville Marriner's *Suppé* so different from everybody else's that it's worth acquiring? I should say it is. As those who know his method might have expected of him, Marriner finds genuine music in these scores where others seem content to settle for bombast. His treatments are reined in yet as smartly polished as a hussar's boots, and he can let the superb London Philharmonic players relax for a songful tune without losing the necessary propulsion to build climaxes. In *Pique Dame*, for example, Marriner's approach to the Magyar melody strikes exactly the right balance between tautness and tenderness. In *The Beautiful Galathea* and *Boccaccio* the emphasis is on the intricacies of instrumentation rather than the mere accumulation of power. And even in *Poet and Peasant* the opening cello solo is played more eloquently and less perfunctorily than I can remember hearing it in any other performance. Of course it's still *Suppé*, shot through with vulgarity and theatricality, but the elements somehow fall into place here more elegantly than they usually do, the playing is splendid, and Philips' recorded sound is brilliant and unexaggerated.

P.K.

TARTINI: Concerto in A Major for Cello and Strings (see VIVALDI)

TCHAIKOVSKY: Suite No. 3, in G Major, Op. 55. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Lorin Maazel cond. LONDON CS 7080 \$7.98, © CSS 7080 \$7.98.

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

The first three of Tchaikovsky's orchestral suites are full of fascinating leavings from the master's workbench—out-takes, one might say, from ballets, symphonic movements, and the like. Suite No. 3 is typical in this respect, and, considering the dance-like character of much of the music, it is hardly surprising to have it turning up as a ballet on its own.

Lorin Maazel elicits gorgeous playing from the Vienna Philharmonic on this disc, with recorded sound to match from London's producers. If you find the first-movement tempo a bit lingering and the treatment of the famous variations finale a bit mannered in spots, you will either have to turn to Antal Dorati's complete set of the suites on Mercury Golden Imports or wait for Angel to issue the 1975 Boulton/London Philharmonic taping.

D.H.

TELEMANN: Music for Wind Instruments (see Best of the Month, page 103)

THOMAS: Mignon (see Best of the Month, page 102)

VIVALDI: Concertos for Cello and Strings in C Major (P. 31) and G Major (P. 120). BOCCHERINI: *Concerto No. 2, in D Major, for Cello and Strings.* TARTINI: *Concerto in A Major for Cello and Strings.* Mstislav Rostropovich (cello); Collegium Musicum Zürich, Paul Sacher cond. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 2530 974 \$8.98, © 3300 974 \$8.98.

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

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et; it is a poster of Mstislav Rostropovich. This is the same effect one gets from listening to the record itself: Rostropovich's personality dominates the music. Sometimes this is good, at other times bad. It is superb in the Boccherini D Major, where the cello writing, especially in the first movement, is full of ornate frills and fussy figuration. Rostropovich turns each phrase to perfection, toying with it in a thousand different ways and then putting it in its place. The same style is also fine for the rococo lines of the Tartini. The reading of the tragic slow movement is deeply moving.

The discrepancy between style and content begins to show in the two Vivaldi concertos. In order to achieve a robustness appropriate to the music, Rostropovich forces the tone and comes up with a sound that is too thick for the figuration. As is typical of Vivaldi's writing, much of the figuration is symmetrical and rigid in its construction. It is what gives drive to the music. Trying to make it into what it is not by fussing around with it and being apologetic for it merely debilitates its vigor. On the other hand, the slow movements here are bald, without ornamentation. If only Rostropovich would learn to apply the sort of rich embellishments that are written out by Boccherini and Tartini to the Vivaldi largos, the music would take on much of the "affect" that the composer intended and that the performer must at least partially furnish.

The real hero of this album is Paul Sacher. His sense of phrasing and balance dominates the ritornellos and supports the soloist magnificently. The first-movement ritornellos of the Vivaldi G Major are particularly difficult with their unusually busy inner parts and duple and triple rhythmic relationships, but Sacher brings clarity to Vivaldi's complex plan. In the same movement, the solo sections are accompanied by busy violin parts with no supporting bass; Sacher again achieves the perfect balance, bringing order to what could easily be chaos. And how nice to hear the fresh Boccherini D Major Concerto rather than the tired and inauthentic one in B-flat.

S.L.

VOŘÍŠEK: Sonata in B-flat Minor, Op. 20; Variations in B-flat Major, Op. 19; Le Désir, Op. 3; Le Plaisir, Op. 4; Rondos in G Major and C Major, Op. 18, Nos. 1 and 2. Radoslav Kvapil (piano). SUPRAPHON 1 11 2178 \$7.98 (from Qualiton Records, Ltd., 65-37 Austin Street, Rego Park, N.Y. 11374).

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

Jan Václav Hugo Voříšek, a contemporary of Franz Schubert, was a transitional composer who was really a Romantic but felt compelled to look back occasionally (and rather nervously) at the Classical era. The collection of pieces on this disc represents those traits perfectly. The two rondos and the variations look back nostalgically but lack the taste and conviction of the works of his predecessors. The sonata and the two character pieces, on the other hand, reveal that he was, indeed, a true Romantic. The sonata, especially, is a magnificent work, well crafted and full of dramatic contrast. The character pieces, *Le Désir* and *Le Plaisir*, overflow with Schubertian charm and sentimentality.

Radoslav Kvapil seems to share Voříšek's ambivalence: he is not at all at home in the rondos and variations, but in the rest his fine

(Continued on page 141)



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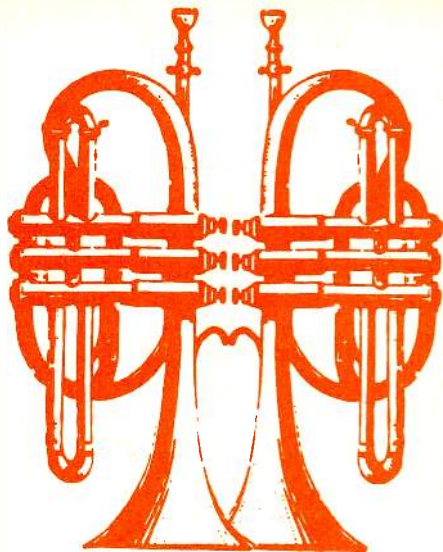
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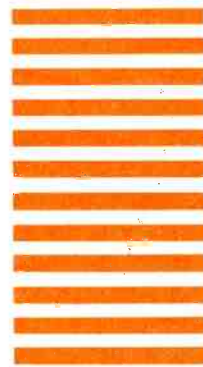


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Music Editor James Goodfriend's Calendar of Classical Composers is a listing of the most important composers from the year 1400 to the present, grouped according to the stylistic periods—Renaissance, Baroque, Classic, Romantic, etc.—in which they worked. This 12 x 24-inch aid, guide, and complement to your music listening is printed in color on heavy, non-reflecting stock suitable, as they say, for framing. A key to the calendar, consisting of capsule accounts of the principal stylistic characteristics of each musical period, is included. The whole will be sent rolled in a mailing tube to prevent creases; we pay postage. All you do is send 50¢ to:

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pianism comes to the fore. His tone is beautiful, and he knows just how to sustain a cantabile line above its accompanying figuration. And he is not afraid to change a tempo in order to underline the Romantic composer's love of contrasting the lyric with the dramatic. This disc, then, is a welcome addition to the early Romantic repertoire, which is just beginning to be explored. Kvapil's reading of the sonata reveals its worth and should inspire other pianists to add it to their own repertoires, to explore more work of Voříšek, and even to look into the music of his compatriot Tomásek. *S.L.*

COLLECTIONS

LOTTE LEHMANN: Farewell Recital. Schumann: Widmung; Oh, Ihr Herren; Ständchen; Wer Machte Dich So Krank; Alte Laute. Franz: Für Musik; Ständchen; Gute Nacht; Weiss Du Noch; Dies und Das. Mendelssohn: Der Mond; Venetianisches Gondellied. Cornelius: Ein Ton; Wiegenlied. Wagner: Träume. Schubert: Six Songs from "Die Schöne Müllerin"; An die Musik. Lotte Lehmann (soprano); Paul Ulanowsky (piano). PELICAN LP 2009 \$6.98.

Performance: **Special**
Recording: **Dated**

After a career of more than forty years, Lotte Lehmann gave her last recital in New York's Town Hall on February 16, 1951. The recording made of the event was released in limited quantities and became a collector's item soon thereafter. Its return to active status will now delight many vocal fans.

Few artists inspired the kind of devotion and loyalty that bound Lotte Lehmann to her public. The spiritual closeness between artist and audience is keenly perceived by today's listener, all those years of distance notwithstanding. Lehmann began the concert under audible emotional strain, as evidenced in her unsteady rendering of *Widmung*. She gathered her strength quickly, however, and hit full stride early enough in the opening Schumann group. What is heard here is a voice way past its best years (Lehmann was sixty-three), but when the technical demands were manageable, she could still achieve extraordinary results with it (*Wer Machte Dich So Krank* and *Alte Laute* are good examples). A voice diminished in range and sustaining power can still communicate the poetry in the music with Lehmann's kind of wisdom and heartfelt conviction ennobling it. And to the very end she retained her inimitable way of attacking certain key phrases with a subtle emotional tug.

Since Lehmann retired, few singers have championed the cause of Robert Franz, a worthy composer of songs. Fewer still are the singers who can make so much of Peter Cornelius' reiterated monotone B-flats in *Ein Ton*, or, for that matter, compress so much drama into Schubert's *Die Liebe Farbe*. And if the unmistakable sign of aging is always there—an erratic breathing apparatus that calls for great flexibility from the reliable Paul Ulanowsky—so are the manifestations of profound artistry that, for many, stir precious memories. The recorded sound is not very good, and probably never was, but the surfaces are decent and English translations are supplied. *G.J.*

(Continued on page 144)

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Conductor James Levine

Two New Otellos

HISTORY does repeat itself. More than seventeen years ago, in October 1961, I reviewed the first two stereo recordings of Verdi's *Otello*, released simultaneously by RCA and London. Those two sets are still in the catalog and holding their own quite well. But seventeen years is a long time, and now we have another two *Otellos* on the same labels competing for audience acceptance. I might add that the intervening years produced two more versions—Angel 3742 and Angel 3809—but they were both disappointing. What does continue to loom imposingly over all recordings of this Verdi masterpiece is Arturo Toscanini's by now sonically antiquated but still vibrant and revelatory 1947 statement (RCA 6107, mono).

I should start by noting that both new versions are led with vigor, clarity, and precision by Sir Georg Solti (London) and James Levine (RCA), both of whom have conducted *Otello* in the theater with impressive results in recent years. But, as I compare these recordings with my memory of Solti's leading the visiting Paris Opera (with the principals of the current London recording) and of Levine's work at the Met, I find that the recorded evidence here somewhat diminishes Solti's stature while it increases Levine's. Levine's tempos seem to be more judiciously chosen, and I find his overall approach more emotionally involving. His tendency to drive climaxes too hard and to drown out his singers has not left him, but such excesses can, on occasion, be mitigated by careful engineering. Solti, too, likes his orchestra loud, though balances seem less of a problem to him (or to London's engineers). I find his pacing for Iago's Drinking Song, the Love Duet, and Desdemona's Willow Song rather brisk and, in the last two, lacking in poetry. Speed alone is not the issue, of course. Toscanini's overall pacing is faster than that of any other conductor who has recorded this work, but his tempos within each act are so miraculously interrelated that we are never conscious of undue rushing of individual scenes, only of a flowing, immensely persuasive continuity. The orchestral execu-

tion is first-class in both the new recordings, but of the two conductors I prefer Levine.

This preference is readily extended to RCA's *Otello* as well. Placido Domingo's early assumption of this punishing role may cost him valuable years in his career, but surely no *Otello* on records can match the sensitive, sustained lyricism of his cantabile passages. An outstanding example is the line "*se dopo l'ira immensa vien quest' immenso amor*" (Love Duet, Act I), in which Domingo executes the composer's *dolce* and *morendo* markings perfectly. In the martial passages and the many violent outbursts the tenor's vocal powers are undeniably taxed to the limit, but there is never an ugly or unmusical sound, never any exaggerated theatricality at the expense of the musical line. Like Domingo, London's Carlo Cossutta never fails to *sing* the role. Both artists possess the Italianate sound and legato that are, for me, essential. I concede that Cossutta's darker tone quality makes for a more natural "Otello sound" than Domingo's brighter, more youthful timbre, and in the Act III Monologue Cossutta reaches moments of rare poignancy. But he cannot match Domingo in tonal beauty.

Both new versions
are led with vigor,
clarity, and precision

This opportunity to sing the role of Iago came much too late in Gabriel Bacquier's distinguished career. His sovereign dramatic command of the character is evident, particularly in the conversational passages, but his voice no longer has the volume or the steadiness for the big moments. Sherrill Milnes lacks Bacquier's gift for the light *parlando*, but he works with a bigger, healthier voice

and a wider coloristic palette, using his lovely *mezza-voce* to very good effect. Milnes' "*Era la notte*" is excellent, though his intonation strays at forte levels and some of his top notes are unsteady.

Both Desdemonas are excellent in their different ways. Renata Scotto (RCA) creates a touching, very vulnerable figure, inflecting every phrase with expressive nuance. There is a moving, pervading sadness in her Willow Song that we don't get from Margaret Price (London), and the difference cannot be explained in terms of less poetic conducting alone. Scotto's *Ave Maria* is also marvelously effective: she treats the opening lines as an almost childlike spoken prayer before soaring into her cantabile. She lives the part and draws us into Desdemona's tragedy, but she has a few uneasy vocal moments along the way (in the Act III duet with Otello, for example). It is in such episodes that the absolute technical mastery of Margaret Price calls a well-deserved attention to itself. A good example is the phrase "*Dammi la dolce e lieta parola*" in the Act III duet, which Price spins out in one almost literally breathtaking arch. Her Desdemona is not as poignant as Scotto's, but the precision of her attacks, the absolute purity of her intonation, and her ability to rise above the ensemble in Act III with the ease of a master violinist—these are qualities not to be taken lightly.

BOTH sets deserve praise for good casting of the supporting roles, particularly the two Lodovicos and the Cassio of Peter Dvorsky (London). London also scores with its superior children's chorus in the second act. As for the engineering, RCA appears to have captured the orchestra in a more natural sound, though at times it overpowers the voices (London's orchestral fortissimo in the opening storm scene appears to be artificially held down to avoid that possibility).

The London set, then, has much to commend it, particularly Margaret Price's Desdemona, but the RCA recording is my clear choice between the two, a good alternative to London's earlier version with Del Monaco, Tebaldi, and Karajan, which remains emphatically in the running for top honors among the stereo sets. —George Jellinek

VERDI: *Otello*. Placido Domingo (tenor), Otello; Renata Scotto (soprano), Desdemona; Sherrill Milnes (baritone), Iago; Frank Little (tenor), Cassio; Jean Kraft (mezzo-soprano), Emilia; Paul Plishka (bass), Lodovico; Paul Crook (tenor), Roderigo; Malcolm King (bass), Montano, Herald. Ambrosian Chorus and Boys Chorus; National Philharmonic Orchestra, James Levine cond. RCA CRL3-2951 three discs \$15.98, CRK3-2951 \$15.98.

VERDI: *Otello*. Carlo Cossutta (tenor), Otello; Margaret Price (soprano), Desdemona; Gabriel Bacquier (baritone), Iago; Peter Dvorsky (tenor), Cassio; Jane Berbié (mezzo-soprano), Emilia; Kurt Moll (bass), Lodovico; Kurt Equiluz (tenor), Roderigo; Stafford Dean (bass), Montano; Hans Helm (baritone), Herald. Vienna State Opera Chorus and Wiener Sängerknaben; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Sir Georg Solti cond. LONDON OSA 13130 three discs \$23.94.

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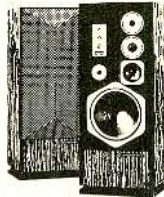
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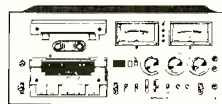
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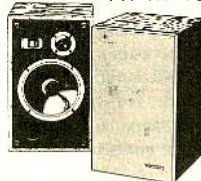
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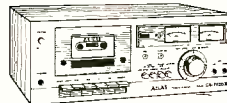
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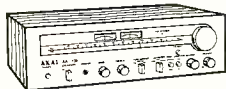
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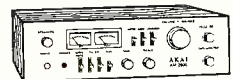
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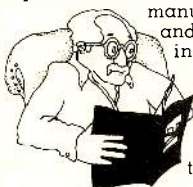
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Performance: **Outstanding**
Recording: **Excellent**

What a marvelous program Sergiu Luca has put together here, and what a marvelous feeling he shows for this material! My only prior exposure to this violinist was through his set of the Bach sonatas and partitas (Nonesuch HC-73030), which I found thoughtful, knowing, and altogether one of the most winning presentations of those works. In this Czech program he shows the same characteristics, together with a fluency and warmth of heart that suggest he has lived intimately with these works, learning all their secrets, and now takes special pleasure in sharing them with us. There is a sense of joyous fulfillment in his playing that the listener will find almost impossible not to share. The three works are in distinctly different styles, but Luca is thoroughly inside all of them. The restless intensity of the Janáček sonata is more compellingly realized here than in any other performance I have heard, and the endearing Dvořák and Smetana pieces (the latter's is not related to his well-known *My Fatherland* orchestral cycle), alive with the freshness of new discovery, entice the listener back again and again without a hint of wearing thin (lovable as they are, they are also possessed of real dignity, which Luca very happily recognizes). Paul Schoenfield is at all times a sympathetic partner, the sound and the quality of the pressing strike me as just about as good as anything achieved so far on either side of the Atlantic, and Jack Diether's thorough and resourceful annotation is especially valuable with music one doesn't hear every week. Altogether, this is a remarkably handsome and satisfying presentation, which, for me, calls up that phrase Artur Schnabel used to describe the Schubert sonatas: "a safe supply of happiness." R.F.

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Tierche Estampie Real. III: The Triumphs of Maximilian I. Senfl: Mit Lust Tritt Ich an Diesen Tanz; Ich Stuend an Einem Morgen; Das Gläut zu Speyer; Meniger Stellt nach Geld; Gottes Namen Fahren Wir; Ach Elstein, Liebes Elstein; Ich Weiss Nit, Was Er Ihr Ver Verhiess; Entlaubet Ist der Walde; Was Wird Es Doch; Quis Dabet Oculis Nostris. Isaac: *Innsbruck, Ich Muss Dich Lassen; Helogierons Nous; Maudit Soy; La Mora.* Kotter: *Kochersperger Spanieler.* Finck: *Sauff Aus und Machs Nit Lang.* Keutenhoff: *Frisch und Frölich Wölln Wir Leben.* Anon: *Welscher Tanz; Christ Ist Erstanden.* Early Music Consort of London, David Munrow cond. ARGO D40D three discs \$26.94, © K40K 33 \$26.94.

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

Argo's three-disc "A Festival of Early Music" is a collection of previously released and unreleased recordings made between 1969 and 1973 by the Early Music Consort of London under the direction of the late David Munrow. The performances are superb, and many of the selections, as well as being beautiful in their own right, will be welcomed by scholars and teachers looking for musically convincing recordings of secular monophonic music and pieces from the Italian *trecento*.

The first disc (still available separately under the title "Ecco la Primavera," ZRG 642) is devoted to music of fourteenth-century Florence. Among other things it includes one of the finest extant collections of works by Francesco Landini, the culminator of this attractive school. Both the poetry and the music here are delicate to an extreme, a quality that is brought out in the refined performances by countertenor James Bowman and tenor Nigel Rogers.

The highlight of the set is the second disc, a collection of music from the Crusades (available separately as "Songs of Love and War," ZRG 673). Munrow is at his best when reconstructing the monophonic songs of the troubadours, trouvères, and minnesingers. His choice of accompanying instruments and use of drones and percussion are particularly imaginative, and he often brings out an Oriental quality in the music that is not only effective but freshly illuminating. Rogers' performances of Marcabru's *Pax in Nomine Domine!* and *Sede, Syon, in Pulvere* are deeply moving, and Bowman is at his best in the two lovely songs by Walther von der Vogelweide and Richard the Lionhearted.

The third disc (not previously released or available separately) is of music written for the court of Emperor Maximilian I and features the work of Ludwig Senfl. Although both the music and the performances are of a high caliber, the collection simply does not come off as well as the two others. Senfl's counterpoint seems rather overelaborate for the lusty melodies and texts he is dealing with, and the performers' gaiety seems a bit forced.

The records are attractively packaged, texts are given both in the original languages and in translation, and the musical forces for each piece are carefully listed. The copious notes, taken mostly from the writings of David Munrow, are not only informative but a delight to read. S.L.

BEVERLY SILLS AND SHERRILL MILNES: Up in Central Park—Duets from Operetta and Musical Comedy (see page 91)

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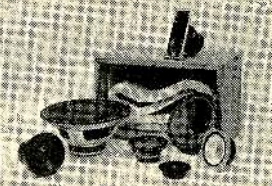
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17 MARANTZ COMPONENTS WHATEVER THE MIX IT'S ALWAYS

Now there's a Marantz component system for everyone! From our most affordable to our finest—with 223 systems priced in between—Marantz delivers the same top Marantz quality and the same stunning Marantz look. There's never a compromise! And with so many systems to choose from, you'll be able to find the exact match for your listening requirements and budget.

A MARANTZ EXCLUSIVE: MIXED SYSTEMS THAT REALLY MATCH.

From the least expensive to the most expensive, all Marantz Pre-Amps, Power Amps, Console Amps, Tuners and Front-Load Cassette Decks feature the same front panel size, the same striking cosmetics, the same top quality design philosophy. So whatever component combination you choose, you'll have a perfect match. Only with Marantz.

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER.

Once you have selected a system, only one question



The RM-3700 STACK RACK contains three Marantz components on fixed-positioned shelves, an accessory shelf and divided record compartment behind its full-length smoked-glass door. The Marantz system shown includes the 6170Q Turntable, 2110 Tuner, 1180DC Integrated Amplifier, 5010B Cassette Deck and Design Series 930 Speakers.

remains: Where do you put it? With a Marantz STACK RACK you can bring it all together—with style. The RM-3100 "Professional" STACK RACK (at right) will accommodate up to four Marantz components equipped with optional rack handle adaptors. Or you may prefer the RM-3700 "Decorator" STACK RACK (above) which encloses three Marantz components behind its full-length smoked glass door. A perfect fit in either rack, your entire system will be at your fingertips.

BUILD NOW. ADD LATER.

Once you see and hear what Marantz components have to offer by way of more performance per dollar, striking appearance and unheard of flexibility, you'll be sold. You'll have a perfectly matched system tailored to your specific needs from as little as \$650* to \$2100*. And don't hesitate when you want to upgrade any part of your system. Any Marantz component you upgrade to will match what you already have.

MIX AND MATCH BY MARANTZ—IT'S ALL FOR YOU.

17 separate components from Marantz. Designed to mix and match into 225 different systems to give you unprecedented flexibility. Whoever you are, Marantz has the perfect system for you.

The three unit Marantz system shown at right includes the 2100 Tuner, 1090 Integrated Amplifier and the 5000 Cassette Deck with 6270Q Turntable. The four unit Marantz system shown at the far right includes the 2130 Tuner, 3650 Pre-amplifier, 5030B Cassette Deck and the 300DC Amplifier with a 6370Q Turntable.

25th Anniversary **marantz**®

**5. 225 MARANTZ SYSTEMS.
/S A MATCH-FROM \$650* TO \$2100*.**



In a class by itself.



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There are few stereophones of any kind that can match the full-bandwidth performance of the Koss Pro/4 AAA. That's because the Triple A's oversized voice coil and extra large diaphragm reproduce recorded material with a lifelike intensity and minimal distortion never before available in dynamic stereophones.

With a frequency response from 10 Hz to 22 kHz, a highly efficient element and a perfect seal for low bass response to below audibility, the Triple A lets every note blossom to its fullest harmonic growth. You'll hear so much more of your favorite music, you'll think you're listening to a whole new recording.

Unlike other stereophones, the ear-cushions developed for the Pro/4 Triple A represent a breakthrough in both comfort and acoustical engineering. Through extensive studies on how stereophones are actually worn, Koss engineers were able to reduce lateral pressure with a direct contour Pneumalite® earcushion that not only offers soft pliable comfort, but also creates an ideal environment for minimizing the linear excursion of the driver. Thus, the driver is able to produce any volume level without distortion. So you'll hear all the fundamental and harmonic frequencies exactly as they were recorded.

In addition, Koss has designed a

special Pneumalite® dual suspension headband that creates a feeling of almost weightlessness even over periods of extended listening. It makes wearing the Triple A's as pleasureable as listening to them.

Why not stop in at your audio specialist and see why the Koss Pro/4 Triple A belongs in a class by itself. Or write for our free, full-color catalog c/o Virginia Lamm. Better still, listen to a live demonstration of the incredible Sound of Koss with your favorite record or tape. We think you'll agree that when it comes to the Pro/4 AAA and other Koss Stereophones and CM loudspeakers: hearing is believing.

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