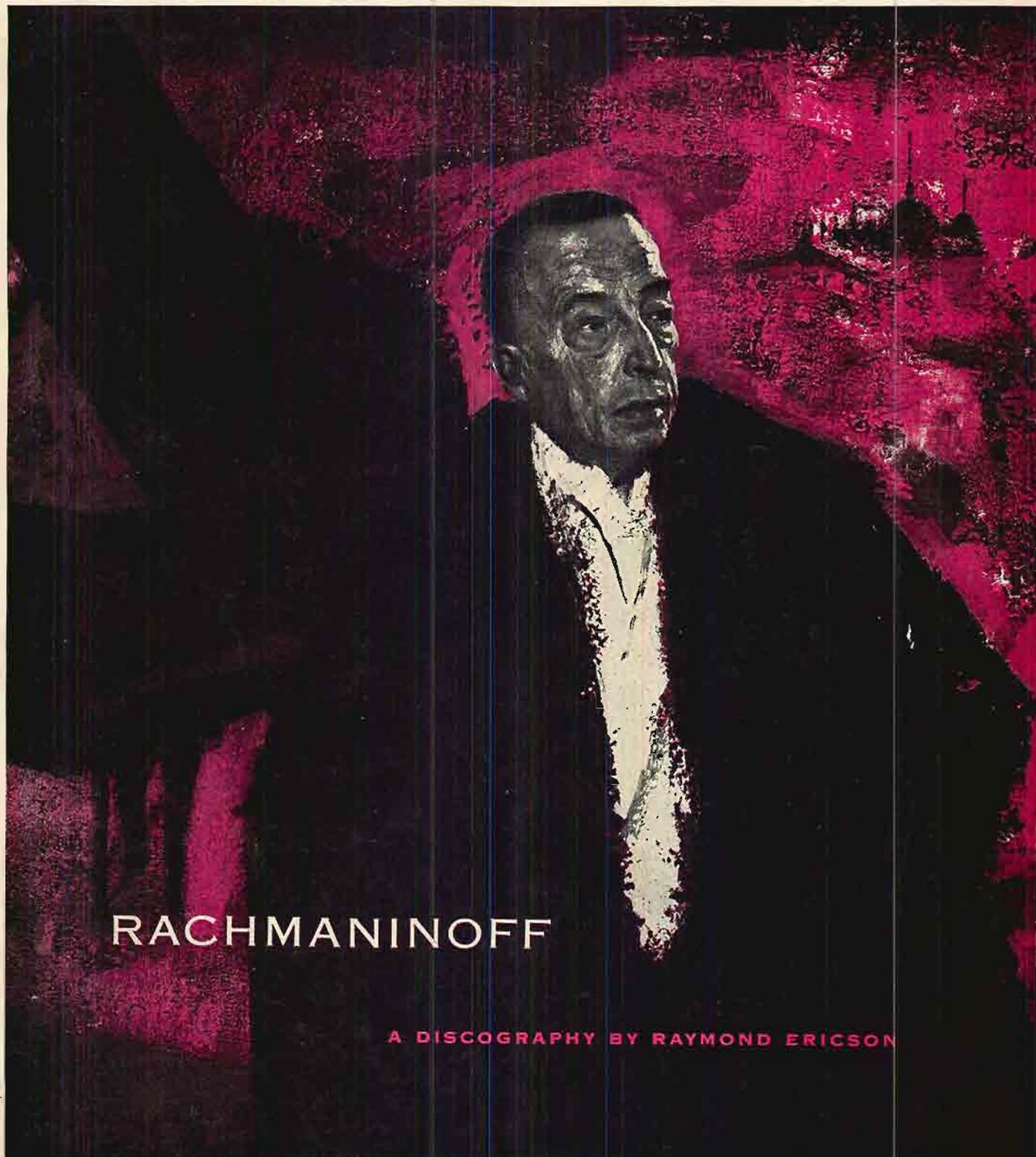


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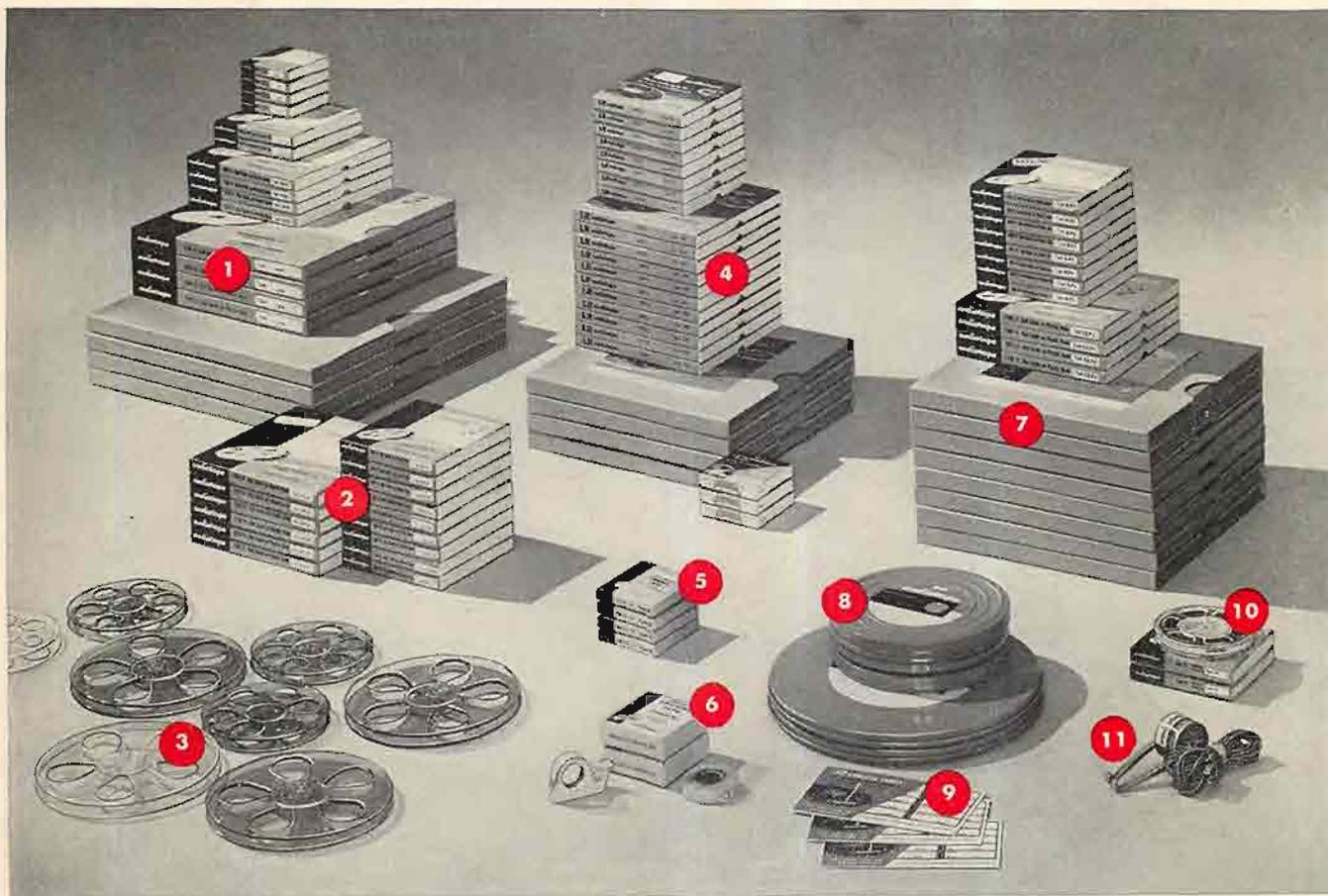
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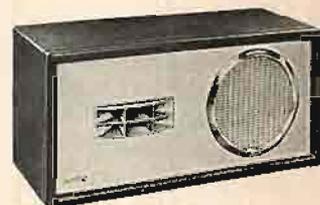
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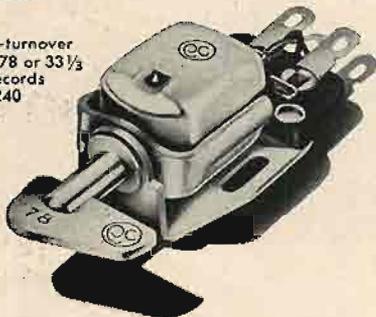
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THE MAGAZINE FOR MUSIC LISTENERS

Volume 5 Number 3

May 1955

The Cover. Sergei Rachmaninoff, portrayed on this month's by Richard M. Powers, was an admirer and a protégé of Tchaikovsky and, in a way, carried forward longest the musical tradition that had reached its peak with Tchaikovsky. It is fitting, thus, that—though we didn't plan it that way—the last installment of our three-part Tchaikovsky discography, by J. F. Indcox, should run along with our Rachmaninoff discography, by Ray Ericson.

This Issue. Problems . . . Is there really too much music around us? Dana Andrews is somewhat inclined to think so, as he indicates in his "Living With Music" essay (page 41). And he has reasons. Jacques Barzun, who will be heard from next in the series, has even keener feelings on the matter But if there can be too much music in the air, are the Italians to be envied or pitied, served as they are with the world's biggest single musical budget? Martin Mayer thinks they're lucky, and explains his stand on page 46 When musical congestion takes the form of a contest in the living room between Haydn and the Hit Parade, some classics-loving fathers bribe their pops-addicted offspring with movie-money, others turn tyrant and switch the TV set off, Joseph Marshall solves the problem in a different and very ingenious way. He tells how on page 91.

Next Issue. Harold C. Schonberg writes to say that the Chopin discography he is finishing will be "long," but we hope to fit it complete in the June issue.

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For the record...

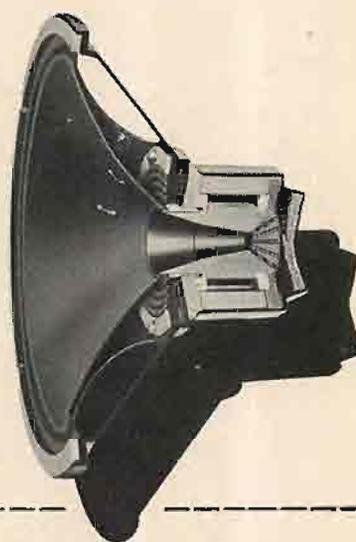
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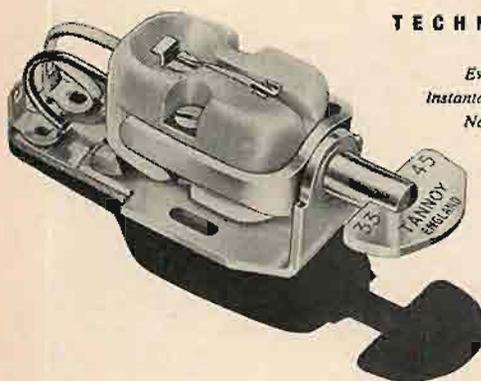
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AUTHORitatively Speaking

Chuck Gerhardt, author of "The Silent Partner" (page 36), visited a staff-member of this magazine last summer. Inspecting the latter's musical equipment, Mr. G. noticed a record newly issued by a company other than RCA Victor (where he works). Pouncing on it, he placed it on the turntable and put the stylus down carefully on a crashing orchestral tutti. "See?" he exclaimed triumphantly, "They can't do it." Then he added, with gloomy satisfaction: "Nobody can do it." Gerhardt is a perfectionist. He studied music at the University of Illinois, served in the Navy, finished his schooling at UCLA. He learned tape-techniques from Peter Bartok, became a recording technician and then an engineer at RCA Victor. He has worked for three years with Walter Toscanini, locating, rehabilitating, and taping the transcriptions of the Toscanini broadcasts and concerts.

Rosalyn Krokover, whose "See How They Dance" begins on page 38, is in private life helpmeet to Harold C. Schonberg, New York Times music critic. Born in Los Angeles, she studied ballet at the Pavley-Oukrainsky school in Chicago, danced professionally for three years with various companies, including the Chicago Opera ballet, then taught the art for several years in Pittsburgh. Shortly after coming to New York she covered the opening of the Ballet Theatre for *Musical Courier*—to such effect that she promptly became that publication's dance editor and critic. Now she also free-lances, writing on dance and general musical subjects.

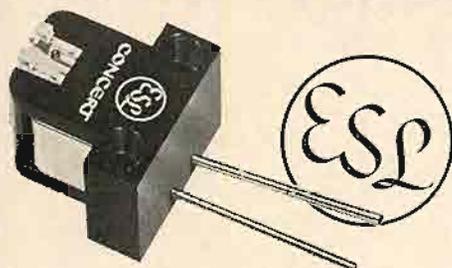
Martin Mayer is a remarkable man. Last year he quit—amicably—a job as copy editor of *Esquire*, and began a carefree tour of Europe. On this jaunt, nothing was to interfere with pleasure except the necessity of finishing two books for Harper & Brothers and interviewing six widely separated musical celebrities for HIGH FIDELITY. He made it. Both books are out. One is *Wall Street: Men and Money* (\$3.50), a piercing yet whimsical study of the fabulous Street; the other is a novel, *The Experts*, of which the central character is an idealistic Midwestern governor (absolutely fictitious) who is picked as a Presidential possibility but whose past contains some charming but politically dangerous peccadillos. Both are highly recommended here. Both were finished, fortunately, before Mayer got to Italy and began to lounge in the sun and listen to the astounding musical fare of Radio Italiana—which gave him the idea for the article that begins on page 46.

Carver Dana Andrews (learn something new every day, don't you?) was born in Mississippi, into a minister's family, and raised in Texas, where he studied to become a teacher. After teacher's college, however, he became an actor and, as nearly everyone knows, an extraordinarily good one (*Laura, A Walk in the Sun, The Ox-bow Incident, State Fair, The Best Years of Our Lives* . . . why go on?). His interest in music and high fidelity he himself talks about, on page 41, in a manner to make any further comments here quite unnecessary.

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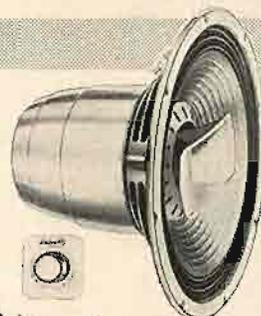


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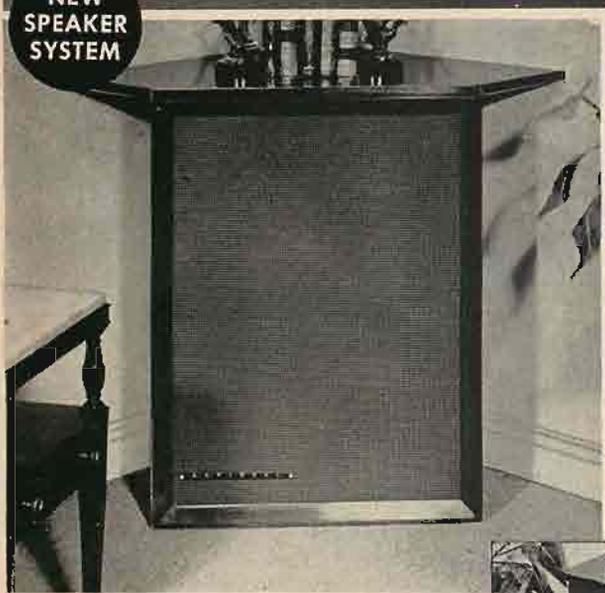
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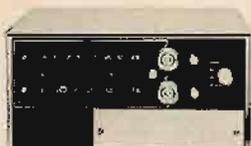
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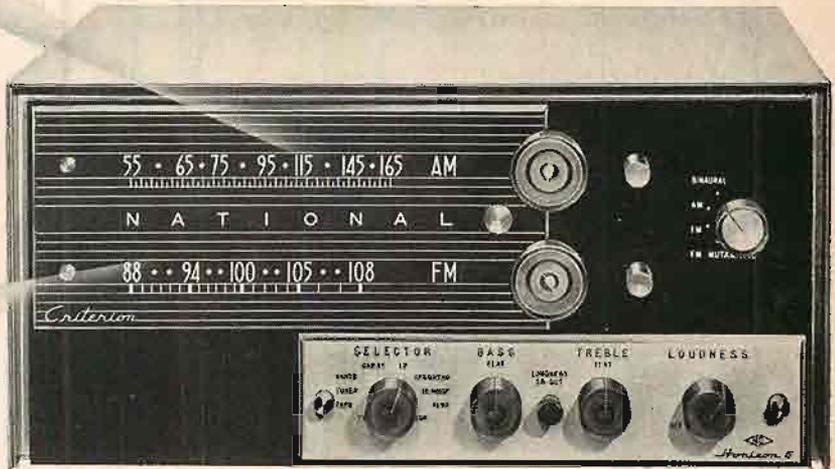
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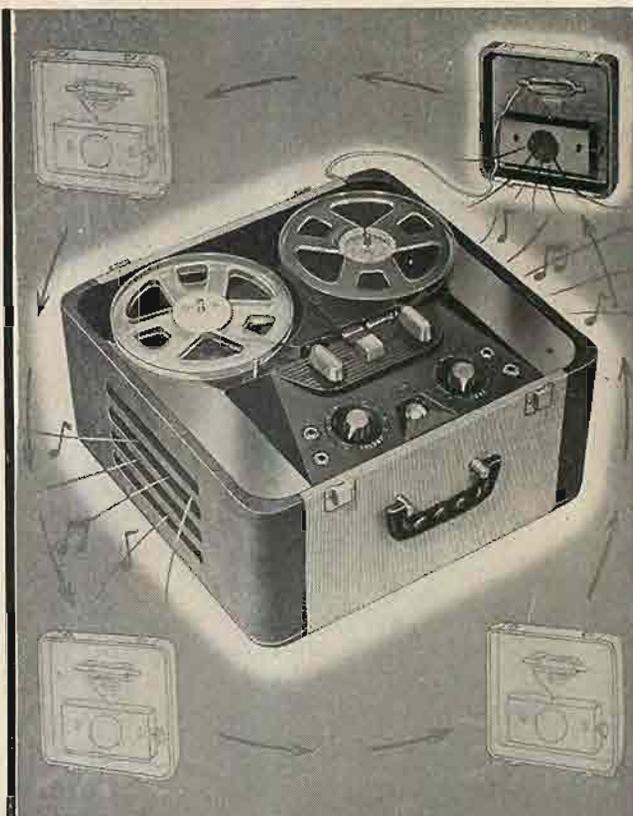
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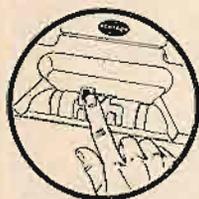
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610 Mamaroneck Ave.</p> |
|--|--|--|



Swap a Record?

We're going to try something new in this column which should interest many of our readers—judging from the number of inquiries we've received.

Not long ago, in our "Letters" column, we published a letter from Nelson L. Walker, of Findlay, Ohio, inquiring whether there was a means or service whereby he might swap records which he no longer wanted for ones which he did want. The response to Mr. Walker's letter was really something—in fact, it was so great that he didn't know "where to go from here." So he sent along to us some of the letters he received which he hadn't been able to handle and with one of which (see below) we cautiously launch a Swap-A-Record service.

We approach this new feature with fear and trembling, as anyone who gives it half a thought will readily realize the complications that may result. We have visions of angry letters, canceled subscriptions, and ticking parcels arriving from people who have gotten records through this column which have turned out to be real duds—full of needle scratches, dust particles, or otherwise imperfect. Thus, we state right here and now that we'll not be responsible for what you might get by trade through this column.

The names and addresses of tradees will be given with their respective records-for-trade or records-they-want lists and the interested party must correspond with them direct.

We plan to list only 78 and 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm records—no 45s, please.

So as to let as many readers as possible take advantage of this swap-space, you should limit your list to ten selections. This can be either a list of records you want to find or records you want to trade.

We must have from tradee complete information regarding the record(s): record company, number, composer, works, and performers.

Continued on page 13

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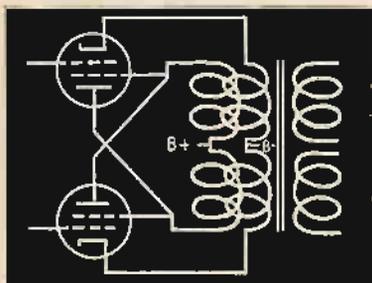
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BOOKLET
HF-555**

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NOTED WITH INTEREST

Continued from page 9

Finally, before you send us your list of records you want to swap, please examine the records, play them through, and make sure they're in good condition. (Remember, you will *also* be on the receiving end.)

Our first trade list is from Robert Starrrett, 31-53 34th Street, Long Island City 6, N. Y. He wants to trade the following records, and we would suggest that you send your list with your initial letter to him.

Tchaikovsky: Piano Concerto No. 2; Mewton Wood & Goehr; Concert Hall 1125, 12-in.

Delius: Orchestral Selections; Slatkin & orch.; Capitol P 8182, 12-in.

Franck: Symphonic Variations; D'Indy: Symphony on French Mountain Air; Casadesus, Munch, N. Y. Philh.; Columbia ML 4298, 12-in.

Lehar: Der Zarewitch (excerpts); Zurich Tonhalle Orch.; Reinshagen, Roswaenge; London LL 219, 12-in.

Jazzmen, Arise!

From Varese, Italy, comes a letter from Pier-Angelo Maletto, via Cavour 20, who wishes to "enter correspondence with" a jazz enthusiast in America. He says, "I assure you that it is not an easy thing to be collecting jazz records in Italy, as most of the recordings have never been published or imported here." He is mainly interested in the 1925-1945 jazz period.

Can anyone help him?

Where Next?

Any of you people vacationing in Havana this winter would have felt right at home if you'd ambled by the Comodoro Hotel during one recent three-day period. It was the scene of Cuba's first Audio Fair and it appears that it won't be the last. Antonio Quevodo, a Cuban newspaper music critic, lecturer, audio-engineer, and one of the promoters of the fair, writes that "everyone in the business was represented." Some of them: G. E. Cubana, Pye, Zenith, Admiral, Sonido y Proyeccion (RCA), Ampro, California, Condom, André, etc. "All exhibited magnificent sets that were highly praised by the public. The financial outcome of this fair has gone far be-

Continued on page 16

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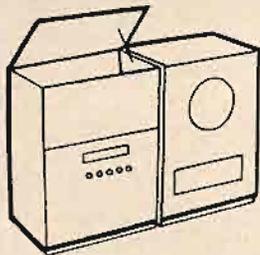
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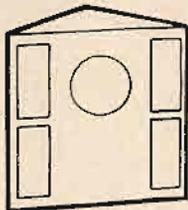
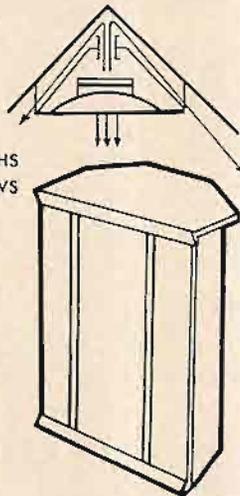
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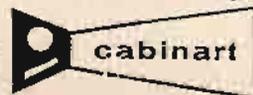
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Model 61, 12" speaker—\$19.95
Model 63, 15" speaker—\$23.95
slightly higher west and south

KIT FORMS BY



75 North 11th Street
Brooklyn, N. Y.

NOTED WITH INTEREST

Continued from page 13

yond expectations, in regard to sales, publicity, and prospects."

Whither Radio?

Interested in radio-listening statistics? Here are some culled from an address given by John C. Doerfer, FCC Commissioner, before The Commonwealth Club of San Francisco, in February:

Type of Program	Number of Listeners	
	1953	1954
Situation		
Comedy	6,000,000	4,758,000
Mystery	4,480,000	3,568,000
Popular Music	5,610,000	3,648,000
Concert Music	3,680,000	4,203,000

Attendance at serious musical concerts has increased 88% over 1940; symphony orchestras have increased over 80% during the same period. In New York City alone, attendance at classical music concerts has increased 130% over 1940; today twice as many towns (2,000) provide more serious music than was provided in 1940. It is estimated that concerts and symphonies by the New York Philharmonic and Boston Symphony Orchestra reach an audience of over 11 million people.

Comparing English and American radio, Commissioner Doerfer states that the ratio of radios in Great Britain is one for each 3½ persons; in America it's one for each 1½ persons; that in 1953 the Britons paid about \$55 million for radio reception privilege (about \$2.80 license fee per radio), while in the U. S., broadcasters paid over \$50 million in income taxes for the privilege of broadcasting.

Finally, though this isn't necessarily "statistics," it seems worth mentioning: "Television broadcasts by the BBC stop at 5:00 o'clock in the afternoon and resume at 7:30 p. m. . . . presumably to permit the mothers to get the children off to bed without too much distraction or argument." Ah . . . !

"The Listeners"

We received a letter the other day from one of our favorite suppliers of article ideas, which began: "Have you ever heard of the National Association of Seekers after the Truth in Music, Midwest Hunting Division, Department of Earnest Suburban Listeners of

Continued on page 18

**...BECAUSE
THEY
SOUND
BETTER...**

Admittedly, the performance quality of a loudspeaker depends upon design and construction. But we know that you intend neither to design nor build one. You will select one already designed and built. And when you sit back to an evening of musical enjoyment, the chances are you won't be thinking of flux density, impedance or cone suspension.

Certainly, the facts and figures are available for Goodmans High Fidelity Speakers...and we know they will impress you. But, the point we make is that you select *your* speaker as you intend to use it... not on paper but by critical listening. The more critical you are, the more confident are we that your choice will be Goodmans—for the best reason in the world—*because they sound better.*

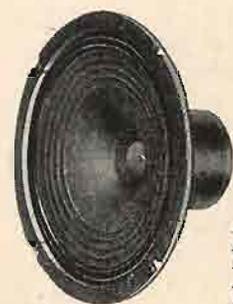
Complete Service Facilities maintained for your convenience

Sold by Leading Sound Dealers • Prices Slightly Higher on West Coast

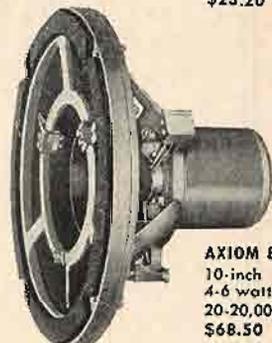
For Complete Literature, write to:

ROCKBAR CORPORATION 215 East 37th Street, New York 16, N. Y.

GE-2



AXIETTE
8-inch
5 watts
40-15,000 cps
\$23.20



AXIOM 80
10-inch
4-6 watts
20-20,000 cps
\$68.50



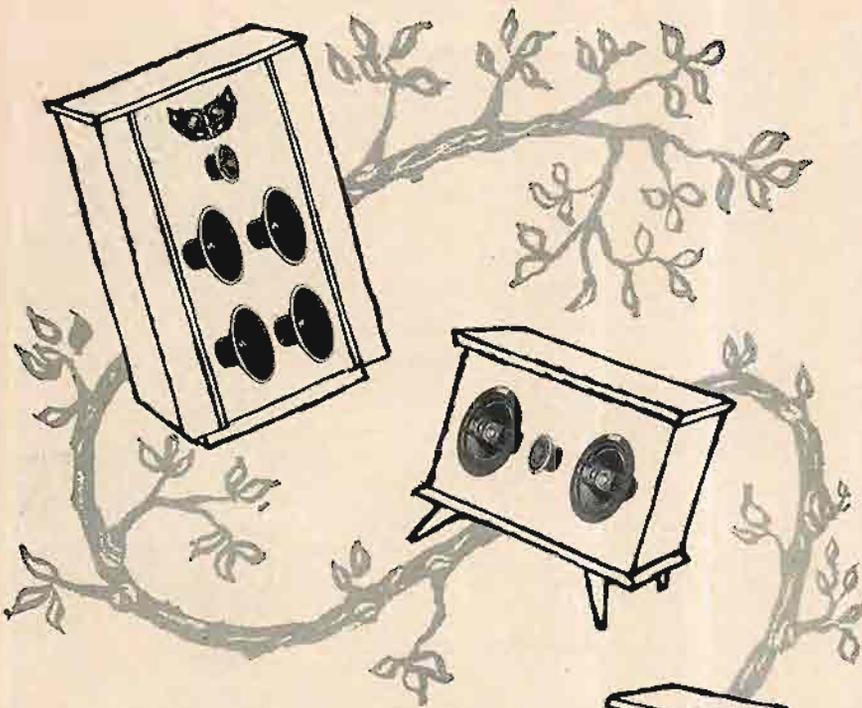
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AXIOM 150**
12-inch
15 watts
30-15,000 cps
\$53.50

GOODMANS
High Fidelity
LOUDSPEAKERS



**Mark II
AXIOM 22**
12-inch
20 watts
30-15,000 cps
\$72.95





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Start with Quality—
add Power and Realism as you wish.

With Bozaks you will enjoy, at every step,
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Build with Bozak.

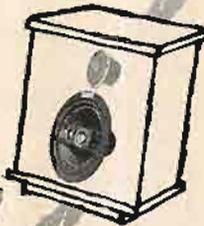
The three matched drivers
—Bass, Mid-Range and Treble—

combine smoothly into two-way and three-way
speaker systems from the modest B-207A to the
supreme B-310, each peerless in its class.

You can build Power and Realism with Bozak Quality,
without the heartaches of scrapping "outgrown"
speakers, the tedious matching and balancing of
incompatible units, and the fruitless tuning of a
resonant enclosure to reduce bass deficiency.

The recommended infinite baffling of Bozak Speakers
preserves their vanishingly-low level of distortion,
perfection of transient response and unequalled
balance—over the widest usable frequency and
dynamic ranges available today.

Bozak Speaker Systems stand unchallenged for
The Very Best in Sound.



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NOTED WITH INTEREST

Continued from page 16

St. Louis County? . . ." No, we hadn't; furthermore, we found that the NASTMMHDDDESLSLC had not heard of us either! We were quick to inform them about HIGH FIDELITY and "Earnest Listener" C. J. Harris was equally quick to reply with more information about the NASTMMD-DESLSLC. We think our readers will be interested: ". . . We usually have formal programs mimeographed or typewritten — not too . . . formal, however; sometimes you might find a footnote reading, for instance, 'Owing to a Supreme Court ruling that you do not have to listen to *Clair de Lune* unless you want to, band two will be omitted.' Each member prepares his own program to suit himself. String quartets are usually barred and for the most part vocal solos and opera are too, but once in a while somebody breaks over. For the most part we stick to orchestra only or piano alone or in concerto. You are at perfect liberty to tear the devil out of a program if you don't like it — but you have to shut up until a piece is over. Then and not until then can you praise or condemn. You can also go to sleep or read a magazine if you're bored and nobody will think a thing of it. Or, you can go into another room if the going gets too rough for you. Nobody will pay any attention to that either. It may be the fact that you can take it or leave it that has held these same fourteen people for *fourteen solid years*.

"The thing was originally thought of by Mrs. J. Mountford Aull . . . of St. Louis County. On my programs she is listed under the big title as 'Founder, Inspirationalist, and Mentor.' . . .

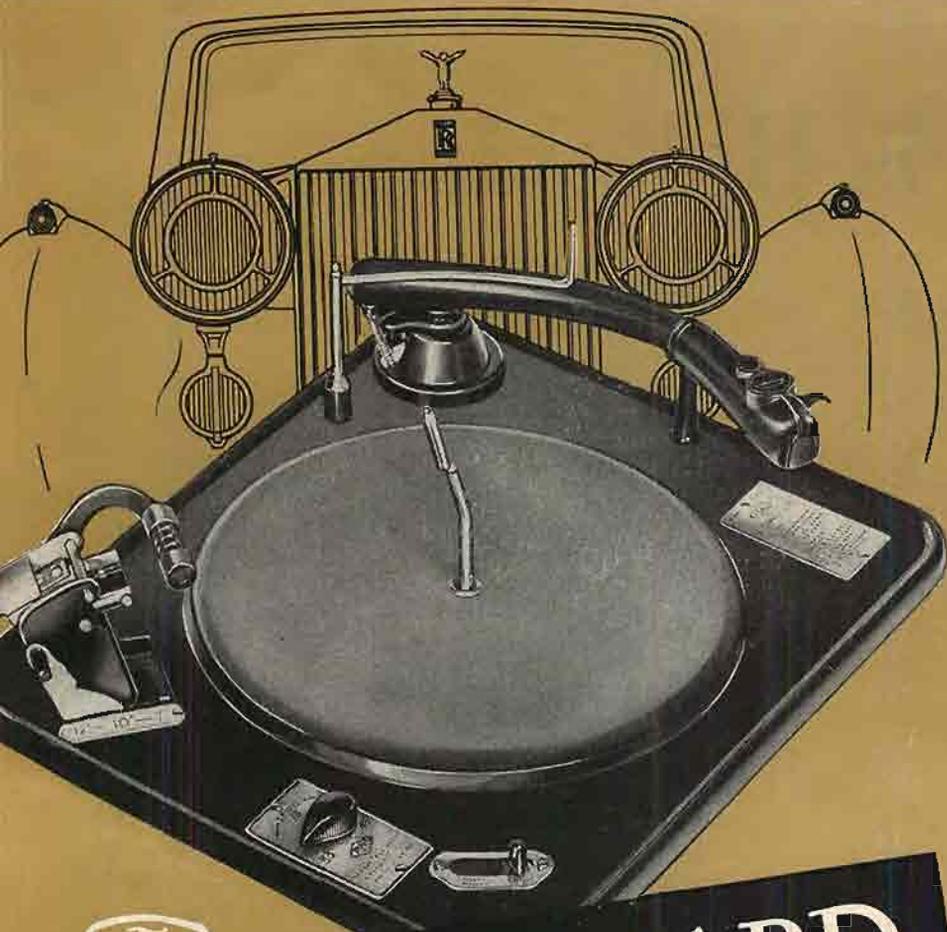
"The Listeners gather, roughly, about every two or three weeks, depending on who is willing to have them. We try to go in rotation but it doesn't always work, what with this and that. We meet at 7 on Sundays. The hostess is supposed to furnish soup. You bring your own sandwiches and your own beer. Wine is historically served at intermission time for them as likes the stuff. Usually the hostess has a dessert too — and coffee. Once in a while somebody gets to feeling rich and passes the word not to bring sandwiches and serves a real supper . . .

"The equipment used ranges from Hi Fi to Low Fo. Everybody seems to

Continued on page 21

Incomparable...

Since 1935
the Garrard has been
sold and serviced
throughout the United States.



GARRARD "Triumph"

World's Finest Record Changer

It is recognized every-
where for superior
performance, ruggedness
and reliability.

**CHECK CRAFTSMANSHIP, FEATURES,
PRICE AND SERVICE...**

and you will understand clearly why this is
the world's No. 1 high-fidelity record changer.

"RIGHTS" and "WRONGS"
of record changer design
(important in protecting your records).

RIGHT:

Garrard Precision Pusher Platform...
the only record changing device that insures
positive, gentle handling of records with standard
center holes.



WRONG:

"Overhead Bridges" (as on ordinary changers)
... which may damage or dislodge records
accidentally.

RIGHT:

Garrard removable and interchangeable
spindles... Easily inserted; accommodate all
records, all sizes, as they were made to be
played; pull out instantly to facilitate removal of
records from turntable.



WRONG:

Fixed Spindles (as on ordinary changers)...
which require ripping records upwards over
metallic spindle projections after playing.

Other Garrard features include: 4 pole motor
—no rumble, no induced hum • heavy drive shaft
—no wows, no waves • weighted turntable—
flywheel action, constant speed • muting switch
—silence between records • silent automatic
stop—shuts off after last record; no disturbing
"plop" • easy stylus weight adjustment—pro-
jects long-playing records • balanced-mounted
tone arm—true tangent tracking • universal shell
—fits all popular high fidelity cartridges

... and this is the LEAK TL/10 HIGH FIDELITY AMPLIFIER
COMPLETE WITH "POINT ONE" REMOTE CONTROL PRE-AMPLIFIER



Most economical amplifier ever built by
Leak. Despite amazingly low price, Leak
standards have been maintained, with all
the engineering skill and fastidious assem-
bly and wiring that have won world-wide
admiration. Incorporates an ultra-linear 10-
watt circuit, with 2 of the new KT-61 beam
power output tetrolodes in push-pull. Har-
monic distortion only one-tenth of one
percent at 1000 cycles, for a power output
of 8 watts... a noteworthy achievement
insuring flawless reproduction.

High damping factor of 23, and low hum level of
-76 db below full output, are ordinarily found
only in far more expensive units.

4 MASTER CONTROLS

Control 1
Tuner, Tape, AES,
NARTB, FFRR,
COL.LP

Control 2
Treble, 23 db
range of control

Control 3
Bass, 23 db
range of control

Control 4
On-Off and
Volume

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EXCLUSIVE FEATURE: Tape recorder jacks (input and output) on front panels for instantaneous use

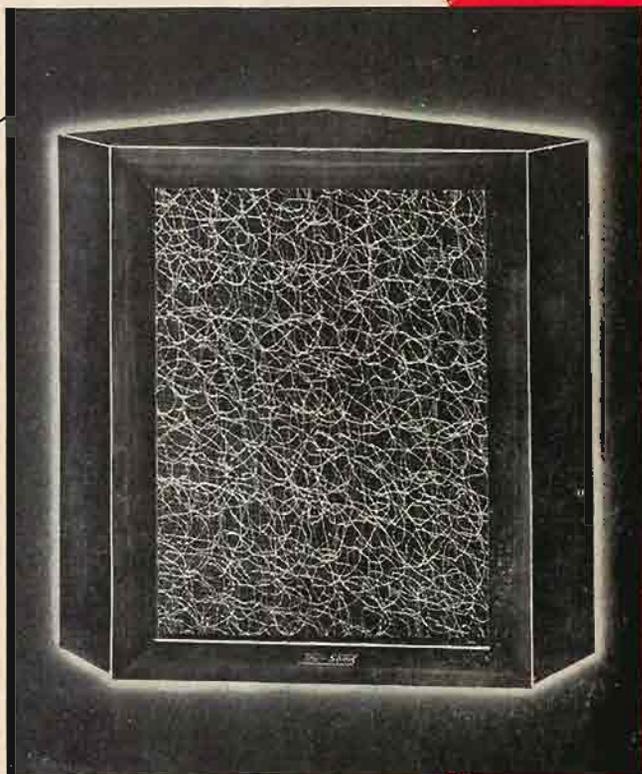
Hearing is Believing

STEPHENS

Cavalier



brings you all the virtuoso quality
your sound system can produce



TRIM straight lines characterize this smart upright enclosure that fits neatly into a corner. Engineered to present a Stephens speaker system at its best, the "Cavalier" blends unobtrusively with either modern or contemporary settings. Choice of high-lustre, hand-rubbed blonde or mahogany finish. Enclosure Model 626 alone, Net \$120.00. 32" wide, 32" high, 21" deep. Shipping Weight 105 lbs.

And a speaker that delivers the most satisfying sound from your hi fi equipment is the Stephens 15" 152AX, a two-way coaxial speaker. Employs two voice coils and 2½ lb. Alnico V permanent magnet, has 5000 cycle network. Shipping Weight 26 lbs. Speaker alone, Net \$88.50.

STEPHENS
TRU-SONIC

Stephens Manufacturing Corporation
8538 Warner Dr. • Culver City, California



*Cavalier with speaker
system installed, complete,
Net \$208.50.*

Cable Address "Morhanex"; Export Address, 450 Broadway, New York 13, New York

NOTED WITH INTEREST

Continued from page 18

like his own set best and the heck with what anybody else thinks about it.

"You can have guests if you want them, but you don't take guests to somebody else's house without prior arrangement

"I do not doubt that these groups exist all over the country. It would be interesting to know"

That it would; and we'd be very glad to hear from any of you who have similar informal "listening" clubs.

Back Copies Available

Ralph Baeuerle, 2514 Yorkway, Baltimore 22, Md., complete set.

Dr. Mark Ross, 118 E. 3rd St., Owensboro, Ky., complete set for the highest bidder, F.O.B.

Dr. Walter H. Frolich, Steptoe Valley Hospital, East Ely, Nev., Nos. 1 through 26 for \$20, plus parcel post on 23 pounds.

A. Russell Jones, 125 Virginia Rd., Oak Ridge, Tenn., copies 1 through 24.

Carl R. Short, Cleveland Camera & Recorder Co., 3788 Rocky River Dr., Cleveland 11, Ohio, complete set of 1954 issues.

Don Schroeder, 5512 Fair Ridge Ct., Jennings 20, Mo., has issues from No. 1 with about four missing.

Also, we are told that Post Office News, 37 W. Monroe St., Chicago, stocks back issues of High Fidelity. They have most of 1954 and some 1953 issues.

Tuner Kit

We received an interesting release recently . . . advised us that Collins Audio of Westfield, N. J., was introducing a new super tuner kit (FM-AM), a limited-edition model called the "Custom Special," in celebration of its tenth anniversary. All sorts of features, including high sensitivity, a big tuning meter, cascode front-end, and a squelch circuit on FM. Looks good.

Plugs, Jacks, and Switches

We hope everyone interested in jacks and switches has at hand a complete Switchcraft catalogue file. Everytime we browse through their catalogues we get four new ideas on how to interconnect and switch hi-fi components. Address is 1328 N. Halsted St., Chicago 22, Ill.

Eye-wise and ear-wise it pleases as no other can



New Sonotone Amplifier

Compare this Sonotone HFA-100 for both performance and appearance with any amplifier you can buy—at any price!

Its 12-watt output is ample for the largest living room. Frequency response is flat beyond audible limits, at any volume setting. At normal listening levels distortion is virtually unmeasurable, and only 0.15% at maximum! Hum and noise, too, are completely negligible.

Cabinetry is equally superb—either solid mahogany or solid walnut; the panel, softly-glowing solid brushed brass. Picture this unit conveniently at your chairside...its beauty is at home in any home.

The Sonotone HFA-100 is for use with fine ceramic phono cartridges, tuners, tape recorders, television, etc. If splendidly reproduced, noise-free music is your interest, rather than gadgetry and knob-turning, here is the amplifier for you. **\$117.50.** (\$99.50 less cabinet).

SONOTONE CONTROL UNIT

Similar in appearance to the HFA-100 above, this CU-50 is a self-powered control amplifier, designed to work with any power amplifier.

Used with ceramic phono cartridge, tuner, tape, or television sound, the CU-50 gives you complete chairside tone, volume and selector control, for your relaxed listening pleasure. **\$59.00.** (\$49.50 less cabinet).



SONOTONE Corporation
Elmsford, N. Y.

We will gladly supply full technical information on request to Dept. AH-55





*Build it
YOURSELF*

**Heathkit
HIGH FIDELITY
PREAMPLIFIER**



MODEL WA-P2

formance and most attractive in appearance. Fulfills every requirement for true high fidelity performance. Shpg. Wt. 7 lbs. **\$19.75**

**Heathkit
WILLIAMSON TYPE
25 WATT AMPLIFIER
(PEERLESS TRANSFORMER)**

This latest and most advanced Heathkit hi-fi amplifier has all the extras so important to the super-critical listener. Featuring KT-66 tubes, special Peerless output transformer, and new circuit design, it offers brilliant performance by any standard.

Bass response is extended more than a full octave below other Heathkit Williamson circuits, along with higher power output, reduced intermodulation and harmonic distortion, better phase shift characteristics and extended high frequency response. A new type balancing circuit makes balancing easier, and at the same time permits a closer "dynamic" balance between tubes.

Aside from these outstanding engineering features, the W-5 manifests new physical design as well. A protective cover fits over all above-chassis components, forming a most attractive assembly—suitable for mounting in or out of a cabinet. All connectors are brought out to the front chassis apron for convenience of connection.

Model W-5M consists of main amplifier and power supply on single chassis with protective cover. Shpg. Wt. 31 lbs. **\$59.75**
Express only.
Model W-5 consists of W-5M, plus WA-P2 Preamplifier shown on this page. Shpg. Wt. 38 lbs. **\$79.50**
Express only.

**Heathkit
HIGH FIDELITY
20 WATT AMPLIFIER**

This particular 20 watt Amplifier combines high fidelity with economy. Single chassis construction provides preamplifier, main amplifier and power supply function. True hi-fi performance ± 1 db, 20 cps to 20,000 cps. Preamplifier affords 4 switch-selected compensated inputs. Push-pull 6L6 tubes used for surprisingly clean output signal with excellent response characteristics and adequate power reserve. Full tone control action. Extremely low cost for real high fidelity performance. Shpg. **\$35.50**
Wt. 18 lbs.



MODEL A-98

**HEATHKIT
High Fidelity
"BUILD IT YOURSELF"
amplifier
kits**

**Heathkit
WILLIAMSON TYPE
(ACROSOUND
TRANSFORMER)**

This dual-chassis high fidelity amplifier kit provides installation flexibility. It features the Acrosound "ultra-linear" output transformer, and has a frequency response within 1 db from 10 cps to 100,000 cps. Harmonic distortion and intermodulation distortion are less than .5% at 5 watts, and maximum power output is well over 20 watts. A truly outstanding performer. W-3M consists of main amplifier and power supply. Shpg. Wt. 29 lbs., Express **\$49.75**
only.

Model W-3 consists of W-3M plus WA-P2 Preamplifier listed on this page. Shpg. Wt. 37 lbs., Express **\$69.50**
only.



**Heathkit
WILLIAMSON TYPE
(CHICAGO TRANSFORMER)**

This hi-fi amplifier is constructed on a single chassis, thereby affecting a reduction in cost. Uses new Chicago high fidelity output transformer and provides the same high performance as Model W-3 listed above. An unbeatable dollar value. The lowest price ever quoted for a complete Williamson Type Amplifier circuit.

Model W-4M consists of main amplifier and power supply on single chassis. Shpg. Wt. 28 lbs., Express **\$39.75**
only.
Model W-4 consists of W-4M plus WA-P2 Preamplifier. Shpg. Wt. 35 lbs., Express only **\$59.50**



COMBINATION
W-5M and WA-P2



**HEATH
COMPANY**

A SUBSIDIARY OF DAYSTROM, INC.

**BENTON HARBOR 8,
MICHIGAN**

LETTERS



Sir:

Recently I observed an early issue and noted that every review quoted the record-playing time. What has happened that this vital element of review information is so often neglected by some of your review personnel?

Consider this, that a competitive review of *Homage to Diaghilev* made sufficient sense to guide buying, except that it lacked the "time of play" information that I deem necessary. Luckily HIGH FIDELITY reviewed this expensive fraud of three 12-inch disks for \$17.85 that contained only 74 minutes of playing time. By a little judicious showing, the whole thing could, and should, have been on one 12-incher.

Why can't HIGH FIDELITY embrace a tenet and a policy to show up the records and/or the companies that have forgotten that *LP means Long Play*? One company apparently recognizes this with ads that are called "Longer Play" (Vox). Further, I quote [from a review by Robert Marsh] page 84 of your February 1955 issue: "Why inflate costs by giving a 12-inch surface to a 10-minute piece?" Your editorial policy should insist on "time" information on all reviews as a starter—and let your readers speak out on how they feel.

Gene J. Lutzeier
Ann Arbor, Mich.

Angel Records, producer of *Homage to Diaghilev*, had a somewhat different reaction to our timing of the records — because it was wrong. The playing time of the three disks is not 74 minutes, but 131 minutes. On the general subject of timing there has been much debate, some of it at a recent luncheon given by this magazine for its reviewers. The reviewers had some cogent points to make. In the first place, they saw no sense in timing well-known standard works; presumably no one will buy one Tchaikovsky Sixth because it is longer than another. They were aware of the

Continued on page 24

Write FOR FREE CATALOG AND SCHEMATICS

Refreshing!



THE
Collaro
RC-54

*The Automatic Record Changer
That First Introduced . . .*

JPF
Just Plain Fidelity

 Refreshing is the word—because for once, we have penetrated the maze of superlatives that has confused the whole idea of music reproduction. We have developed a clear understanding that what the listener wants is faithful sound . . . and this means fidelity . . . not 'high'—not 'super'—and not 'ultra'. . . *just plain fidelity.*

We decided that fidelity cannot be improved upon—not even by qualifying the word with an adjective. So, we turned our attention to improving the product. And by so doing, achieved what others belabored . . . fidelity . . . *just plain fidelity.*

Complete specifications are available by writing to Dept. UE-2

This is immediately apparent in the new Collaro RC-54, the most modern of all record changers. Used with a high quality amplifier and speaker system, the performance of the RC-54 is a rewarding experience. It is smooth and foolproof. It won't stall or jam . . . and handles your records with utmost gentleness. The Collaro RC-54 operates at all three speeds: 33 $\frac{1}{3}$, 45 and 78 rpm. The change cycle takes only 7 seconds regardless of the record speed. And for your added convenience, the new RC-54 intermixes all size records in any sequence, and without pre-setting.

Sold by Leading Sound Dealers

ROCKBAR CORPORATION • 215 East 37th Street • New York 16, N. Y.

Net \$48⁷⁵
Slightly Higher
West of Rockies

PERMOFLUX ANNOUNCES

The NEW

Largo-12

Big brother to the famous "Largo 8"



New, complete two-way speaker system — with all the time-tested, proven features of the "Largo 8" plus:

- More powerful Super Royal 12" Speaker
- New, larger, back-loaded horn enclosure
- Full 20-watt power-handling capacity
- Smooth peak-free response . . . 30 to 16,000 cycles

Combined with: • Scientifically matched 32KTR Super Tweeter • Slanted speaker panel for proper sound focusing • High-frequency balance control • Horn loading of back wave thru unique cabinet base. The Largo 12 is precision-constructed of beautiful $\frac{3}{4}$ " Mahogany or Korina Blonde cabinet woods. Impedance, 8 ohms. Size: 23 $\frac{1}{8}$ " H, 27 $\frac{1}{2}$ " W, 15 $\frac{1}{2}$ " D.

Audiophile NET.....\$149.50
(Also available in Walnut at slightly higher price.)

HTP.

The Largo 12 is available under the exclusive Permoflux insured Home Trial Plan (HTP). Try it in the comfort and quiet of your own home for 15 days—with your own records and associated equipment. For a limited time only, each HTP participant will receive—absolutely FREE—the new Permoflux "Maestro" speaker-Headset Control Box (\$10.00 value). Also available under HTP: the Diminutive (\$49.50); the Largo 8 (\$99.75).

Only Permoflux gives you all the features you should have in a 2-way high-fidelity speaker system. See and hear the Largo 12 and other Permoflux systems at your hi-fi dealer today. Also ask him about HTP—or write:

Permoflux CORPORATION

Dept. B, 4916 West Grand Avenue • Chicago 39, Illinois
West Coast Plant • 4101 San Fernando Road • Glendale 4, California
Canadian Licensee • Campbell Manufacturing Co., Ltd., Toronto, Canada

LETTERS

Continued from page 24

need to give some indication of playing time for little-known works, especially when assembled in collections on one disk. In general, they preferred to indicate the duration in general terms rather than figures: a bargain; average; makes or omits repeats; very little for the money; and so on. Timing, they pointed out, requires playing a record through without interrup-



HIGH FIDELITY MAGAZINE WAS MY Scorekeeper UNTIL THE MARCH ISSUE. GIVE YOUR REVIEWS—FROM WATER'S EDGE!

tion, and does not permit of section-by-section comparison with other versions, which is sometimes desirable. Reviewing, we were reminded, is after-hours work for most reviewers, and time is limited. To play each record twice, once for timing and once for other evaluation, would be impossible for some. Accordingly, we agreed to let them include timing only when they thought it relevant, and to include the data in the text of the review rather than in the heading. We remain open-minded about the question, however, and are open to suggestions—particularly if they are enlightening. We have never been clear as to the value of timing beyond the factor of how-much-music-for-the-money. — Ed.

Sir:

A few of the high fidelity items that I want were seen (from a distance) at the recent Audio Fair in Los Angeles. Most were not seen at all.

Since Audio Fairs are largely an unfortunate fiasco, I suggest that manufacturers follow the lead of Pilot Mfg. Co. and supply audio enthusiasts with inexpensive lists of local dealers where their products may be seen. An Audio Fair is not the place, since great numbers of children, high school kids, etc.,

Continued on page 28

Viscous-Damped

NEW GRAY *VISCIOUS-DAMPED TONE ARM AT NEW LOW PRICE!

Made Possible By New Materials . . . Engineering
Ingenuity . . . Increased Production

*Fluid Control For Protection
Of Records

HEAR THE LISTENING QUALITY OF THE All-New . . . Low Priced Gray 108C Hi-Fi Tone Arm

For listening quality and low price, Gray leads the Hi-Fi field with the ALL-NEW 108C TONE ARM. Like all Gray Tone Arms, the 108C gives you true reproduction of concert quality High Fidelity music. The Gray 108C Tone Arm is the product of advanced engineering technique, unusual application of new materials and unique production facilities. It guarantees the ultimate in performance for new and old recordings . . . 33 $\frac{1}{3}$, 45, and 78 RPM . . . up to 16 inches in diameter, with perfect compliance for all records, new or old, at lowest stylus pressure . . . virtually eliminating tone arm resonance. Instant cartridge change, Pickering, G-E, Fairchild, Electro Sonic with automatic adjustment to correct pressure. NOW . . . you can own a Gray Tone Arm at a price you can afford to pay. See your nearest High Fidelity dealer. Hear the amazing listening quality of the ALL-NEW Gray 108C Tone Arm.

Illustrated above . . . the Gray Viscous-Damped arm in action. Gray's viscous-damped (fluid control) suspension principle regulates vertical and horizontal movement of tone arm. Minimizes groove jumping and skidding. Prevents damage to record if tone arm is suddenly dropped.

Vertical motion of arm descending on record is automatically controlled so that even a child can handle the Gray All-New 108C Viscous-Damped Tone Arm.



The Gray ALL-NEW
108C Viscous-Damped
Tone Arm

STILL AVAILABLE AT YOUR HIGH FIDELITY DEALER . . . GRAY'S FAMOUS 108B VISCIOUS-DAMPED TONE ARM.

GRAY RESEARCH

AND DEVELOPMENT CO., Inc., Hilliard St., Manchester, Conn.
Division of the GRAY MANUFACTURING COMPANY

Originators of the Gray Telephone Pay Station and the
Gray Audograph and PhonAudograph.

GRAY RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT CO., INC.
Hilliard Street, Manchester, Connecticut

Please send me complete descriptive literature on the ALL-NEW 108C Viscous-Damped Tone Arm. Also information on other Gray tone arms.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____



CZECH ACTORS. refugees from communism, listen to playback of weekly satirical program "Café de l'Europe" on tape recording machine in one of Radio Free Europe's Munich studios. Supported by contributions from American citizens, RFE now beams as many as 20 hours of home news and entertainment every day to the five key satellite countries of Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Bulgaria. Programs compete hour by hour with communist stations in such cities as Prague, Warsaw and Budapest.



BITING WIT and patriotic music featured in popular tape recorded programs like "Kohout's Cabaret" incite bitter attacks on RFE by Red officials in satellite countries. With tape, exile entertainers, clergymen, statesmen from behind Iron Curtain can address listeners in their native languages at all hours of the day.



ARMORED CAR ESCAPEES from Czechoslovakia tape record the story of their flight to freedom for Radio Free Europe listeners. Besides world news, RFE tells captive peoples the *real* news in their own countries. Coded messages to families and friends are daily part of network's schedule.

THE RADIO NETWORK THAT BRINGS HOPE TO 50 MILLION EUROPEANS

Leaders of Iron Curtain countries are anxious to drown out Radio Free Europe because RFE is stimulating opposition to communism in key satellite countries. By exposing communist collaborators . . . answering Red propaganda . . . revealing news suppressed by Moscow, RFE gives the will to resist oppression to the captive populations of Romania, Hungary, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria.

But the job of broadcasting the truth grows harder. The Communists are stepping up their efforts to block Radio Free Europe. So far, superior engineering know-how has kept RFE ahead of Red "jammers". But now, more and *stronger* transmitters are urgently needed. Keep the truth turned on—by contributing to Radio Free Europe. Send your "Truth Dollars" to **CRUSADE FOR FREEDOM**, c/o your Postmaster.

Radio Free Europe uses "Scotch" Brand Magnetic Recording Tapes exclusively to assure uniform, highest quality broadcast results.



OKLAHOMA CITY radio producer David Sureck fights daily battle with communism. Directing inspirational and service programs, adult and children's broadcasts, he exposes Red propaganda. Most RFE programs are tape recorded for round-the-clock broadcasting from transmitters in West Germany and Portugal.



29 TRANSMITTERS like this one near Mannheim, Germany help Radio Free Europe break through the Iron Curtain. By beaming all transmitters on one target for certain periods of the day, RFE makes Soviet jamming ineffective.



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40 WATT Amplifier \$99⁵⁰

Greatest amplifier buy today and here's why. RESERVE POWER — 80 watt peak. EXCLUSIVE NOVALOOP CIRCUITRY — completely new, non-ringing multiple path feedback design, over 50 DB feedback. 40 WATT HIGH EFFICIENCY, WIDE RANGE OUTPUT TRANSFORMER — sealed multiple-section winding, thin strip core. FOOLPROOF DAMPING CONTROL — continuously variable, exactly matches loudspeaker for startling performance. 5 to 200,000 cycle response. DISTORTION FREE — less than 0.05% at 30 watt level, ex-

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"Coronation"

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erence. MAXIMUM BASS AND TREBLE COMPENSATION — over 20 DB distortion-free boost and attenuation. FIVE INPUT SELECTIONS. 16 PRECISION PLAYBACK CURVES — lifetime encapsulated precision plug-in networks, instantly replaceable if equalization curves change. ULTRA COMPACT, EASY MOUNTING. Built-in power for Weathers cartridge, film projector photocells, condenser microphones. Distinguished satin-gold LUCITE front panel. Custom finished table cabinets available. Many extras.

For the hi-fi thrill of your life, hear the Coronation Twins today! Some dealerships still available.

INTERELECTRONICS

2432 Grand Concourse
New York 58, New York

LETTERS

Continued from page 24

seem to occupy all display rooms to capacity.

Wayne Proctor
Long Beach, Calif.

Sir:

My wife and I attended the concert by the Irish Festival Singers at the Waldorf-Astoria on St. Patrick's Night. I want to tell you it was *swell*. Veronica Dunne, Austin Gaffney, Dermot Troy and the superb basso, whose name I didn't get, as the featured singers, gave us an evening we shall long remember.

I am still smoldering over that "peat smoke" reference by your reviewer of the Irish Festival Singers' record [March 1955]. I haven't heard the record, but it is the idea that Irish song, to be authentic, must be loaded with the brogue and an indefinable "quaintness" bordering, I presume, on crudeness that irks me. That just simply isn't so. Irish song, as rendered by John McCormack was *art*. There have been lesser singers, too, who recognize it as such—Christopher Lynch, Michael O'Duffy and Seamus O'Doherty coming to mind almost at once. And why not? Ireland had a genuine culture nearly a thousand years ago. Its music had begun to move away from the primitive pentatonic, and keyless music had made its appearance in which the text determined the rhythmic pattern, there being no time signature, either.

I do not think that the outstanding characteristic of Irish song is its uninhibitedness. Where it features anger, and defiance, it pulls no punches. Where it deals with humorous situations, it is deft but unmistakable. In treating the subject of love, it is hotly passionate and unfailingly poetic. I can't think of a single instance where it sinks to coarseness or becomes maudlin. It stays dignified, in any case.

It has been my good fortune to have set foot on Eire's soil a number of times in the past four years. I have heard a variety of brogues, of course, but I must say, too, that I have never heard cleaner English either here or in Great Britain than the English of the well-schooled Dubliner. Now wouldn't I have looked foolish had I expected "peat smoke" in such society? I think your reviewer was off-base in being disappointed with the Irish Festival

Continued on page 30

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PRECISION TURNTABLE

FOR ONLY \$49⁹⁵



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Rondine **Jr.**

Model L-34, 2-SPEED, 12-INCH

For some time, there has been an expressed need for a high quality turntable with only the two currently popular record speeds. This has arisen mainly among the newcomers to high fidelity who have found that they can fill all of their music requirements with either 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ or 45 rpm records.

In considering this situation, Rek-O-Kut realized that the exclusion of one speed would simplify many of the design and construction procedures, and would permit a lower cost without compromising quality. The result . . . the Rondine, Jr. . . . is an achievement we regard with considerable pride.

The most significant feature of the Rondine, Jr. is the employment of the floating idler, now adopted in all Rek-O-Kut Rondine turntables. This development has virtually eliminated accoustical coupling between motor and turntable . . . thereby reducing vibration, rumble, and noise to below the threshold of audibility.

The Rondine, Jr. is powered by a 4-pole induction motor. Other features include a built-in retractable hub for 45 rpm records, a permanently affixed strobe disc, plus the many design and construction elements which have made the Rek-O-Kut name world-renowned in the field of sound reproduction.



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—HIGH FIDELITY Magazine

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THE FISHER FM-AM Tuner • Model 70-RT

■ Features *extreme sensitivity* (1.5 mv for 20 db of quieting); works where others fail. Armstrong system, *adjustable AFC* on switch, *adjustable AM selectivity*, separate FM and AM front ends. Shielded and shock-mounted main and subchassis. Distortion below 0.04% for 1 volt output. Hum level: better than 90 db below 2 volts on radio, better than 62 db below 10 mv input on phono. 2 inputs. 2 cathode-follower outputs. Self-powered. Exceptional phono preamplifier with full equalization facilities. 15 tubes. Six controls: Bass, Treble, Volume, Channel/Phono Equalization, Tuning and Loudness Balance. Beautiful control panel. SIZE: 14¾" wide, 8½" high, 9¼" deep.



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THE FISHER 25-Watt Amplifier • Model 70-AZ

■ Offers more *clean watts* per dollar at its price than any amplifier made. The 70-AZ has *2½ times the power* of 'basic' 10-watt units. **OUTSTANDING FEATURES:** High output (less than ½% distortion at 25 watts; 0.05% at 10 watts.) IM distortion less than 0.5% at 20 watts; 0.2% at 10 watts. Uniform response ±0.1 db, 20-20,000 cycles; 1 db, 10-50,000 cycles. Power output constant within 1 db at 25 watts, 15-35,000 cycles. Hum and noise virtually non-measurable (better than 95 db below full output!) Includes FISHER Z-MATIC at no additional cost. SIZE: 4⅞" x 14¾" x 6⅞" high.



\$99.50

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FISHER RADIO CORP. • 21-25 44th DRIVE • L. I. CITY 1, N. Y.

LETTERS

Continued from page 28

Singers' record because they gave a polished performance. His apparent expectations are hardly complimentary to the Irish!

Albert J. Franck
Richmond Hill, N. Y.

Sir:

I was gratified to read the review, short though it was, of the recording of Carl Nielsen's *Commotio for Organ and Three Motets* [March 1955]. It brings to mind, however, a rather sore point: a review of this kind, in fact any mention at all of Nielsen and/or his works, is somewhat of a rarity. In the light of his contribution to musical literature, especially in his symphonic work, this is utterly unjustifiable. He is a composer of the first magnitude. His philosophy represents all which is a beneficial influence upon the creativity of man. His music sings of peace through struggle and valiance, relates heroically our conflict with external forces and with our own minds. David Hall has commented that he is one of the four greatest symphonists since Brahms, the others being Mahler, Sibelius, and Vaughan Williams . . .

For various reasons, among which are Denmark's ineffectuality in propaganda and the devastation brought about by World War II, Nielsen's works have not reached a proper degree of significance on this side of the Atlantic and, until two years ago, were virtually unknown . . . All that he lacks in order to reach his deserved prominence is an introduction to listeners and appreciators of music. The rest is implicit in his work.

Thomas R. Walker
Durham, N. C.

Sir:

. . . For your interest, I think there are more hi-fi systems per one hundred people on Guam than any place in the world. In the BOQ here, there are at least five completed units and at least two under construction. The din in the evenings is horrible—did you ever listen or try to listen to five 20-watt hi-fi amplifiers going at once, each with a different record, all going full blast in a metal quonset hut? We get a very nice selection of various makes of LP records here at our ships store and practically every Guamanian store in town has a record shop. Guam is a record dealer's paradise.

We are sitting on the edge of a

tropical jungle and you can imagine what happens to crystal pickups in this hot, damp climate. A great many ceramic jobs are used and with pretty fair results. There has been many a modern type of horn enclosure built out here (of course, some of us have never heard a commercial horn-type enclosure). We get some directions and then build them ourselves. We can't go down to the corner store and buy things like that. If we need a resistor we go through old discarded radio receivers and "liberate" one of the right value. Condensers give us a bad time — little bugs and varmits like a condenser diet and eat them up; sometimes the moisture gets the condenser. To whip this problem we paint the condensers with a home-made insulating varnish. Of course, this changes the capacity a wee bit and takes about a week to dry but it is all for music and no one minds.

Results? We don't know how our sound systems compare with those you use back home but to us "they satisfy." It is kinda funny suddenly to hear a fifty piece orchestra come floating out of a dusty, rusty, beat-up quonset hut in the middle of a jungle, but it is more or less a common occurrence.

We have one, just one, commercial broadcast station which can hardly be classed as a full-range job. We of course get a great deal of good music from the Australian, New Zealand, and Japanese broadcast stations. The best music we get is from about five in the evening until seven-thirty from Berne, Switzerland, no commercials, no soap opera, just good music

I am doing you guys a dirty trick: I am the only man on this woebegone . . . island that gets HIGH FIDELITY. Within a week after I receive my copy it is dog eared, worn out, and messed up by at least twenty men who read every word of it. I don't know why they are so cheap that they won't subscribe, but that is the way we do things on this island of Guam.

Leslie L. Funston

Chief Warrant Radio Electrician
U. S. Navy

Sir:

I was recently confronted with a situation which is not new to me, and certainly not new to most of your readers: namely, the problem of ill-selected pairings on LPs.

To illustrate, Vox and Westminster have both recently released new re-

Continued on page 32

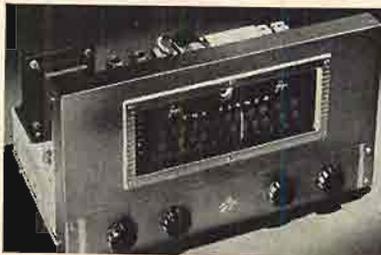
"Dream Set!"

—LIFE Magazine

THE FISHER

SERIES FIFTY

THE FISHER FM-AM Tuner • Model 50-R



■ "This tuner is among the most sensitive of all in 'fringe' areas and conjoins beautifully with the FISHER Amplifier."—*Life Magazine*. The truest index to the quality of the Model 50-R is its selection even by FM stations, after competitive trials, for pickup of distant programs for rebroadcast to their own communities. In town, or even in the extreme suburbs, the 50-R is unexcelled. **\$164.50**

THE FISHER Master Audio Control • Series 50-C



■ "The finest unit yet offered."—*Radio and TV News*. 25 choices of record equalization, outstanding phono preamplifier, separate bass and treble tone controls, loudness balance control, 5 inputs and 5 input level controls, cathode follower outputs. Hum and noise inaudible.

Chassis **\$89.50**

With cabinet **\$97.50**

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■ "Of the very best!"—*High Fidelity Magazine*. Will handle 100 watts peak. World's finest all-triode amplifier. Uniform response within 1 db from 5 to 100,000 cycles. Less than 1% distortion at 50 watts. Hum and noise content 96 db below full output—virtually non-measurable! Oversize components and quality workmanship in every detail. Includes FISHER Z-MATIC, at no additional cost. **\$159.50**

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NEW! Electronic mixing or fading of any two signal sources (such as microphone, phono, radio, etc.) No insertion loss. Extremely low hum and noise level. High impedance input; cathode follower output. 12AX7 tube. Self-powered. Beautiful plastic cabinet. *Only \$19.95*



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Professional phono equalization. Separate switches for HF roll-off and LF turn-over; 16 combinations. Handles any magnetic cartridge. Extremely low hum. Uniform response, 20 to 20,000 cycles. Two triode stages. Fully shielded. Beautiful cabinet. Self-powered. *\$22.95*



PREAMPLIFIER-EQUALIZER • 50-PR-C WITH VOLUME CONTROL

50-PR-C. This unit is identical to the 50-PR but is equipped with a volume control to eliminate the need for a separate audio control chassis. It can be connected directly to a basic power amplifier and is perfect for a high quality phonograph at the lowest possible cost. *\$23.95*



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WHOM CAN YOU BELIEVE?

■ There is no policing system in the high fidelity industry with the power to prevent exaggerated and, in some cases, deliberately misleading claims. Laboratory measured performance of some competitive tuners and amplifiers being offered currently indicate advertised claims that are as much as seven times the *actual* performance. As for our own advertisements, we cram them as full of specifications as space permits — specifications you can *trust*. If you seek the finest, insist on side-by-side comparative tests *in your own home*. YOU be the judge.

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LETTERS

Continued from page 31

cordings of Mozart's Bassoon Concerto, K. 191 (undoubtedly intended to replace the aging RCA Sharrow-Toscanini). By coincidence both are backed with Mozart's Clarinet Concerto, K. 622. On the face of it, this seems to be a good pairing. But consider the fact that the purchaser of the Bassoon Concerto will probably be either (1) a Mozart lover, or (2) a woodwind lover (like myself). In either case, he will undoubtedly already have the Clarinet Concerto in his collection, thereby causing unnecessary duplication.

It doesn't make sense to record Mozart's Clarinet Concerto, which has had a more-than-fair treatment by the companies, as evidenced by the Schwann's listing of four performances (six, with these two new ones), and neglect other works just begging to be recorded. For example, there is the Handel C-minor Bassoon Concerto, Mozart's Sonata for Bassoon and Cello, K. 292, Mozart's 2nd Bassoon Concerto, ed. by Max Seiffert (one of Concert Hall's 1953-54 Limited Edition Series, by the way), 39 (!) Bassoon Concertos by Vivaldi, Sonatine for Bassoon by Weinberger, a contemporary Concerto by Gron-dahl, and, finally, Weber's Bassoon Concerto, which, as any bassoonist will tell you, is a staple item in this neglected woodwind's repertoire.

The argument will probably arise to the effect that Mozart's Bassoon Concerto is a comparatively esoteric item, with little mass-market appeal, thereby making it necessary to pair it with something a bit more "popular." In rebuttal, I'd like to point to numerous music-lovers who have tenaciously held on to their long-since discontinued Victor Oubrados-Bigot reading on 78, in hope that a comparable performance will appear on LP. Surely, here is a ready market, without any need for an incentive, as the Clarinet Concerto.

*Donald Draganski
Bensenville, Ill.*

Sir:

I was delighted to note that you printed several letters this month [March 1955] complaining about the shocking quality of LP records; it is about time that record manufacturers were taken to task for the slovenly way in which their inspection departments must work.

I myself am so fed up with spending \$5.95 for a collection of pops and crackles (always in the quiet parts of the record) that I have stopped purchasing records entirely, and shall not start again until manufacturers begin to realize that, for the serious music lover, the purchase of an LP record — like marriage — is not to be undertaken lightly

Things have come to a pretty pass when a layman has to suggest how to make a spider [Audio Forum, March 1955] which will ensure getting the hole in the middle of the record; don't record manufacturers have any engineers on the production side, and exactly what sort of inspection are the records subjected to? I don't mean a casual glance to see whether there are any scratches, or whether there is a label on each side . . . but a proper inspection with perhaps every tenth pressing played through completely on up-to-date equipment

By far the weakest link in high fidelity at the present time is the record; I grant you all the enormous strides made in the recording of the performance, the absence of needle hiss and lots of other things, but when it comes to the production run, somebody is being exceedingly dirty and careless.

S. Skinner
Toronto, Ont.

Sir:

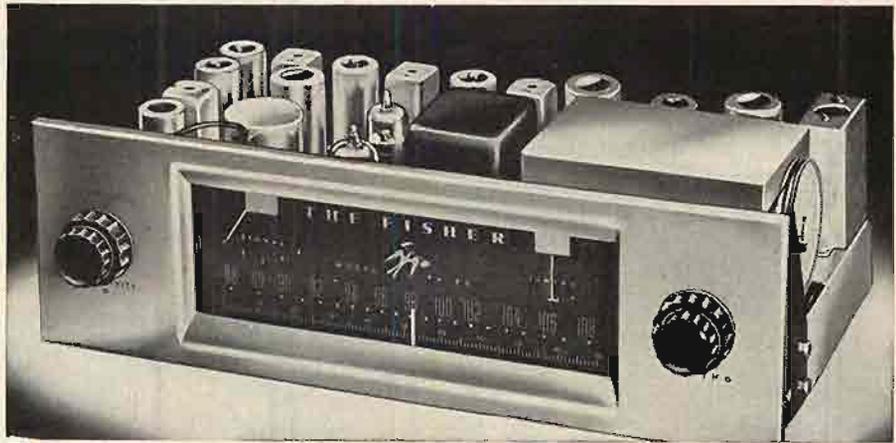
I wonder when the various recording companies will evolve some process whereby their LP hi-fi records can be made anti-static and dust-free *before* they leave the factory? . . .

I am convinced that my set which is custom-made of genuine hi-fi components is in no way responsible for the "knocks" unless one can regard as a fault the high sensitivity of the set. It gives the most superb performance one could wish for when the records are dust-free. Several of our records prove this.

Perhaps the sealed records are the only answer to this problem, but until all the various record companies adopt this idea, some other solution should be found. . . .

Since Westminster, RCA, London FFRR, and several other companies are doing a wonderful job in providing music-lovers with such brilliant recordings, we must look to them for the answer to this most troublesome problem.

Hilda M. Freed
Ottawa, Ont.



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FM TUNER MODEL
FM-80

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- Full limiting even on signals as weak as one microvolt.
- Dual antenna inputs: 72 ohms and 300 ohms balanced (*exclusive!*)
- Sensitivity: 1½ microvolts for 20 db of quieting on 72-ohm input; 3 microvolts for 20 db of quieting on 300-ohm input.
- Chassis *completely* shielded and shock-mounted, including tuning condenser, to eliminate microphonics, and noise from otherwise accumulated dust.
- Three controls — Variable AFC/Line-Switch, Sensitivity, and Station Selector PLUS an exclusive Output Level Control.
- Two bridged outputs. Low-impedance, cathode-follower type, permitting output leads up to 200 feet.
- 11 tubes.
- Dipole antenna supplied. Beautiful, brushed-brass front panel.
- Self-powered.
- WEIGHT: 15 pounds.
- SIZE: 12¾" wide, 4" high, 8½" deep including control knobs.

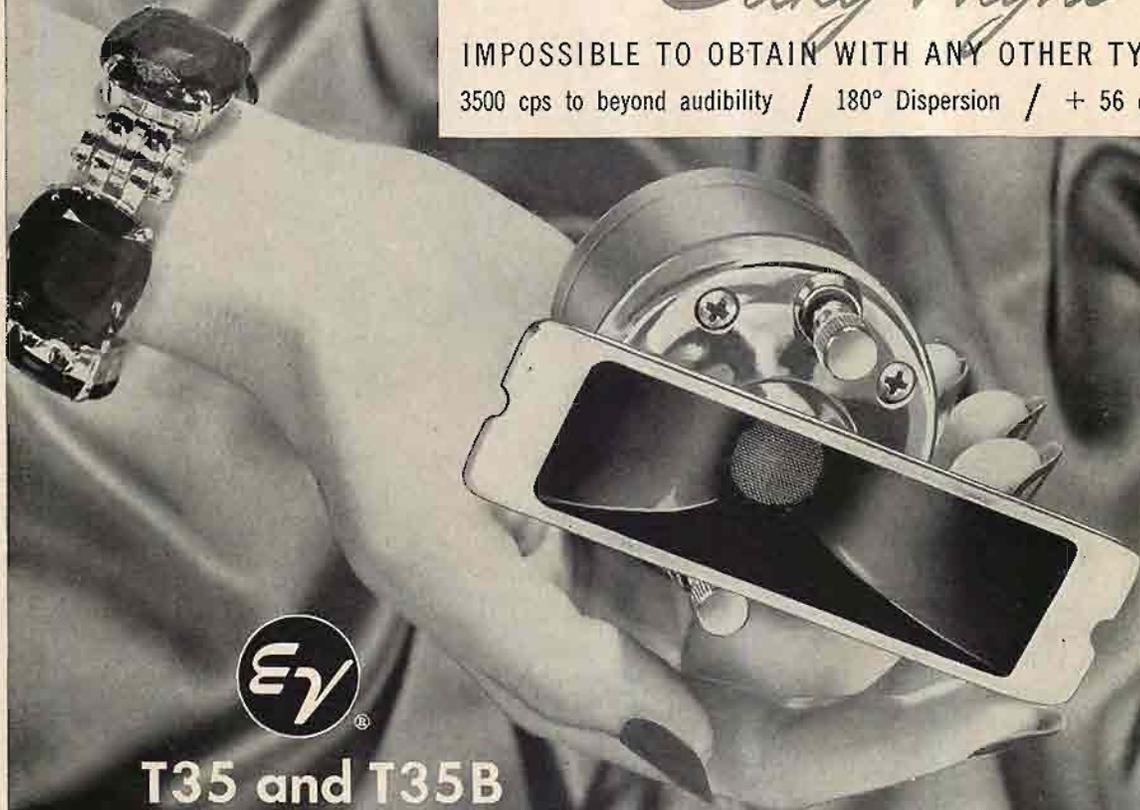
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Beautiful Piccolino Accessory Enclosure for T35 or T35B, mahogany or blonde. List \$15.00, Audiophile net \$9.00.

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T35	List \$55.00	Audiophile Net \$33.00
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TODAY—write for Bulletin 194 and name of nearest E-V dealer.

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AS THE EDITORS SEE IT

Let us give some thought to diamonds. Not the diamonds that are a blonde's best friends, nor even those that are a record's best friends, but the small, funereally black diamonds which crop up from time to time in Mr. W. Schwann's *Long Playing Record Catalog*. A diamond, as used by Mr. Schwann, indicates a record that will be no more, one that is being deleted by a manufacturer from his catalogue.

Of course, a recording is not snuffed out of existence immediately by being tagged with a diamond. It will remain in stock at some dealers' for some time. The manufacturer may even preserve the metal parts (master, mother, and stamper disks) or master tape, though crowded storage space lessens instances of this. Sometimes the masters are sold to other companies, to be reissued as cut-rate items or, in the case of full-length operas, to be edited into "highlight" collections. But most black-diamond items can be considered gone forever.

This is not always, nor even most of the time, a great deprivation. But in some cases it is a distressing loss; at least it distresses me. Take the case of the Vox version of Beethoven's *Fidelio*, conducted by Karl Böhm, with an Austrian cast and the Vienna Philharmonic. Vox pulled it in November, probably under the pressure of competition from the new Toscanini and Furtwängler issues. As a business move, this was astute. The Böhm set probably had stopped selling. It was a good performance; indeed it had only one serious fault: something had gone seriously amiss during the recording and afflicted the records with grotesque volume changes. And it lacked some striking excellences the Toscanini and Furtwängler have. But it had one that they lack, and which—to some of us—renders them flatly unsatisfactory. It was complete, whereas they are divested of the spoken dialogue and thus of the dramatic story-line. To complicate matters, the Toscanini-Furtwängler competition may dissuade anyone else, for some time, from attempting to put forth a good and complete *Fidelio*.

Then there was another favorite of mine, the "old" Allegro recording of Purcell's music for *The Fairy Queen*. It was made at a Cambridge (Massachusetts) subsidized festival, and featured Phyllis Curtin, other soloists and what sounded like Boston Symphony instrumentalists, conducted by Daniel Pinkham. The performance was fine indeed, and the fidelity—especially for 1950—quite adequate. Then Allegro sold out to a cut-rate company. Through one-step mass-merchandising channels, the *Fairy Queen* probably didn't "move" very well, not surprisingly. So it drew a black diamond, and vanished. Hearteningly, another complete *Fairy Queen* is supposed to be in the making, but this

is music easy to botch, despite good intentions, and I'll wait to hear before I cheer.

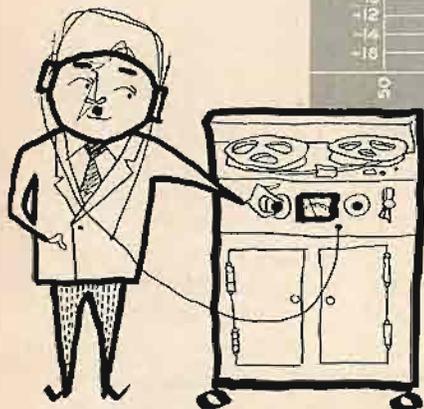
I also remember November 1953, when Columbia deleted all the Beethoven quartets recorded by the "old" Budapest Quartet, supplanting them with versions by the present Budapests (the personnel of the groups was not the same). Most of the new ones are better, but there are portions of the older ones I hate to think of as lost and gone forever.

The foregoing examples have illustrated supercession, of one version of a work by another, and the consequences of a company's going out of business. Of both of these developments we may well see an increase in coming months and/or years; a glance at the aforementioned bulging Schwann catalogue will explain the likelihood of this. But there is another important source of deletions.

It was brought to my attention by rumors I heard (and am inclined to believe) that the very recently issued reprint of the Virgil Thomson-Gertrude Stein *Four Saints in Three Acts* might soon succumb to black diamond treatment. It was—and there are many such records—what might be called an artistic-conscience issue in the first place. The comparatively few people who had heard this very endearing, oddly convincing joke-opera either alive or on 78s, had begged for its re-release on LP. They got it, and the record got rave-reviews. But the public, phobic about modern music in general and Gertrude Stein, did not respond. Too bad. There will be other such disappointments.

Thus, it can be seen, the only cause for dissatisfaction with the deletion system lies in the fact that for certain records, though they do not inspire broad enough demand to justify marketing them through standard commercial channels, there does exist a small and relatively intense demand from special groups. I am indebted to Mr. Dario Soria, of Angel Records, for the suggestion that this small demand might be adequate for the maintenance of a small enterprise. This would be a sort of on-demand treasury of valuable deleted items. It could be run either as a sort of co-op shared in by the various record companies, or as an independent venture approved and abetted by the companies. It would have to be run shrewdly: it would be ridiculous to let its storage space become cluttered with genuine dead turkeys. Red tape might impede the release of metal parts to such a company (if this were necessary; it might not be). But it just possibly might work. There used to be a record of Elisabeth Schumann singing songs of Mendelssohn and Franz, remember? And a lieder recital by Leo Slezak. And a complete *Beggar's Opera*. To paraphrase Mr. George Gobel, copies of these have become exiguous in the extreme.

J. M. C.



The Silent Partner

by CHUCK GERHARDT

A live concert performance has advantages over a performance on records: atmosphere, unfettered sonics, the asset of being heard once only. A record must offer compensating advantages. Helping provide these—for RCA Victor—is Mr. Gerhardt's job.

THE PHRASE "hi-fi" has taken on for many people the magical quality that other rhymed combinations like "voodoo," "abracadabra," and "mumbo-jumbo" have. Saying that a recording is "hi-fi" is a formula to silence all objections to it. Remarking that "fi" means "fidelity," and asking in consequence whether the recorded sound is faithful to the music recorded, often places the questioner in the position of someone who has just ridiculed another's religious beliefs. Of course, it is a question that some high priests of audio would prefer never asked in the presence of the faithful. The early months of "hi-fi" had their absolutely mystical binges of sound in-and-for-itself: bass drums with weird boosts and cut-offs of low and mid-low frequencies cracked our neighbor's plaster; contrabassoon and trombone buzzed and boomed like alto Furies; wind-machine and glockenspiel rang through the glassware. Presiding over these rites, some engineers with a yen to wow the flock found they could make a triangle sound like an anvil with a good healthy peak around 8,000 cycles. Happily though, these triangles have proved not to be eternal. In more technical terms, "equalizing" of this type is rapidly going out of style.

The photographer tries with perfect lighting and exposure to obtain a print as like as possible to the living subject. When he fails, he must attempt correction in the bath and with retouching. This would correspond to equalization in sound recording. Of course, the perfect recording would need no equalization, but often there are acoustic difficulties, distortion, noise, poor balance, and things "not heard" in a musical score. I propose to discuss what can be done by an engineer after a work has been taped. The equalization discussed here ought not to be confused with the progressive increase of high frequencies from the outside to the inside of a record, known as "diameter compensation" (for decreased linear velocity), nor with the corrective equalization used in the cutting of LPs known as "recording characteristics" (i.e., RIAA, AES, etc.).

Equalization can, as we have seen, be used for merely sensational trickeries and can become a dangerous toy, dangerous aesthetically. Its best uses have yet to be fully realized, but the concern of engineers is more and more the ever difficult problem of clarity, musically-faithful clarity, in

the recording of large orchestral sound. And by "large orchestral sound" I mean to cover any number of different instrumental and vocal combinations. But there is one very important point to discuss before these musical examples can be considered.

The first problem is how much of any performance can or should be heard; and here it is the *ideal listener*, thoroughly informed and thoroughly musical, who must be imagined by the engineer. What would such a listener actually hear in the big second-act ensemble of Verdi's *Falstaff*, for example, with its many strands of musical and dramatic action? He could focus (I imagine) on one or two of these—the lovers and the scene around the laundry basket, let us say—at any given performance, and turn his attention to other details at another. This same listener following the score will be enabled to "hear" details he is reading that he might otherwise miss. Since an LP performance can be assumed to be one that will be heard many times, it must obviously have every musical line represented (or audible) in such a work, so that our ideal listener will have at least the possibility of hearing it.

Recording *Le Sacre du Printemps*, with its abrupt rhythmic and harmonic shifts, its often literally stunning orchestral onslaught, presents a "hearing" problem similar to that of *Falstaff*, but only approximately similar. A mere reading of the *Falstaff* libretto should make the engineer's duty to produce balanced clarity in big ensembles quite obvious; in *Sacre* the "listener's" test is more difficult. Take the repeat of the opening bassoon solo (in C flat!) ten bars before the *Dances des Adolescents*: it contains an extremely beautiful note which I, for one, have never heard on records. The final note of this phrase is not A flat, as one might think, but a resolution to F natural. However, because of the clarinet trill and the entrance of pizzicato violins the listener is, so to speak, thrown off this last note. Again, four bars later, with the string pizzicati, a lovely D sharp-F double sharp harmony occurs in the horns, which is never *really* heard. Positing again our ideal listener, we must ask—will he really *miss* these details? Are they, considering the absolute wealth of detail in this score, essential? Should they be forced on his attention? Is their sound, even if un-

remarked, enough? I think, once one has gone through the piano reduction, and all these harmonies *sound* on the piano, we must conclude that our listener (though he might not miss them) ought to have them brought to his attention. Our ideal listener, if he is to remain such, must not be allowed to fall short. (Have you ever noticed, incidentally, how much fresher even the most familiar score sounds when listened to with someone you have not heard it with before?) In this case, I think it would be permissible for recording purposes to make a small accent on these notes so that they become psychologically locatable.

It is not, on the other hand, plausible or even desirable to hear everything in some music. The "Battle Scene" in *Heldenleben*—were some engineering miracle to occur which would make every detail of it apparent in a recording—would, I am sure, be a mess, a fussy cluttered mess; it would fail to make its proper effect. Lace slipcovers on a tank may be a *piquante* idea, but their functional value is, to say the least, dubious. The best, perhaps the perfect performance of this music may have been that conducted by Toscanini on February 1, 1941; correct tempos and correct reading of all dynamics by the orchestra men were all that was required. The result, an undifferentiated yet clean decibel whack, was all our ideal listener could want.

In such passages it was often Mengelberg's practice to achieve a certain brass and woodwind clarity, thus making some of the score's underplayings stick out, by hours of rehearsal before recording. Now it is usually done by microphone placement during taping, or later equalization of the tape.

IT MUST be clear by now, even before I go on to discuss some of the technicalities of equalization, how important musical training is for anyone dealing with these technicalities. Yet I have been told by one audio engineer that he thought himself a good engineer precisely because he knew nothing about music, and that he had little patience with people like me who were straddling the boundary between performing musician and recording technician. Surely, in this case, pure science is pure nonsense; there is no such thing as some abstract perfect sound. No one can make a good recording, happy accidents barred, if he does not know what to listen for. Remembering the exceptional conductors like Mengelberg, he might reply, "Leave the musician his job and let him leave me mine," conveniently forgetting that in the last analysis he is thus throwing part of his own job right back in the musician's lap. "Realistic" sound in a concert hall cannot possibly be the same in a studio, and it is asking too much of a conductor to tamper with his reading of a piece of music in order to accommodate an engineer who cannot or will not read a score. Any musical director will tell you that most of his artistic intentions go down the drain when he has to work with an engineer who dislikes or doesn't know good music. "Could you hold down your percussion a bit?" is his usual approach when he cannot manage correct mike placement; this is decidedly unfair to the musical director and the conductor, whose quest for good balance is far more difficult than that of the engineer's. Equations involving wave velocity, displace-

ment, density, and so on, whatever their basic importance to recording, are of small value compared to a good knowledge of some difficult piece scored for double chorus, four soloists, mastodon orchestra, organ, off-stage paraphernalia, a battery of tympani, gong, and a casual assemblage of kitchenware.

A EUROPEAN friend of mine, an experienced engineer who has succeeded in salvaging many tapes ruined by others, goes about his work in a quite unorthodox fashion. Accustomed though I am to many of his successful procedures, I have often been shocked at positions of controls on his equalizers. I need not have been; he knows what he is doing. Long experience listening to music in concert halls and opera houses has given him sharp ears and sure taste. His system is to focus the attention of the listener away from unwanted areas by making the best use of the clearest portions of the sound. Only a searching ear that knew, musically, what it sought could try this, let alone succeed in it. Once, forgetting that his dial settings are only based on the problem before him, not on any pure theories of electronics, I asked, "Don't you think that's too much? Perhaps?" "Forget zose meters and dials!" he shouted. "I got to get zat *bass* in!" Exactly. And the pure scientist, not knowing the bass was there to get in, would never have obtained as good a result in sound merely by seeking for "sound" in the abstract.

This type of focusing is one of the accomplishments of equalizing and is especially valuable in working with old air checks and historic musical broadcasts where certain disturbances are unavoidable. The technical procedure is slightly to boost the best recorded frequencies in a group and diminish the distorted zones. If the resultant signal is top or bottom-heavy, an entire new over-all equalization can then be applied.

No amount of engineering can do the work of a good conductor and orchestra, naturally, yet the extent to which it can change the whole aspect of a performance may not be realized by many. I once played two differently equalized tapes of the very same performance for two musicians, to ascertain which sound they preferred. Both preferred the second, and they added that the orchestra and performance were much superior to the first!

Still, this is not as surprising as it may at first seem. Equalization in modern magnetic tape recording has advanced a great deal since earlier stages that might be roughly compared to the simple bass and treble tone controls on a phonograph preamp. We have discussed shifts of emphasis; balance changing can also be achieved by the removal or addition of "highs and bass," but by far more involved procedures requiring that much more musical awareness. An engineer who knows the technical limitations of LP recording, who knows where instruments and tonalities appear in the audio spectrum, can work with infinitesimal sections of that spectrum, isolate an unwanted high-frequency whistle from an old AM broadcast, locate and filter out a bad low frequency AC hum from an otherwise splendid tape of obscure European origin, reinforce one piccolo not "not heard" in a

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See how they Dance

by Rosalyn Krokover

BALLET is the most glamorous and, in a way, the most mysterious of the arts. Yet you see it on Broadway, on TV, on the screen. In America there are countless ballet schools, where many a budding Pavlova tries to balance on her big toe. There are two completely native, permanent companies of international fame, and there hardly seems to be a time when some major foreign organization is not touring the country. (Next season, four companies, domestic and imported, will be traipsing around.) Recordings of ballet music appear in profusion, yet are always represented, these days, among the best sellers.

Which is not bad for less than a generation of progress. Before 1933, when the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo presented its first season in this country, ballet performances occurred spasmodically. True, we had had a taste of the Diaghilev company, around the time of the first World War: a rather sour taste, from most accounts. Later there were groups that originated in this country, such as the Adolph Bolm and Pavley-Oukrainsky Ballets. Their home base generally was the Chicago Opera. It cannot be said that the public took them to its heart. But the public did warm to the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo. When the glamour and sheen of that Russian ballet began to wear off—this was in the late Thirties—along came Ballet Theatre, the first major company of purely American origin. Conceived and organized by Lucia Chase and Richard Pleasant, it had enough money behind it to open with some fanfare. It took over the Center Theatre, in New York, and managed to fill it regularly. Ballet suddenly was Big Business. It also suddenly was Entertainment, thanks to enterprising pioneers like Agnes de Mille, who threw a choreographic net around *Oklahoma!* From that point onward, no self-respecting musical dared open on Broadway without some kind of ballet.

Ballet Theatre, after several distinguished years, began to sag. In stepped the New York City Ballet, by way of Ballet Society, with Lincoln Kirstein and George Balanchine at the artistic helm. About this time arrived a movie from England named *The Red Shoes*. It had little to do with ballet as the professional knows it, but somehow the film captured the imagination of the American public. It played to millions of people and made a star of Moira Shearer. The Sadler's Wells Ballet, also from England, followed close on the heels of the movie. Sadler's Wells specializes in uncut versions of classic ballets—*Swan Lake*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Sylvia*, and others—and does them with real flair. This

company made a tremendous impact on the United States.

And what does it all mean?

Well, ballet is close to opera. Only, the participants dance instead of sing. Otherwise the parallels are obvious: music, décor, costumes, plot. (Even in plotless, abstract ballets there often is something on which to string a libretto, however slight: a succession of strongly marked emotional moods, if nothing else.) Ballet, a form that has evolved over several centuries of experimentation, has its own vocabulary, its own technique. It is based on certain leg and arm positions, certain patterns of stylized movement. These are the choreographic verities which the choreographer bends to his will, just as the composer juggles *his* elements around to produce a work of art.

The more the observer knows about the vocabulary and technique of ballet, the more he will enjoy it. The same goes for any art. But it is a monstrous mistake to assume that ballet cannot be appreciated and understood by the uninitiate. Forget the mumbo-jumbo that some critics throw at you. George Bernard Shaw, back in 1890, took off severely on just such verbal smoke screens. "The very vilest phase of criticism is that in which it emerges from blank inanity into an acquaintance with the terms, rules, and superstitions which belong to the technical processes of the art treated of . . . The indiscreet revelation of how a critic with no artistic sense of dancing may cover up his incapacity by talking about *ronds de jambe*, arabesques, elevations, *entrechats*, *ballonnés*, and the like, threatens to start a technico-jargonautic fashion in ballet criticism . . . The critics will make as much as possible of any ugly blemish (the teetotum spin, for instance), provided only they can thereby parade their knowledge of its technical name."

Shaw was never more right. The point is that you do not have to know the name of a specific step in order to enjoy the beauty of it, no more than you have to know the key signature of a piece of music, or how to spell out its harmonies, in order to enjoy listening to it. The important thing is to keep going to performances at every opportunity. Reading maketh the full man; and constant attendance maketh the balletomane.

Of course, it is recognized that not everyone lives near a city where ballet is regularly performed. However, companies do tour, and more and more will do so in the future, anxious to share in the sell-out business done by the Sadler's Wells group and others. There probably also will be more efforts to put the dance into TV and on film, though it must

be pointed out that most such attempts thus far have offered a sort of musical-comedy style of quasi-ballet, utterly lacking the aesthetic impact of the great repertoire classics.

It is also true that not quite everyone is a potential balletomane. One way to tell whether or not you are is to watch for a change in the way you listen to ballet music—on records, particularly—after having seen a few actual performances. You should soon begin to visualize movement and to appreciate the dance-worthiness, so to speak, of a performance that is balletic rather than symphonic in spirit—and to enjoy it.

As you attend ballet performances you will discover that the backbone of the repertoire is the ballets of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; and those are largely French or Russian. Even many contemporary ballets stem from one or the other. *Giselle*, produced in Paris in 1841, still figures actively in the repertoire. So do the three ballets that Tchaikovsky composed and a handful of works that Diaghilev commissioned for his Russian ballet. There have, of course, been many great works since then. But the works that inevitably bring down the house, the equivalent of the three musical B's, would be *Giselle*, *Swan Lake* and *Sleeping Beauty*.

Giselle, and other popular ballets of its period, such as *Coppélia*, are of the French school. The Tchaikovsky works are, of course, Russian. French ballet is inclined to be extremely romantic. Their librettos deal more with human beings lifted into the realm of fantasy (as in *Giselle*) or charming comedy (as *Coppélia*). The Russian ballets are generally devoid of humor but very strong on fantasy and spectacle. Theirs is ballet in the grand manner, with music to match. The French ballet is rather smaller-scaled, more intimate. The Russians deal in broad strokes; the French have more delicate brushwork. But don't underestimate the French contribution. *Coppélia* and *Sylvia*, the two best scores of Leo Delibes, are authentic masterpieces—graceful, rhythmic, full of ingenious touches, perfectly orchestrated. *Giselle*, the ballerina's Hamlet, remains tremendously effective on stage. It gives the dancer a mad scene and a death scene; and yet, in addition to the glorious opportunities to emote, dance remains the chief element. *Giselle*, indeed, is quite an opera, complete with a peasants' chorus, arias and ensembles of all kinds—even if not a note is sung. Musically it is weak, though it is a rather adorable tintype. Adolphe Adam, its composer, was not blessed with much imagination, but at least he knew how to write with balletic movement in mind.

The three Tchaikovsky ballets—*Swan Lake*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Nutcracker*—need no introduction. No greater ballet music has ever been written. These are rich, sumptuous scores, evocative of glamorous ballerinas, huge theaters, and audiences of which the least member is a duke. Listening to one of these ballets on LP disks can never give the full musi-

cal meaning; you have to attend a performance, and then you will see how everything falls into place. *Swan Lake* is most frequently performed in a truncated version (Act II alone), just as the last act and variations from the prologue of *Sleeping Beauty* have been presented as *Aurora's Wedding*. Fortunately, Sadler's Wells has shown us how both ballets look in their complete versions.

Nutcracker, which recently was revived by Balanchine for the New York City Ballet, has a lovely score but choreographically it is the weak sister of the three Tchaikovsky ballets. An abridged *Nutcracker*, largely devoted to the second act, is the version most frequently seen. *Swan Lake* has the most drama and intensity, and gives a ballerina the chance to offset her Dr. Jekyll (Odette, the Swan Queen) with a Mr. Hyde (Odile, the malicious Black Swan). *Sleeping Beauty* is a grand, fairy-tale panorama, completely objective, full of brilliance.

It is worth adding that nearly every ballet company's biggest applause-getters are various divertissements clipped from the Tchaikovsky ballets. Russian ballets of the nineteenth century often were interspersed with set numbers that gave the virtuoso dancers a chance to show off (and had nothing to do with the plot). Thus the *Bluebird Variation* from *Sleeping Beauty* or the *Black Swan pas de deux* from *Swan Lake* (a *pas de deux* is balletese for "duet") are brilliantly effective showpieces that fit into ballet programs much as *Là ci darem la mano* or the *Butterfly Act I* duet used to fit into the Sunday night opera concerts that the Metropolitan used to give.

The story of Serge Diaghilev and his Ballet Russe has been told again and again: how he set the Western world on its collective ear; how he commissioned major works; how nearly every important composer, artist, and dancer worked for him; how he stimulated twentieth-century art in general. Among the Diaghilev-commissioned ballets that have proved most popular during the years are *Les Sylphides*, *Schéhérazade*, *Fire Bird*, and *Petrouchka*, all created by Michel Fokine. The first of these is nothing to bring color to the music lover's cheek; it is set to music of Chopin, orchestrated by Glazunov and others. But as a ballet it is a classic. It is an abstract work that restored the *ballet blanc* to favor; and, in its lyricism and purity of movement, it can be a great emotional experience when danced as its creator envisaged. *Schéhérazade*, to Rimsky-Korsakov's popular symphonic poem, was hot stuff in Paris in 1910. Such daring! Such color and barbarism! Sex, even. Today the ballet regulars are inclined to look down on the work; and there is no denying that it is sadly dated. Yet there is also no denying that it is still a box-office attraction outside of New York City.

Fire Bird and *Petrouchka* are very much alive. The young Stravinsky had not entered his neo-classic stage when he wrote them, and his music, an extension of the Rimsky-Korsakov



A Selective Discography of Ballet Music

Note: All of these ballets are actively in the repertoire of one or more of the companies that are resident in this country or that will be on tour. Those companies are the New York City Ballet, Ballet Theatre, the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, and Sadler's Wells. The record situation today is such that in most cases there are many versions of a particular work. All choices here are made on the basis of (a) quality of recorded sound, and (b) the approximation to the tempos and balances that are actually heard in the theater. Unfortunately many fine symphony conductors have approached ballet with symphonic rather than balletic ideas; and in some cases their tempos are such that a dancer would find it impossible to follow the beat. Conductors like Robert Irving or Ernest Ansermet, who have had actual pit experience, never make this mistake. The discography omits music not specifically composed or arranged for ballet. Thus Balanchine's *Concerto Barocco* (Bach's Two-Violin Concerto), Tudor's *Pillar of Fire* (Schoenberg's *Verklärte Nacht*) and other works of that nature mentioned in the text, are not represented here.

- ADAM, Adolphe: *Giselle*. Robert Irving and Royal Opera House Orchestra. VICTOR LM 1092. 12-in.
- BERNSTEIN, Leonard: *Fancy Free*. Joseph Levine and Ballet Theatre Orchestra. CAPITOL P 8196. 12-in. (with Copland: *Rodeo*).
- CHOPIN (arr. Glazunov and others): *Les Sylphides*. Roger Désormière and Paris Conservatory Orchestra. LONDON LL 884. 12-in. (with Ibert: *Divertissement*).
- COPLAND, Aaron: *Billy the Kid*. Joseph Levine and Ballet Theatre Orchestra. CAPITOL P 8238. 12-in. (with Schuman: *Undertow*).
- COPLAND, Aaron: *Rodeo*. Joseph Levine and Ballet Theatre Orchestra. CAPITOL P 8196. 12-in. (with Bernstein: *Fancy Free*).
- DELIBES, Leo: *Coppélia* (excerpts). Constant Lambert and Royal Opera Orchestra. COLUMBIA ML 4145. 12-in.
- DELIBES, Leo: *Sylvia* (excerpts). Louis Fourester and Paris Opera Orchestra. VICTOR LBC 1025. 12-in. (with Schumann: *Carnival*).
- GOULD, Morton: *Interplay*. Morton Gould and Robin Hood Dell Orchestra. COLUMBIA ML 4218. 12-in. (with Music of Gould).
- OFFENBACH (arr. Rosenthal): *Gaité Parisienne*. Eftem Kurtz and Columbia Symphony Orchestra. COLUMBIA ML 4233. 12-in. (with Russian Music).
- STRAUSS, Johann (arr. Dorati): *Graduation Ball*. Anatole Fistoulari and New Symphony Orchestra. LONDON LL 883. 12-in.
- STRAVINSKY, Igor: *Fire Bird*. Ernest Ansermet and Orchestre de la Suisse Romande. LONDON LL 889. 12-in. (with *Symphony of Psalms*).
- STRAVINSKY, Igor: *Orpheus*. Igor Stravinsky and RCA Victor Symphony. VICTOR LM 1078. 12-in.
- STRAVINSKY, Igor: *Petrouchka*. Leopold Stokowski and his Orchestra. VICTOR LM 9029. 12-in. (with Ibert: *Escapes*).
- TCHAIKOVSKY, Peter: *Nutcracker* (complete). Antal Dorati and Minneapolis Symphony. MERCURY OL 2-201. Two 12-in.
- TCHAIKOVSKY, Peter: *Sleeping Beauty* (complete). Anatole Fistoulari and Paris Conservatory Orchestra. LONDON LL 636/7. Two 12-in.
- TCHAIKOVSKY, Peter: *Sleeping Beauty* (excerpts). Constant Lambert and Royal Opera Orchestra. COLUMBIA ML 4136. 12-in.
- TCHAIKOVSKY, Peter: *Swan Lake* (complete). Anatole Fistoulari and London Symphony Orchestra. LONDON LL 565/6. Two 12-in.
- TCHAIKOVSKY, Peter: *Swan Lake* (excerpts). Robert Irving and Philharmonia Orchestra. VICTOR LBC 1064. 12-in.

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school, glows and pulsates with youth. *Petrouchka* can be called the perfect ballet, a work of genius from every aspect—a stunning musical, pictorial, and choreographic evocation of Old Russia, with satiric underpinnings and a story of universal application in the account of the puppet and his beloved. Needless to say, one who approaches this score without having seen it on stage should carefully read the libretto. Not all of the musical nuances will then emerge, but the listener will at least get an idea of what the music is trying to do.

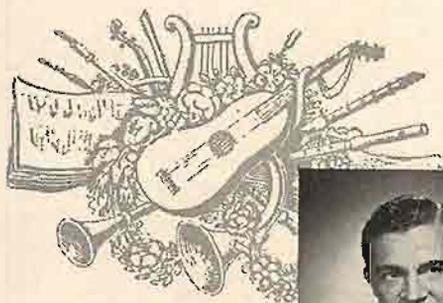
The most popular choreographer after Fokine was Leonid Massine, who experimented in all forms. Most of his so-called "symphonic ballets," in which he set Beethoven, Schubert, and others to dance, have dropped from the repertoire (and, in many opinions, deservedly). Massine also had a quality rare among choreographers of his day—a sense of effervescent humor, a feeling for comedy situation. This is exemplified in his most popular work, *Gaité Parisienne*, set to Offenbach music brilliantly orchestrated by Manuel Rosenthal. First performed in 1938, *Gaité* rolls merrily along, telling the story of the rich Peruvian and his quest for romance. Massine himself used to dance the Peruvian with a flair and style that nobody ever duplicated; and the Glove-Seller and Baron, as danced by Danilova and Franklin, were among the most enchanting characterizations of the modern stage.

Somewhat allied to *Gaité* is *Graduation Ball*, also a humorous ballet with a tight story line about the visit of a group of cadets to a girls' academy. The score here consists of Johann Strauss excerpts, arranged by Antal Dorati. David Lichine's choreography is full of detail without being fussy, and the ballet moves with a pleasant glow. Nothing immortal here, true, but such works as *Gaité Parisienne* and *Graduation Ball* are the cakes and ale of ballet, and we would be the poorer without them.

During the late Thirties and Forties the two great choreographers active in America were George Balanchine and Anthony Tudor. Balanchine continues today in full creative swing, though Tudor has contributed nothing of importance since *Undertow* in 1945. Tudor, who created his major works for Ballet Theatre, was responsible for a series known as "psychological ballets." He was not an abstractionist; all of his works had a strong story line which he used in a remarkably penetrating fashion. His masterpiece is *Pillar of Fire*, set to Schoenberg's *Verklärte Nacht*—a brooding, passionate ballet that works up to an extraordinary pitch of intensity. This is the work that made Nora Kaye famous. It is pleasant to be able to state that *Pillar*, after a long absence, is being revived this season, with Kaye in her original role, by Ballet Theatre. And Tudor will be on hand to supervise it. There are some of us who believe that *Pillar of Fire* is one of the supreme creations of the twentieth-century ballet.

Balanchine is quite a different type of choreographer. Where Tudor is warm, he is dispassionate; where Tudor likes to work with a concrete libretto, Balanchine tends toward abstract, plotless ballets. He primarily is an objectivist, concerning himself with line and pattern rather than emotions and color. As a technician he is superb. His roots, unlike Tudor's, lie in the

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DANA ANDREWS



LIVING WITH MUSIC

Anyone who saw the motion picture Laura or, more recently, Duel in the Jungle or Smoke Signal, will recognize the third adventurer in home music listening to contribute to our new series. Mr. Andrews has just finished work on a Warner Brothers film, Strange Lady in Town, and is preparing to film a property which he owns, The Build Up Boys, to be based on the novel by Jeremy Kirk. His spare time is usually spent either at the controls of his high fidelity system or at the tiller of his sailboat.

MY ROMANCE with music has brought me untold hours of sheer pleasure and moments of towering exaltation. But, as in all serious love affairs, there have been trying situations as well. I can point to the hostility of certain neighbors who stubbornly have never reconciled themselves to experiencing Bartók at 3 a. m., a prejudice which seldom fails to astonish me.

I demand my musical reproduction loud and substantial. My wife shares my love for music, even music enthusiastically rendered, but I suspect she has certain reservations on the subject of my resounding nocturnal serenades. If I ever find her in a picket line along with the neighbors, I'll probably have to blame it on the irony of her bedroom being directly over the den which houses an imposing battery of speakers.

My wife's patience and forbearance are monumental. They were sorely tried when I first came down with the high-fidelity virus. I experimented with equipment for well over a year and my den became a workshop strewn with the entrails of components of every imaginable shape, size, make and model. It was impossible to clean the whole thing up every night. As the confusion mounted, and the room came to resemble the graveyard of America's audio equipment, my wife's anxiety grew. She began to avoid the room as if it were haunted. She forbade it to the children, muttering darkly of electrocution and irresponsible fathers. I finally developed a system that suited my needs and put all the superfluous equipment out to pasture. The den became fair game for the kids once more, and my wife could hear hi fi discussed without gritting her teeth.

Lately I've been toying with some fine ideas for improving the set up and getting truer reproduction. It's all on paper, of course. I haven't said anything to my wife. She's been so happy these days. But actually we could spare that den for a while and it isn't as if she wouldn't enjoy the improvement as much as I.

I'm a man who takes his music seriously. I can't com-

bine conversation and listening. Of course, I've been afflicted as the next man with guests who ask to hear a work and then take the passage of the first few bars as a signal for social chatter. On such occasions I'm tempted to rise, casually turn off the sound, and continue the conversation. I actually tried this a few times, but I've given up. My wife was more embarrassed than the offending guest.

I suppose my reaction to this sort of inattention is a form of impotent rage against a doleful development which Clifton Fadiman in a provocative *Saturday Review* article called the decline of attention. Our modern technology has deluged us with such a relentless torrent of entertainments and diversions clamoring for our attention that our appetites and ability to respond are dulled. We have too much to assimilate, too much to keep up with. We end up trying to do everything simultaneously and succeeding at nothing. I strongly suspect that whatever inroads TV may have made upon the motion picture business have occurred because people don't like to be restricted to a single activity, and a man watching a movie can't do anything else. In recognition of this principle, some operators have introduced dining to theaters, and with noteworthy success. But contrast this with the magnificent variety of activities that can accompany televiewing. There's eating, reading, and conversation. And then, of course, a pox on the old idea of watching a single plot develop with all its fussy detail. With TV a flick of the wrist commands half a dozen dramas and a conscientious fan can follow all of them simultaneously, extracting the basic plot from each without the distraction of details.

One of the most lamentable aspects of the decline of attention has been the increasing relegation of music to the position of a sort of underscore to daily activity. Record companies are selling albums of music to dream to, music to love to, music to read to, music to pluck chickens to, and apparently music for every conceivable purpose except listening. It would seem almost an effort

to win the public away from the serious effort of pursuing music for its own sake. Then too, the prevalence of music in public places as a pleasant background to conversation abets the growing tendency to consider music as a utility.

In connection with this last point I've experienced a unique problem. I've trained myself to listen to music and give it my full attention despite the distraction of coughing, throat-clearing, or even voices. If anything, music in public places will distract me from the conversation rather than the other way around. Occasionally I'm caught being inattentive to a discussion. Everyone nods his head understandingly and I can imagine them thinking, "Oh, that Andrews fellow is certainly a dreamer. Mind probably a million miles off." No one would believe I was listening to music. It just isn't done.

WE INHABIT an age of violent nationalism and peoples' loyalties have become sharply polarized in almost every sphere and level of activity. The musical arts are no exception. To name a few, we have developed loyalties to performers, to conductors, to orchestras and of course to composers and schools of music. Loyalty can be a good thing. As patriotism it can be an excellent and inspiring thing. But when it is applied to the arts it can have a surprisingly deleterious influence. People who develop such loyalties frequently end up thinking whatever they are loyal to is not only better than anything else of its sort, but in addition anything else of its sort is completely devoid of any value whatsoever. In music, this leads to a type of snobbery I deeply regret, particularly so because like most of us I was victimized by it.

The friends who guided my musical development inspired me with a love for much that is good. They also imbued me with as neat a collection of musical prejudices as can be found. Bach was unpalatable, a pedantic musical mathematician, Verdi was only fit for organ grinders, and Tchaikovsky for adolescent girls. And so it went. I was not only cut off from musical experiences I would have accepted were it not for my conditioning, but I also developed a feeling of guilt at a later date when I found myself getting to enjoy some of the very things I was supposed to disapprove of. It took some time before I could bring myself to admit to all comers that I liked Tchaikovsky without fearing I'd be criticized as a weakling.

I might add that the development of the recording industry has paradoxically created the greatest opportunity for musical insularity that has ever existed. In the past, a man who liked only the classicists had to go to a concert to hear them and was exposed to other music in the process. Nowadays he can devote himself entirely to the classicists on records or even, if he wishes, restrict his perspective to a single composer. This is actually happening. I know a group of people who listen to nothing but the works of Bach and Vivaldi. The prolificness of these composers and the generous treatment they've received at the hands of the recording industry has made it possible for them to constitute the sole listening of a large group of otherwise intelligent people. I suppose if this specialization continues we'll eventually find people whose entire record collection

will consist of many different renditions of a single work.

I used to liken the various musical cultures and the diverse schools embodied in each to the many languages and dialects in use throughout the world. I felt that just as a strange language is an incomprehensible jumble of sounds until constant exposure and increasing familiarity bring comprehension, so an unfamiliar school of music is unintelligible sound until conversance with the idiom resolves order out of chaos and brings understanding. Understanding, I believed, always beget love.

The key, then, was exposure and more exposure. No matter what school of music was involved, love for it was certain to follow. I no longer hold this concept. I have come to understand that conversance with a musical idiom can only lay the foundation for that which may ripen into love. The ultimate determining factors are contained in the unique psychology of each individual. A knowledge of the English language doesn't imply that we'll love all poems in English or for that matter any poems in English. Again the determinant is the emotional structure of the individual.

I arrived at this understanding as the result of a shocking discovery. I do not like the composers of the classical school. I realize this is arrant heresy. I fully expect to be denounced for my presumption. In my defense I can only protest that I've made every effort. I can look back on countless hours of unrewarding attention to Mozart and Haydn. I've subjected myself to Beethoven symphonies and concertos until I knew them note for note as a conductor would. I've found them interesting and occasionally entertaining but never have they moved me emotionally. I realize the fault is in me rather than the music. All I can do is continue the exposure and hope that time may find a remedy. I doubt it.

Louis Untermeyer writes in a previous number of this series that he finds refuge from the anxiety of this age in the serenity and unashamed melody of the eighteenth century composers. Paradoxically, the tensions and conflict of the twentieth century have driven me into the arms of the composers of our own time, the moderns who speak to me in a language valid in terms of my own experience. I confess to being of this age and liking it. I wouldn't trade it for any other era in history. What of its anxieties? No period was without them. Ours is an age of the most exciting thought, the most magnificent accomplishments in the history of mankind. Musically it speaks to me through the incisive masculinity of Stravinsky, the passion and drama of Bartók, the uniquely American discourse of Copland, the scholarly, almost medieval excitement of Hindemith, the pungent lyricism of Milhaud, and a hundred others. Contemporary composers are accused of unpleasant dissonance. This is nothing new in musical history. The contemporaries of every period have had to answer the same charge. Much of the simple, naïve music of the eighteenth century would have been dissonant to seventeenth century ears. Apparently dissonance is nothing but a vague term of opprobrium used to describe unfamiliar sounds.

Next to the contemporary idiom I find the Romantic school most satisfying. Mendelssohn and Schumann, the solid contemplative raptures of *Continued on page 109*

by FRED GRUNFELD
and DR. OTTO BETTMANN



BEETHOVEN STROLLING through the city was sketched by Lyser, deaf-and-dumb painter of musical subjects.

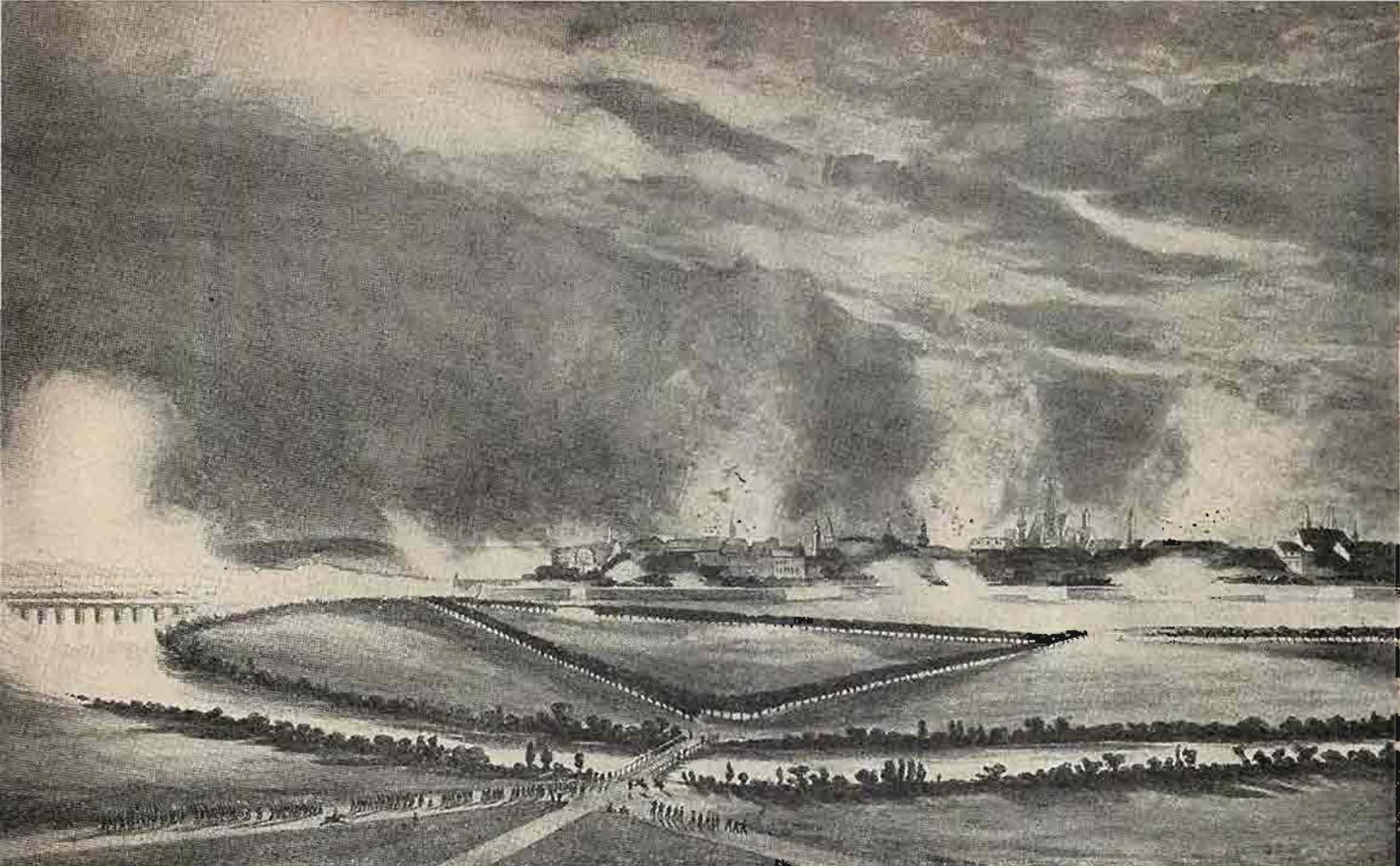
When Beethoven walked Vienna's streets

Beethoven shared the fortunes of Vienna, for better or worse, from 1792 until 1827. To visitors he was often pointed out as a local institution, a genius, a lovable eccentric. Awarded the Freedom of the City in 1815, he was a few years later arrested for vagrancy by a policeman who thought he looked too disreputable to be "der Beethoven." Reflected in these contemporary pictures is the alternatively turbulent and gemütlich Zeitgeist of that golden revolutionary era in music and literature.



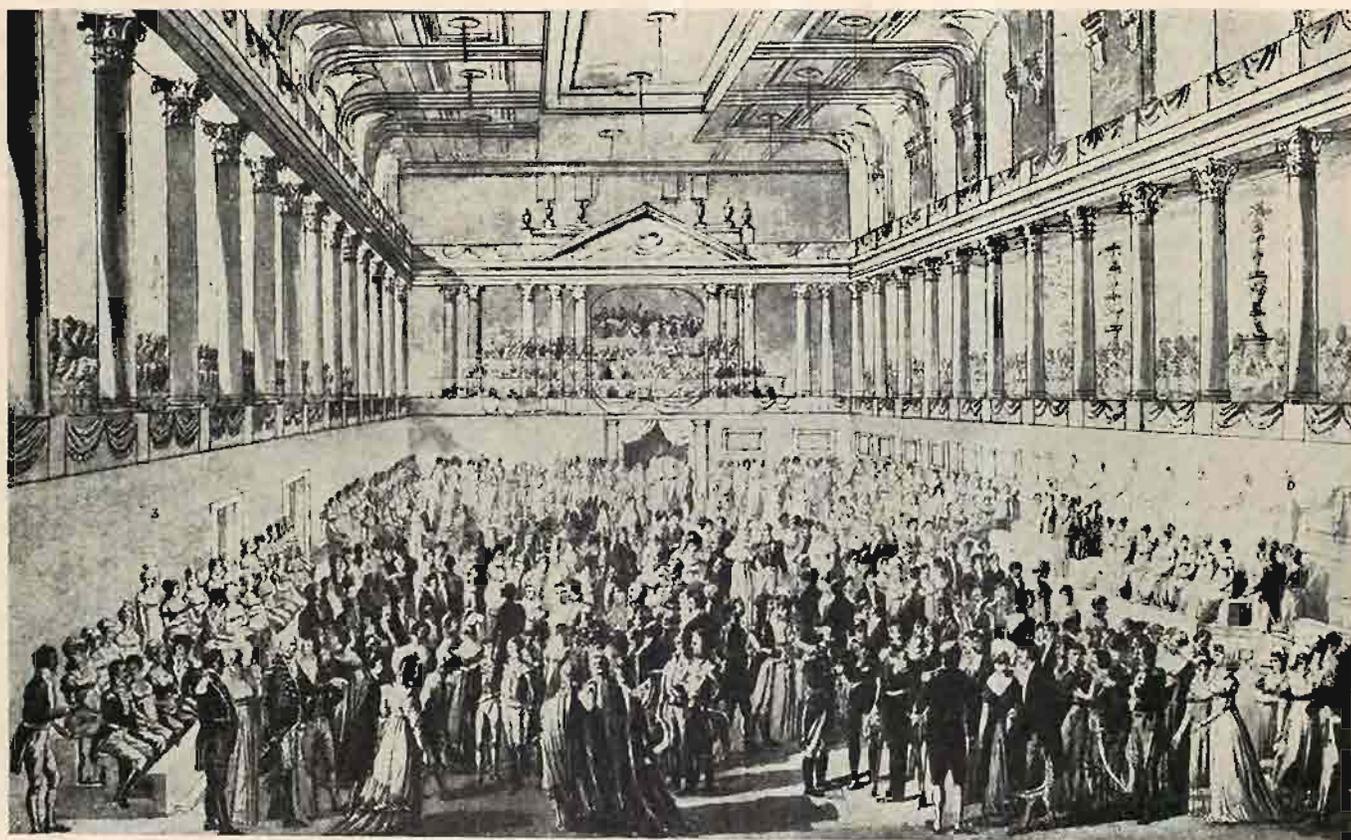
ST. MICHAEL'S SQUARE was the hub of aristocratic Vienna, which hailed Beethoven in the 1790s as "the

greatest of pianists." The lavish Imperial Residence is flanked by the Horse Academy (left) and Burg Theater.



BOMBARDMENT OF VIENNA, May 11 and 12, 1809, turned Viennese into cellar-dwellers. Beethoven took pillows with him to protect his ailing ears from noise.

Later, as victorious French marched into the fallen city, Haydn had himself carried from his death-bed to a piano to play his anthem, "God Preserve Our Emperor Francis."



CONGRESS OF VIENNA was convened in 1814 to re-divide Europe after Napoleon's defeat. Led by statesmen of the Big Four — Russia, Prussia, Austria, and Eng-

land — diplomats gathered for brilliant functions at the famed Redouten Saal. Beethoven's well-timed cantata, "The Glorious Moment," made him musician of the hour.



NAPOLEON'S IMPERIAL AMBITION turned Beethoven's wrath against him: "Now he'll trample on all rights of man."

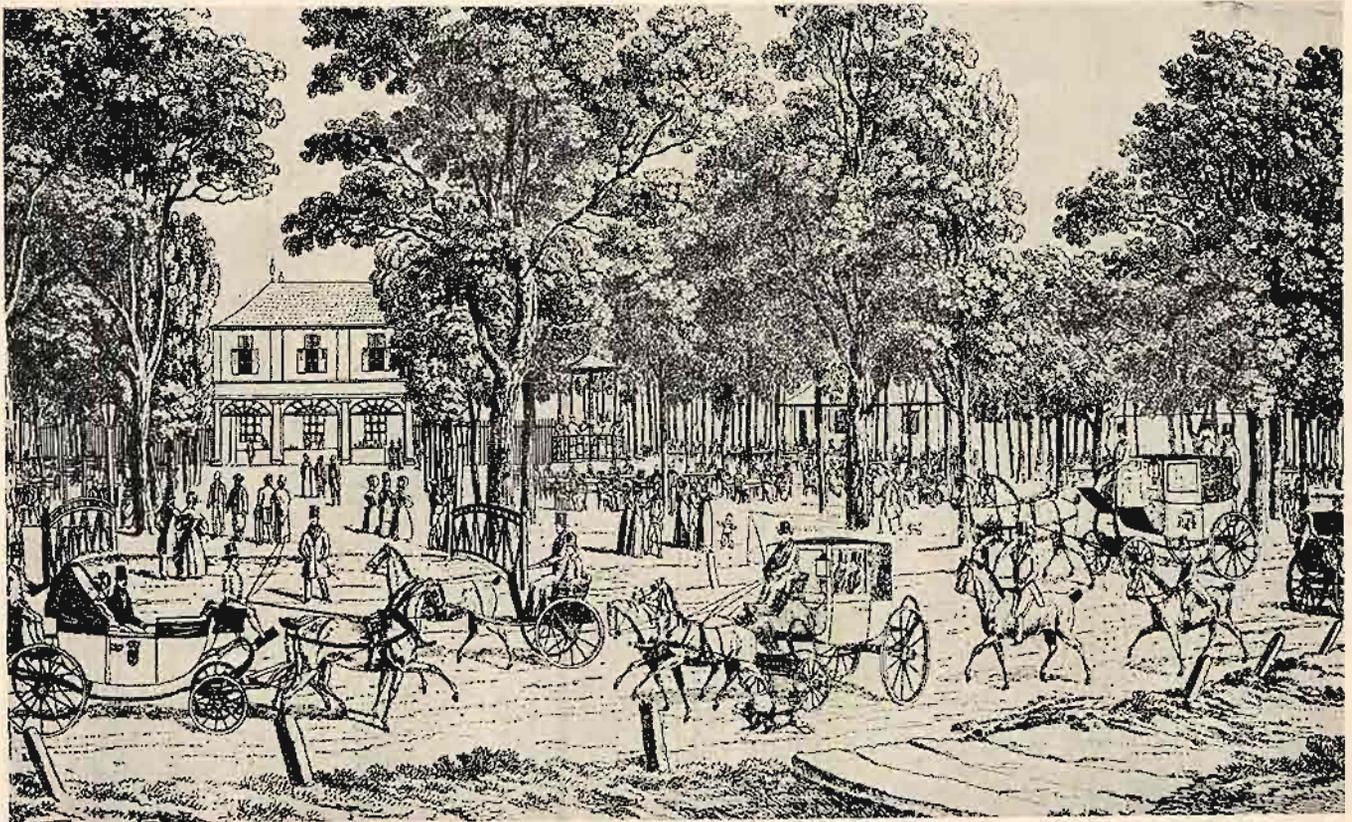


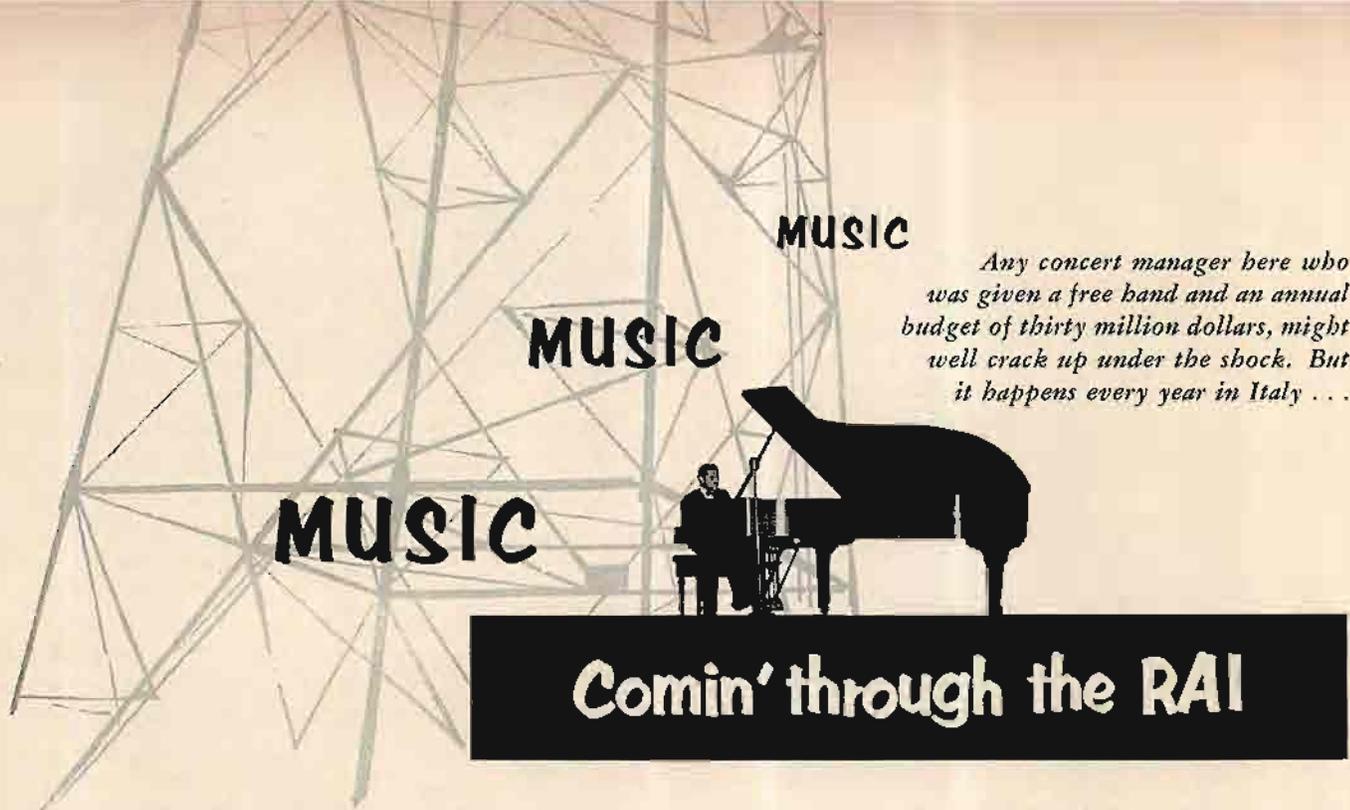
AUSTRIAN ARTILLERYMEN fought a war of hurry-up-and-wait. Beethoven supported the war effort with lieder like the "Farewell Song for the Volunteer Militia."



PICNICKING IN THE OUTSKIRTS was preferred by the young artists in Franz Schubert's circle. A painter friend, trailing behind on foot, drew Schubert (gesturing).

TREES, REFRESHMENTS, and band-music in abundance made the Prater a favorite warm-weather spot for middle-class citizens yearning for the great outdoors.





Any concert manager here who was given a free hand and an annual budget of thirty million dollars, might well crack up under the shock. But it happens every year in Italy . . .

Comin' through the RAI

by MARTIN MAYER

MO. (MAESTRO) MARIO LABROCA is a rather short, rather round gentleman with a large head and rapidly decreasing quantities of brown hair. He wears light-rimmed glasses, a worried, alert, serious expression, and a double-breasted brown pin-stripe suit that could use a pressing but will probably not receive one. His charm is vast and entirely natural. From his appearance and manner he could be a composer or a major business executive (the two types are often indistinguishable). In fact, he is both, and the business he runs is the largest and most imaginative musical apparatus in the world: RAI (as in rye whiskey), the Italian National Radio.

In a recent year RAI broadcast 488 live symphony concerts, 170 live opera performances, 397 studio concerts of opera excerpts, and 810 chamber music recitals. More recently, recordings have replaced some of the concerts; but Radio Italiana still broadcasts every year more live music than can be heard in the various halls of the city of New York. The breadth of the operation is staggering, especially since the most serious of RAI's three programs (called the "Third" in tribute originally to the BBC) presents no music but unusual music. Very unusual.

Basically, Mario Labroca is Artists and Repertory Director of this vast operation — and *ipso facto* of *Dischi Cetra*; almost all Cetra records are simply pressings of RAI broadcasts. His official title is *Condirettore Centrale dei Programmi della Radiotelevisione Italiana*. Once a month the conductors of RAI's three orchestras and three choruses come to his office on the Via Botteghe Oscure in the center of Rome with suggestions for future programming, artists to hire, projects and complaints. Administrative officers in the three central stations — Rome, Turin, and Milan — are constant visitors, and other ideas come from a small staff of official consultants (which includes composer Gianfranco Malipiero) and thousands of unofficial helpers. All final decisions about music, however, are in Labroca's small,

strong hands; and very little goes out over Radio Italiana that he does not okay.

Labroca is a graduate of the Accademia di Santa Cecilia in Rome. He started his career as a critic and composer and among his published compositions are three string quartets, a "sonata for orchestra, with piano obbligato," three cantatas on the Passion according to San Giovanni, a *sinfonietta* for small orchestra, and assorted chamber pieces. In 1936 he became Superintendent of the *Maggio Musicale* in Florence, and since then most of his time has gone into administrative work. In 1946-47 he was artistic director of the Teatro La Fenice in Venice, and from 1947 to 1949 he held the same post at the Teatro alla Scala. RAI bought him away from Milan in 1949; and it is a fairly open secret in Italy that the Metropolitan Opera Association tried to buy him away from RAI before he had settled in his new chair, and before Rudolf Bing had been approached. His answer to the emissary is reported to have been, "I'm too busy to tell you why, but NO." This is a translation: Mo. Labroca speaks excellent French, but no English.

Commercially, RAI has the best of both worlds: it exacts a tax of roughly four dollars on every Italian household with a radio (between three and four million households), and then collects as much again from advertisers. Although the advertisers can to some extent choose which programs they will "sponsor," their choice is limited to RAI programs; commercial considerations are not allowed to interfere with Labroca or his overall *direttore* in the program department, Giulio Razzi. The total RAI budget of nearly \$30 million would be a lot of money anywhere; in Italy, where an orchestral musician makes about thirty dollars a week (and considers it, accurately, a middle-class salary), the leverage is enormous. In addition, the top dozen Italian opera houses, and the symphony orchestras in Rome and Naples, rely on government subsidies to meet a third of their costs; and it is generally understood that in part pay-

ment for that subsidy they give RAI the right to broadcast, for a nominal fee, anything presented to a paying public. Almost every prominent foreign artist who visits Italy will have at least one broadcast over RAI: in a recent year the pianists available to the Italian radio audience included Geza, Anda, Robert Casadesus, Edwin Fischer, Walter Gieseking, Friedrich Gulda, Wilhelm Kempf, and Artur Schnabel; among the choral groups were the Vienna Kammerchor, the Marcel Couraud ensemble, the Finnish Choral Society, and the Chamber Chorus of Smith College ("di Northampton"). The list of conductors included Van Beinum, Böhm, Cluytens, Dean Dixon, Ferenc Fricsay, Furtwängler, Isserstedt, Von Karajan, Klieber, Krips, Markevitch, Mitropoulos, Moralt, Jean Morel, Munch, Rodzinski, Scherchen, Stokowski, Toscanini, and Walter.

These concerts "from outside," however, take up only a small part of Radio Italiana's musical time. Radio Turin has a 98-man orchestra and a chorus of 58, Radio Rome a 96-man orchestra and a chorus of 72, Radio Milan a 69-man opera orchestra and a chorus of 50: collectively they provide some three hundred radio concerts a year. Another hundred or so are provided by the String Quartets of Radio Rome and Radio Turin, and Radio Turin's Instrumental Chamber Group. Each orchestra works five hours a day, six days a week, to make two weekly broadcasts: each hour of music on the air has behind it, as an average, seven hours of rehearsal. No other of the world's major orchestras has so much rehearsal time for each concert, and Italian musicians claim that the Orchestra of Radio Turin, under its permanent director, Mario Rossi, is the finest in Europe—at any rate, south of Amsterdam.

Full-time ownership of so many musicians gives RAI the opportunity to plan special projects. The Orchestra of Radio Turin commissions half a dozen major symphonic compositions every year, and gives them an impeccable preparation which sometimes runs to as many as fifteen rehearsals. Among this season's major efforts were a complete cycle of the music of Claudio Monteverdi, the major oratorios of Handel, and the world premiere of Ildebrando Pizzetti's opera *La Figlia di Jorio*. Last year members of the Orchestra of Radio Rome presented, in a 12-day contemporary music festival, 12 world premieres and 26 other modern works they had never played before. A few weeks later, Igor Stravinsky flattered the Orchestra of Radio Turin, and its theater and home audience, by playing the most difficult program of his own works he has ever risked—the *Violin Concerto*, the *Elegie for Natalie Koussevitzky*, and the *Penelope* (to a text by André Gide) for actress, tenor, chorus, and orchestra. Labroca gave Stravinsky nine rehearsals of three hours each to prepare the concert.

RAI's ordinary budget of rehearsal time is so high that Cetra Records, which is the only Italian record company, and has an elaborate and confusing arrangement with RAI, can take a tape of a broadcast and make it a recording of competitive quality. The RCA Victor version of Donizetti's *Elisir d'Amore*, for example, is clearly inferior to the Cetra, although the RCA was made under studio conditions in Rome, with eight or so recording sessions and full opportunity to correct mistakes. Part of the difference between the two sets is in the conductors: RAI's Gavazzeni is a per-

manent man at Scala and one of the best directors in Italy. Part is in the cast, because RAI's Valletti, Noni, and Bruscantini are finer artists than RCA's Monti, Carioso, and Luise. But a large part, too, comes from the seven rehearsals which Gavazzeni was able to devote to this fairly simple work. Cetra's recording is distinguished by a smoothness of execution and a perfection of comic timing which can be gained only through intensive rehearsal.

Since Cetra does not pay the rehearsal bills, it has also been able to issue some remarkably sound performances of quite rare music: Orazio Vecchi's *L'Amfiparnaso* (1594), Alessandro Scarlatti's *Trionfo dell' Onore*, Fioravanti's *Cantatrici Villane*, Montemezzi's *Amore dei Tre Re*, Wolf-Ferrari's *Quattro Rusteghi*. These performances are far better than those which a record company can ordinarily afford to give to an unfamiliar—and hence relatively unsalable—operatic work. Their issuance on disks is a sign of the excellent taste of ex-tenor Edgardo Trenelli, who is *Grande Ufficiale* (or big boss—the Italians say "Grand Oof") of Cetra and, subject to a complicated contract, picks what he likes from among RAI's opera broadcasts.

A GONDOLA ride along the Grand Canal in Venice today provides a view not only of great palaces, but also of magnificent television aerials. The most magnificent of all—half a dozen enormous antennae, poking out at every corner—rise from the RAI *palazzo* near the Rialto, advertising the newest and proudest activity of what is now *Radiotelevisione Italiana*. Like many other places in Venice, this office is mostly for show: RAI's broadcasting activity is largely concentrated in Rome, Turin, and Milan.

The facilities are usually new. Radio Rome works out of scattered sets of studios on the south bank of the Tiber. Public symphony concerts take place out at the Foro Italico, where Mussolini built an enormous public swimming pool and an unfinished Olympic Stadium to seat eighty thousand. RAI's hall has a very steeply banked auditorium on concrete steps; for acoustical reasons, the walls have been left bare brick and mortar. It is the only full-size concert hall in Rome, Mussolini having torn down the old Augusteo to take a peep at the Tomb of Augustus below it. Chamber music broadcasts originate in other studios attached to this ath-



Initial concert at RAI auditorium, 1953: all Turin turned out.

letic auditorium, or in a squat brick building, equally inconvenient, in another suburb beyond Vatican City. These studios have been completely reconditioned since the war, and are full of bulges, star patterns, and irregular gashes beloved of European architects and acoustical engineers.

An even more thorough job of design by acoustical patterns has been done in the RAI *palazzo* in Milan, on the Corso Sempione beyond the Sforza Castle. This was a bombed area, now full of new apartment houses, and the *palazzo*, begun in 1939, was not completed until 1952. It is a massive, very marble building, partly five and partly seven stories high, containing the complete administrative, musical, radio, television, and technical staffs of Radio Milan. Echo chambers, bulbous ceilings, sound-effects rooms abound; and every conceivable material is on the walls and floors—no two rooms are alike. The biggest room has nearly 60,000 cubic feet of air-space, and is home base for more than half of RAI's studio-originated opera broadcasts. Since this room is also the orchestra's rehearsal hall, the engineers can come to the final session entirely prepared for the job at hand.

Radio Turin's public auditorium has greater antiquity. Built in the early nineteenth century as a royal stables for Vittorio Emanuele, King of Piedmont, it was transformed first into an "Equestrian Circus" for a fashionable court audience, and then, simply by knocking down a wall and building a stage, into a legitimate theater. Operas were given here, and popular concerts (some of which employed the services of a juvenile cellist named Toscanini), and it was officially called the Turin Hippodrome. (Because of its size the irreverent natives called it the Turin Hippopotamus.) It was damaged during the war, and RAI tore down most of what was undamaged, then erected on the site a wholly new theater with two semi-circular balconies. Except for some execrable red-and-green glass chandeliers in the lobby, the project was carried through in remarkable taste. The problem of displaying an organ in an auditorium has been solved quite wonderfully: the silver pipes sit in three eccentric lines dead center behind the stage, and behind the pipes, brilliantly illuminated, is a huge, free-standing, white, oval sounding board.

A FEW blocks nearer the Po, in a low office building, is a crowded complex of studios (including several in a sub-basement) which is the source of most broadcasts from Radio Turin. Here, too, is a little suite of two rooms facing on a court, where Cetra's two engineers work with RAI tapes to produce records.

Cetra is Americanized: the tape machines are Ampexes, the amplification is Fairchild, and the speaker is the standard studio RCA. In the typical uncivilized manner of engineers everywhere, Cetra's people play the damn thing at a level neatly calibrated to be just beyond the "threshold of pain." Up on a bulletin board in the office end of the suite is a letter from Capitol's chief engineer praising the fidelity of a recent tape: it is one of Cetra's treasures.

RAI has good equipment everywhere. The microphones are usually German, though certain studios are equipped with American and Danish condenser mikes. Most of the

amplifying equipment is local, product of a brand new electronics industry; some of it is British. Many RAI programs are now taped rather than broadcast live, and the tape machines are mostly EMI, left behind by the British occupying forces. RAI has been somewhat cramped technically by the poverty of the country (it was only five years ago that sales of new radios, in a nation of 43,000,000 people, passed 500,000 a year), and pinched by a narrow allocation of wave bands. "After the war," said an officer of RAI, "the International Federation gave us very few, small channels for our broadcasts. But we get along."

EVERYTHING starts with the talent. Tasteful management, rehearsal time, acoustically perfect halls, brilliant engineering—all are dust in the balance. Nearly a thousand musicians are under direct, full-time contract to RAI, and keeping up the quality of this aggregation is one of Labroca's major jobs. As a government institution, RAI does not wish to compete aggressively with the semi-private opera houses and orchestras of the major Italian cities. It can offer musicians greater security and, since the introduction of tape, better working hours than the outside orchestras; most important of all, it can offer the young musician a chance. Teachers are constantly bringing pupils into the various RAI offices for auditions, and every few years the conductors at the three stations assemble in one place for a monster audition (they call it a "tourney") of vocal talent. Except for the choruses, RAI does not keep singers under full-time contract; but it does draw from a previously established pool of voices, and the winners of the auditions are assured regular appearances with the lyric orchestra of Radio Milan. Among those who have gone on from these auditions to international opera careers are the sopranos Rosanna Carteri and Alda Noni, and the basso-buffo Sesto Bruscantini.

The primary talent, of course, is conducting. Labroca reads a lot of music during the course of a year, but RAI's repertory, and especially its choice of modern works, must be made largely by the conductors, with Labroca merely consenting. Guest conductors are chosen because of their experience with certain work: the new Radio Turin auditorium was launched with a performance of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony under the baton of Wilhelm Furtwängler. But most of RAI's major broadcasts (and most of Cetra's recordings) are the work of the permanent staff.

Internationally, the best known of RAI's conductors is Turin's Mario Rossi, whose work can also be heard for a month every year in Vienna and at the Salzburg Festival (and on Vanguard as well as Cetra Records). Those who wish to judge his qualities will find it instructive to compare his recording of Verdi's *Falstaff* (on Cetra) with that of Arturo Toscanini. He is, by all report, a modest man with little ability at self-advertisement, little cleverness at politicking. It is practically impossible for such men to win and hold top conducting jobs with the big institutions, but it can be done when the boss is one tasteful musician rather than a glamor-hungry public.

An even more striking example of this willingness to reward modesty

Continued on page 106



music makers

by ROLAND GELATT

SOME OF THE MOST satisfying orchestral concerts heard in New York this year were provided by the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra under its newly elected musical director, Herbert von Karajan. The series began with a reverential playing of *Deutschland über Alles* and the *Star-Spangled Banner*. Unreconstructed Germanophobe that I am, I found this opening gambit more than a little trying. But thereafter Herr von Karajan and his men preceded to soothe any feelings ruffled by this salutation with some glorious performances of Haydn, Beethoven, and Wagner. I rather expected Von Karajan to be a showy conductor in the Stokowski vein. He is not. His gestures are economical, his manner unassuming. No one would call his interpretations models of understatement, for he knows well how to dramatize music and how to exploit it for virtuosic effect, but I never found this flair of his at all offensive.

What particularly impressed me was Von Karajan's sense of sound values—especially his skill in achieving finely adjusted balances between sections of the orchestra. At a rehearsal I was able to observe his regard for acoustics at close hand. For the first half hour the orchestra didn't play a note. Instead of conducting, Von Karajan kept readjusting the placement of seats. From time to time he would clap his hands at various spots on the stage to determine how the sound reverberated through the hall. Finally, the orchestra went to work on a piece by Boris Blacher called *Concertante Musik*. As they approached a crescendo, the conductor jumped down from the stage and roamed over the empty hall while the concertmaster, Siegfried Borries, kept the men playing together.

What Von Karajan heard, I gather, did not altogether please him, for after the rehearsal he complained of the acoustic deficiencies of Carnegie Hall. As it is the musical center of the world, he said, he was astounded that its acoustic problems have been left unsolved. The anachronism puzzled him: jet planes fly overhead, the quint-

essence of modern technology, and yet New Yorkers tolerate a hopelessly antiquated auditorium. Funny, most New Yorkers I know find the sound in Carnegie Hall eminently satisfying. One day demolition will come to Carnegie Hall, as it seemingly must to all buildings in Manhattan more than twenty years old, but there's no guarantee that we—or Von Karajan—will find its replacement an improvement.

ABOUT ONE MILLION dollars will be invested by English Decca this year in new operatic recordings—which ought to advance "the dawn of a new era" to high noon at least. Certainly it's the most ambitious opera agenda ever projected for one year by a record company. Whether it all works out according to schedule remains to be seen. As Doctor Johnson once observed, opera is an exotic and irrational form of entertainment; it is prone to all kinds of upsets, even at recording sessions. But if everything goes as planned, we shall have plenty to listen to this fall on the London label alone.

Chief among the coming operatic attractions from Decca-London are the four Mozart staples—*Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Don Giovanni*, *Così fan tutte*, and *Die Zauberflöte*. They are to be



Herbert von Karajan

recorded in Vienna this spring. *Le Nozze* will be conducted by Erich Kleiber, with Lisa della Casa as the Countess, Hilda Gueden as Susanna, Suzanne Danco as Cherubino, Cesare Siepi as Figaro, and Alfred Poell as Almaviva. *Don Giovanni*, under the direction of Josef Krips, will employ Siepi as the Don, Fernando Corena as Leporello, and Anton Dermota as Don Ottavio; Leonie Rysanek will sing Donna Anna, to the Elvira of Della Casa and the Zerlina of Gueden. The remaining two works will be conducted by Karl Böhm. In *Così*, the disguised lovers will be sung by Dermota and Erich Kunz, their inamoratas by Della Casa and Christa Ludwig, with Paul Schoeffler as Don Alfonso and Emmy Loose as Despina. For *Die Zauberflöte*, Decca-London has cast Wilma Lipp as Queen of the Night, Hilde Gueden as Pamina, Leopold Simoneau as Tamino, Kurt Boehme as Sarastro, and Walter Berry as Papageno, with bit parts going to Leonie Rysanek, Hilde Rossl-Majdan, and Anny Felbermayer. Last, but definitely of note, we are promised that all recitatives set to music by Mozart will be recorded.

The final Mozart session is due to take place on June 30. Four days later, Arthur Haddy and his assisting engineers will have the "fir" equipment set up in Rome ready to record Puccini's *Turandot*, for which Inge Borkh has been engaged to sing the Princess, Mario del Monaco the Unknown Prince. *La Forza del Destino*, with Tebaldi and Del Monaco, is next on the schedule. Then the engineers are off to Bayreuth for actual performance tapings in the Festspielhaus of *Der Fliegende Holländer*, *Das Rheingold*, and *Götterdämmerung*. In the early fall they will be back in Italy, this time in Florence, to record Donizetti's *L'Elisir d'Amore* and *La Favorita*. And to wind up their strenuous 1955 season, the Decca-London crew will return to Vienna to record Richard Strauss's *Die Frau ohne Schatten*.

A BOMBSHELL has been quietly laid in the Prefatory Note to Irving Kolo-

din's recently published *Guide to Long-Playing Records: Orchestral Music*. "It is my belief," Kolodin writes, "that the total of great performances now on records is substantially smaller than it was in 1941. The total of good ones is doubtless higher; the total of exceptionally fine-sounding ones is beyond question at an all-time high. But the repertoire represented by the magic digits 1941 . . . was one that had been accumulated through a decade of intensive, discriminating effort in Europe and the United States. The six-years-plus since LP began have created a repertoire to fill a commercial need based on unprecedented consumer demand. The two are not synonymous and can never be compared—except to the artistic disadvantage of the current production."

That's putting it on the line straight and true—though the new generation of record collectors, brought up on the Gospel According to St. Schwann, may find it hard to believe. Before the advent of tape and LP, there was usually a strong and long-standing involvement between recording artists and the music they performed for the phonograph. When Artur Schnabel decided to record the thirty-two sonatas of Beethoven, he had been playing them in public for at least a quarter century. Today, artists are constantly being asked to record music that they have seldom, if ever, performed in public. This comes partly from the commendable desire of record companies, especially the smaller ones, to explore off-the-beaten-track repertoire, partly from the desire—understandable if not so commendable—of all companies to record standard pieces "for the catalogue" with whatever artists they happen to have under contract. Either way, the odds are against achieving a memorable—as distinct from a good or merely adequate—recorded performance.

Kolodin's bird's-eye view of orchestral music on LP is one of a trio of books just published by Alfred A. Knopf under the over-all rubric *Guide to Long-Playing Records*. The other two volumes are devoted to vocal music and chamber music, surveyed respectively by Philip L. Miller and Harold C. Schonberg. At the time this column went to press, only Kolodin's book had been issued. The series as a whole will be reviewed in a forthcoming issue of HIGH FIDELITY.

IN THE YEARS before World War

II, when Paris was still the haven *par excellence* for wealthy expatriates, a very well-heeled lady from Australia named Louise Dyer began investing her money in, of all things, music. Mrs. Dyer had been "musically inclined" for many years, but not until she came to France were her enthusiasms channeled in the direction of *musique ancienne*. In Paris she learned that no modern edition existed of the music of François Couperin, an eighteenth-century French composer highly esteemed by his somewhat younger German contemporary, J. S. Bach; and having learned this, Mrs. Dyer decided to do something about it. She gathered together a panel of Couperin authorities and commissioned them to prepare the most complete and useful edition possible of his music. On the bicentenary of Couperin's death, 1933, the results were published in twelve magnificently printed, sumptuously bound volumes under the imprint of Editions de l'Oiseau-Lyre (Lyrebird Press).

Since that mighty opening salvo, Mrs. Dyer's press has published much other neglected music. But to the generality of music listeners, Editions de l'Oiseau-Lyre is better known as the sponsor of some highly valued phonograph records. Mrs. Dyer has been in the record business since 1938, in which time she has issued a variety of musical fare ranging from the fourteenth-century Guillaume Machaut to the twentieth-century Henri Sauguet. Just recently she has returned to her first love by underwriting a complete recorded edition of Couperin's harpsichord music, played by Ruggero Gerlin, which is due to reach record shops in the United States this month. It comprises sixteen records in all, but fortunately does not have to be purchased *in toto*. Anyone desirous of obtaining just *La Passacaille* (one of the most passionately intense pieces of music ever written) or *Les Folies françaises* (one of the wittiest) can get them without the other 230 pieces.

Ruggero Gerlin was a pupil of Wanda Landowska's. This can be said of almost every harpsichordist in circulation, but Gerlin apparently was the prize pupil of her school in St. Leu-la-Forêt. Landowska speaks of him still with great admiration—and that is high praise for a harpsichordist. Concert tours in Europe and teaching jobs at the Naples Conservatory and the Chigiana Academy in Siena have kept him busily engaged abroad, but I sus-

pect we shall be hearing him in person here before too long. Meanwhile, his playing of Couperin can be sampled on records practically *ad infinitum*.

THAT HENRY PLEASANTS has written a diatribe against contemporary composers entitled *The Agony of Modern Music* (Simon & Schuster, \$3.00) is by now sufficiently publicized; that he was able to score some well-chosen rebukes at the expense of modern music is obvious; that he juggled historical fact and disdained logic in order to buttress his case has been ably demonstrated by many reviewers. Pleasants goes off on innumerable tangents in his endeavor to prove that "serious music is a dead art," but underlying all the questionable historical analogies and all the muddy eddies of his argument is one basic fallacy: he assumes that no audience exists today for contemporary music, that listeners put up with it from a sense of duty but never show what can be called signs of genuine enthusiasm. This, I submit, is not so.

To underline his conviction that nobody really likes modern music nowadays, Pleasants quotes a 1798 review of Haydn's *Creation* in which a Viennese critic asserts: "Three days have gone since that enrapturing evening, and still the music sounds in my ears and in my heart." Then Pleasants asks: "Is it possible that any critic could write of anything written in the past fifty years, 'Three days have gone by since that enrapturing evening?'" The answer is yes. I can think of many compositions written since 1915 (giving Mr. Pleasants the benefit of ten years) that affected me much as *The Creation* did that anonymous critic of Haydn's day. Here are ten:

- Strauss: *Capriccio*.
- Ravel: *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges*.
- Stravinsky: *Le Baiser de la Fée*.
- Fauré: *L'Horizon chimérique*.
- Prokofiev: Violin Concerto No. 1.
- Poulenc: Any one of several song cycles.
- Bloch: Concerto Grosso.
- Walton: *Belsazzar's Feast*.
- Copland: *Appalachian Spring*.
- Berg: *Wozzeck*.

I am not putting these forward as my considered choices for the ten best compositions written since 1920. I merely remember them fondly as echoing "in my ears and in my heart" for days after I first heard them.

Anyone else want to make a list?

Records in Review



Reviewed by PAUL AFFELDER • NATHAN BRODER • C. G. BURKE • RAY ERICSON
 ALFRED FRANKENSTEIN • ROLAND GELATT • JAMES HINTON, JR.
 ROY H. HOOPES, JR. • J. F. INDCOX • ROBERT KOTLOWITZ
 HOWARD LAFAY • GONZALO SEGURA, JR. • JOHN S. WILSON

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CLASSICAL

BACH

Six Trio Sonatas; Pastorale in F major; Fantasia in C minor; Fantasia in G major

Marie-Claire Alain, organ (recorded at the Church of Saint Merry, Paris).

HAYDN SOCIETY HSL 119/120. Two 12-in. \$11.90.

The sonatas consist of three lines of almost equal importance throughout. These lines are deployed with great flexibility and freedom and yet are tightly bound together in Bach's solid harmony. They must therefore be played with precision and the utmost clarity. The organ used here does not seem to be an ideal instrument for the transparent contrapuntal texture required. Some of the pedal stops are weak and have little character; they apparently do not "speak" readily and sometimes lag behind the manuals. At the other end of the tonal spectrum Mme. Alain seems to be fond of stops that sound rather shrill; and the middle voice is occasionally too faint.

In the richer texture of the two Fantasias such handicaps are less evident. These pieces and the Pastorale are played very nicely; but for sound I much prefer the Pastorale and the G major Fantasia as performed in a recent Haydn Society recording by Finn Viderø on a Danish organ. N. B.

BEETHOVEN

Quartets: No. 7, in F, No. 8, in E minor, No. 9, in C, Op. 59; No. 10, in E flat ("Harp"), Op. 74; No. 11, in F minor ("Serious"), Op. 95

Hungarian Quartet.

ANGEL 3513-C. Three 12-in. 39, 32, 30, 30, 19 min. \$14.94.

This second album in the complete edition of the Beethoven Quartets by the Hungarians is distinguished by (1) an outstanding performance of the Third Rasonmoulsky

Quartet, No. 9, aloof in a polished regularity just right for it; (2) the economy and convenience (initiated by the Vegh edition of the Haydn Society) of the five quartets on three disks; (3) the thoughtful bounty of clean miniature scores supplied in addition to the expected notes. Other features will evoke a more tepid enthusiasm. No. 7, in a disciplined disdain of any sentimentality at all, is admirable in the way of handsomely chased glass; No. 8 and 11 are hurried and perfunctory in the slow movements, inclined to bluster in the quick, the tone dry; and No. 10, music with less heart than design, has received an interpretation of appealing poise and manners, but the volume is too low to give a sense of actuality without sonic complications.

It has been said before in this place that series like this, played throughout by one group, cannot on the basis of experience be expected to be uniformly of great quality. In view of the recorded competition in this music, the Hungarian Quartet are to be congratulated for their pre-eminence in twenty per cent of it. C. G. B.

BEETHOVEN

Symphony No. 1, in C, Op. 21

Symphony No. 8, in F, Op. 93

Vienna Symphony Orchestra, John Pritchard, cond. (in No. 1); Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Paul van Kempen, cond. (in No. 8).

EPIC LC 3095. 12-in. \$3.98.

A forceful, standard performance of the Eighth, orchestrally sure and well recorded, clean and true except at a number of *fortes* when echo swallows detail and flabbifies contours. No. 1 is seldom done the way Mr. Pritchard takes it, with a lively, undeviating pulse, not hard but formal, to emphasize that it is still the eighteenth century, abhorring dishevelment. A small infusion of ruth might have made the interpretation masterly, but even without it interest is commanded and held. Fat and robust in sound, with outstanding clarity

of wind, it has been engineered to the first sonic place for this symphony. C. G. B.

BRAHMS

A German Requiem, Op. 45

Lore Wissmann, soprano; Theo Adam, baritone; the Frankfurt Opera Chorus; the Frankfurt Opera and Museum Orchestras, Georg Solti, cond.

CAPITOL PBR 8300. Two 12-in. \$9.96.

This is the first up-to-date recording of the Brahms *German Requiem*, the first that begins to do justice to this profound and magnificent work, which is not only Brahms's finest choral composition but one of the great choral masterpieces of all time.

Music of such stature deserves the very best from both musicians and engineers. I certainly cannot quarrel with the quality of recorded sound here; it is clear, full, well-balanced, and wide-range. Nor can I find anything but high praise for the dignity of Solti's interpretation. The combined orchestras, too, are first-rate. The soloists, however, while adequate, are little more than that, and the chorus lacks the solidity and bite of some of the better English and American groups though it embodies sufficient tonal warmth.

This recording far outstrips the older versions by Von Karajan (Columbia) and Shaw (RCA Victor). It might be well to bear in mind, however, that at least two more recordings of the work are due in the not-too-distant future. P. A.

BRAHMS

Symphony No. 2, in D, Op. 73

Concertgebouw Orchestra, Amsterdam, Eduard van Beinum, cond.

EPIC LC 3098. 12-in. \$3.98.

It is surprising that this conductor, so authoritative in Brahms, has recorded only two of the symphonies. His big, healthy First for London (LL 490) is a standard, of reasonable, responsive rhetoric; and this new Second is played to the same pattern

of full-blooded statement, deep harmonic texture (where aeration is often favored) and firm stresses, all with a fluent confidence suggesting that there is no other way to play it. The sound has a well-defined splendor and natural orchestral integration not yet common on records; but it must be confessed that this critic may have been influenced by an imposing realignment of speakers just completed when the disk was last heard, and the increment of splendor may have come from the apparatus. Still, the potential is there in the disk. C. G. B.

BRITTEN

The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra.

†Saint-Saëns: *Carnival of the Animals.*

Philharmonia Orchestra, Igor Markevitch, cond. Peter Pears, narrator (in the Britten); Geza Anda and Bela Siki, pianists (in the Saint-Saëns).

ANGEL 35135. 12-in. \$4.98.

Here is the first LP version of Britten's skillful and effective *Guide* to include the explanatory commentary—admirably narrated by Peter Pears—that was part of its original form. This is a decidedly brisk performance, though not always clear in instrumental values when the orchestra is working in unison, and inclined to rob the fugue of some of its majestic breadth. The solo instrumental work is good, without being exceptional, and in this respect the recording is hardly the equal of the fine Van Beinum version on London LL 917. Angel has provided a good over-all sound, though it is somewhat confined.

Saint-Saëns' frolic finds the conductor, pianists, and orchestra at top form, in a performance that projects all the humor and wit of this enjoyable score. The recorded sound has a more open quality than is found on the obverse side. J. F. I.

BRUCKNER

Symphony No. 5, in B-flat major

†Weber: *Symphony No. 1, in C major*

Leipzig Philharmonic Orchestra, Gerhard Pflüger, cond.

URANIA URLP 239. Two 12-in. \$7.96.

Those listeners who find it difficult to detect a unified train of musical thought in Bruckner's compositions will discover a great deal of thematic unity in this long symphony. It has several basic themes that reappear in strategic places throughout the four movements, especially in the first and last. A good deal of the typical Brucknerian bombast is also here, but on the whole this work makes more sense and has more lasting qualities than a number of his other symphonies. Those who like the Fourth and Seventh will undoubtedly also take to the Fifth. Pflüger treats the music sympathetically, and his orchestra sounds like a good one. He also gives a strong performance of Carl Maria von Weber's Symphony No. 1, composed when he was only twenty. Aside from the laborious first movement, it is a delightfully vivacious and original work.

Fine reproduction in the Bruckner, some distortion in the Weber. P. A.

CHAUSSON

Poème, Op. 25—See Lalo.

CHOPIN

Sonata No. 2—See Schumann

FRANCK

Sonata for Violin and Piano in A major
†Szymanowski: *Sonata for Violin and Piano in D minor*

David Oistrakh, violin; Vladimir Yampolsky, piano.

ANGEL 35163. 12-in. \$4.98.

Every time David Oistrakh gets out from behind the Iron Curtain these days, he seems to find his way to a recording studio. This has worked out happily for record collectors, who have had to suffer far too long with the violinist's inferior Russian recordings. But in this instance one of his Soviet tapes contends strongly for preference. Several months ago, both Vanguard and Colosseum issued the Franck Sonata performed by Oistrakh and Lev Oborin, which was not a decidedly superior Russian recording but a more absorbing interpretation than the present one on Angel, Oborin being a more forceful, interesting pianist than Yampolsky.

It all boils down to a choice between the somewhat less impassioned performance of the Franck on the more brightly reproduced Angel disk, with a coupling of Karl Szymanowski's lyrical sonata, and a more dramatic, idiomatic Franck, not quite so well recorded, bracketed on the Vanguard disk with Prokofiev's Sonata in F minor, a work closely associated with Oistrakh and Oborin. P. A.

GLUCK

Alceste: Overture

†Schumann: *Manfred Overture*

Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Geneva, Karl Münchinger, cond.

LONDON LD 9145. 10-in. \$2.98.

A shrewd coupling on an admirable little disk. Gluck's great work is a triumph of form tightly containing heat, and the *Manfred Overture's* heat has overflowed its frame, not excessively. There is a kinship of concept which the conductor illustrates

with a coolly vigorous projection. Solid registration plays its part in a compact achievement that ought not to be overlooked. C. G. B.

GRIEG

Quartet in G major, Op. 27

†Rachmaninoff: *Romance and Scherzo from Quartet in G minor*

Guilet String Quartet.

M-G-M E 3133. 12-in. \$3.98.

Grieg's only string quartet is a better work than its neglect would imply. Written in 1879, when Grieg was thirty-six, the quartet is perhaps overly typical of his music in its folklike rhythms, sentimentally harmonized melodies, and episodic form. However, it is colorfully scored for the four instruments, and the long first movement holds the attention with its varied handling of one pervasive theme and with its curious two-section structure.

The two movements from a quartet by Rachmaninoff are student efforts, highly derivative, and of little interest. In them and in the Grieg work the Guilet ensemble maintains a cohesive, well-balanced tone throughout vigorous performances. The recording has a sense of intimacy, though it is somewhat lacking in fullness and brilliance of tone. R. E.

HANDEL

Sonatas for Flute: No. 1, in A minor; No. 2, in E minor; No. 3, in B minor; No. 4, in E minor; No. 5, in G minor; No. 6, in A minor; No. 7, in G; No. 8, in B minor; No. 9, in F; No. 10, in C

John Wummer, flute; Fernando Valenti, harpsichord; Aldo Parisot, cello.

WESTMINSTER WAL 218. Two 12-in. \$11.90.

The last seven of these were published as part of Op. 1; the first three were published separately. Four were originally intended for the fipple flute, but the designation was changed by the composer as he saw the transverse acquiring wider popularity. Most of the sonatas have been recorded before, although there is no other edition of ten; but nothing compares with the subdued high finish of this set. It is particularly admirable that the temptation to underline the archaic flavor of the pieces was resisted as basic policy: the flute has full scope, with harpsichord and cello discreetly filling in the bass, making a ramification of interest of which the listener is barely conscious. Mr. Wummer has made some good records, but none better than these: flutists and others can profit from the refinement of his display, and the quality of his sustained notes is worth a special encomium. This type of recording presents no great difficulties and the finished disks betray none. Pocket scores are supplied, and a historical note by Dr. Karl Geiringer. C. G. B.

HAYDN

Symphony No. 88, in G

†Schumann: *Symphony No. 4, in D minor, Op. 120*

Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Wilhelm Furtwängler, cond.

DECCA DL 9767. 12-in. \$4.98.

Attention is herewith directed to DECCA DX 119, an album of two disks containing the same beautiful performance of the ever-

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appealing Haydn No. 88 as that presented here, with a magnificent exposition of Schubert's last symphony to boot, in place of the labored, artificial, joyless, unconvincing, and dreary stretch-out of the Schumann Fourth coupled to the Haydn on this newer disk. Furthermore, the Haydn in DX 119 has a sound of greater substance and distinctness than that of the replacement.

C. G. B.

HENKEMANS, HANS

Concerto for Violin and Orchestra

†Pijper: *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra; Six Epigrams for Orchestra*

Theo Olof, violin; Hans Henkemans, piano; Concertgebouw Orchestra, Eduard van Beinum, cond.

EPIC LC 3093. 12-in. \$3.98.

The late Willem Pijper was the leading Dutch composer of the present century, but this disk does his memory no special good. The recording is very thin, inadequate,

ancient-sounding, so that the subtleties of his *Six Epigrams* are largely lost. The piano concerto, as played by his pupil Henkemans, seems unnecessarily rhetorical and overblown. Henkemans's own concerto, for violin, comes off better, doubtless because it makes less pretense. It is in a tuneful, lyrical, somewhat chromatic style, with many exquisitely wrought effects, and it is exquisitely played by Olof. A. F.

HOLMBOE

String Quartet No. 3 — See Nielsen.

KHACHATURIAN

The Battle for Stalingrad — Suite — See Shostakovich.

LALO

Symphonie Espagnole for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 21

†Chausson: *Poème, Op 25*

†Ravel: *Tzigane*

Arthur Grumiaux, violin; Lamoureux Orchestra, Jean Fournet, cond.

EPIC LC 3082. 12-in. \$3.98.

Here, on one compact disk, is the cream of the French repertoire for violin and orchestra, superbly played by Grumiaux. He is a violinist whom the American critics have been inclined to pass over in favor of some of his more flashy colleagues. He may not be the most brilliant fiddler, but everything he does is smooth, polished, warm, and tasteful. There is ample fire in the three works he plays here, yet not a single scratchy note. Fournet's accompaniments are firm but discreet, while the whole has been accorded excellent reproduction. You may find more exciting recorded versions of these works, but none that are more musically satisfying. P. A.

All God's Indians Got Drums

IT IS NO extraordinary thing for half a dozen different recordings of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony to appear in a single month, but when four separate recordings of a fairly obscure piece for percussion ensemble appear simultaneously, that's news. It may even indicate a Trend.

The piece in question is the Toccata for Percussion by Carlos Chavez, which has been recorded at least twice in the past and now suddenly blossoms out in four more versions, all coupled with a fantastic and extremely interesting variety of things.

The Toccata itself is a three-movement piece that runs about twelve minutes. Its first movement is scored mainly for deep-toned drums and is a study in the fast, reiterative Mexican Indian rhythms this composer often employs. The second movement turns from the sounds of hollow, stretched skins to those of metal and wood; it is an atonal slow movement of a quietly expressive kind. The finale returns to Mexican rhythms and brings together all the resources previously employed. The piece as a whole has a kind of classically reserved, polyphonic feeling about it. Its rhythmic counterpoint and its finely drawn palette of sonorities create no problems for the listener, and it is not surprising that many musicians and recording companies have thought it might be good business.

The Toccata appears on the following new records:

1. By the Gotham Percussion Players (URANIA URLP 7144. 12-in. \$3.98), coupled with Respighi's *Brazilian Impressions* and two *Spanish Dances* by Granados, all performed by George Sebastian and the Colonne Orchestra.

2. By the M-G-M Chamber Orchestra conducted by Izler Solomon (M-G-M E 3155. 12-in. \$3.98), coupled with Revueltas' *Ocho por Radio*, Surinach's *Ritmo Jondo*, and Villa-Lobos' *Chôros VII*, all played by ensembles under the same conductor.

3. By the Concert Arts Percussionists conducted by Felix Slatkin (CAPITOL P 8299. 12-in. \$3.98) coupled with Milhaud's *Concerto for Percussion and Small Orchestra* performed by Hal Rees and the Concert Arts Orchestra and Bartók's *Music for Stringed*

Instruments, Percussion, and Celesta by the Los Angeles Chamber Symphony, Harold Byrns conducting.

4. By the University of Illinois Percussion Ensemble, Paul Price, conductor (UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS CRS 3. 10-in. \$2.98), coupled with Jack McKenzie's *Introduction and Allegro*, Edgard Varèse's *Ionisation*, Michael Colgrass' *Three Brothers*, and Lou Harrison's *Canticle No. 3*, all by the same performers.

So far as the Chavez is concerned, all the performances are excellent, though all are quite different from each other, partly because percussion instruments are not as rigidly standardized as other instruments. Two gongs, xylophones, or sets of bells may differ widely in size or tone color, and there is an enormous variation in the weight and head-covering of beaters, especially those used with the more unorthodox instruments like the Indian drums Chavez requires. Consequently these four recordings really cannot be compared with each other, though when all is said and done the Urania comes over the best, has the widest gamut of shading and timbre, and seems the largest in interpretative conception. Unfortunately, however, it has the poorest

coupling. Respighi's *Brazilian Impressions* is third-rate Respighi, and the Granados dances are neither sensitively played nor well recorded.

Solomon joins the Chavez with justly comparable pieces for chamber orchestra; the entire recording is entitled *Spanish and Latin-American Music for Unusual Combinations*. Revueltas' *Ocho por Radio* takes off from what one hears on twirling the dials in a small Mexican town — a snatch of a dance tune here, a verse of a sentimental song there, a blare of a march somewhere else. It is a *Musikalischer Spass*, and a fairly good one.

Surinach's *Ritmo Jondo* is a marvelously tense, taut, acrid, and hard-boiled evocation of Spanish gypsy music, without a trace of the usual sentimentality or impressionism. Its three movements are scored for trumpet, clarinet, and percussion, including three hand-clappers. Villa-Lobos' *Chôros VII* is one of the best of that master's wildly rhapsodic, fantastic, and pungent explorations of Brazilian musical folk lore.

The University of Illinois recording consists entirely of pieces for chamber ensemble. Those by McKenzie and Colgrass are slight. Varèse's famous *Ionisation* is, of course, a fabulous explosion of mordant energy, precisely calculated and controlled. Harrison's *Canticle No. 3* is a very lyrical piece employing some extremely subtle, delicate, and fragile effects. It has a part for the hollow, mournful sound of the ocarina, and it also uses such things as iron pipes, water-buffalo bells, and elephant bells in three different sizes.

Capitol, whose record bears the general title, *Percussion!*, contrasts the Chavez with the zestful, tuneful, slightly jazzy concerto by Milhaud for a percussion soloist and small orchestra, and with a fine performance, reasonably well recorded, of Bartók's great Music for Stringed Instruments, Percussion, and Celesta, half a dozen previous recordings of which are listed in the catalogues. Coming of the Bartók after all this other music, one feels as if one were hearing the Brahms Piano Quintet under the unusual but not unthinkable title *Sonata for Strings and Percussion*. ALFRED FRANKENSTEIN



DRAWING BY ANTONIO SOTOMAYOR

Carlos Chavez

LISZT

Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2 (trans. Müller-Berghaus)

†Massenet: *Werther: Prelude and La Nuit de Noël*

Paris Conservatory Orchestra, Albert Wolff, cond.

LONDON LD 9171. 10-in. \$2.98.

It is a pity that the venerable and highly respected Albert Wolff was not given more congenial material to conduct. He is well attuned to the warm, melodic *Werther* music, which doesn't mean too much heard out of context; but his approach to the Liszt Rhapsody is entirely unsympathetic—a routine, straightforward reading without any real fire in it. The reproduction is clear and well defined. P. A.

LEONCAVALLO

Pagliacci

Maria Callas (s), Nedda; Giuseppe di Stefano (t), Canio; Nicola Monti (t), Peppe; Tito Gobbi (b), Tonio; Rolando Panerai (b), Silvio; orchestra and chorus of Teatro alla Scala, Milan, Tullio Serafin, cond.

ANGEL 3527. Two 12-in. (side 3 blank). \$8.98.

As the second half of one of the most celebrated double bills in the whole history of opera, Leoncavallo's *Pagliacci* had been recorded for (or, in some cases, transferred from 78s to) LP some five times before Angel made it an even half dozen with the present issue. Presumably to maintain face and get its share of the record-buying dollar, any sizable record company that is in the opera business at all feels the need to have so popular an opera represented in its catalogue. Now Angel has—after a fashion.

On artistic grounds it seems a great pity that a company with so distinguished a list of operatic recordings did not wait until a really suitable cast could be assembled. But perhaps on economic grounds it could not afford to; even good Angels have a right to bread and butter. In any case, the most appropriate reaction is to wish Angel good health but leave this *Pagliacci* to be forgotten. There is a distinct difference between a list of well-known names and a good cast, and although the newest *Pagliacci* is not without its good points, almost any one of the others to be had on LP is substantially a better over-all representation of what Leoncavallo is generally considered to have had in mind.

The most distinctive feature of the Angel set is the conducting of Tullio Serafin. Pure and musicianly rather than opportunistically blood-and-gutsy, his broad, controlled reading would provide a magnificent framework for a cast that could take full advantage of its opportunities. Unfortunately, no such cast was on hand. Nedda is not characteristically one of Maria Callas' parts, for the simple reason that its music does not touch the dramatic-coloratura style in which she is most effective. However, it is a part she conceivably *might* sing, and she is far too serious and intense a singing actress to let it go for nothing. Her tone is not always pure, and some of her readings are individual to the point of peculiarity, but she accomplishes the music with

very few *contretemps* and projects more than just the outline of a character. But—to name one only—Clara Petrella, London's Nedda, is even more interesting dramatically, and in this sort of vocal context is not in the least outclassed vocally.

As Canio, Giuseppe di Stefano is essentially a boy sent to do a man's work. There is a certain hopeless gallantry about the way in which he hurls his light voice at passages like "No! *Pagliaccio non son!*" but there is no more than two-thirds enough of it. On any terms, his performance is disqualifyingly pale—so pale that alongside the performances of Mario del Monaco (London) or Richard Tucker (Columbia) or Jussi Bjoerling (RCA Victor), it might as well be transparent. Nor—even accepting his voice as a possible one for a recorded Canio—does he have anything very interesting to say. The casting of Nicola Monti as Peppe is a lagniappe; but his neat, tasteful singing of the serenade is pushed so far off the electronic stage that even he does not make much of an effect.

Tito Gobbi is artistically first-class as Tonio, if rather drying of voice. He sings the prologue carefully and with art, but also with certain reserve about attacking head-on any more high notes than absolutely necessary. Rolando Panerai, the Silvio, sings with fresher resonance, and does a generally commendable job, marred by some scraping of the keel as he gets over into his upper voice. The engineering is good, if not quite so sharply defined as in some other Angel releases; I myself rather like the effect of a certain distance, but others may have different tastes.

Like most other *Pagliacci* recordings, this one is available either separately (on three sides, in this case, with the fourth a blank) or in a six-side set along with *Cavalleria Rusticana*, which, in its Angel version, comes closer to the mark but does not by any means knock out the bullseye either. J. H., Jr.

MASSENET

Overture: Phèdre

†Chabrier: *España*

L'Orchestre Symphonique de la Radiodiffusion National Belge, Franz André, cond. TELEFUNKEN TM 68016. 10-in. \$2.95.

It seems strange that Massenet's *Phèdre* Overture has not achieved any great measure of popularity, for it is exciting, dramatic, and melodious music. Perhaps this brilliant recording, coupled with a superb version of Chabrier's immensely popular *España*, will finally remedy the situation. Playing times are 8 and 5 minutes, respectively. G. S., Jr.



Tito Gobbi: "artistically first class."

MASSENET

Werther: Prelude and La Nuit de Noël

— See Liszt.

MOZART

Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, No. 14, in E flat, K 449

†Strauss: *Burleske for Piano and Orchestra*

Friedrich Gulda, piano; London Symphony Orchestra, Anthony Collins, cond.

LONDON LL 1158. 12-in. \$3.98.

Written for a woman (who must have had astonishing musical understanding), the intoxicating complexities of this marvelous concerto are entrusted here to execrators aggressive with bold manliness. It sounds good and has a new interest in the kind of broad, energetic delivery proffered by the Messrs. Gulda and Collins in one of London's best recordings of the piano and one of anyone's best for piano and orchestra. The piano is close and perhaps too, for best balance, but it is hugely effective and helps restore Mozart's sex to him.

The *Burleske*, thoroughgoing Brahms, is vivid, uninhibited, and unserious in a becomingly brilliant performance and recording that complete a disk of first order. C. G. B.

MOZART

Divertimentos for Wind Octet: in E flat, KA 226; in B flat, KA 227

Vienna Philharmonic Wind Group.

WESTMINSTER WL 5349. 12-in. \$5.95.

Westminster excels in these fields, where the winds scent the open air. Her catalogue is lightened by a dozen or more disks of the sort, with Mozart, Beethoven, the two Haydns, Boccherini, and Hummel as *par-fumeurs*. Mozart was more adept at disseminating superb fluff than anyone ever, and the pair of distractions here, disarmingly routine at first hearing, acquire substance with familiarity, and remain delightful. They could hardly be better played, and the sound is both delicate and thorough, in tender, conscientious balance. C. G. B.

NIELSEN

String Quartet No. 4

†Holmboe: *String Quartet No. 3*

Koppel Quartet.

LONDON LL 1119. 12-in. \$3.98.

Vagn Holmboe is a modern Danish composer who here makes his debut on American records with the last of three quartets composed in 1949 under the inspiration of hearing the sixth quartet of Bartók. So we are told in Frede Petersen's record notes; the new Grove adds that at an earlier period Holmboe had collected folk songs in Rumania, just as Bartók himself had done. His Third Quartet is an extremely attractive work built on an unusual plan. There are five movements, the central one a chaconne of great size and breadth. This is surrounded with two short, scherzolike movements, and at the extreme periphery, front and back, are two short, related slow movements. The harmonic and rhythmic schemes are very strong and original, and there are many pungent effects of color like those of Bartók himself.

The quartet by Carl Nielsen on the other side is a fairly early work by that distinguished Danish master and is less clearly in his characteristic style than other com-

positions of his which have reached disks. It is gently and acceptably Brahmsian. Performances are excellent and the recording is good. A. F.

PADEREWSKI

Fantaisie Polonaise — See Tavares.

PIJPER

Concerto for Piano and Orchestra; Six Epigrams — See Henkemans.

PUCCINI

Manon Lescaut

Renata Tebaldi (s), Manon Lescaut; Luisa Ribacchi (ms), Singer; Mario del Monaco (t), Des Grieux; Piero di Palma (t), Edmondo; Angelo Mercuriali (t), Lamplighter; Adelio Zagonara (t), Dancing Master; Mario Boriello (b), Lescaut; Fernando Corena (bs), Geronte; Dario Caselli (bs), Captain; Antonio Sacchetti (bs), Innkeeper and Sergeant; orchestra and chorus of L'Accademia di Santa Cecilia, Rome, Francesco Molinari-Pradelli, cond.

LONDON LLA 28. Three 12-in. \$14.94.

Considering the relatively in-and-out repertoire status of *Manon Lescaut*, in comparison with *La Bohème*, *Madama Butterfly*, and *Tosca*, it has been, and is, remarkably well represented on records — qualitatively, at least. There are now three full-length versions available on LP. For those who do not know the work, it perhaps ought to be noted with emphasis that it is a far more rewarding and effective piece, either in the theater or on records, than its lack of currency would indicate. It is not at all a charity case or simply one of those early works that depends for interest on the fact of its being by a composer who did better later on.

First performed in 1893, it was Puccini's third opera and his first full-scale, unequivocal success. By the time he composed it, he was in his mid-thirties and already developing his own familiar musical personality on a basis of sound craftsmanship. Some of the writing, especially in the last two acts, is in the strong declamatory style of what is commonly thought of as a fully mature Puccini. Some of it, though, especially in the first two acts, is quite as accomplished technically but purer and more gracefully vocal; for, before coming fully to grips with the stronger passions of his characters, the composer spent a good deal of energy and skill in evoking the eighteenth-century milieu. This leads to a certain ambivalence, but it also results in some of Puccini's loveliest writing for voices. *Manon Lescaut* is not so foolproof and self-protecting a score as some that Puccini was to write, but it has a delicacy and charm, and a developing power, that — if the performance is good — can make it seem in some ways the most attractive of all his operas.

Probably the really defining virtue of the new London set — although it may not seem so at first — is the conducting of Francesco Molinari-Pradelli. He is not hyperpuritanical in his treatment of the score, and though he can be extremely delicate and subtle he does not characteristically choose to be so. What he does accomplish is a reading that is full-blooded, firmly controlled, unflinchingly vital, and at the same time vocal. His treatment of the singers is an odd combination of holding



The Vienna Philharmonic Wind Group

them to the narrow line when he feels that it is important to do so and being willing to shape his beat to their needs when the score is going to pay off in terms of voices or not at all.

How this is accomplished is not, in any detail, of concern here. What is of concern is the fact that he gets from Mario del Monaco a performance in which the full splendor of a great voice is shaped into what is, by odds, artistically his finest sustained singing on records. Exciting though it is, it is not perfect; but in the justice and variety of the phrasing, as much as in the ringing tones, it is a kind of earnest of the artist Mr. Del Monaco may become. Besides singing of this caliber, that of Vasco Campagnano in the Cetra set seems, at its best, innocuous. Francesco Merli, in the Columbia-Entré set, is worthier competition, but the recorded sound is that of yesterday, or, more properly, of the 1930s.

The sheer loveliness of tone with which Renata Tebaldi sings the title role is such as to set her apart from competitors, even though her reading is not all that might be wished. The line of her singing is supple and the voice itself a marvelous instrument, especially in these spinning soft top tones. But a Puccini Manon, quite as surely as a Massenet Manon, needs to project some illusion of a girl who is, among other things, young, very pretty, and capricious — and these are qualities not to be found in Miss Tebaldi's vocal characterization. At her best (she has some rough moments as well), Clara Petrella in the Cetra set is more in line dramatically, though her voice is neither so lovely nor so exquisitely used.

As Lescaut, Mario Boriello gives an intelligent, decently sung, but rather dry-voiced performance, neither less good nor notably better than his Cetra counterpart, Saturno Meletti. One of the most distinguished performances on records of a part in this category is Fernando Corena's superb characterization as Geronte, Manon's wealthy, vindictive protector. Pier Luigi Latinucci, the Cetra Geronte, is also quite good — but not that good. The numerous and important smaller roles average out very well in both sets, although London has the edge, with Piero di Palma's fine Edmondo worth special mention.

The engineering is clear, clean, resonant, and consistent in perspective — altogether preferable to that of the Cetra version. All told, a very superior and satisfying set.

J. H., Jr.

PURCELL

Come Ye Sons of Art

Margaret Ritchie (s), Alfred Deller, John Whitworth (countertenors), Bruce Boyce

(b); Ruggero Gerlin, harpsichord; St. Anthony Singers and L'Ensemble Orchestral de L'Oiseau-Lyre, Anthony Lewis, cond. OISEAU-LYRE DL 53004. 10-in. \$2.98.

This joyous and graceful work, the last of six odes composed by Purcell to celebrate the birthday of Mary Stuart, wife of William III, is given a stunning performance by orchestra and vocalists under the brilliant leadership of Anthony Lewis. The orchestral playing is a pure joy, both in the introductory overture, where the sound is delightfully clean and crisp, and as it supports the singers. Balance between singers and orchestra is generally correct, though a more prominent placement of the harpsichord would have helped. Alfred Deller and John Whitworth manage the immensely difficult duet for countertenors (Purcell himself was a male alto) with extraordinary grace and vocal coloration. Beside them, the robust voice of the baritone, Bruce Boyce, seems almost overpowering. This is particularly noticeable in the solo "The day that a blessing gave," where the microphone is obviously far too close to the singer. Miss Ritchie, not always in top form, manages the difficult Purcell roudades and sequences well, but occasionally her tones are constricted and breathy. Yet despite these minor criticisms, this is altogether a lovely record; highly recommended.

J. F. I.

RACHMANINOFF

Romance and Scherzo from Quartet in G minor — See Grieg.

RAVEL

L'Enfant et les Sortilèges

Suzanne Danco (s), Geneviève Touraine (s), Adrienne Migliette (s), Flore Wend (ms), Marie Lise de Montmollin (ms), Hugues Cuenot (t), Pierre Mollet (b), Lucien Lovano (bs); The Motet Choir of Geneva and L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Ernest Ansermet, cond.

LONDON LL 1180. 12-in. \$4.98.

A strong case can be made for *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges* as Ravel's masterpiece, and an equally strong case can be made for it as the opera *par excellence* for home listening. Its libretto, by Colette, is compounded of *fantaisie*: an injured armchair, a ceaselessly chiming grandfather clock, wallpaper shepherds and shepherdesses, a princess from a fairy-tale book, two infatuated cats, a widowed dragonfly, and a dolorous caged squirrel figure among the *dramatis personae*. It has all the labyrinthine sense and nonsense of a dream, and it inspired Ravel to compose what is probably his most imaginative and certainly his most compassionate music. But it is an opera that should be heard and not seen. The Opéra-Comique tries to produce it in an appropriately fantastical vein. But nothing that occurs on stage can possibly match the images conjured up by the mind's eye as one listens, transported, to the music.

Since 1948 we have been able to savor this music in a recording made by Pathé-Marconi in Paris and issued here by Columbia (ML 4153). It was conducted by a musician of no great international repute, Ernest Bour, and performed by a cast of singers whose names will be recognized only by those who closely follow the French musical scene.

No matter. It is a great recording, one of the phonograph's treasurable and enduring achievements. Next to it, the new version under the direction of another and more celebrated Ernest seems pale and ineffectual.

Ansermet's interpretation is nothing if not precise; he crosses every *t*, dots every *i*, and makes the whole complex fabric of Ravel's orchestration as clear as glass. But somewhere in all that careful attention to the letter of the score, its spirit gets lost. This is a strict, desiccated reading of free, fairy-like music. Ansermet—that usually passionate Ravelian—seems continually to be tugging at the reins, holding the sentiment back, even in the gloriously luscious "Danse des Rainettes" in the garden scene. The singers, too, evince a matter-of-fact orientation to Ravel's fanciful score. They all sing prettily, but almost without exception they lack the identification with the music shown by their opposite numbers in the older Columbia recording.

Suzanne Danco, for all her immaculately produced tones, is unbelievable as a fairy princess; Martha Angelici, though a less finished vocalist, never leaves one in doubt—in the Columbia version—that she is a fragile and ethereal figure. And so on right through the cast. There is nothing in the new London recording to equal Yvon le Marc'hadour's meltingly phrased projection of the Grandfather Clock part, or Solange Michel's tear-stained evocation of a caged squirrel, or Claudine Verneuil's wide-eyed tenderness in the role of a nameless animal. Even Flore Wend, who of all the singers in the London recording comes closest to recreating the childlike aura of this opera, does not quite capture the repentant simplicity that Nadine Sautereau manages to achieve in the older recording.

Needless to say, the sound in London's version is rounder, fuller, and more clearly defined. But Ansermet, who has given us such magical recordings of *Daphnis* and *L'Heure Espagnole*, seems to have little rapport with the particular magic of *L'Enfant*, and all the hi-fi in the world can't make up for it. Better get the Columbia while it's still to be had. R. G.

RAVEL

Zigane—See Lalo.

ROSSINI

La Cenerentola

Alda Noni (s), Clorinda; Mariña de Gabarain (ms), Angelina (known as Cenerentola); Fernanda Cadoni (ms), Tisbe; Juan Oncina (t), Don Ramiro; Sesto Bruscantini (bs), Dandini; Ian Wallace (bs), Don Magnifico; Hervey Alan (bs), Alidoro. Glyndebourne Festival Orchestra and Chorus, Vittorio Gui, cond.

RCA VICTOR LHMV 600. Two 12-in. \$9.96.

First performed in Rome in 1817, the year after *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *La Cenerentola* (known otherwise as *Angelina* or just plain *Cinderella*) stands just about half-way in a chronological list of Rossini's compositions. It is one of the last, and in some ways the very best, of his operas in the true Italian *buffa* genre. After it, he turned more and more to serious and semi-serious subjects, and after 1823 shifted his attention to Paris and composed no more for the Italian stage.

La Cenerentola has had a spotty history of performance. For all its charm and bril-



Gioacchino Rossini

liance, it is one of those operas never in repertoire, always revived. The problem lies in proper casting of the title role, which is very special in its requirements. What it *should* have is a real bravura mezzo-soprano—not soprano—who can charm and win sympathy by gentle means all evening long and then step forward in true Cinderella style and astound everyone with coloratura fireworks that not only are extremely difficult but that fail in their effect if the singer allows them to sound like hard work. Like the glass slipper in the fairy tale, these specifications are easier to try on than to fit, so *La Cenerentola* is very likely to continue as a special work for singers with accomplishments that may have been commonplace in 1817 but that certainly are not so now. A *Cenerentola* that does not end in dazzlement misses the point.

As told in the opera, the story of Cinderella has added to it a variety of sophistications to take the place of magic in moving things along. She still has two mean-spirited stepsisters who bully her; she still marries the Prince (Ramiro) in the end. But instead of a wicked stepmother she has a foolish and avaricious, yet impoverished, stepfather (Magnifico). What remain of fairy-godmother duties are taken over by the court philosopher (Alidoro), and confusions enough for two acts are ensured by the insistence of the prince's valet (Dandini) that *he* is the prince and the prince his valet. It is all very fast, often witty, and wonderfully expert in the sorting and shuffling of characters and attitudes into situations that give Rossini something to make music about. The total effect is that of a juggling act with words and tunes as the score races and prattles and pontificates and bounces along.

The lurking dissatisfaction about the new HMV recording is rooted in doubt: that Marina de Gabarain really and truly deserves anything more than, say, a Viscount; and that if she does, should not Giuletta Simionato, of the abridged Cetra set, be awarded at least an emperor? Miss De Gabarain's voice is attractive, and her basic schooling exemplary. All through the early part of the opera, before her grand emergence, she is sweet and winning. But when the time comes for "Nacqui all'affanno" she does not have the sure authority of Miss Simionato; and in the rapid descending scales of "Non piu mesta"—which Miss Simionato clicks off with great élan—the best she manages is a sort of all-or-nothing blur.

The finest thing about the HMV-Glyndebourne set is the aristocratic leadership of Vittorio Gui, the beautifully transparent, unified, plastic ensemble he maintains, the style with which his cast approaches the score. The work (whatever was done at Glyndebourne in 1953) is not complete on the records—in spite of what the gold lettering on the album says—but there is a great deal more on these four sides than there is in the frankly abridged Cetra set. Most of the minor HMV cuts are in recitatives rather than (as is more common) in ensemble strettos. But Alidoro loses his little homiletic aria; *Magnifico* loses his long one at the start of Act II (which is in the Cetra); and Clorinda loses hers in the same act. There is always open season on Rossini so far as cuts are concerned, but it does seem a little thick to make a point of the completeness of a recording that dispenses with some forty-odd pages in the standard vocal score of an opera. And, too, RCA might have made matters easier for the text-conscious listener by going to the trouble of collating the very pretty libretto with the performance on the records.

As the stepsisters, Alda Noni and Fernanda Cadoni are excellent in all regards. And although Cesare Valletti, the Cetra Ramiro, does what he has to do a bit more crisply, Juan Oncina is more than acceptable. Sesto Bruscantini's Dandini is stylistically magnificent, if not always nice to hear, and, as *Magnifico*, the British bass Ian Wallace sings cleanly and with point, better, all in all, than Cristiano Dalamangas, whose voice was pretty far gone when the Cetra was recorded. The HMV sound is bright and sufficiently resonant, with everything close-to and clear, including recitatives sung so lightly that any stage illusion has to be related to a very small theater—which that at Glyndebourne is. Even if Miss De Gabarain is not a Supervia or a Simionato, the musical values here are too substantial to ignore. Recommended. J. H., Jr.

ROSSINI

Overtures to Il Barbiere di Siviglia and Tancredi

L'Orchestre Symphonique de la Radiodiffusion Belge, Franz André, cond.
TELEFUNKEN TM 68024. 10-in. \$2.98.

The overture to Rossini's *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* is so thoroughly familiar that another version of it would need to have really great distinction—which this has not—to draw much attention. That to *Tancredi*, less well known, is of the same general variety, and a good piece. However, anyone who hopes to find in it matter of special interest deriving from the fact that *Tancredi* was Rossini's first serious opera will be disappointed. The overture was composed, and used, a year earlier for an opera *buffa* called *La Pietra del Paragone*, and is quite as effervescent and non-specific as any other Rossini overture before *William Tell*. Performances: crisp and clean. Engineering: ditto. No great bargain quantitatively or qualitatively.

J. H. Jr.,

ROSSINI-RESPIGHI

La Boutique Fantasque

†Tchaikovsky: *Aurora's Wedding*

"Stratford Symphony Orchestra" (London Philharmonic Orch., Eugene Goossens and Efrem Kurtz, conds.).

CAMDEN CAL 211. 12-in. \$1.98.

Goossens and the prewar London Philharmonic offer sparkling and humorous performance of the Rossini trifles that Respighi orchestrated for the ballet *La Boutique Fantasque*. Bright Camden sound, a little weak in the bass, adds immeasurably to the effectiveness of this lively score. The old Victor album (DM 326) of the popular Tchaikovsky ballet conducted by Kurtz was notable for the rich texture of its recorded sound; its full-throated sonority seemed particularly appropriate to the composer's orchestration. In the transfer to LP most of this has been excised; the sound now is often disagreeable and emasculated. In some strange way, too, the LP seems to have lost the feel of an actual performance that was so noticeable in the 78-rpm version.

J. F. I.

SAINT-SAENS

Carnival of the Animals — See Britten.

SCHUBERT

Rosamunde Overtures: The Magic Harp; Alfonso and Estrella

Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Fritz Lehmann, cond.

DECCA DL 4094. 10-in. \$2.98.

The record is labeled "Overtures to *The Magic Harp* and *Rosamunde*." This confounds confusion, since the music we know as the *Rosamunde Overture* is *The Magic Harp Overture*. Schubert did not write an overture for Wilhelmina von Chezy's play *Rosamunde*. For performance with his incidental music he used first one and then the other of the two overtures recorded here, delightful music already composed for other stage works already dead. The performances are fair, a little portentous for this kind of sparkle, the *Magic Harp* curiously without climax. The sound is strong and satisfactory although rough, remarkably good in its range of volume, which was perhaps uppermost in the conducting mind.

C. G. B.

SCHUBERT

Symphony No. 5, in B flat

Symphony No. 8, in B minor ("Unfinished")

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Karl Böhm, cond.

LONDON LL 1105. 12-in. \$3.98.

This kind of record causes vexation because it comes so late. It is far too good to dismiss casually, but it has been preceded by other versions of both symphonies as good or better, none in this pairing. There is one absolute: sonically Prof. Böhm's is the best of the B flats, but two or three other conductors move more airily through its simple tunes. The *Unfinished* is grave, intent, and beautifully played by the orchestra, especially in the harmonic alignment. There are versions—generally of more forceful central drama—preferred by the prejudices of this department, but no record collection would be degraded by inclusion of this twenty-second edition.

C. G. B.

SCHUBERT

Symphony No. 9, in C

Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Wilhelm Furtwängler, cond.

DECCA DL 9746. 12-in. \$4.98.

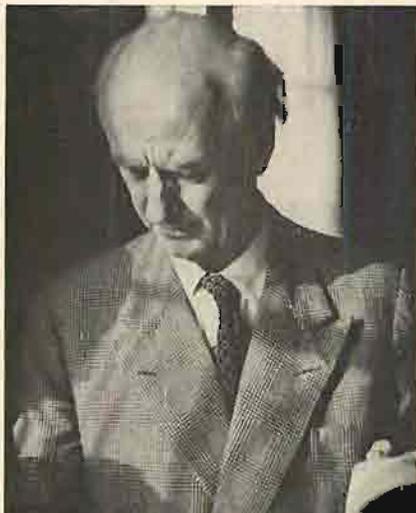
"Jewel Symphony Orchestra" (London Symphony Orch., Bruno Walter, cond.).

CAMDEN CAL 195. 12-in. \$1.98.

The Furtwängler edition is a redistribution of the three-sided version on DECCA DX 119, which seemed at its issuance one of the few vindications of the late conductor's habitual deliberation. It still does. This music's resilience can endure anything but hurry, and the pace slow without precedent here contributes to realization of the tenderness, resignation, and majesty of Schubert's culminating symphonic thought. The sound is soberly orchestral—good sweep and little brilliance—and the record as a whole has first place in this critic's esteem. Decca found it necessary to split the andante for technical causes, and an explanatory note to this effect printed on the jacket is commendable practice.

The work of the "Jewel Symphony Orchestra" on the inexpensive Camden record is persuasively lovely, but the re-created sound is bare of dynamic and hence dramatic contrast and will not do for music like this.

C. G. B.



HAUERT, PARIS

Furtwängler: a split andante is forgiven.

SCHUETZ

The Christmas Story

Gunthild Weber, soprano; Herbert Hess, tenor; Paul Gummer, bass; Kantorei der Dreikönigskirche, Frankfurt; Orchestra of the Collegium Musicum, Kurt Thomas, cond.

L'OISEAU-LYRE OL 50020. 12-in. \$4.98.

This tender and lovely oratorio, written when Schütz was close to eighty, became known in this country through Arthur Mendel's edition, published about five years ago, and through the recording he conducted, released by REB Editions about the same time. If not for that recording, the present one might have been more welcome. It has quieter surfaces, but in almost every other respect it seems to me inferior. The instrumentation is less authentic, the continuo (played here on a harpsichord) is too busy, and the treatment in general is plodding and unimaginative compared to the loving and understanding care lavished

on the Mendel performance. The important tenor solo part is sung here in a straightforward, prosaic manner, whereas in the older recording it was done in a way that faithfully reflected the shifting emotions of the text. The present disk has its good points—the Chorus of the Angels, for example, is nicely performed—but it is not, I think, in the same league with the other.

N. B.

SCHUMANN

Carnaval, Op. 9

†Chopin: *Sonata No. 2, in B-flat minor, Op. 35*

Alfred Cortot, piano.

RCA VICTOR LHMV 18. 12-in. \$4.98.

Presumably this "new orthophonic" disk was recorded recently by the now seventy-seven-year-old Alfred Cortot. Although the Swiss-born French pianist still concertizes on occasion, his technique has sadly deteriorated, and the first run-through of these performances is distressing, to say the least. However, once the ear gets accustomed to all the missed or missing notes, the listener can derive some benefit from the recording. Mr. Cortot belongs to the Romantic school of artists who tend to present what they think about a work rather than the work itself. Sometimes the results are edifying—some new facet of a piece being revealed through the insight of an imaginative performer. Here, the Chopin section of *Carnaval* and the Funeral March from the B-flat minor Sonata gain considerable emotional weight from Cortot's dramatic, rhetorical approach. But such treatment may strike some listeners as just tiresomely sentimental. To the student who can profit from observing Cortot's felicities in phrasing, legato, underlining of inner voices, and rhythmic license, this should be a valuable disk. The piano tone sounds almost too brilliant at times, but it is basically stunning in its vibrancy.

R. E.

SCHUMANN

Manfred Overture — See Gluck.

SCHUMANN

Symphony No. 4, in D minor — See Haydn

SERRANO

La Canción del Olvido

Pilar Lorengar (s), Manuel Ausensi (b), Carlos Munguía (t). Cantores de Madrid, Orquesta Sinfónica, Ataúlfo Argenta, cond.

LONDON INT'L TW 91026. 12-in. \$3.98.

The most popular work of a tremendously successful composer, its title is a misnomer: instead of "The Song of Forgetfulness" it should be called "The Song of Remembrance," for who, after a couple of listenings, can ever forget its haunting title song? Not that this is the only memorable item here—practically every number became a hit at its 1916 premiere. The vastly amusing story concerns itself—of course!—with getting hero and heroine married, except that here it is the girl who chases the boy, not the other way around. It is a pity indeed that listeners who know no Spanish will have to get by on the exceedingly sketchy notes supplied with the record, but apparently no one has yet

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building your record library

number twenty



ROBERT KOTLOWITZ SUGGESTS A BASIC LIBRARY OF THE MUSIC BETWEEN

I have no introductory remarks to make about the following suggested list for a basic "Music Between" library, except to say that the prime, and possibly the only, test in selecting the records was pleasurable listening. It was that simple.

The single best record in the Music Between category received for review in the past year was probably *I Love Paris* (Columbia CL 555). On it, Michel Legrand's orchestra plays a shrewdly selected medley of Parisian tunes in glittering arrangements. The melodies range from popular Folies Bergères hits of the Twenties to such well-known contemporary songs as "*La Vie en Rose*" and "*The Song of the Moulin Rouge*." It is a superlative recording from every point-of-view and, unlike many others of its kind, it will stand as many playings as your equipment will give it.

The Strausses, senior and junior, have been amply covered by the record companies (it may well be time, as a matter of fact, to call a halt, at least temporarily, to Strauss recordings), but nowhere quite so well as on "*New Year Concert, 1954*" (London LL 970), which Clemens Krauss made with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra shortly before his death. It's reproduction of the old Viennese custom of greeting the New Year with a concert of Strauss family waltzes and polkas, and I can't imagine the seven with which Krauss ushered in 1954 played with more warmth and less exaggeration.

Closer to home, Percy Faith and his suave instrumentalists have collaborated with Mitchell Miller and the English horn and oboe on a deftly produced record called *Music Until Midnight* (Columbia CL 551). Almost all the melodies are unfamiliar here, but a good many of them—including two or three by Alec Wilder, a man of bewitching musical ideas when he puts his mind to it—will probably remain with you for a long time after you hear the orchestra's plush treatments and Miller's beautiful phrasing on both wind instruments.

Ethel Merman and Mary Martin had a high old time when the Ford Motor Company put them to work to celebrate Ford's 50th anniversary on an elaborate television program last year. The duet that capped the event, consisting of dozens of the best-loved songs of the twentieth-century, and maybe even further back, has been recorded by Decca on DL 7027. It was obviously a hearty and joyous effort for everyone concerned, and even Miss Martin's unfortunate choice of material for the overside—a negligible item from *Lute Song* called "*Mountain High, Valley Low*" and "*I'll Walk Alone*"—cannot dissipate the feeling of exuberance and well-being that comes over the listener when Merman and Martin fling themselves headlong into their duet.

Rodgers and Hart have been gloriously served on *Walden 304*. Louise Carlyle and Bob Shaver, the two vocalists, do their work with great conviction, and the John Morris Trio, a superlative group that seems to know exactly the right thing to do at every moment, provides invaluable accompaniments. This is first-rate record-making, from the attractive packaging right through to the uncannily faithful

engineering, and its interest is further heightened by the many infrequently played R&H tunes it offers.

On a Heritage disk called *A Touch of Rome* (H 0053), Harold Rome plays and sings some of the memorable tunes he wrote for such musicals as *Pins and Needles*, *Call Me Mister*, and *Wish You Were Here*. Mr. Rome hasn't much of a voice (it gets pretty hoarse at moments), but he knows how to write nice songs and, just as important for recording purposes, knows how to sing them with style and affection.

The Errol Garner record that Columbia has issued with the straightforward title of *Errol Garner* (CL 535) probably belongs in John Wilson's "The Best of Jazz" territory, but while Mr. Wilson is not looking, it might not be a bad idea to appropriate it and offer it as one of the suggested ten basic items in a Music Between library. It contains six tunes—"Caravan," "Memories of You," "Avalon," "There Is No Greater Love," "Will You Still Be Mine?" and "Lullaby of Birdland"—is made up of lengthy improvisations plunked out in one of Columbia's studios, and of its kind is a powerhouse. The familiar driving quality of Garner's playing is tempered throughout by the extraordinary variations his resourceful musical mind creates and the melodies wind up with about the wittiest, most decorative treatments imaginable.

Three ladies take the last spots and each is worth her weight in gold. The first, Marlene Dietrich, has just made her most successful recording in a new album reviewed in these pages recently. It's called *Marlene Dietrich at the Café de Paris* (Columbia 5ML 4975) and a more remarkable tribute to Dietrich's invincible glamour is hard to envision. The album contains the complete proceedings of her opening-night appearance at London's Café de Paris last year, including a provocative photograph of her in the celebrated opaque-transparent gown she wore for the occasion. She sings most of the songs she's famous for as well as a few she's liable to find herself stuck with henceforth and the whole business is preceeded by an introduction written and spoken by Noel Coward.

On *Love Songs for a Late Evening* (Columbia 3ML 4722), Portia Nelson takes a well-aimed shot at several of our more ephemeral, as well as prominent, contemporary songs and walks off with high honors. Miss Nelson, who should be heard in public more often, has one of the coolest sopranos around, and she handles it with a fresh, probing intelligence. If you've never heard her, try this record; it's a treat.

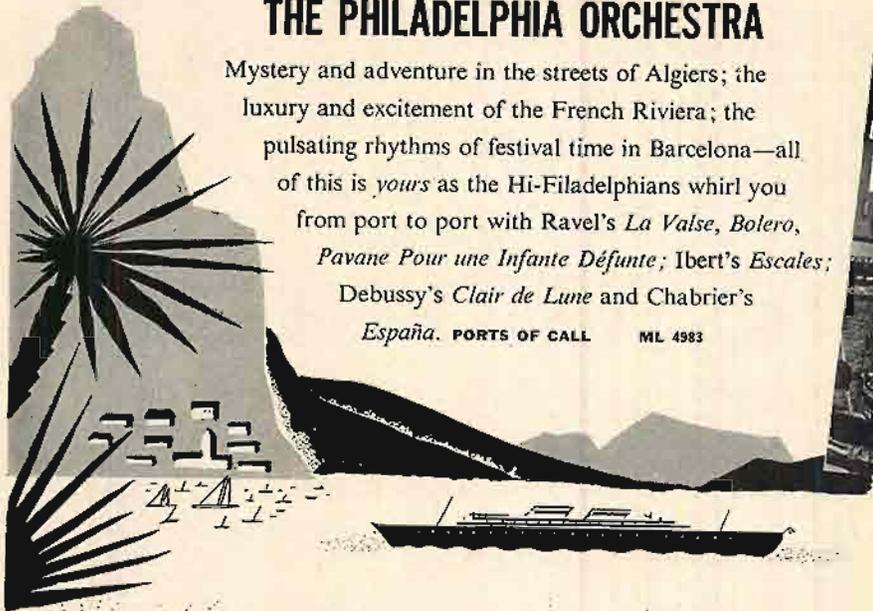
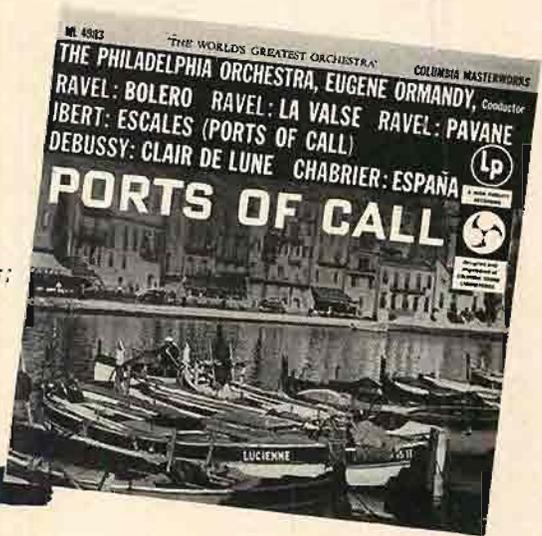
To top the list, I'd like to suggest *Piaf of Paris* (Angel 64015). Almost everything has been said about this singer: she is sentimental, sardonic, frequently bitter, almost always fatalistic. She's also the best torcher to be heard today and has the taste to tackle material that could conceivably interest adults. *Piaf of Paris* shows her in all her moods, including a highly inflammatory couple of minutes when she forgets love and sings instead about the promises of the French Revolution in the marching-song, "*Ca Ira*."

MEDITERRANEAN CRUISE

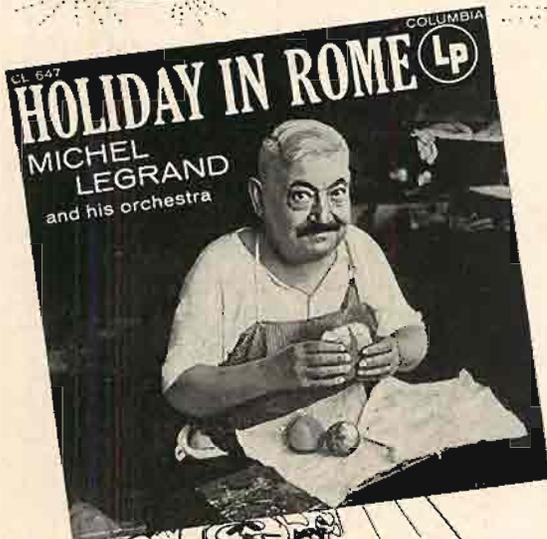
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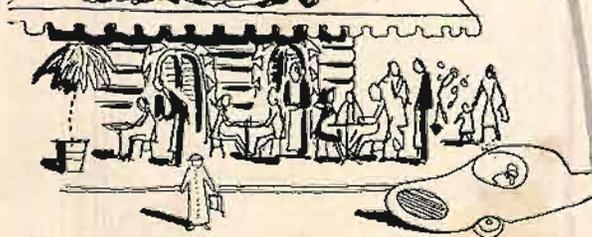
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Continued from page 57

bothered to translate a *zarzuela* libretto. The performance is fine, with the honors going to the superb baritone Manuel Ausensi. Pilar Lorengar does not boast of a voice with the dimensions and fundamental beauty of Lily Berchman's, the soprano in the Montilla recording, but neither does she spread her tones as Berchman does once in a while. The recording itself is silky smooth, fully up to the usual London standards. G. S., Jr.

SHOSTAKOVICH
The Fall of Berlin — Suite

State Radio Orchestra and Chorus of the USSR, Alexander Gauk, cond.

†Khachaturian: *The Battle for Stalin-grad* — Suite

State Radio Orchestra of the USSR, Aram Khachaturian, cond.

CLASSIC CE 3009. 12-in. \$5.95.

Both these suites are drawn from music written for Soviet propaganda films issued during World War II. As is usually the case with music of that kind, it all sounds very trite and empty when divorced from its context and its historic moment. The Shostakovich recording is passable, the Khachaturian quite poor. A. F.

SIBELIUS
Symphony No. 2, in D, Op. 43

Hallé Orchestra, Sir John Barbirolli, cond. RCA VICTOR LBC 1084. 12-in. \$2.98.

Last month RCA Victor issued a dreadful Sibelius Second by Stokowski and the NBC Symphony for \$3.98, and now here is an excellent version by Barbirolli from the same company for a dollar less. This may not be the greatest interpretation of the work on disks, but it is soundly conceived and amply dramatic, while the realistic sound, especially in the lower strings, makes it one of the very best recorded of all Sibelius Seconds. Definitely worth investigating, along with Koussevitzky (RCA Victor), Collins (London), and Ormandy (Columbia). P. A.

STAINER
The Crucifixion

Richard Crooks, tenor; Lawrence Tibbett, baritone; Wilfred Glenn and Frank Croxton, bass; Mark Andrews, organ; Trinity Choir. CAMDEN CAL 235. 12-in. \$1.98.

Most church musicians have had contact sooner or later with Sir John Stainer's oratorio *The Crucifixion*, and it is to them that this recording might conceivably appeal. A simple, tidily written example of English Victorian church music, composed in 1887 by a man who functioned exclusively in ecclesiastical and pedagogical posts, it has little value to the serious-minded listener. Being a reissue of a 78-rpm recording, it is sonically outdated: the organ sounds thin and wobbly and gets obscured by the singers; the choir seems small and dominated by male voices; there is little range in dynamics and considerable surface noise. The recording has one great virtue in its favor — the singing of Richard Crooks and Lawrence Tibbett, whose enunciation, phrasing, tonal beauty, and emotional sincerity are

worth the attention of every student of singing. For the record: many or all of the stanzas of the hymns in the oratorio are deleted; otherwise the work is presented complete. R. E.

STRAUSS
Burleske for Piano and Orchestra — See Mozart.

STRAUSS
Daphne; Elektra; Salome (excerpts)

Daphne: O bleib, geliebter Tag; Ich komme, grnende Brüder (Daphne). *Elektra*: Allein! Weh, ganz allein (Elektra). *Salome*: Ab! Du wolltest mich nicht deinen Mund küssen lassen through finale (Salome, Herodias, Herod).

Annalies Kupper (s), Daphne; Christel Goltz (s), Elektra and Salome; Hetty Plümacher (ms), Herodias; Wolfgang Windgassen (t), Herod; Munich Philharmonic Orchestra, Fritz Lehmann, cond. (*Daphne*); Bavarian State Orchestra, Georg Solti, cond. (*Elektra*); Württemberg State Orchestra of Stuttgart, Ferdinand Leitner, cond. (*Salome*). DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 18090 LPM. 12-in. \$8.50.

This disk of excerpts from operas by Richard Strauss has a special claim to attention because it provides the first easy opportunity to hear what the score of *Daphne* is like. First performed in 1938, in Dresden — in a double bill with *Friedenstag*, another Strauss opera yet to be heard here — *Daphne* is a myth told in music, to a text by Josef Gregor, but a myth made complexly allegorical and filled with the mystery of love. Daphne herself is loving, but her love is of the earth and the trees and blossoms. She cannot yield her identity with nature to the human love of her childhood playmate; and although she feels drawn to Apollo, who has taken human form to try to win her, she rejects him when she senses that his affection for her is not pure and brotherly. The suitors quarrel, and the god kills the boy. Then, full of remorse for having interfered with the lives of mortals, he asks that Zeus give Daphne to him — not as a girl, but made immortal as a laurel tree.

The excerpts sung here by Annalies Kup-



Igor Stravinsky

per are Daphne's long opening monologue of ecstasy at being close to the trees and flowers she loves so much, and the final scene, in which her voice floats forth in joy at her release from human form into a state in which she can love all living things, without fear, without disillusion, unendingly. Once past the unsettling idea of an operatic heroine who turns into a bird sanctuary, it is not in the least surprising that Daphne's music is exceedingly lovely. After all, her need for an identity, for a certain special ability to love and be loved, is not so different from the need of, say, Ariadne, or of Arabella, and her music is, in its own graceful, unsensual, outgoing way, expressive of the same things. Miss Kupper's singing is fresh and vital, with more gleam to the tone than is characteristic of her on recordings released here.

The other side is less compelling of interest only because the music and the singer are more familiar. There are two complete *Salome* sets with Christel Goltz in the title role, and although her performance here is very fine it calls for no new comment. Her *Elektra* monologue has been released here already by Decca. The German recording is technically quite good, all in all, the only notable flaw being a falling-off in quality in the last few measures on the *Daphne* side. The packaging is a flexible, booklet-type envelope with a plastic facing in the record slot. Texts and notes in German. Because of the *Daphne* excerpts, in particular, recommended. J. H., Jr.

STRAUSS
Ein Heldenleben

"Warwick Symphony Orchestra" (Philadelphia Orch., Eugene Ormandy, cond.). CAMDEN CAL 194. 12-in. \$1.98.

This Camden is not to be received with condescension. When it first appeared, on ten 78-rpm sides for ten dollars, it was this critic's opinion that the ten sides contained highly competent conducting, dazzling playing in the orchestra, and spectacular registration. There is no reason to change that opinion, even in the matter of spectacularity; for the bristling brass and snarling woodwinds are an undulant wall of retained complex timbre, the dynamic range is excellent, and although we know that there was some original restriction of high frequencies, the ear cannot swear to it. Bass articulation is more incisive on the best LPs but is not badly blunted here. The most successful of recorded *Heldenlebens* is also an RCA product — Dr. Reiner's on LM 1807 — and music-lovers who are coy to the price of that one will not suffer at having this one at less than half. C. G. B.

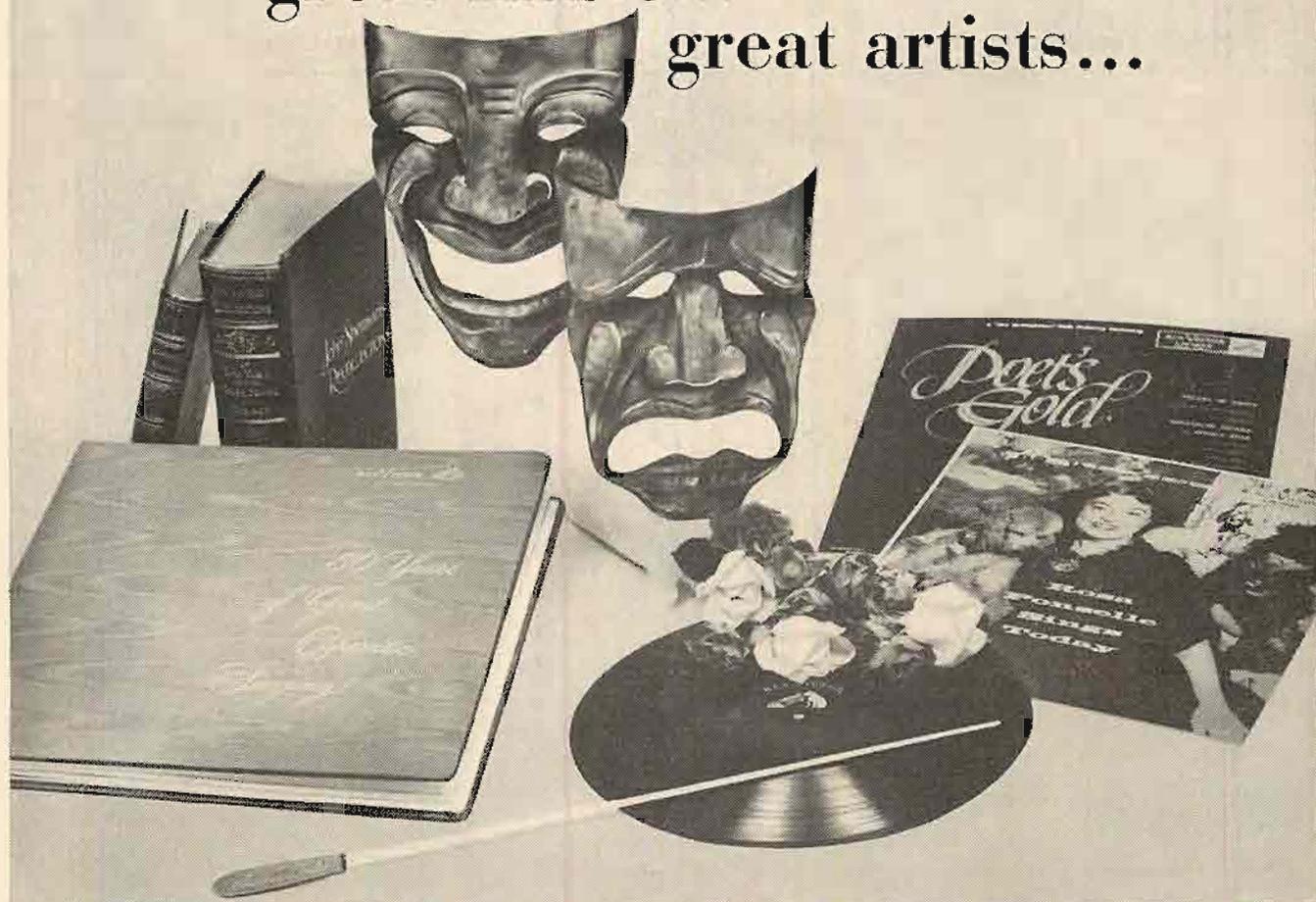
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Fritz Weaver, John Harkins, Frederic Wariner, speakers; instrumental ensemble, Emanuel Vardi, cond. VOX PL 8990. 12-in. \$3.98.

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Records are made with the treble range boosted to mask surface noise, and the bass range reduced in volume to conserve groove space and reduce distortion. When the records are played, therefore, treble must be

reduced and bass increased to restore the original balance. Control positions on equalizers are identified in different ways, but equivalent markings are listed at the top of each column in the table below. This table covers most of the records sold in America during the past few years, with the emphasis on LP. Some older LPs and 78s

required 800-cycle turnover; some foreign 78s are recorded with 300-cycle turnover and zero or 5-db treble boost. One-knob equalizers should be set for proper turnover, and the treble tone control used for further correction if required. In all cases, the proper settings of controls are those that sound best.

RECORD LABEL	TURNOVER			ROLLOFF AT 10KC.	
	400	500	500 (MOD.)	10.5-13.5 db	16 eb
	AES (old)	RIAA RCA ORTHO NAB NARTB AES (new)	LP COL ORIG. LP LON	AES NARTB RCA ORTHO RIAA LON	NAB(old) COL LP ORIG. LP
Allied		●		●	
Angel		●		●	
Atlantic* ¹		●			●
Amer. Rec. Soc.*		●		●	
Bartok		●			●
Blue Note Jazz*	●			●	
Boston*			●		●
Caedmon		●		●	
Canyon*	●			●	
Capitol*	●			●	
Capitol-Cetra	●			●	
Cetra-Soria			●		●
Colosseum*			●		●
Columbia*			●		●
Concert Hall*	●			●	
Contemporary*	●			●	
Cook (SOOT) ¹		●		●	
Decca*	●		●		●
EMS*	●			●	
Elektra		●			●
Epic*			●		●
Esoteric		●		●	
Folkways (most)		●			●
Good-Time Jazz*	●			●	
Haydn Soc.*			●		●
L'Oiseau-Lyre*			●	●	
London*			●	●	
Lyrichord, new* ²		●			●
Mercury*	●			●	
MGM		●		●	
Oceanic*		●			●
Pacific Jazz		●		●	
Philharmonia*	●			●	
Polymusic* ¹		●			●
RCA Victor		●		●	
Remington*		●			●
Riverside		●		●	
Romany		●		●	
Savoy		●		●	
Tempo		●		●	
Urania, most*		●			●
Urania, some	●			●	
Vanguard*			●		●
Bach Guild*			●		●
Vox*			●		●
Walden		●		●	
Westminster		●			●

*Beginning sometime in 1954, records made from new masters require RIAA equalization for both bass and treble.

¹Binaural records produced on this label are recorded to NARTB standards on the outside band. On the inside band, NARTB is used for low frequencies but the treble is recorded flat without pre-emphasis.

²Some older releases used the old Columbia curve, others old AES.

Continued from page 60

The Vox is the first complete recording of the *Histoire* with its spoken text in English translation. The Columbia is the first LP of the suite (i. e., the music minus the text) to be directed by the composer. Both records have decided virtues, and any devotee of Stravinsky will want the two of them.

The acid doggerel of the libretto by C. F. Ramuz is presented on the Vox recording in a new, extremely good version by Sidney Tillim, and it is beautifully read. Vardi's interpretation is excellent, more varied in tempos and sonority than Stravinsky's own, and the recording is quite good. Here, for the first time, the English-speaking record public can obtain a full, complete, authoritative, and highly entertaining idea of this bitter masterly fable.

As the writer of this review has observed before in these columns, Stravinsky's tempos are always faster than anybody else's, and in the new LP of the *Histoire* they are even more nervous and lickety-split than they were in his famous 78s of the same music. This, of course, adds an extra sharpness and irony, borne out by the hairline perfection of Columbia's recording.

The complete *Histoire* fills two sides, the suite only one; the difference is in the talk. On the reverse of his disk, Stravinsky provides his own first LP of the octet for wind instruments and the first recording ever released of the *Symphonies of Wind Instruments*. The octet, which dates from 1922-3, is one of Stravinsky's first "classical" pieces, and he plays it here with special emphasis on its clarity, lightness, and melody. The *Symphonies of (not for) Wind Instruments* is a study in pungent harmonies and austere colorful instrumental effects originally written in 1920 in tribute to the memory of Debussy; it is recorded, however, in a revised version of 1947.

The Stravinsky recordings of the *Histoire* and the *Octet* were made in New York with ensembles organized for the occasion; the *Symphonies* were done with members of the North German Radio Orchestra of Cologne. A. F.

SUPPE

Overtures: Light Cavalry; The Beautiful Galatea

Orchestre Symphonique de la Radiodiffusion Nationale Belge, Franz André, cond.
TELEFUNKEN TM 68018. 10-in. \$2.98.

The performance of the *Light Cavalry* Overture suggests that nothing will stop the hero and his band from rescuing the damsel in distress, but that they will take their time doing it. In other words, unostentatious, rhythmically solid performances, cleanly played, of two engaging, popular light-opera overtures. Excellent sound. R. E.

SZYMANOWSKI

Sonata for Violin and Piano in D minor

— See Franck.

TAVARES

Concerto in Brazilian Forms for Piano and Orchestra

†Paderewski: *Fantaisie Polonaise for Piano and Orchestra*

Felicja Blumenthal, piano; London Symphony Orchestra, Anatole Fistoulari, cond. LONDON LL 1104. 12-in. \$3.98.

Flashy, obvious, musically worthless stuff, well played and recorded. A. F.

TCHAIKOVSKY

Aurora's Wedding — See Rossini-Respighi.

TCHAIKOVSKY

Sonata in G, Op. 37; Romance in F minor, Op. 5; Nocturne and Humoresque, Op. 10; Souvenir de Haspel, Op. 2

Nadia Reisenberg, piano. WESTMINSTER WL 5330. 12-in. \$5.95.

Miss Reisenberg performs the astonishing feat of investing the faded familiarities of Op. 5 and Op. 10, as well as the final movement of Op. 2 ("Chant sans paroles"), with considerable freshness, thanks to the musical taste and integrity of her performance. The sonata poses a bigger problem; and though her performance is in every way most commendable, she is no more successful in bringing it to life than most pianists. The obstacles here are the work's lack of unity and warmth, plus the composer's determination to extract from the piano a larger array of colors than the instrument can produce. Well-realized piano tone, though lacking the brilliance of some Westminster issues.

J. F. I.

VERDI

Un Ballo in Maschera (excerpts)

Prelude; *Alla vita che t'arride* (Renato); *Re dell' abisso* and *E lui! E lui!* (Ulrica); Act II from *Ecco l'orrido campo* and *Ma dall' arido stela divina* through duets and *Abimè! S'appressa alcum* trio (Amelia, Riccardo, Renato); *Morrò, ma prima in grazia* (Amelia); *Alzati!* and *Eri tu* (Renato); *Forse la soglia* and *Ma se m'è forza perdeti* (Riccardo); *Saper vorreste* (Oscar).

Zinka Milanov (s), Amelia; Roberta Peters (s), Oscar; Marian Anderson (c), Ulrica; Jan Peerce (t), Riccardo; Leonard Warren (b), Renato; Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, Dimitri Mitropoulos, cond.

RCA VICTOR LM 1911. 12-in. \$3.98.

Un Ballo in Maschera (excerpts, in German)

La rivedrò nell' estasi (Riccardo); *Teco io sto!* (Amelia, Riccardo); *Di se tu fedele* (Riccardo); *Morrò, ma prima in grazia* (Amelia); *Non è su lei* and *Eri tu* (Renato); *Si, rivederti, Amelia* (Riccardo); *Ab! perchè qui* (Amelia, Riccardo, Renato).

Carla Martinis (s), Amelia; Helge Roswaenge (t), Riccardo; Théo Baylé (b), Renato; Orchestra and chorus of the Vienna Volksoper, Wilhelm Loibner, cond.

LONDON LS 861. 10-in. \$2.98.

On January 7, 1955, when the curtain rose on the second scene of the Metropolitan

Opera revival of Verdi's *Un Ballo in Maschera*, the great American contralto Marian Anderson, making her debut as the sorceress Ulrica, realized an ambition cherished in humility for a lifetime, and, incidentally, became the first Negro ever to sing with the company. The ovation she received was overwhelming, and deeply moving. Seldom can public honor have been so completely merited, personally and artistically; seldom can it have been accepted with such grace and simplicity.

This recording (the first official use by RCA Victor of Metropolitan resources since the agreement terminating the exclusive contract between the opera company and



Masked Ball session: Victor's Richard Mabr, Mitropoulos, Marian Anderson

Columbia Records) was made within hours after the great occasion, and, whatever its absolute artistic merit, its status as a document is beyond dispute.

However, the mirror it holds up to history is, if anything, a little too clear. Although no one could question Miss Anderson's sentimental—almost moral—right to become the first Metropolitan singer of her race, no one who knew her singing during its finest years could help feeling a pang of very personal sadness that recognition had been delayed until she was no longer able to do anything like full justice to either herself or the music. The great, dark, rich voice that had more than filled auditoriums larger than the Metropolitan was no more than a shadow of what it had been—the extreme low notes weak, the extreme top notes badly strained and without much force, the middle voice hollow-sounding and unsteady. Only on a few *forte* tones of not-too-long duration in the upper middle part of her once encompassing range did she sound at all secure and impressive. She did not, as she has done increasingly in recent years, fall consistently below pitch, but that is rather negative praise for a singer who at her peak was really a great one.

Hearing her was at once tremendously exciting and quite painful, and this recording captures the quality of her performance precisely. It is hard to know whether to be glad for the historical sense that prompted RCA to preserve it or to be sad at the thought that in years to come someone may hear it without appreciation for the context and speak of Miss Anderson's singing without proper respect for her as one of the great artists of her time, without realization of what tremendous things she *might* have accomplished in opera—as Ulrica, as Erda, and so on—had she been able to come to it fifteen or twenty years earlier.

Apart from Miss Anderson, the main facet of interest is, I think, the revelation—partial though it is—of Dimitri Mitropoulos as a non-Strauss opera conductor. In the opera house, his *Ballo* was breathtaking for its rare combination of orchestral brilliance (pure and Verdian—not symphonized) and emphatic flexibility in conducting for the singers. A good deal of this comes through in the recording, though excerpts can give no real sense of the overall plan, and though some of the tempos (notably the very speedy *allegro* in "Saper vorreste") are not characteristically those he took at the Metropolitan.

Jan Peerce is in reliable voice, and is more at ease than in the broadcast set conducted by Arturo Toscanini; in fact, a comparison of the two Peerce performances is quite instructive in several ways. Zinka Milanov, in good form relative to herself day in and day out, if not in form quite so good relative to her RCA Victor self, sings very well much of the time, most notably (as at the Metropolitan) in a marvelously fine-spun "Morrò, ma prima in grazia"; but Leonard Warren sounds to be in far from top condition, especially in the Act II trio. Roberta Peters sings very charmingly in her brief song as Oscar. As a brief of the score, this disk is of limited use; but as a memento of *Ballo* as it has been done this season at the Metropolitan—aside from some odd internal pruning and the absence of the chorus—even its faults are in its favor as a document.

The London ten-incher has even less claim to representative status so far as the score as a whole is concerned, for the prunings are even odder, and the excerpts from Acts I and II have been shuffled into an order that is as unreasonable as it is nonconsecutive. The most distinguished singing—and some of the best tenor style in any *Ballo* recording at all, even if it is in German—is done by Helge Roswaenge, still a very striking artist at sixty-three, and actually in better vocal condition than in some of his wartime recordings. Both Carla (who used to be called Dragica) Martinis and Théo Baylé have sung in New York at the City Center—she as a rather wild soprano with a fine voice, he as a pretty ordinary baritone. Neither has changed very much. Wilhelm Loibner's conducting makes perfectly good sense, and the reproduction is good. The other disk of *Ballo* excerpts—taken from a full-length Renaissance set, covers more of the score. However, it seems just as well to admit that I had forgotten, in giving the complete set a relatively clean bill of health last month, just how much of the singing is downright bad, how much of the style so abysmally uninformed as to be misleading.

JAMES HINTON, JR.

WAGNER

Tristan und Isolde; Götterdämmerung (orchestral excerpts)

†*Tristan und Isolde: Prelude and Liebestod. Götterdämmerung: Dawn, Farewell, and Siegfried's Rhine Journey; Funeral Music.*

L'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris, Carl Schuricht, cond.

LONDON LL 1074. 12-in. \$3.98.

As purely orchestral excerpts and syntheses from Wagner music-dramas go, these

are musically very reputable, and the performances are painstaking and eloquent rather than merely virtuosic, with the crisp French winds and brasses making for clean lines and well-modeled contours. J. H., Jr.

WALTON

Portsmouth Point; Siesta; Scapino; The Wise Virgins

London Philharmonic Orchestra, Sir Adrian Boult, cond.

LONDON LL 1165. 12-in. \$3.98.

Portsmouth Point and *Scapino* are comedy overtures, extremely brilliant in orchestration, extremely vivacious in rhythm, and very strong in harmonic texture; *Portsmouth Point*, in addition, is full of delightful, folklike tunes. *Siesta*, as its title suggests, is a slightly satiric slow piece, vaguely Spanish in character. Played on one side of a record, as they are here, the three pieces make up a kind of symphony and a most exhilarating one, especially since Sir Adrian understands the music to perfection and the recording is superb.

The Wise Virgins, on the other side, is a suite of six Bach arrangements put together for a Sadler's Wells ballet. They are done with a light, sensitive, erudite hand and effect the transfer from the original media without any perceptible violence. All in all, this record makes an exceptionally eloquent case for Sir William Walton. A. F.

WEBER

Symphony No. 1, in C major—See Bruckner.

The Choice of Destinies Becomes More Complicated

TO MANY PEOPLE *La Forza del Destino* occupies a unique place in the Verdi canon, as a work that seems in many ways the very quintessence of his art. However—apart from general agreement on the richness and long-lined beauty of its melodies—there is a good deal of contention among lovers of *Forza* over just what its values are. Completed in 1862, three years after *Un Ballo in Maschera*, and revised in 1869, two years after *Don Carlo*, it is one of the group of later Verdi works that were—so to speak—discovered by German men of learning. That is to say, it has qualities that were decided to be musicologically and spiritually respectable enough to merit the attention of serious musicians. Thus there is a school of thought that finds the work of real significance mainly in the religious music of the second and last acts. The less exalted musics of the scenes at the inn, in the military camp, and on the battlefield, not to mention the scene in which the beggars are fed in the monastery courtyard, are regarded as mere trivialities, best dealt with by cutting as much as possible of them and enduring what has to be left as patiently as possible while waiting for the final scene and the great soprano prayer.

The principal reason for mentioning this is that the current Metropolitan production is of the exalted variety, and a good many listeners to the Saturday broadcasts may very well have come to the conclusion that the defining spirit of *Forza* is one of beautiful gloom at slow tempos. This is far from being the case when the work is presented in true balance. Although it would be reaching too far to place its alternation of the serious and elevated with the earthiness of the muleteers, gypsies, local officials, and scroungy friars who are its minor figures on quite the plane of more purposeful alternation in Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov*, the effect is not unlike. Leaving out of the question the sober consideration that Fra Melitone is one of the most interesting genre figures in opera at all, a good chorus and a spirited Preziosilla, with something left to sing, can change the whole effect of the opera. The least anyone can do is give them a chance.

The Angel version is not uncut, but most of the cuts are internal and not seriously damaging. Only the opening Act IV scene for Melitone, and his duet with the Padre, which fills in some definite gaps in the telling of the story, seem losses that really ought to have been avoided somehow or other. Of the rival *Forza* recordings, the Urania—wide-range, if not what demand-



Tullio Serafin and Richard Tucker

ing listeners would call hi-fi—is quite complete enough to be worth mention for that reason. However, aside from the emotional vitality of Adriana Guerrini's spotty vocalism and the all-round excellence of Fernando Corena, its good points do not outline a performance that is shapely or consistent enough to compete. The Cetra version, a transfer from 78s, presents about two-thirds of the score. Quite well recorded, considering its period—which can be delimited at the near end by the fact that its conductor, Gino Marinuzzi, died in 1945—it is cut and spliced with excellent judgment. And the performance is still the high standard by which the newest set has to be evaluated.

In general, the Angel cast looks better on paper than it turns out to be by ear, with the conducting of Tullio Serafin the only element of consistent great distinction. The tragic role of Leonora is one in which Maria Callas would almost certainly be effective, if perhaps not traditionally so, in the opera house. But there is no begging the fact that her first two acts as recorded here are sung in terms of a microphone rather than a stage. Her phrasing is characteristically shapely, and her tone—forgiving some cloudy sounds in the middle voice and some bad flickers on soft notes around the top of the staff—is free and poised. Purity is not dramatic urgency, though, and her delivery has more delicacy than impact. Maria Caniglia, in the Cetra set, sometimes drives her voice hard in dealing with the music more conventionally, but she makes the right effects and makes them emphatically. However, Miss Callas' "Pace, pace"—her whole last act, in fact—is more in scale and is as exquisitely phrased as anything she has recorded.

As Alvaro, Richard Tucker sounds a little

tired after a long Metropolitan season (the sessions were held in the summer of 1954), but his tone has as much point as Francesco Merli's and far more richness, and his singing, if not model in style, is strong and effective. The Carlo of both sets is Carlo Tagliabue, as sound and steady an artist as anyone in either cast. But the years have told heavily, and it is not a happy thing to hear cautious attacks and hollow tones from a voice that used to bang out F sharps above the staff as reliably as if they were an octave lower. He warms up somewhat as the performance moves along, but not enough to make the blending of his voice with Mr. Tucker's in "Solemn in quest' ora" anything to remember with pleasure, however artistic the intentions.

As the Padre Guardiano, Nicola Rossi-Lemeni manages to sound less on the verge of disaster than he does in the *Norma* set, but never forces the issue by singing at much more than two-thirds of full power. Everything is very close-to, very careful, and extremely dry in sound. When the Cetra set was made, Tancredi Pasero was nearing the end of a long career, but the vocal—and artistic—advantage is all his. It is interesting to hear Elena Nicolai (the excellent London Santuzza) in the bravura music of Preziosilla, but the part lies high for her, and although she proves herself technically, the sound is heavy and mature in the middle range and strained at the top, quite lacking in the virtuosic abandon of Ebe Stignani's dashing Cetra performance. Not by trade a buffo singer, Renato Capecchi actually does sing Melitone in Italy, and his querulous but undistorted performance is both individual and extremely interesting. The Angel sound is generally well balanced, if inconsistent in perspective and perhaps too frank about some of the voices. All told, the set is worth owning because of Mr. Serafin, and the singers in it are too good in their various ways for it to ever be dull. But there is still room for a better *Forza* than this. JAMES HINTON, JR.

VERDI: *La Forza del Destino*

Maria Callas (s), Leonora; Elena Nicolai (ms), Preziosilla; Rina Cavallari (ms), Curra; Richard Tucker (t), Alvaro; Gino del Signore (t), Trabuco; Carlo Tagliabue (b), Carlo; Renato Capecchi (b), Fra Melitone; Nicola Rossi-Lemeni (bs), Padre Guardiano; Plinio Clabassi (bs), Marchese di Calatrava; Dario Caselli (bs), Alcade and Surgeon. Orchestra and Chorus of the Teatro alla Scala (Milan), Tullio Serafin, cond.

ANGEL 3531. Three 12-in. \$17.85.

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RECITALS AND MISCELLANY

AMERICAN BIRD SONGS, VOL. I

Recorded and Edited by P. P. Kellogg and A. A. Allen of the Laboratory of Ornithology, Cornell University.
CORNELL UNIVERSITY RECORDS. 12-in. \$7.75.

Enlarged and immeasurably improved in aural similitude over its 78-rpm predecessor of 1942, the second edition of *American Bird Songs* contains the calls or songs or outcries of forty-seven songbirds common in the northeast and thirteen birds man kills for sport, besides the background remarks of twenty-eight other kinds. Presumably Volume I will be followed by at least one other, for some very familiar fellows are not featured and should be: towhee, kingbird, cedar waxwing (a lispng counter-tenor), the cuckoos, crow, bluejay, tree sparrow, most of the owls, vireos, and warblers. And the noises of two abominable interlopers turned gangster ought to be given as warning: *passer domesticus*, that so-called English sparrow without virtue in his new home, and the common starling so sagacious and ruthless to his betters.

Most of the sounds have been clearly caught and are clearly characteristic (birds are capable of vocal variations). It could not have been easy to capture them, for birds are more capricious even than tenors, and will not co-operate for money. Patience and discomfort were the part of Professors Allen and Kellogg in the seizure of impressions that may induce some of us to respect the other animals who share earth, air, and water with us. The chickadee, the fox sparrow, and the Baltimore oriole are better citizens than most of us, not having to lie for status although they must fight for freedom. It is good to hear them clearly, and this record permits that even when we cannot see them. C. G. B.

THE ART OF THE ORGAN

Purcell: Fanfare in C major. Sweelinck: Toccata in A minor; Variations on *Mein junges Leben hat ein End*; Balletto del *Granduca*; Variations on *Unter der Linden grüne*. Pachelbel: Toccata in D minor; Variations from the partita *Was Gott tut, das ist wohlgetan*; Chorale Prelude *Vom Himmel hoch, da komm' ich her*; Toccata in C major; Toccata in E minor; Chorale Prelude *Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern*. Buxtehude: Prelude and Fugue in F major; Prelude, Fugue, and Chaconne in C major; Partita *Auf meinen lieben Gott*; Prelude and Fugue in F major; Prelude and Fugue in G minor; Chorale Preludes *Erschienen ist der herrliche Tag* and *Lobt Gott, Ihr Christen*; Fugue in C major (Gigue); Chaconne in D minor. Bach: Toccata in D minor.

E. Power Biggs, organ.
COLUMBIA SL 219. Two 12-in. \$11.90.

E. Power Biggs's article in the March issue of HIGH FIDELITY supplied most of the background for this album, with a description of his twelve-week recital tour of Europe early in 1954, during which he re-

corded works of five composers on twenty organs in England, Germany, Holland, and the Scandinavian countries. Columbia has served up the results very handsomely, with a booklet repeating the basic data of Mr. Biggs's article, additional comments by Edward Tatnall Canby, and many photographs of organs, churches, and Mr. Biggs. One of the record jackets lists the specifications of the organs played.

Features of the recording as pointed out by Mr. Biggs can now be sampled, and they are really there—the sound of the tracker action, the untempered tuning of the Frederiksborg Castle organ, the sound of the abbey bells at Amorbach, etc. It is to be hoped that this highly personal approach of the recording, with all the accompanying anecdotes and pictures, will attract listeners to what is really to be heard here—to the music, the performances, the instruments, all of which are superb. For Mr. Biggs is trying to make an important—and, to me, valid—point, that baroque music is heard in its true colors and glory only on the kind of instruments for which it was written. Some of these instruments remain unchanged, and they set the standards for others that have been rebuilt or for new ones.

The organs heard on these disks represent many eras, from as early as 1612, through organs dated 1730, 1882, and 1929, to 1954, but they represent only one structural principle, the production of an unforced, articulate tone, which makes the polyphonic music of the baroque style sound forth with complete clarity. This quality persists remarkably throughout the recordings, whether in the mellow sonorities of the Leufsta Bruk organ in Sweden, the dark ones of the St. Jacobskerk organ in The Hague, the tremendously massive ones of the cathedral organ in Trondheim, Norway.

Realizing that Bach's music is well represented on records, Mr. Biggs wisely devoted most of these disks to the works of Sweelinck, Buxtehude, and Pachelbel, all outstanding figures in the pre-Bach era. The Dutch Sweelinck (1562-1621) paved the way for organ chorales with his variations on sacred and secular tunes, and the listener should find those on *Unter der Linden grüne* particularly ingratiating. The German Pachelbel (1653-1706) went in for virtuoso displays on the manuals over a held pedal note, as illustrated in his brilliant Toccata in D minor. His Chorale Prelude *Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern*, delicately registered by Mr. Biggs, is truly enchanting. A Swedish-born contemporary of Pachelbel, Buxtehude set musical standards at his post at Lübeck that served as an inspiration for Bach. A more imaginative composer than Pachelbel, Buxtehude is revealed at his best in the fine variations on *Auf meinen lieben Gott*.

The mechanical aspect of the recording is particularly memorable. One hears the organs in their proper setting and perspective, with all the force and dazzle of cumulative resonance and yet with the utmost limpidity at all times. One need only compare Mr. Biggs's recordings at Sorø and Lübeck with the quite good ones by Finn Viderø and Helmut Walcha in order to realize the extraordinary engineering achievements involved. The recordings truly capture a sensation so well described

in words by Mr. Biggs: "When the music is over, the echoes seem to recede down the centuries." An invaluable recording. R. E.

MARIA CALLAS SINGS

Wagner: *Tristan und Isolde: Liebestod* (in Italian). Bellini: *I Puritani: Qui la voce* and *Vien, diletto*. Verdi: *La Traviata: E strano* through finale to Act. I; *Addio del passato*. Ponchielli: *La Gioconda: Suicidio!*

Maria Callas, soprano; Symphony Orchestra of Radio Italiana, Turin, Gabriele Santini and Antonio Votto, conds.; Symphony Orchestra of Radiotelevisione Italiana, Turin, Arturo Basile, cond.

CETRA A 50175. 12-in. \$4.98.

The excerpts presented here fall into two categories—those (from *La Traviata* and *La Gioconda*) taken from full-length sets in the Cetra catalogue and those recorded separately. The *Gioconda*—from the first Callas recording released here—contains some of her foggiest, but also most dramatically compelling, singing. The first-act *scena* from *Traviata* presents the singer at less than her most distinguished, and the "Addio del passato" (in spite of what the label indicates) has been shorn of its opening *mélodrame*—probably the best thing that Miss Callas does in the whole performance. The *Puritani* aria and cabaletta, recorded—it seems fair to guess from phrasings—before Miss Callas' association with Tullio Serafin in the complete Angel set, is quite brilliantly sung and may tempt those who do not want or cannot afford the whole opera. The *Liebestod* in Italian is more a curiosity than anything else, though the performance is always intense and meaningful—a worthy companion to Cloe Elmo's performance, also in Italian, of Brangäne's *Einsam wachend*. J. H., Jr.

CORRIDA!

Marches and Pasodobles

Spanish Air Force Military Band; Madrid Bullfight Band; Manuel G. de Arriba, cond.
DECCA DL 9764. 12-in. \$3.98.

During the last year or two we have been flooded with *zarzuelas* and *cante flamenco*. Strangely enough, the *pasodoble* has been sadly neglected, although it is perhaps the most widely popular form of music in Spain and one that may appeal to Americans. This rousing recording, brilliant and exciting, is hereby welcomed with open arms, for both the *pasodobles* and the marches on the other side. Incidentally, if you are curious—"corrida" means bullfight and "pasodoble" means two-step.

G. S., Jr.

GUITAR MUSIC OF SPAIN

Albéniz: *Leyenda, Oriental, Sevilla*; Falla: *El Cienlo Mágico, Canción del Fuego Fatuo*; Segovia: *Anecdote 2, Neblina*; Tárroba: *Serenata Burslesca*; Sor: *Estudio XII*; Tárrega: *Recuerdos de la Alhambra, Capricho Árabe*; Turina: *Garroín, Soleares*.

Laurindo Almeida, guitar.

CAPITOL P 8295. 12-in. \$3.98.

It is always a pleasure to see new records devoted to the guitar, an instrument capable of an infinite tonal variety, yet somehow,

usually neglected and often considered not quite respectable. The present disk is a welcome addition, for Almeida is good and the recording flawless. Some may object to a few of the transcriptions, particularly the *Amor Brujo* selections, which sound downright peculiar transcribed to the guitar, but this is a minor matter when one considers the record as a whole. G. S., Jr.

NAN MERRIMAN

Spanish Songs

Falla: Seven Spanish Popular Songs: *El Paño Moruno*; *Seguidilla Murciana*; *Asturiana*; *Jota*; *Nana*; *Canción*; *Polo*. Mompou: *Combat del Somni*; *Damunt de tu Només les Flors*; *Aquesta Nit un Mateix Vent*; *Jo et Presentia com la Mar*. Pittaluga: *Romance de Solita*. Montsalvatge: *Canciones Negras*; *Cancion de Cuna para Dormir a un Negrito*; *Canto Negro*. Turina: *Farruca*; *La Giralda*. Obradors: *Corazón Porque Pasais*; *El Maja Celoso*; *Con Amores, la Mi Madre*; *Dos Cantares Populares*; *El Vito*.

Nan Merriman, mezzo-soprano; Gerald Moore, piano.

ANGEL 35208. 12-in. \$4.98.

Apart from Falla's *Seven Spanish Popular Songs*, which are now to be heard fairly frequently, most of the literature presented on this disk is less than familiar to listeners in this country. In fact, Spanish songs in general seem to occupy a special place, not quite in the usual North American recital repertoire, but not quite outside it either. This equivocal status is rather a pity, for the Spanish song tradition has produced much very lovely music and still continues vital—the first two Mompou songs, for instance, date only from 1942 and 1946. The reason for this relative neglect must be partly, even largely, linguistic, for when singers of Spanish antecedents—Lucrezia Bori before her retirement and Victoria de los Angeles now—do offer them, audiences seem almost always to react with delight.

Nan Merriman, one of the few American singers enterprising enough to investigate very seriously the rich literature of recent and contemporary Spanish art songs, has assembled here a generous program, varied enough in style to be consistently interesting. Without having a voice that is of great intrinsic beauty, on the one hand, and without having the chesty abandon of singers to whom *flamenco* cadences are a natural expressive means, on the other hand, she sings as an intelligent and tasteful musician rather than as an interpreter with born-in convictions. As a result, her performances gain in neatness and shapeliness what they lose in spontaneity and fire. Her singing may be on the literal side for admirers of (say) Conchita Supervia to accept it readily, but it is very well planned and its rewards increase on rehearing. Gerald Moore's accompaniments are genteel too, unexceptionably so. Engineering: clean and close, with plenty of surrounding resonance to place the sound in perspective. Texts and admirable notes by Walter Starke in an accompanying booklet. J. H., Jr.

MONTOYA: INTIMATE FLAMENCO

Carlos Montoya, guitar.

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PHOTOGRAPH BY PAUL SENN

The music world has hailed Pablo Casals as the greatest living musician; and a fortunate few of his admirers have made the journey to the tiny French town of Prades to hear him play and conduct his favorite works. In order that the genius of Casals may be heard by thousands more and for a thousand years to come, Columbia has recorded in France the miracle of his performance. These precious records are a tribute to his genius. Pablo Casals has chosen to record *exclusively* for Columbia Masterworks Records.

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COOK/SOOT 1029. 10-in. \$4.00.

That Carlos Montoya is indeed a master of the *flamenco* has been proved time and time again, but if any doubts remain this record will surely dispel them. Nothing else need be said, except that the selections have been chosen so as to provide the greatest variety possible and that the recording is excellent. G. S., Jr.

MUSIC APPRECIATION FOR THE HOME

An analysis with music of Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker* Suite and Schubert's *Unfinished* Symphony.

Written by Fred Grunfeld; narrated by Arlene Francis. Orchestra not specified.

CAMDEN CAL 256. 12-in. \$1.98.

Camden aims to catch the attention of the musical neophyte from seven to seventy, to judge by the disparate approach to the two musical scores analyzed on this record. While the Tchaikovsky is surrounded, quite appropriately, with a fairy-story feeling, the Schubert is more adult in outlook and more informative as to the substance of theme, development, etc., of the symphony. The Schubert also uses music more extensively; the snatches from *The Nutcracker* are far too short to give much idea of the beauty of the score.

Miss Francis has a pleasant and persuasive manner and relates the commentary, written by Fred Grunfeld, with a good deal of conviction. The recorded sound of the musical examples is decidedly thin and not always tonally steady. J. F. I.

OPERA INTERMEZZI

Intermezzos, preludes, etc., from: Mascagni: *Cavalleria Rusticana*; L'Amico Fritz. Leoncavallo: *Pagliacci*. Offenbach: *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*. Kodály: *Háry János*. Puccini: *Manon Lescaut*. Bizet: *Carmen* (Act IV). Massenet: *Thaïs*. Mussorgsky: *Khovanchina*. Granados: *Goyescas*. Verdi: *La Traviata* (Act III).

Philharmonia Orchestra, Herbert von Karajan, cond.
ANGEL 35207. 12-in. \$4.98.

Good (occasionally very), indifferent, and pretty bad — valued as pure music — the items in this apparently quite random selection have two things in common. First, all have proven to be at least serviceable as mood-inducing or mood-sustaining interludes designed to prime audiences for the scenes they precede and/or as distractions from the sounds of onstage carpentry. Second, all are rendered at least thirty-three per cent meaningless by being ripped out of their theatrical context. The Philharmonia plays splendidly (with its French-horn virtuoso, Dennis Brain, returning to his earliest musical interest, the organ, for the *Cavalleria* excerpt), and is finely reproduced by EMI; but even Herbert von Karajan's strongly individual readings, even Philip Hope-Wallace's excellent jacket notes, cannot make these bits of operatic mesentery seem independently functional. J. H., Jr.

PAGANINI VARIATIONS

Schumann: *Studies for Piano after Caprices by Paganini*, Op. 3. Liszt; Paga-



Würher. Paganini started the whole thing.

nini Etude No. 6, in A minor. Brahms: *Variations on a Theme by Paganini*, Op. 35, Books I & II.

Friedrich Würher, piano.
VOX PL 8850. 12-in. \$5.95.

The Caprices, Op. 1, which Paganini wrote in 1801 at the age of nineteen, have been the springboard for compositions by Schumann, Liszt, Brahms, Busoni, Rachmaninoff, Tommasini, Boris Blacher, and probably others I do not know of. The set was published in 1820 and first came to the attention of Schumann and Liszt about a decade later. Schumann published two sets of transcriptions (six each) of the Caprices in 1833 (Op. 3) and 1835 (Op. 10). Liszt finished his first paraphrases of five Caprices in 1838, which together with the famous *La Campanella* (based on a theme from Paganini's B minor Concerto) made up the six so-called *Paganini* Etudes. They proved so difficult, however, that Liszt published simplified, revised versions in 1851, which are what are usually heard today. Caprice No. 24, not used in Schumann's Op. 3 but which is the basis for Liszt's sixth étude, is also the basis for Brahms's variations (as well as Rachmaninoff's Rhapsody and Blacher's *Paganiniana*).

Schumann and Liszt sought to extend the tonal and technical possibilities in piano writing by adapting some of Paganini's violinistic devices to the piano, and both succeeded in doing so in their respective ways. Schumann's versions are more literal, yet paradoxically less Paganinian in spirit. The more virtuosic they are, the duller they become; the more lyric, the more interesting. No. 3 is quietly characteristic of the composer and quite lovely. Liszt's adaptations, particularly in the 1851 edition, are much freer, but they retain the streak of *diablerie* present in the original. They are splashy, effective, and imaginative. Brahms, of course, went off on his own, writing variations considerably more substantial musically, just as difficult technically, but no more effective than Liszt's étude. It is an arguable point to this day whether Brahms's score, ingenious and occasionally beautiful as it is, is worth the strain it puts on the performer.

Friedrich Würher plays with solid musicianship and admirable technique, and his performances have a massive power without being heavy-handed. But why

didn't he record Schumann's Opus 10 as well as Opus 3? This would have been far more welcome than yet another version of the Liszt or Brahms. Excellent tonal reproduction, a little on the echoey side. R. E.

PLAIN AND FANCY

Music by Albert Hague; lyrics by Arnold B. Horwitt. Original cast recording featuring Richard Derr, Barbara Cook, Shirl Conway, Gloria Marlowe, Nancy Andrews, David Daniels, and others; orchestra and chorus under the direction of Franz Allers. CAPITOL S 603. 12-in. \$5.95.

There should be good material for a musical comedy in the unusual mores of the Amish, a sect of Mennonites who live in the Lancaster region of Pennsylvania. Their simplicity, unworldliness, and objection to many of the accepted fundamentals of modern American life, even the peculiarities of their speech, make them an intriguing part of the American scene. *Plain and Fancy* attempts to contrast their way of life with that of two sophisticated New Yorkers suddenly thrust in their midst.

It may well be that the physical production of this show is — as some New York critics declare — a delight to the eye, but what comes off this original cast recording is no pleasure to the ear. Albert Hague has contributed a score of intolerable banality and derivativeness to which Arnold B. Horwitt has fitted some of the dreariest lyrics written since Harry B. Smith was in his hey day. Work as the singers do, and in some cases it almost amounts to hard labor, they cannot rise above such mediocre material. They are no worse, vocally, than most singers found in today's musical shows; they merely sound that way, thanks to the miserable songs they must contend with. The recorded sound is of little help, being piercingly sharp and tiring on the ears. Isn't it time for a revival of *Okla-boma!*? J. F. I.

PRELUDIOS E INTERMEDIOS No. 1

Works by Giménez, Chapí, Granados, Luna, and Bretón. Orquesta de Cámara de Madrid, Ataúlfo Argenta, cond.

LONDON INT'L TW 91020. 12-in. \$3.98.

This record, like several Decca disks reviewed in the March issue, contains a number of orchestral excerpts from several *zarzuelas*. The music is bright, colorful, interesting. The recording is superb. After several attempts, I have given up trying to decide which is superior, London or Decca — both are superb; you make the choice. G. S., Jr.

SHOSTAKOVICH

Ballet Suite No. 1

KABALEVSKY

The Comedians

PROKOFIEV

The Love for Three Oranges — Suite

BORODIN

Prince Igor; Dances

Berlin Symphony Orchestra, Adolf Fritz Guhl, Arthur Rother, Karl Rucht, conds.

URANIA URLP 7146. 12-in. \$3.98.

The Shostakovich is an absolutely enchanting piece, straight out of the French ballet and musical comedy of the 1870s, full of whistleable tunes and solos for piccolo and xylophone, and totally devoid of any nonsense about modern harmonization. Something of the same sort is to be said about the Kabalevsky, but its forms are more extended and its texture more elegant. The famous Prokofiev suite, often recorded before, is a prodigiously vehement and dramatic affair, chosen — except for its famous march — from the highlights of conflict in an opera which is essentially a comedy. The Borodin dances call for no comment. Recordings and performances are workmanlike. A. F.

SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE MASTERS OF THE HARPSICHORD

Pedro Antonio Avondano: Sonatas in D major and G major. Davide Perez: Sonata in D major. Sebastian Albéro: Sonatas in G minor and D minor. Jozé Joaquin dos Santos: Sonata in A major. Francisco Xavier Bachixa: Sonata in D major. Joáo Cordeiro da Silva: Sonata in B-flat major.

†Alessandro Scarlatti: *Tocatta No. 7 in D minor*.

Ruggero Gerlin, harpsichord.

L'OISEAU-LYRE OL 50032. 12-in. \$4.98.

Ruggero Gerlin explores virtually unknown territory with this recording of Spanish and Portuguese works. Some, perhaps all, of the sonatas were recorded from manuscript, and there is virtually no data available regarding three of the composers. Their music stresses the continuity of artistic endeavor: the writing of keyboard sonatas by composers on the Iberian peninsula did not cease with the death of Domenico Scarlatti. The examples here may not indicate a comparable genius among their composers, but they are creditable achievements, sometimes more than that; and some suggest contact with such outside influences as Haydn.

In general, these one-movement sonatas follow the pattern set by Scarlatti, perhaps a little cruder in devising transitions. The most striking work is that in G minor by Albéro, tragic in mood, with strangely dissonant harmonies and unusual chord progressions, possibly stemming from Spanish guitar effects. The sonatas of Bachixa and Silva carry faint glimmerings of classic sonata form, together with a Haydnesque style of melody and bass writing.

The second part of Alessandro Scarlatti's *Tocatta* is a set of twenty-nine variations on *La Folia*, the Spanish dance that has served as a theme for so many composers, most notably Corelli. They constitute Scarlatti's most famous keyboard work — he was best known as an opera composer — and well they might, for they are engagingly varied rhythmically and melodically. Elsewhere in the *Tocatta* there is a stirring passage over a long-sustained pedal point, adding a dramatic touch to a well-made work. Mr. Gerlin's rhythms are not very steady — and this is not just a matter of rubato — but he uses tasteful registrations, and he is certainly to be commended for searching out and presenting this material.

The banding of the Scarlatti *Tocatta* (five bands for a three-section work) is mildly confusing. The harpsichord sound is vigorous and clean. R. E.

CESARE VALLETTI Famous Tenor Arias

Donizetti: *Lucia di Lammermoor*: *Tu che a dio spiegasti l'ali*; *Tombe degli avi miei*. Mozart: *Don Giovanni*: *Il mio tesoro*; *Dalla sua pace*. Massenet: *Werther*: *Pourquoi me réveiller*; *O nature, plein de grace*. Manon: *Le Réve*; *Ab! fuyez, douce image*.

Cesare Valletti, tenor; Orchestra Lirica Cetra, Arturo Basile, cond.

CETRA A 50176. 12-in. \$4.98.

The aria performances on this disk, unlike the Donizetti assortment on Cetra A 50154, are not snippings from full-length opera sets. Rather, they were done separately, apparently all in one lot and fairly recently, and (it seems safe to surmise) under studio conditions in Turin. The results are such that the listener familiar with Cesare Valletti's work — both in the opera house and on records — can hardly keep from feeling ambivalent about them.

On the one hand, Mr. Valletti, who is young and still developing artistically, does here some of his most stylish singing on records, and the Cetra engineers, without a whole cast to worry about, have given him the benefit of their undistracted attention. However, by the same token the engineers would seem to have been rather more solicitous of Mr. Valletti than strict in doing their duty to aural truth, for the voice that is cut into the grooves, though usually somehow relatable to Valletti's, often carries with it the clear implication of more power and greater weight than his has in real opera-house life. It might be argued, speciously, that this is the way Mr. Valletti would actually sound under certain acoustical circumstances. This may be so, but the circumstances are not those of any opera house known, contemplated, or even imaginable. All this may be aside from the point in a record review, but it does give pause to consider that a vocal enthusiast twenty years from now would have a very tough time equating the perspective given by this record with contemporaneous accounts of Valletti's singing. In fact, he might find it impossible. So what is all this high-fidelity stuff about, anyway?

However, electronically magnified or no, Mr. Valletti is a very musicianly, intelligent singer, and his performances here reflect this too. No Edmond Clément or Georges Thill, or Charles Hackett — or Richard Crooks — for French style, he is a much better vocalist than most of his French contemporaries and a far more tasteful, flexible, refined stylist than most of his current Italian rivals in the Massenet repertoire. His singing of "*Le Réve*" is very good in all regards without being overwhelmingly lovely in any lacking, as it does, the final grace of style and the final beauty of tone. In the opera house, his Saint Sulpice scene ("*Ab! fuyez*," etc.) is harrowing, for tenors with half again as much voice as he have broken themselves on the climaxes, and the sense of impending disaster is more than can be borne enjoyably, but on records there is only a certain tightness at the top to indicate that this is not the Des Grieux of the ages. The *Werther*

excerpts go better, with not much more than the standard driving and straining in the climaxes of "*Pourquoi me réveiller*."

On the reverse, the Capitol purveyors of Cetra products have achieved the prodigy of getting the arias from both *Don Giovanni* and *Lucia di Lammermoor* in reverse chronological order — which, since the *Lucia* excerpts are actually parts of one long *scena*, comes very close to nonsense. Taking it at a smart tempo, Valletti sings a very tidy "*Il mio tesoro*," only one breath over par (as he does in the opera house), and also sings a quite smooth "*Dalla sua pace*" (something he achieves only about one time out of every three at the Metropolitan). Reversed, upside down, or any other way, Edgardo's last-act *scena* from *Lucia* is not for a voice as light as Valletti's; and though he does the recitative very well, neither he nor the engineers can make the climaxes in either half sound impressive. There is no chorus, no Raimondo, and the tempo at which Arturo Basile whips through their most extended comment makes poor Donizetti's music sound downright idiotic. No texts. Notes that are commonplace and occasionally misleading. J. H., Jr.

LES 24 VIOLONS DU ROY

String Orchestra of l'Anthologie Sonore, Félix Raugel, cond.

L'ANTHOLOGIE SONORE (Haydn Society) AS 36. 12-in. \$5.95.

"The King's 24 Violins" was the name of a court orchestra apparently fixed in its complement under Henri IV. The instruments were viols of the various sizes and registers then used. The twenty-four pieces presented here were part of their repertory of *bransles*, *gavottes*, *courantes*, *allemandes*, *sarabandes*, *bourrées*, etc. The record is No. 1 of Volume VIII of *l'Anthologie Sonore*, and like its predecessors shows a scholarly understanding of style on the part of the participating players. String instruments of the modern orchestra have been used, and the sense of style noted is more advanced than the sense of unity or a knack for dulcet tone. Good articulation is not a feature of the sound, and strong treble control must be exercised to make the violins tractable. C. G. B.

FOLK MUSIC

by Howard Lafay

NOVA SCOTIA FOLK MUSIC FROM CAPE BRETON

Collected by Diane Hamilton

ELEKTRA EKL 23. 10-in. \$3.50.

The 79th Farewell to Gibraltar; *My Ain House*; *The Sailor's Love Song*; *Lullaby*; *Soldier's Joy*; *Marquis of Huntley*; *Mrs. MacLeod of Ramsay*; *Shean Truibbas*; *Mr. Frog Went A-Courtin'*; *Oh, Birdie Tell*; *Two Milling Songs*; *Haste to the Wedding*; *Speed the Plough*; *Soldier's Joy* (dance); *My Young Maid*; *In the Glen Where I Was Young*; *Psalm 121*.

Diane Hamilton is a youthful amateur both at collecting and recording folk songs, but her collection of folk music from Nova Scotia bears a professional stamp. Not only has she done an excellent technical job of taping the material, but her handling of it communicates "the rare joy of hearing and knowing the beauty of a people's music." She has managed to catch all the craggy tenderness of Cape Breton's rugged Gaels.

Anyone familiar with Alan Lomax's magnificent volume on Scotland in the Columbia World Library of Folk and Primitive Music will be intrigued by the North American mutations of the same music contained in Miss Hamilton's collection.

Elektra's sound is of the best. In addition to copious notes, a 15-page illustrated booklet accompanies the record.

THE MUSIC BETWEEN

By Robert Kotlowitz

ANGEL IN THE ABSINTHE HOUSE *Songs in the Indoor Manner by La Vergne*

One Scotch, One Bourbon, One Beer; Lover Man; Hurry on Down to My House; Blues in the Night; Straighten Up and Fly Right; One for the Road; I Like That Kind of Carryin' On; Moonlight in Vermont; That Old Black Magic; Hey There; You'd Better Go Now.

COOK/SOOT 1081. 10-in. \$4.00.

La Vergne, whose last name is plain old Smith, has been singing at The Absinthe House in New Orleans for quite some time. "For her," the jacket notes tell us, "the sophisticated style is just a metaphor, a foil for the fanlight façade of The Absinthe

House." Happily, her singing is a good deal less surrealistic than the above description of it, which derives straight from the contemporary school of jet-propelled record annotations. La Vergne has an extremely light, breathy voice, and she uses it with a sure knowledge of its limitations. At times you will be reminded of at least a half-dozen other singers, including Rose Murphy and Pearl Bailey, to cite two extremes, but La Vergne manages enough individual tricks to keep you from caring too much. Cook has recorded her singing and rather elementary accompaniments (which she plays herself) with extraordinary respect. R. K.

A JIM CAMERON DANCE PARTY

Grand March; Circassian Circle; Scottish Waltz; Cumberland Reel; 2nd Gay Gordons; Waltz Country Dance; Canadian Barn Dance; The Dashing White Sergeant.

LONDON LB 1071. 10-in. \$2.98.

The Saga of Shinbone Alley

DON MARQUIS was born in Walnut, Illinois in 1878. He died in 1937. During his varied career he was a poet, humorist, playwright, novelist, short story writer, and journalist. In addition he preceded these roles with the traditional irrelevant literary apprenticeship, working in assorted lowly capacities at a clothing firm, a slaughterhouse, a drug store, a bank, a sewing-machine company, a railroad, a traveling stock company, and the Census Bureau. Dogged all of his life by tragedy (the death of a son, of his first wife, of a daughter, and of his second wife) it is not surprising that his writing often had tragic themes — nor is it surprising that he often flirted with the bottle (Marquis is remembered as walking into a bar one day after a month on the wagon and proclaiming: "I've conquered that god-damn will power of mine. Gimme a double scotch!").

Despite his aspirations as a tragic poet and playwright, Marquis was most famous as a humorist. His one successful play, *The Old Soak*, was a comedy and his most durable characters are essentially humorous creations: Hermione and her little group of serious thinkers; Archy the cockroach; Mehitabel the cat.

Archy and Mehitabel grew out of the daily column, "The Sun Dial," which Marquis wrote for the *New York Sun* from 1912 to 1920. One afternoon in 1916, after referring to a story about a Dobbs Ferry rat which was supposed to slip out of his lair at night and write unfinished stories on a typewriter in a garage, Marquis said that he would like to report something that happened to his own typewriter a couple of weeks before: "We came into our room earlier than usual in the morning and discovered a gigantic cockroach jumping about upon the keys . . . He would climb painfully upon the framework of the machine and cast himself with all his force upon a key, head downward, and his weight and the impact of the blow were sufficient to operate the machine, one slow letter after another. He could not

work the capital letters . . . Congratulating ourselves that we had left a sheet of paper in the machine the night before . . . we made an examination and this is what we found:

*expression is the need of my soul
i was once a vers libre bard
but i died and my soul
went into the body of a cockroach
it has given me a new outlook upon life
i see things from the under side now . . .
there is a cat here called
mehitabel i wish you would have
removed she nearly ate me
the other night why don't she
catch rats that is what she is supposed
to be for
there is a rat here she should get without
delay."*

Archy's underside philosophy and Mehitabel's open defiance of morals helped make Marquis famous. The story of their lives and times eventually grew long enough to fill a 477 page book, and from this story Joe Darion and George Kleinsinger have

created a modest little musical comedy written especially for records. It is imaginative and entertaining and everyone involved in the production is to be congratulated. David Wayne maintains the proper atmosphere throughout his narration, and Carol Channing (sounding very much like Lorelei Lee) is a well-chosen Mehitabel. She delivers an uncanny cat-like screech at one point, when Archy makes Mehitabel save her illegitimate kittens, which she was letting drown in a rain barrel. (Mehitabel's eventual reaction: "That cockroach may be on the nosy side but he's a brainy little fellow at that.")

Eddie Bracken's performance as Archy is perhaps the weakest, primarily because of his difficulties with some of the songs. The songs themselves are not all good, but the best ones — which I shall call (they have no titles) "They Haven't Got It Here;" "Dance Mehitabel Dance;" and the "Flea Song" — give the record the flavor of a high-grade musical comedy.

But above the music can be heard the poetry of a perennially unhappy poet whose heart, in his own words, followed all his days something he could not name. His creation, Archy the cockroach, poet, philosopher, and observer of life, generally made wise observations. But few of Marquis's readers would agree with Archy when, diving head first at the keys of a typewriter, he wrote to his boss:

*no insects like human beings
and if you think you can see why
the only reason i tolerate you is because
you seem less human to me than most of
them.*

ROY H. HOOPES, JR.



GEORGE HERRIMAN, COPYRIGHT DOUBLEDAY & CO.

Archy and Mehitabel

ARCHY AND MEHITABEL

Narrated by David Wayne, with Eddie Bracken and Carol Channing. Words by Joe Darion; Music by George Kleinsinger; based on stories and vignettes by Don Marquis.

COLUMBIA ML 4963. 12-in. \$3.98.

This is folk dance material with a strong Scottish accent. If you enjoy our own collective barn dance fun, you should certainly have a good time with this disk. London has provided explicit directions on the way to dance each tune and the quality of the sound is up to usual "firr" standards. R. K.

THE MOST INTIMATE

Ill Wind; Stormy Weather; Let's Fall in Love; I Cover the Waterfront; You're Mine, You; Out of Nowhere.

Charlie Shavers, trumpet; Sy Oliver, conducting.

BETHLEHEM BCP 1021. 10-in. \$3.85.

The high spot of this Harold Arlen-Johnny Green medley is Shavers' playing of Arlen's rarely heard lament, *Ill Wind*. Shavers serves it up without exaggerations, phrasing with delicacy and intelligence, leaving it unadulterated by too much decoration. He handles the other tunes almost as well—particularly *I Cover the Waterfront*—and generally keeps the sentimental values carefully reined. Sy Oliver's strings, which accompany him all the way through, unfortunately turn out to be an intrusion. Bethlehem has recorded Shavers' trumpet cleanly. The annotations supplied on the jacket are more notable for unintentional humor than information. R. K.

VERY VERY DRY

Orchid Room; Sophistication Waltz; Melody Fair; Wellington Barracks; Vogue; Honey Child; For You, Madame; Looking Around; Seventh Heaven; Blue Velvet; Starry Night; Spring Cruise.

Queen's Hall Light Orchestra.
DECCA DL 8087. 12-in. \$3.98.

This is the latest recording in Decca's Cocktail Music for Your Listening Pleasure series and it consists of simple, unfamiliar tunes aimed straight at a target labeled "comfortable listening." Most of them hit the mark with little trouble. They are helped on their way by the orchestra's deft, untroubled playing and Decca's ably balanced sound. R. K.

THE SPOKEN WORD

by Roy H. Hoopes, Jr.

AN EVENING WITH ALISTAIR COOKE

Alistair Cooke, piano.
COLUMBIA ML 4970. 12-in. \$3.98.

Just when we Americans, uncomfortable as we are in our specializations, were beginning to feel that we had seen all the many sides of Alistair Cooke, along comes this record to announce that Mr. Cooke *also* sings and plays the piano (and, to make it worse, he had to draw a caricature of himself for the record jacket).

Alistair Cooke, a U. S. correspondent for the *Manchester Guardian*, is probably our most sensitive and sympathetic observer since James Bryce and Alexis de Tocqueville. He is also an author (*Generation on Trial; One Man's America*); radio commentator (BBC "Talks From America");

and television master of ceremonies (on the Ford "Omnibus" program).

This record would probably be described by his countrymen as "perfectly charming"—and charming it is. As the jacket suggests, it is simply an evening with Alistair Cooke; a collection of songs—some well-known, some not so well-known and some composed by Mr. Cooke (another talent, song writing!)—played and occasionally sung by our Briton of many parts just as if he were entertaining at a party—at which he is obviously well practiced. Most charming of all is a chorus singing the Madrigal from *The Mikado* in four-part harmony *all parts* sung by Mr. Cooke. This does not mean that he has four heads or that he is really four people thereby explaining his many talents. It does mean that in addition to everything else, he knows how to operate a tape recorder like Les Paul, hence to create four-Cooke-harmony.

As long as he sticks with his Gilbert and Sullivan, Cooke turns in a very creditable—and charming—performance. But when he decides to try "Basin Street Blues"—well, these British chaps can't do everything you know.

HERE'S MORGAN

Henry Morgan

RIVERSIDE RLP 8003. 10-in. \$5.95.

"This record," says Henry Morgan, "is made in the original, non-tricky, no-dials-to-adjust Lo-Fi," which is exactly what Morgan fans expect from rebel Morgan. However, the producers of Riverside Records couldn't resist the demands of the market place, and crossed Morgan up by labelling the record jacket "Hi-Fi."

Lo-Fi or Hi-Fi, it doesn't make much difference. When Morgan is funny, he's very, very funny and when he's not—well, few comedians can be as unfunny as Morgan when he's off, and the Fi of the record wouldn't help him any. Fortunately, in most of the satires and monologues in this collection Morgan is in fine form, with the prize probably going to Googie Morgan.

Googie, you will remember, is Morgan's British radio announcer. In this skit we're at Tinkey Boo Stadium where Googie is describing a baseball game between the Blue Stockings of Hunting-on-Thames and the White Jerseys of Jersey. After announcing that the first service of the pitcher is adjudged a strike, there is a sharp crack of the bat, followed by a roar of the crowd—all of which reminds Googie of a hunting expedition in Tanganyika with Sir Hubert Foss Whitelip. From then on, despite the tantalizing roars of the crowd, Googie interrupts his reminiscing only long enough to offer such comments as "uh, there's a good one" and "particularly interesting play that—Fathersham at short threw to Eversham at second who, whirling smartly, threw to Frothingham at first. Fathersham to Eversham to Frothingham, leaving nothing to chance."

In addition to Googie, there is Little Riding Hood Rouge ("Gor Juzz!"); The Russian Concert Commentator (who informs us that when Korsakov met Rimsky he was part owner of the Bolshoi Theater. In those days you could at least part-own something; today nobody owns everything); and Dr. Heinrich von Morgan ("after

reading my book, *How to Know More than a Stupid Little Kid*, if your child is still smarter than you let him watch the television, it'll stupid him up good.") Last but not least there's Morgan as Morgan telling us about such things as advertising ("When they talk about King size, which King do they mean?) and the Invention of Time (to which Einstein added the concept of relativity, but to this day nobody knows how he makes a living out of it).

There are a few attempts that leave him flat on his face, such as "Hey, Bud," and "Mr. Dooley on John D. Rockefeller," but mostly its pretty good Morgan, even though it is a Lo-Fi record in a Hi-Fi jacket.

BURLESQUE UNCENSORED

COOK/SOOT 1071. 12-in. \$5.95.

We have known for some time that this Emory Cook is a pretty cagey fellow, and one can't help questioning his motives in making this record. It contains some very, very authentic "sounds of our times," recorded on-the-spot in a New Jersey burlesque theater. Comic dialogues, cat calls, and candy sales-patter vie with interludes of very, very suggestive music, which most certainly was accompanied on stage by some mighty intriguing goings on. Now what we want to know is: Did our good friend Emory really want to leave for posterity a social document or did he just want a good (and tax deductible) excuse for paying nocturnal visits to some of America's more entertaining showplaces?

Whatever his motives, the result is pretty good fun; quite listenable and even funny in spots. Funny, that is, if you can still get a bang out of such old-timers as:

"I can see my wife now, lying there on her deathbed, gasping for air—and I come in and close the windows!"

THE BEST OF JAZZ

by John S. Wilson

HARRY CARNEY WITH STRINGS

Harry Carney, baritone saxophone and bass clarinet; Tony Miranda, French horn; Ray Nance, trumpet and violin; Jimmy Hamilton, clarinet; Billy Bauer, guitar; Leroy Lovett, piano; Wendell Marshall, bass; Louis Bellson, drums; Martin Donegan, Sylvan Shulman, Ben Gerrard, Zelly Smirnoff, Eugene Orloff, Mac Ceppos, Howard Kay, Isadore Zir, Alan Shulman, Sidney Edwards, strings; Doris Johnson, harp.
I Don't Stand a Ghost of a Chance with You; Take the A Train; We're in Love Again; Chalmers; Moonlight on the Ganges; It Had to Be You; My Fantasy; I've Got It Bad and That Ain't Good.

CLEF MG 640. 12-in. \$4.98.

Harry Carney is one of the great instrumental creators in jazz. During his many years as the solid anchor of Duke Ellington's saxophone section he has, almost singlehandedly, developed the baritone saxophone into a jazz instrument. Today, despite the numerous baritone exponents

Continued on page 73

Music on Tape

Mozart, Dittersdorf and Others by Webcor and Omegatape

USERS OF MAGNETIC TAPE will be gratified by the appearance of *Eine kleine Nachtmusik*, played by a string orchestra under the leadership of Leonard Sorkin, first violin of the Fine Arts Quartet, on a seven-inch Webcor reel, 7.5 ips, No. 2923-3, in company with other standard, admired music for strings. For *Eine k N*, in the recording industry, is a symbol of serene and confident stability: it is not issued at this date in the expectation of filling a void, but rather as an acceptance of the conventions of respectability. Every manufacturer of musical preserves must have it on his shelves. (This is a pretty good one, better than most of the discal versions in the honest style of its playing and the unstrained quality of the string reproduction.)



STEPHEN DEUTSCH

The Fine Arts Quartet

In fact, what impresses most deeply the listener is the general absence of sonic tension in this pile of tapes. The great diminution of background noise he would naturally expect and discount, but accustomed to disks he is always braced for the disturbance of a piano occasionally belling or blasting, and the deterioration of violins becoming strident when they become loud. Many disks have no sign of these defects, but everyone has heard them often enough to dread their appearance on any disk until trial has proved it uncontaminated. After a few minutes with the tapes we can relax and forget temporarily those particular ordeals of reproduction.

In articulation, resonance, and distinctness most of these seem above the average of the average disk and below the best. In brilliance and differentiation of timbre first-class modern disks are notably superior, but it is to be noted that most of the tapes in this survey are not scored for brilliant effect. An exception is Tchaikovsky's *Tempest*, with a crowded instrumentation, and the tape of this has insufficient volume to overcome background noise, the choirs of the orchestra are not in balance, and timbre is ambiguous. Sonically the best of all is the track devoted to eight short pieces for violin or cello and piano on Webcor 2923-2, very clear and most comfortably assimilable.

The three string quartets, by Dvorak, Debussy, and Dittersdorf, neatly played and registered with pleasant cleanliness, are as a whole the most successful musically of the batch. The Fine Arts Quartet, responsible for them all, have made many disks characterized by a steady probity of musicianship without concern for individuality, giving a product always acceptable and seldom ultimate. The Dittersdorf is new to reproduced music, has all the entertaining unimportance of the composer, one of the eighteenth century's most facile factories, and will suggest Haydn on holiday.

Only the first of the three Mozart Divertimentos, KV 136, 137, and 138, has found its way to a disk, so the Omegatape registration of them all is a contribution of real value to the coming Mozart Bicentennial. They are played with brave and telling élan and slighted shading; hard to resist and hard in tone. —The Piano Concerto, KV 467, has a similar excitement of bold adventure in the decisive outline given by the same conductor, and a similar disinclination to show contrast; but the piano tone is pearly and the woodwinds are beautifully distinct in a registration of high order, while the pianist shows a rippling symmetry of fingering worth orchestral support of higher finesse.

The Sorkin version of Tchaikovsky's *Serenade for Strings* has more polish than the Vicars, and the various smaller works under the Sorkin leadership are direct and honorable. The piano-sound contrived for the McDowell miscellany is outstanding in that it cannot be faulted at any point, which would be a great rarity on a disk. On the other hand the best disks have a stinging vibrancy not evident here. The *pièce de résistance* on this track is Liszt's *Mephisto Waltz*, surprisingly genteel for the

devil's playing, but the three shorter works, by Granados, Ravel, and Liszt again, are poetically enunciated.

The voices of the John Halloran Choir have been impressively recorded in a standard glee-club sampling of the sacred and the profane, of tears and laughter. The *Organ Moods* of Miss Scott seem pretty morose no matter what she plays in the popular repertory, but the reproduction is excellent, imposing in the bass. The seven appetizers played by the Fine Arts Quartet on Webcor 2922-3 sound fine. There is an Omegatape demonstration reel "D" containing excerpts from the company's initial tapes besides five sections devoted to tests.

The issuance of music on tape is still a new commercial venture. We expect, and find, uncertainties of procedure, imperfect planning and perplexities of choice. Pretty obviously Webcor has decided that a seven-inch, 7.5 ips reel should contain as close to thirty minutes of music on each track as can be fitted. Thus a major work is followed by a movement from another major work and a complete minor work, be they compatible or not. The underlying intention, to give the public its money's worth, is laudable, but the results are hodge-podge and out of date. On disks excerpts except from operas have become very rare. Omegatape has not followed this path, but permits several minutes of silence to follow the end of music on one track and several more to precede the beginning of music on the other track. There is a naïve honesty in this: the company is giving a generous length of tape; but unless we detest the company's music and erase it the generosity creates a nuisance. Webcor supplies no annotations and those provided by Omegatape are sketchy. The sides of the transparent reels are by neither company boldly marked to show which track is which.

The Webcors are available in seven-inch reels, single or double tracked, and five-inch double-tracked reels. Some of the works listed below have been issued in all three forms, making acceptability easier to the purchaser and cataloguing a curse to a magazine of limited space. Only the most inclusive form found is mentioned here. C. G. BURKE

The following tapes are all Webcor, seven-inch, double-track, 7.5 inches per second, \$12.00 each:

2923-1. Debussy: *Quartet*; Haydn: *Andante from Op. 76, No. 2*. Fine Arts Quartet. *Piano Music of Ravel, Granados, and Liszt*. Robert McDowell.

2923-2. Dvorak: *Quartet No. 6, "American"*; Haydn: *Adagio from Op. 64, No. 5*. Fine Arts Quartet. *8 Items for Violin or Cello and Piano*. Leonard Sorkin, George Sopkin, Alexander Josefer.

2923-3. Vivaldi: *Concerto Grosso in D minor*; Mozart: *Eine k N*; Bach-Stoessel: *Prelude in E*; Tchaikovsky: *Serenade for Strings*; Bolzoni: *Minuet*. Sorkin Symphonette.

2922-1. *Choral Miscellany*. John Halloran Choir.

The following are all Omegatape, five-inch, double-track, 7.5 inches per second.

5002. Tchaikovsky: *Serenade for Strings*. "Concert Artist Symphony of London", Mervyn Vicars, cond.; \$6.45.

5007. Mozart: *Piano Concerto No. 21, in C, KV 467*. Sergio Fiorentino; London Mozart Ensemble, Mervyn Vicars, cond.; \$5.95.

6001. Mozart: *Divertimentos for Strings, KV 136, 137, and 138*. (Labeled 3 Salzburg Symphonies.) London Mozart Ensemble, Mervyn Vicars, cond.; \$6.45.

6008. Tchaikovsky: *The Tempest*. Vienna National Opera Orchestra, Zoltan Fekete, cond. *Elegy*. "Concert Artist Symphony Orchestra of London," Mervyn Vicars, cond.; \$6.45.

The following are all Webcor, five-inch, double-track, 7.5 inches per second, \$8.00 each:

2922-2. *Broadway Miscellany*. Leonard Sorkin Strings.

2922-3. *Excerpts from 6 Quartets, and 2 transcriptions*. Fine Arts Quartet.

2922-4. Dittersdorf: *Quartet in E flat*; Turina: *Oracion del Torero*; Wolf: *Italian Serenade*. Fine Arts Quartet.

2922-7. *Organ Moods*. Adele Scott.

Continued from page 71

who have appeared in his wake, Carney is still the unqualified master.

His mastery is put to the test on this disk for he has to drag a string section (the customary stolidly unjazzable string section) along with him through a series of arrangements which are predominantly in a moping tempo. Carney, however, is unquenchable. His instinctive jazz feeling enlivens even the least possible setting. His tone—firm, rich, amazingly delicate when need be—is a constant joy. Fortunately all of the selections are simply a framework for his solos including, happily, one on bass clarinet (*Ghost of a Chance*). Jimmy Hamilton and Ray Nance have a few brief moments to themselves but otherwise this is all Carney's and deservedly so. The soloists and strings are recorded with discriminating clarity but the rest of the ensemble seems to have been pushed off in a corner.

TEDDY CHARLES N.D. QUARTET

Teddy Charles, vibes; J. R. Montrose, tenor saxophone; Charlie Mingus, bass; Jerry Segal, drums.

Violeta; The Night We Called It a Day; Jay Walkin'; Speak Low; Relaxo-Abstracto; I Can't Get Started.

NEW JAZZ 1106. 10-in. \$3.85.

Teddy Charles has been operating far, far out on a limb in his recent series of New Directions recordings on the Prestige label but on this group of recordings he pulls in his horns a bit. This quarter is swingingly melodic, representative of the integrated type of group which is currently emerging as jazz gets away from the solo binge it has been on and turns to a more advanced variant of the group playing which characterized its early days.

Charles and bassist Charlie Mingus have a very genuine jazz drive which gives movement and vitality to even as slow a ballad as *The Night We Called It a Day*. Mingus, in fact, is a vital force in keeping this group swinging, in keeping it away from a rhythmic stodginess. Montrose, a saxophonist who plays in a rather angular manner, is a propulsive force behind Charles's solos and has some fine explosive moments reminiscent of the early Coleman Hawkins but his flat tone is apt to become tedious on extended solos. The group receives sensitive engineering from Rudy Van Gelder.

MEL HENKE

Mel Henke, piano; Bill Newman, guitar; Bob Reed, bass; Lou Singer, drums.

Dream a Little Dream of Me; I Can't Give You Anything But Love; Sentimental Journey; Frankie and Johnny; Where or When; Sleepy Time Down South; The Man I Love; Ain't Misbehavin'; Kammenoi Ostrow; Four Deuces; Nola; Liza.

CONTEMPORARY C 5001. 12-in. \$4.85.

Mel Henke made his first recordings in 1939 for the obscure Collectors Item label, a condition from which it would be practically impossible to do anything but emerge. Henke, however, managed to sink into relative quiescence, so far as recordings were concerned, until his re-appearance on this disk. In the intervening sixteen years

he has obviously been polishing his technique to a fare-thee-well and giving rein to his idiosyncrasies.

The connective characteristic among these selections is a lack of the commonplace. Henke's approaches are unique but, as a rule, delightfully apropos. He draws on a mélange of styles from boogie-woogie to modern legitimate piano (on *Frankie and Johnny* he manages to bring both of these extremes together with engaging effectiveness) and stirs with a fey hand. He is a strong and definite pianist with an extremely clean attack, an endless bag of ideas and the ability to carry them out with proper élan. Even that worn out old finger wiggler, *Nola*, is built into a sort of lowdown powerhouse in Henke's hands. This is decidedly different piano playing,

supported by a sympathetic rhythm section and brightly recorded.

ART HODES TRIOS

Art Hodes, piano; Volly De Faut, clarinet; Jasper Taylor, drums and washboard.
Someday Sweetheart; Washboard Stomp; Tishomingo; Copenhagen.

Hodes; Darnell Howard, clarinet; Baby Dodds, drums.

Slow and Easy Mama Every Night; I Know That You Know; Baby Food; Sweet Georgia Brown.

PARAMOUNT 113. 10-in. \$3.85.

This is noted largely for historical interest. Volly (for Voltaire) De Faut is an almost legendary clarinetist whose very brief re-

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Grieg: *Hulberg Suite* • *Two Norwegian Melodies* — Concert Artist Symphony of London, Mervyn Viars, conductor . . . Omegetape 5003 (five inch reel, dual track, 7½ ips.) \$5.95

Beethoven: *Moonlight Sonata* • *Pathétique Sonata* — Bernard Vitelsky, pianist . . . Omegetape 6010 (five inch reel, dual track, 7½ ips.) \$6.45

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Mighty Wurlitzer Pipe Organ — Gordon Kibbee, organist — selections from "Pal Joey" and "Jumbo" plus "Louise" and "The Continental" — recorded on the mighty Wurlitzer 5 manual Pipe Organ . . . Omegetape 7009 (five inch reel, dual track, 7½ ips.) \$6.95

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Recording career consists of a few acoustical disks made in 1924 and 1925 with Jelly Roll Morton, Merritt Brunies, and Muggsy Spanier. He's heard here for the first time under modern recording conditions. He plays a sound, traditional clarinet, quite recognizably Chicago most of the time, and on *Copenhagen* he gives an indication of the root clarinet style which Benny Goodman developed, polished, and made his own. Darnell Howard, another veteran, plays a richer textured clarinet with a notably New Orleans vibrato on the slower numbers. Some of the potential effectiveness of these trios is diminished by poor balancing which hides Hodes, not a very forceful pianist under the best of circumstances, under the other instruments.

YANK LAWSON'S DIXIELAND JAZZ

Yank Lawson, trumpet; Brad Gowans, valve trombone; Pee Wee Russell, Ray Ekstrand, clarinets; James P. Johnson, piano; Eddie Condon, guitar; Bob Haggart, bass; Tony Spargo, drums.

That's a Plenty; Yank's Blues; Old Fashioned Love; Squeeze Me.

Lawson; Ward Silloway, trombone; Bill Stegmeyer, clarinet; Joe Marsala, tenor saxophone and clarinet; Dave Bowman, piano; Haggart; Johnny Blowers, drums.
Wolverine Blues; Double Clarinet Blues; Sunday; Jeepers Creepers.

RIVERSIDE RLP 2509. 10-in. \$3.95.

The main points of interest on this disk are concentrated on the second side (*Wolverine Blues*, etc.), a group of performances which are derived less from Dixieland than from straightforward swing. The focal point on these selections is clarinetist Bill Stegmeyer whose playing is consistently polished and inventive. He is aided by some stylish Dave Bowman piano work, driving bass playing by Bob Haggart and Lawson's trumpet when the mutes are in. The first side is rather murky two-beat, made notable by several riding solo appearances by the late Brad Gowans on valve trombone. All the numbers were recorded in 1944. The balance is haphazard and the range limited.

SHELLY MANNE, VOL. 3

"The Three"

Shorty Rogers, trumpet; Jimmy Giuffre, clarinet; tenor and baritone saxophones; Shelly Manne, drums.

Three on a Row; Steeplechase; Abstract No. 1; Flip; Autumn in New York; Pas de Trois.

CONTEMPORARY C 2516. 10-in. \$3.00.

Despite its odd and seemingly limited makeup, this thoroughly engaging trio achieves a wide range of effects. They are deterred by nothing—a perky, swinging line in *Flip*, the slowness of a slow ballad (including an unusual slow drum solo) on *Autumn in New York*, twelve tone composition in *Three on a Row* or even musical anarchy, *Abstract No. 1*, which is a completely free improvisation without established melody or chord structure.

Almost all of it comes off amazingly well. The interplay of trumpet and reeds is handled with enormous skill and subtlety. The trio swings at all times, under all cir-

cumstances. What they play is provocative and readily comprehensible—even the *Abstract* which develops an astounding sense of unity.

This is chamber jazz on a new and fascinating level, aided by exceptionally good recording which preserves some delicate uses of dynamics by keeping the group properly in focus.



Lester Young: featured in a fine reissue.

RED NORVO TRIO

Dancing on the Ceiling

Red Norvo, vibes; Red Mitchell, bass; Tal Farlow or Jimmy Raney, guitar.

Dancing on the Ceiling; Lover Come Back to Me; I Remember You; Skylark; Good Bait; Strike Up the Band; The Spider's Web; Tenderly.

DECCA DL 5501. 10-in. \$2.98.

Red Norvo is one of those consistent jazz musicians who are always deserving of a hearing even though on occasions, such as this one, you have to listen pretty closely to hear anything. Norvo appears to be working under wraps on many of these selections but he bursts out from time to time—at a bright tempo on *Good Bait*, with a gentler swinging beat on *Lover Come Back to Me* and *Spider's Web*. These are refreshing moments but too much of his playing on this disk lacks his usual inventiveness and subtlety. The rather diffuse recording is no great help.

JOHNNY SMITH

In a Mellow Mood

Johnny Smith, Perry Lopez, guitars; Arnold Fishkin, bass; Don Lamond, drums.

What's New; I'll Remember April; Sophisticated Lady; Easy to Love; 'S Wonderful; Stranger in Paradise; Our Love Is Here to Stay; Lover Man.

ROOST RLP 421. 10-in. \$3.85.

These are eight admirable exercises in small group jazz by a polished and inventive guitarist of rare taste supported by an

unusually good rhythm section. Smith's relaxed, swinging style rings endless changes in the relatively limited area of these ballads. It is, for the most part, an assured, straightforward style, although he allows himself a few engaging embellishments on *Lover Man*. Much of its appeal, however, is in its simple directness. The group with him make up one of the finest supporting trios in jazz. They have been recorded with excellent balance and definition.

THE TATUM — CARTER — BELLSON TRIO

Art Tatum, piano; Benny Carter, alto saxophone; Louis Bellson, drums.

My Blue Heaven; Blues in B Flat; Street of Dreams; Idabo; 'S Wonderful; Hands Across the Table; Old Fashioned Love; Blues in My Heart.

CLEF MG C 643. 12-in. \$4.98.

The teaming of two such old masters as Art Tatum and Benny Carter with a highly cognizant drummer, Louis Bellson, could hardly miss. And it definitely doesn't in this case, for Tatum is heard at the top of his form both as soloist and accompanist while Carter's playing is more relaxed and inventive than much of his recent work on records has been. Tatum scores on every number, applying his unique touch to a lowdown blues on *Blues in B Flat*, spilling over with balladic charm on *Hands Across the Table*, or racing along on a riding rhythm number on *Idabo*. Carter is less consistent, occasionally falling back on clichés or allowing his tone to grow coarse but usually rising successfully to Tatum's challenge. This is rare, floating, freehand jazz, recorded with care and intelligence.

SARAH VAUGHAN

Sarah Vaughan, vocals; Jimmy Jones, piano; Joe Benjamin, bass; Roy Haynes, drums; Clifford Brown, trumpet; Paul Quinichette, tenor saxophone; Herbie Mann, flute.

Lullaby of Birdland; April in Paris; He's My Guy; Jim; You're Not the Kind; Embraceable You; I'm Glad There Is You; September Song; It's Crazy.

EMARCY MG 36004. 12-in. \$3.98.

SARAH VAUGHAN SINGS WITH JOHN KIRBY

Sarah Vaughan, vocals; Clarence Brerton, trumpet; Buster Bailey, clarinet; Russell Procope, alto saxophone; Billy Kyle, piano; John Kirby, bass; Bill Beason, drums.

It Might As Well Be Spring; I Can Make You Love Me; You Go to My Head; I'm Scared.

George Taitt, trumpet; Hilton Jefferson, alto saxophone; Hank Jones, piano; Bailey; Kirby; Beason.

Serenade; The Peanut Vendor; Ripples; Sextet from Lucia.

RIVERSIDE RLP 2511. 10-in. \$3.95.

There may come a time when Sarah Vaughan, who has one of the finest voices ever applied to jazz purposes, will allow that voice to stand forth in its own natural beauty unadulterated by the bronchial

plunges and wavering grotesqueries which she affects. On her new EmArcy disk she seems to be moving in that direction although it is still a rare occasion when she isn't lured toward the ridiculous like a lemming into the sea. In this case, she manages to control her urges sufficiently to turn in highly affecting and closely recorded performances of *Embraceable You* and *April in Paris*, both of which are supplemented by excellent Jimmy Jones piano passages. She seems most at home, least likely to strain for effect, when she has a swinging beat going for her, as she does on *He's My Guy* and a very apt version of *Lullaby of Birdland*.

Strangely enough, the Riverside selections, recorded in 1946 when she was in the midst of the bop boom, are sung practically straight and are thoroughly gratifying. They are some of the most appealing and artful recordings she has made. John Kirby's band gives her very sympathetic support and takes off on its own numbers with its customary sprightly polish. The recording is a little thin by present standards, but not bad for the period.

Reissues

The jazz treasures locked in Columbia's vaults, which have been transferred to LP in only a modest way so far, are about to reappear in more satisfying quantity on Columbia's subsidiary label, Epic. The first group offered is titled *Lester Leaps In* (EPIC LG 3107, 12-in., \$3.95) by Count Basie's orchestra, a collection of some of

the most lightly swinging instrumental recordings of the Thirties. They are all distinguished by generous portions of Lester Young's solo work at a time when he was playing with all the discipline and form which were the essential contributions to his reputation.

A fascinatingly varied assortment of performing groups are represented in *Jazz Sampler* (JAZZTONE J-SPEC 100, 10-in., \$1.00), an introductory disk issued by the recently organized Jazztone Society. Jack Teagarden's *Serenade to a Shylock* and Sidney Bechet's *Jelly Roll Blues* are cheek by jowl with Charlie Parker's *Relaxin' at Camarillo* and Woody Herman's Woodchoppers' *Moon Burns*. Art Tatum, Red Norvo, Buck Clayton, and Erroll Garner are also represented by reissues and there are previously unreleased (and extremely good) numbers by Rex Stewart and Coleman Hawkins. Hawkins is also heard in the last days of his swing style and the beginnings of his modern style on *The Hawk in Flight* (VICTOR LJM 1017, 12-in., \$3.98). The Hawkins of 1940 seems somewhat arid now, particularly as juxtaposed to the warmth of Danny Polo and J. C. Higginbotham, but the 1946 recordings on this LP show him as rich and invigorating as ever.

The Dorsey brothers are crawling in and out of several recent LP reissues. Some of their very early efforts (1924-25) are displayed on *Tommy and Jimmy Dorsey with the California Ramblers* (RIVERSIDE 1051, 10-in., \$3.95), a band which also included Red Nichols and Adrian Rollini in his bass saxophone phase. Tommy was an

exponent of the gutty trombone in those days and he splats through with clarity even in these relatively limited recordings. There's more of his early works on *Bix Biederbecke, Vol. 2* (RIVERSIDE 1050, 10-in., \$3.95), which is made up of some of Beiderbecke's earliest recordings. Brother Jimmy, whose manner of playing has remained much the same over the years, turns up as a member of a 1927 Red Nichols group, Red and Miff's Stompers, on *Red Nichols and Miff Moll* (RIVERSIDE 1048, 10-in., \$3.95).

The brothers are heard working together again in Phil Napoleon's Emperors in 1929 on *Joe Venuti and Eddie Lang* ("X" LVA 3036, 10-in., \$2.98), but the highlights of this disk are four Venuti-Lang trio and quartet numbers.

Swing in the pre-Goodman manner is deftly demonstrated in some numbers written and conducted by Gene Gifford, arranger for the Casa Loma band in its heyday, on *Swing Session: 1935* ("X" LVA 3034, 10-in., \$2.98). The deftness is helped by the presence of Bunny Berigan, Bud Freeman, Matty Matlock, and Cluade Thornhill. A swinging band of an even earlier day is represented on *McKinney's Cotton Pickers, Vol. 1* ("X" LVA 3031, 10-in., \$2.98) with classic performances of such jazz standards as *Milenberg Joys* and *Nobody's Sweetheart*. And the Fats Waller who was known almost entirely for his skill as a pianist and composer, the pre-singing Waller, is heard in some typically striding piano solos, circa 1929, on *Young "Fats" Waller* ("X" LVA 3035, 10-in., \$2.98).



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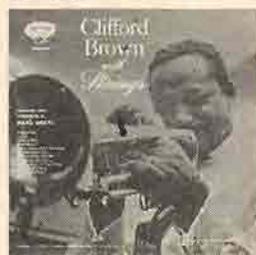
BRILLIANT NEW RELEASES



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April In Paris
He's My Guy
Jim
You're Not The Kind
Embraceable You
I'm Glad There Is You
September Song
It's Crazy

MG 36004

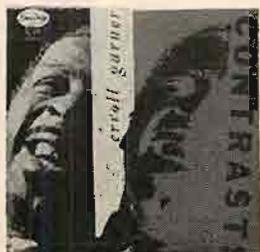


CLIFFORD BROWN

Yesterdays
Laura
What's New
Blue Moon
Can't Help Lovin' Dat Man
Embraceable You
Willow Weep For Me
Memories Of You
Smoke Gets In Your Eyes
Portrait Of Jenny
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Misty
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DINAH WASHINGTON

Lover Come Back To Me
Alone Together
Summertime
Come Rain Or Come Shine
No More
I've Got You Under
My Skin
There Is No Greater Love
You Go To My Head

MG 36000

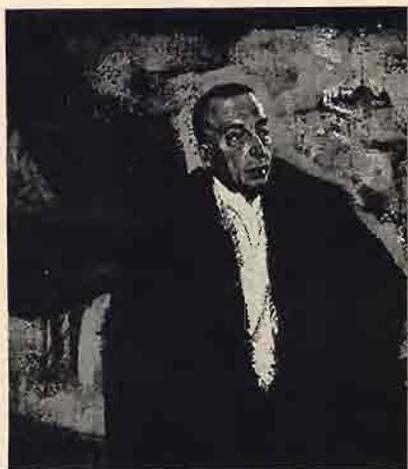
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RACHMANINOFF

A Discography by Raymond Ericson

Although nobody would want to claim a place for Rachmaninoff in the upper echelon of composers inhabited by the likes of Bach, Mozart, and Beethoven, it is entirely possible to make a persuasive case for him as a great musical personality—as composer of the C-sharp minor Prelude, which must have been played on every piano in the Western world; as composer of three or four works that will endure as long as nineteenth-century Romantic music is played; as a superb pianist and fascinatingly individual interpreter; as one of this country's most successful concert artists; as a human being whose lined, enigmatic, masklike face was wonderfully photogenic and, in its way, beautiful.

Rachmaninoff's music does not bulk large in size nor vary much in style, though it spans a half century. It is poetic, gloomy almost to the point of fatalism, in a narrow, highly personal, sincere way. It is the work of a knowledgeable craftsman; yet, as Virgil Thomson has said, it lacks "intellectual distinction." It provides a clear and absorbing



DRAWING BY RICHARD M. POWERS

study in the influence of sounds and symbols on style and stylistic devices. For Rachmaninoff has expressed a fondness for the bells of St. Petersburg, the chants of the Russian Orthodox Church, gypsy music, the melody and meaning of the *Dies Irae*, the music of Tchaikovsky. In these things it is sometimes possible to find the basis for characteristic features of his music—the open clanging decorative figurations, chords, and stepwise phrases; the melodies that revolve around one tone; the static harmonies so often avoiding the "active" dominant chord; the sweeping, lush themes richly harmonized; the frequent use of D minor as a working key. These are not the only elements of his style, but they are those most frequently encountered, the ones that earmark the music as his alone.

What is most important, perhaps, is the popular response Rachmaninoff's music has won from the public. It is, to quote Thomson once more, "part of our century's history, a creation, a contribution, a personal monument." And so, the discography.

ORCHESTRAL WORKS

THE ISLE OF THE DEAD, OP. 29 (3 Editions)

Hardly any other of Rachmaninoff's works is as characteristic as *The Isle of the Dead*. Written in 1907 in Dresden, the period of the Second Symphony, this symphonic poem was inspired by Arnold Böcklin's famous painting of the same name. The artist sought to produce "an effect of stillness"; in transmuting this mood into sound, Rachmaninoff got a slightly monotonous work, but some critics consider it among his finest. It is infinitely melancholy, with long-held pedal points and unchanging basic chords, a middle theme that twists and turns around B flat, and the introduction of the *Dies Irae* accompanied by chords orchestrated to sound like bells.

Ernest Ansermet conducts a smooth, forward-moving version that builds strongly to a climax; the sound is clean and immediate, with a shade too much prominence given to the winds. The transference of the Mitropoulos and Koussevitzky performances from 78s has been handled with a good deal of success, though neither can compete sonically with Ansermet's. Mitropoulos gives an emotionally surcharged performance that lifts the score out of any possible lethargy. Surprisingly, the Minne-

apolis Symphony plays better than either of the other orchestras. Koussevitzky conducts in the Ansermet vein, with appropriate quietude.

—Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris, Ernest Ansermet, cond. LONDON LL 1155. 12-in. \$3.98 (with *Dukas: La Péri*).

—Minneapolis Symphony, Dimitri Mitropoulos, cond. COLUMBIA ML 4196. 12-in. \$3.98 (with *Vaughan Williams: Fantasia on a Theme by Tallis*).

—Boston Symphony, Serge Koussevitzky, cond. RCA VICTOR 1M 1215. 12-in. \$3.98 (with *Prokofiev: Classical Symphony*).

SYMPHONIC DANCES, OP. 45 (1 Edition)

Rachmaninoff's last composition, written in 1940 in this country, is what its name implies—three strongly rhythmic movements elaborately developed. We find in it cleaner and more brilliant use of orchestral resources than in Rachmaninoff's earlier work, wider-ranging melodies, characteristic harmonies with astringent touches, and some notable syncopated effects. An effectively colored piece, it is persuasively played by Leinsdorf and the Rochester Philharmonic, and satisfactorily recorded. —Rochester Philharmonic, Erich Leinsdorf, cond. COLUMBIA ML 4621. 12-in. \$3.98.

SYMPHONY NO. 1, IN D MINOR, OP. 13 (2 Editions)

After winning exceptional success at the age of nineteen (see *Aleko*), Rachmaninoff suffered no setbacks in his career until he was twenty-four, when his First Symphony had a disastrous premiere. This took place in St. Petersburg in 1897. An under-rehearsed performance, which caused the composer great anguish, as well as the savage critical reaction, made him withdraw the work and helped to push him into a period of depression and nonproductivity that lasted until his treatment by Dr. Dahl. The orchestral parts of the symphony were discovered in the Leningrad Conservatory in 1945. A full score was prepared from these and from the composer's piano-duet version, and the symphony was played for the second time in Moscow in 1945.

The work is more than just the promising effort of a gifted twenty-two-year-old (it was written in 1895). It is elaborately and well constructed, and shows an imaginative handling of its themes, which are said to come from the *Okteodos*, a collection of Russian Church chants. The influence of Tchaikovsky's music is strong, but it remains unmistakably Rachmani-

Continued on page 78

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in operatic recording*

Maurice Ravel
L'ENFANT ET LES SORTILÈGES

Flore Wend; Lise de Montmollin; Lucien Lovano; Genèvieve Touraine; Adrienne Migliette; Hugues Cuenod; Pierre Mollet; Juliette Brise; Suzanne Danco; Giselle Bobillier.

Members of The Motet Choir of Geneva (Chorus Master: Jacques Horneffer)

L'ORCHESTRE DE LA SUISSE ROMANDE.

Conductor: ERNEST ANSERMET

LL-1180 free libretto \$4.98

This opera-ballet with a libretto by the noted French novelist, Colette was first produced at Monte Carlo in 1925. As usual with Ravel, it can be stated that the harmonic texture is complex and elaborate; the instrumentation evokes a shimmering array of tone-tints; the melodic lines are pure and graceful, the form is organic and perfect.

Ernest Ansermet is the ideal interpreter for this masterpiece of imagery and Full Frequency Range Recording (ffr) mirrors his communication with pellucid effect.

Georges Bizet
SYMPHONY No. 1 IN C MAJOR
PATRIE—Overture (Opus 19)

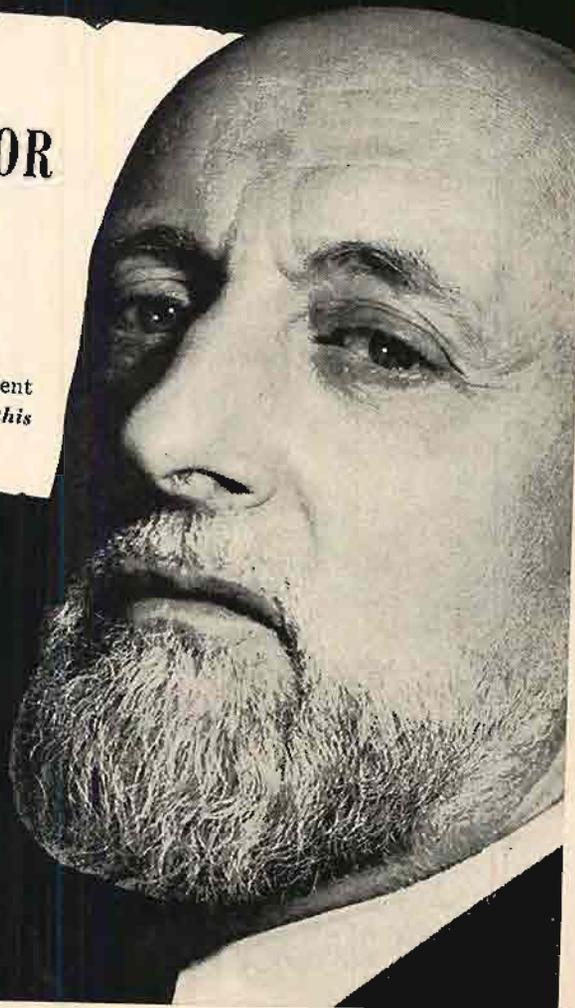
ERNEST ANSERMET conducting
L'ORCHESTRE DE LA SUISSE ROMANDE

LL-1186 \$3.98

An offering of unusual French repertoire by the most eloquent maestro of the idiom. Utilizing words of a distinguished critic, "this is a recording of almost supersonic realism."



LONDON
RECORDS



RACHMANINOFF

Continued from page 76

noff's. Not so sweet harmonically and melodically as later compositions, it deserves more performances than it has had.

The two recorded versions are equally desirable. The Stockholm orchestra plays with greater sensitivity, and Mercury has recorded it with spaciousness and resonance. The Dresden ensemble gives a more direct, dramatic account of the score, and the sound has comparable immediacy and brilliance.

—Stockholm Radio Symphony, Jacques Rachmilovich, cond. MERCURY MG 10111. 12-in. \$3.98.

—Dresden Philharmonic, Heinz Bongartz, cond. URANIA URLP 7131. 12-in. \$3.98.

SYMPHONY NO. 2, IN E MINOR, OP. 27 (4 Editions)

From 1906 to 1908, Rachmaninoff lived in Dresden. He believed the peaceful atmosphere there would be more conducive to creative activity than had been the case in Moscow, where he was very busy socially and as a performer. It turned out to be in fact a relatively serene period for the composer, and out of it came his best-known symphonic work, the Second Symphony. A long, discursive score, it can flourish in the repertoire if trimmed down. But cut or uncut, it is a luxuriating piece of music, a typical Rachmaninoff mixture of vitality and moodiness.

The performance by the Pittsburgh Symphony, recorded with full splendor, is thoughtful and introspective without growing tiresome. Steinberg realizes that hurrying the music is not going to make it sound less long, and he molds the lovely, curving melodies to wonderful effect. Artur Rodzinski conducts a comparable performance, but the sound is only fair, with occasional poor balances. However, the price is low. Dimitri Mitropoulos indulges in rather stylized, dramatic phrasing that makes his performance the most individual and striking, if not the most convincing; the sound can be described as adequate. The Philadelphia Orchestra lavishes typically gorgeous tone on it, but Ormandy tends to over-inflect the music with an irritating restlessness; the reproduction is excellent.

—Pittsburgh Symphony, William Steinberg, cond. CAPITOL P 8293. 12-in. \$4.98.

—New York Philharmonic-Symphony, Artur Rodzinski, cond. COLUMBIA-ENTRE RL 3049. 12-in. \$2.98.

—Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond. COLUMBIA ML 4433. 12-in. \$3.98.

—Minneapolis Symphony, Dimitri Mitropoulos, cond. RCA VICTOR LM 1068. 12-in. \$3.98.

SYMPHONY NO. 3, IN A MINOR, OP. 44
The Schwann catalogue lists two recordings of this symphony. That by the Rachmaninoff Society was unobtainable; presumably it is out of print. Columbia's newly announced version was not available, even in test pressings, at the time this was written.

PIANO AND ORCHESTRA

PIANO CONCERTO NO. 1, IN F-SHARP MINOR, OP. 1 (2 Editions)

The First Piano Concerto dates from 1890-91, when Rachmaninoff was eighteen, but it is known today only in the revised dress given it by the composer in 1917. This revision is said to differ from the original largely in form and orchestration. If one assumes the thematic material to be unchanged, it demonstrates how nearly crystallized at an early age Rachmaninoff's style was. Did it not exist in the shadow of its successors, this concerto might have more currency, if only for the immediacy of its tunes and the splashiness of the solo role.

Both the Rachmaninoff and Moiseiwitsch performances are reissues from 78s. The former has the older sound, but it is not so much inferior as to keep it from being preferable. Nobody played Rachmaninoff's music as well as the composer himself—partly, I suspect, because he wrote in a way that was ideally suited to his technique. This recording demonstrates well his fleet and glittering approach to fast passagework, his glistening tone, his rapid blocking of chords, his ability to inflect a melody with remarkable singing quality. Moiseiwitsch plays with warmth, taste, and good tone, but his artistry is not as mercurial as Rachmaninoff's; neither is he as well served by his accompanying orchestra and conductor.

—Sergei Rachmaninoff, piano; Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond. RCA VICTOR LCT 1118. 12-in. \$3.98 (with *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini*).

—Benno Moiseiwitsch, piano; Philharmonia Orchestra, Sir Malcolm Sargent, cond. RCA VICTOR LCT 1127. 12-in. \$3.98 (with *Tchaikovsky: Second Piano Concerto*).

PIANO CONCERTO NO. 2, IN C MINOR, OP. 18 (10 Editions)

The failure in 1897 of Rachmaninoff's First Symphony led to a period of depression aggravated by more drinking than was good for him. He found himself unable to compose. At the beginning of 1900, he was induced to undergo treatment by Dr. Nicolai Dahl, who specialized in curing alcoholism and nervous disorders through hypnosis. This much is known of the treatment, that Rachmaninoff visited the doctor daily to sit half-asleep listening to him repeat: "You will begin to write your concerto . . . You will work with great facility . . . The concerto will be of an excellent quality . . ." It worked. Whatever the intellectual quality of the concerto, it is one of the most popular in the whole repertoire, full of passages in Rachmaninoff's most luscious and vigorous vein.

Rachmaninoff's own performance is a very special one, though its sound quality (of 1929 vintage) will not appeal to ears receptive only to high fidelity. For pianists and those vitally interested in the composer, however, it is a must. (Rachmaninoff, perversely, makes radical changes in dynamics and tempos from those marked in the score.) Some of the phrasing in the slow movement, the purling lines in the finale, the lightning-swift accentuation are unparalleled, and Rachmaninoff's magical tone is evident now and again despite the antediluvian sound. The Philadelphia Orchestra gets better reproduction than the soloist and performs magnificently under Stokowski's sympathetic direction.

The next four recordings just about match each other. Julius Katchen offers a full-bodied Romantic interpretation; the piano tone is generally lovely, the over-all sound resonant and balanced. Leonard Pennario gives a cooler performance, technically stunning in the last movement; Capitol's recording is just as resonant as London's, and there is even more clarity and sharpness to the ensemble (which, unfortunately, does not always play so well). William Kapell's brilliant version is a little self-consciously impetuous, but Steinberg leads the best orchestral performance of all; the sound is clean and well balanced. Outside of a few missed notes, Artur Rubinstein's performance is flawless. Like Rachmaninoff, he moves the slowish themes along in a soaring, rather than rigid manner. The NBC Symphony plays well enough, even though Golschmann's conducting in this recording seems slightly laggard at times. The closed-in sound is fairly clear, but the balance between soloist and ensemble is less than ideal.

Geza Anda gives an individual reading, delicate and high-strung, with very expressive phrasing and admirable continuity, and he gets wonderful support orchestrally; the reproduction is generally fine. A praiseworthy, energetic performance by Cor de Groot comes from the studios of Philips, in a bright, transparent recording that has a booming bass. Gyorgy Sandor provides an urgent, driving view of this music; somewhat thin sound (from 78-rpm originals), fair balance, with the piano generally coming through cleanly. Edith Farnadi and Hermann Scherchen collaborate on a slow, literal reading of the score that often reveals new beauties in the music but is more often too lethargic for my taste. The reproduction is superior to all others for naturalness, balance, and immediacy. Cyril Smith's version, another reissue from 78s, is lively and sensible, noticeably fine at the opening of the second movement; but this one is sonically out of the running.

—Sergei Rachmaninoff, piano; Philadelphia Orchestra, Leopold Stokowski, cond. RCA VICTOR LCT 1014. 12-in. \$3.98.

—Julius Katchen, piano; New Symphony, Anatole Fistoulari, cond. LONDON LL 384. 12-in. \$3.98.

—Leonard Pennario, piano; St. Louis Symphony, Vladimir Golschmann, cond. CAPITOL P 8302. 12-in. \$4.98.

—William Kapell, piano; Robin Hood Dell Orchestra of Philadelphia, William Steinberg, cond. RCA VICTOR LM 1097. 12-in. \$3.98.

—Artur Rubinstein, piano; NBC Symphony, Vladimir Golschmann, cond. RCA VICTOR LM 1005. 12-in. \$3.98.

—Geza Anda, piano; Philharmonia Orchestra, Alceo Galliera, cond. ANGEL 35093. 12-in. \$4.98 (with *Preludes in G minor and G major*).

—Cor de Groot, piano; Hague Philharmonic, Willem van Otterloo, cond. EPIC LC 3009. 12-in. \$3.98.

—Gyorgy Sandor, piano; New York Philharmonic-Symphony, Artur Rodzinski, cond. COLUMBIA-ENTRE RL 3052. 12-in. \$2.98.

—Edith Farnadi, piano; Vienna State Opera Orchestra, Hermann Scherchen, cond. WESTMINSTER WL 5193. 12-in. \$5.95.

—Cyril Smith, piano; Liverpool Philharmonic, Sir Malcolm Sargent, cond. COLUMBIA ML 4176. 12-in. \$3.98.

PIANO CONCERTO NO. 3, in D MINOR,
OP. 30 (3 Editions)

The Third Concerto was written by Rachmaninoff as a vehicle for his American debut in 1909. It lacks the direct appeal of the Second Concerto but is much more fascinatingly constructed, with the two outer movements evolving out of small initial themes and separated by a lovely, sad intermezzo.

Of exceptional difficulty technically, it has found its best exponent (the composer excepted) in Vladimir Horowitz. His performances and the recording he made in the early 1930s were almost unbelievable in their dazzling pianism. Fortunately, he re-recorded the work for the LP catalogue and repeated his earlier triumph. Horowitz's virtuosity gets a legitimate workout here, and he achieves some effects that are seemingly his alone: dry, crackling staccatos; whiplash chords; clangorous octaves; trip-hammer notes in prestissimo runs. The tone bites and stings at one moment, then becomes remarkably round and full. The orchestral performance under Reiner's direction is of comparable brilliance, its tone sometimes outweighed by the piano in an otherwise respectable recording.

Witold Malcuzyński gives a virile, dashing, and appropriately Romantic reading of the score, the orchestral support being solid. The over-all sound is sometimes clouded, and the volume seems to be reduced at certain *fff* points. The orchestra is heard to thrilling effect in London's recording, but Miss Lympany's reading is tame, however musical and lucid. All three pianists make small cuts throughout the work, which is standard performance practice.

Victor should be persuaded to reissue on LP the composer's own recording with the Philadelphia Orchestra.

—Vladimir Horowitz, piano; RCA Victor Symphony, Fritz Reiner, cond. RCA VICTOR LM 1178. 12-in. \$3.98.

—Witold Malcuzyński, piano; Philharmonia Orchestra, Paul Kletzki, cond. COLUMBIA ML 4369. 12-in. \$3.98.

—Moura Lympany, piano; New Symphony, Anthony Collins, cond. LONDON LL 617. 12-in. \$3.98.

PIANO CONCERTO NO. 4, in G MINOR,
OP. 40 (1 Edition)

Rachmaninoff's Fourth (and last) Piano Concerto (1927) contains isolated passages of interest, particularly from the pianistic point of view, but not a great deal else. It is the poorest of the concertos, the harmonies have grown a little more acerb, the rhythms slightly more disjointed, as if to give a novelty to old ideas; alas, they seem only contrived. The Largo embodies an insinuating mournfulness, but the theme's resemblance to *Three Blind Mice* must be resolutely ignored for the movement to be endured. The recorded version represents the composer's revisions of the original published score. His performance needs no recommendation, and the sound is quite clear for its time (*circa* 1940).

—Sergei Rachmaninoff, piano; Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond. RCA VICTOR LCT 1019. 12-in. \$3.98.

RHAPSODY ON A THEME BY PAGANINI,
OP. 43 (7 Editions)

The Rhapsody—really a series of variations—dates from 1934, the year it was

first performed by the composer with his favorite Philadelphia Orchestra, under Leopold Stokowski's conductorship. Rachmaninoff's treatment of the ubiquitous Paganini theme is witty, effervescent, ironic. This was to be his last wholly successful work. Both the piano writing and orchestral scoring represent a more transparent style than the composer had used before.

Rachmaninoff's own recording is one of the best, from an acoustical standpoint, that he ever made, and the Stokowski-led Philadelphians play stupendously well. It sounds studio-made—clean, balanced, hemmed-in. Because the performance is so right on the non-Rachmaninoff-level and is so stunningly reproduced, Julius Katchen's recording is recommended for the hi-fi enthusiasts. William Kapell emphasizes the sardonic aspects of the score with a biting, Horowitz-like reading; in its way, it is as good as Katchen's, not quite so brilliantly reproduced. Reiner's acidly demonic conducting is a fine foil for Kapell's playing. Kapell's ten-inch version (same performance) can be criticized for breaking after the sixteenth variation when it could have been done just as easily after the fifteenth, with better musical results.

Artur Rubinstein's version represents a kind of norm, which any pianist would do well to aim at. The sound is remarkably live for a transference from 78s, and the ten-inch disk happily breaks after the fifteenth variation. Shura Cherkassky's wholly satisfactory reading is characterized by excellent sound, with a good deal of presence and fine balance. The over-all tone may be a little shallow, but the disk is a good buy at the price.

—Sergei Rachmaninoff, piano; Philadelphia Orchestra, Leopold Stokowski, cond. RCA VICTOR LCT 1118. 12-in. \$3.98 (with *Piano Concerto No. 1*).

—Julius Katchen, piano; London Philharmonic, Sir Adrian Boult, cond. LONDON LL 1018. 12-in. \$3.98 (with *Dobnanyi: Variations on a Nursery Song*).

—William Kapell, piano; Robin Hood Dell Orchestra of Philadelphia, Fritz Reiner, cond. RCA VICTOR LM 126. 10-in. \$2.98. Same. LM 9026. 12-in. \$3.98 (with *Beethoven: Piano Concerto No. 2*).

—Artur Rubinstein, piano; Philharmonia Orchestra, Walter Süsskind, cond. RCA VICTOR LM 26. 10-in. \$2.98. Same. LM 1744. 12-in. \$3.98 (with *Szymanowski: Symphonie Concertante*).

—Shura Cherkassky, piano; London Symphony, Herbert Menges, cond. RCA VICTOR LBC 1066. 12-in. \$2.98 (with *Chopin: Nocturne in E minor, Op. 72, No. 1; Mazurka in D major, Op. 33, No. 2; Fantaisie in F minor*).

KEYBOARD MUSIC

MISCELLANY

As in the case of many composers of the Romantic school, Rachmaninoff's shorter piano solos seem impressively concise and formally perfect in contrast to the large-scale works. They develop an idea to its logical conclusion, and then stop. The problems of bridge passages, of allied or contrasted themes, of sonata form are avoided—and all these troubled Rachmaninoff.

The sixty or so pieces will be considered under the opus number to which they

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The Gramophone
—March, 1955

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belong. Where a disk includes all the works within an opus, I have not mentioned other, isolated performances of individual items, except in the few instances where they seemed warranted. The best disk devoted to a Rachmaninoff piano miscellany is that of his own performances, RCA VICTOR LCT 1136, which includes most, but not all, of the recordings he made on 78s of his own works plus four pieces by other composers. The disk is required listening for all pianists who touch the Romantic tradition. The playing time is generous, the sampling comprehensive. Each selection from this collection will be listed under the opus number without repeating the disk data. The sound is variable, with much surface noise, but it will do under the circumstances.

—Rachmaninoff Plays Rachmaninoff and Others." RCA VICTOR LCT 1136. 12-in. \$3.98.

FIVE PIECES (MORCEAUX DE FANTASIE) FOR PIANO, OP. 3 (1 Edition)

1. *Élégie*, E-flat minor
2. *Prelude*, C-sharp minor
3. *Mélodie*, E major
4. *Polichinelle*, F-sharp minor
5. *Serenade*, B-flat minor

This set, dating from Rachmaninoff's nineteenth year, includes *the* prelude, which made the composer's name a household word and has given joy and agony to countless amateur pianists. The other pieces, including the popular *Polichinelle*, are bland, youthful works of student-recital caliber. Nadia Reisenberg plays them for all they are worth, and sometimes more, and the Westminster sound is ideal.

However, Rachmaninoff's performance of the *Prelude* must be considered definitive, and Moura Lympany's, in the full collection of preludes, is smoother than Miss Reisenberg's. Leonard Pennario's vigorous version is available on a ten-inch disk. Lucien Cailliet's arrangement for orchestra is given an exaggerated but effective performance by the Philadelphia Orchestra.

—Nadia Reisenberg. WESTMINSTER WL 5344. 12-in. \$5.95 (with *Polka de W. R.; Piano Pieces, Op. 3*).

—Sergei Rachmaninoff (Nos. 2, 3—see Miscellany).

—Moura Lympany (No. 2). LONDON LLP 328/9. Two 12-in. \$7.96 (with *Preludes Op. 23 and 32*).

—Leonard Pennario (No. 2). CAPITOL H 8186. 10-in. \$2.98 (with *Prelude in G minor; Liszt: Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2*).

—Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond. (No. 2). COLUMBIA ML 2158. 10-in. \$2.98 (with *Preludes in G minor and G major; Sibelius: Finlandia and The Swan of Tuonela*).

SEVEN PIECES FOR PIANO, OP. 10 (1 Edition)

1. *Nocturne*, A minor
2. *Waltz*, A major
3. *Barcarolle*, G minor
4. *Mélodie*, E minor
5. *Humoreske*, G major
6. *Romance*, F minor
7. *Mazurka*, D-flat major

Although the *Humoreske* is the most popular of this set (composed in 1893-94), the *Barcarolle* and the *Mazurka* deserve to be better known. Otherwise there is little of interest. Miss Reisenberg's playing is

again recommended. Rachmaninoff's performance of *Humoreske* has a shade more elegance and humor.

—Nadia Reisenberg. WESTMINSTER WL 5344. 12-in. \$5.95 (with *Polka de W. R.; Piano Pieces, Op. 3*).

—Sergei Rachmaninoff (No. 5—see Miscellany).

SIX MOMENTS MUSICAUX, OP. 16

2. *Allegretto*, E-flat minor

By 1896, when Rachmaninoff wrote these pieces, his style had nearly matured. The piano writing is much more florid and technically difficult, with broodingly static harmonies and winding melodies. No. 2 is a beautiful, shimmering study, and gets a glittering reading from the composer. None of the others are recorded: they should be.

—Sergei Rachmaninoff (see Miscellany).

VARIATIONS ON A THEME OF CHOPIN, OP. 22 (2 Editions)

Chopin's C minor *Prelude*, Op. 28, No. 20, the basis of this work, has a self-sufficient perfection; in consequence, the variations seem like an inorganic appendage. Still, much of what Rachmaninoff has devised is imaginative, effective, and well worth investigation. For recital performance, some of the twenty-two variations are marked optional, but Bernhard Weiser has recorded them complete in a swift, brilliant reading, somewhat vitiated by shallow piano sound. Robert Goldsand's recording is slower, more thoughtful and meaningful, and it has better tone quality; but there are many cuts, including some not admitted on the label.

—Bernhard Weiser. RACHMANINOFF SOCIETY RS 4. 12-in. \$5.95 (with *Variations on a Theme of Corelli*).

—Robert Goldsand. CONCERT HALL CHS 1149. 12-in. \$4.98 (with *Liszt: Six Paganini Etudes*).

TEN PRELUDES, OP. 23 (1 Edition)

1. *Largo*, F-sharp minor
2. *Maestoso*, B-flat major
3. *Tempo di minuetto*, D minor
4. *Andante cantabile*, D major
5. *A la marcia*, G minor
6. *Andante*, E-flat major
7. *Allegro*, C minor
8. *Allegro vivace*, A-flat major
9. *Presto*, E-flat minor
10. *Largo*, G-flat major

These are major, mature works, variously dated from 1900 to 1903. The content may not be to everyone's taste, any more than the rest of Rachmaninoff's music is, but the expression of it is rich in manner, secure in purpose. Moura Lympany plays them carefully, in pleasantly unsentimental performances that wear well with repetition. She finds less in No. 10 than the composer does, but she also avoids mannerisms and exaggerations. Her smooth, round tone is faithfully captured by the London engineers. The G minor *Prelude*, almost as popular as the one in C-sharp minor, gets a fast, clean, exciting reading from Leonard Pennario, and there is a highly colored one from the Philadelphia Orchestra.

—Moura Lympany. LONDON LLP 328/9. Two 12-in. \$7.96 (with *Preludes, Op. 3, No. 2, and Op. 32*).

—Leonard Pennario (No. 5). CAPITOL H

8186. 10-in. \$2.98 (with *Prelude in C-sharp minor; Liszt: Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2*).

—Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond. (No. 5). COLUMBIA ML 2158. 10-in. \$2.98 (with *Preludes in C-sharp minor and G major; Sibelius: Finlandia and The Swan of Tuonela*).

—Sergei Rachmaninoff (No. 10—see Miscellany).

PIANO SONATA NO. 1, in D MINOR, OP. 28 (1 Edition)

A product of 1907 and the Dresden sojourn, the First Sonata is in three movements, all of them too long for the work's good. The trouble lies largely in the relatively dull development of ordinary Rachmaninoff themes and in the pervasive somberness of mood. The composer resorts to his device of relating the movements thematically, and again uses a *Dies Irae*-like theme. Warren Perry Thew plays the work with unusual understanding and cohesion, but with a tone that sounds wooden as recorded.

—Warren Perry Thew. RACHMANINOFF SOCIETY RS 6. 12-in. \$5.95 (with *Powder and Paint*).

THIRTEEN PRELUDES, OP. 32 (1 Edition)

1. *Allegretto vivace*, C major
2. *Allegretto*, B-flat major
3. *Allegro vivace*, E major
4. *Allegro con fuoco*, E minor
5. *Moderato*, G major
6. *Moderato*, F minor
7. *Moderato*, F major
8. *Vivo*, A minor
9. *Allegro moderato*, A major
10. *Lento*, B minor
11. *Allegretto*, B minor
12. *Allegro*, G-sharp minor
13. *Grave*, D-flat major

This 1910 set is subtler, harmonically drier, rhythmically more complex than Op. 23. The pieces range in mood from the exquisite, justly popular No. 5 to the magnificent No. 13, which requires a Rachmaninoff or Horowitz to do it full justice. Miss Lympany is again the impersonal servant of the notes, which I find praiseworthy, and her complete performance will serve until a better one comes along. Geza Anda gives a ravishing account of No. 5. The last of the three Cailliet transcriptions is of the same prelude.

—Moura Lympany. LONDON LLP 328/9. Two 12-in. \$7.96 (with *Preludes Op. 3, No. 2, and Op. 23*).

—Sergei Rachmaninoff (Nos. 3, 6, 7—see Miscellany).

—Geza Anda (No. 5). ANGEL 35093. 12-in. \$4.98 (with *Piano Concerto No. 2, Prelude in G minor*).

—Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond. COLUMBIA ML 2158. 10-in. \$2.98 (with *Preludes in C-sharp minor and G minor; Sibelius: Finlandia and The Swan of Tuonela*).

EIGHT ETUDES-TABLEAUX, OP. 33 (1 Edition)

1. *Allegro non troppo*, F minor
2. *Allegro*, C major
3. *Grave*, C minor
5. *Moderato*, D minor
6. *Non allegro, presto*, E-flat minor
7. *Allegro con fuoco*, E-flat major
8. *Moderato*, G minor

9. Grave, C-sharp minor

The numbering of this set is mildly confusing. No. 4 was withdrawn by Rachmaninoff and inserted into Op. 39. Nos. 3 and 5 were discovered in 1947 in Moscow, so that prior to that Nos. 6-9 were known as Nos. 3, 5, 6, 7. Did I say *mildly* confusing? Composed in 1911, these pieces might be considered as later preludes, slightly more experimental and atmospheric. Some sound manufactured, some just odd, some imaginatively original; all are interesting, though probably not destined for much popularity. Weiser is a sterling pianist, but he is not well served here by the engineers; the tone is too thin and tinny. It is a pity Rachmaninoff did not record the entire set (and Op. 39 as well), for his persuasive performances of Nos. 2 and 7 leave no doubt as to their musical validity.

—Bernhard Weiser. RACHMANINOFF SOCIETY RS 1. 12-in. \$5.95 (with *Piano Sonata No. 2*).

—Sergei Rachmaninoff (Nos. 2, 7 — see Miscellany).

PIANO SONATA NO. 2, in B-FLAT MINOR, OP. 36 (1 Edition)

In 1931, eighteen years after its composition, Rachmaninoff revised his Second Sonata, compressing and simplifying it. A three-section work played without pause, the sonata is formally absorbing for its development and cyclic construction, but the insistence on some of the same thematic material grows wearisome. Weiser displays quite a remarkable technique in coping with the work's enormous difficulties, and the sound is better than in the Etudes.

—Bernhard Weiser. RACHMANINOFF SOCIETY RS 1. 12-in. \$5.95 (with *Etudes-Tableaux, Op. 33*).

NINE ETUDES-TABLEAUX, OP. 39 (1 Edition)

1. Allegro agitato, C minor
2. Lento assai, A minor
3. Allegro molto, F-sharp minor
4. Allegro assai, B minor
5. Appassionato, E-flat minor
6. Allegro, A minor
7. Lento lugubre, C minor
8. Allegro moderato, D minor
9. Tempo di marcia, D major

The unsettled, revolutionary atmosphere in Russia in 1916 and 1917 may or may not have affected Rachmaninoff's music, but these pieces, written in those years, are generally more grim and mordant than Op. 33. (Shortly after, Rachmaninoff left Russia forever.) They are also larger in conception and more densely written, frequently very striking. They capture the essence of the works most successfully; unfortunately, the sound quality is only fair.

—Warren Perry Thew. RACHMANINOFF SOCIETY RS 3. 12-in. \$5.95.

—Sergei Rachmaninoff (No. 6 — see Miscellany).

VARIATIONS ON A THEME OF CORELLI, OP. 42 (1 Edition)

One of Rachmaninoff's last and most satisfactory compositions, written in 1932. The theme is the traditional dance tune, *La Folia*, which was not original with Corelli but was the basis of his well-known variations from the Twelfth Violin Sonata. The shape of the theme — like that of Paga-

nini's — is again characteristic of Rachmaninoff; he obviously worked easily with it, for the variations flow in graceful, supple fashion. A grateful work to play and to listen to, it surprisingly does not appear very often on recital programs. It gets a satisfactory performance from Weiser, with adequate sound.

—Bernhard Weiser. RACHMANINOFF SOCIETY RS 4. 12-in. \$5.95 (with *Variations on a Theme of Chopin*).

ROMANCE, E-FLAT MAJOR (1 Edition)

A negligible, presumably early work, given a shapely, conscientious performance by Eldin Burton.

—Eldin Burton. CLASSIC CE 1025. 12-in. \$5.95 (with other "*Piano Miniatures*").

POLKA DE W. R. (2 Editions)

W. R. was the composer's father, Wasily, who supplied the theme for this charming, lighthearted piece, written in 1911. Rachmaninoff plays it with more elegance and point, but Miss Reisenberg's version is not far behind, and she has the advantage of Westminster's lifelike sound.

—Sergei Rachmaninoff (see Miscellany).

—Nadia Reisenberg. WESTMINSTER WL 5344. 12-in. \$5.95 (with *Piano Pieces, Op. 3 and 10*).

ORIENTAL SKETCH: DAISIES (1 Edition)

Sketchy but not very Oriental might describe the first, youthful piece. *Daisies* is the composer's transcription of his song, Op. 38, No. 3 — a more pleasant and respectful version than he made of Kreisler's *Liebesfreud*.

—Sergei Rachmaninoff (see Miscellany).

FANTASIA (FIRST SUITE) FOR TWO PIANOS, OP. 5 (1 Edition)

1. Barcarolle
2. Oh night, oh love
3. Tears
4. Easter

SECOND SUITE FOR TWO PIANOS, OP. 17

- (1 Edition)
1. Introduction
2. Waltz
3. Romance
4. Tarantella

Rachmaninoff's suites for two pianos, composed in 1893 and 1900-01 respectively, have a glamorous surface quality and have proved useful in filling out the meager repertoire of duo-pianists. The beautiful texture Rachmaninoff achieved for the combined instruments has been copied *ad nauseam* by arrangers of popular tunes. No pair could play the Rachmaninoff works better than do Vronsky and Babin; a newer recording could provide greater tonal fidelity, though the sound is agreeable enough now.

—Vitya Vronsky and Victor Babin. COLUMBIA ML 4379. 12-in. \$3.98.

CHAMBER MUSIC

TRIO ELEGIAQUE, FOR PIANO, VIOLIN, AND CELLO, in D MINOR, OP. 9 (1 Edition)

Rachmaninoff's idol, Tchaikovsky, died in November 1893, and the youthful adulterator shortly thereafter completed this trio "in memory of a great artist." It is a dull work, with fitful gleams of talent. Only in the central movement — a theme with variations — does it come close to suggesting



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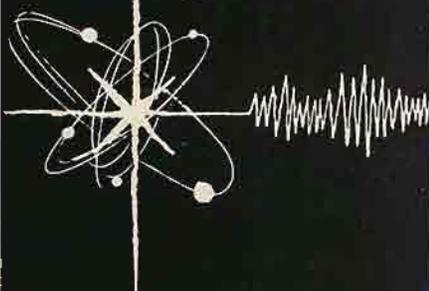
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the composer's personal style. The piano part is generously treated; the cello and violin spend most of their time doubling each other. The performance by the Compinskys has fervor, emotion, and style, but in this reissue from 78s the instrumental tone is harsh. Considerable surface noise. —Compinsky Trio. ALCO. 12-in. \$4.85.

QUARTET IN G MINOR (1 Edition)

According to the notes on the jacket of this recording, Rachmaninoff completed two movements for each of two string quartets during his student days at the Moscow Conservatory. Those from the first quartet, Romance and Scherzo, were begun in 1889 and played publicly in 1891. The music of Tchaikovsky and Borodin still dominates Rachmaninoff's thinking in this work; his craftsmanship is commendable, but he shows little of his future personality. The result is quite without interest. The performance by the Guilet String Quartet, uniform in tone and nicely spirited, has been reproduced in an intimate, tonally limited manner.

—Guilet String Quartet. M-G-M E 3133. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Grieg: *String Quartet in G major*).

SONATA FOR CELLO AND PIANO, in G MINOR, OP. 19 (2 Editions)

A lengthy work of some richness and warmth, composed in 1901 just after the Second Piano Concerto, though the piano part has too much prominence to make the sonata a well-balanced ensemble piece. Of the two cellists, Schuster has the sweeter

tone, the longer, better-inflected line. Of the pianists, Kapell is the fleetest, more mercurial player. Schuster and Pennario make the better-integrated pair, and Capitol gives them richer, fuller sound.

—Joseph Schuster, cello; Leonard Pennario, piano. CAPITOL P 8248. 12-in. \$4.98.

—Edmund Kurtz, cello; William Kapell, piano. RCA VICTOR LM 1074. 12-in. \$3.98.

SONGS

Of the disks that devote half or more of their space to Rachmaninoff songs, the most satisfactory is probably the recent release made by several Soviet artists. Their singing is exotically colorful, the voices richly vibrant, the sound intimate. Maria Kurenko, who coached many of the songs with the composer and has been one of his most ardent exponents in this country, sings with variable tone quality and wonderfully intuitive phrasing. Her voice is occasionally a bit wiry, yet at its best exceptionally beautiful. She is accorded excellent recording on her fine Capitol disk, but the Rachmaninoff Society coupling that includes all of Op. 38, in spite of imperfect recording, is also musically treasurable. Jennie Tourel's luscious mezzo-soprano voice is shrewdly handled in artistic performances that are only a shade less interesting than Miss Kurenko's. In fact, all the artists, plus their accompanists, can be highly recommended, and the choice of recordings can depend on the repertoire desired. The disks, all in Russian, will be listed here first, followed by a breakdown of the songs by opus number. Unrecorded songs, of which unfortunately there are still many, will not be listed; it is to be hoped these gaps will be filled soon.

—Nadezhda Oboukhova, mezzo-soprano; Serge Lemeshev, tenor; Boris Gmirya, baritone. VANGUARD VRS 6023. 12-in. \$4.98 (with Mussorgsky songs).

—Maria Kurenko, soprano; Vsevolod Pastukhoff, piano. CAPITOL P 8265. 12-in. \$4.98 (with *Mussorgsky: The Nursery*).

—Maria Kurenko, soprano; Vsevolod Pastukhoff, piano. RACHMANINOFF SOCIETY RS 2. 12-in. \$5.95.

—Jennie Tourel, soprano; George Reeves, piano. COLUMBIA ML 4357. 12-in. \$3.98 (with Villa-Lobos and Chopin songs).

—Maria Kurenko, soprano; Laurence Rosenthal, piano. RACHMANINOFF SOCIETY RS 5. 12-in. \$5.95.

SIX SONGS. OP. 4

1. Oh, stay, my love, forsake me not!
3. In the silence of the night
4. Oh, never sing to me again
5. The Harvest of Sorrow

The earliest set of songs (1893) includes two of the most popular and enduring, Nos. 3 and 4. The fully expressed candid emotion makes up for any derivative quality in the writing. Miss Kurenko and Miss Tourel sing No. 3 equally well, but the former is better recorded. Gmirya's singing of No. 4 is superb. Miss Oboukhova issues forth some wonderful wails at the end of No. 5.

—Boris Gmirya (Nos. 1, 4).

—Maria Kurenko (Nos. 3, 4—CAPITOL).

—Nadezhda Oboukhova (No. 5).

—Jennie Tourel (Nos. 3, 4, 5).

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SIX SONGS, OP. 8

4. The Soldier's Bride

No. 4 is fortunately the best song of this set (1893). Miss Kurenko's performance is more moving than Miss Oboukhova's by about a hair's breadth.

—Maria Kurenko. CAPITOL.

—Nadezhda Oboukhova.

—Jennie Tourel.

TWELVE SONGS, OP. 14

4. I was at her house

5. Midsummer Nights

11. Floods of Spring

This 1896 cycle reveals a more personal style, a growing independence of vocal line and piano accompaniment. The two performances of the popular No. 11 are equally good.

—Serge Lemeshev (Nos. 4, 11).

—Jennie Tourel (No. 11).

—Maria Kurenko (No. 5 — CAPITOL).

TWELVE SONGS, OP. 21

1. Fate

4. The Answer

5. Lilacs

6. Loneliness (Fragment from Musset)

7. It is pleasant here

8. On the Death of a Linnet

9. *Mélodie*

12. Sorrow in Springtime

Op. 21 (1900) begins with a mildly interesting curiosity, a long, elaborate song based on the opening motif of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. It is excellently sung by the sonorous-voiced Raphael Arie in an admirable recording. This set, without a wholly dull song in the lot, ends with a particularly lovely work, and it is poignantly sung by Miss Tourel. The well-known No. 5 is smoothly phrased by Jussi Bjoerling in an English version, but the result is pallid. Miss Tourel is the superior artist here.

—Raphael Arie, bass; Wilfred Parry, piano (No. 1). LONDON LD 9101. 10-in. \$2.98 (with miscellaneous Russian songs).

—Jennie Tourel (Nos. 4, 5, 12).

—Maria Kurenko (Nos. 5, 12 — CAPITOL; Nos. 6, 7 — RS 5; Nos. 8, 9 — RS 2).

—Jussi Bjoerling, tenor; Frederick Schauwecker, piano (No. 5). RCA VICTOR LM 1771. 12-in. \$3.98 (with other miscellaneous songs).

FIFTEEN SONGS, OP. 26

2. Everything is taken from me

3. Come, let us rest!

4. Two Partings

8. Thy pity I implore!

9. Let me rest here alone

10. Before my window (The Alder Tree)

11. The Fountain

12. Night is mournful

13. Yesterday we met

14. The Ring

15. All things depart

The summer of 1906, when Rachmaninoff was still living rather serenely in Dresden, saw the creation of the cycle—more than usually cheerful for its composer! The beguiling No. 3 is a setting of a passage from Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya*, which Rachmaninoff once wanted to use for an opera. No. 4 is an ironic duet, in the performance of which Miss Kurenko has the assistance of her son, Vadim Gontzoff. The popular *To the Children*, No. 7, is unrecorded on LP, as far as I know, which seems very odd

indeed. In the two performances of No. 10, Miss Kurenko's is marked by sweetness of phrasing, Miss Tourel's by tonal beauty.

—Maria Kurenko (Nos. 2, 3, 4, 9, 11, 13, 14 — RS 5; Nos. 8, 12 — RS 2; No. 10 — CAPITOL).

—Jennie Tourel (Nos. 10, 15).

FOURTEEN SONGS, OP. 34

1. The Muse

4. The Changing Wind

5. Arion

8. Music

10. I remember the day

12. What happiness

13. Dissonance

14. Vocalise

When these songs were written, in 1912, Rachmaninoff was enjoying another rela-

tively peaceful, successful period, and his writing seems assured and bold, making just the effect he wants. Of particular interest is the long and unusual No. 13. *Vocalise*, frequently heard in all sorts of instrumental versions, fares best in Miss Kurenko's performance for Capitol. Lily Pons sings it with orchestra in a pretty, trembly, appealing tone.

—Maria Kurenko (Nos. 1, 4, 12, 13 — RS 5; No. 14 — CAPITOL; Nos. 2, 8, 10, 14 — RS 2).

—Lily Pons, soprano; orchestra cond. by Andre Kostelanetz (No. 14). COLUMBIA ML 2181. 10-in. \$2.98 (with other miscellaneous songs).

SIX SONGS, OP. 38 (1 Edition)

1. At night in my garden



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2. To Her
3. Daisies
4. The Rat Catcher (The Pied Piper)
5. Dreams
6. A-ou

These last most sophisticated, most subtle songs of Rachmaninoff are all knowingly handled by Miss Kurenko. Lemeshev's version of No. 4 is on a par with the soprano's.

—Maria Kurenko. RS 2.
—Serge Lemeshev (No. 4).

LIKE A VISION THE DAYDREAMS HAVE VANISHED

A recently discovered song, of modest effect, in slow waltz rhythm. It is stylishly sung by Miss Oboukhova.

—Nadezhda Oboukhova.

POWDER AND PAINT

This is a setting of a Russian folk song by Rachmaninoff, which was eventually elaborated into the third section of his *Three Russian Folk Songs*, for chorus and orchestra, Op. 41. The composer is heard here as accompanist, playing for a much-admired Russian folk singer who was a good friend of the composer. Song and performance are highly flavorful; Rachmaninoff does what little he has to do perfectly.

—Nadejda Plevinskaya, singer; Sergei Rachmaninoff, piano. RACHMANINOFF SOCIETY RS 6. 12-in. \$5.95 (with *Piano Sonata No. 1*).

OPERAS

ALEKO (1 Edition)

In 1892, at the age of nineteen, Rachmaninoff finished this one-act opera in seventeen days, as part of an examination at the Moscow Conservatory. It impressed the examiners, won the student a coveted gold medal, impressed Tchaikovsky, and finally impressed the public when it was performed in Moscow in 1893. A well-made, unoriginal work, it has pleasant tunes and dance interludes, and is excellently orchestrated. It is probably the least characteristic of all of Rachmaninoff's music. In spite of its initial success, it has failed to hold the boards steadily, though it is revived from time to time in Russia.

The performance here is complete. With the exception of the wobbly-voiced soprano, the singers are vocally well equipped. The expert performance, well recorded, creates quite an atmosphere, even if the opera does not.

—Ivan Petrov (Aleko), Nina Pokrovskaya (Zemira), Anatole Orfenov (Young Gypsy), Alexander Ognitzyev (Old Man); Chorus and Orchestra of the Bolshoi Theater, Nicolai Golovanov, cond. CONCERT HALL CHS 1309. 12-in. \$4.98.

THE MISERLY KNIGHT, OP. 24 (1 Edition)

The second of the three scenes of this short opera, written in 1904, is a long monologue for bass, in which a miser happily gloats on the power his gold has given him. Musically and dramatically undistinguished, it makes a fine display piece for a singer endowed with a beautiful voice, as is Cesare Siepi, an Italian bass whose English is generally intelligible. A discerning performance all around, aided by some of Columbia's better recorded sound.

—Cesare Siepi, bass; Little Orchestra So-

ciety, Thomas Scherman, cond. COLUMBIA ML 4526. 12-in. \$3.98 (with *Arensky: Variations on a Theme by Tchaikovsky*).

CHORAL WORKS

THE BELLS, OP. 35 (1 Edition)

Rachmaninoff comes to grips in this work in literal fashion with sounds and motives that strongly influenced his musical thinking. Composed in 1913, it remained the composer's favorite among his works. A massive, swirling piece, subtitled a choral symphony, *The Bells* is a setting of a free Russian translation of Poe's poem that calls for soloists, chorus, and orchestra. Each of the four movements is concerned with bells—sleigh bells, wedding bells, alarm bells, mournful bells—and each is permeated by a specific mood. The score is almost too rich, but it is superbly wrought for the effects it seeks.

The current recorded performance, made in English in Rome, is adequately recorded in a sound-blanketing studio, which is not right for this heavily scored work. It is sympathetically conducted by Jacques Rachmilovich, if not too well played. The soloists try hard, but only Charles Anthony combines a good voice with musical phrasing. The English is decidedly variable. A recording of a splendid performance last year by the Philadelphia Orchestra and assisting artists has been promised by Columbia for future release. The present recording will serve to acquaint listeners with an eloquent work, but it is a frustratingly imperfect realization.

—Orietta Moscucci, soprano; Charles Anthony, tenor; Lorenzo Malfatti, baritone; Rachmaninoff Society Orchestra and Chorus, Jacques Rachmilovich, cond. RACHMANINOFF SOCIETY RS 8. 12-in. \$5.95.

VESPER MASS, OP. 37

7. Glory Be to God on High

A serious omission from the recorded Rachmaninoff literature is his Vesper Mass, written in 1915. With his own style restrained and leavened by liturgical strictures, Rachmaninoff produced one of his finest compositions in this series of fifteen *a cappella* songs for men's and boys' voices. I have been able to discover only the one excerpt on recordings, well sung by a male chorus at an actual concert. The work should be preserved on disks by a Russian group trained in the proper traditions before such traditions are lost.

—Divinity School Choir, Yale University, James Borden, cond. OVERTONE LP 2. 12-in. \$5.95 (with other sacred vocal music).

TO THEE, O LORD

This short, quietly moving choral piece, for boys' and men's voices *a cappella*, is probably one of the twenty songs in Rachmaninoff's *Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*, Op. 31, a conjecture I have been unable to verify. Op. 31 antedates the Vesper Mass by five years and has been adjudged a kind of preparatory exercise for the Mass. Performance and recording are first-rate.

—Male Choir of All Saints Church, Worcester, Mass., William Self, cond. CLASSIC CE 1022. 12-in. \$5.95 (with choral works from the Russian liturgy).

This concludes the Rachmaninoff Discography. Next month: Chopin.

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SUITES FOR ORCHESTRA

The four orchestral suites date from 1879, 1883, 1884, and 1887 respectively. Into their composition went the love, care, invention, and imagination that the composer usually reserved for his larger orchestral scores. Like those works, they produced, in the composer's mind, the usual doubts and misgivings as to their musical worth, though in the end Tchaikovsky's affection for and opinion of them was high. That they have never attained the popularity he hoped for, is due almost entirely to their musical content, which seldom rises above the level of salon music. Numbers 1 and 2 are virtually never played today, number 4 ("Mozartiana," discussed in Part I, August) but seldom, and only the third suite, thanks to the fine Theme and Variations of its final movement, has managed to retain its place in the orchestral repertoire of today.

SUITE NO. 1 IN D MINOR, Op. 13 (1 Edition)

The rambling structure of this Suite creates the impression that it was a hastily assembled affair, made up of a few pieces the composer had at his disposal. This would be a gross injustice to Tchaikovsky, who spent many months in arranging and rearranging the various sections, until they met with his complete approval. The Scherzo, which was the core of the score, was shifted several times, as additions and excisions were made in the original score. The end result is not particularly satisfying. After the opening Introduction and Fugue, not particularly Tchaikovskian, the musical interest slowly deteriorates, as one trivial section follows another. The *Marche Militaire*, with its hint of the later Overture Miniature of *The Nutcracker* has its moments of interest, but the remaining sections are of little consequence.

The recording is only moderately successful. Goehr has a nice feeling for the work, and his direction is properly spirited, but the orchestral forces at his disposal are not of the highest calibre, and the playing is spotty and rough, particularly in the strings. Concert Hall's sound is rather undernourished, lacking in resonance, and the balance is not always ideal.

— Winterthur Symphony Orchestra, Walter Goehr, cond. CONCERT HALL CHS 1121. 12-in. \$4.98.

SUITE NO. 2 IN C MAJOR, Op. 53 (1 Edition)

The music of this "Suite Caractéristique," as Number 2 is subtitled, seldom rises above the level of good salon music. The two fairly lengthy program sections, "*Jeu de Sons*" and "*Rêves d'enfant*" allow the composer to play with orchestral coloration and tone in his most agreeable manner, and are considerably superior to the remaining three dance sections. The waltz is hardly one of the composer's most inspired efforts, and the finale, a piece of Tchaikovskian pseudo-folk-dance nationalism doesn't quite come off. With addition of four accordions to the full orchestra, the rough and tumble Scherzo Burlesque acquires a rather surprising piquant flavor, making it the most attractive of the dance movements.

The performance is very workmanlike and straightforward, possibly a little too stiff to catch the lilt of the waltz, and inclined to ruggedness in the finale. In general, the sound closely parallels that in the recording of the first Suite.

— Winterthur Symphony Orchestra, Walter Goehr, cond. CONCERT HALL CHS 1122. 12-in. \$4.98.

SUITE NO. 3 IN G MAJOR, Op. 55 (1 Edition)

From Tchaikovsky's efforts to lay the foundation of a symphony, in 1884, emerged the most popular of his orchestral suites, the Third. In view of its origin, it is not surprising to find it cast in a more symphonic mold than its predecessors. The first three movements, a light Elegy, a "*Valse Mélancolique*" (which is hardly what its title implies) and a breezy scherzo have become overshadowed, in the last few years, by the well-known Theme and Variations of the finale. Upon the simple, almost folk-like, melody of the Theme, Tchaikovsky has built a series of twelve variegated and brilliant variations, which even he, a master of the variation form, seldom excelled. They are sturdy enough to retain—or even gain—effect when played out of their proper musical context.

The only complete performance of the Suite (except for minor cuts in the *Valse*) is efficiently played, strongly directed, but lacking in distinction. The weakest section is the finale, where the Variations call for a more plastic treatment than Goehr provides. The recorded sound is more forward and resonant than in the recordings of Nos. 1 and 2, and the balance is also much better managed. There is

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such a striking similarity in the orchestral tone of the Concert Hall Symphony Orchestra, to that of the Winterthur as heard in their recordings of Nos. 1 and 2, that this might well be the Swiss group, renamed for domestic consumption.

—Concert Hall Symphony Orchestra, Walter Goehr, cond. CONCERT HALL CHS 1144. 12-in. \$4.98.

THEME AND VARIATIONS from SUITE NO. 3 IN G MAJOR, Op. 55 (3 Editions)

Of two very excellent recordings of this work by Malko and Schuricht, I have a slight preference for the former's fanciful and fiery reading, with its careful phrasing and excellent detail. The Bluebird sound, while very good, does not match the glow of the London recording, which is, I think of a later date. Schuricht handles the score with considerable finesse, but does not lack for drive except at the most important point, the final variation: the brilliant Polonaise is strangely subdued. The bustling Barbirolli performance is one of his more successful efforts, but he severed his connection with the Philharmonic in 1943, which obviously dates the recording. Yet the sound is surprisingly live, and it is only towards the center of the record that one observes a disturbing amount of fuzziness and distortion.

—Philharmonia Orchestra, Nicolai Malko, cond. BLUEBIRD LBC 1024. 12-in. \$2.98. (with *Borodin: Symphony No. 2*).

—L'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris, Carl Schuricht, cond. LONDON LL 640. 12-in. \$3.98. (with *Tchaikovsky: Capriccio Italien*).

—Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of New York, John Barbirolli, cond. COLUMBIA ML 4121. 12-in. \$3.98 (with *Tchaikovsky: Serenade for Strings*).

SERENADE IN C MAJOR FOR STRING ORCHESTRA, Op. 48 (8 Editions)

Nothing could be further removed from the typical Tchaikovskian musical oratory of the *Overture 1812*, with its gaudy and massive orchestral effects, than the delicate, well disciplined and graceful eloquence of the *Serenade for Strings*. Yet both stem from the same year, 1880, and were, in fact, written and orchestrated at the same time, though perhaps not with the same affection. For according to the composer, the *Overture* was written "without much warmth of enthusiasm," while the *Serenade* sprang "from an inward impulse; I felt it." If the feeling of joyousness, so noticeable in the Mozartian sparkle of the first movement, and the graceful waltz which follows it, is somewhat darkened by the melancholy of the *Elegy*, we soon return to it in the fast-moving, even boisterous finale. The writing for strings is enormously effective, both in its inventiveness and in its achievement of orchestral sonorities and colors. It has an elegance almost unique in the music of this composer, an elegance that makes it the most enjoyable of all his lighter orchestral scores.

Until newer versions are available, the honors must go to the personal, but highly effective Koussevitzky version on Victor. There are certain conductorial idiosyncracies which will not meet with everyone's approval, but the performance gleams with the conductor's affection for the score, is

brilliantly played by the Boston ensemble, and the recorded sound, surprisingly brilliant, belies its age of some five years. A suaver tone pervades the Bluebird issue, but the performance is sluggish and rather heavy-handed, too four-square in conception, and played with a certain fierceness, most unsuitable for such an amiable score. Mengelberg gives us an unusually expressive and sensitive reading, and the Amsterdam players respond admirably to his every demand, but the recording is old, and the sound sadly frayed. In addition, this disk may well be difficult to locate, since it is due to be deleted when present factory stocks are exhausted. A well-proportioned, nicely detailed Ormandy performance, rather forcefully played, is handicapped by Columbia's fuzzy sound, which deteriorates seriously towards the end of the work. Some quite healthy cuts here, in a version originally issued around 1944. The dry string tone of the Decca entrant, typical of the early transfers from Deutsche Grammophon masters, is not inappropriate to this work. The performance, however, is rather heavy, unimaginative, and Germanic in style. The Iron Curtain seems to have been put to good use in veiling the sound of the Bolshoi strings. However authentic this may be in performance, too little of it is heard with any real clarity to let it challenge any of the other versions.

—Boston Symphony Orchestra, Serge Koussevitzky, cond. RCA VICTOR LM 1056. 12-in. 3.98.

—Philharmonia String Orchestra, Issay Dobrowen, cond. RCA VICTOR BLUEBIRD LBC 1021. 12-in. \$2.98. (with *Glinka: Valse Fantasia*).

—Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam, Willem Mengelberg, cond. CAPITOL P 8060. 12-in. \$4.98. (with *Dvorak: Serenade for Strings in E major, Op. 22*).

—Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond. COLUMBIA ML 4121. 12-in. \$3.98. (with *Tchaikovsky: Theme and Variations from Suite No. 3*).

—NWDR Symphony Orchestra of Hamburg, Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt, cond. DECCA DL 9517. 12-in. \$3.98.

—Orchestra of the Bolshoi Theater, Leopold Steinberg, cond. COLOSSEUM CRLP 10190. 12-in. \$5.95. (with *Tchaikovsky: String Quartet No. 1 in D major, Op. 11*).

Not available for evaluation: Royale 1407; Mercury 15035.

SOUVENIR DE FLORENCE (1 Edition)

By no means a profound work, this sextet, it was originally written for violins, viols and cellos doubled, was inspired by the composer's visits to the congenial atmosphere of Italy, specifically to the Tuscan city of its title. Prevailingly sunny in disposition, warm in sentiment, it is most effectively scored to exploit the texture of the instruments involved. In this recording, using augmented strings, this texture sounds almost symphonic. Without knowing the work well, I would say that the performance under Swoboda is extremely good, though there could have been a little more suppleness in his direction. The recording is rich and very full bodied, with excellent definition throughout.

—String Orchestra of the Vienna State

Opera, Henry Swoboda, cond. WESTMINSTER WL 5083. 12-in. \$5.95.

STRING QUARTET NO. 1 IN D MAJOR, Op. 11 (3 Editions)

From the earlier String Quartet in B flat of 1865, only one movement survives, the remainder of the score having been destroyed, possibly by the composer himself. Six years later the most durable and popular of all Tchaikovsky's chamber music works, the fine Quartet in D major appeared. It is the least ambitious of the three quartets, reasonably free from the melancholy that mars some of his work, notable for the security with which the composer handles the sonata form, and for the succinctness of its musical statements. The manipulation of the instrumental forces, particularly in the matter of interplay, is always first-rate, and the whole work shows a mastery of the technique of chamber music writing, that the English critic Colin Mason suggests Tchaikovsky never surpassed. Much of the popularity of the work can be attributed to the beautiful second movement, the "Andante Cantabile" probably the best known quartet-movement in all music, and another of those Tchaikovsky segments so often transplanted from their natural habitat and transcribed for all sorts of instruments, from church organs to palm court trios.

The Capitol disk offers a performance that is purposeful and alive, occasionally overdriven, but not lacking in poetry and warmth. The brightness and polish of the playing is admirably complemented by a vivid, clear sound of striking immediacy, as if the ensemble were only a few feet away. The instrumental clarity is extremely keen, but the strings often verge on an unpleasant steeliness. Concert Hall's sound is not as vibrant or compelling as Capitol's, but through it all runs a silken sheen, a softer quality that is particularly appropriate to the more lyrical moments. The performance is more relaxed, better balanced and the ensemble work more closely knit. The Colosseum recording is something of a puzzle. Originally issued as CRLP 119, performed by the Beethoven String Quartet, it later became CRLP 10190, played by the Oistrakh String Quartet. The performances are identical, the sound (slightly improved on the later issue) is several degrees below that of its competitors, sometimes obscure. The Russian players adopt slightly slower tempos than the two other groups, but the performance does not lack for expressiveness or insight. Surface noise is fairly prominent, suggesting that the record has been transferred from old Russian masters.

— The Hungarian Quartet. CONCERT HALL CHS 1183. 12-in. \$4.98. (with *Glazunov: Five Nocturnes, Op. 15.*)

— The Hollywood String Quartet. CAPITOL P 8187. 12-in. \$4.98. (with *Borodin: Quartet No. 2 in D major.*)

— The Oistrakh String Quartet. COLOSSEUM CRLP 10190. 12-in. \$5.95. (with *Tchaikovsky: Serenade for Strings, Op. 48.*)

STRING QUARTET NO. 2 IN F MAJOR, Op. 22
No recordings on LP.

STRING QUARTET NO. 3 IN E FLAT MAJOR, Op. 30 (1 Edition)

Tchaikovsky's final string quartet, written when he was 36, is dedicated to the memory of Ferdinand Laub, the violinist who had led the first performances of the earlier quartets. Whether Laub's death re-awakened, or merely intensified, the composer's morbid interest in man's fate, a feeling of despair runs through the entire work, and is most strongly present in the slow and funereal third movement. In both the scherzo and the finale, this gloomy outlook is lifted slightly, as if to indicate some hope for the future. Yet, despite its melodic appeal, and the beauty of the first movement, the work always fails to hold my interest throughout.

The Boston group offer a performance more notable for bite, particularly in the finale, and for sturdiness than for style and finesse. The intensity of the playing is pointed up by the remarkably resonant and close-to sound captured, a sound, that for all its closeness, does not impart any edginess to the strings. The balance inclines in favor of the first violin, with the cello pushed well into the background. — Richard Burgin, violin; Leo Panasevich, violin; Joseph de Pasquale, viola; Samuel Mayes, cello. BOSTON B 206. 12-in. \$5.95.

TRIO IN A MINOR, Op. 50 (1 Edition)

Tchaikovsky's assertion, in 1880, that it was torture for him to have to listen to any trio for piano and strings, did not prevent him from using both the form and the combination in his fine Trio in A minor only two years later. It was the first and only time he combined these instrumental timbres in his chamber music. Dedicated to the memory of his good friend, the pianist Nicholas Rubinstein, who died suddenly in Paris in 1881, it is one of the composer's most sincerely convincing scores.

Its short elegaic first movement quickly gives way to the second, a theme and twelve variations, the last of which, developed at some length, is often considered to be a third movement. Its conclusion leads to a return of the main theme of the first movement, and the work concludes on a note of mourning. Throughout, the piano part is emphasized more than usual in a work of this kind, but this is explained by its dedication.

Victor's "Million Dollar" Trio, Rubinstein, Heifetz, and Piatigorsky, give a glowing account of the score, in the only recording currently available. Made in 1950, the recorded sound is remarkably incisive and clean, but the matter of instrumental balance is a serious defect. Almost throughout the piano is far too prominent, the cello obscured, the violin about right. This unequal state of affairs is particularly noticeable in some of the variations: Number 21, for instance, emerges almost exactly the opposite of what the score calls for.

— Artur Rubinstein, piano; Jascha Heifetz, violin; Gregor Piatigorsky, cello. VICTOR LM 1120. 12-in. \$3.98.

EUGENE ONEGIN (Complete) (2 Editions)
Whether *Eugene Onegin* is a masterpiece, a minor masterpiece, or merely the best of all Tchaikovsky's operas — and supporters of *Pique Dame* will no doubt object to all three statements — it is without question

one

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the composer's most popular opera, both inside and outside Russia. The dramatic content of Pushkin's "novel in verse" is small, yet it contained two requirements Tchaikovsky considered necessary to him in the writing of any opera, characters that aroused his sympathy and love, and a plot concerned with strong emotions. The libretto, as it finally emerged, may be considered almost entirely the work of the composer, who, while quoting liberally from the original, reshaped it, considerably heightened its dramatic force and in general gave it a theatrical effectiveness it previously lacked. The plot is by no means improbable. Tatyana, a young girl, is introduced to Onegin, a man of the world, by his friend, Lenski, who is engaged to Tatyana's sister Olga. Tatyana falls in love with Onegin, who is quite indifferent to her. Later, Onegin meets Olga, flirts with her, arousing Lenski's jealousy, and he insists on a duel, during which Lenski is killed. Years later, at a ball given by Prince Gremin, Onegin meets Tatyana again, discovers she is married to the Prince, but still loves Onegin, as he now loves her. Tatyana's respect for her husband forces her to spurn Onegin's love, and she sends him away. Tchaikovsky, as librettist, lessened the prominence of Onegin, played up the Lenski sub plot, and greatly expanded the part of Tatyana, a character with whom he "absolutely fell in love." It is to Lenski and Tatyana that the composer assigns the most felicitous writing in the score, and they represent a musical self-projection of the composer himself. In addition to these vocal parts, the composer rounds out their characters in a series of orchestral passages of great suggestive power. The background against which this drama is enacted, is brilliantly conveyed in the composer's use of hints of folk music for the country scene of the first act, the mazurkas, waltzes and dance music in the opening scenes of Acts II and III.

The two editions available emanate from the same source, the old Disc album originally issued here in the mid-forties, from Russian masters of the same period. In the processing to LP, Period have achieved a sound slightly superior to Colosseum's, but neither can be classed as anything but fair. The orchestra is distant and misty, though the vocalists are reasonably well placed. The vocal honors go to Mikhailov, a better-than-average bass, who sings both Prince Gremin and Zaretsky with considerable distinction. As Lenski, Koslovsky, one of Russia's leading tenors when this recording was made, sings with a good deal of freedom, in a voice that has a rather pinched, nasal quality to it. Less adequate is the Onegin of Norzoff, the final duet with Tatyana, in particular, being quite indifferently sung. Kruglikova, a good if not outstanding soprano, manages most of Tatyana's music with ease, the voice is sweetly young and used most sensitively. The letter aria and scene is competently managed, though perhaps not with quite all the passion and intensity it needs. The lesser parts are capably performed, and the direction is animated, keeping the work moving at a rather unhurried pace. Both companies use six sides, which consume 129 minutes on Period, 132 minutes on Colosseum. Period

includes an English text, Colosseum merely a synopsis of the plot.

—Kruglikova (s). Tatyana; E. Antonova (ms), Olga; L. Roodnytskaya (ms), Larina; V. Makarova (c), Filipevna; P. Nordzov (b), Onegin; I. Koslovsky (t), Lenski; M. Mikhailov (bs), Prince Gremin and Zaretsky; S. Ostraoomov (t), Triquet; A. Myzyehyev (bs), Rotnuy; I. Dolgy (t), Zaduivalov; Chorus and Orchestra of the State Theatre; A. Sh. Mehlik-Pashayev, cond. PERIOD SPLP 507. Three 12-in. \$17.85.

—Identical Cast. Chorus and Orchestra of the Bolshoi Theatre. A. I. Orlov, cond. COLOSSEUM CRLP 127/129. Three 12-in. \$17.85.

N.B. The discrepancy in conductors, whose names are taken from the two albums, may be explained as follows: On the Disc set, some sides were conducted by Orlov, others by Mehlik-Pashayev.

EUGENE ONEGIN. Excerpts. (1 Edition) These excerpts are taken from Period's complete recording of the opera, and include the following highlights:

Introduction and Duet, Act I, scene 1.
Lenski's aria, Act I, scene 1.
Letter scene, Act I, scene 2.
Onegin's aria, Act I, scene 3.
Mazurka and Finale, Act II, scene 1.
Lenski's aria, Act II, scene 2.
Prince Gremin's aria, Act III, scene 1.
Scene and Onegin's aria closing, Act III, scene 2.

—The vocalists are, of course, those on the complete recording. PERIOD SPLP 502. 12-in. \$5.95.

PIQUE DAME Complete. (2 Editions) Modeste Tchaikovsky's libretto for the opera *Pique Dame* is fashioned from an ironic Pushkin story that reads like a combination of Grand Guignol and E. T. A. Hoffmann. In the course of the story, we are treated to three deaths — one by fright, one by drowning, the last by stabbing — gambling, ghosts; a secret involving an infallible formula for winning at cards, and, naturally, love. Certainly this is as macabre a plot as any composer might wish for, though it did not at first appeal to Tchaikovsky who said he could never make anything worth while of it. Two years later, this decision was reversed, and the full score was completed between January and June of 1890. Modeste was quite free in adapting the Pushkin story, giving a wealthy fiancé to Lisa, and conveniently providing her with a grandmother, the aged Countess, who had previously served Tomsy in that capacity. Besides interpolating a pastoral *scena* that has little if anything to do with the action, he devised a tragic ending, the suicide of Hermann, which, while more effective operatically, lacks the ironic twist of the Pushkin original, where Hermann goes mad and is confined in an asylum, where he counts "Three, seven, ace," the secret of the cards, interminably.

If the characters of Hermann, Lisa, and the Countess are not particularly attractive, and to Tchaikovsky this was always important, the composer has surrounded them with music of dramatic power that makes them real personalities, rather than operatic puppets. As in *Eugene Onegin*, Tchaikovsky

reserves some of his finest passages for the interludes, which, by their very contrast, heighten the intensity of the drama. The Mozartian duet in the pastoral interlude, "The Faithful Shepherdess," is almost worthy of the Austrian master himself. Equally fetching is the aria of the old Countess, as she recalls her youthful days as the "Venus of Moscow," with its graceful arietta from Grétry's opera *Richard Coeur de Lion*. There is a very noticeable increase in the emotional content of this score over previous efforts, and in that respect it lies very close to the two last symphonies.

The new Concert Hall version, while not comparable to the best domestic operatic issues, has much to recommend it. This is one of the better-sounding recordings to come from Russian tapes, reasonably free from distortion, clear and very nicely balanced, where orchestra and soloists are concerned. The vocal work, while not greatly distinguished, is on a high level of competence throughout. George Nelepp gives an admirable characterization of the thankless part of Hermann, and his voice, with the peculiar, sweet, nasal quality indigenous to the Russian tenor, seems completely right for the role. His feminine *vis-à-vis*, Smolenskaya, is less successful in making Lisa come to life, though vocally her work is quite satisfactory. The ensemble work is surprisingly good, and the performance under the ubiquitous Mehlik-Pashayev extremely dramatic.

Colosseum's issue is of an earlier vintage, probably the early forties. In every respect it is inferior to its competitor. Sound is distinctly poor and lacking in body, and at no point do the vocalists attain a level comparable to those on the Concert Hall disks. This is particularly noticeable in the two leads, and in the chorus work, which sounds dreary and tired. Concert Hall compresses the work onto six sides (150 minutes) and offers an English text. Colosseum runs to eight sides (157 minutes) with merely a précis of the story as guide.

—G. Nelepp (t), Hermann; A. Ivanov (b), Tomsy; P. Liseetian (b), Prince Yeletsky; A. Peregudov (t), Tcheikalinsky; V. Tyutyuk (bs), Sourin; I. Skobtzov (bs), Naroumov; F. Godovkin (t), Tchaplitsky; V. Shevtzov (t), Master of Ceremonies; E. Smolenskaya (s), Lisa; E. Verbitzkaya (ms), The Countess; V. Borisenko (c), Pauline; E. Korneyeva (ms), Governess; N. Kositzina (s), Mary; V. Firsova (s), Chloë; Chorus and Orchestra of the Bolshoi Theatre; A. Mehlik-Pashayev cond. CONCERT HALL CHS 1305. Three 12-in. \$14.94.

—B. Zletogorova (c), The Countess; K. Djerzhinskaya (s), Lisa; M. Maksakova (ms), Pauline; M. Schervinskaya (ms), Governess; N. Tchubienko (s), Mary; N. Hanaiev (t), Hermann; A. Baturin (b), Tomsy; P. Nordzov (b), Prince Yeletsky; S. Ostraoomov (t) Tcheikalinsky; I. Manshavin (bs), Surin; M. Novozhenin (t), Tchaplitsky; K. Terekin (bs), Naroumov; P. Biellinik (t), Master of Ceremonies.

In the Pastorale:
V. Barsova (s), Pryleppa; M. Maksakova (ms), Mylovzor; V. Poltkovsky (b), Zlatagor; Chorus and Orchestra of the Bolshoi Theatre; S. A. Samosud, cond. COLOSSEUM CRLP 130/3. Four 12-in. \$23.80.

PIQUE DAME Abridged. (1 Edition)
For those who want the best portions of the opera score, sung with great distinction and style, Urania offers this abridged version which in every respect is superior to the two complete versions available. It can be argued that the impact of this work is lessened by being sung in German, but this recording would refute the idea. It is as dramatically exciting, as vocally satisfying as any opera recording known to me. In Rudolf Schock, a robust tenor, heroic in style, Urania offers the best Hermann on records. The sweet, youthful voice of Elisabeth Grümmer is perfectly suited to the hapless Lisa, and she sings the role without undue effort. The veteran Margarete Klose is superb in her well-rounded characterization of the old Countess, and brings to her delineation a poignancy that is memorable. The performance orchestrally is excitingly dramatic, beautifully recorded, and brightly paced by Arthur Rother. Urania's useful booklet contains both a synopsis of the complete work, and an English translation of the text by Boris Goldovsky, but no German text.

—R. Schock (t), Hermann; E. Grümmer (s), Lisa; M. Klose (c), The Countess; J. Prohaska (b), Tomsy; H. Nissen (b), Prince Yeletsky; A. Mueller (c), Pauline; C. van Deyck (t), Tcheikalinsky; O. Hopf (bs), Sourin; W. Lang (bs), Naroumov; K. Reimann (t), Tchaplitsky; Chorus of the Civic Opera; Berlin Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin; Arthur Rother, cond. URANIA URLP 207. Two 12-in. \$11.90..

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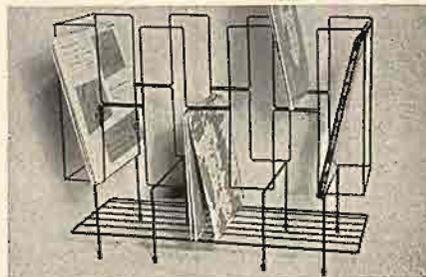
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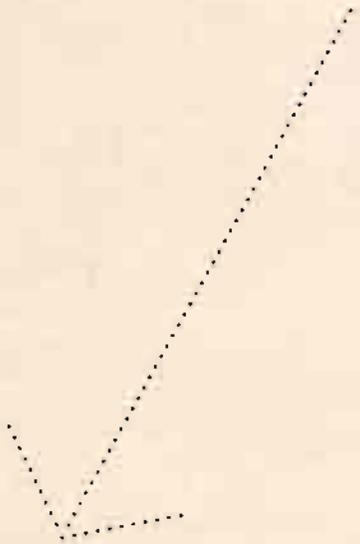
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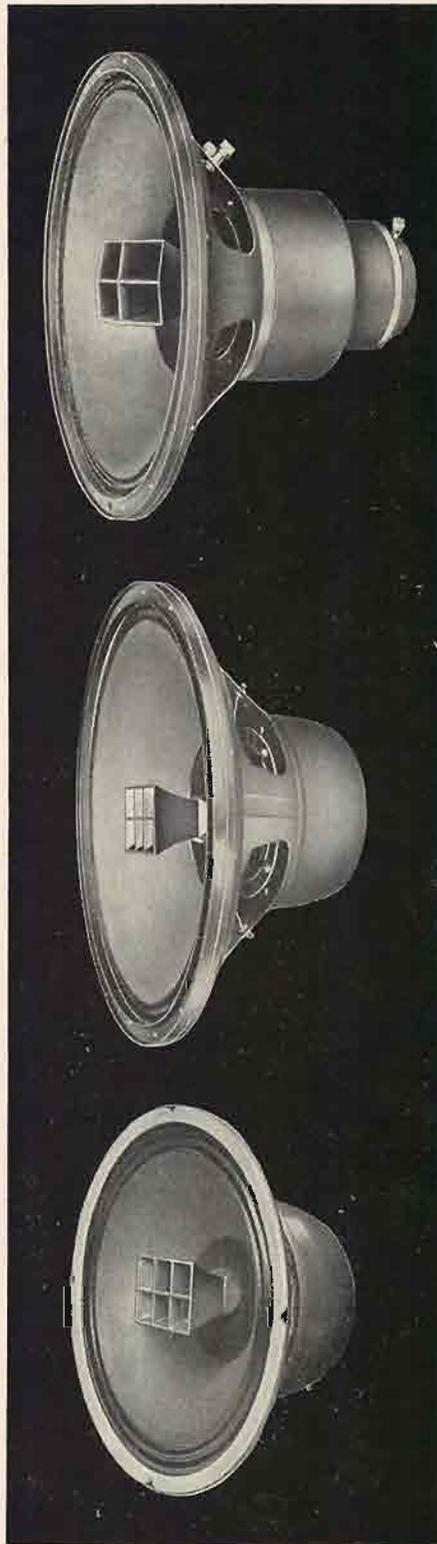
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Nobody Hears It But Me

by JOSEPH MARSHALL

ONE OF THE serious problems in my household is that on most evenings and holidays, when I would like to enjoy a high fidelity concert, the rest of the family would prefer to observe some favorite TV program. Since they constitute a majority and I have no desire to be the authoritarian father, the result is inevitably a victory for television. After some years of this sort of frustration I was at last driven to do something about it, and I pass on my solution to others faced with the same problem.

Obviously the solution to this problem is to provide headphones for either the TV viewers or the hi-fi listeners. Logic would seem to favor phones for the TV viewers, for the simple reason that audio quality may not be important to the enjoyment of TV. Unfortunately, it would be difficult to act on this logic; first, because it would take several headphone sets and, even more important, because the majority is not likely to agree to wear them. The only practical answer is headphones for the high fidelity minority of one.

A preliminary appraisal isn't encouraging. The frequency response of the best headphones slopes severely at the high end in every case, and on the low end also in most cases. I compared the advertised response curves of Permoflux high fidelity models (HD-1, HD-100, DHS-17B), Telex dynamic headsets (Dynaset), and the Brush BA-206 crystal headset. All curves show a very severe drop above the 6,000 to 8,000-cycle region. Considering that even inexpensive high fidelity speaker systems are reasonably flat to 12,000 cycles, and the better ones extend to 15,000 or beyond, this set of curves would appear to discourage the possibilities of real high fidelity.

Still, on the principle that half a loaf is better than none, I made some tests with samples of these headsets. I was very pleasantly surprised to discover that the curves don't do the headphones justice at all. I have no doubt the curves are accurate representations of measurement by instruments; however, they do not appear to represent accurately the response to the human ear. As a matter of plain (though possibly incredible) fact, I found that I could not only hear frequencies all the way up to 17,000 cycles but that the response above 6,000 cycles appears to my ear to be nearly as flat as the response of my elaborate and very expensive loudspeaker system. I could hear no really significant loss of highs even with the amplifier treble control flat. To eliminate the possibility that my own ears might be somehow abnormal, I submitted other members of the family to the same tests and their impressions confirmed my own fully.

I have some theories to account for this seeming para-

dox. First, when listening with loudspeakers in a given room there is a considerable loss of high frequencies through absorption losses and directivity. Since the headphones channel the entire output to the ear alone, these losses do not occur. Furthermore, we are all familiar with the fact that the sensitivity of the ear to high frequencies slopes quite severely at normal room listening levels. It would appear that when headphones are used the relative volume level is more favorable and the net slope is less. Finally, high frequencies are of very low amplitude in normal program material and quite subject to masking by room and background noise. Headphones exclude the room noise; the masking effect is minimized. In any case, through a combination of these factors, the result is a response to the ear which is very much flatter at the high end than the curves indicate and, in fact, completely satisfactory for true high fidelity listening.

On the other hand, the bass end is not as good to the ear at normal listening volume as it is on the curves. In the case of the Permoflux phones, which have the best bass response, the slope appears to start at around 100 cycles; in the case of the Brush it appears to start an octave or more higher and to cut off more completely below 50 cycles. The loss of bass is probably explainable by the slope of the ear's response at low frequencies, which is very much steeper than at high frequencies. The attenuation cannot be compensated completely by the bass boosts of average high fidelity control units. This does reduce some of the bass coloration of music but it does not subtract much if anything from musical appreciation. In other words, one does not hear the bass in the awesome depth possible with today's best speaker systems; but one does hear most or all of the musical values and the subjective effect is very good.

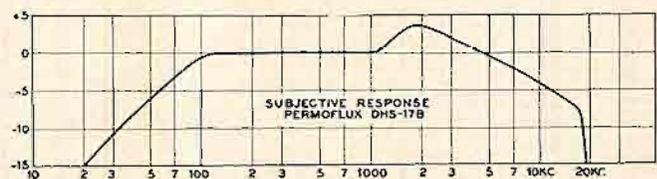


Figure 1

For what it's worth, the curve in Fig. 1 is a purely subjective or psychological impression of the response of the Permoflux headset to my ear and that of my daughter. I claim no objective validity for this curve, and I certainly do not recommend the use of such curves to replace the electrical curves. However, I do think that it gives a better idea of what the average ear can expect to hear than the curves made with instruments and artificial ears. The

Brush gives similar results at the high end, but the turn-over in the bass end appears to begin at a higher point.

On the other hand, the sacrifice of some bass and an insignificant portion of the treble is balanced by some improvements in quality when headphones are used. For one thing, the phones have no cavity or enclosure resonances or boom; the bass, though shallower, is clean, sharp, and well-defined. For another, the resonances recorded on the record are less modified by room acoustics. This, with the final fact that the phones isolate the ear from room noises, has the effect of considerably increasing the feeling of being present right in the room in which the music was performed. By and large, the advantages balance the disadvantages and the net effect is that the phones provide listening quality which merits the designation high fidelity in every respect — very much higher fidelity than a glance at the manufacturer's specifications would indicate.

Having ascertained these gratifying facts, the only remaining problem was to design a satisfactory means of attaching the phones to the high fidelity equipment. I present several solutions to meet several requirements.

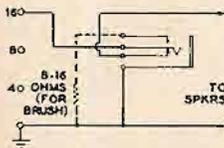


Figure 2



Figure 3

The Permoflux HD-1 and HD-100 sets, and the Telex Dynaset, have impedances of 6 to 8 ohms and can be connected to an amplifier in place of the loudspeakers. A phone jack of the make-and-break type indicated on the diagram can be mounted on the amplifier and wired as indicated in Fig. 2. Ribbon type 300-ohm transmission line of any reasonable length could be used from a plug going into this jack to another jack at the remote location where the headphones are to be used. This second jack could be mounted in a wall outlet or, for moving around the room, in a small RF or IF coil can. The ribbon transmission line can be run under rugs or tacked along moldings. The Brush phones are high impedance and they would require, in addition, an 8 or 16-ohm resistor to provide an amplifier load; this is shown in dotted lines.

If one does not want to modify the amplifier or bother drilling holes in the chassis for the jack, the gadget in Fig. 3 will serve the same purpose but will require a 3 or 4-wire cable. The cable used for remote control of antenna rotators is also flat and easily concealed. All the components could be mounted in a small shield can mounted close to the easy chair occupied by the listener, or moved around the room as required.

The Brush headphones will operate from the output of a preamplifier or control unit. A jack could be mounted on the control unit panel and wired as indicated in Fig. 4. Permoflux and Telex headsets cannot be operated this way unless a step-down transformer is used. Permoflux offers a suitable transformer for this purpose.

A more elaborate version takes into account the possibility of binaural listening with two amplifiers, suitable

binaural sources, and the Permoflux binaural headset. This headset has a three-way plug but an adaptor is available which converts it from binaural to normal listening. This gadget, as Fig. 5 shows, permits using the binaural headset with either a single amplifier for conventional monaural

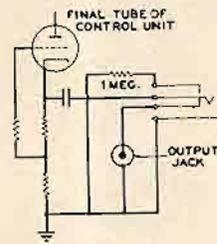


Figure 4

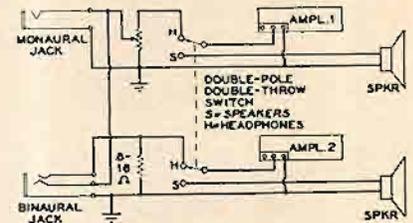
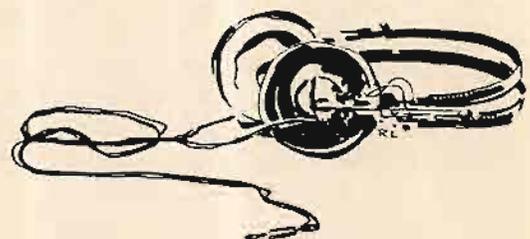


Figure 5

listening, or with two amplifiers and accessories for binaural listening. The adaptor has also a volume control for one channel, so that when used binaurally the sound to the two ears can be balanced or, when used monaurally, the volume can be controlled. You can use either two 3-wire, two flat 4-wire, or a single 5-wire cable to connect this unit to two amplifiers and their speaker systems. I used a Signal Corps jack box for the case. Neither the volume control nor the switch on the box are useful, but the jacks are fine and the case is very handy. Flat cable will slip into the case through the narrow opening below the jacks.

Some, having read this and looked into the catalogues, may be dismayed at the cost of high fidelity headsets. Prices range from about \$10 for the Telex, \$15 for the Brush, and \$30 for the Permoflux HD-1, to nearly \$50 for the binaural Permoflux. Personally, the more I use the phones, the more a bargain they seem. On the positive side I can now enjoy true high fidelity listening at any time. Previously the outfit was usable only about half the time; now it is usable all the time. The phones eliminate family bickering, too; family peace is a precious commodity, and a bargain at just about any price needed to obtain it. Finally, I can cut myself off at any time from the sound of TV — and that in itself is worth a good deal.

All sound transducers have a tendency to color sound with their own characteristics, and headphones are not exceptions to the rule. It is best, therefore, to make listening tests whenever possible of the several types before committing oneself to a purchase. Some listeners will like the sound quality of one make better than that of others; though the difference is not as marked as in speakers, it is well to take it into account. When the budget will not tolerate anything more than a nibble off its edge, you might look around for surplus Army type HS-30-D or 30-U headphones. They have excellent quality, but they have also the serious disadvantage of being uncomfortable and even painful to wear for extended periods.



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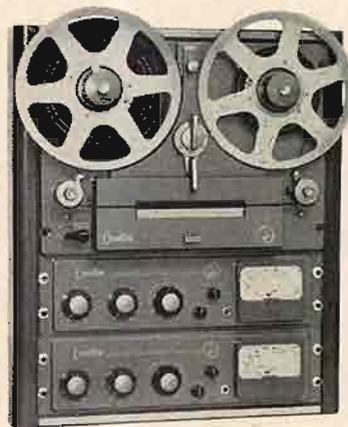
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Craftsmen C250 Solitaire

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): a compact integrated preamp-control unit and amplifier. **Inputs:** equalized input for magnetic phono cartridges; three high-level inputs marked for Tuner, TV, and Tape. **Controls:** combined input selector and phono equalization switch (Tape, TV, Tuner, six phono positions with AES, Lon, RIAA, LP, Eur, or NAB equalization); three-position low-frequency cutoff switch (Flat, 40, 150 cycles); Bass (+15 to -13 db, 50 cycles); Loudness (with concentric uncompensated volume or level-set control); Treble (+15 to -13 db, 10,000 cycles); three-position high-frequency cut-off filter (Flat, 6½, 3 kc); AC power on-off switch. **Hum** null adjustment under chassis. **Outputs:** low-impedance output, affected by all adjustments excepting loudness control, to feed tape recorder; 8 or 16 ohms to speaker. Two switched AC power outlets. **Rated Power:** 20 watts; reserve for 40-watt peaks. **Response:** 10 to 30,000 cycles, ±1 db, at 20 watts. **Distortion:** less than 0.1% IM overall at normal listening levels; 0.5% at 15 watts; less than 2% at 20 watts. **Noise:** 60 db down on phono channel; 70 db down on others. **Dimensions:** 4 in. high by 14½ wide by 11½ deep. **Tubes:** 2-12AX7, 6U8, 6SL7, 2-6L6, 5V4. **Price:** \$86.50. **Manufacturer:** The Radio Craftsmen, Inc., 4401 North Ravenswood Avenue, Chicago 40, Illinois.

Anyone who doubts that high fidelity is a fast-moving field ought to be convinced by the Craftsmen Solitaire. Four years ago, if you could have found a combination that would do everything this does and do it as well, you'd have had to pay at least three times the price — and it would have been much larger and heavier. This progress has not been reflected only in Craftsmen equipment, needless to say; but the Solitaire is a particularly striking example.

There are four input channels: three are unequalized high-level circuits for tuners, tape playback, and the like; the other, for magnetic phono cartridges, feeds through the preamplifier-equalizer section. Six equalization curves are supplied, and they are well chosen (see Specifications paragraph). As on all Craftsmen units, the terminating resistance on the magnetic phono channel is adjusted to furnish an automatic rolloff of 4 db at 10,000 cycles. An extra resistor is supplied for Pickering cartridges. This rolloff is taken into consideration in the design of the equalizer circuits, and our checks on the test unit showed exceptionally close correspondence with the indicated curves. The theory behind this equalization approach is,

apparently, that low values of termination impedance suppress high-frequency cartridge response peaks to some extent. Gain of the phono channel is adequate for low-level cartridges without transformers.

Set below the main rank of front-panel controls are two slide switches for low and high-frequency cutoff filters. The one on the left, next to the bass tone control, is for the lows filter; it has three positions. One position takes the filter out of the circuit completely. The other two give moderately sharp (12 db per octave) cutoffs beginning at 40 or 150 cycles, useful for rumble and hum suppression respectively. Next to the treble tone control, on the right, the high-frequency filter has three positions also: Flat (filter out of the circuit), and cutoffs beginning at 3,000 or 6,500 cycles. Attenuation rate is the same, 12 db per octave. Both filters can shape total response in an entirely different way than tone controls; they serve to limit the *range* of response to what is useful in any given circumstance, and to eliminate what is not useful (scratch, rumble, hum, or high-frequency distortion). They are effective on all inputs, and are useful surprisingly often in radio reception.

Bass and treble controls have average operating ranges. When set to their indicated flat positions, and with other response-shaping controls effectively off, the total response of our test Solitaire was well within ±1 db. The tone controls are marked in db boost and cut, a good idea.

In the very center of the front panel are the loudness and level-set controls, mounted concentrically. Both



The Solitaire — small and inexpensive, versatile and powerful.

affect the sound level, but the loudness control has compensation such that the bass and (to a lesser degree) the treble is boosted relative to the middle range as the control is turned down, in accordance with Fletcher-Munson hearing curves. The other control is uncompensated. The idea is this: you turn the loudness control all the way up. Then you adjust the level-set control so that the sound from whatever source is selected at the time is at a level approximating that of the original. Then, thereafter, you use the loudness control for sound level adjustments, and the tonal balance is supposed to remain audibly the same at any level. With both controls on the front panel, effective loudness compensation can be obtained regardless of changing input levels. If you don't want loudness compensation, of course, you can leave the inner control turned up all the way and use the level-set control for all volume adjustments. It may be difficult to visualize, but you soon get the knack of its operation.

There is an output jack for connection to a tape recorder. It is of low impedance, which is desirable, and the signal at that point is affected by the filters and tone controls but not the loudness control. We are inclined to believe that if you can't have two tape outputs — one before and one after the tone and filter controls — it is generally better to have it after them, to facilitate dubbing records to tape.

A twenty-watt power amplifier is, so far as we know, unique to the Solitaire among compact all-in-one units of this price range. Moreover, it is an excellent amplifier according to our tests. Measuring and listening qualities are both high. The case gets quite hot directly over the output tubes; don't put anything on top that would cover the vent holes (apparently, when the photo reproduced here was retouched these holes were ignored).

Packaging of the unit was very good, and the instruction book was complete and written intelligibly. Before

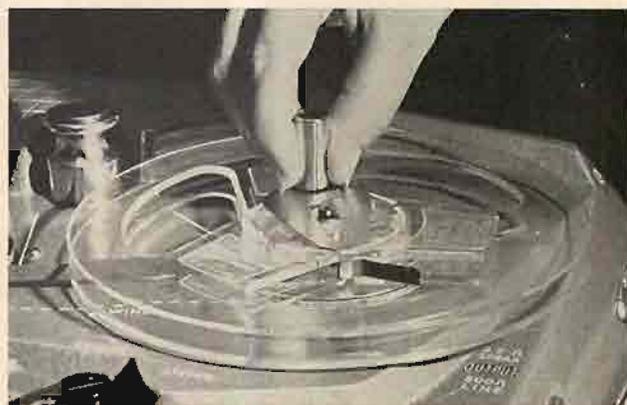
Craftsmen decided to sell directly to consumers the price tag for this combination was about \$120; we'd consider it an outstanding bargain at that price. At better than \$30 less it is, of course, even more attractive. — R. A.

Flahan Tape Threader

We omit manufacturer's specifications because the picture tells the whole story . . . here's a gadget that works! We receive all too many which are pretty close to worthless.

Simply drop the threader over the center post or spindle of the recorder, pull the overhanging lip tight against the hub of the spool (to grip the tape), and turn the spool a couple of times. Then remove the threader and you're in business. Takes a little practice, but here's a case where familiarity definitely does not breed contempt. All for 98c, too!

Address is the Flahan Co., 7517 Pelham Drive, Cleveland 29, Ohio. — C. F.



The Flahan magnetic-tape threader and reel crank really works.

MANUFACTURER'S COMMENT: We'd like to add that this threader may be used also as a manual crank to rotate the reels in either direction, for editing or cuing. Also, it may be used on 8-mm movie reels in the same manner.

Rek-O-Kut Rondines

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): a line of 12-in. rim-driven turntables in three price ranges. All have heavy, dynamically-balanced aluminum tables with cork-neoprene mats, strobe disc sections, and retractable built-in 45-rpm hubs. All have single-knob speed controls with automatic drive disengagement in "off" positions. **MODEL L-34** — Speeds: 33 1/3 and 45 rpm. **Motor:** 4-pole induction. **Noise:** 40 db below average recording level. **Dimensions:** 12 by 15 in. Height above deck, 1 3/8



Rondine and Rondine Deluxe models differ in the drive motors.

in.; below deck, 5 in. **MODEL B-12** — Speeds: 33 1/3, 45, and 78 rpm, controlled by rotary switch with "off" positions between speeds; pilot light goes on when in any speed position and off when between speeds. **Motor:** 4-pole induction. **Noise:** better than 40 db below average recording level. **Dimensions:** 15 3/4 in. wide by 14 in. Height above deck, 1 1/2 in.; below deck, 5 in. **MODEL B-12H** — same as for B-12 except that a hysteresis-synchronous motor is used; noise is better than 50 db below average recording level, and depth required below deck is 6 1/2 in. **Prices:** model L-34 (Rondine Jr.), \$49.95; model B-12 (Rondine), \$74.95; model B-12H (Rondine Deluxe), \$119.95. **Manufacturer:** Rek-O-Kut Company, 38-01 Queens Blvd., Long Island City 1, New York.

Rek-O-Kut's Rondine and Rondine Deluxe turntables are completely new designs; from our experience with them, we'd say they are definitely improved over their predecessors, not only in performance but in operating convenience also.

To begin with, they are easier to install. The cutout required is rectangular, about 13 by 15 inches. There are ribs under the cast-iron deck that fit into such a hole; you simply set the deck over the cutout and screw it down. No need to cut out an irregular hole with a jigsaw. The deck itself is big enough to hold standard 12-inch play-



New Rondine Jr. turntable turns at only the microgroove speeds.

ing arms (it has a place all prepared for drilling holes for a GE arm, incidentally), and if you're going to use a 12-inch arm there's no necessity for a mounting board at all — just the side members of a base big enough to take the turntable deck.

The rotary speed control has five positions: 33 1/3, Off, 45, Off, and 78, and there are three sections on the motor pulley with different diameters. Turning the control to any of the three operating positions turns on the motor and a flush-mounted pilot light, adjusts the height of the idler wheel to contact the motor pulley section of the proper diameter for the speed selected, and engages the drive mechanism. In either of the Off positions the drive is disengaged (to prevent formation of flat spots on the idler) and the motor and pilot light are shut off. Note that there is an Off position next to each speed position, so that it is possible to shut off the unit without switching through other speeds. — Also, there are no pops in the loudspeaker when the motor is switched on and off.

The tables are quite heavy and are permanently covered in the groove area with a thick mat compounded of cork and neoprene rubber. This furnishes a non-slip surface that is slightly resilient and not so rough as to be difficult to keep clean. In the label area, recessed, is fastened a set of printed stroboscopic bands — one for each speed. When the spokes of the strobe appear to remain stationary while the table is turning under 60-cycle light, you know the speed is exactly right. So you have a continuous check on speed accuracy; furthermore, the fine speed adjustment is under the rotary control knob, and wrenches are furnished to remove the knob and make the adjustment!

In the very center of the table is a spring-loaded hub for 45 rpm records. Push down the large hub and twist it to the right: it stays down and doesn't interfere with LPs and 78s. Twist it to the left and a spring pushes it up so that you can play 45s without adaptors. Clever idea, and convenient to use.

The Rondine has a four-pole induction motor that is very smooth-running and quiet in itself; rumble and wow in our sample were at a low level, quite unobjectionable. If you follow arm mounting directions you'll have no trouble with hum pickup from most magnetic cartridges. For \$45 more you can get the Rondine Deluxe with its

hysteresis-synchronous motor, which has four advantages: absolute speed consistency regardless of line voltage variations; even less rumble and wow; substantially less hum pickup from the motor field when used with magnetic cartridges (this is of consequence with only a few cartridges); and tubes running from holes in the deck plate to the motor bearings — you can oil the motor from above.

The Rondine Jr. appears to be a simplified two-speed version of the older, very popular LP-743, with a new table (similar to that for the other Rondines) and a \$10 price reduction. It doesn't have the large cast-iron deck, but it can be mounted in a much smaller base. Speed is controlled by a shift lever; the drive mechanism is disengaged and the motor is shut off in the position midway between speeds. It seems compact, rugged and dependable, and is priced competitively.

Generally, we like these new Rek-O-Kuts. They reflect clearly a commendable design approach; consideration was given appearance, ease of installation and simplified operation, as well as good performance. These matters are all important in today's hi-fi market. The Rondines merit the success they will undoubtedly achieve. — R. A.

MANUFACTURER'S COMMENT: We would like to indicate that each Rondine model incorporates a system of mechanical and acoustical isolation between the idler wheel and the turntable frame or deck. This fact is especially important with reference to your description of the Rondine Jr. The isolation is effective in reducing to an absolute minimum any noises that might be imposed on reproduced music.

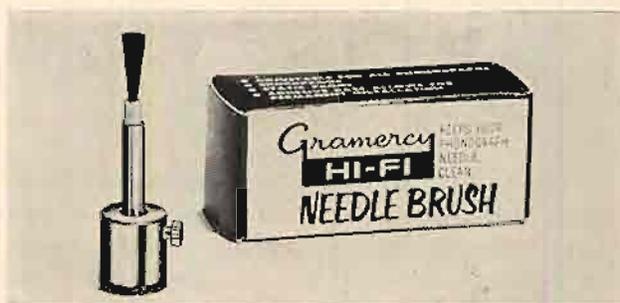
Gramercy Needle Brush

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): a small flexible brush mounted in a springlike arm that is adjustable in length and fastened in an adhesive base. **Price:** \$1.00. **Manufacturer:** Prosound Corporation, 175 Fifth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y.

Here is another ingenious accessory for record-playing systems. Most hi-fiers know that it's bad practice to flick a stylus with the finger to remove accumulated dust, so they do one of two awkward things to remove it: they lean down and blow heartily on the stylus before playing each record, or they hunt for an evasive little brush they keep on hand for the purpose. The brush is not always where it's supposed to be.

With a record changer, the dust is often not removed, particularly between records, and that may be hard on the stylus and the records.

So the Gramercy needle brush may make life a little easier. It consists of a fine brush in a flexible spring arm that fits into a base with a very sticky adhesive on the bot-



Gramercy needle brush sticks to the turntable or changer deck.

tom. You find a clear place on the turntable or changer deck directly under the path of the stylus as it travels from the arm-rest to the record, and stick down the base there with the brush pointing upward. Then adjust the height of the brush so that it flicks the stylus as it travels by, tighten the lock nut, and there you are. Works fine on most turntables and changers; there might not be a suitable mounting space, on some changers, between the arm rest and the outer edge of a 12-in. record. — R. A.

MANUFACTURER'S COMMENT: The spring arm has been made long enough to accommodate the highest swing of a record changer arm over the chassis. But about 5% of such units made in the last five years swing lower than our lowest adjustable height. This is easily rectified by snipping the spring to correct length.

Marantz Audio Console

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): a deluxe self-powered control preamplifier-equalizer. **Inputs:** one for high impedance microphone; one for low-output and one for high-output magnetic cartridges; four high-level inputs marked Tuner, Tape, TV and Extra. **Controls:** selector switch with three positions for low-level inputs and four for high-level inputs; loudness compensation control; volume; bass (+17 to -10 db, 50 cycles); cutoff filter switch (Off, 10, 7, and 5 kc cutoffs); treble (± 10 db, 10,000 cycles); record turnover (Flat, FFRR, AES, Ortho-RIAA, Col LP, 800); AC power on-off switch; record rolloff (Flat, FFRR 78, AES, Ortho-RIAA, LP-NAB, Early 78). **Outputs:** low-impedance output to amplifier; high-impedance output, unaffected by volume, tone and filter controls, for tape recorder. Three switched AC power outlets on power supply chassis. **Response:** ± 1 db, 20 to 40,000 cycles. **Distortion:** 1% maximum IM at 15 volts output; virtually unmeasurable at normal levels. **Noise:** four microvolts equivalent maximum open-circuit noise at first phono grid. **Tubes:** 2-12AX7, 12AU7. **Price:** \$155.00 with cabinet; \$142.50 without. **Manufacturer:** Marantz Company, 44-15 Vernon Blvd., Long Island City 1, New York.

The Audio Console is built like a piece of broadcast equipment; our first impression was one of solid, uncompromising quality and workmanship. Further examination confirmed this impression, and disclosed that it is also a versatile audio front end designed with intelligence and a lot of common sense.

For example: this unit is obviously going to be used in deluxe sound systems, which are more than likely to have two magnetic phono pickups; it would be sensible to furnish two magnetic *phono* channels in any high-quality preamplifier-control. All too few provide this facility — the Marantz unit is one that does. And it has a microphone channel, too. Then there are four high-level input channels; this ought to be enough for even the most complex system. (That's a total of seven switched input channels!)

We approve of the volume-loudness control setup, too. There are actually two controls: one is a straight uncompensated volume control; the other is a continuously-adjustable compensation control that does *not* affect the over-all sound level but adds bass and treble boost in varying degree as desired. This does away with the need for input level controls. It is, in our opinion, a most satisfactory way of dealing with the loudness compensation problem simply and effectively. You select the sound source, adjust the volume as you want it, and turn the loudness knob until it sounds right. Since the boost is

added primarily at very low and very high frequencies the control is often useful as a tone control with special characteristics.

Bass and treble tone controls checked out for us with genuine flat response in their center positions. Inflection frequencies — those at which the controls began to have effect — were lower than usual in the bass and higher than usual in the treble. This results in generally improved performance in the middle range but limits the maximum boost and cut available; no disadvantage in this case because of the other response-shaping controls furnished.

The round knob in the center is the range switch. Turned fully to the left it is removed from the circuit. Other positions successively to the right furnish moderately sharp cutoffs beginning at 10,000, 7,000, and 5,000 cycles, with an attenuation rate of 12 db per octave: useful in gently eliminating scratch, etc.



This front end is designed and built like broadcast equipment.

Individual turnover and rolloff controls for record equalization furnish a choice of 36 curves. Equalization extends to well below 30 cycles, which is unusual and which will be appreciated by those having speaker systems capable of showing up this feature. The phono preamp section is more than adequate; it has enough gain and low enough noise, too, to handle very low-output cartridges without transformers.

With a bit of head-scratching, we can think of three other facilities that might be included in a front end selling for this price. First, a rumble filter can be useful in some circumstances. Second, we believe the recorder output signal should be at low impedance, not high. Finally, there are times (when dubbing old records to tape, for instance) when it might be handy to have the scratch filter and tone controls in the tape recorder output circuit; they're bypassed now, along with the volume control.

These are minor points; we like the Audio Console very much. It merits respect not only for its fine performance in conjunction with a hi-fi system, but in itself as a fine example of good engineering and construction. — R.A.

MANUFACTURER'S COMMENT: There is no adjustable rumble filter, but the phono equalizer circuits have been designed specifically for a rapidly falling response below 20 cycles to reduce subsonic rumble interference.

The recorder output signal is switched directly from the high-level inputs and, therefore, is of the same impedance as the original source. On phono and microphone positions the recorder output will be affected very little by normal cable capacities (less than 1 db loss at 20 kc with a 3,500 mmf load).

Most users seem to prefer an output isolated from the action of tone control circuits for recording purposes. However, if it is desired to use these controls, it is possible to parallel the cables from the main output to both amplifier and recorder.

Continued on page 100



Portrait of a homing pigeon

NEW BOGEN AUTO-LOCK TUNER "ZEROS IN" FROM FRINGE TO PERFECTION

Your "knob jockeying" days are over. With the Bogen R765 FM-AM Tuner you just tune until you hear the FM station you want—and let go! Before you can sit back in your favorite chair, Auto-Lock tuning takes over to make precise adjustments for unbeatable reception . . . and then locks into position.

No chance for drift. No chance for a strong signal to dominate the AFC. The AFC will not operate until you have selected the station. An instant later a light on the panel indicates that the AFC is on and you are locked into precise tuning.

R765 TUNER FEATURES:

- Extreme Sensitivity
- *Complete* silence between stations on FM
- Precision record equalization (7 positions)
- Feedback tone controls
- Delayed AFC (Auto-Lock) for simplified
- Colored dots on controls indicate best settings for your neophyte Aunt Minnie FM tuning

R765 Tuner in chassis form—\$199.50.

R765W Tuner in handsome blond or mahogany veneer cabinet—\$221.75

Write for specifications on the perfect companion amplifier, Bogen D030A with exclusive "ultimate damping."



Bogen

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Please send me your 56 page book, "Understanding High Fidelity," by L. H. Bogen and Louis Biancolli. This new enlarged edition presents invaluable practical information to help get more out of any sound system. I enclose 25¢ for my copy. Also send catalog.

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Send free catalog only.

TESTED IN THE HOME

Continued from page 98

The Plantenna

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): an indoor antenna for VHF television and/or FM, disguised as modernistic planter bowl and tray. Essentially non-directional; has tuning knob to peak reception on any VHF channel or FM frequency. Price: \$9.95 list. Manufacturer: Plantenna Corp., Silverton, Oregon.

We were much disposed to discount the value of this Plantenna before we tried it, having had little success with indoor FM antennas in our fringe location. After we had worked with it for some time, however, we found that it merited more respect than its appearance alone would generate.

Some six months ago we installed a "temporary" antenna in the attic which was to serve until we had a chance to put a broadband multi-element Yagi, with a rotor, on a chimney. It's still in the attic. Fortunately it works reasonably well; our attic is three stories high and was built long before metal was used for construction, lath, or insulation. With this and a sensitive tuner we can get nine FM stations solidly. Using the Plantenna on the first floor, we were able to get eight of these stations.

We found that the Plantenna is somewhat directional, although not severely. There seems to be one fairly sharp null-direction, though, and this might very well be helpful in eliminating or reducing interference from an unwanted



An indoor antenna that is well disguised but quite efficient.

station. Or you might orient the null toward the street, to reduce noise pickup.

Signals are of such low intensity in our area that we had to use the antenna's tuning knob for each station, since it tunes quite sharply. But perhaps we should emphasize again that FM conditions are much less difficult in most populous places, and the Plantenna would undoubtedly not require so much attention. — R. A.

MANUFACTURER'S COMMENT: Electrically, the Plantenna is a circular dipole that has been variably tuned across its ends. The design not only minimizes the directional effect but makes it possible to bring the ends of the dipole together for tuning. Its frequency coverage is 54 to 216 megacycles.

When tuning the Plantenna a sharp increase in signal strength will be noted at resonance. The impedance is correct at resonance; it is appreciably higher off-resonance.

Whereas the Plantenna is small in diameter (13 inches) the frontal mass presented to the wave front is augmented by the width (1½ inches) of the brass antenna element. Horizontal polarization affords maximum rejection of vertically-polarized pulse-type interference.

Altec-Lansing 820-C Speaker

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): A direct-radiating low-frequency horn employing two 15-in. woofers mounted in a bass-reflex cabinet with crossover at 800 cycles to a horn-loaded high frequency unit. Range: 30 to 22,000 cycles. Power rating: 30 watts. Impedance: 16 ohms. Dimensions: 47 3/8 in. high, 42 1/4 in. wide, 29 in. deep; fits corner positions. Price: \$525 in mahogany cabinet; \$388 without exterior cabinet, for custom installation. Manufacturer: Altec-Lansing Corp., 9356 Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills, Calif.

It has taken a long, long time for one of the Altec 820 units to come in for a TITH review. The wait has been worth while: the sound, to this writer's ears and tastes, is superlative. It doesn't go down as deep as some he has heard; it begins to fade somewhere around 40 cycles. It is by no means the most brilliant — and those who like brilliance will wish for more. But it has fine projection; hearing it, I am not made aware that any of the speakers are *in* an enclosure. That goes for the woofers; two 15-inchers can produce a lot of sound; this is clean, without horn-sound, all the way; drums are startlingly crisp; bass voices are realistic; organ pedal notes are true — though here, I must admit, I have heard more impressive bellows; however, I am not sure that the sound at 32 cycles from other speaker systems has been any more true to what was on the record; put a long horn between speaker and ear and the resulting hollowness may create a more exciting throb than the real organ itself would.

Middles are clean, unaffected (if I may use that word), and without pronounced peaks and valleys; highs are pure

and extended. Violins don't burn holes in the grille-cloth. Thus the overall effect is one of balance, cleanness, and good projection. There is no noticeable transition or change in type of sound at the crossover point.

All in all, this is pretty much of a rave-review, for me! Some of the HIGH FIDELITY staff have raved even more excitedly, especially one man who is something of a jazz-(and-drum) enthusiast. Another was unmoved; being a pedal-note lover, he'll pick another. A third was polite but firm in his preference for his own speaker — one which I personally dislike! A fourth said, "I'd have to listen again to only one other speaker-system before I could decide which was best." So it goes; all readers of these columns know by now that how much any given individual likes or dislikes a speaker system depends to a large extent on personal tastes. I happen to like this one, but because of the differences of opinion, I can only urge anyone who plans to spend more than \$500 for a speaker system to listen carefully to the half-dozen ready-made "greats" that fall into this price class. The 820-C is certainly one of them.

I can think of several reasons why the sound from the 820-C appeals to me. The design is straightforward. The two 15-in. woofers radiate directly through a very short, curved baffle (I hesitate to call it a throat; it isn't big enough to warrant that appellation) and are back-loaded by a bass-reflex design. A very carefully worked out bass-reflex can be excellent. Slip a little bit, and they

Continued on page 102

Superb control, beautiful styling,
magnificent performance



CAR BY JAGUAR CARS, NORTH AMERICAN CORPORATION

**...The Bogen PR-100 preamplifier—
audio control unit**

Have you ever opened up the throttle of a truly fine sports car? If so you've sampled a thrill similar to the one you'll get when you put this new Bogen PR-100 through its paces. Its official title, Deluxe Preamplifier and Audio Control Unit, barely describes the sparkling performance and versatility of control of this amazing new unit. For example:

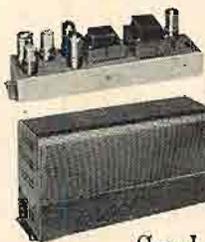
- 2 Concentric Record Equalization Controls: 6 positions for high roll-off, 6 positions for low turnover.
- 2 5-position filter controls: Bass Cut eliminates turntable rumble, Treble eliminates scratch or distortion.
- DC on all filaments.
- Exclusive separate loudness contour selector: the only LCS that takes into account the *input* signal as well as output when you boost lows and highs.
- Produces rated output with any cartridge.
- 6-Pushbutton input selector: power off, phono, tape, radio auxiliary, and *tape monitor* (Enables you to monitor a tape while you are recording).
- Response: 5 to 150,000 cycles ± 0.5 db.

Four coaxial knobs plus selector pushbuttons take care of all the controls. The exclusive "red dot" on each control enables even your Aunt Minnie to hit optimum settings.

Chassis only, \$99.50; in mahogany veneer cabinet, \$119.50.

Bogen HIGH FIDELITY
BECAUSE IT SOUNDS BETTER

Match up your PR-100 with either of
these new amplifiers



Bogen D0110 power amplifier
12 watt output with controlled positive feedback and power stage grid screen regulation: \$44.95.

Bogen D030A power amplifier
30 watt output with exclusive ultimate damping: \$99.00.

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Understanding High Fidelity
explains how to plan your installation. "For the audiophile first seeking his way... a surprising introductory work." *Saturday Review*. Send 25¢ with the coupon.



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Send only free catalog and where-to-buy-it guide.

Send Engineering Data Sheet on following:

PR-100 D0110 D030A

TESTED IN THE HOME

Continued from page 100



Altec Lansing 820-C speaker system gained enthusiastic approval of several staff members.

are horrible, as all too many know. This one is exceptional; furthermore, the cabinet is rock-solid and big enough so that reflexing is not critical. A single crossover network operating at 800 cycles is used; this helps keep the middles clean. The tweeter, working through a very large segmented horn, is crisp without being metallic. Incidentally, the difference between the 820-A and the new 820-C is a new and, to me, less edgy tweeter (better called high-frequency speaker, since it works fairly far down).

The crossover-network has four taps which permit cutting the level of the frequencies above 800 cycles by 1, 2, 3, and 4 db, to balance for room-acoustics. In a dead-ish room, I liked the -3db position best. (Hint to Altec: bring those taps out to a switch, so that the user doesn't have to remove and replace 22 screws to try different taps.)

This item I will hate to return to its maker. — C. F.

University Adjustable Dividing Networks

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): a series of dividing networks and filters for use with two- and three-way loud-speaker systems. Model N-2A provides crossovers at 350 and 700 cycles with speakers of 8 or 16 ohms impedance, or at 700 cycles with 4-ohm speakers. Model N-2B provides crossover at 2,500 cycles with 4-ohm speakers, at 1,250, 2,500 or 5,000 cycles with 8-ohm speakers, and at 2,500 or 5,000 cycles with 16-ohm speakers. The N-1 adjustable high-pass filter provides crossovers at 5,000 or 10,000 cycles with 4-ohm speakers, 2,500, 5,000 or 10,000 with 8-ohm speakers, and at 1,250, 2,500 or 5,000 cycles with 16-ohm speakers; in addition, it incorporates a continuously variable level control. The N-2A and N-2B networks have a 6 db per octave cut-off rate when used singly as 2-way dividing networks; two can be used together to furnish a cutoff of 12 db per octave; or they can be used (singly) as high- or low-pass filters with a cutoff rate of 12 db per octave. The N-2A and N-2B units can be used together as an adjustable 3-way dividing network as well. **Prices:** N-2A: \$18.00; N-2B: \$12.00; N-1 high-pass filter: \$9.00. **Address:** University Loudspeakers, Inc., 80 South Kensico Avenue, White Plains, N. Y.

For the many audiophiles who like to experiment with different speaker and crossover network combinations, the announcement that University Loudspeakers was marketing a series of flexible, already-assembled dividing networks and filters was indeed good news. A few ready-made networks have been available from one or two of the speaker

manufacturers but generally speaking they operated at only one crossover frequency and matched only one speaker impedance. By a bit of clever designing and forethought, the University N-2A and N-2B units not only provide a series of crossover frequencies but also match speakers of 4, 8 and 16 ohms. Furthermore, they can be used as filters instead of dividing networks. What University has done is to put the necessary components (coils and condensers) into a small metal case and bring the connections to these components out to a group of eight screw terminals. By making proper connections to the screw terminals, you get a series of different crossover frequencies or filter effects. A small but very complete instruction book* gives detailed and complete wiring specifications for dozens of different combinations: a quick count shows 45 combinations! The N-2A is for use between speakers designed for low crossovers; a typical crossover frequency with this unit is 350 cycles. The N-2B is for use with speakers intended to cross over in the range above 1,250 cycles. With this in mind, the combination of an N-2A and N-2B is suitable for 3-way systems since they provide, for example, crossovers of 350 and 5,000 cycles.

The N-1 filter is the high end half of a network (remember that a dividing network is essentially two filters working together, a low-pass and a high-pass pair). It is a high pass filter for use in conjunction with tweeters and incorporates a level control.

We shan't discuss here the general theory and application of dividing networks; that subject has been covered in considerable detail in previous issues of HIGH FIDELITY. But we do predict that a lot of people who have always wanted to experiment with networks and different crossover frequencies for their systems, but who have shied

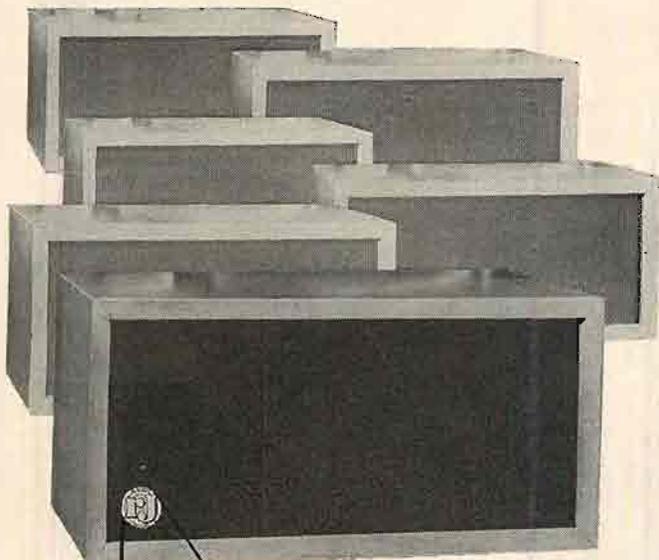


Adjustable dividing network, left, and bi-pass filter, right.

away because of the complication of having to wind their own coils, will be going ahead with these University units and getting a lot of instructive fun — as well as better sound — out of the experiments. We did! The units work very well and the instruction manual is exceptionally clear and helpful. — C. F.

MANUFACTURER'S COMMENT: In addition to providing a means for the audiophile of adjusting his speaker system for best performance under the exact operating and acoustic conditions in his own home, these adjustable networks and filters enable the user to take advantage of the University Progressive Speaker Expansion formula which permits speaker systems to be developed gradually, adding units one at a time as finances permit, without fear of obsolescence of any of the original components including the networks. Of great importance, too, is the fact that one need not possess any technical knowledge to use these networks; the 40-page instruction book supplied clearly illustrates all interconnections for innumerable combinations of speaker types and values

*Available without charge to readers of HIGH FIDELITY; write manufacturer for form No. 78N31.



There is
only one

RJ

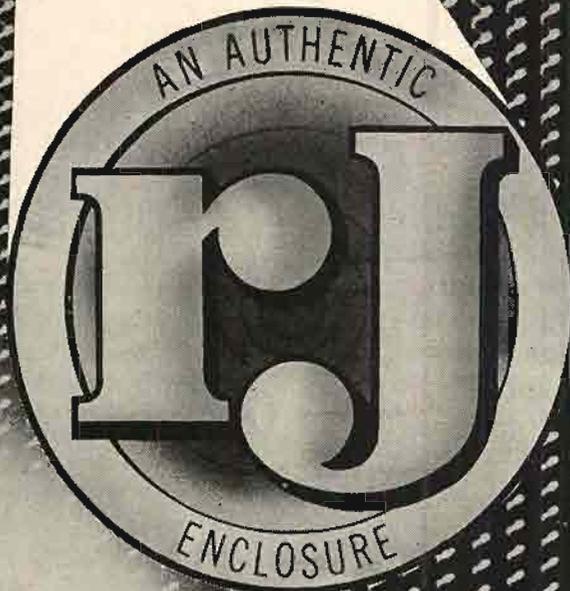
They may look alike...but they can't sound alike! Never before has any product been so aped, copied, and imitated as has the R-J enclosure! The important thing is that other enclosures may look like the R-J, but they can't sound like an R-J...because it's the interior construction principle that makes the difference. The R-J is so different that it has been granted not one but two patents* by the U. S. Government.

There is only one R-J enclosure! Unfortunately, we cannot protect you, by preventing any manufacturer from making a cabinet with the same outside dimensions and appearance as the R-J. But it's the inside of the enclosure that determines how a speaker sounds...and the inside of the R-J absolutely cannot be duplicated!

The best part is that R-J enclosures are as low as \$24.50.

* U.S. Patent Office

Nos. 2,694,462 - 2,694,463



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new performance
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FAIRCHILD 260
50 watt
PROFESSIONAL
AMPLIFIER

Many amplifiers work well when new, but as tubes age unequally, distortion sets in. With ordinary amplifiers you accept this distortion or throw away the tubes and buy another matched pair for the all-important output stage.

But, with the Fairchild 260, you can be your own test engineer. By turning a single control shaft, you can easily restore full distortion-free 50 watt performance yourself. No instruments are required. Proper balance for minimum IM distortion is assured at any time — as often as you wish. See this important, practical feature at your dealer's. Try it yourself. **\$149.50**

FAIRCHILD model 280 arm

Frequently overlooked is the important role played by the pickup arm in a high fidelity system. A poor arm impairs listening quality due to its lateral and torsional resonances, uneven tracking pressure because of bearing friction, lateral instability and distortions from numerous other causes.

The Fairchild 280 Arm, incorporating remarkably rigid square aluminum tubing, separation of lateral and vertical mass, low-friction gyro bearings and other expertly engineered features, assures you of only the sound you were meant to hear.



\$29.50

FAIRCHILD RECORDING EQUIPMENT
10th AVENUE AND 154th STREET, WHITESTONE, NEW YORK

SILENT PARTNER

Continued from page 37

fortissimo, and generally arrive at a beautiful and appropriate orchestral sound.

Nor is frequency response *per se* as important as it is imagined; an engineer I know told me that one of his best-selling, highest-praised recordings, one that had started with an extremely troublesome tape, was released with no frequencies above 8,000 cycles. Nor is "reinforcement" necessarily achieved by accenting details. I learned from an engineer I had just complimented on a good tympani sound that he had been obliged to *remove* most of the bass because of a rumble in the hall. The result was a particularly "live" and beautiful sound with wonderful impact, and no "hall wash." In other words, music is the occasion, and the occasion determines the science. Science cannot come first.

We are learning. There is, apparently, a friendly and fruitful rivalry among the engineers of different companies who, though they may never meet, "watch" each others' recordings of duplicated works. "Aha," I imagine as a comment, "you don't hear the bass clarinet and celeste unison in the Janiculum in *their* version"; or, when outdone by a rival, noting what they themselves missed, for future use. It is the public's gain; and any comparison between the early gems of the hi-fi catalogue with those of today will show how much the gain has been. Records which created a sensation then sound pretty grim to ears attuned to later refinements in clarity. Play, too, the first editions of many disks and compare them with the later "enhanced" editions and you cannot fail to appreciate what equalizing, spurred by competition, can do to further its own range of accomplishment (with the same tape!) and thus to better the listener's enjoyment.

Still we are not medicine men. My heart goes out to the engineer who, it is reported, was greeted by a misguided conductor before a recording session with: "I want *more bass, more highs, more middles, more echo, and more presence!*"

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Complete index of HIGH FIDELITY's record reviews, from the first issue through December 1953 — 50 cents.

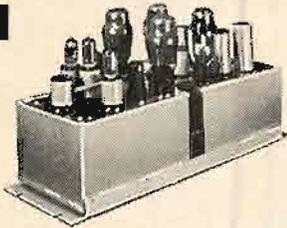


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McINTOSH

50 Watt AUDIO AMPLIFIER

Model 50 W-2



A novel and unique circuit design is employed to provide 50 watts of continuous power (100 watts peak) with amazingly clean, distortion-free reproduction. Frequency response extends from 20 to 20,000 cycles, ± 1 db, and from 10 to 100,000 cycles, ± 3 db. Distortion is less than 1% over the entire audible spectrum at full 50-watt output. Phase shift is negligible. High damping factor and other features contribute much to the outstanding listening quality of the 50 W-2.

Complete with tubes.....\$249.50



REL Precedent FM TUNER

Unquestionably the finest FM tuner ever made. This successor to the famous 646B incorporates every important advance developed in the art of FM reception. Sensitivity is 2 microvolts for better than 40db quieting. Frequency response is 30 to 40,000 cycles ± 1 db. Waveform distortion is less than .5% for 100% modulation. Provides 2-volt output to high impedance, and .2 volts to 600 ohms. Front panel includes slide-rule dial, tuning meter, signal strength meter, tuning control, radio frequency and audio gain controls, and power switch. Power supply is self-contained. Supplied complete with tubes.

Chassis only (for custom installations).....\$325.00

Relay Rack Model.....335.00

Cabinet Model (Mahogany, Walnut or Blonde).....360.00

The ELECTRO-SONIC Professional Series TRANSCRIPTION CARTRIDGES and TONE ARM



The Professional Series of ESL cartridges may be considered the ultimate in transcription apparatus. Employing the same D'Arsonval movement principle as the standard series, these cartridges reach new heights in transcription and record reproduction. With an equivalent moving stylus mass of only 1 milligram, their intermodulation distortion is insignificant. High stylus compliance provides good tracking with as little as 3 grams vertical force and a minimum of record and stylus wear. ESL cartridges have no inherent resonances over the audio range. The extremely low output impedance assures hum-free performance. Requires a matching transformer.

The ESL 310 Professional tone-arm is a superbly machined, ball bearing device for use with ESL Professional cartridges. The stylus force is adjustable to a fine degree of tolerance by means of a spring balance. Arm height is adjustable.

Model P-1 Professional Cartridge, (Microgroove) .001" Diamond.....\$4950

Model P-2 Professional Cartridge, (78 rpm) .003" Diamond.....49.50

Model ESL-310 Professional Tone Arm.....57.00

Model ESL-201 Transformer 50 or 200 ohms secondary.....7.50

Model ESL-211 Transformer to 90,000 ohms.....6.25

MARANTZ AUDIO CONSOLETTA

CONTROL PREAMPLIFIER-EQUALIZER



An unusually high quality unit permitting complete control of response characteristics. In flat position, frequency response extends from below 17 cycles to 50,000 cycles ± 1 db. Unit features a 7-input selector switch... VOLUME CONTROL... independent, continuously variable BASS and TREBLE CONTROLS... independent TURNOVER SELECTOR and TREBLE PRE-EMPHASIS EQUALIZER... continuously variable LOUDNESS COMPENSATOR... 3-position LOW-PASS FILTER... and other features to provide the utmost flexibility.

Cathode follower output permits long line to main amplifier. An independent, isolated output is provided for recording on tape or disc. Furnished with power supply. Supplied in gold finished metal cabinet with stained wood end-blocks.

Complete with tubes.....\$155.00



CONRAC

Fleetwood

REMOTE CONTROL TELEVISION RECEIVER CHASSIS

Models 600 and 700



Two-chassis, remote control TV receivers designed for custom installations. Circuit employs 27 tubes, exclusive of picture tube. Audio amplifier supplies power for existing speaker, also low level high impedance and cathode follower outputs to feed complete sound system. Remote tuner embodying all controls can be operated 40 feet or more from picture chassis. Supplied complete with tubes, but less picture tube, mounting bracket and cabinets.

Model 600—for 21" (70°) rectangular picture tube.....\$264.50

Model 700—for 24" and 27" (90°) rectangular picture tube.....289.50

NOTE: These receivers may be obtained with self-contained controls on single chassis (without remote tuner): Models 610 and 710, priced at \$199.50 and \$219.50 respectively.

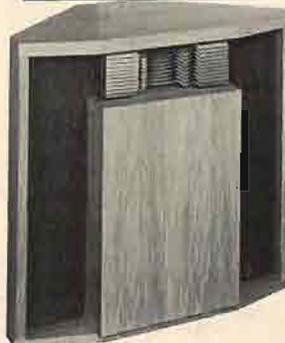
Cabinet for
Remote Control Unit

Mahogany or Walnut.....\$19.95

Blond or Maple.....21.95

Unfinished.....16.95

Where no cabinet facilities are available to the user, Mounting and Accessory Kits are supplied suitable for wall-type and similar installations. Complete literature furnished on request.



JIM LANSING Signature

LOUDSPEAKER SYSTEM

Hartsfield

Model 30085

Includes some of the finest units ever incorporated in a system intended for home use—the Jim Lansing Theater Components. The Model 30 enclosure in which these components are used embodies a new and original

folded horn design which fully loads the front of the low frequency unit. Bass response is clean and crisp, pure and well-defined.

The high frequency driver takes over above the 500-cycle cross-over frequency with smooth response through and above the audible range. The integral Koustical lens assembly evenly disperses these high frequencies, distributing them over a wide horizontal angle.

Complete with cross-over dividing network:

Model D-30085M (Mahogany).....\$726.00

Model D-30085B (Blonde).....735.00

Enclosure only Mahogany.....309.00

Blonde.....318.00



COMPONENTS Professional 3-SPEED TURNTABLE

A high quality record turntable with extremely low rumble and wow content. Employs a constant speed, shielded induction motor, double shock-mounted to isolate vibration. An endless fabric belt drives the turntable directly

from the motor shaft. Speed change is made by placing the endless belt on the proper pulley step.

The turntable itself is a 25-pound steel disc with a polished steel shaft riding on a ball thrust bearing. An expanding spindle is used which automatically centers the record. The entire turntable assembly is mounted on damped coil springs to absorb floor and cabinet vibration. The table provides ample room for mounting a pickup arm.

Blonde or Mahogany.....\$84.50

Base Skirt (as shown in illustration).....15.00

NOTE: Prices Net, F.O.B., N.Y.C. Subject to change without notice

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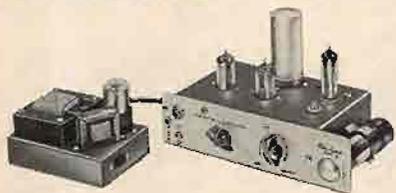
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AUDIOPHILE COMPONENTS

FOR THE BARGAIN PRICE
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\$154¹⁵—



TPR-1 TAPE PREAMP



2 *Fen-tone* TPR-1 TAPE PREAMP

- Bias Frequency 45-55 Kc
- Signal-to-noise ratio 55 db
- Separate Power Supply and Hum-Balance Control
- One mike, One high level input
- High impedance (1 volt) output
- Tubes: 6X5GTA, 6AQ5, 12AT7, 5879, 6E5.

1 *Fen-tone* MOTEK TRANSPORT MECHANISM

- Driven by three individual AC motors.
- Speed 7½ I.P.S., dual tracks.
- All electrical push button switching and braking.
- Hi-Fi record/playback and erase heads.
- Frequency response better than 50 - 10,000 C.P.S.
- WOW and FLUTTER less than .3%
- Accommodates 7" reels (1200').

3 *Fen-tone* PE REX CHANGERS

- The only truly automatic and foolproof changer (patented), playing ten intermixed records, without pre-setting, in any odd size between 6" and 12".
- Precision built: free from rumble and acoustic feedback.
- Automatic muting switch. Automatic shut-off. Built in 3-stage tone filter. Spring mounted chassis.
- Price includes famous PE8 dual cartridge with sapphire stylus.



Fen-tone Hi-Fi announces a new era in professional bi-directional ribbon microphones at down-to-earth prices

THE *Fen-tone* RESLO "BLUE RIBBON" MICROPHONES!

- Bi-directional pattern easily changed to directional or close talk by use of internal pads (standard equipment).
- Isolated, foam rubber shock-mounted, extremely low mass, heat-treated Duraluminum ribbon.
- Output impedance selected by plugging in of proper cable, no switch needed.
- Exceptionally high output and sensitivity (Output level: -6ldb., Sensitivity: 250 MV)
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RAI

Continued from page 48

is Radio Milan's Alfredo Simonetto, a great conductor relatively unknown in Italy and, except for his nine Cetra recordings, utterly unknown outside. I went to visit Maestro Simonetto when I was in Milan, and he was immensely surprised to see me. "I am not a Toscanini or a De Sabata," he said apologetically. "I am a *piccolo musicista*." Nevertheless, his recordings of Wolf-Ferrari's *Quattro Rusteghi*, Donizetti's *Campanello*, Pergolesi's *Serva Padrona*, Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi*, and Verdi's *Un Giorno di Regno* are among the brightest stars in the Cetra catalogue — and their great distinction is in the conducting. He has the greatest of directorial gifts, an absolute grasp of simple and complex rhythms, and a rare ability to make notes sing.

Simonetto is fifty years old, a slight, dark, wiry man with a gentle, apologetic manner. He was born in Treviso, on the Venetian mainland, studied with Wolf-Ferrari, held appropriate junior jobs, and at the age of twenty-eight was taken on by the Teatro alla Scala as a *maestro sostituto*. In 1939 he joined RAI, primarily as a conductor of symphonic music: Labroca shifted him back to opera. Among his outside assignments have been stints at the podia of Scala, the San Carlo in Naples, and the Fenice in Venice.

At Radio Milan, he prepares several dozen operas a year, for all sorts of broadcasts. *Serva Padrona*, for example, was RAI's first, experimental opera telecast. The new studios were not ready at that time, and the old studio was so inadequate that Simonetto had to face away from the singers while conducting, watching the action in a mirror. (Cetra took a tape of the telecast and made a record — a good record, too.) "In the future," Simonetto said, "for those broadcasts where Cetra is making a record, we will have another session after the broadcast to make changes and eliminate mistakes."

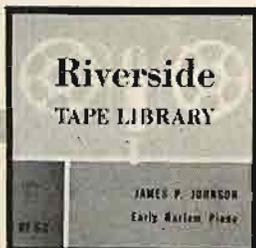
Like all natives of that most beautiful of cities, Simonetto misses Venice; otherwise he is a happy man. He lives with his wife and three sons in a modern apartment house a block from the new radio *palazzo*, teaches a few selected students (one of them a girl from Oklahoma City), buys and reads scores, and writes for various professional magazines. He is RAI's expert

Continued on page 109

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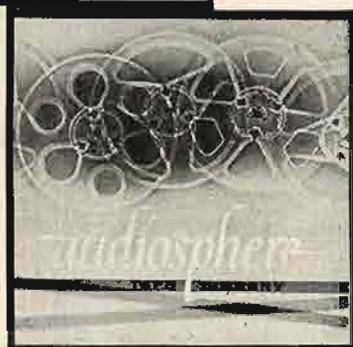
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RAI

Continued from page 106

on eighteenth century music, and a strong supporter of the rising Italian twelve-tone school. "What more could I ask?" he said. "I have my orchestra; if there is something I wish very badly to play I know I will some day have my chance to play it."

No government organization is free of bureaucracy or political pressure; and, as the Cetra catalogue testifies, RAI has among its artists the usual allowance of influential old crocks and untalented friends of friends. But few conductors of Alfredo Simonetto's low-voltage personality are ever given important orchestras of their own. Simonetto's position, and his pleasure in it, are not the least of the accomplishments of Mario Labroca and Radio-televisione Italiana.

LIVING WITH MUSIC

Continued from page 42

Brahms, the incredibly inexhaustible wellspring of Wagnerian vitality, the hysterical drama and color of Tchaikovsky, and the fire and lyricism of Rachmaninoff whose greatness as a composer has been eclipsed by his stature as a pianist. I've always had a weakness for Russian folk music and the strange modal feeling it generates. English and French folk music creates the same response for me. The impressionists please me greatly. I especially like to bathe in the strange, amorphous half world of *Pelléas*. I'm also interested in jazz, particularly the more progressive variety. I'm especially responsive to Stan Kenton and Sauter-Finnegan in the big band field, and Dave Brubeck and Barbara Carroll among the small group.

There are several hundred albums in my library. Their content is predominantly orchestral music of contemporary and Romantic composers with a smaller selection from the classical and pre-classical schools. I admit ignorance of a large segment of our musical culture. This does not distress me. Rather it fills me with a happy feeling of anticipation. Recently I fell in love with Ravel's *Introduction and Allegro*. Only later did I stop to think that this was chamber music, a species I had always assumed I didn't like. New vistas are thus constantly unfolding and each one holds forth a promise of adventure and deep satis-

Continued on page 110



EVERY important discovery relating to mind power, sound thinking and cause and effect, as applied to self-advancement, was known centuries ago, before the masses could read and write.

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Wisdom is not readily attainable by the general public; nor recognized when right within reach. The average person absorbs a multitude of details about things, but goes through life without ever knowing where and how to acquire mastery of the fundamentals of the inner mind—that mysterious silent something which "whispers" to you from within.

Fundamental Laws of Nature

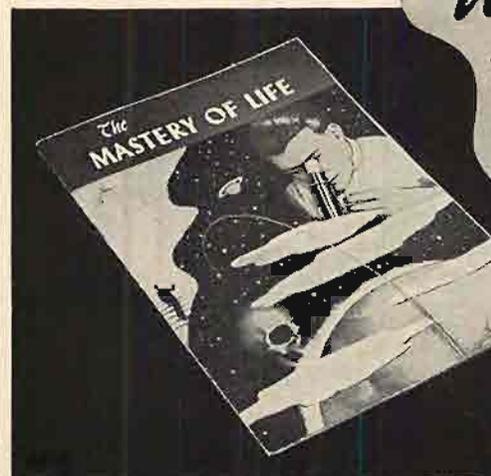
Your habits, accomplishments and weaknesses are the effects of causes. Your thoughts and actions are governed by fundamental laws. Example: The law of compensation is as fundamental

as the laws of breathing, eating and sleeping. All fixed laws of nature are as fascinating to study as they are vital to understand for success in life.

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LIVING WITH MUSIC

Continued from page 109

faction. For my most rewarding moments with music have been those too rare occasions when having struggled against hope with a new work or idiom the sun suddenly burst through and understanding was mine.

"Then felt I like some watcher of the skies

When a new planet swims into his ken;

Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes

He stared at the Pacific—and all his men

Look'd at each other with a wild surmise—

Silent, upon a peak in Darien."

DANCE

Continued from page 40

Russian Imperial Ballet, where he received his training, and his entire vocabulary—even in such experimental shockers as *Op. 34*—is basically derived thence.

Balanchine has, of course, created some ballets with plots. One such is *Orpheus*, which tells in stylized fashion the old Greek legend. For this, Stravinsky composed one of his finest scores. *La Valse*, which is set to Ravel's *Valses nobles et sentimentales* and *La Valse* itself, also has the thread of a plot, though it is a very tenuous one. *Theme and Variations*, set to the last movement of Tchaikovsky's Suite No. 3 in G, is plotless and is a supreme evocation of the great days of the Russian ballet, with all of its pomp, virtuosity, and color. Balanchine also has gone to the classic composers for some of his abstract ballets. *Symphony in C* is set to the Bizet work of the same designation; *Concerto Barocco* uses Bach's Concerto for Two Violins; *Symphonie Concertante* uses Mozart's K. 364 for Violin and Viola.

When Eugene Loring's *Billy the Kid* was first produced in 1948, to Aaron Copland's score, there was hope that a native school of ballet was on the way. As things developed, it was a false assumption. What held back an American school? Hard to say, though the overwhelming influence of Balanchine may have been a factor. Several American works, however, are—like *Billy the Kid*—unmistakably American, not an eclectic synthesis. Loring's ballet, the first of its line, uses Western melodies as a background; and over its

MUSIC LISTENER'S BOOKSHELF

classic technique is something strongly close to the soil. It was followed in 1942, by Agnes de Mille's *Rodeo*, also a Copland score, also an evocation of the American frontier.

One of the most talented of American choreographers is Jerome Robbins, who is responsible for at least two ballets of immense popularity — *Interplay*, and *Fancy Free*. The latter received its premiere in 1944. Its story of three sailors on the town had a peculiar application that year, but that alone was not responsible for its success. There is something likeably brash about it; it has a swing, a swagger, an unselfconscious extroversion. Leonard Bernstein's clever score perfectly complemented the action. *Interplay*, done the following year to a jazzy score by Morton Gould, balances four boys and four girls who choose up sides and choreographically compete with each other. There are four movements: Free Play, Horseplay, Byplay, and Interplay. What comes out is something really American: a national flavor that has no need to rely on props, a treatment that could have evolved in this country and nowhere else. It is from works like these that an American ballet tradition eventually will come.

BALLET DISCOGRAPHY

Continued from page 40

Additional Ballet Recordings, not mentioned in the article.

BLISS, Arthur: *Miracle in the Gorbals*. Arthur Bliss and Philharmonia Orchestra. ANGEL D 35136 or T 35136. 12-in. (with *Music for Strings*). Contemporary British; in Sadler's Wells repertory.

BORODIN, Alexander: *Polovtsian Dances from Prince Igor*. Leopold Stokowski and his Symphony Orchestra. RCA VICTOR LM 1054. 12-in. (with Falla: *El Amor Brujo*). In B. R. de M. C. repertory.

DEBUSSY, Claude: *Jeux*. Victor de Sabata and Augusteo Symphony Orchestra. RCA VICTOR LM 1057. 12-in. (with Respighi: *Fountains of Rome*). Was a Diaghilev repertory item; not given now.

DE FALLA, Manuel: *El Amor Brujo*. Leopold Stokowski and his Symphony Orchestra. RCA VICTOR LM 1054. 12-in. (with Borodin: *Polovtsian Dances*).

DE FALLA, Manuel: *Three Cornered Hat*. Ernest Ansermet and Orchestre de la Suisse Romande. LONDON LL 598. 12-in. Still crops up in B. R. de M. C. performances.

GOTTSCHALK, Louis Moreau: *Cake-walk* (arr. Kay). Eugene Ormandy and Philadelphia Orchestra. COLUMBIA ML 4616. 12-in. (with Gould: *Fall River Legend*). A regular with N. Y. City Ballet.

Continued on page 113

MUSIC-MAKERS: Roland Gelatt. 286 pages, illustrated.

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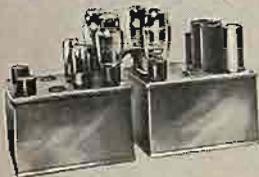
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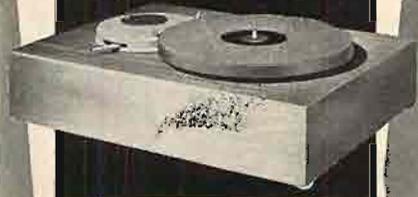


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BALLET DISCOGRAPHY

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KAY, Hershy: *Western Symphony*. Leon Barzin and New York City Ballet Orchestra. VOX PL 9050. 12-in. (with Thomson: *Filling Station*). New, popular item with N. Y. City Ballet.

LAMBERT, Constant: *Horoscope*. Robert Irving and London Philharmonic Orchestra. LONDON LL 771. 10-in. (with Walton: *Façade*). Sadler's Wells repertory; not current.

LECOQC, Alexandre Charles: *Mlle. Angot Suite*. Efreim Kurtz and New York Philharmonic. COLUMBIA ML 4083. (with Kabalevsky: *Comedians*). Occasional Ballet Theatre revivals.

MEYERBEER, Giacomo: *Les Patineurs*. John Hollingsworth and Royal Opera Orchestra. COLUMBIA ML 4362. 12-in. (with Bliss: *Checkmate*). A Sadler's Wells and Ballet Theatre staple.

OFFENBACH, Jacques: *Bluebeard Suite*. Joseph Levine and Ballet Theatre Orchestra. CAPITOL P 8277. 12-in. (with *Helen of Troy*). In B. T. repertory next year.

OFFENBACH, Jacques: *Helen of Troy*. Joseph Levine and Ballet Theatre Orchestra. CAPITOL P 8277. 12-in. (with *Bluebeard*). In B. T. repertory next year.

POULENC, Francis: *Les Biches*. Roger Désormière and Paris Conservatory Orchestra. LONDON LL 624. 12-in. (with Scarlatti: *Good Humoured Ladies*). Rarely performed.

PROKOFIEV, Serge: *Cinderella*. Warwick Braithwaite and Royal Opera Orches-

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BRADFORD & COMPANY

315 East 6th Street NEW YORK, N. Y.

BALLET DISCOGRAPHY

Continued from page 113

tra. COLUMBIA ML 4229. 12-in. (with Gordon: *Rake's Progress*). S. W. may perform.

PROKOFIEV, Serge: *Romeo and Juliet* Suite No. 2. Serge Koussevitzky and Boston Symphony Orchestra. RCA VICTOR LCT 1144. 12-in. (with excerpts from *Love for Three Oranges* and *Lt. Kije*). Not given here.

PROKOFIEV, Serge: *Prodigal Son*. George Sebastian and Colonne Concerts Orchestra. URANIA 7139. 12-in. (with Symphony No. 4). In N. Y. C. B. repertory.

RAVEL, Maurice: *Daphnis et Chloe* (complete). Ernest Ansermet and Orchestre de la Suisse Romande. LONDON LL 693. 12-in. Sadler's Wells will perform.

ROSSINI, Gioacchino: *La Boutique Fantasque*. Ernest Ansermet and London Symphony Orchestra. LONDON LLP 274. 12-in. Rarely performed.

ROUSSEL, Albert: *Bacchus et Ariane* Suite No. 2. Charles Munch and Boston Symphony. RCA VICTOR LM 1741. 12-in. (with Honegger: Symphony No. 5; Ravel: *Pavane*). Rarely performed.

SCARLATTI, Domenico: *Good Humoured Ladies*. Roger Désormière and Paris Conservatory Orchestra. LONDON LL 624. 12-in. (with Poulenc: *Les Biches*).

SCHUMAN, William: *Undertow*. Joseph Levine and Ballet Theatre Orchestra. CAPITOL P 8238. 12-in. (with Copland: *Billy the Kid*). B. T. may revive.

STRAVINSKY, Igor: *Jeux de Cartes*. Igor Stravinsky and New York Philharmonic. MERCURY 10014. 12-in. N. Y. C. B. may perform.

STRAVINSKY, Igor: *Le Sacre du Printemps*. Igor Stravinsky and New York Philharmonic. COLUMBIA ML 4092. 12-in. Oddly, not given here. Very difficult.

STRAVINSKY, Igor: *Scènes de Ballet*. Igor Stravinsky and New York Philharmonic. COLUMBIA ML 4047. S. W. will do.

TCHAIKOVSKY, Peter Ilich: *Swan Lake*. Antal Dorati and Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra. MERCURY OL 3-102. Three 12-in. Complete version as originally composed; never performed in this version.

HOMAGE TO DIAGHILEV. Debussy: *L'Après midi d'un Fauv*; Ravel: *Daphnis et Chloe* Suite No. 2; Satie: *Parade*; Weber-Berlioz: *La Spectre de la Rose*; Tchaikovsky: *Swan Lake* (excerpts); Scarlatti-Tommasini: *Good Humoured Ladies*; De Falla: *Three Cornered Hat* (excerpts); Liadov: *Kikimora*; Stravinsky: *Petrouchka* (excerpts); Prokofiev: *La Pas d'Acier*. Igor Markevitch and Philharmonia Orchestra. ANGEL 35151/2/3. Three 12-in.

THE BALLET. Meyerbeer: *Les Patineurs*; Piston: *The Incredible Flutist*; both with Arthur Fiedler and Boston Pops. Ravel: *La Valse*; Roussel: *Bacchus et Ariane*; both with Charles Munch and Boston Symphony; Stravinsky: *Firebird Suite*, with Stokowski and his orchestra; Ravel: *Daphnis et Chloe* Suite No. 2; Weber: *Invitation to the Dance*; both with Arturo Toscanini and N. B. C. Symphony; Delibes: excerpts from *Coppélia* and *Sylvia*; with Pierre Monteux and Boston Symphony. RCA VICTOR LM 6613. Three 12-in.

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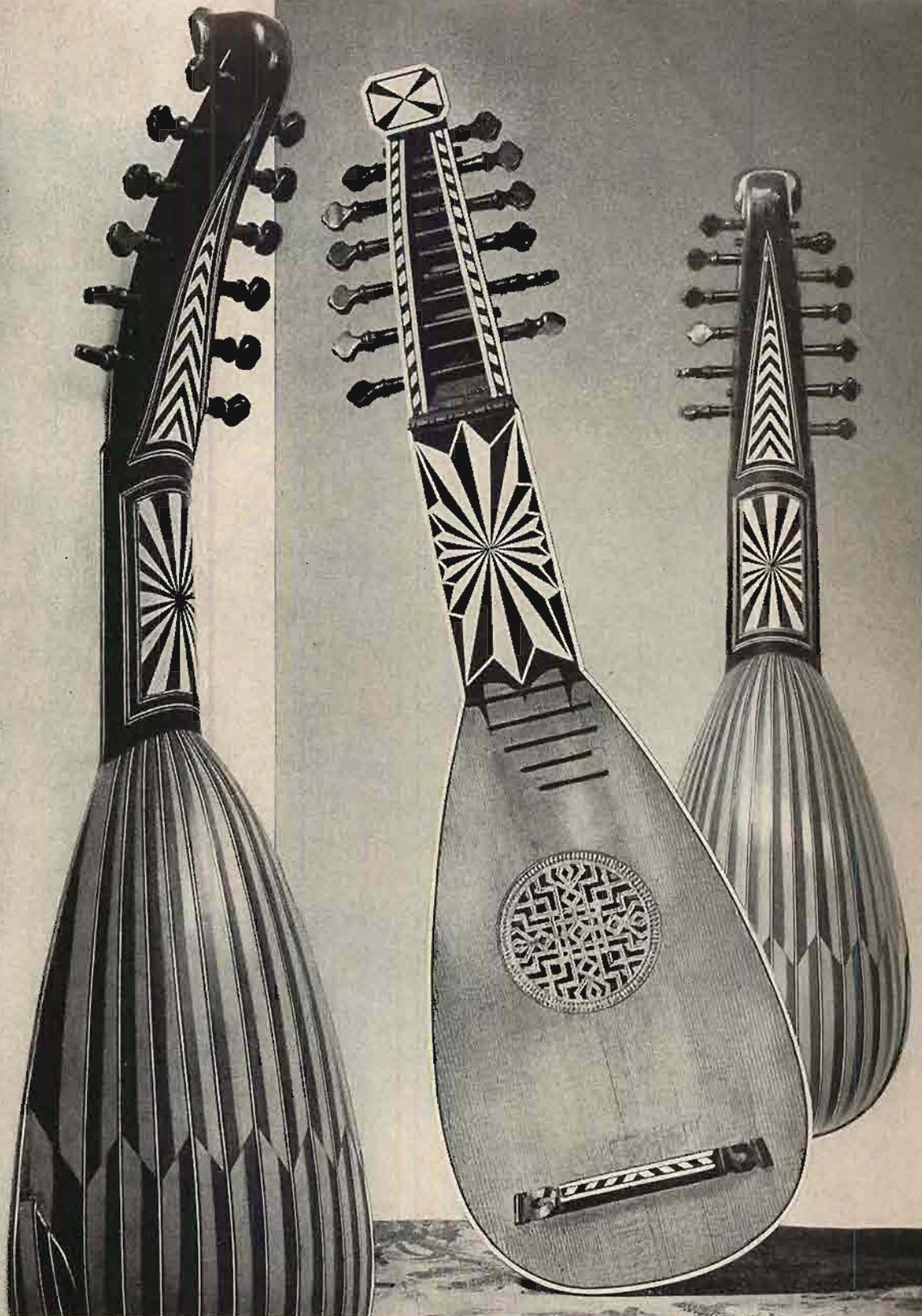
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for the
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photograph by Irvin Kerstner of 18th century pandurina in the Erich Lachmann collection of historical stringed instruments reproduced with permission of the Allan Hancock Foundation and the University of Southern California



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shown by the infinite care taken with minute details. Fedele Barnia fashioned this pandurina in Venice in 1765. The pains he took to cut and fit his bits of cedarwood, ivory and ebony are immediately apparent to the eye. Immediately apparent to the ear is the care taken by Jim Lansing craftsmen in forming and assembling Signature Speakers and enclosures. The objective of all concerned in the fabrication of this outstanding sound reproduction equipment is to make every note a perfect quote.



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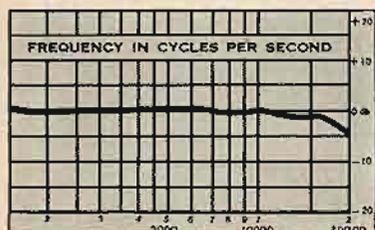


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220
DIAMOND
CARTRIDGE**

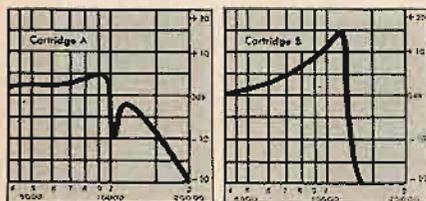
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Highest performance and operating simplicity in this attractive Fairchild 240 Balanced Bar Preamplifier give you the world's finest sound equalization.

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AUDIO FORUM



SIR:

Is there apt to be something wrong with the tracking of my machine and, if so, what could be done? The inner side of the tone arm seems from my observation to tilt slightly closer to the record than does the outer side, indicating perhaps that the stylus isn't fitting properly into the groove. Also, on LPs I can hear faintly the beginning of the music on the groove immediately preceding the groove on which the music actually begins. Perhaps that is a common occurrence.

Lorne Tooley

8½ Mountain View Avenue
Tupper Lake, N. Y.

Unfortunately you neglected to specify what sort of player you had! This is important because it makes a difference as to the best remedy. Nonetheless, there are two general solutions: if you're using

a manual turntable and arm, put a shim under one edge of the arm base, or adjust the height of the arm above the motor board, or both. If you're using a record changer, put one of the foam rubber pads (such as the Phonomat) on the turntable, so as to raise the arm. Changer arms are designed to hold the cartridge stylus perfectly vertical in the middle of a stack of records. On some changers, such as Garrard, the cartridge holder can be turned in the arm to make the stylus vertical at any specific level.

The pre-echo effect on LPs is common, although it is more noticeable on some than on others. It is not invariably a fault in the record itself; the tape used in making the original recording may have "printed through" — that is, high-amplitude passages might have magnetized to some extent the adjoining turns on the tape reel.

SIR:

How about an article on suggested ways of tapping radio and TV in order to pull a tape? Big problem is the 3.2-ohm voice coil and the usual high input impedance of tape recorders. Any simple answer here?

Lloyd McCracken

2054 West 84th Street
Los Angeles 47, Calif.

It seems that you are concerned about connecting the high-impedance inputs on tape recorders across a 3.2-ohm voice coil. There is really no problem involved: if you leave the speaker connected you want a high-impedance bridging load, so as not to disturb the operation of the radio or TV set's output stage. If you want to disconnect the speaker, on the other hand, you simply substitute a resistor of the same value (3 or 4 ohms) for the speaker, and bridge the tape recorder input across that.

SIR:

Please advise me whether I can use to advantage the new Model 132 Pickering Record Equalizer. I own the following equipment: Garrard record player RC-80, with GE variable reluctance cartridge and diamond stylus, Bogen PX-15 amplifier, and Altec Lansing 604B speaker in



COMPONENTS

Professional TURNTABLE

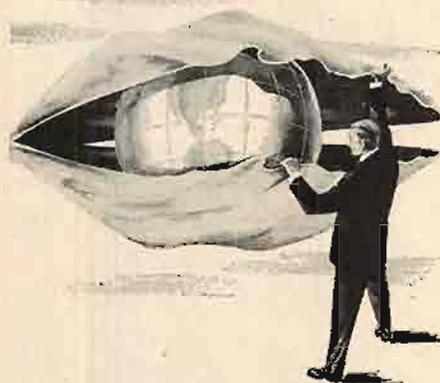
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Price **\$8750**



- Sensitivity 1 to 2 microvolts.
- IF amplifier for broad and sharp bandwidth
- 10 kc whistle filter.
- High gain RF stage.
- Covers complete broadcast band.
- Tape recorder output.
- International shortwave band — 17 meters through 49 meters.
- Built-in high gain ferrite antenna.
- Three controls — output level control with ON-OFF switch; 3-position selector switch, AM broad, AM sharp, shortwave control; and velvet tuning control.
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CABLE: SIMONTRICE

an Electro-Voice cabinet. I also have a Craftsmen Tuner, model 10.

L. C. Dias
P. O. Box 1126
Rio De Janeiro, Brazil

You would be able to use the Pickering record compensator in your system. However, we would suggest that you examine the terminating resistor on the phonograph input of the amplifier, and if it is not 27,000 ohms, then you should replace it.

Also, it is quite likely that you will have to use some treble boost from your amplifier tone control. This will not be very much, but enough to make up for the difference in optimum terminating impedances between the GE and the Pickering cartridges.

SIR:

About one year ago I purchased a hi-fi system. The whole assembly worked fine until my music dealer convinced me that a different cartridge would improve the results. I purchased one, and then my troubles started. Upon playing any of the new records the set delivers a great deal of distortion. I have tried various remedies such as reducing the bass,

Continued on page 118

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HANDBOOK

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The Hartsfield may be purchased progressively. To begin with a D208 Signature 8" Extended Range Speaker can be installed. Later, it is replaced with an 085 two-way theater system kit. The extraordinary reproduction possible with the D208-Hartsfield combination proves two things: the value of The Hartsfield's complex structure... the perfection of all Signature units — from the modest D208 to the ultimate 085. If you cherish perfect sound, the speaker you buy will be...

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OUTSTANDING
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AUDIO FORUM

Continued from page 117

reinforcing the speaker enclosure, sending the cartridge to the manufacturer for adjustment, and trying other compensating curves, all to no avail. I have removed the speaker from the baffle and watched the action of the cone while playing a record and notice that the cone appears ready to tear itself out. The same thing happens with the old cartridge, but to a lesser degree. I'm contacting you as a last resort with the hope that you may be able to suggest a remedy.

Henry Zabel
2714 Paulding Avenue
Bronx, New York

The trouble with your hi-fi system could be caused by amplifier oscillation, bad turntable rumble, or acoustic feedback. Here's how to find out for sure which it is:

Put on a record and let it begin to play through the system normally. Then, while it is still playing, lift the player arm gently and only slightly, just enough to take the stylus off the record, and do not move the arm horizontally. If the cone flutter continues while you do this, there is something wrong with the amplifier; if the flutter stops, then the trouble is in the record player or is caused by acoustic feedback. Replace the arm on the record and lift the whole record

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VITA DRIVE. An effective plasticizer-cleaner for slipping rubber drives, idler wheels and belts used in Record Players, Record Changers and Tape Recorders. You'll be pleased with the results! 75c a bottle. Please include postage. **FRIEND'S WHOLESALE DISTRIBUTORS,** 106 N. 6th STREET, PHILADELPHIA 6, PA.

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Record Collectors: Hundred of operatic records, record catalogs (old) sale or exchange. **G. O. Moran, Lodi, Wisconsin.**

6 element broad band FM antennas. All seamless aluminum, \$10.95 ppd. **Wholesale Supply Co., Lunenburg, Mass.**

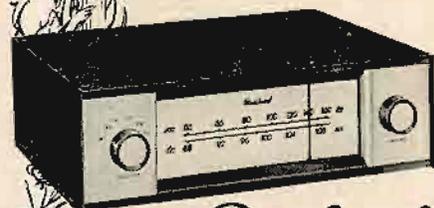
ULTRA LINEAR WILLIAMSON AMPLIFIERS. Intermodulation distortion plotted on every one. 20 WATTS at one percent intermodulation, 10 cycles to 100 K.C., \$79.50. 25 WATTS, 5 to 160 K.C., KT-66's \$99.50. **AUDIO ARTS, Box 22, Oakhurst, Calif.**

Tape recorders and accessories at lowest prices. Excellent trade-in deals on high fidelity recording equipment. **Boynton Studio, 10 Pennsylvania, Dept. 205, Tuckahoe, N. Y.**

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Here is the tuner that offers you more for your money in every way: extraordinary high fidelity tone, exceptional selectivity and sensitivity, more gain and high output, beautiful "space-saver" design.

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with every desirable feature . . .

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A full 20 watt amplifier, a pre-
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Chicago 40, Illinois

player by its base, holding it in your
hands while it plays. If this stops the
flutter too, the trouble is acoustic feedback;
if not, the record player is at fault.

The acoustic feedback, if responsible,
can be cured by experimental repositioning
of components and/or liberal use of
shock-mounts. If the record player or
amplifier causes the flutter you should
take the offending unit to a hi-fi service
dealer—there are many good ones in
the New York area.

SIR:

Mr. Harry L. Wynn ("Letters,"
February 1955, page 32) asks about a
handle on a tone arm.

Anyone can make one easily by at-
taching a banjo pick or a guitar pick
to the arm with household cement.
The picks come in various sizes and
shapes, and weigh very little. They
can be cut with scissors and bent into
most any form by heating.

(Name withheld by request)

SIR:

I don't know the situation in the
East, but in the Los Angeles area there
are a number of surplus electronic ware-
houses. A bit of not unpleasant treas-

Continued on page 120

BEFORE
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know the
reasons why!



- This first book for nonprofessionals, de-
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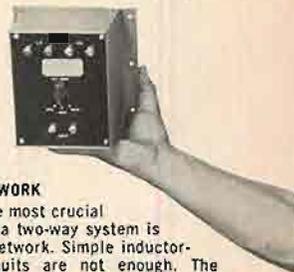
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Signature assembly provides a mid-range ("pres-
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Lens gives wide horizontal and narrow vertical
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Hartsfield—like all Signature Networks—are
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All parts—paper foil capacitors, wire wound re-
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and long term stability.



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Made with a straight-
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coil for maximum rigidity,
this unit drives The Hartsfield
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control" for the first time. Percussion and string
bass come through with a clarity, accuracy, and
balance heard heretofore only in live performance,
in the most acoustically perfect auditoriums.

these massive units are

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THE HARTSFIELD

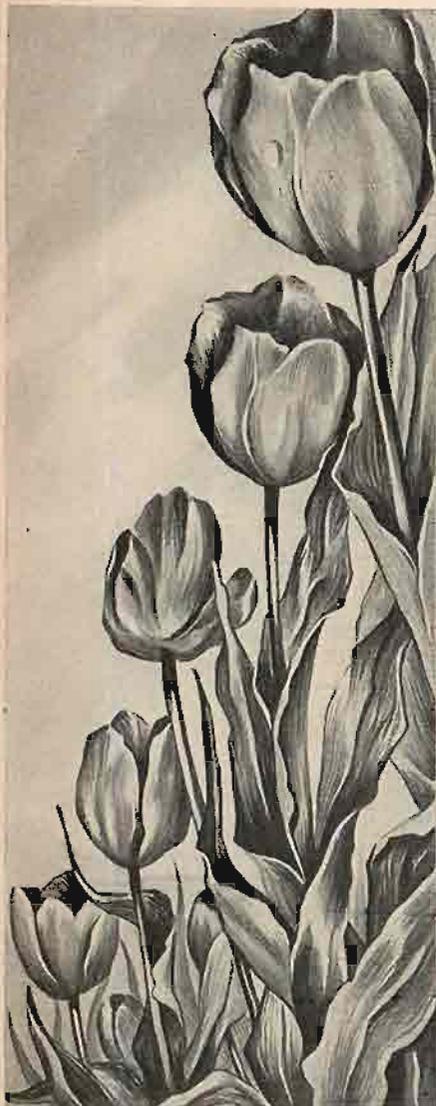
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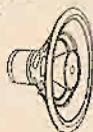
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Information on other models from Duotone, Keyport, N. J.



AUDIO FORUM

Continued from page 119

ure hunting unearthed a set of chokes and power transformer for \$5.50 that equal in quality civilian components at three times the price, and in square shielded cases that really give a professional look to a home-constructed job. As to their durability, I am now working for one of the main radar gear suppliers to the Air Force and Navy. As I work in the receiving test department I test similar units. At two and three times their rated output these units are just starting to get warm. Military standards are of the highest. The home constructor should know of these gold mines.

For the pin-plug haters, a negative solution is to convert to either mike connectors and cables or to coax, such as RG59/U, and 260A/U plugs with their corresponding jacks. Disadvantages are larger size and more of a soldering job. Advantages are ease of removal, neatness, and permanence. Also, although a bigger job, the soldering is less fussy.

Arthur M. Day
Apartment 12
11162 Culver Boulevard
Culver City, Calif.

SIR:

Can a TV antenna be used as an FM antenna too? Would this be wise? If so where should I place the switch on the lead-in line? What kind of switch should I use and where should I get it?

Stanley M. Searles
RFD 1
Rockville, Md.

Most VHF television antennas can be used for FM, since they operate over generally the same frequency range.

You should remember, however, that a TV antenna is ordinarily quite directional, and will be pointed toward a given station or area. This would make the antenna not very useful to pick up FM stations in any other direction, unless you have a rotator.

If you decide to use the TV antenna for FM, a switch should be installed somewhere inside the house. Technical Appliance Corporation makes a multi-antenna switch that is intended for use in switching between two or more television antennas feeding to one set. It works just as well, however, in switching one antenna to two sets. These are available

Continued on page 122

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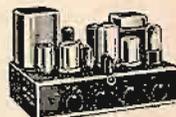
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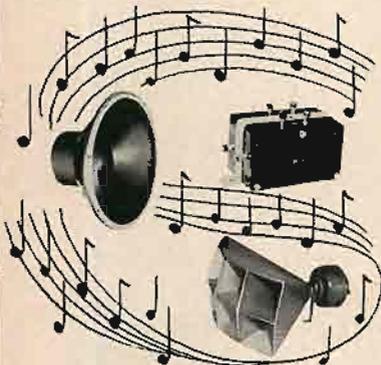
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AUDIO FORUM

Continued from page 120

in most any television or radio service or supply store. For a comprehensive discussion of antennas for FM, we suggest you read the two articles on this subject in the July 1954 issue of HIGH FIDELITY.

SIR:

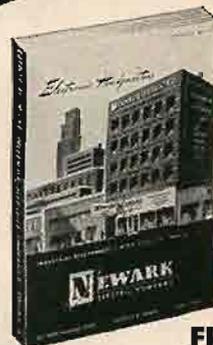
What equipment is required, and exactly how does one go about 1) measuring the impedance of a loudspeaker at 10 kc, at 3 kc, and also at the fundamental resonance of the cone in the low frequency range? 2) And how does one go about measuring the DC resistance of the loudspeaker's voice-coil winding?

R. Bowser

485 East 174 Street
New York, N. Y.

In order to determine the impedance of a loudspeaker you will require a good audio oscillator and a power amplifier to amplify its output. You would then feed this to the loudspeaker at any frequency setting of the oscillator in which you are interested. Then, you put a voltmeter across the loudspeaker voice coil and an ammeter in series with it. The impedance will then

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be the voltage divided by the current.

The DC resistance of the voice coil can be determined simply by measuring it with a standard ohmmeter.

These methods will give results sufficiently accurate for most purposes. It should be noted that loudspeaker impedance—particularly at the low-frequency cone resonance—will change with the baffling method.

SIR:

Can the 12AY7 tube be used in place of the 12AX7 in a preamplifier? I understand that the 12AY7 has a lower output but gives phenomenally low hum.

Frederick P. Thomas
8 Laurel Street
Roxbury 19, Mass.

The base connections on the 12AY7 tube are the same, and the operating voltages are similar, so that you can ordinarily replace one with the other directly.

However, you may run into trouble because the 12AY7 has a much lower amplification factor. Unless you are using a very high-output cartridge, you may find that you will get insufficient volume with this tube.

Continued on page 125

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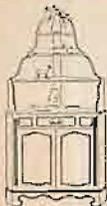
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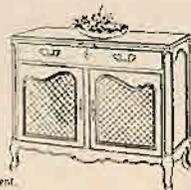
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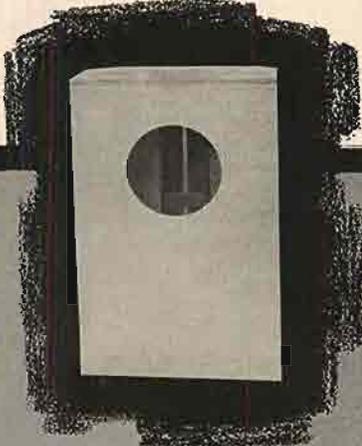
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AUDIO FORUM

Continued from page 123

SIR:

It seems to me that HIGH FIDELITY is written for the genius type who can put together a few feet of baling wire, a couple of vacuum tubes, assorted tin cans and other odds and ends, and produce (wonder of wonders!) beautiful symphonies, etc.

I have a phonograph console which was bought a couple of years ago after comparing various makes mainly on the "tone" basis.

What I would like to know is whether there is anything I can do to bring my machine anywhere near what is classed as "high fidelity." For instance, I would like to know:

1) Would another tone arm improve record playing, or would another player do so?

2) Is it possible to connect up a tweeter to my machine?

3) Would it improve the tone to put the present speaker in a bass reflex cabinet?

The speaker is a 12-inch one with no name or number on it, so far as I can see. It is not in an enclosure. It is simply screwed to a baffle board which stretches across the lower part of the front.

The pickup is what I would call the turnover type for the two classes of 33 1/3 and 45 combined, and 78. It is not the type used on the General Electric here (variable reluctance?).

What I am interested in knowing is whether anything can be done without a major operation

C. C. Falck

3012 Fifth Street, S.W.
Calgary, Alberta, Canada

It is usually not a question of changing one part of such a phonograph to make it "high fidelity," but of deciding if any part is worth keeping. All parts affect the resulting sound — more specifically, the sound is determined by the worst part of the system, not the best. Manufacturers realize this, of course, and are not likely to make any component of a ready-made system radically better than the rest of them.

Nevertheless, improvements are sometimes possible at moderate cost. Probably the least expensive and most impressive improvement in performance of your radio-phonograph could be made by substituting a high-quality ceramic cartridge for your present one.

After that, we'd recommend putting

Continued on page 128

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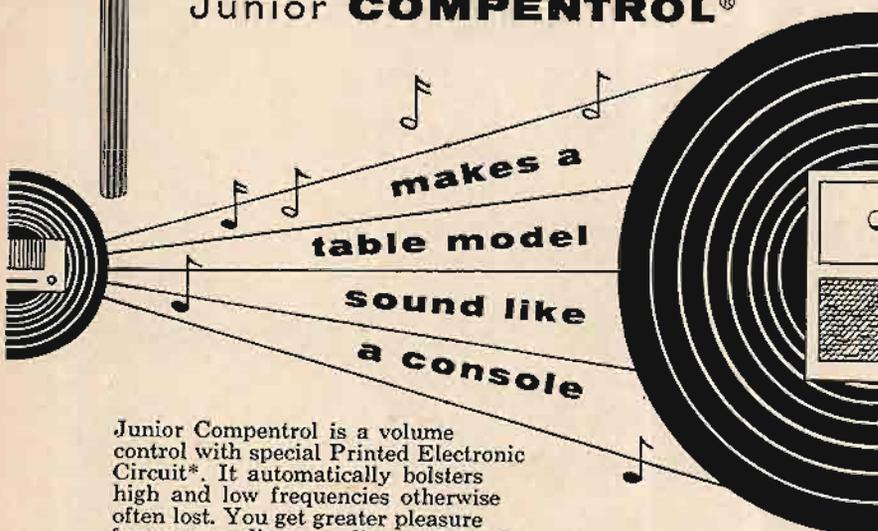
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the loudspeaker in a good enclosure. If you are going to build it yourself, a simple bass-reflex cabinet might be best. Plans for these can be obtained from University, Tannoy, Jensen, and most of the other speaker manufacturers at no cost.

The next improvement would have to be a rather large one. It would entail replacing the ceramic cartridge with a good magnetic type, and also replacing the speaker with a better one. You see, it would be of little use to replace one of them, because this improvement would be primarily in the middle and high-frequency ranges. It would be impractical to obtain a better speaker unless there were cleaner middles and highs to feed it and likewise it would be of little avail to get a better pickup cartridge unless the speaker could reproduce the wider range more sensitively. At the same time, you would need a pre-amplifier-equalizer to go with your magnetic cartridge. There are many inexpensive types available.

After that there are only two changes left for you to make — the record player itself and the amplifier. It would seem logical to replace the record player first; otherwise, an improved amplifier might reveal an embarrassing amount of rumble in your old record changer.

SIR:

I am having some FM trouble, and I would like to tell you my woes. Several months ago I started picking up an undercurrent of "beeps" from one end of the FM dial to the other. They seem to be a Morse code type of signal, which I believe is probably caused by some local short-wave or microwave station. This interference, which luckily stops at night, can be heard over even the strongest FM stations.

Would you please tell me if there is anything I can do — anyone I can write to — about correcting this situation?

Kenneth Knoblock
Timber Lane
Lake Geneva, Wis.

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