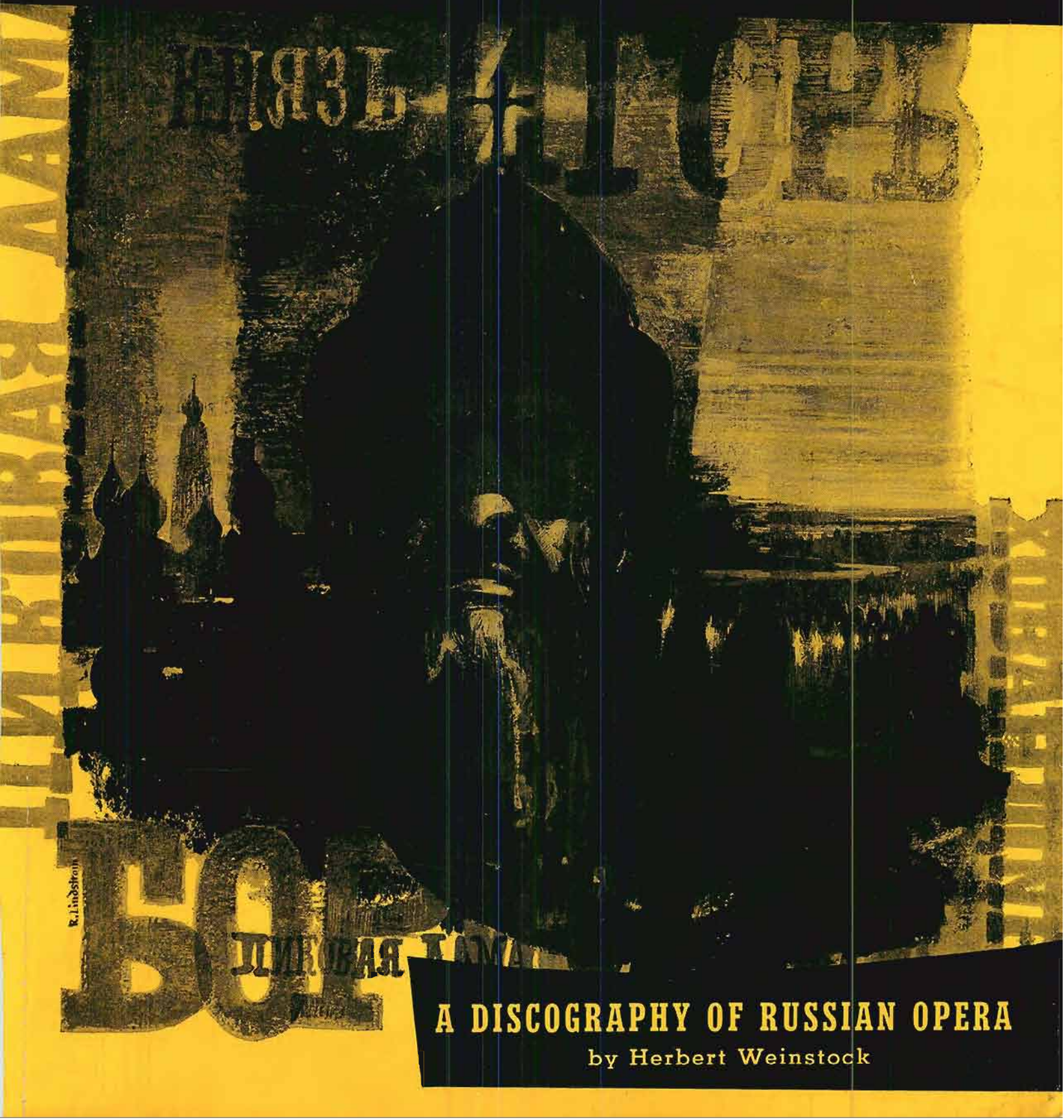
RUSSIA AS IT SAW ME by Jan Peerce

NOVEMBER

High Fidelity

60 CENTS

THE MAGAZINE FOR MUSIC LISTENERS



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by Herbert Weinstock

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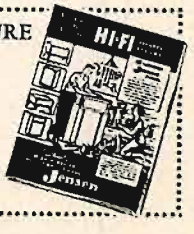

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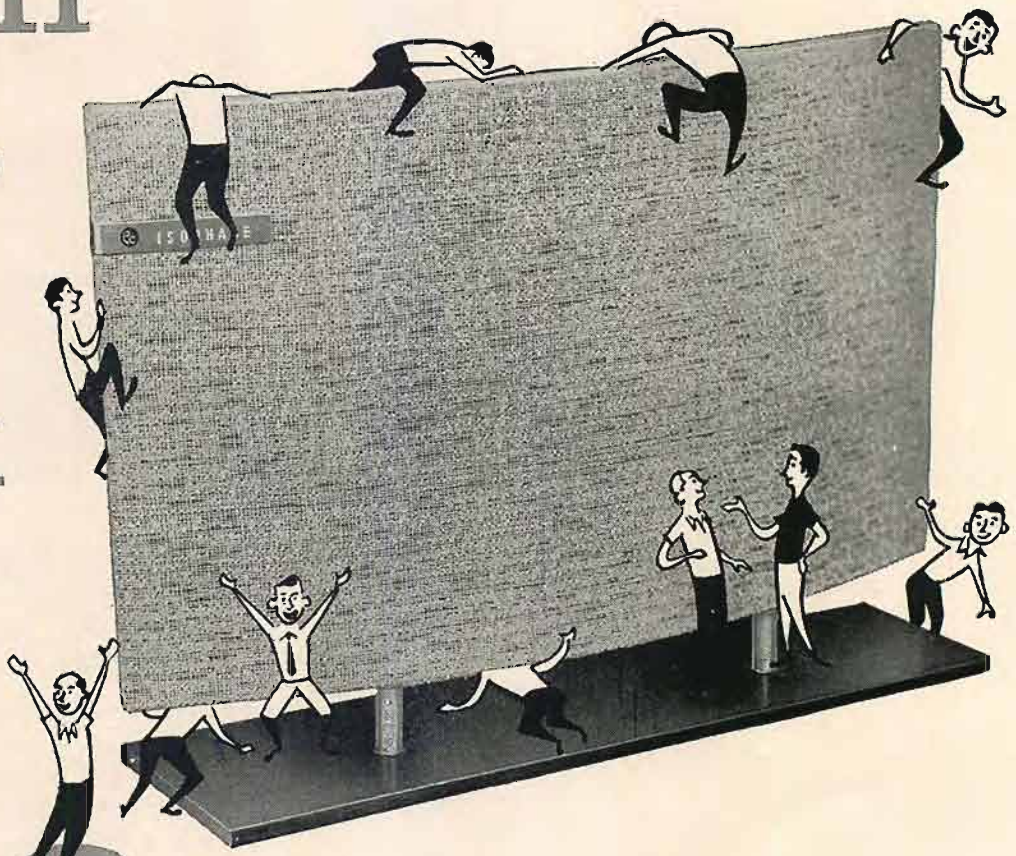

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High Fidelity

THE MAGAZINE FOR MUSIC LISTENERS

The Cover. Art director Roy Lindstrom, who drew the fierce-looking Slav on the cover, does not know whether he (the f.-l.S.) is supposed to be Prince Igor or Boris Godunov, so you may take your choice. To make this easier, Mr. Lindstrom has identified him at the top as Igor and at the bottom as Boris, both in Cyrillic lettering. Mr. Lindstrom does not know Cyrillic lettering, in case you were wondering, but one of the editors does (this is an unusual publishing firm). And when some doubt arose about a terminal "soft" letter (pretty important in Russian script), it developed that another of the editors knew a beautiful and highly literate Russian-born lady pianist, who happened to be living in the neighborhood and who solved the problem in jig-time, or perhaps it was trepak-time. Fast, anyway.

This Issue. We can't remember how we first encountered Fred J. Sass, since he has long been a sound enthusiast and for some considerable time also a *New York Times* photographer, and we could have heard of him in either connection. The connection we were most happy to make with him, however, began when he undertook to make for us a series of pictorial reports on people in the public eye who are fond owners of and listeners to high-fidelity music systems. The first Sass-subject, as page 64 will confirm, is Harold Rome, composer of such Broadway scores as *Fanny* and *Wish You Were Here.*

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Chicago — John R. Rutherford & Associates, Inc., 230 East Ohio St. Telephone: Whitehall 4-6715.

Los Angeles — Brand & Brand, Inc., 6814 San Vicente Blvd. Telephone: Webster 8-3971.

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High Fidelity Magazine is published monthly by Audiocom, Inc., at Great Barrington, Mass. Telephone: Great Barrington 1300. Editorial, publication, and circulation offices at: The Publishing House, Great Barrington, Mass. Subscriptions: $6:00 per year in the United States and Canada. Single copies: 60 cents each. Editorial contributions will be welcomed by the editor. Payment for articles accepted will be arranged prior to publication. Unsolicited manuscripts should be accompanied by return postage. Entered as second-class matter April 27, 1951 at the post office at Great Barrington, Mass., under the act of March 3, 1879. Additional entry at the post office, Pittsfield, Mass. Member Audit Bureau of Circulation. Printed in the U. S. A. by the Ben Franklin Press, Pittsfield, Mass.

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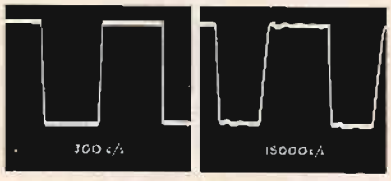
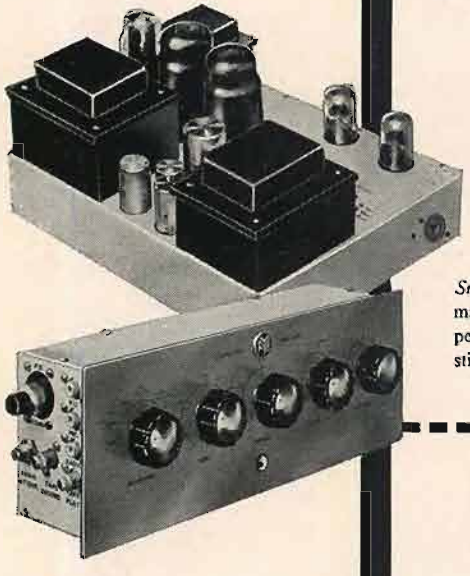
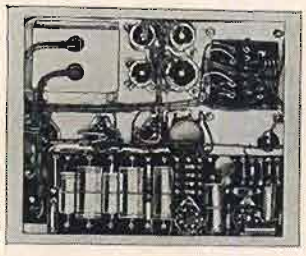


Square wave response at 300 c.p.s. fundamental and 15,000 c.p.s. fundamental; the latter contains harmonics to about 150,000 cycles and indicates the degree of damping attained.





Subchassis view of amplifier showing fine workmanship, which ensures enduring reliability in performance. In the long run there is no substitute for quality.

Control Unit facilities include radio, microphone, pick-up and tape recorder inputs; outlet for tape recording; pre-set radio input attenuator as insurance against overload; interchangeable compensator plugs to meet the wide variation in pick-up gain and optimum load requirements.

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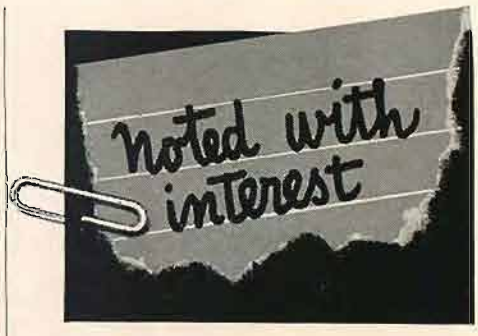

Changer Covers, Continued

Who started all this, anyway? Seems as if we've been discussing changer covers practically all year!

Well, so long as we keep getting good ideas from readers, we will go right on. This time, we are indebted to Earl B. Weber, 36 E. Milwaukee, Detroit 2, Mich., for a brief account of his own experiences and a suggestion which should have appeal for many HIGH FIDELITY readers. Here's his letter of August 15:

"I have some ideas regarding Mr. Montaldi's suggestion, in your August 'Noted With Interest' column, that covers for record changers be a do-it-yourself project fashioned from plastic material.

"I also had this problem and met with the same difficulty in finding a solution. Flexible plastic, while adequate as a dust cover, presented an unsightly appearance.

"Finally, out of sheer despair, I paid something like $20.00 to have a clear Lucite box cover made. However, I feel it was well worth the price as it is a perfect dust protector and at the same time, in an offhand sort of way, adds a modernistic, tailor-made touch to the table upon which I have mounted the changer.

"It occurs to me if enough individuals are interested in a product of this kind, I could contact the local manufacturer for a more reasonable price based on a quantity. I will be glad to hear from any reader who would like to explore this further."

Don't think we need to say anything more . . . sounds like a smart and attractive idea, and Mr. Weber is, no doubt, due for some mail!

High Fidelity Clubs

A call for help and assistance has been received from Donald K. Isburgh, 164 West Main St., Amsterdam, N. Y. He writes:

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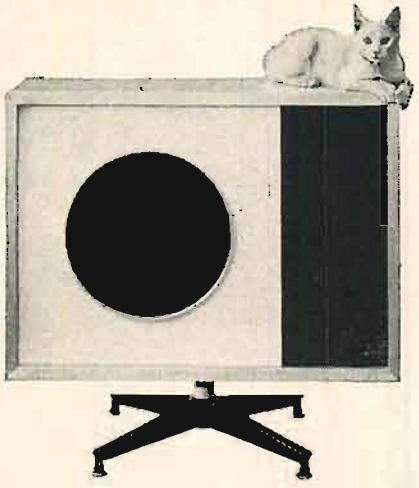

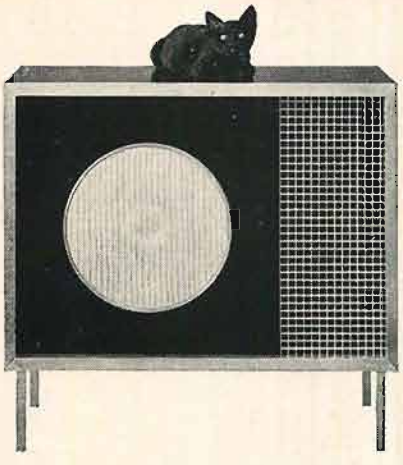

THE FIRST CHARLES EAMES DESIGNS FOR STEPHENS

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The curious analogy of the black diamonds

Recent issues of the Schwann Catalog have shown a large number of black diamonds opposite listings of recorded performances of fine music . . . black diamonds that mean music will be missing from future issues.

These black diamonds can be an object lesson to every serious listener to music, too, for in music reproduction there is a strong analogy. If you listen to your records on outmoded phono equipment, even if you've paid all outdoors for a new TV combination, you're suffering from the malaise of the black diamonds. *You're missing a lot of music!*

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ESL Professional Arm and Cartridge — Superb arm and cartridge value at this or any price. Startling clarity and detail of reproduction. For up to 16" transcriptions. Diamond stylus.
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JansZen Electrostatic Tweeter and AR-1W Woofer — Acclaimed as the ultimate speaker system in minimum space. Pure highs; crisp, clean lows. Truly natural reproduction. Available unfinished or choice of finish.
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City ..... Zone ( ) State .....

NOTED WITH INTEREST

Continued from page 4

"There is a group of music lovers in this area who are very much interested in getting together and forming a high-fidelity listening club. The idea would be to become acquainted with various types of hi-fi installations belonging to members of the club and also to promote better understanding and appreciation of *hi-fi in* this area. . . .

"My reason for writing you is to ask if you have any information concerning the type of group which I have described: how such a group is formed; how it functions; where and when it meets — just anything pertaining to a high-fidelity club."

We sent Mr. Isburgh such information as we had, and suggested the names of a couple of clubs he might get in touch with. But — that didn't seem like very much help; hence this call to readers.

We would appreciate it — and so would Mr. Isburgh, of course — *if* anyone who has any ideas on the subject would write him. Furthermore, what's the status of high-fidelity clubs and music listening groups these days? Would readers like us to publish the names and locations of active clubs? If so, will club secretaries send us brief, basic information: name of club, address (if permanent), name and address of secretary or other person to whom inquiries for further information should be addressed.

Fie

We wish to take this opportunity to remind readers of the well-known fact that little differences make big messes.

For example, in spite of the best efforts of printers and proofreaders, hi-fi gets tangled up every now and then. We recently read about "hi-if." This seemed rather appropriate, since that particular article had a good deal of iffiness about it . . . and it certainly is true that *if* everything is just right, many times over, then in spite of hi-*if* you get hi-fi.

We also read once about hi-fie. This, we think, *is* an admirable term, one that should be added to the audiophile lexicon. Into the category we can put equipment such as was described in one of the trade papers last summer: "The RE Co. is marketing a 15-watt amplifier, plus or minus five

Continued on page 9

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H • THE TREND II: 40 watt preamplifier and amplifier.
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Separate custom multiple speaker system. (26½"H, 31½"W, 17¼"D, in walnut or mahogany.)
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can be started as a single channel system and converted to 2-way and 3-way without modification

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By simply mounting and connecting a Trebax and 5000-cycle crossover unit, you convert your full-range Axiom system into a 2-way with frequency response extended to 20,000 cycles. Then, by adding a Midax and 750-cycle crossover unit, this 2-way converts into a Goodmans 3-way system. In this instance, the 12-inch Axiom may be replaced with a 12-inch Goodmans Audiom 60 or 70 woofer, if desired. ARU Enclosures are also available for use with the 15-inch Audiom 80 and 18-inch Audiom 90 woofers in 2-way and 3-way systems.

Another type of ARU Enclosure is designed to use 8-inch Goodmans Axiette speakers as tweeters with Audiom woofers. Three special ARU Enclosures have also been developed for use with one, two or four of the famous Axiom 80 'free suspension' speakers as wide-range single-channel systems exclusively.

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prices slightly higher west of Rockies

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NOTED WITH INTEREST

Continued from page 6

decibels, for $129.95. The unit is made of ¾-in. wood with lock-joint corners. Among the controls is an on-off pilot light."

This, we claim, is hi-fie. And, in a few well-chosen words, the item conveys to the reader which, of a vast number of possible technical specifications, are truly important to the achievement of hi-fie. So: don't be misled by wild advertising claims. If you really want hi-fie, be *sure* you get lock-joint corners *and* an on-off pilot light.

Jensen Enclosure Designs

Just received from Jensen Mfg. Co. is a sample copy of their new publication, *Loudspeaker Manual 1060* . . . and a most interesting and worthwhile manual it is.

Described are a whole series of loudspeakers systems and enclosures, ranging from the 28-cubic-foot Imperial to a 1¾-foot Duette. Construction drawings and instructions are given in detail so you can build your own enclosures, of appropriate size and style, to accommodate your own speakers or the Jensen speaker kits specifically assembled for the enclosure. The descriptions cover all the well-known Jensen models: Imperial, Triplex, Ultraflex, Concerto, Duette —each in several sizes and shapes (corner and wall).

If you're interested in building enclosures better get this manual. It's only 50¢.

New in San Francisco

Miller Brennen of Edgewater Inn, Corte Madera, Calif., wrote us during the summer that they planned to open soon for business, specializing in records and hi-fidelity sound reproduction, in the San Francisco Bay area. Stop in to see their place if you have a chance.

High Fidelity Defined

From Ed Altshuler of American Electronics (Berlant-Concertone) comes a definition of high fidelity:

"High-fidelity components differ from regular packaged goods in one basic respect: the hi-fi component is an integral part of a music reproduc-

Continued on page 12

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Model S-235. Preamp Kit for above. Net $3.10
S-757. Enclosure for above. Net..... $3.95

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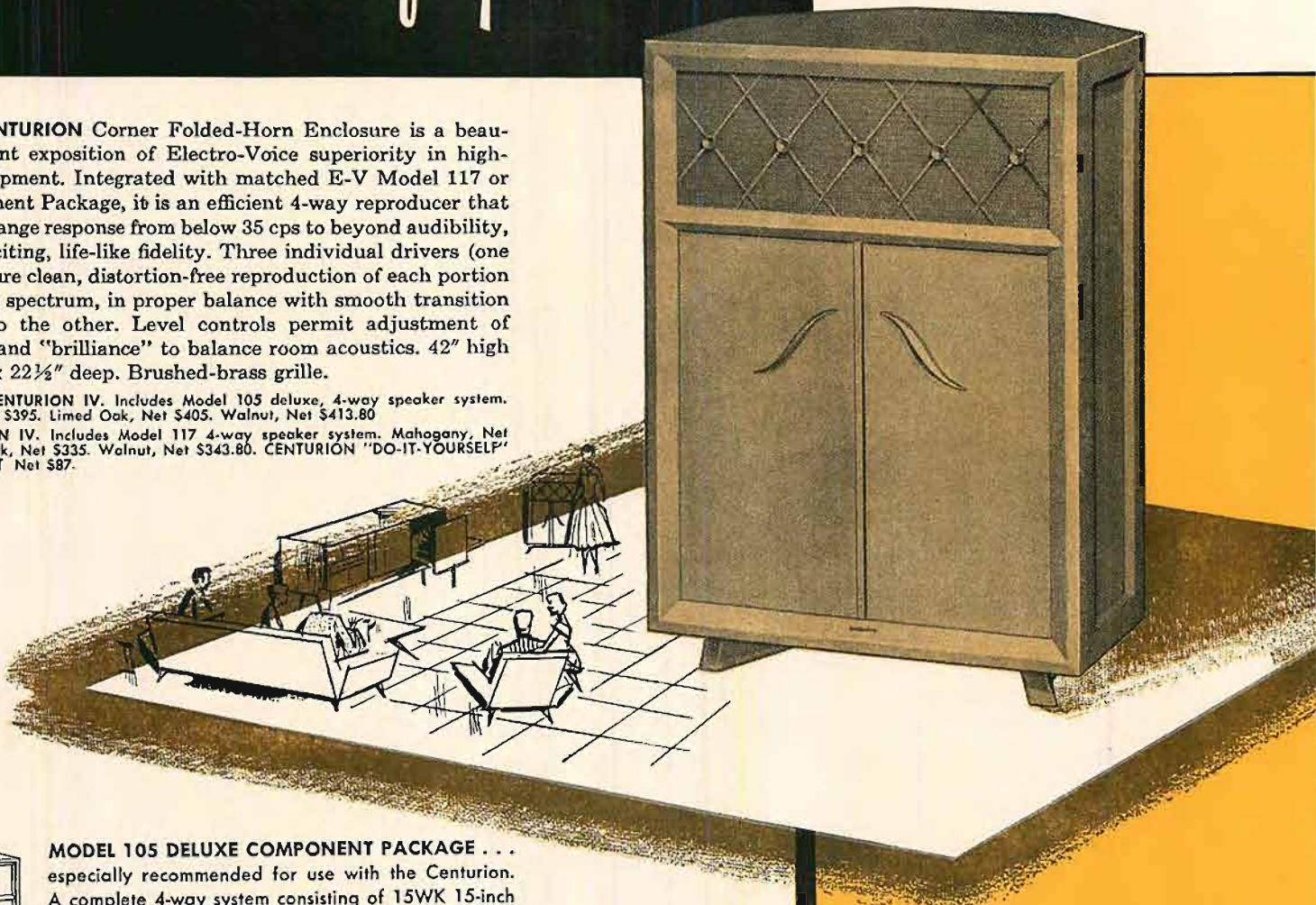

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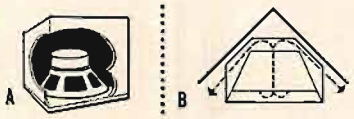

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CHAMPION CARTRIDGE

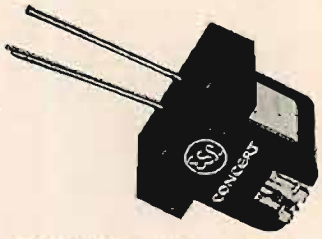
There is only one champion in the fine phono cartridge field: the ESL. After impartial testing of nineteen leading pickups, the authoritative Audio League continues to report:

"By a practically unanimous decision, our listening panel considers the ESL Professional and Concert Series cartridges to be by far the finest phonograph reproducing instruments we have heard.

"In A-B comparisons with its closest competitors, even persons who had never previously been exposed to high fidelity reproduction were struck by the superior definition of the ESL."

"The smoothness and clarity of these cartridges are unique. ...For sheer naturalness and undistorted ease, ESL has no peer."*

Is your pickup obsolete? No matter how respected nor how recent it may be, you're missing plenty if you don't have the world's most advanced cartridge: the ESL. Write today for free information.



FOR LISTENING AT ITS BEST

Electro-Sonic Laboratories, Inc.

Dept. H, 35-54 Thirty-sixth St. • Long Island City 6, N. Y.

Soloist Series from $14.95 • Concert Series $35.95 • Professional Series arm and cartridge $106.50

Authorized quotation No. 11. Please consult The Audio League Report, Vol. 1, No. 6-7 (March-April 1955) for the complete technical and subjective report. Additional information in Vol. 1, Nos. 10 & 12. Subscription: 12 issues $4, from P. O. Box 262, Mt. Vernon, N. Y.

NOTED WITH INTEREST

Continued from page 9

tion system that is connected by a strand of wire to the rest of the system. The consumer is allowed complete freedom of choice in selecting the particular unit or units he desires to assemble to satisfy not only his aural but also his visual or esthetic taste as well as his pocketbook. With a pre-assembled package, the manufacturer makes the decision as to which components shall be connected and the comparative value of each. For example, some manufacturers put particular accent on cabinetry rather than on the electronics of the equipment. Some manufacturers may use inexpensive phonographs in combination with fairly good tuners, amplifiers, and speakers. The consumer is required to purchase the entire package. If his musical ear cannot digest the 'package', there is little or nothing he can do about making individual changes in the various elements."

Loud Enough?

We recently heard about an installation which we think may possibly have had enough power to satisfy even the most "powerful" audiophile. The system used 14 Jensen speakers, each driven by a separate 85-watt amplifier! Talk about multi-amplifier systems! Anyway, there were, in this system, eight Triaxials in Imperial enclosures plus six more Triaxials in bass reflex enclosures.

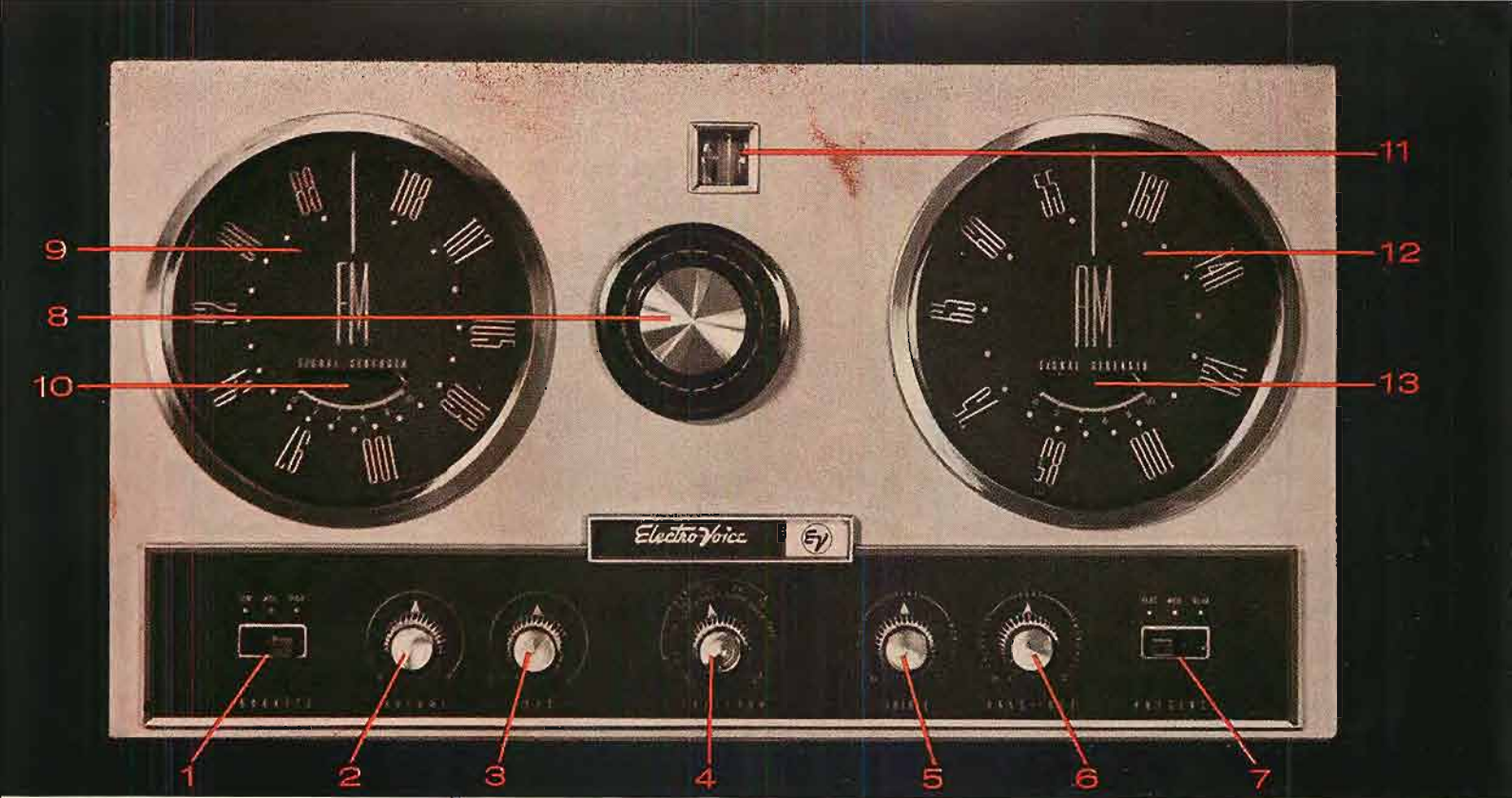
No, we did not say this was a home system. It was one worked out by Jensen and the Conn Organ Corporation for reproduction of electronic organ music at the Democratic and Republican conventions. But it has some possibilities, don't you think?

Maximizing FM Antennas

Readers will recall the articles on FM antennas by L. F. B. Carini. Some of this material, along with much that is new and important, has been put together by Mr. Carini into a small pamphlet (32 pages) called "Theme and Variations — or All About FM Antennae and Their Installation." It's available from him for 25 cents, c/o Apparatus Development Co., Inc., Drawer 86, Wethersfield 9, Conn.

Incidentally, a geographic list of FM broadcasting stations and their fre-

Continued on page 14



For the man who is planning today's Finest High Fidelity System . . .

Electro-Voice®

FM-AM TUNERS

Electro-Voice design aims: to build an FM-AM tuner matching the quality of the Electro-Voice Patrician. Result: the E-V Model 3303 FM-AM Tuner with preamplifier. For the man to whom price is less important than fine engineering and superior performance there is no other choice than Electro-Voice.

CONTROLS. (1) 3-position Loudness. (2) Volume. (3) Continuously Variable AFC-Squelch. (4) Playing Selector: tuner, 6-position phono-equalizer, tape, TV, Auxiliary. (5) Treble. (6) Bass-Off. (7) Vital "Presence" control (3-position) spotlights singers and soloists for your Concert-at-Home. (8) Master Tuning Knob controls both AM and FM channels. E-V tuners are extra-easy to dial because they employ a Tuning Control having a 7 to 1 ratio and Automatic Frequency Control. Tuning Knob slides to left for FM; it slides to right for AM . . . locks band, locks station.

DIALS AND METERS. (9) FM Tuning Dial. (10) FM Signal Strength Meter. (11) Magic Eye FM Tuning Aid. (12) AM Tuning Dial. (13) AM Signal Strength Meter. Electro-Voice Tuner dials are easy to read, easy to set. FM and AM Signal Strength meters provide easy, exact tuning of both channels.

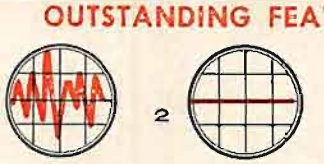
PREAMPLIFIER SECTION. Ceramic-Magnetic Selector. Cathode-follower output. Record Output Jack (not affected by Loudness, Volume or Tone Controls). Preamplifier section operates *independently* of tuner sections.

FM TUNER. Sensitivity: 1 microvolt for 20 db noise reduction, 2 microvolts for 30 db noise reduction, 10 microvolts to open squelch. Tuning Ratio, 7 to 1. Tuning Range, 88 MC to 108 MC. I.F. Frequency, 10.7 MC. I.F. Bandwidth, 180 KC flat. Discriminator Separation, 200 KC between peaks. Additional FM Output Jack (not affected by volume or tone controls) used in dual or stereophonic operation.

AM TUNER. Sensitivity: 1 microvolt for 6 db noise reduction, 25 microvolts to open squelch. Tuning Ratio, 7 to 1. Additional AM Output Jack: (not affected by volume or tone controls) used in dual or stereophonic operation. I.F. Frequency, 455 KC. I.F. Bandwidth, 11 KC. Tuning Range, 550 KC to 1600 KC.

The Electro-Voice Model 3303 Stereophonic FM-AM Tuner is finished in handsome Mocha enamel with dark brown escutcheon and brushed-brass trim. Mocha chassis has brown case. 15" x 15¾" x 8¼". Net Weight 28 lbs. Net.....$279.50*.

OUTSTANDING FEATURES OF ELECTRO-VOICE TUNERS



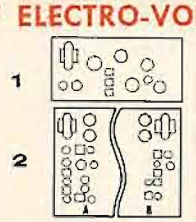
1 This is inter-station noise from a conventional tuner.

2 This is inter-station silence from an Electro-Voice tuner.

Black velvet silence between stations on both FM and AM is exclusive with Electro-Voice. Precisely tuned programs spring out of complete silence as you turn the Master Control knob.

Unpleasant noise between stations is erased by the exclusive Electro-Voice Squelch Circuit!

YOU CAN HEAR THE DIFFERENCE



1 This is a conventional tuner. A single "compromise" circuit is used for both FM and AM.

2 This is an Electro-Voice tuner.
(A) Independent FM section
(B) Independent AM section

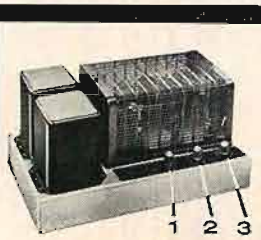
No compromise circuits are used. Result: Superior FM performance (and superior AM performance too).

Stereophonic programs or completely separate FM and AM broadcasts can be received simultaneously. In fact, you can listen to FM while your family listens to AM in another room.

YOU CAN HEAR THE DIFFERENCE

Electro-Voice Model 3304 Basic FM-AM Tuner is similar to model 3303. It is designed for use with separate preamps and amplifiers having a complete set of controls. E-V Model 3304 controls include: (1) AFC-Squelch. (2) Master Tuning Knob. (3) Balance Control for tuning stereophonic broadcasts. (4) Level-Off. 15" x 14¾" x 8¼". Net Weight, 27 lbs. Net.....$239.50*.

*Price slightly higher in the West.



Electro-Voice Model A50 Circlotron High-Fidelity Amplifier. The perfect companion unit for E-V tuners. Power Output: 50 watts rated, 100 watts on peaks. Response: ± 0.5 db, 20-75,000 cps. Harmonic distortion at rated output less than 0.5%; I.M. distortion at rated output less than 1%. Hum and noise level: 85 db below rated output. Output impedances: 4, 8, 16 and 70-volt line. Controls include: (1) Power. (2) Critical Damping. (3) Input Level. 16½" x 10½" x 8½". Net Weight 41 lbs. Net.....$169*.

All Electro-Voice Products are unconditionally guaranteed to meet or exceed performance specifications . . . an exclusive E-V guarantee!

See your E-V High-Fidelity Distributor or write for Bulletin F611.

NO FINER CHOICE THAN

Electro-Voice

ELECTRO-VOICE, INC. BUCHANAN, MICH.
CANADA: E-V of Canada Ltd., 1908 Avenue Road, Toronto, Ontario
EXPORT: 13 East 40th Street, New York 16, U. S. A.
Cables: ARLAB

WORLD PREMIERE

A king can have no better than this "2300" . . . the newest look and performance in High Fidelity amplifiers.

Pictured above is the *new* Bell "2300", twenty watt.
Other *new* designs are available in 10 to 40 watts.
The specifications of these *new* Bell amplifiers
are the best in the world today.
The controls, all closely grouped in the center panel,
present conveniences you've always longed for.
You cannot buy a better engineered or better styled
High Fidelity amplifier . . . anywhere.

NOT JUST NEW VERSIONS OF OLD MODELS but . . . COMPLETELY NEW DESIGNS

For "Operation 2300", Bell assembled a group of electronic engineers with knowhow . . . a group of designers with imagination . . . and gave them an order—"Create a line of High Fidelity Amplifiers that will produce breathtakingly-realistic sounds—and will be styled for traditional, contemporary and modern living."

The "2300" line is the result of this far-reaching project. You should see and hear it. Your nearest Bell dealer will gladly demonstrate, for you, a remarkable "2300". *Write us for his name and detailed "2300" literature. Bell Sound Systems, Inc., (A subsidiary of Thompson Products, Inc.) 559 Marion Road, Columbus 7, Ohio.*

Bell *"World Renowned For the Best in Sound"*

NOTED WITH INTEREST

Continued from page 12

quencies is included in Mr. Carini's booklet.

New Address

Kingdom Products Ltd., distributors of Lorenz speakers and enclosures, have moved to new and larger offices at 514 Broadway, New York 12, N.Y.

The Inevitable

It was bound to come sooner or later. The so-called boys' and girls' rooms in the Reno Hi-Fi Circle club rooms are labeled "Woofer" and "Tweeter."

Hot Air

We will not mention by name the company which has, in all seriousness, announced a system whereby the warm air ducts of a heating system, of the proper type, are used for sound distribution. The system is not claimed to be high fidelity — just "true fidelity."

We hate to mention this, but we have been doing this same thing for years, much to our chagrin. Our high fidelity rig is in one end of the house and the sound can be heard in the other end with rather startling clarity. It makes most vocalists, in particular, sound like Yma Sumac with a garbage pail over her head. The sound goes in one register, whangs around through yards and yards of duct work, has fits and spells of severe intermodulation distortion whenever the oil burner goes on, and finally emerges all over the house as — oh, absolutely — true fidelity sound.

No Fair!

We consider it definitely unfair practice for the Brush Electronics Company to continue sending us publicity releases about their sound measurement instruments. We read all about automatic equipment for the measurement of frequency response and what have you, all done with extraordinary precision. We look at the price tag, faint, and wander to our back room and look at our work bench equipment. You could buy all of it three times over for the cost of one Brush doodad!

Oh well, we hope to make our first million by 1960 and will then call in the Brush salesman. Won't *he* be surprised!

For the Musical Thrill of Your Life!

Pianissimo **AM-FM-SHORT WAVE with Automatic Phonograph**
A Symphony in elegant, modern design . . . 5 loudspeakers . . . natural Walnut finish.

AM-FM ULTRA HIGH FIDELITY
Music Instruments For The Home

Music that Lives... Here, from Europe's largest manufacturer of radios, are the most true-to-life, self-contained high fidelity units available today. With the magnificent Grundig Majestic, every sound from every instrument or voice is at the command of your fingertips—the low moans of an alto saxophone, the rich, mellow tones of a violin, the soaring highs of the flute—all are reproduced with amazing brilliance and clarity.

Best of all, Grundig Majestic Hi-Fi is ready for concert hall performances immediately. No expensive, time-consuming installations, no complicated separate parts, but perfect life-like sound reception from a Continental-crafted furniture piece that will enhance your home with its timeless beauty.

See, Hear the Incomparable Grundig-Majestic soon,
from $59.95 to $1,495, at Better Stores, Everywhere.

Write Chicago Office for Free Illustrated Brochure and Name of Nearest Dealer

MAJESTIC INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION
743 N. La Salle St., Chicago 10, Illinois • 79 Washington St., Brooklyn 1, New York
Subsidiary of WILCOX-GAY CORP., Mfrs. of RECORDIO Magnetic Tape Recorders

Starlet
AM-FM The ideal second set.
Choice of Mahogany, Pastel Green, Ivory.

Riviera
AM-FM-SHORT WAVE
4 loudspeakers. In light Walnut cabinet only.

La Petite
AM-FM-SHORT WAVE with Automatic Phonograph
4 loudspeakers. Choice of light or dark Walnut cabinet.

Continental
AM-FM-SHORT WAVE with Automatic Phonograph and Tape Recorder.
6 loudspeakers. Mahogany or light Walnut cabinet.

Renaissance
AM-FM-SHORT WAVE with Automatic Phonograph and Tape Recorder.
6 loudspeakers. Cabinet in luxurious Pumice finish.

"Mystic Maestro" A Grundig Majestic Exclusive!
Converts any room into a concert hall by transmitting middle and high frequencies throughout the room in equal values. The tones completely envelop you, as perfectly true and clear as if the orchestra and conductor were right there with you. Truly, the ultimate fulfillment in 3D Stereophonic Sound!

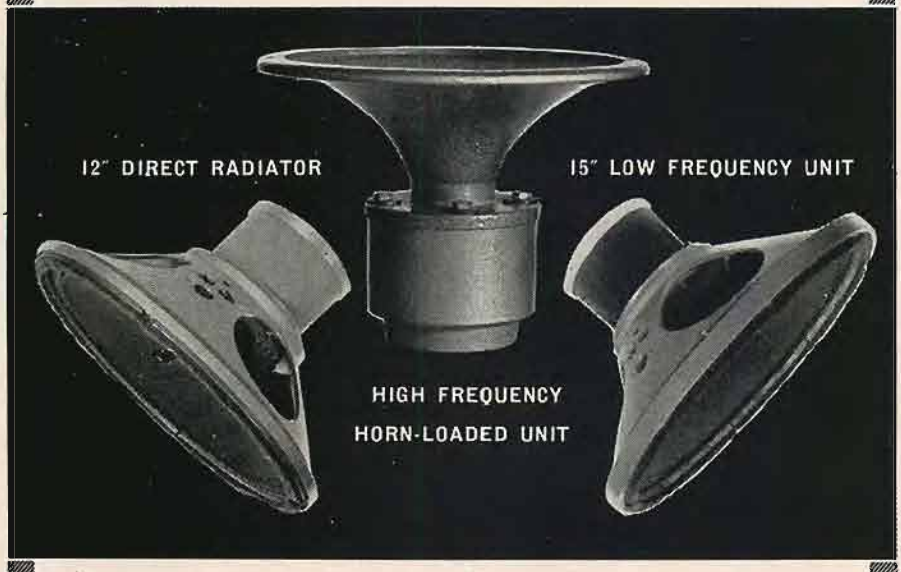
EASY STAGES FOR HI-FI PERFECTIONISTS

Another TANNOY speaker triumph

The world famous Tannoy Dual Concentric speakers have established a standard so high that even ardent supporters of multi-speaker systems strive to achieve their perfection. In response to overwhelming requests to make available separate speakers for those wishing to improve their present systems, and for those budgeting in easy steps towards the ultimate performance of the Dual Concentrics, we are proud to announce the release of the new Tannoy 12" and 15" LF Units, 12" Direct Radiator, and horn-loaded HF Unit, with associated crossover networks. This flexible range provides a multiplicity of speaker systems, both two and three way, according to personal requirements.

In the three-way system the new Tannoy 12" Direct Radiator is the starting point: no single speaker can offer a better introduction to the realm of realism than this product of English craftsmanship. The new Tannoy 15" LF Unit and the new horn-loaded HF Unit (both based on the performance specification of the DUAL CONCENTRICS) follow, — but not necessarily together — to bring the system as near perfection as human skill can devise. A specially designed crossover network ensures optimum performance from a two-speaker set-up until the budget permits adding the final unit. The original 12" Direct Radiator then achieves its remarkable best as a mid-range speaker.

Here indeed is perfection in easy stages!



TANNOY REGD. *Practitioners in Sound*

Tannoy (America) Ltd., 38 Pearl Street, New York 4, N.Y., U.S.A.
Tannoy (Canada) Ltd., 36 Wellington Street East, Toronto 1, Ontario, Canada.

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC., REQUIRED BY THE ACTS OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912, AND MARCH 3, 1933
Of High Fidelity, published monthly at Great Barrington, Massachusetts, for October 1, 1956

1. The names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business manager are: Publisher, Charles Fowler, Egremont, Mass.; Editor, John M. Conly, Great Barrington, Mass.; Business Manager, Warren B. Syer, New Marlboro, Mass.

2. The owner is: Audiocom, Inc., Great Barrington, Mass.; R. F. Allison, North Egremont, Mass.; C. G. Burke, Ghent, N. Y.; J. M. Conly, Great Barrington, Mass.; S. Q. Curtiss, Sheffield, Mass.; C. Fowler, Egremont, Mass.; R. H. Hoopes, Jr., Washington, D. C.; R. Lindstrom, North Egremont, Mass.; F. C. Michalove, Englewood, N. J.; W. B. Syer, New Marlboro, Mass.; H. R. Sykes, Pittsfield, Mass.; Frank R. Wright, Jr., New Marlboro, Mass.

3. The known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: none.

4. The two paragraphs next above giving the names of the owners, stockholders, and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear upon the books of the company, but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting, is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona-fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association, or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stock, bonds, or other securities than as so stated by him.

(Signed) Charles Fowler

Sworn to and subscribed before me this Twenty-fifth day of September 1956.

(Seal) Lillian F. Bendross, Notary Public
Commission expires June 24, 1961.

AUTHORitatively Speaking

Among things you probably didn't know about the author of "Russia As It Saw Me" (page 56) is that he was a successful jazz violinist named Jacob Pincus Perelmuth before he decided to become a singer named Jan Peerce. Among enormous numbers of people who have never regretted this change are audiences at the Metropolitan, record buyers, Russian operagoers, and, lately, patrons of the Desert Inn, Las Vegas, where he brought the house down as easily with *E lucevan le stelle* as with *My Yiddische Mama.*

Herbert Weinstock, who surveys Russian opera records for us this issue, is executive editor of Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. His books on musical subjects include *Men and Music* (with Wallace Brockway); *Tchaikovsky; Handel; Chopin, the Man and His Music*; and *Music as an Art*. In the early 1940s he was editor of the Gramophone Shop Supplement (remember?), and since the early 1930s he has been one of the most ardent vacationist-explorers of Mexico. His interest in Russian opera began in the 1920s, when he heard Chaliapin sing Boris in Chicago.

John Ball, Jr., who discourses fondly of his 78-rpm record collection on page 66, was born in Schenectady and reared in Milwaukee by a physicist father who was also an accomplished musician. J. B., Jr., has been an annotator for Columbia, music editor of the Brooklyn *Eagle*, and author of the only daily record column in America, that of the New York *World-Telegram.* At present he lives in Los Angeles.

For the Very Best in High Fidelity...

Specify FISHER *Fidelity*

There is One Accepted Leader in Every Field

AVERY FISHER
Founder and President, Fisher Radio Corporation
Chairman of the Board, Institute of High Fidelity Manufacturers

In High Fidelity

... it is

THE FISHER

Our Twentieth
Year
of Leadership

For Pride and Practicality . . . Specify

FISHER *Fidelity*

Usually . . . when a music lover purchases a FISHER high fidelity product, he does so for pride, for quality, for personal satisfaction. On the other hand, it is gratifying to know that — if he preferred — he could have chosen FISHER, *the* leader in the field, purely on the basis of *economy*. For it has been proven time and again, that FISHER, with the best in technological advancement and beauty of style, is *most practical* to own.

FISHER *Modules* afford the most complete versatility for practical, step-by-step assembly of a high fidelity music system!

FISHER *functional* concept of unit-design offers the user the most *economical* means of achieving the ultimate in sound reproduction!

80-T

THE FISHER FM-AM Tuner · Model 80-T

■ Unequalled among FM-AM tuners, Model 80-T identical to the 80-R — but includes *complete* profe *sional audio control facilities. For general specifica* tions, see Model 80-R below. Model 80-T is the *fir* FM-AM tuner with a separate tape head playback pr amplifier (with NARTB equalization.) Preamplifie equalizer has sufficient gain for lowest level magnet cartridges. Six record equalization settings. Separa Bass and Treble Controls. DC on all audio tube fil ments. Hum level non-measurable with Volume Contr at minimum, better than 72 db below 2 volts at max mum position. On phono, better than 60 db below ou put with 10 millivolt signal. Four inputs. EIGHT CO TROLS: Selector, Variable AFC/Line Switch, Stati Selector, Bass, Treble, Equalization, Volume, Ca brated Loudness Balance. SIZE: 12¾" x 8¼" (le knobs) x 6" high. WEIGHT: 21 pounds. CABINET Blonde (Model TB) and Mahogany (Model TM

$199.5

80-R

THE FISHER FM-AM Tuner · Model 80-R

■ Acclaimed everywhere as the finest FM-AM tun available. Works where others fail. America's fir FM-AM tuner with *two* meters, for micro-accura tuning. Extreme sensitivity — 1.5 microvolts produc 20 db of quieting. Separate FM and AM front end with adjustable AM selectivity and variable AFC f FM. AM sensitivity better than 1 microvolt. Respon within 0.5 db from 20 to 20,000 cycles. Distortion b low 0.04% for 1 volt output. Inherent hum so low to be *non-measurable!* Super-smooth flywheel tunin Shielded, shockmounted chassis. Multiplex, catho follower outputs. SIZE: 12¾" x 8¼" (less knobs) 4" high. WEIGHT: 16 pounds. CABINETS: Blon (Model UN-B) and Mahogany (Model UN-M

$169.5

FM-90

THE FISHER FM Tuner · Model FM-90

■ *The Finest FM Tuner Made.* The FM-90 *definitel* sets the standards for the *tuner of tomorrow* . . . an outperforms *any existing FM tuner!* Micro-accurat tuning combined with extreme sensitivity and flex bility. Equipped with *two* meters, indicating signa strength and center of channel. Dual Dynamic Limi ers operate on signals as low as *one* microvolt. Ba anced antenna inputs for 72 and 300 ohms. Cathod follower and Multiplex outputs. Shielded and shoc mounted. CONTROLS: Interchannel Muting, AFC Power Switch, Station Selector, Input Level. Respon within 1 db from 20 to 20,000 cycles. Sensitivity - 1½ microvolts for 20 db quieting. 10 tubes and crystal diodes. SIZE: A compact 13⅜" wide x 8⅜ deep x 6⅛" high. Distinctively styled and housed i a smart metal case with handsome brass and plast panel. WEIGHT: 16 pounds.

$149.5

THE FISHER FM Tuner · Model FM-40

■ A beautifully designed instrument at moderate cost, for discriminating listeners. Stable circuitry and simplified controls make this remarkable tuner exceptionally easy to use. Meter for micro-accurate, center-of-channel tuning. Sensitivity, 3 microvolts for 20 db quieting. Can accommodate 72 or 300-ohm antenna systems. 8 tubes. Self-powered. CONTROLS: Power On-Off/Volume, Station Selector. OUTPUTS: Detector/Multiplex, plus cathode follower. SIZE: 12¾" x 8⅛" x 4" high. WEIGHT: 15 pounds. CABINETS: Blonde (Model UN-B) and Mahogany (Model UN-M.)

$99.50

FM-40

THE FISHER AM Tuner · Model AM-80

■ The high fidelity AM counterpart of the famous FM-80 Tuner. Combines the pulling power of a professional communications receiver with the broad tuning necessary for high fidelity reception. Designed to rigid standards; features a meter for micro-accurate tuning. Three-position adjustable bandwidth. Less than *one* microvolt produces maximum output. An excellent companion to the FM-80, for those who wish *binaural* reception. Three inputs, cathode follower output. 8 tubes. Self-powered. SIZE: 12¾" x 8¼" x 4" high. WEIGHT: 15 pounds. CABINETS: Blonde (Model UN-B) and Mahogany (Model UN-M.)

$119.50

AM-80

Free Individual Technical Bulletins are Available on All Models — Write Today

Start Now With

FISHER *Fidelity*

Depending on individual requirements — whether you are just beginning your high fidelity hobby, or whether you seek to improve an existing system — plan the first step with a practical view toward the future. Devote your budget to basic components. In that way, you can realiz *immediate* listening satisfaction . . . with quality FISHER equipment. Moreover you can add to it later, with the same hig level of quality.

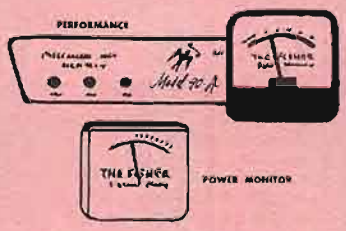
If you start with phono — choose from the wide selection of FISHER quality amplifie models . . . later, add a tuner for FM, AM or both. Or . . .

If you start with radio — choose a profes-sional tuner and amplifier from the wide range of FISHER models . . . later, add phono facilities, buying the best quality manual or automatic player your budget permits.

For the Best Present . . . and Future . . . Plan with FISHER

FISHER Exclusives That Make a World of Difference!

Exclusive FISHER Features provide that *added* measure of control to satisfy *all* listening requirements. Here is flexibility that obsoletes old fashioned hi-fi. Here is FISHER FIDELITY . . . *it makes a world of difference.*



Progressive Engineering At Its Superlative Best . . .

THE FISHER 90-Watt Audio Amplifier

■ 90 watts of audio power, with less than ½% distortion at full output. *Two* power supplies assure optimum operation. FISHER *Performance Monitor* meter indicates correct adjustments of tube bias, screen voltage and output balance. Shows average power output in watts. Less than 1% IM distortion at 75 watts! Harmonic distortion at 50 watts ¼ of 1%. Frequency response within 0.1 db, 20 to 20,000 cycles. Hum and noise better than 92 db below full output. 8 and 16-ohm speaker output impedances. Power socket supplies all necessary voltages for operation of unpowered auxiliary components. CONTROLS: Input Level, Speaker Impedance Switch, Meter Switch, Bias, Screen Voltage, Output Balance, Driver Balance, *Z-Matic*. TUBE COMPLEMENT: 1 - 12AU7, 1 - 12AX7, 4 - EL34 (6CA7), 1 - 6Y6, 1 - 6AU6, 2 - 5R4GY, 2 - NE16. SIZE: 14" x 11⅛" x 8¼" high. WEIGHT: 55 pounds.

$229.50

THE FISHER Master Audio Control

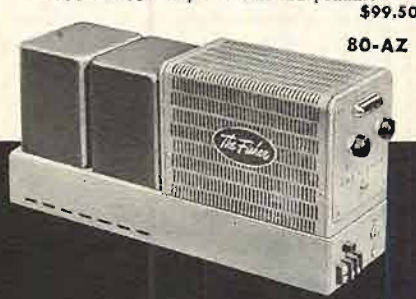
■ This Master Audio Control matches any am- This Master Audio Control matches any amplifier. Provides professional phono and tape-head equalization. Full mixing and fading facilities for from two to five channels. Seven inputs, including two Phono, Mic and Tape. Two cathode follower outputs. IM distortion virtually non-measurable. DC on all filaments. Separate equalization and preamplification *directly* from tape playback head. Four negative feedback loops, for excellent stability. CONTROLS: Bass, Treble, Master Volume, Two Phono/Tape Equalization, Calibrated Loudness Balance, Line Switch, Five Channel Selector Push Buttons, Five Input Mixer/Level. Self-powered. Three AC outlets. TUBE COMPLEMENT: 3 - 12AX7, 1 - 12AU7A. SIZE: 12¾" x 7¾" x 4¼" high. WEIGHT: 10 pounds. CABINETS: Blonde (Mod. CB), Mahog (Mod. CM)

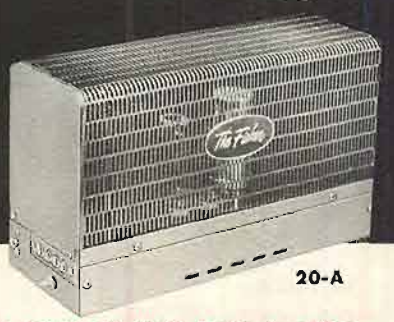
$99.50

THE FISHER 30-Watt Audio Amplifier

■ Incomparable FISHER amplifier with *Power-Scope*, a visual Peak Power Indicator. More clean watts per dollar than any amplifier in its class. 60 watts peak! Three separate feedback loops, resulting in low internal impedance, extremely low distortion, and excellent transient response. Less than 0.5% distortion at 30 watts (0.05% at 10 watts.) IM distortion less than 0.5% at 25 watts. Uniform response within 0.1 db, 20 to 20,000 cycles. Within 1 db, 10 to 50,000 cycles. Hum and noise virtually *non-measurable* (better than 96 db below full output!) CONTROLS: Z-Matic, PowerScope, Input Level, 8 and 16-ohm output. TUBE COMPLEMENT: 1 - 12AT7, 1 - 12AU7A, 2 - EL37, 1 - 5V4G, 1 - PowerScope Indicator, 1 - Regulator. SIZE: 15¼" x 4¼" x 6⅜" deep. WEIGHT: 22 pounds.

$99.50





THE FISHER 15-Watt Audio Amplifier

■ Low in cost, terrific in quality. It is the amplifier thousands of hi-fi enthusiasts have requested. Meets the most exacting requirements. Traditional FISHER workmanship, handsome appearance. Advanced design throughout. Response within 0.1 db, 20 to 20,000 cycles at 15 watts. Less than 0.7% distortion. IM distortion less than 1.5% at 10 watts. Hum and noise better than 90 db below full output! Internal impedance: 1 ohm for 16-ohm operation, giving damping factor of 16. Assures low distortion and superior transient response. Octal socket provides all necessary AC and DC voltages for operating unpowered auxiliary components. Output impedances 4, 8, and 16 ohms. TUBE COMPLEMENT: 1 - 12AX7, 2 - EL84, 1 - EZ80. SIZE: 13" x 4¼" x 6¼" high. WEIGHT: 13 pounds.

$59.50

THE FISHER 55-Watt Audio Amplifier

■ Plenty of power for your present — and any possible *future* needs. Less than 1% distortion at 55 watts. 110 watts peak. IM distortion below 2% at 50 watts. All-triode design. Exclusive FISHER *Power Monitor*, an illuminated meter to indicate average audio power and make possible correct adjustment of output tube bias. New *Z-Matic* Variable Damping Factor Control with *three* times the range of ordinary controls of this type. Frequency response ±0.1 db, 20 to 20,000 cycles. Hum and noise better than 92 db below full output! 8 and 16-ohm outputs. Minimum internal impedance 0.53 ohms at 16-ohm tap, giving maximum damping factor of 31. Input Level Control. Octal socket supplies all voltages for operating unpowered components. TUBE COMPLEMENT: 3 - 12AU7A, 2 - 6CL6, 2 - 6550, 2 - 5AW4. SIZE: 14¼" x 9¾" x 8 3/16" high. WEIGHT: 50 pounds.

$169.50

THE FISHER Master Control-Amplifier

■ Complete in every respect — the remarkable Model CA-40 Master Control Amplifier with *ToneScope!* A 25-watt amplifier with *complete* Audio Controls. Features *ToneScope*, an *exclusive* FISHER *first* that shows graphically the Bass and Treble Control settings on an illuminated panel. Response 10 to 90,000 cycles, within 0.5 db! Less than 1% distortion at 25 watts. IM distortion 1% at 15 watts. Hum and noise level better than 90 db. Six inputs. Direct tape-head playback and microphone preamp. Tape recorder output. Output impedances: 4, 8, and 16 ohms. CONTROLS: Volume, 4-Position Loudness Contour, Selector/Equalization, Power Switch, Bass, Treble, Rumble Filter, Noise Filter, Input Level. TUBES: 1 - 12AU7, 3 - 12AX7, 4 - EL84, 2 - 6BW4. SIZE: 12¾" x 10⅜" x 5" high. WEIGHT: 24 pounds.

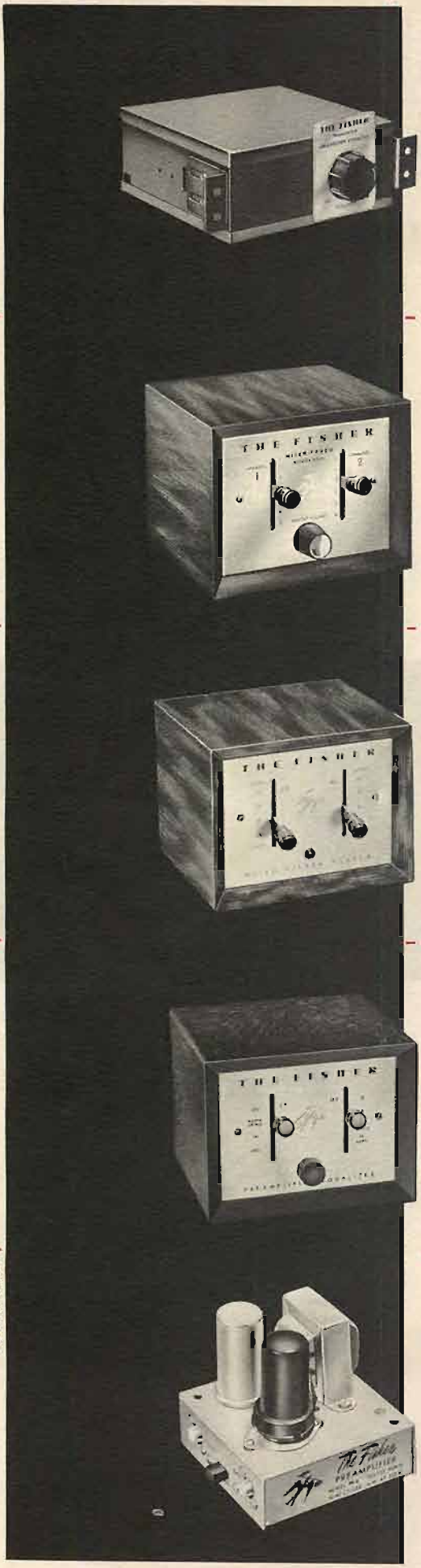
$139.50

FISHER 'FIRSTS' - Milestones in Audio History

1937 FIRST High fidelity sound systems featuring a beam-power amplifier, inverse feedback, acoustic speaker compartments (infinite baffle and bass reflex) and magnetic cartridges.
1937 FIRST Exclusively high fidelity tuner, featuring broad-tuning 20,000 cycle fidelity TRF.
1937 FIRST Two-unit high fidelity system with separate speaker enclosure.
1938 FIRST Coaxial speaker system.
1938 FIRST High fidelity tuner with amplified AVC.
1939 FIRST Dynamic Range Expander.
1939 FIRST Three-Way Speaker in a high fidelity system.
1939 FIRST Center-of-Channel Tuning Indicator.
1945 FIRST Preamplifier-Equalizer with selective phonograph equalization.
1948 FIRST Dynamic Range Expander with feedback circuitry.
1949 FIRST FM-AM Tuner with variable AFC.
1952 FIRST 50-Watt, all-triode amplifier.
1952 FIRST Self-powered Master Audio Control.
1953 FIRST Self-powered, electronic sharp cut-off filter system for high fidelity use.
1953 FIRST Universal Horn-Type Speaker Enclosure for any room location and any speaker system.
1954 FIRST Low-cost electronic Mixer-Fader.
1954 FIRST Moderately-priced, professional FM Tuner with TWO meters.
1955 FIRST Peak Power Indicator in a high fidelity amplifier.
1955 FIRST Commercial Control-Chassis with mixing facilities.
1955 FIRST Correctly equalized direct tape-head playback preamplifier in tuners and master controls as well as a separate preamplifier.
1956 FIRST To incorporate Power Monitor in a home amplifier.
1956 FIRST *All Transitorized* Pre-Amplifier.
1956 FIRST Dynamic limiters in an FM tuner for home use.
1956 FIRST Performance Monitor in a high quality amplifier for home use.
1956 FIRST FM-AM tuner with *two* meters.
1956 FIRST 90-watt amplifier especially designed for home use.
1956 FIRST Complete visual indicator for bass, treble, filter controls and record equalization.

THESE SPECIFICATIONS AND PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE. WEST COAST PRICES SLIGHTLY HIGHER.

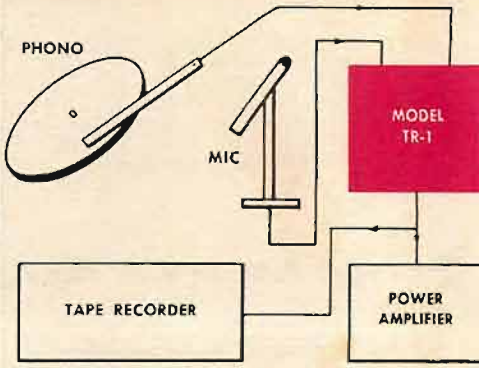
Whatever The Requirement . . . Do It Better With FISHER



THE FISHER
Transitor Preamplifier · TR-1

■ The first *all-transitor* high fidelity product! Absolutely *zero* hum and *zero* microphonism. Powered by battery or AC power supply. Consumes 0.0217 watt. Choice of four inputs. Handles lowest level magnetic cartridges. RIAA phono equalization. Flat response for mike ± 0.5 db, 20 to 20,000 cycles. Maximum gain, 48 db. Three transistors, printed circuit wiring. Four controls. SIZE: 4⅛" x 4½" x 2" high. WEIGHT: 12 oz.

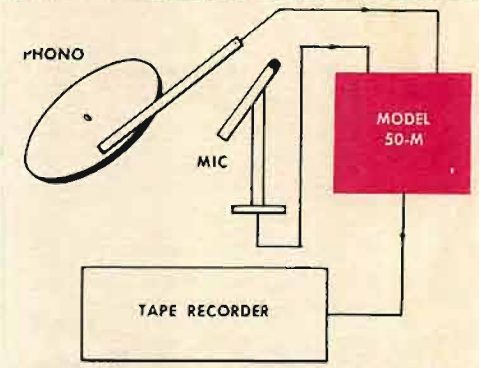
$27.50



THE FISHER
Mixer-Fader · Model 50-M

■ Mixes two signal sources of equal or varying amplitudes. Permits smooth, noiseless fading from channel to channel. No insertion loss, extremely low hum and noise level. High impedance input, cathode follower output. High signal-to-noise ratio, negligible distortion. Self-powered, with AC switch. Completely shielded. Beautiful plastic cabinet, brushed-brass control panel. SIZE: 5 11/16" x 5" x 4⅜" high.

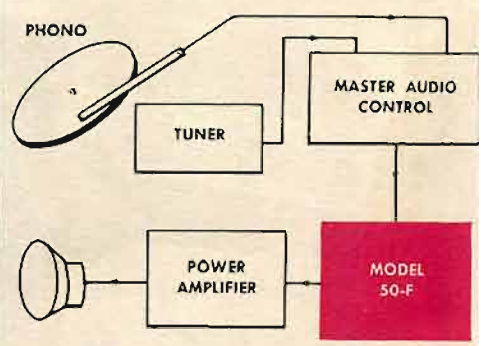
$19.95



THE FISHER
Hi-Lo Filter · Model 50-F

■ Electronic, *sharp cut-off filter* system for suppression of turntable rumble, record scratch and high frequency distortion — with an absolute minimum loss of tonal range. Low frequency cut-off points (Flat, 37, 70, 120 cycles) at a slope of 10 db per octave. High frequency cut-off (20, 10 and 3 Kc) at a slope of 20 db per octave. Self-powered, jewel pilot light. SIZE: 5 11/16" x 5" x 4⅜" high.

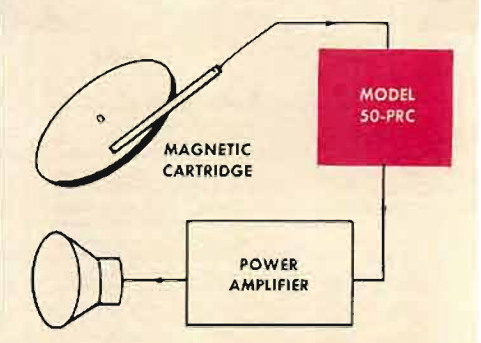
$24.95



THE FISHER
Audio Control · 50-PRC

■ Provides complete professional equalization. Two stages of triode amplification. 40 db gain; sufficient for the lowest level magnetic cartridge. Hum level 60 db below 10 millivolt input. Shock mounted, completely shielded, self-powered. With volume control—can serve as a moderately priced front end. Pilot light. Plastic cabinet, with beautiful brushed-brass control panel. SIZE: 5 11/16" x 5" x 4⅜" high.

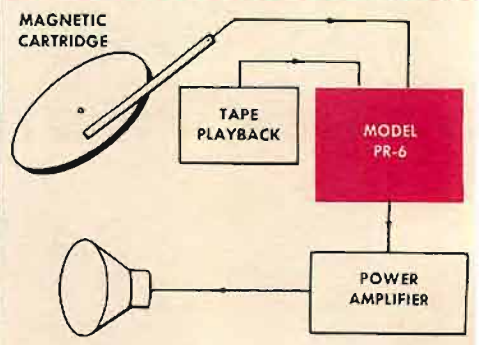
$19.95



THE FISHER
Preamplifier · Model PR-6

■ A self-powered unit of excellent quality, moderate cost. For use with any low-level magnetic cartridge, tape deck or microphone. Two triode stages, high gain. Exclusive feedback circuit permits long output leads. Fully shielded. Uniform response, 20 to 20,000 cycles within 2 db. RIAA equalization for phono. NARTB for tape. Hum level 60 db below 1 volt. SIZE: 3¼" x 3⅝" x 3⅝" high.

$10.95



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LETTERS

SIR:

First of all a long delayed word of appreciation for your wonderful magazine. I've enjoyed it immensely and would only be repeating what others have said in compliment.

I think that Rodrigues is priceless in his characterizations, and with apologies to him I am enclosing a birth announcement which I thought you might be interested in:

B-E LP-1 — very Hi Fi

Orchestre de Lipsett
in a
Bev-Earl
Blue Label Production

Program Notes:

Opus No.1: Maurice Joel
A Light Classic : 3 Lbs. 14 Oz.
First Performed: 20 August 1956
At: Calgary General Hospital Symphony Hall

For best results, keep record clean. Use only best quality cotton covers.

HIGH FIDELITY is the rage in this part of the country as it is elsewhere; and with most of your friends and relatives having more than a passing acquaintance with music, we thought it would be appropriate. . . .

Earl Lipsett
Calgary, Alta.
Canada

SIR:

I read Mr. Joseph Kerman's "Trouble with Tosca" [HIGH FIDELITY, Sept.

Continued on next page

Klipschorn®
CORNER HORN
LOUDSPEAKER SYSTEM

DEDICATED to those discriminating listeners who demand REproduction of original music, the KLIPSCHORN system offers the ultimate in fidelity.

KLIPSCHORN and SHORTHORN loudspeaker systems are manufactured only by their designer, Paul W. Klipsch. *Write for our latest literature.*

KLIPSCH AND ASSOCIATES
HOPE, ARKANSAS

SHORTHORN®
CORNER HORN LOUDSPEAKER SYSTEM

MODERATELY sized — moderately priced, the SHORTHORN system approaches the KLIPSCHORN system in fidelity of music REproduction.

Mullard
AUDIO TUBES DESIGNED FOR HIGH FIDELITY

Many years of research and development have been spent in producing a range of Audio Tubes to meet the requirements of High Fidelity sound reproduction in all respects. This is why MULLARD Audio Tubes are accepted in Great Britain as a standard by which others are judged, and why leading High Fidelity manufacturers in the United States also use MULLARD tubes in their equipment.

EL-34—Recognized as the finest high power output pentode, up to 100 watts in push-pull. Exceptionally linear, requires low input voltage.

EL-84—9-pin miniature AF power pentode, combining high gain and linearity. Up to 18 watts in push-pull.

***EL-37** Specialized manufacture of Mullard High Fidelity tubes, particularly the EL-37 assures longer life and increased balanced power output. Equivalent to 6L6, 5881, KT66.

***ECC83/12AX7**
***ECC82/12AU7**
***ECC81/12AT7**
Mullard quality double triodes with low hum, noise and microphonics.

***EF-86** — High gain pentode with low hum, noise, and microphonics. Especially designed for input stages of tape recorders and pre-amplifiers. Equivalent to the Z739 and the 5879.

***GZ34**—Indirectly heated full-wave rectifier with 5v, 1.9 amp heater, 250 ma output. Equivalent to 5U4G/GA without circuit changes with the advantage of lower tube voltage drop due to unipotential cathode.

*Maximum levels specified and guaranteed

MULLARD TUBES are available at leading audio distributors throughout the United States. For detailed technical data and application information, write to:

INTERNATIONAL ELECTRONICS CORP.

61 Spring Street, New York 12, N. Y.

TRADE MARK MULLARD, LTD., LONDON

MULLARD TUBES DEVELOPED FOR HIGH FIDELITY

LETTERS

Continued from preceding page

1956] and came to the conclusion that there must be some "Trouble with Kerman". . . .

The purpose of poetry in spoken drama is to heighten the atmosphere. Poetry has nothing to do with characterization or dramatic presentation. It is an idiom in which the author may or may not express himself. It is not an ingredient, a sauce which has to be added to make a complete dish. Many good spoken dramas were written which lack poetry.

The essential characteristics of opera are (a), the existence of a libretto and a score, the latter having at least equal status with the former and (b), [the writer's conscious intention of producing a work to be presented] on the stage.

There is absolutely no similarity between the function of poetry in spoken drama and of music in opera, as the inventive mind of Mr. Kerman puts it. Spoken drama can exist without poetry, but there can be no opera without music.

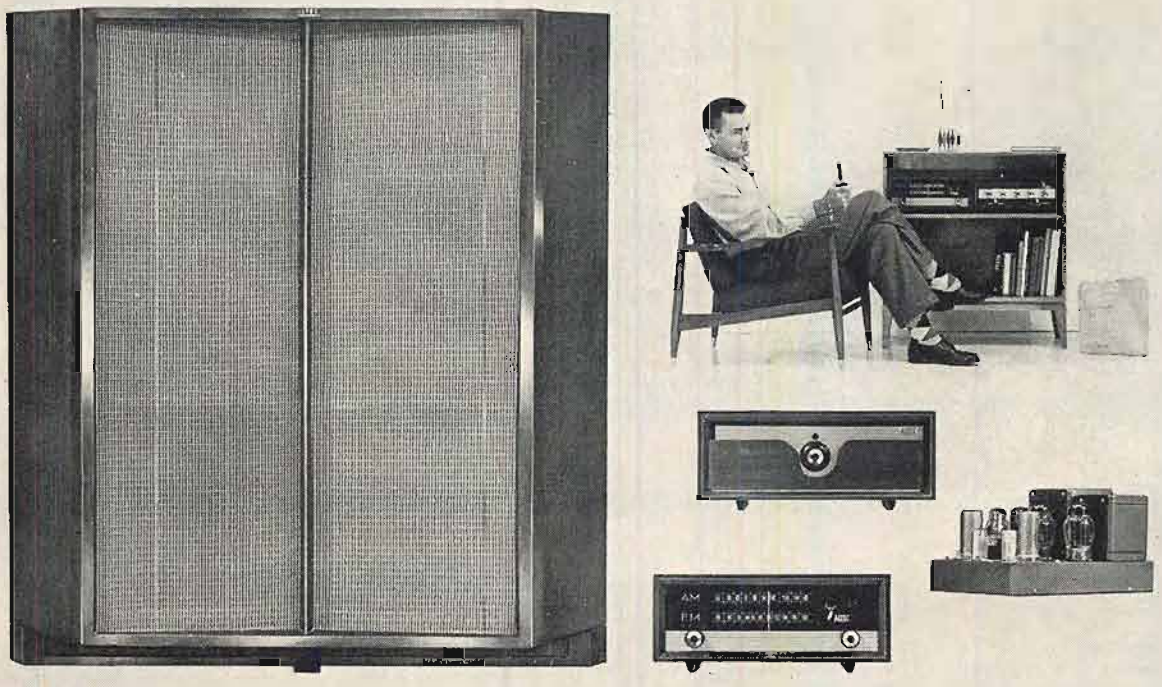
The purpose of music in an opera is not clearly defined. It may be symphonic in character, thus awakening and sustaining deeper emotions than those which could be expressed by mere words; and it may do this with or without reference to the libretto. Or it can be illustrative, putting the text into sharper focus and motivating the action. Or it may be just melodious music giving pleasure to the listeners and keeping the composer from starvation. And, of course, it can mingle all three of these functions. . . .

Mr. Kerman proceeds to put his theory into practice by comparing Puccini's *Tosca* with Verdi's *Otello*. (We really should be grateful that he did not compare Noel Coward with Strindberg—he was on his way to do so). Let us be honest: I personally do enjoy *Otello* more than *Tosca*. However, Puccini in *Tosca* was led by different considerations and motives than Verdi in *Otello*. If Mr. Kerman really wishes to compare the two composers, why not compare *Tosca* with *Rigoletto*, in which the conception of music shows at least some similarity? The dramatic element in opera does not necessarily manifest itself in "intellectual brilliance"; and as emotional backgrounds to a melo-

Continued on page 29

The Finest Home Music System In The World...

BY ALTEC LANSING



Pictured is the ultimate in high fidelity home music systems ...a combination without peer anywhere or at any price because it is the best by Altec Lansing. Every component is the product of superior design, matchless engineering skill and faultless craftsmanship. Each component carries the exclusive Altec "Performance Guarantee," which means that it will actually out-perform the published specifications.

Altec has long occupied a position of unchallenged leadership in the field of professional sound. And Altec brings to the field of high fidelity home music the same uncompromising dedication to the highest standards of quality.

Hear the finest home music system in the world. You'll agree that only Altec realizes—and magnificently—all the clarity and brilliance, all the wide range of orchestral color and the subtle nuances of the human voice—in short, the *full* beauty of the best in recorded sound.

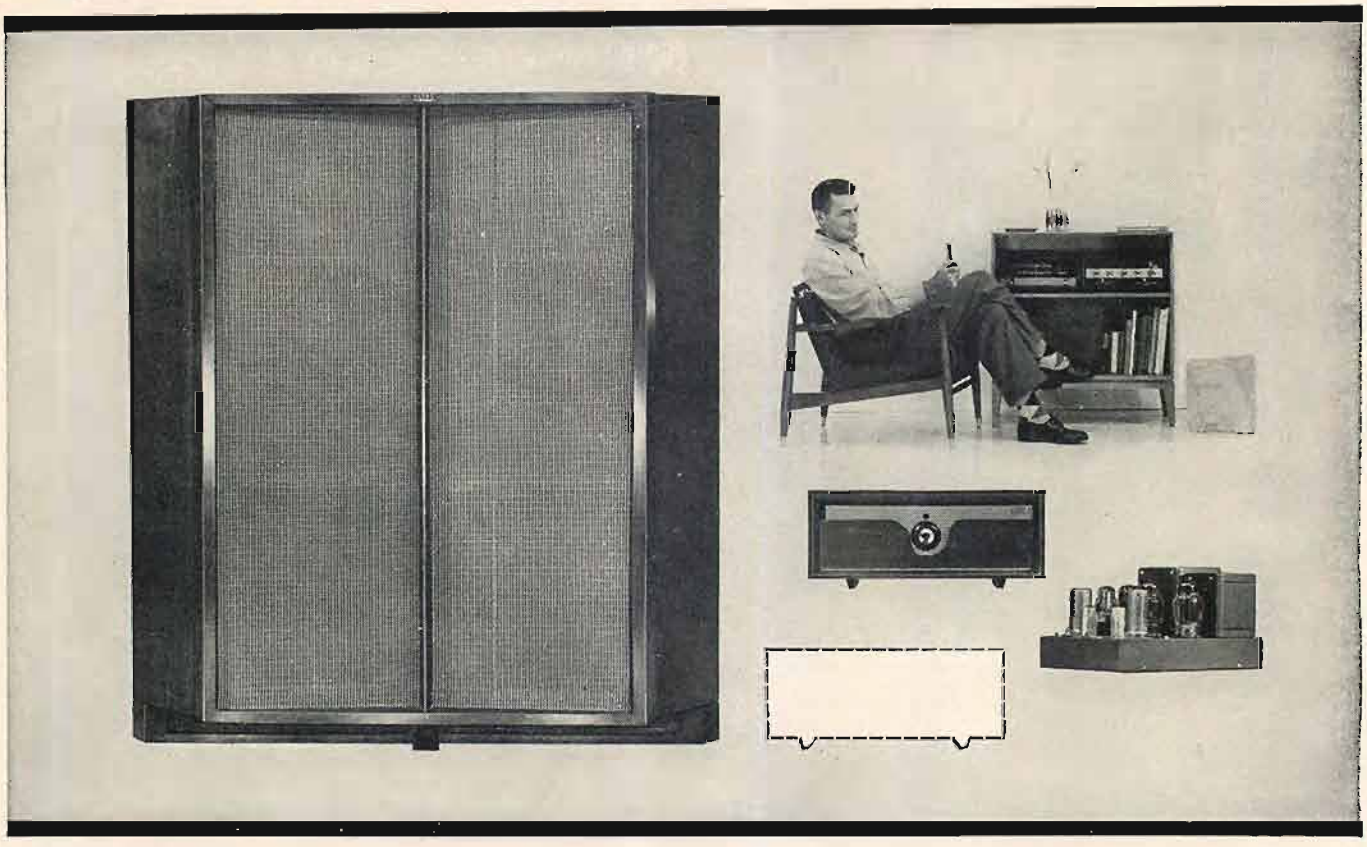
The system shown, $1062. Other Altec home music systems from $191.

ALTEC FIDELITY IS HIGHEST FIDELITY

ALTEC® LANSING CORPORATION

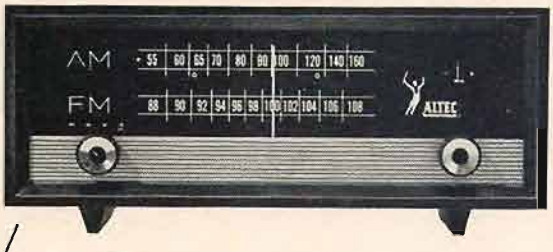
9356 Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills, Calif.
161 Sixth Avenue, New York 13, N. Y.

The Finest in the World — by Altec Lansing



Sharp selectivity, exceptional sensitivity, maximum fidelity and superfine controls characterize the high fidelity tuner. The Altec Lansing 306A AM-FM tuner has all these qualities developed to the highest degree. The finest home music system requires this superlative tuner—designed for maximum stability and freedom from drift— even after hundreds of hours of operation.

The Altec 306A tuner is the latest quality component to come from the renowned Altec laboratories. Facilities include AM, FM and FM with AFC, a well-lit tuning dial and sensitive meter for accurate tuning. Requires a control amplifier such as the Altec 440B. Housed in a beautiful hardwood cabinet, the Altec 306A is compatible with any room style or decor.



SPECIFICATIONS

Frequency Modulation • **Antenna:** Standard 300 ohm • **Maximum Sensitivity:** 1.1 microvolt • **Quieting Sensitivity:** 2.5 microvolts for 20 db*, 4.0 microvolts for 30 db* • **Selectivity:** 6 db band width 185 kc, 20 db band width 300 kc • **Frequency Range:** 87—109 MC **Image Rejection:** 48 db • **IF Rejection:** 72 db • **Frequency Response:** ±0.5 db, 20-20,000 cps • **Distortion:** Less than 1% at 100% modulation. Less than 0.4% at 1 volt output • **Amplitude Modulation** • **Antenna:** Built-in Ferrite Rod "Loopstick" plus external antenna connections • **Maximum Sensitivity:** 3 microvolts • **Loop Sensitivity:** 50 microvolts per meter • **Selectivity:** 6 db band width 11.0 kc, 40 db band width 27 kc • **Frequency Range:** 534 kc—1675 kc • **Image Rejection:** 66.5 db • **IF Rejection:** 58.5 db • **Distortion:** Less than 1.5% at 30% modulation • **Output:** 1 volt cathode follower matched for 440 and 339 • **Power Supply:** 117 volts; 60 cycles; 65 watts • **Tubes:** 2-6BQ7A, 1 each 6AB4, 6BA6, 6AU6, 6AL5, 6BE6, 12AU7 • **Dimensions (with cabinet):** 14-1/2"W; 8-1/2"D; 6-1/2"H • **Shipping Weight:** 14 lbs • **Price:** less cabinet, $183.00; blond or mahogany cabinet, $15.00

*standard 300 ohm antenna

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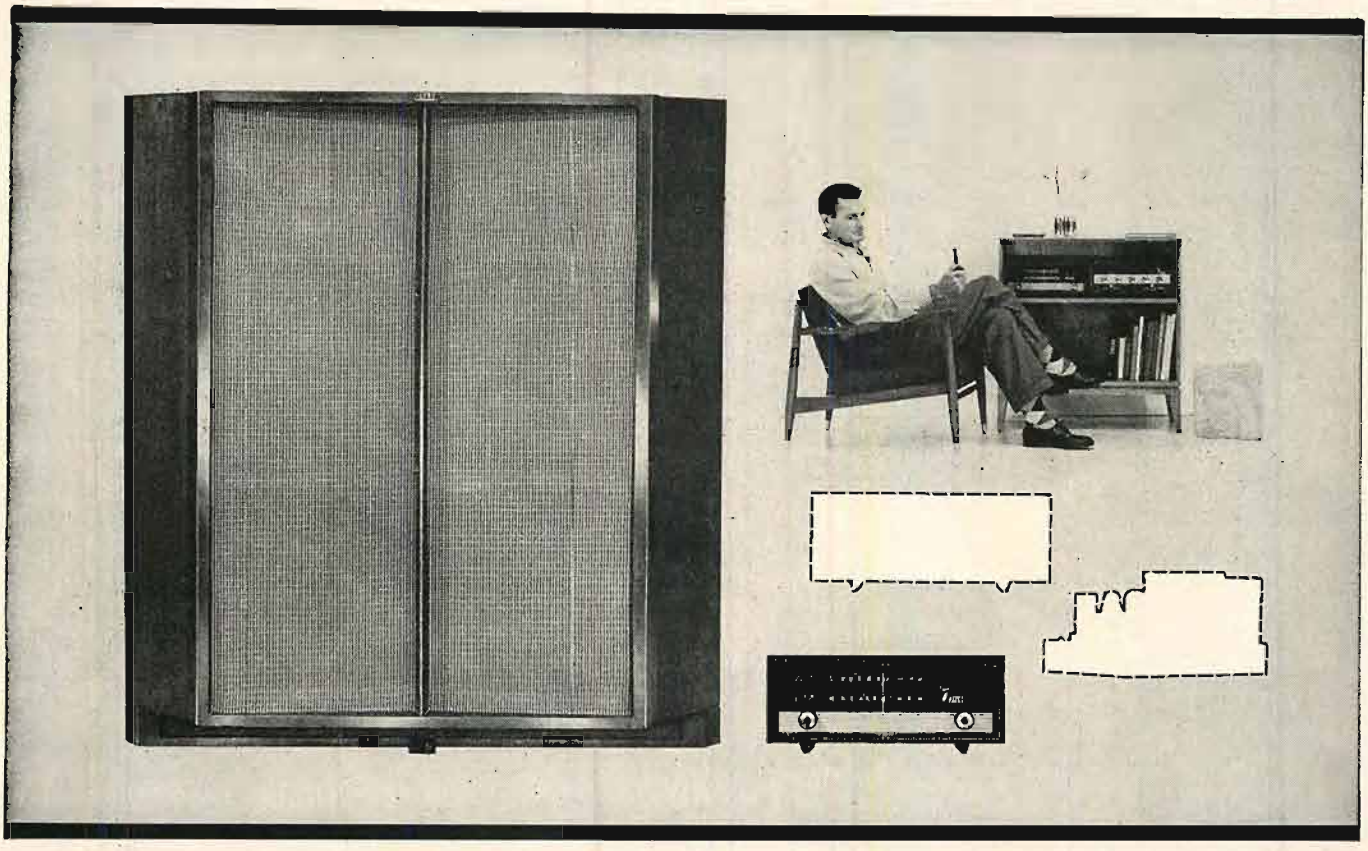
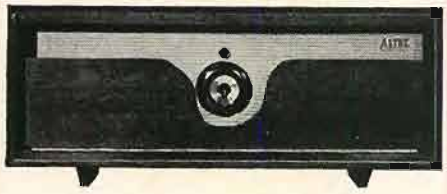


The control point of this superb high fidelity home music system—literally the point where high fidelity begins—is the Altec 440B control preamplifier and the 340A power amplifier. These precision-engineered Altec components provide a degree of control and amplification quality equalled only by the most expensive studio consoles.

The 440B control preamplifier was designed for the home. With the graceful door closed it blends beautifully with any surroundings. Open, the controls are at your fingertips. Reproduction characteristics for any record are easily selected through 25 crossover combinations. An unusually desirable feature is special circuitry which permits monitoring tape playback while recording. Full range tone, loudness and volume controls complete this ideal home unit.

The 340A power amplifier is characterized by exceptional performance, truly professional circuitry and superlative craftsmanship. Premium power tubes of 100 watt capacity, conservatively rated at 35 watts, plus a simple class A1 circuit give this dependable unit years-long performance stability.



The outstanding design of the 440B preamplifier and the 340A amplifier represents the highest development of electronic engineering. The most expensive professional components available have been painstakingly assembled into dependable circuits to meet Altec's strict specifications...your assurance of a lifetime of good listening.

Specifications

440B Control Preamplifier • **Inputs:** Three high level, two low level equalized or flat • **Outputs:** Two—one main amplifier, one recorder • **Gain at 1 kc—tone controls flat** • **Low level, equalized (phono):** 60 db • **Low level, flat (mic):** 63.5 db **High level (tv, tape, radio):** 26 db • **Noise level:** High level inputs—volume max., better than 95 db below 1.5 volts output. Phono inputs—better than 95 db • **Controls:** Seven: Switch for choice of inputs and low frequency crossover. H.F. equalization switch. Volume—loudness control with power switch. Volume—loudness tape monitor switch. Bass and treble controls. Five independent level controls on back • **Power supply:** Self-contained. Three AC receptacles controlled by On-Off switch. 117V., 60 cycles • **Tube complement:** Two—12AY7, One—12AU7 • **Dimensions:** 14-1/2"W; 8-1/2"D; 6-1/2"H • **Finish:** Mahogany or blond • **Shipping weight:** 15 pounds • **Price:** Less cabinet, $135.00. Blond or mahogany hardwood cabinet $15.00. **340A Power Amplifier** • **Output power and Distortion:*** 35 watts continuous, 30-22,000 cycles with less than 0.5% distortion • **Gain:*** 66.5 db • **Input sensitivity:*** 1.3 volts RMS for 35 watts output • **Input impedance:** 200,000 ohms • **Frequency response:*** Within 1 db, 5 c.p.s. to 100,000 c.p.s. • **Noise level:*** 95 db below full output • **Load impedance:** 8, 16 ohms • **Output impedance:** Adjustable from —4 to +4.5 ohms on 8 ohm tap. Less than .52 ohms on 16 ohm tap • **Damping factor:** Greater than 35 on 16 ohm tap, +1.8 through infinity to —2.0 on 8 ohm tap • **Controls:** Gain Adjustment, Ra Adjustment • **Power supply:** 117V 60 cycles • **Tubes:** One—12AY7, One—12AU7, Two—6550, One—5U4GB, One—0A3/VR75 • **Dimensions:** 8-1/4"W; 12-1/2"D; 6-3/4"H • **Shipping weight:** 30 pounds • **Price:** $159.00

*Normal setting of Ra control.

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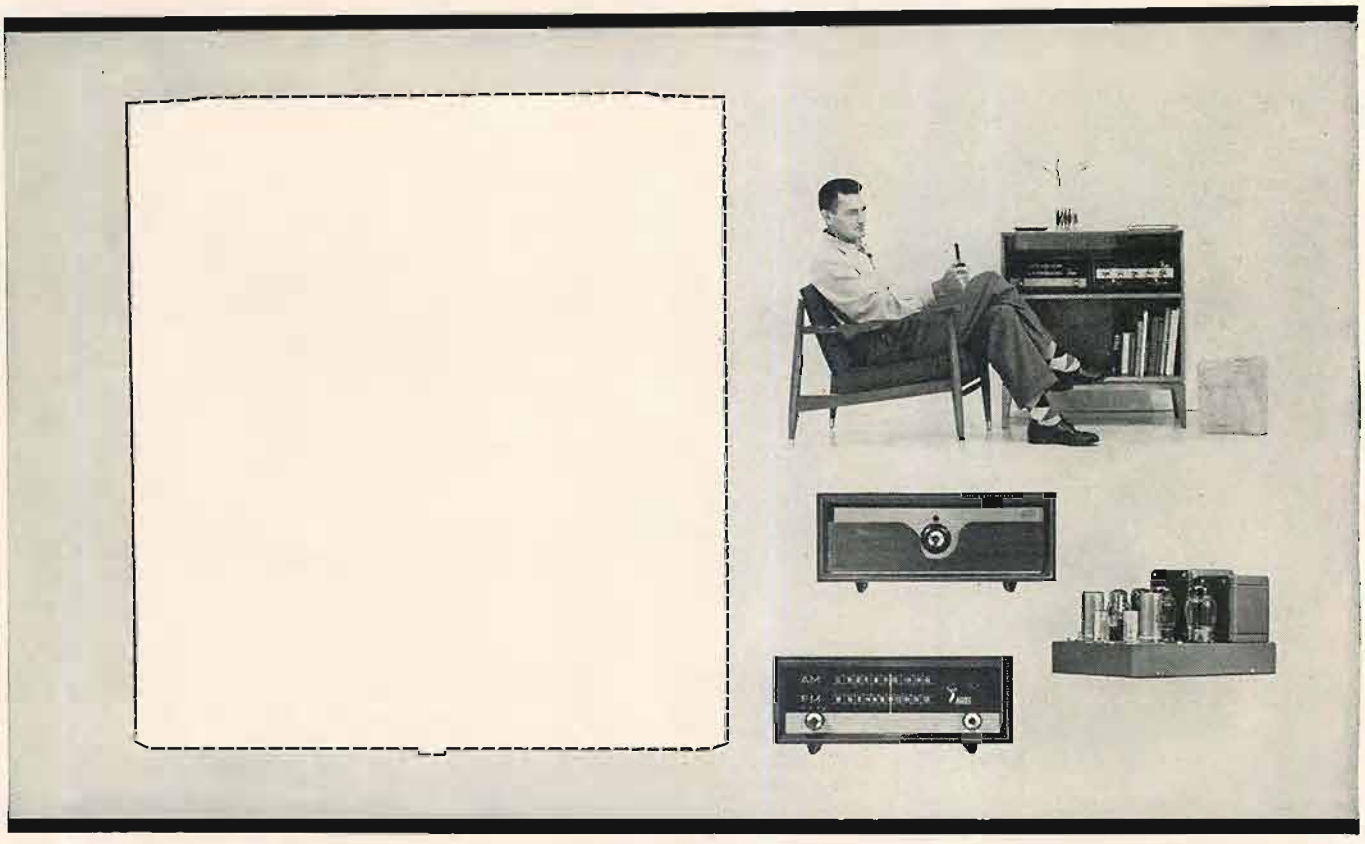

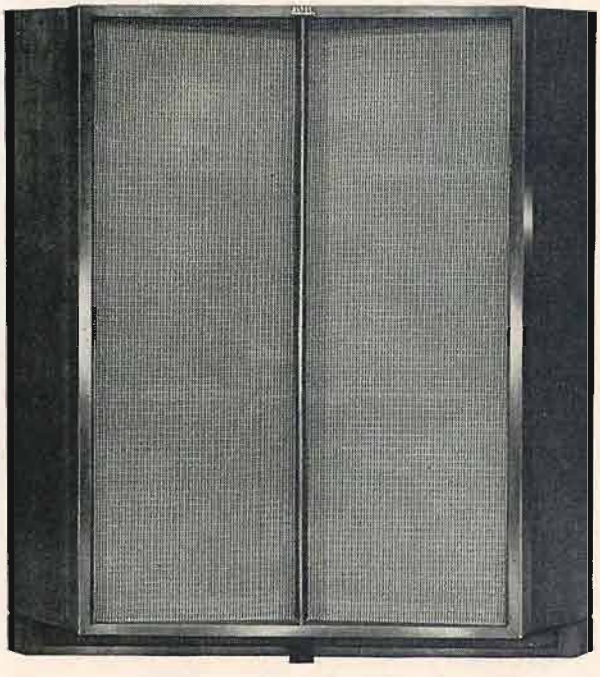

More than 12,000 motion picture theatres throughout the world are equipped with Altec's famous "Voice of the Theatre" speaker systems. In every major motion picture studio as well, Altec speaker systems are the accepted standard of perfection for true fidelity sound reproduction. This same acoustical excellence is yours in the Altec 820C iconic speaker system, designed for matchless performance in the home.

The Altec 820C speaker system is the finest speaker system obtainable anywhere, regardless of price. For guaranteed smooth frequency response from 30 to 22,000 cycles, without false bass or other misleading frequency accentuations, the 820C is the first choice the world over. The 820C consists of two 15" 803 low frequency speakers mounted in the exclusive Altec direct radiating exponential horn. A modified bass reflex principle combined with the advantages of a corner enclosure add additional depth and beauty to the sound. From 800 to 22,000 cycle tones are reproduced by an 802 driver speaker mounted on an 811 horn.

SPECIFICATIONS

Power rating: 30 watts • **Impedance:** 16 ohms • **Finish:** Mahogany, Blond • **Dimensions:** 42-1/4" W, 29" D, 47-3/8" H **Weight:** 230 lbs. • **Price:** $555.00

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LANSING CORPORATION

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LETTERS

Continued from page 22

drama, the scores of *Otello* and *Tosca* are equally successful each in its own element, regulated by text, the situations, and the composer's purpose. . . .

Can we not just be grateful for what we receive from our great creative artists? [Can we not just]. . . settle down to enjoy *Otello* and *Tosca* for what they are and not for what they should have been? What price common sense Mr. Kerman?

Dr. A. G. Ross
Toronto, Ont.
Canada

The Editors reply:

We grant Dr. Ross's point: certainly there exist good spoken dramas written in prose; and equally certainly, there can be no opera without music. As we understand Mr. Kerman's thesis, however, he meant to suggest that drama reaches its highest intensity in poetic expression. From his point of view, poetry does not simply "heighten atmosphere"; of itself it serves to characterize the speaker and the situation through the enrichment of emotional response which metaphor, symbol, rhythm, etc. provoke in listener and reader. Mr. Kerman, we feel, would maintain that in opera affording the fullest aesthetic experience, the music is not simply an independent source of pleasure to the listener, but performs the same integral function which poetry performs for the spoken drama. In other words, a rose by any other name would *not* smell as sweet; one's experience of a rose *is* compounded of a number of allusive (and elusive) factors.

In contrasting *Otello* and *Tosca,* Mr. Kerman, unless we misread him, is deliberately setting out to demonstrate that Puccini's opera *is* (as Dr. Ross also would seem to agree) "melodrama"—with the theatricalism and sensationalism for its own sake, both musically and dramatically, which that term implies—while *Otello,* as a fully integrated musical and dramatic structure, is a genuine work of art.

Obviously, one cannot live always among masterpieces. Mr. Kerman's contention, we think, is that it might be salutary not only to know what we like, but to know why we like it.

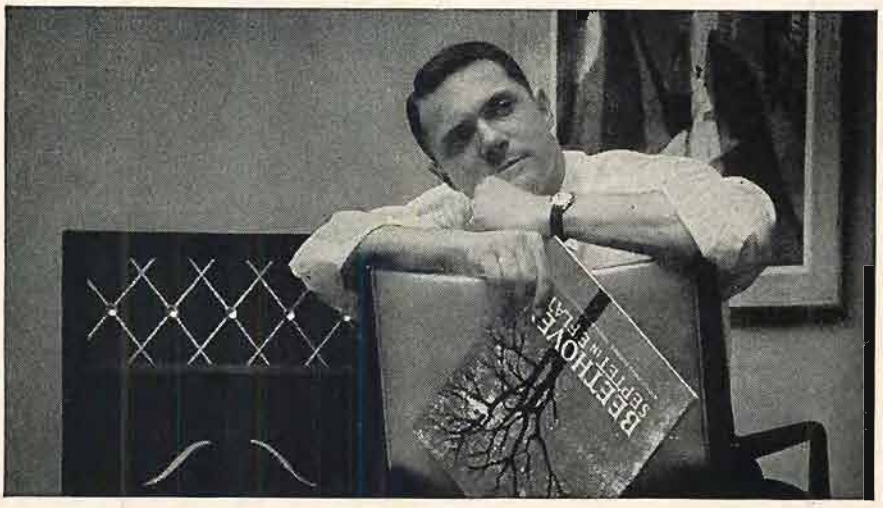
We should be glad to hear from our other readers on this score.

SIR:

There was an error of fact in Part II of my "Americans on Microgroove" [HIGH FIDELITY, Aug. 1956] which does an injustice to a recording company and which I should like to see corrected.

The recording of John Alden Car-

Continued on next page



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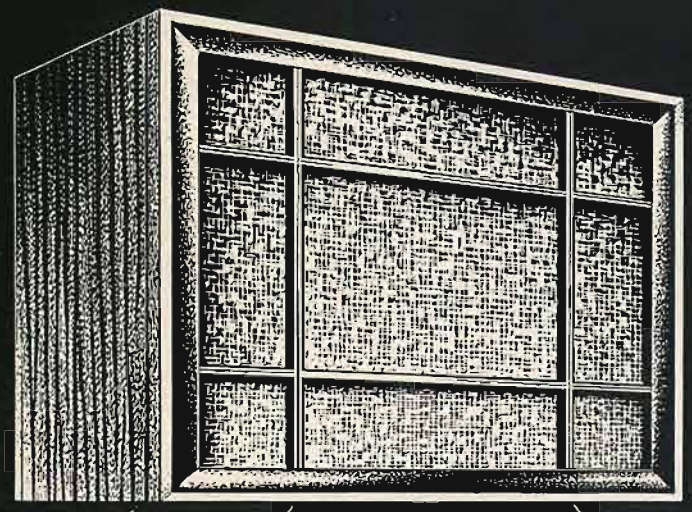

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LETTERS

Continued from preceding page

penter's jazz ballet *Krazy Kat* was made by the Philharmonia Orchestra under Richard Korn on Allegro-Elite 3150. Somehow it got attributed to ARS-37. [The error was ours, and we apologize to all parties concerned. Eds.] The other Carpenter jazz work, *Skyscrapers, is* on ARS-37, coupled with Elwell's *Happy Hypocrite.*

While I am writing, I'd like to say I am enamored of the September cover — it is a beauty indeed. And that I was really impressed with Mr. Harold Schonberg's introductory essay to his Schumann piano music discography. For all its brevity, this is just about the warmest, most understanding, most beautifully written piece of its kind I have ever seen.

Ray Ellsworth
Brooklyn, N. Y.

SIR:

I am indebted to Mr. Arthur T. Burke of San Diego, California, for having drawn my attention to a reasoning error which slipped into my article on pitch deficiencies published in the July 1956 issue of your magazine, on page 90, third paragraph. There I said: "Increased pull at the tape and capstan (caused by the take-up wheel) would cause increased tape speed and *rising* pitch."

Mr. Burke points out, correctly, that "increased tape speed in the recording machine would raise the pitch, but in playback of such a tape the result would be a decreased pitch IF the playback machine was not afflicted with a speed-up of tape."

Of course Mr. Burke is right as concerns the final playback results, and I apologize for this error. Incidentally, both of us were wrong in assuming first that increased tape speed during recording would raise the pitch; as a matter of fact the falling of pitch occurs when the recording machine begins to speed the tape up: the signal frequencies are recorded or "distributed" along an increasing length of tape per each cycle which, in terms of time and of speed, means a dropping in reference pitch.

Fritz A. Kuttner
Jackson Heights, N. Y.

SIR:

Re J.F.I.'s review of *The King and I* in the August 1956 issue of HIGH FIDELITY: the voice of Anna on this

disk is sung, *not* by Deborah Kerr (as your reviewer supposes), but, according to the *New York Times* of August 12, 1956, by Marni Nixon.

Joseph A. Misklow
Nutley, N. J.

SIR:

Your timely article "Where Do Conductors Come From?," by R. C. Marsh, [Aug. 1956], gave much valuable information on a critical problem in the world of music.

I was disappointed, however, that the author did not make reference to a very worthy organization which is making a direct contribution to the solution of this problem, namely, the National Orchestral Association of New York. Through its Training Orchestra, under the direction of Leon Barzin, the Association offers excellent opportunities to any musician for orchestral and ensemble work. Experience is also available for those students who desire to become conductors.

True, this is not an opportunity to play with a professional orchestra, or to lead a group of professionals. But, as many members of the training orchestra go directly from that position to some of the leading orchestras in our country, it is evident that it is more nearly professional than amateur.

The Training Orchestra gives four performances each year in Carnegie Hall, in addition to broadcasting one of its rehearsal periods each week on New York City's station WNYC. Mr. Barzin and his associates work tirelessly to encourage young musicians and conductors.

Mrs. John C. Pace, Jr.
East Northport, N. Y.

SIR:

May I add a heartfelt "amen" to Mr. Al Franck's letter in your September issue regarding the inadequacy of the record catalogues currently available in this country.

The Gramophone, HIGH FIDELITY's distinguished colleague, publishes separate "Classical" and "Popular" LP and 45-rpm catalogues four times annually, listing records available in Great Britain—and the exact and painstaking research and organization that go into both makes one realize how, by comparison, we lag behind them with our haphazard jumbled listings. . . .

Thanking you for a really fine Sep-

Continued on page 34

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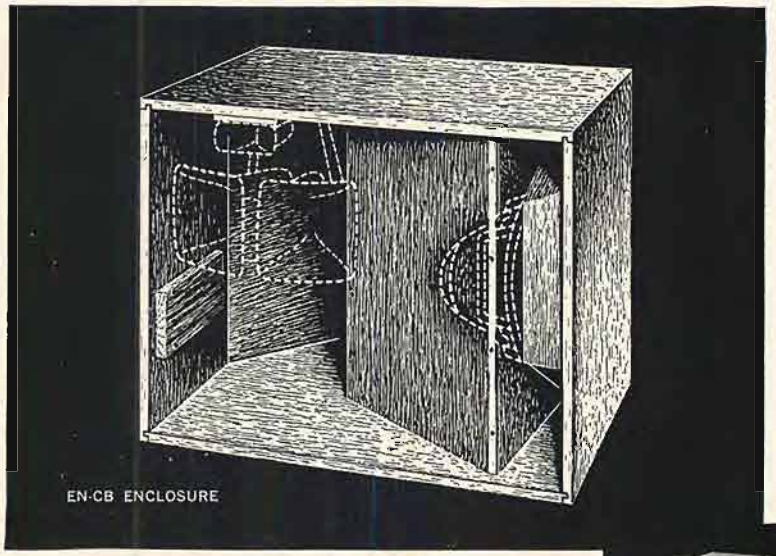

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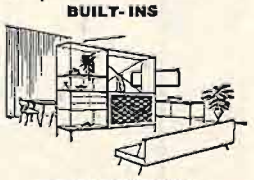
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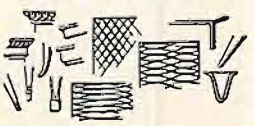
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BUILT-INS—Easily installed into closet or wall, or into large wall-to-wall installations.

ROOM-DIVIDERS—Can be used vertically or horizontally.

PICK A PERIOD—Any furniture period can be achieved by treatment of front frame moulding, base, grille fabric, etc.

CUSTOM FINISHING—Can be stained and finished Blond, Mahogany, etc. Surface treatments: enamel, leather, formica, etc.

University offers the largest selection of speakers and components to meet every size and budget requirement

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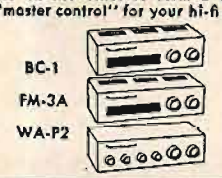
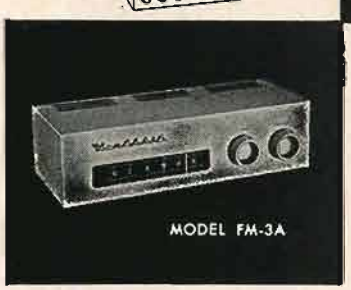
Here's what you get:

High-fidelity amplifiers, tuners, and speakers that you *assemble yourself,* from the step-by-step instructions furnished. You get, top-quality parts at lower cost through Heath mass purchasing power. You get the equivalent of systems costing approximately twice the Heathkit price.

MATCHING CABINETS

The Heathkit AM tuner, FM tuner, and preamplifier kits may be stacked one on the other to form a compact "master control" for your hi-fi system.





HERE'S WHY A Heathkit® IS FUN TO BUILD:

Instructions are *complete,* and our amazing step-by-step method, tied-in with large pictorial illustrations, guide the beginner through each stage of assembly. If you can follow directions you can succeed, and can build high-fidelity equipment you will be proud to show off to your family and friends.

Here's the proof:

Thousands of Heathkits have been built at home by people just like yourself, and you should treat yourself to this same experience by dealing with the world's largest manufacturer of top-quality electronic kits for home and industry.

Heathkit Model FM-3A High Fidelity FM Tuner Kit
Features A.G.C., and stabilized, temperature-compensated oscillator. Ten uv sensitivity for 20 DB of quieting. Covers standard FM band from 88 to 108 mc. Ratio detector for efficient hi-fi performance. Power supply built in. Illuminated slide rule dial. Pre-aligned coils and front end tuning unit. **$26.95*** (With Cabinet) Shpg. Wt. 7 Lbs.

Heathkit Model BC-1 Broadband AM Tuner Kit
Special AM tuner circuit features broad band width, high sensitivity and good selectivity. Employs special detector for minimum signal distortion. Covers 550 to 1600 kc. RF and IF coils pre-aligned. Power supply is built in. **$26.95*** (With Cabinet) Shpg. Wt. 8 Lbs.

Heathkit Model WA-P2 High Fidelity Preamplifier Kit
Provides 5 inputs, each with individual level controls. Tone controls provide 18 DB boost and 12 DB cut at 50 CPS and 15 DB boost and 20 DB cut at 15,000 CPS. Features four-position turnover and roll-off controls. Derives operating power from the main amplifier, requiring only 6.3 VAC at 1 a. and 300 VDC at 10 ma. **$21.75*** (With Cabinet) Shpg. Wt. 7 Lbs.

Heathkit Model W-5M Advanced-Design High Fidelity Amplifier Kit
This 25-watt unit is our finest high-fidelity amplifier. Employs KT-66 output tubes and a Peerless output transformer. Frequency response ± 1 DB from 5 to 160,000 CPS at one watt. Harmonic distortion less than 1% at 25 watts, and IM distortion less than 1% at 20 watts. Hum and noise are 99 DB below 25 watts. Output impedance is 4, 8 or 16 ohms. Must be heard to be fully appreciated. **$59.75** Shpg. Wt. 31 Lbs. Express Only

MODEL W-5: Consists of Model W-5M above *plus* Model WA-P2 preamplifier. $81.50* Shpg. Wt. 38 Lbs. Express only

Heathkit Model W-3M Dual-Chassis High Fidelity Amplifier Kit
This 20-watt Williamson Type amplifier employs the famous Acrosound Model TO-300 "ultra linear" output transformer and uses 5881 output tubes. Two-chassis construction provides additional flexibility in mounting. Frequency response is ± 1 DB from 6 CPS to 150 kc at 1 watt. Harmonic distortion only 1% at 21 watts, and IM distortion only 1.3% at 20 watts. Output impedance is 4, 8 or 16 ohms. Hum and noise are 88 DB below 20 watts. **$49.75** Shpg. Wt. 29 Lbs. Express only

MODEL W-3: Consists of Model W-3M above *plus* Model WA-P2 preamplifier. $71.50* Shpg. Wt. 37 Lbs. Express only

HEATHKIT SPEAKER SYSTEM KITS

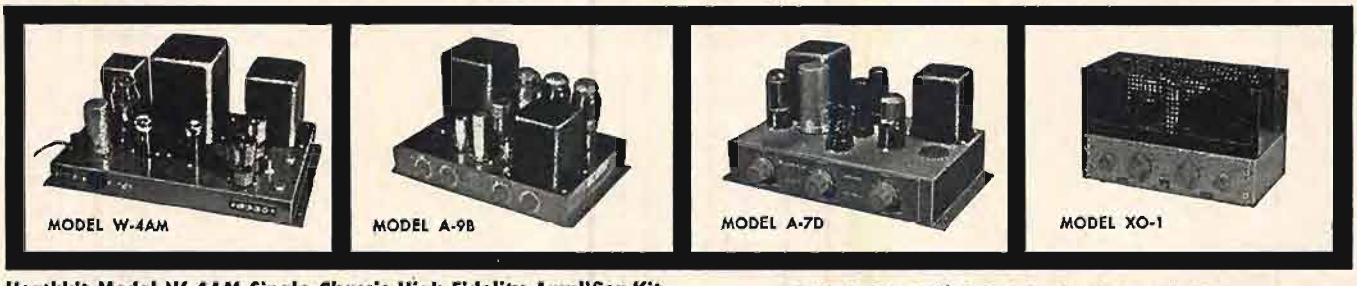
These speaker systems are a very vocal demonstration of what can be done with high-quality speakers in enclosures that are designed especially to receive them. Notice, too, that these two enclosures are designed to work together, as your high-fidelity system expands.

Heathkit Model SS-1 High Fidelity Speaker System Kit

Employing two Jensen speakers, the Model SS-1 covers 50 to 12,000 CPS within ± 5 DB. It can fulfill your present needs, and still provide for future expansion through use of the SS-1B. Cross-over frequency is 1600 CPS and the system is rated at 25 watts. Impedance is 16 ohms. Cabinet is a ducted-port bass-reflex type, and is most attractively styled. Kit includes all components, pre-cut and pre-drilled, for assembly. **$39.95** Shpg. Wt. 30 Lbs.

Heathkit Model SS-1B Range Extending Speaker System Kit

This range extending unit uses a 15" woofer and a super-tweeter to cover 35 to 600 CPS and 4000 to 16,000 CPS. Used with the Model SS-1, it completes the audio spectrum for combined coverage of 35 to 16,000 CPS within ± 5 DB. Made of top-quality furniture-grade plywood. All parts are pre-cut and pre-drilled, ready for assembly and the finish of your choice. Components for cross-over circuit included with kit. Power rating is 35 watts, impedance is 16 ohms. **$99.95** Shpg. Wt. 80 Lbs.



Heathkit Model W-4AM Single-Chassis High Fidelity Amplifier Kit
The 20-watt Model W-4AM Williamson type amplifier combines high performance with economy. Employs special-design output transformer by Chicago Standard, and 5881 output tubes. Frequency response is ± 1 DB from 10 CPS to 100 kc at 1 watt. Harmonic distortion only 1.5%, and IM distortion only 2.7% at this same level. Output impedance 4, 8 or 16 ohms. Hum and noise 95 DB below 20 watts. **$39.75** Shpg. Wt. 28 Lbs.

MODEL W-4A: Consists of Model W-4AM above *plus* Model WA-P2 preamplifier. $61.50* Shpg. Wt. 35 Lbs. Express only

Heathkit Model A-9B 20-Watt High Fidelity Amplifier Kit
Features full 20 watt output using push-pull 6L6 tubes. Built-in preamplifier provides four separate inputs. Separate bass and treble tone controls provided, and output transformer is tapped at 4, 8, 16 and 500 ohms. Designed for home use, but also fine for public address work. Response is ± 1 DB from 20 to 20,000 CPS. Harmonic distortion less than 1% at 3 DB below rated output. **$35.50** Shpg. Wt. 23 Lbs.

Heathkit Model A-7D 7-Watt High Fidelity Amplifier Kit
Qualifies for high-fidelity even though more limited in power than other Heathkit models. Frequency response is ± 1½ DB from 20 to 20,000 CPS. Push-pull output, and separate bass and treble tone controls. **$18.65*** Shpg. Wt. 10 Lbs.

MODEL A-7E: Same, except that a 12SL7 permits preamplification, two inputs, RIAA compensation, and extra gain. $20.35* Shpg. Wt. 10 Lbs.

Heathkit Model XO-1 Electronic Cross-Over Kit
Separates high and low frequencies electronically, so they may be fed to separate amplifiers and separate speakers. Selectable cross-over frequencies are 100, 200, 400, 700, 1200, 2000, and 35,000 CPS. Separate level control for high and low frequency channels. Minimizes intermodulation distortion. Attenuation is 12 DB per octave. Handles unlimited power. **$18.95** Shpg. Wt. 6 Lbs.

*Price includes 10% Fed. Excise tax where applicable.

HOW TO ORDER:

It's simple—just identify the kit you desire by its model number and send your order to the address listed below. Or, if you would rather budget your purchase, send for details of the HEATH TIME-PAYMENT PLAN!

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World Famous for

consistent good sound

...unequalled Quality features and LOW COST!

LORENZ LP 312
12" WIDE-RANGE LOUDSPEAKER

A quality, dual - purpose speaker. Can be used as wide - range reproducer or woofer unit in expanding system. **FEATURES:** EXTRA heavy magnet, long magnetic path, small air gap, long voice coil, non-resonant frame, perfect gap alignment and multi-parameter, tropicalized cone. **SPECIFICATIONS:** Impedance — 16 ohms at 800 cps; Response — below 20 to above 14,000 cps; Output — 25 w average, 35 w peak; Magnet Wgt. — 61.5 ozs; Voice Coil Diam. — 1½"; Baffle Opening — 10⅝"; Depth—6¾"; Frame—heavy duty cast aluminum girder construction. net **39.50**

LORENZ TB-1 and TB-2
TWEETER COMBINATIONS
For all 12" speakers.

Completely assembled and ready for installation. Fits across 12" speakers without projecting beyond front of speaker mounting baffle. Specially designed steel bracket supports tweeter(s) coaxially. Rigid metal construction discourages resonance in speaker or tweeter.

TB-1 (bracket with single tweeter) ..... net **11.85**
TB-2 (bracket and two tweeters) net **21.69**

LORENZ LP 208
8" WIDE-RANGE LOUDSPEAKER

Versatile, 3 - purpose reproducer. Designed as wide-range speaker alone or in groups, as high or low end of 2-way system, or as mid-range unit in 3-way system. **FEATURES:** extra heavy Alni magnet, perfect gap alignment, tropicalized cone, oversized voice coil, small air gap, non-resonant frame. **SPECIFICATIONS:** Impedance — 8 ohms at 800 cps; Response — 35 to 14,000 cps; Output — 15 w average, 21 w peak; Magnet Wgt. 28.5 ozs; Voice coil Diam. — 1"; Overall Diam. — 8½"; Baffle Opening — 7¼"; Depth — 4"; Frame — heavy duty cast aluminum girder construction. net **19.95**

LORENZ LP 312-1 and LP 312-2
12" COAXIAL AND DIAXIAL SPEAKERS

Extended response coaxial or diaxial speakers are obtained by adding Lorenz TB-1 or TB-2 Tweeters to Lorenz 12" wide-range reproducers.

SPECIFICATIONS	LP 312-1	LP 312-2
Impedance (at 800 cps):	16 ohms	16 ohms
Response:	20-17,000	20-17,000
Output:	27 w	27 w
Overall Diam.:	12¼"	12¼"
Baffle Opening:	10⅝"	10⅝"
Depth:	6¾"	7⅛"
Price:	net **49.50**	net **59.50**

(includes HP-1 Hi Pass Filter)

LORENZ LP 65
HORN-TYPE TWEETER

Fits any enclosure or speaker without the usual interaction. **FEATURES & ADVANTAGES:** solid back permits wide application; round cone design assures even sound dispersion; soft plastic construction prevents metallic overtones. **SPECIFICATIONS:** Impedance — 5.5 ohms at 800 cps; Response (with High Pass Filter HP-1)—2,000 to 17,000 cps; Sound Dispersion—120° (in all directions); Output—2 w; Outside Diam.—2½"; Cone Diam.—2¼"; Baffle Mounting Hole—2⅛" flared to 2½" or more. net **8.50**

LORENZ HP-1
HIGH PASS FILTER

For use with any tweeter. Introduces highs at rate of 3 db per octave starting at 2,000 cps, with nominal crossover at 5,000 cps. Effect increases smoothly to limit of audibility. Installed within speaker enclosure. DIMENSIONS: Overall height 2¾"; Mounting (square base) — 1½" between hole centers. net **4.95**

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LETTERS

Continued from page 31

tember issue — I hope Mr. Gelatt keeps whetting our appetites with "inside" and advance information on recording activities.

Frank Schwarzenberger
New York, N. Y.

SIR:

Charles Moore, of Chicago, presented a very interesting problem in his letter published in your September issue, in regard to cataloguing his recordings. Perhaps some of your readers might be interested in what I have found to be a very successful method of keeping track of just what lurks in my record cabinet.

The equipment is simple and easily obtained: white and yellow 3 x 5 file cards; a ring or spring binder; paper for same; and a file box (or cabinet). My method, after I've decided to keep a record, is as follows:

1. White card — title at top left; manufacturer's record number top right; names of artists center; date of acquisition lower left; purchase price lower right; my record number center right.

2. Yellow card — composer top left; title(s) center; my record number center right.

3. Add record title to numerical listing in binder.

My records are numbered in several series. From #1 onward are 12-inch disks, with 10-inchers beginning at 1000. Albums are A-1 *et seq.* and jazz records, my only special category, J-1 on up.

I have added tabbed index cards to my card file (with the "Mc" card reversed and labeled "Sym") to keep a little more order and add much convenience.

It's quite true that multi-selection disks, of which Mr. Moore speaks, could be quite a problem, and I have found that occasionally seven or eight cards were necessary to index properly a single record. But, in the long run, it more than repays the time and trouble.

The one serious drawback to instituting such a system is the initial expense of time, if the collection is at all large. I began mine in 1951, when I owned only fifteen records, and have kept it up to date, with my present collection being more than ten times as large. . . .

William C. Hillman
Boston, Mass.

the NEW Pilot AA-920 $99.50

slightly higher West of Rockies

Power Amplifier and Audio Control System

Here—in one handsome, convenient enclosure—is the immediate answer to all your amplifier needs.

There is hardly a high fidelity feature you can name that has not already been included in the AA-920. First, it delivers up to 20 watts of undistorted audio power with a frequency response that is flat from 20 to 20,000 cycles ±1db. Even at its peak output of 40 watts, distortion is surprisingly low.

Second, the AA-920 also incorporates a high quality preamplifier and a versatile audio control system. In addition to phono, tuner, tape amplifier and auxiliary channels, the AA-920 also has provision for operating directly from the playback head of a tape deck or tape recorder. The necessary tape equalization is included.

The phono input impedance is continuously variable, and may be adjusted for the optimum value prescribed for your favorite cartridge. There are four record equalization positions, as well as independent, full-range bass and treble tone controls, effective on all inputs.

Sharp-cut rumble and scratch filters are also included in the AA-920. Each is operated by a separate switch which may be set for either mild or extreme conditions. To give full effectiveness to the loudness control, the AA-920 is also equipped with a volume or level-setting control.

The AA-920 employs the new rugged 6L6GB output tubes in push-pull. Use of DC on all tube heaters in the preamp and other low level circuits has brought hum to 80db below full output—practically hum-free performance.

The all-metal enclosure of the AA-920 is luxuriously finished in deep burgundy and burnished brass. Styling and design make it the perfect match for the Pilot FM-530 and the Pilot FA-540, companion FM and FM-AM tuners to the AA-920.

See and hear the Pilot AA-920 at your hi-fi dealer or write for complete specifications to Dept. YL-2

the Pilot **RADIO CORPORATION** 37-06 36th STREET, LONG ISLAND CITY 1, N. Y.

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THE AUDIO WORKSHOP, 2211 Camino Del Reposo, LaJolla.
WHITEHEAD RADIO CO., 4686 Long Beach Blvd., Long Beach.
OLIN GROVE CO., 2904 Telegraph Ave., Oakland.
AUDIO ASSOCIATES, 689 S. Fair Oaks Ave., Pasadena.
SILVERGATE RADIO SUPPLY, 1528 India Street, San Diego.
THRIFTY ELECTRONIC SUPPPLY CO., 13647 Burbank Blvd., Van Nuys.
19318 Van Owen Ave., Reseda.
Dist. of Col.
HI-FI WHOLESALERS, INC., 1340 Connecticut Ave., N. W., Washington.
Florida
TRUE FIDELITY MUSIC SYSTEMS, 908 North Spring St., Pensacola.
Indiana
GOLDEN EAR, 15 E. 16th St., Indianapolis.
610 Main St., Lafayette
Illinois
HIGH FIDELITY UNLIMITED, 1305 Roosevelt Rd., Broadview.
THE NEW SOUND, 35 E. Springfield Ave., Champaign.
SUMRALL AUDIO SYSTEMS, 4109 W. Armitage Ave., Chicago.
BECKERS, 801 Dempster Street, Evanston.
THE HIGH FIDELITY HOUSE, 1127 Westgate, Oak Park.
Kentucky
GOLDEN EAR, 610 Third St., Louisville.
Michigan
R. A. HOWARD – HIGH FIDELITY, 2938 Niles Ave., St. Joseph.
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DON COOK'S ELECTRONIC EQUIP. CO., 1020 W. Truman Rd., Independence.
DAVID BEATTY CUSTOM HI-FI SOUND, 1616 Westport Road, Kansas City.
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WBPA SOUND SYSTEMS, 132 W. Big Bend, St. Louis.
CUSTOM MUSIC SYSTEMS, 426 Main St., East Orange.
SOUND REPRODUCTION INC., 34 New St., Newark.
New York
BROOKLYN HIGH FIDELITY CENTER, 836 Flatbush Ave., Brooklyn.
THE PINE SHOP, 26 Glenwood Rd., Glen Head.
SHERIDAN HIGH FIDELITY CENTER, 2200 Sheridan Drive, Kenmore.
RADIO CRAIG, 1215 Northern Blvd., Manhasset.
37-40 74th St., Jackson Heights.
AIREX RADIO CORP., 64 Cortlandt Street, New York.
ASCO SOUND CORP., 115 W. 4th St., 3rd Fl., New York.
HARVEY RADIO CO., INC., 103 W. 43rd Street, New York.
1123 6th Ave., New York.
HOUSE OF HARMONY, 1034 Eastern Ave., Schenectady.
CAMBRIDGE ELECTRONICS CO., 530 Westcott Street, Syracuse.
Ohio
GROSHAN CAMERA CENTER INC., 331 Cleveland Ave., N. W. Canton.
CUSTOMCRAFTERS AUDIO INC., 2259 Gilbert Ave., Cincinnati.
MUSIC UNLIMITED, 13410 Detroit Ave., Cleveland.
BEXLY ELECTRONIC, 14805 Euclid Ave., East Cleveland.
CUSTOM CLASSICS, 13421 Euclid Ave., East Cleveland.
ANDERSON HIGH FIDELITY CENTER, 2244 Neil Ave., Columbus.
Pennsylvania
HOUSE OF RECORDS, 360 West 8th St., Erie.
HI-FI WHOLESALERS, INC., 1731 Chestnut St., Philadelphia.
LECTRONICS, City Line Center, Philadelphia.
TEN CATE ASSOCIATES, 6128 Morton St., Philadelphia.
ENGINEERED ELECTRONICS INC., 2046 West Liberty Ave., Pittsburgh.
SHADLE ASSOCIATES, 151 S. Allen Street, State College.
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HI-FI SOUND & RECORDS CO., 621 Harden St., Columbia.
Texas
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ROSS RADIO & SOUND CO., 1608 North Haskell Ave., Dallas.
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THE MUSIC CENTER, 6918 N. San Pedro Ave., San Antonio.
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ELECTRONIC PARTS CO., 9303 Granby St., Norfolk.
Washington
OLYMPIC ENGINEERING CO., 2008 Westlake Ave., Seattle.
HOUSE OF HI-FIDELITY 1021 W. First Ave., Spokane.
Wisconsin
HI FI CORNER, 401 State St., Madison.
THE HI-FI CENTER, INC., 4236 W. Capitol Dr. Milwaukee.
Canada
AKINS SALES, 114½ Slater Street, Ottawa.

Books in Review

LIKE too many audiophile oldtimers, I have despondent moments when the high-fidelity movement strikes me as running a strong second to the movies as a candidate for the Peter Pan of the arts — eternally youthful, to be sure, but also eternally immature. But if I look and listen around me with freshened eyes and ears, I realize anew just how far and fast we've come from the "good old" days; which, to be completely honest, actually were thoroughly bad ones as measured by even the most modest current sonic standards.

Yet I still must echo the common plaint of "senior citizens" in every field that their juniors (in experiential if not in chronological age) lack a sufficient "sense of history" to appreciate fully not only their present blessings but the valiant labors of the hardy pioneers who transformed the dream into its present hard reality. It was on this score that I urged them so strongly (in this column for September 1955) to read Roland Gelatt's *The Fabulous Phonograph*, and now commend to their attention the reminiscences of Sir Compton Mackenzie, founder of the oldest and still most important British journal devoted exclusively to reproduced music, *The Gramophone*. And it is partly on this score that I welcome a quite different, more direct, introduction to and clarification of contemporary audio techniques, equipment, and psychology: this one by the original editor, since 1954 publisher, of the magazine you are now reading.

To be sure, Charles Fowler's ***High Fidelity: A Practical Guide*** (McGraw-Hill, $4.95) is neither a history of the high-fidelity movement nor the anecdotal memoirs of one of its most influential Founding Fathers. Rather it is exactly what its subtitle claims: a highly practical introductory guidebook to the listener's enjoyment — and management — of reproduced sound. Yet both its actual content and the manner of presentation seem to be particularly, even if perhaps subconsciously, devised to provide the novice audiophile with broadened perspective on the art as a whole, as well as with practicable "working" information and advice.

On the surface, this book follows the now conventional formula of discussing the various component links in the over-all sound-reproduction chain, first individually and then as integrated systems. But the necessary background materials (on the nature of sound in general and high-fidelity sound in particular, on the significant colorations of "The Room in Which We Listen," and on "How and What We Hear") are presented in more detail and explained far more meaningfully than in any previous volume or pamphlet addressed to the nontechnical reader. Components are described in basic functional terms, rather than those of specific "name" models, although it seldom is difficult for any informed reader to recognize what particular "makes" of equipment the author has in mind. And the usual system-building recommendations are here omitted in favor of a searching questionnaire on individual-listener needs and desires, the honest answering of which must surely enable even the tyro to select his eventual purchases for maximum satisfaction as well as minimum cost. Indeed the only serious omissions are an annotated bibliography and a discussion of the tantalizing appeals and problems of stereo — but, then, the latter might well require another 310 pages of their own. . . .

For those unfamiliar with the unique quality of Mr. Fowler's content and style, the key to both is provided in the author's Preface, where he tells how and why the book itself came to be written — as a kind of summary of and expanded surrogate for the enormous correspondence he has carried on with confused yet avid newcomers to the world of high-fidelity sound. It is the exploitation of this first-hand familiarity with the questions that most puzzle the novice, the thoroughgoing utilization of Fowler's own exceptionally enlightening personal experience, and the innate gift for extraordinarily lucid, verbal ex-

Continued on page 40

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the **Ultimate** in personal control makes you your own music impresario—the **Ultimate** in crisp detail of music reproduction—presence as you would have it; music as you like it!

INTRODUCING

the complete Sherwood music center

- The all new S-1000 II Amplifier
- Sensitive FM-AM or FM tuners
- Unparalleled cabinet design and craftsmanship
- "Realistic" 3-way speaker systems

You are a music lover, wishing for better music reproduction. Or, you are a Hi-Fi expert, wanting improved sound—greater flexibility. Why Sherwood?

Sherwood is the Ultimate production of engineers who designed Hi-Fi components for a score of nationally-recognized manufacturers—who developed the first FM tuner with AFC. You may rely fully on Sherwood, backed by the **industry's longest warranty—1 year!** Here is a **complete** Music Center, including 3-way speaker systems, amplifiers, and tuners, so simple to plug together and operate you'll be amazed.

Tastefully designed for use without cabinets; they may be placed on book shelves, desk top, or chairside table for remote control. Cabinetry speaks for itself—the finest woods, expertly crafted; styled to suit any decor. Technical specifications may be had on request.

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A BROWN FLEXTONE

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C MAHOGANY LEATHERETTE GOLD-TOOLED

J BLACK LEATHERETTE GOLD-TOOLED

T TAN LEATHERETTE GOLD-TOOLED

W WHITE LEATHERETTE GOLD-TOOLED

S-1000 II—20 Watt Amplifier. This all new amplifier is designed to bring the maximum pleasure to music lovers—the greatest joy to the Hi-Fi expert.

Controls are simple, easy-to-handle, yet complete—include 6-db presence-rise switch, equalizer control for 4 record compensation choices or microphone and tape-playback equalization, inverse-feedback type bass and treble controls, Sherwood exclusive "center-set" loudness control, loudness compensation switch, 12 db/octave scratch and rumble filters, phono level control, tape-monitor switch, and selector for 5 inputs (including 2 with high-gain preamplifier)—all on front panel. Speaker-damping selector switch on rear. Phono preamp features low-noise EF86/Z729 tube. Power output: 20 watts (40 watts peak) at 1% IM Distortion (60:7kc/4:1). Outputs: 16, 8, and 4 ohms. Inverse Feedback: 23 db, plus current feedback selection. Frequency Response at 20w: 20-30,000 cps ± 1 db. Preamp Sensitivity: 3mv. Preamp hum level: 60 db below rated output. 105 watts, fused. 6 tubes plus rectifier. Size: 14 x 10½ x 4 in. high. Shipping weight: 23 lbs.

Model **S-1000 II A or B...$99.50**; Model **C... $104.50**; Models **J, T, or W...$109.50**; west of Rockies, add $3.00 to above prices.

FM-AM Tuner S-2000. Engineered and styled to match the performance of the incomparable S-1000 II Amplifier, this tuner offers features not previously available in this price range. These include 0.95μv (20 db quieting) FM sensitivity, cascode 6BS8 balanced input, automatic frequency control, flywheel tuning, wide/narrow AM switch, (15-kc "hi-fi" bandwidth or 5-kc selective bandwidth), precision calibrated dial, directable AM rod antenna, cathode-follower output, output level control, FM multiplex output, 10-kc "bridged-T" AM filter. Delayed AGC on FM reduces IM distortion to below 1½% at 100% modulation. 11 tubes plus rectifier. Dimensions: 14 x 10½ x 4 in. high. 55 watts, fused. Shipping Weight: 18 lbs.

Model **S-2000 A or B...$139.50**; Model **C... $144.50**; Models **J, S or W...$149.50.**

Model **S-3000**—FM Tuner only; same FM specifications as the Model S-2000 **PLUS** tuning eye and "local-distance" switch to suppress cross-modulation responses. Model **S-3000A or B...Net $99.50**; Model **C...$104.50**; Models **J, S, or W... $109.50**; west of Rockies, add $3.00 to above prices.

Forester 3-Way Speaker. This speaker system with horn-loaded cabinet is a delight to the woman's distortion-sensitive ear and style-conscious eye. It features a 300-cps crossover network (once obtained only in expensive "dream systems")—reducing intermodulation distortion, eliminating "harshness and fuzziness." Careful balance of the 12 in., 8 in., and 5 in. speakers gives realistic music reproduction. Response: 40-13,500 cps (-5 db); IM dist. 1½% at 25 watts. Tweeter level control.

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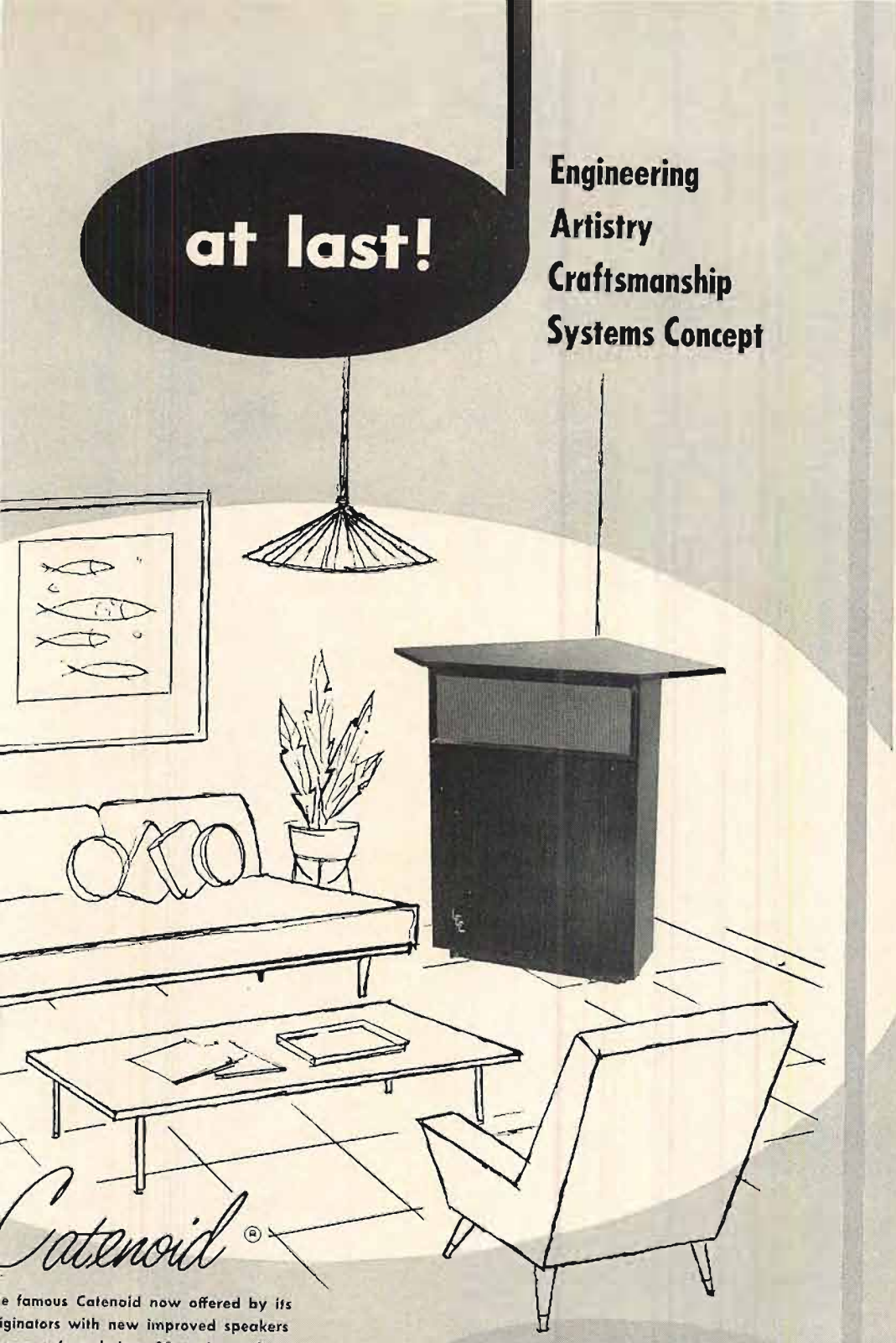

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

Continued from page 36

pression which, in felicitous combination, give his book its prime distinction as well as its immense usefulness.

Yet it is in view of the broader perspectives implied if not explicit here and of Fowler's great influence as a spokesman of audio philosophy in general that I reiterate my obsessive jeremiads about the dangers of letting the worthy aim of practicability limit not merely our immediate hi-fi demands but also some by-no-means-impossible ideal objectives.

Happily, and to the author's everlasting credit, he takes far more pains than most of his predecessors to stress the basic complexity of the technical terms and functions explained here so effectively in everyday language. And unlike so many of his colleagues, he is careful to indicate too that there well may be better (if necessarily more elaborate and expensive) means of spectrum-division than by L-C dividing networks . . . of obtaining adequate acoustic power than simply by upping amplifier electrical-power resources . . . and of securing satisfying aural balance than by the use of "loudness" and "tone" controls. Nevertheless, and despite his frequent qualifications, the main spatial emphasis here is on the utility of L-C networks, non-horn-loaded speaker systems, and loudness and tone controls — without fully alerting the novice to what are (to my mind) their basic and incorrigible deficiencies.

I take particular exception to Fowler's statement that "only in the very simplest systems should tone controls be completely omitted" (the need for any "control" except for equalization and level-setting purposes is for me an unmistakable indication of some kind of speaker inadequacy); to his endorsement, however implicit and qualified, of pseudo-stereophony (dispersed sound sources, except for true stereo, are in my opinion the ruination of far too many otherwise first-rate contemporary installations), and above all to his concluding advice, "Don't buy more than you can hear." That is practical, all right; but again, infinitely educable though ears and aural sensibilities are, they never can realize any great measure of their potentialities unless our sound systems are capable of providing far more than we can appreciate at first

Continued on page 42

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Matching twin cabinets with removable legs suggest use as companion pieces or as separates. Also available in walnut or blonde.

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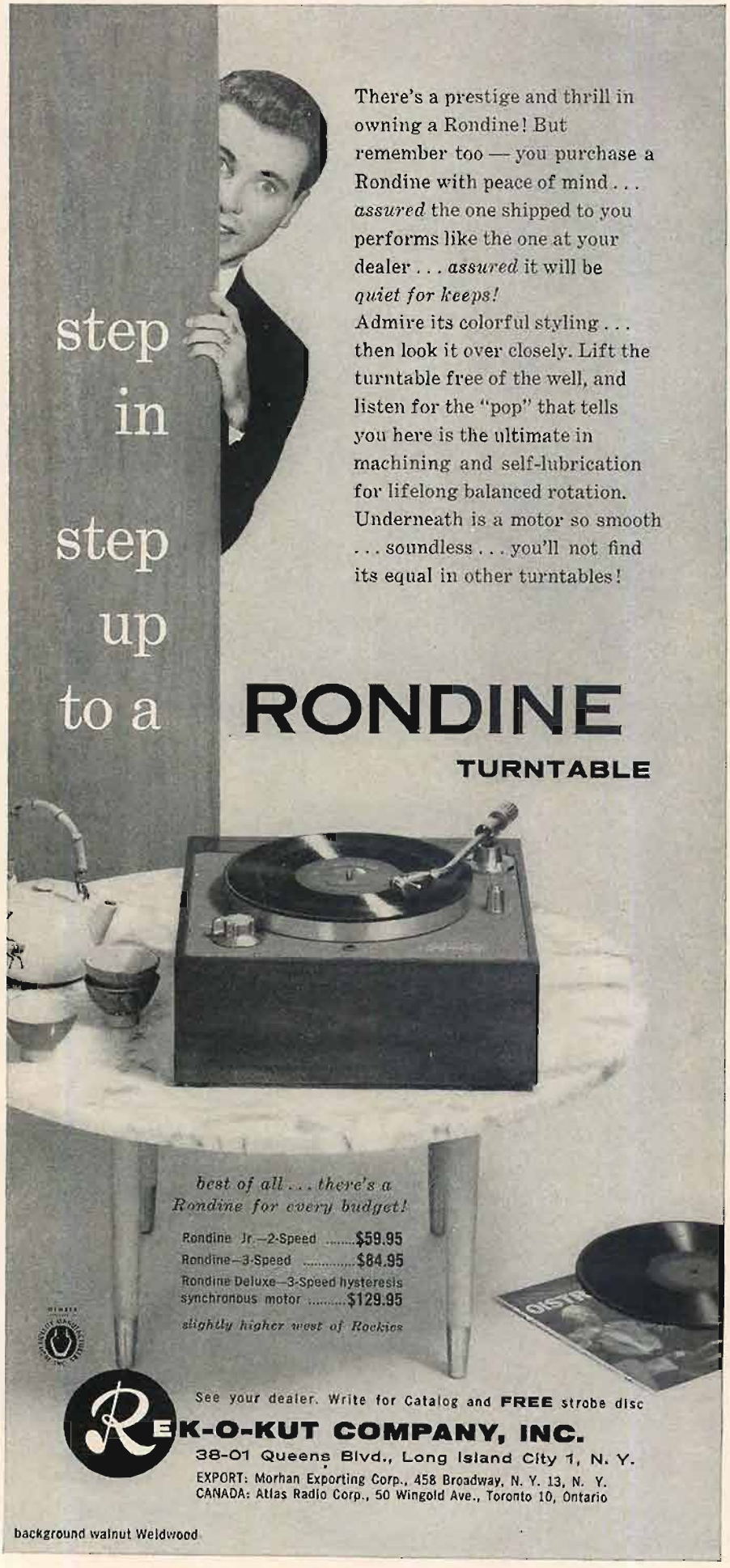

BOOKS IN REVIEW

Continued from page 40

— or even after years of — hearing.

But perhaps these are matters for private argument or for extended discussion with readers who have graduated from their audio apprenticeship. What even the most fanatical purist must gladly concede is that the search for perfection has no possible hope of even partial success until it is encouraged and shared by a vital nucleus of audiophiles who have been thoroughly educated in basic principles and fully understand the operational capabilities (and deficiencies!) of the "practical" equipments now generally available. For such education and comprehension no book I have seen to date makes the necessary factual information, and the no less essential stimulus of enthusiasm for good sound, more palatable for the layman than Charles Fowler's *Practical Guide.*

Ignoramus to "Gramophile"

While Sir Compton Mackenzie's **My Record of Music** (Putnam's, $5.00), does not itself exhibit any understanding of "high fidelity," it richly documents the awakening of interest in recorded music, which inevitably led to the development of hi-fi techniques and — more importantly — to their delighted acceptance by at least a substantial segment of the listening public. However disinterested he may think himself to be in the pre-hi-fi disk eras or however impatient he may become with Mackenzie's rehashing of now old and meaningless controversies, the serious record collector can still learn a great deal from these reminiscences. The book is also a fascinating account of a complete musical ignoramus' slow but complete conversion into the prototype of the modern music lover christened by Mackenzie himself as "gramophile," and the even more absorbing account of the founding of *The Gramophone* in 1923 and its piloting through indifferent, stormy, and war-torn seas to a position of international renown. The combination makes for first-rate personal, as well as audio, history.

Mackenzie himself seems something of a reactionary, in music at least, and more than a little of a curmudgeon. He writes with practiced skill and verve, however, which makes it more than ever regrettable that he lazily fills so many of these pages with ex-

tended quotations from bygone *Gramophone* editorials, his letters to other editors, and the like, rather than consistently providing new commentary on more recent gramophonic subjects or reconsidered commentary on the historical ones. But he always can be simultaneously entertaining and irritating, as befits the many-faceted, candid, belligerent, and outspoken personality he is. One thing I can definitely promise you: if you read his book at all, it won't be unresponsively.

And it never should be forgotten by any true audiophile how much the fabulously expanded LP repertory of today owes to Mackenzie's condemnation of early record catalogues' inadequacies and to the pioneering explorations of the National Gramophonic Society which he founded. Or how much the present freedom of expression enjoyed by record reviewers owes to Mackenzie's powers of persuasion over the British manufacturers to support a publication in which their products were honestly criticized, and to his consistent refusal to interfere (however much he personally disagreed) with the reviewing staff of his own magazine. Or how much the present practice of comparative testing and evaluation of equipment owes to the early "sound-test" demonstrations which Mackenzie initiated.

There was and still is much more to *The Gramophone* than Mackenzie himself. Yet in spite of the limitations of his own musical preferences and of the omission from his book of much material which illuminates the magazine, his *Record of Music* is a uniquely significant one. Knowing it is likely to inspire many novice listeners with new courage to cope with what seems at first like unintelligible music, but which through diligent phonographic repetition can become truly known (and loved) "by heart." And knowing it certainly will give any present-day audiophile enhanced appreciarion of the disks and equipment he relishes so much — and can relish all the more for knowing that they didn't "just grow" by chance, but were indefatigably encouraged and promoted by pioneers like Sir Compton Mackenzie in England — and, I surely must add, by Charles Fowler in this country.

Mozart Bicentennial (cont.)

Not much need be said about the

Continued on page 46

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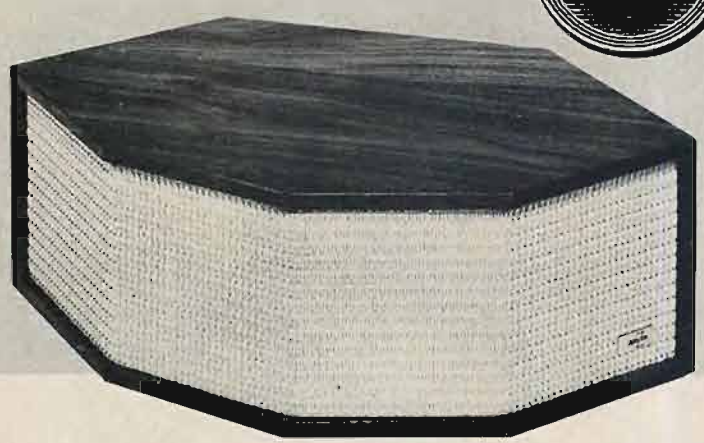

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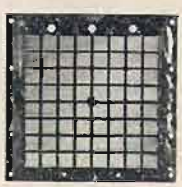

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

Continued from page 43

latest biography, Annette Kolb's Mozart (Regnery, $4.00), except by way of warning. It's far from new, since it originally appeared (in German) in 1937, but more importantly it says nothing new to anyone already familiar with the *Letters*, on which Miss Kolb depends for the bulk of her materials. The rest is her own excessively feminine and romantic gloss on these. The translator discreetly shrouds himself in anonymity, but he or the publishers, certainly shouldn't escape responsibility for so ridiculous a musical blunder as calling K. 617's glass harmonica an *accordion*. Or was this an inspired Freudian slip?

About the other, vastly more substantial and significant anniversary publication, little can be said here for quite different reasons: my own lack of musicological authority and the unsuitability of these pages for detailed appraisal of scholarly technical studies. **Mozart Companion**, edited by H. C. Robbins Landon and Donald Mitchell (Oxford, $6.50) is a work which undoubtedly all Mozartean listeners *should* study, but which most amateurs among them are likely to find very hard going indeed.

It's really worth the effort, though, for what we actually have here is a panel of outstanding specialists analyzing, in extreme detail and depth, almost all aspects of Mozart's incredibly versatile techniques. Some of these are as readable as they are illuminating (e.g., Gerald Abraham on the operas, Jens Peter Larsen on the symphonies, Karl Geiringer on the church music); a few approach well-nigh incomprehensible musicological metaphysics (Hans Keller on the chamber music, for example); but all of them can be superbly enlightening. In addition to the papers already cited, Otto Erich Deutsch discusses the Mozart portraits, Friedrich Blume the "style and influence," Arthur Hutchings the keyboard music, Donald Mitchell the serenades for wind band, Hans Engel the smaller orchestral works, and Paul Hamburger the concert arias; while the concertos are given especially extensive and intensive study by Blume, dealing with their sources, and Landon, dealing with their musical origin and development. From now on it will be a rare (or superficial) Mozart LP or concert-program annotation

Continued on page 50

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C36 — 19⅜" wide, 15⅞" deep, 23¾" high. 29½" high with legs. Shpg. Wt. empty. 47 lbs.

C38 — 23¾" wide, 15⅞" deep, 19¾" high. 26" high with legs. Shpg. Wt. empty 47 lbs.

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C37 — 36" wide, 16" deep, 30¼" high. Shpg. Wt. empty 69 lbs.

Contemporary Woods: **$105.00**
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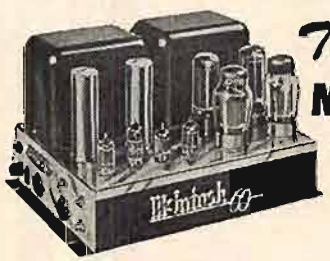

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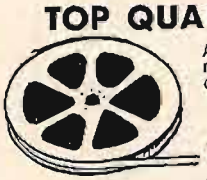

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1200 ft. on 7" reel..... **3** for **$4.98**

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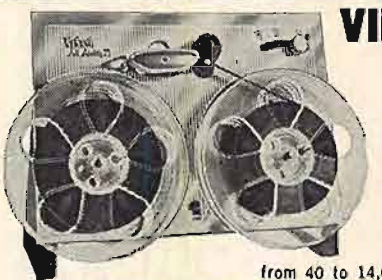

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FF75 TAPE DECK This basic component provides all necessary tape functions by permitting use of a variety of interchangeable heads for special purposes. FF75 basic monaural playback unit consists of transport, bracket, and one record-playback head. Hi-fi response from 40 to 14,000 cps at 7½ ips. Less than 1% harmonic distortion. Also plays at 3¾ ips. 4-pole constant speed 60 cycle motor. Viking's exclusive Dynamu heads, with a flux-gap less than 0.0002", assures extraordinary fidelity for playback of pre-recorded tapes and all recording usage. Dimensions: 12⅛ x 8⅝ x 4⅝". Wt. 11 lbs. Net **$59.95**

ALSO AVAILABLE AS FOLLOWS

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A recording amplifier and playback preamp, expressly designed to match the Viking FF75 full fidelity tape deck. Provides perfect recording fidelity over its entire range to 12,000 cps. Recording equalization fixed for NARTB curve. Variable equalization for playback from any source. Dimensions: 12⅛ x 2 x 6" completely encased. Self powered. Net **$74.50**

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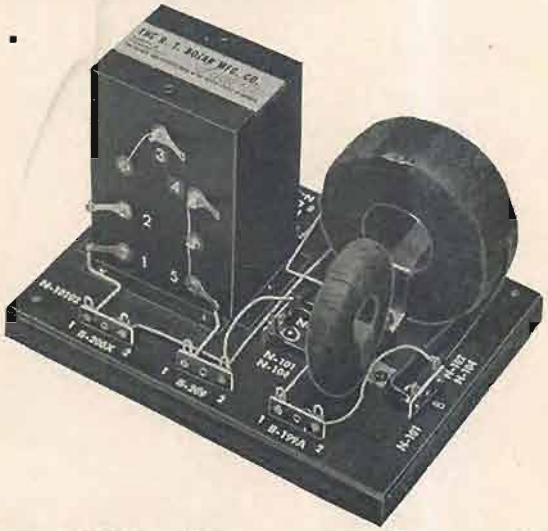
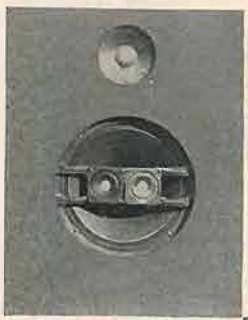


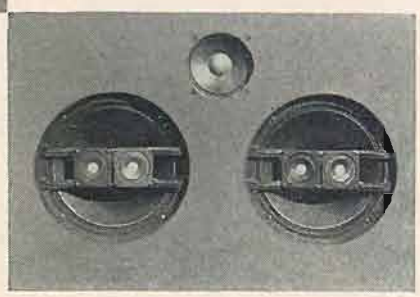
the N-10102 Convertible Crossover Network



Grows with your Bozak Speaker System

Wired as an *N-101* it has an 8-Ohm Impedance and the *slow* 6-db-per-octave Crossovers at 800 and 2500 cycles for the one-woofer Bozak B-302 Speaker System.

when your B-302 grows into a two-woofer B-305



just remove two leads and transfer two others, and you have the 16-Ohm Impedance and the same *slow* Crossovers at 800 and 2500 cycles needed for this outstanding System.

For the magnificent four-woofer B-310 and B-400 . . . add a condenser bank and change four leads for the 8-Ohm Impedance and *slow* Crossovers at 400 and 2500 cycles.

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

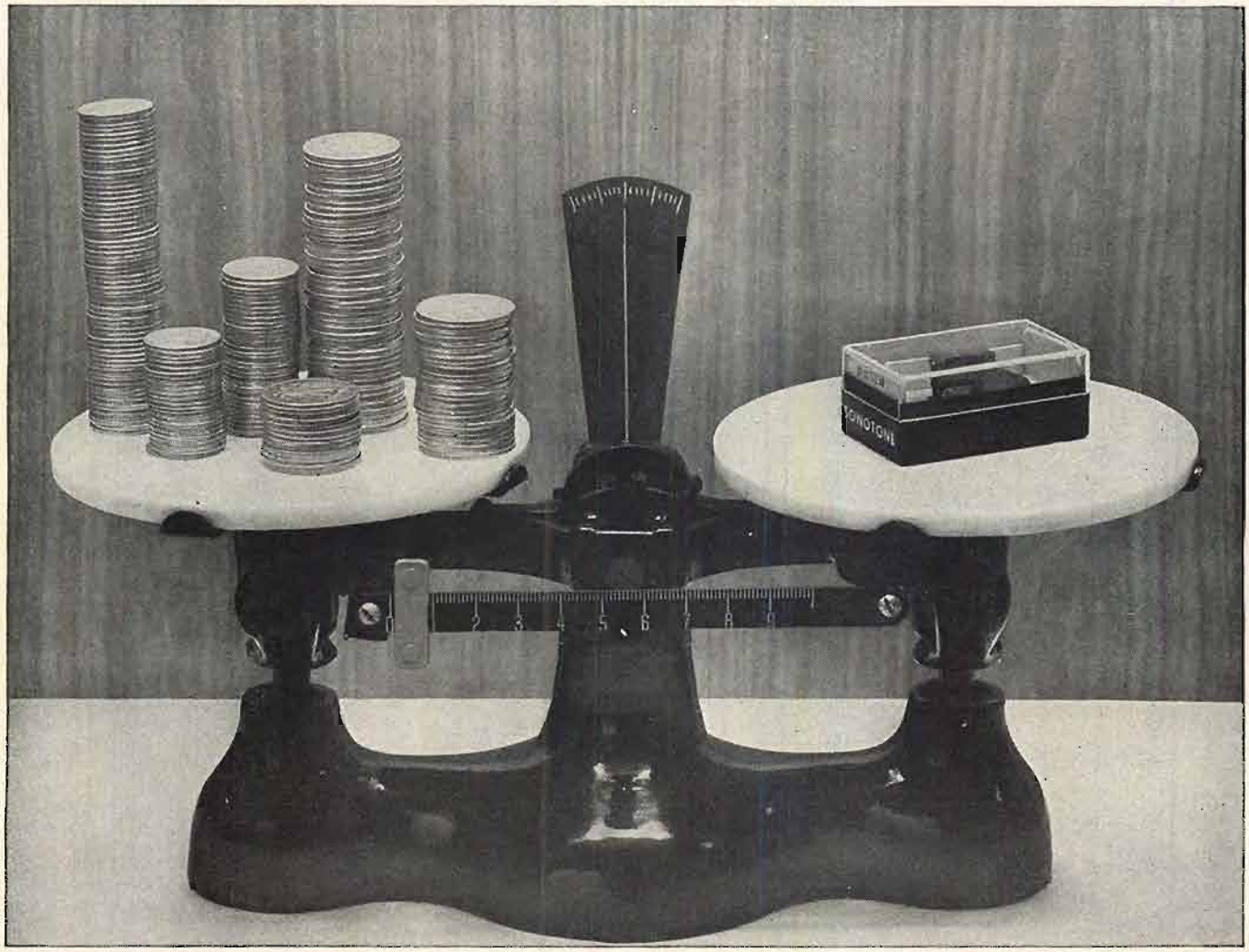
Continued from page 46

which fails to make use of the technical insights and relationships revealed in such prodigal wealth here.

GRACE NOTES

Stravinskian "Poetics." One weakness of the current renaissance of "class" paperback reprints is the comparatively few musical classics included so far. But at least these few all have been really first-rate books — as is the latest, a reissue of Stravinsky's celebrated Norton lectures at Harvard, *Poetics of Music in the Form of Six Lessons*, translated by Arthur Knodel and Ingolf Dahl (originally Harvard University Press, 1947). If perhaps not quite as richly revelatory an insight into the composer's philosophy and techniques as the out-of-print *Chronicle of My Life* (1936), the present astonishingly provocative — and far too little-known — booklet contains some of the most tersely cogent remarks on the composition and performance of music to be found anywhere. Whether you personally admire or detest Stravinsky's own scores, you are sure to find here entirely new illuminations not only on the man and artist himself, but on the fundamental nature of all musical experience (Knopf "Vintage" series, 95¢).

Crowhurst Audio Handbooks. I was so stimulated by No. 5 in this British series (*The Quest for Quality*, reviewed here September 1956) that I couldn't resist looking up all the earlier pamphlets: No. 1, *Amplifiers* (1951, now in its 4th reprinting); No. 2, *Feedback* (1952); No. 3, *The Use of A. F. Transformers* (1953); and No. 4, *Public Address* (1956). And I found that, although they are (as their titles indicate) of more specialized interest than No. 5, all are packed with a great deal of highly concentrated practical information. No. 1 is perhaps somewhat out-of-date now, and in any case can't get very far into its vast subject in only some 64 pages, but the others should be extremely useful to amateur as well as professional technicians (Norman Price, Ltd., London, via British Radio Electronics, Ltd., Washington, D. C., or the Book Department of HIGH FIDELITY magazine: Nos. 1-3, $1.00 each; No. 4, $1.25; No. 5, $1.50).



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Yet this is the cartridge of which The Audio League* says:

> "...*overall smoothness instantly apparent...*"
>
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> "...*in view of its excellent listening quality, it must be considered an outstanding buy when used with an appropriate amplifier...*"

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*Authorized quotation number 34 from Volume I, No. 12, April 1956, of The Audio League Report. Complete technical and subjective report available from The Audio League, Box 252, Mt. Vernon, New York. Single issue $.50, twelve issues, $4.00.

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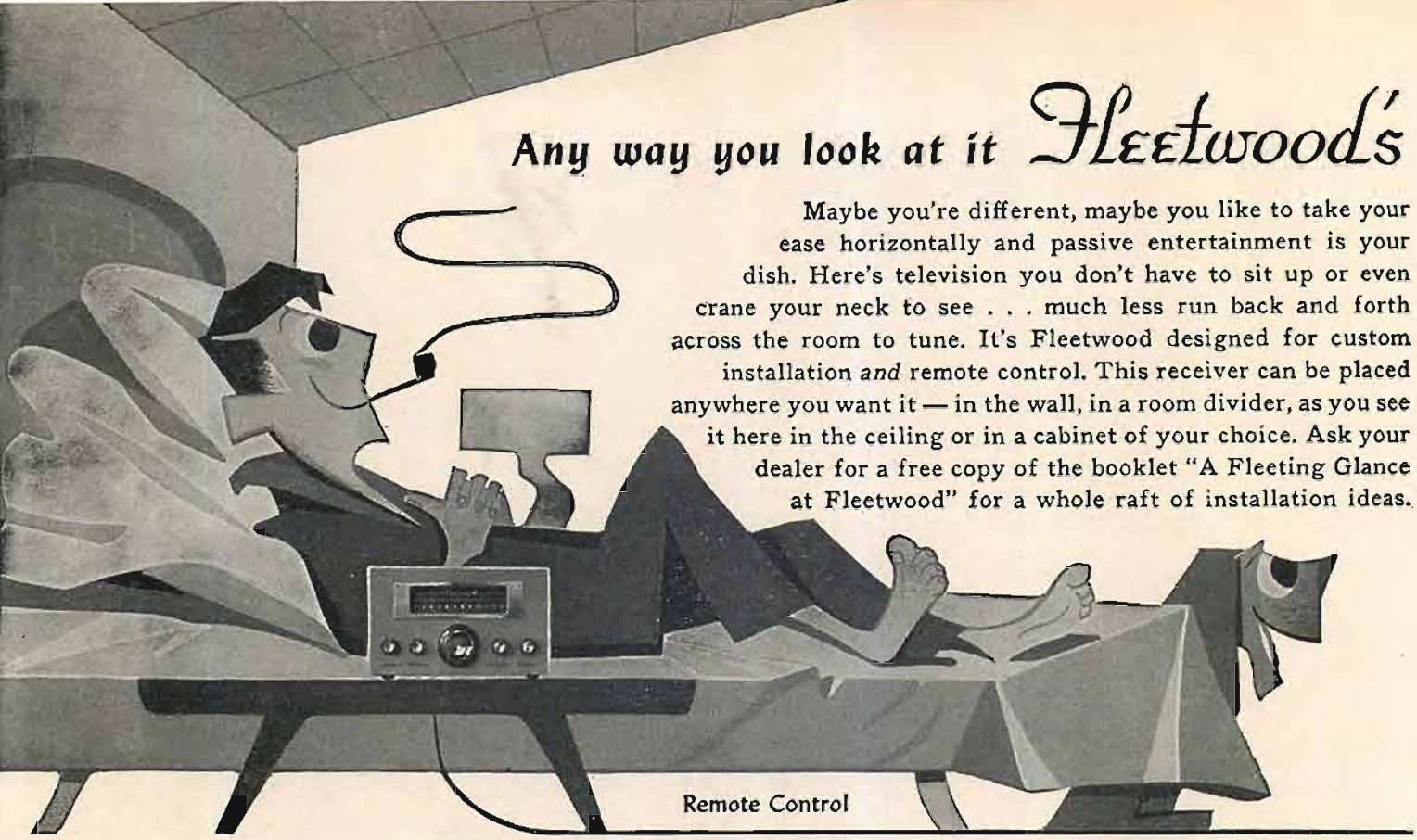

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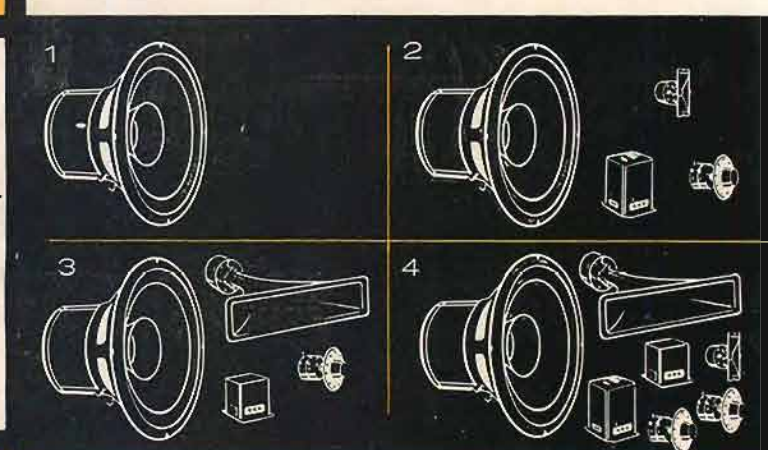

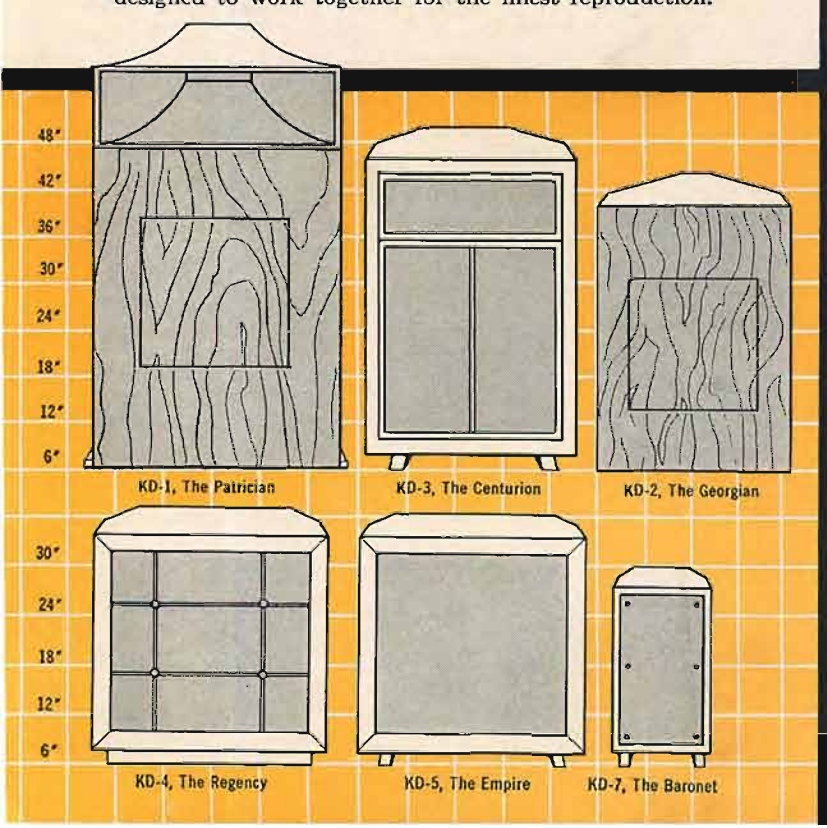

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How Durable Is Your Fidelity?

LATELY WE HAVE BEEN accused of treason, by reason of our having pointed out that high-fidelity components, no matter how lovingly crafted to begin with, do not invariably reach their final owners in the best of operating condition, perhaps owing to their not being checked adequately before delivery. Among the most reproachful of our accusers, incidentally (and we love them just the same), were people who had not long ago submitted for Testing-in-the-Home an amplifier with one wrong tube, and an AM-FM tuner which would tune only AM. The burthen of all the accusations, however, was that by harping on troubles that beset high-fidelity components, we might frighten people back into buying packaged radio-phonographs instead.

Well, if this be treason, let's get on with it — after a word of fuller explanation. In the first place, institutional preachments on this page are not, naturally, aimed at such manufacturers as have been above reproach, and there are always a few of these. Secondly, we doubt that many readers of HIGH FIDELITY ever consider seriously, even as a remote possibility, retreating to low fidelity to escape the hazards of high. The chief motive behind commitment to high fidelity is not (ordinarily) expectation of complete freedom from trouble; it is the desire for the best possible reproduction of sound. Complete freedom from trouble you don't get, from either high-fidelity rig or limed oak jukebox, but in the former small imperfections are more important than in the latter, because it is precision equipment. A slight wheel imbalance on an expensive sportscar makes it completely unsatisfactory to operate. On a second-hand station wagon or on Junior's jalopy, the same flaw is accepted as perfectly normal.

TO PROCEED — the question next after what condition a piece of audio equipment is in when you buy it is what condition it's in six months later. More treason? Perhaps, but with a seasoning of hope. Some audio components rarely develop malfunction if they were in good condition to begin with. Loudspeakers, for instance. Power amplifiers, too, as a rule, stand up well. So do most turntables, though some require regular replacements of idler wheels. Tuners vary, but their symptoms, when something goes wrong, lend themselves to easy diagnosis. Tape recorders vary also, and largely in direct proportion to their prices. It is when we come to phono pickups and preamplifiers that we encounter evidence of how subtly and fiendishly inanimate objects can behave. For the symptoms of misbehavior, though aurally painful, are almost never easily traceable, since the two instruments tend to work in league with each other, simulating each other's distortion (and perhaps stimulating it as well).

A pickup must be vulnerable to wear, since it operates through the opposed mechanical principles of springback and damping, and its tracking consists of friction. Withal, it must be delicate to be good. For these hazards, manufacturers have already, in large part, found a working solution. To wit, they tell customers (or the dealer does) to send or bring the pickup, or its stylus assembly, back for checkups periodically. Furthermore, most makers manage to recondition them and return them with commendable promptness.

There remains the control unit or preamplifier, and in particular its phono-preamplifying-stage. This is the instrument, of the whole array, in which the slightest ill has the most horrifying effect. It seems, maybe oddly, that until rather lately this was not realized: the idea being that distortion in the very early stages of amplification, of a low order of magnitude, would be somehow "lost" in the inescapable larger distortion elsewhere in the chain of reproduction. Perhaps realization had to wait until the ancillary components were good enough to expose the defection of a preamplifier.

Without much doubt, a preamplifier's main points of vulnerability are its tubes. It seems also safe to say that the vulnerability was increased when manufacturers went from big "standard" tubes — the 6SL7 and its ilk — to miniatures, though there were cogent economic reasons for their doing so. The factors of vulnerability range from microphonism and hum to uncertain prong-and-socket contact. There is evidence also that miniatures have a shorter reliability-life than their larger cousins. At any rate, there is small doubt that a developing disorder of one small tube, even while it is still unmeasurable on a tube-checker, can change the sound of a $500 music system from something delightful to something almost intolerable, and that there is usually no way to find the source of the trouble but by trial replacement of a 12AX7 or 12AU7.

No one would suggest that manufacturers now revert to large tubes. There isn't much consumer demand for big, hot, heavy, premium-priced preamplifiers (though there certainly would be *some* buyers — I know of one).

What does present itself as a possible solution, not immediate but eventual, is the transistor as component in early-stage amplification. Transistors embody all the working assets of miniature tubes and few of their liabilities — there is no microphonism, no hum, little change of functional value under use. The only trouble is, transistors — at their present stage of development — are devilishly hard to make standard in functional value when they are manufactured; they come forth too wildly varied to be safely purchased in large job lots by audio manufacturers. This will pass. The same generic trouble hampered penicillin production in 1945. It doesn't now. The moral: for the nonce, buy some spare 12AX7s and 12AU7s, but keep your eye peeled for transistor units. There are a few around already.

J. M. C.

Russia as it saw me

by Jan Peerce

If Napoleon really had wanted to conquer Moscow, apparently, he should have gone there disguised as a visiting American tenor.

ON MY SECOND DAY in Moscow, I asked the white-haired greenroom attendant at Tchaikovsky Hall, where I was to make my Russian concert debut, whether the acoustics were good or not. The old man replied in Russian to my "lady" interpreter, his blue eyes twinkling. Mme. Alexandra blushed and hesitated but finally came out with it. "He says," she translated, "where there is a voice—there are acoustics! No voice—no acoustics." I asked no further questions.

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This was to be the summer that I had originally planned to devote to vacation only; perhaps interspersed with a few concerts at outdoor auditoriums, a few recitals, a record session or two. That was to be all. But the Ministry of Culture of the Soviet Union came forth with another idea. They invited me — via Mr. Sol Hurok — to come to Russia and sing in concerts and opera for audiences in Moscow, Leningrad, and Kiev. It was an invitation on a grand scale: six concerts and six opera appearances in three different operas — to be accomplished in four weeks. After I had had a talk with State Department officials in Washington, who regarded the venture favorably, I abandoned my peaceful summer without a backward glance and almost immediately started to struggle with the packing and to estimate overweight luggage.

I was joined in my anticipatory excitement by my wife Alice, the perfect "tour manager," and my esteemed accompanist of long standing, Warner Bass. There had been so little news coming through the Iron Curtain about the musical and artistic life of Russia that we felt we were in a particularly privileged position by being promised a unique opportunity to investigate it for ourselves.

True — distinguished instrumentalists such as Gilels and Oistrakh had recently appeared to great acclaim in the

United States and Ulanova's ballet triumphs had been hailed loudly enough all over Europe to be heard on this side of the Atlantic. In general, however, the musical life of the Russian people was still as unknown to us as ours was to them. What were the orchestras like, what kind of concert halls and opera houses would we encounter, and — of ultimate significance — what sort of a reception would we have? This was important to me because for the first time I felt I was engaged on a professional tour that had, in addition to the usual accouterments, a semi-official, semidiplomatic flavor. Singing in Russia as the first Metropolitan Opera artist since World War II, and appearing at Moscow's Bolshoi Theater as the first American ever to stand on its stage, was going to be a highly gratifying but — I was equally sure — also a highly exposed and vulnerable position.

I was soon to find out that every time I stepped on a concert platform I would be introduced by an official as "Jan Peerce of the United States of America," and the huge posters which were pointed out to me and which announced my operatic appearances carried the same statement. It all made me feel a little like a member of the American Davis Cup team, except that I was "singing" for my country. I had no illusions; a few sour notes might reflect not only on me but on the entire United States. It was quite a challenge.

Before I left on the tour my friends and colleagues had continually asked me what I intended to sing in my Russian concerts. And I had answered that I would sing programs identical with those I prepared for Chicago, Los Angeles, Rochester, and other such cities in this country. If there was one international language, I reasoned, it was music; and if the Russians were not able to grasp its message — well, that would simply have to rest in the lap of the gods.

I needn't have worried. After the first concert at Tchaikovsky Hall in Moscow, there was no doubt, musically speaking, that Russian audiences understood me. When — after seven encores — the house manager finally ordered the lights dimmed so people would start for home, I felt very, very good indeed. Back in the greenroom, with music lovers and musicians crowding in to shake hands, one question kept popping up. Had I chosen the Bach aria, with which I opened my program, *especially* for my Russian tour? Was Bach *known* in America? As a proud and faithful member of New York's Bach Aria Group, I think I did manage to convince them that Bach played just as great a part in *our* music life as he did in that of the rest of the world.

Looking over a rather sketchy diary which I tried to keep during my Russian sojourn, I find a little note: "Militia had to clear exit of Tchaikovsky Hall so we could get to car." I recall the reception I got, leaving the greenroom — autograph books thrust under my chin, shouts of "Bravo, Pirs, Bravo, Pirs." In Russia, it's true that musicians, and certainly ballet dancers, have acquired the status in the hearts of their fans enjoyed by our movie stars and pop singers; this warm affectionate feeling between audience and performing artist seems to be universal.

Right after my first concert we hopped a plane to Leningrad, where I was to appear both in concert and as Duke in *Rigoletto.* It was the first time I really met my Russian colleagues. I was told, wherever I appeared in opera, (two *Rigolettos* in Leningrad, two *Traviatas* in Moscow, and two *Masked Balls* in Kiev), that I would be singing with all-star casts of these opera companies. Now, looking back, I certainly must agree. Valentina Maskinrova, Leningrad's prima donna, was Gilda; Konstantin Laptev, a wonderful artist, was Rigoletto; and a young girl, Taisiya Sirovatko, was Maddalena. This last named singer has one of the most beautiful contralto voices I've ever heard, and I believe, if the cultural exchange among artists of all countries continues, she will make a name for herself on an international scale.

Mme. Alexandra, our interpreter, accompanied us on all our trips and, of course, was at hand during the first piano rehearsal under Maestro Yeltsin's direction. But the minute we got down to the business at hand, Verdi's *Rigoletto*, no interpreter was needed. Although I sang my roles in the original Italian and my Russian colleagues sang theirs in their native tongue, I don't believe — even at that very first get-together — that anyone missed even one cue. What was more, I soon found out that Italian and Russian blend beautifully. Not all languages do. It can be a highly embarrassing and often comic spectacle if a love duet is sung, say, in German and Italian. And I'd hate to think of a mélange of Czech and French! But Russian and Italian — two very euphonious languages with open vowels — get along fine.

I believe I could have asked for and gotten as many orchestra rehearsals as I would have liked. As all opera companies are State owned, extra rehearsal time is no problem. But after our one and only stage and orchestra rehearsal for *Rigoletto*, I felt we all were completely in accord, and as the rest of the cast and the conductor felt the same way, we settled for just that.

There was some time to do a little sightseeing in this beautiful, spacious city — somewhat reminiscent of our Washington, D. C. The river Neva flows right through its heart and forms many canals, which give it a leisurely, Venice-like feeling. This was also my first experience with the "white nights." At one a.m. it was still quite light. On my first day in Leningrad I went to a performance at the Kirov Theatre of Tchaikovsky's *Pique Dame.* Leningrad's

The author (second from left) with members of the cast of Rigoletto *and executives of the Kirov Theater, Leningrad.*

famous opera house, called in Czarist days the Mariensky, is a beautiful, intimate place, seating about 1800. Its décor is white with two shades of blue, and it boasts a wonderful crystal chandelier. There were mostly young singers in the cast of *Pique Dame*, all of them excellent, but the thing that left the strongest impression with me was the chorus. Russians are rightly famous for their choirs, and there is nothing as thrilling as the sound of those Russian bassos — a sound unique, with a vastness and power comparable to that of the singers' huge country itself.

Another highlight of our Leningrad visit was a performance of a puppet show at that city's Summer Park. Obrastov, a famous puppeteer, presented a satire which I shall long remember. The cast consisted of a "coloratura," of a "baritone," and a "poet," who sang a cantata in praise of vitamins A, B, C, and D ("By special permission of the Apothecary Society") which had us all in stitches. It was a highly artistic performance and also a reassuring evidence that the Russians have a sense of humor and even a faculty for self-mockery.

Both *Rigolettos* went exceedingly well. Though the crowd was obviously bent upon lionizing me — shouts of "Pirs, bravo Pirs" welled up from the auditorium — I firmly insisted on sharing my bows with the rest of the cast. One thing that pleased me especially was that many of my colleagues came up to me and, without ceremony, placed their hands on my diaphragm and demanded, "Breathe, Pirs. Breathe." They were plainly curious about my breath control and couldn't believe I had learned my entire technique in the United States. They were sure I had studied in Italy, and I had quite a time contradicting this preconceived notion.

Between my two *Rigoletto* appearances I also sang a concert at Leningrad's Philharmonia Hall, one of the most beautiful auditoriums I've ever sung in and certainly the most beautiful concert hall in Russia. White marble pillars line the sides and red velvet arm chairs form the rows of seats. Eight enormous, sparkling chandeliers give the whole building a fairyland quality, and the acoustics (*sic!*) are truly magnificent.

Recital in Philharmonia Hall, Leningrad: "perfect acoustics."

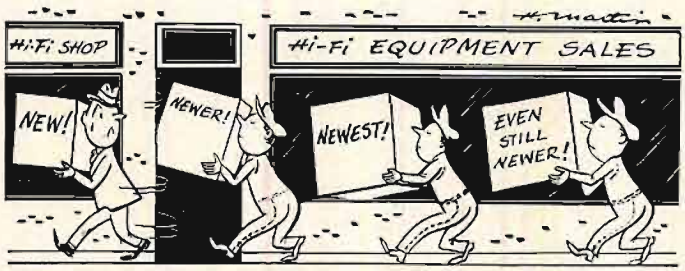
During my stay in Leningrad I had a chance to talk to some of the other artists. I found that musicians are the same the world over. They're all friendly, unceremonious, and interested only in music. There is no doubt, from what I have seen in Russia, that its singers — and I believe all its artists — live well, and, when they achieve great distinction, occupy a "preferred status." They enjoy pensions, paid vacations, and a guarantee of work. Their pay is well above the average Russian income, and in most cases their living conditions are on a similar level. I found, too, that women occupy leading positions in Russian opera houses as stage directors, artistic directors, scenic designers, and such. You'll also find many female stage hands. I discovered that prices of tickets for my appearances were scaled very high. The most expensive seats sold for $10.00 each, which — in Russia — is even higher than it sounds.

To give you an example of how kind and warm the entire feeling among artists was, let me relate one incident. After our second *Rigoletto* performance there was a party given in my honor. I returned home at about one a.m. and had to leave my hotel the next day at seven a.m. to catch my plane back to Moscow. When my wife and I appeared in the lobby at that unearthly hour, we found to our amazement that the entire *Rigoletto* cast, headed by Konstantin Laptev and his wife Anna, were waiting for us. They just wanted to see us to the airport for a final *au revoir*. Anyone who knows singers and their notorious penchant for late rising will understand how deeply touched we were.

Back we flew to huge, bustling Moscow which — at that time — was crowded with tourists from all over Russia who had come to see their capital. Finally the day approached when the dress rehearsal for Verdi's *Traviata* was scheduled at the Bolshoi Theater. I have an especially warm spot in my heart for this opera, for it was as Alfredo that I made my debut at the Metropolitan fifteen years ago. Mme. Firsova, an excellent lyric coloratura, was Violetta, and the beloved baritone Lisitsian, a great Russian favorite, was the elder Germont. He bears the proud title of "People's Artist" which is equivalent to the Germanic honor of *Kammersaenger*.

The present Bolshoi production of *Traviata* is set in the Maupassant era, and the décor and costumes are among the most beautiful I have ever seen. As is customary during dress rehearsals all over the world, I started out by singing *sotto voce*.

Although I couldn't see an audience I soon had the distinct feeling that we, up on stage, were not alone. This was the understatement of the century. As it soon turned out, the entire orchestra was packed with colleagues, members of the drama and various ballet companies. They all had come, so I was told during the first intermission, to hear "the tenor from the United States." Well — I naturally let go. I have been very lucky in my career and I have had, over the years, all kinds of recognition. But the applause that reached me on stage after my aria was something that brought tears of gratitude to my eyes. Maestro Khaikin tried to continue the performance—but it was no use. Finally, in a *Continued on page 144*



WHY BIAMPLIFY?

by ROY F. ALLISON

EVERYBODY has at least one major plaint about high-fidelity systems. To many, the most infuriating thought is that the equipment is always obsolescent: no sooner does a man finish paying for the last improvement — goes the wry observation — than something better becomes available, to make canned Philadelphia Orchestra seem yet more garden-fresh.

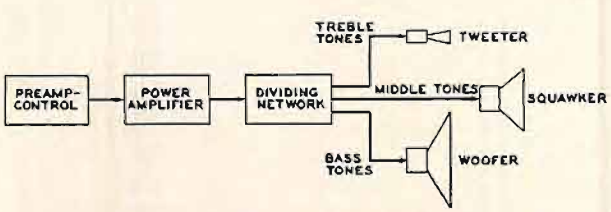
We could marshal several quite reasonable answers to this protest. One that comes to mind immediately, for instance, is that people seem to object far less poignantly to the far more flagrantly planned and systematized obsolescence of Detroit products, which are, after all, even more expensive. But we won't, because this has been discussed before. Besides, we secretly feel fellowship with the frustrated fi-man in his plight. Indeed, we mention him primarily to demonstrate that we are aware of him, sympathize with him, and for that reason hesitate to urge readers editorially to spend even a little on more sound reproducing equipment unless we're pretty certain that it will bring a significant and lasting improvement. This we are about to do.

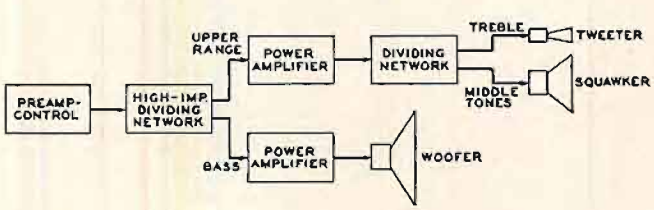
Specifically, we believe that owners of two, three, and four-way speaker systems are well advised to consider the advantages of using a separate power amplifier for the bass driver. The conventional method of using a multi-speaker system is illustrated in Figure 1: a preamplifier-control unit is connected to a single power amplifier which, of course, amplifies the entire frequency range of the control unit's output. A dividing network (or crossover network; same thing) then separates the components of the sound according to frequency, permitting them to pass only to the appropriate reproducer in the loudspeaker system and blocking them from the other reproducers. We have used a three-way speaker system for illustration. In a two-way system there are only two reproducers and two outputs from the network; in a four-way system, four reproducer operating ranges and four network outputs. When we speak here of two, three, and four-way systems we mean those in which separate parts of the frequency range are reproduced by as many individual voice coils, or sets of voice coils. We do *not* refer to multi-cone or "two-way" speakers with mechanical crossovers in this context.

A better place to accomplish this frequency division is before the power amplifier, as shown in Figure 2. The high-impedance dividing network following the control unit breaks up the signal into frequency bands, with the dividing frequency at or near the normal woofer crossover point. Frequency components below that point are directed into the bass power amplifier, which drives the woofer only. The rest of the range is handled by the upper-range power amplifier. (In a three-way system as pictured, a conventional dividing network is used to separate the remaining frequency components into ranges appropriate for the middle-range and high-frequency reproducers.)

Conversion of system No. 1 to system No. 2 requires, obviously, a high-impedance dividing network and a second power amplifier. Amplifiers, we know as well as you do, are not bought by economizing on lunch money for a few weeks. What, then, are the advantages of system No. 2 (a biamplifier system, until someone thinks of a better name) that make it worth the extra expense? There are many; some of the most important are discussed in the following paragraphs. Which is *most* important in a given case will depend on the components in a particular system and on how they are used.

Better woofer damping. A conventional crossover network requires a combination of inductors and capacitors to accomplish its filtering action. Almost invariably an inductor is connected in series with the woofer. If the recommended woofer crossover frequency is ten times the





basic resonance frequency — a normal ratio — the impedance of this inductor is about 2¼ ohms at the woofer resonance frequency in a high-quality 16-ohm network. If the amplifier's damping factor is 20, the series inductor reduces the *effective* damping factor to a little more than 5. The same ratios exist for other system-impedances. Degradation of the damping factor may be worse in non-typical cases, but it is rarely less severe — unless the woofer is connected directly across the amplifier output terminals and allowed to roll off naturally, as it is in a few conventional systems. Most woofers *do* need electrical rolloff, however. In a biamplifier system this is obtained with the high-impedance dividing network; thus the advantages of direct woofer connection to the power amplifier are retained.

Smoother crossover curves. Because of imperfectly damped electrical resonances in the inductance-capacitance components of a post-amplifier dividing network, there is a small but significant peak in output just before the rolloff begins for each driver. Moreover, because loudspeakers are not resistive but reactive terminations for the network, rolloff curves are often not symmetrical. These difficulties are easily avoided in a high-impedance dividing network: resistor-capacitor filters are used, so that peaking can be eliminated; the filter terminations are resistive, which makes for smooth, symmetrical rolloff curves; and the filter components can be matched without difficulty to obtain perfect conjunction of the curves.

Lower distortion. With complete separation between amplified bass and treble impulses, there is far less opportunity for the occurrence of electrical intermodulation distortion. Indeed, for equivalent over-all power levels, the probability of formation of audible intermodulation products is reduced by much more than one-half; the exact reduction depends on the crossover point, characteristics of the amplifiers, efficiency of the speakers, and many other factors which cannot be discussed here.

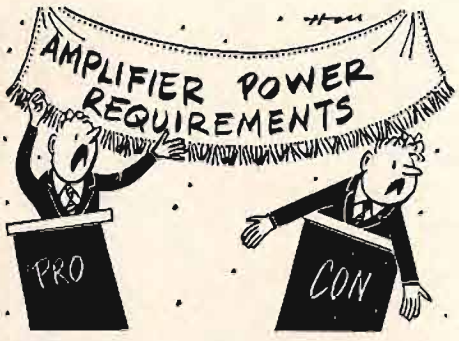
Higher power-handling ability. Recently, the question of amplifier power requirements has been debated from every quarter. There is no simple absolute answer. Power requirements depend on so many circumstances that one user may need twenty or thirty times the power that would be entirely adequate for another. Still, it is certain that the increasing dynamic range, and decreasing distortion, of source materials are gradually raising amplifier power requirements. If 20 watts were enough three years ago, for instance, the same system now probably needs 40 or 50 watts. This situation makes a biamplifier conversion especially advantageous for a system now limited by an obsolescent amplifier; rather than buy a 40-watt amplifier to replace a 20-watter, the owner need buy only another 20-watt unit to use with the old one in a biamplifier setup. With a woofer crossover point somewhere between 250 and 1,000 cps, a range which covers just about all multi-speaker systems, the average signal power handled by the two amplifiers will be roughly equal. Thus the probability of signal clipping will be about the same in a biamplifier system with two 20-watt units as in a standard system with a 40-watt amplifier. A bonus advantage, and a most important one, is that if severe clipping *does* occur it will be less objectionable, since it will probably not affect both channels simultaneously. A heavy low-frequency transient will not muddy up the treble. Needless to say, the two amplifiers should be as clean and as stable up to their rated power limits as the single high-power unit; and a pair of high-power amplifiers would be better yet for desirable power-handling ability.

Variable crossover frequency. It is desirable to have precise control of crossover frequency in order to permit its optimal adjustment for the particular driver units and enclosures, personal preferences in tone quality, and even for listening-room acoustics. When any of these factors is changed, the most satisfactory crossover frequency is likely to change also. To vary the crossover frequency of a conventional network all the elements must be changed in value simultaneously, which is decidedly impractical. It is possible to use variable resistors (potentiometers) or inexpensive switched capacitors for this purpose in a high-impedance dividing network; and, in fact, all commercially-available high-impedance networks do have controls for changing the crossover frequency.

Insensitivity to speaker impedance and efficiency. For best operation of a post-amplifier dividing network, the woofer should be matched to the other reproducers in both impedance and efficiency, and they don't come this way. Elaborate networks can be devised to compensate for differences in impedance, and level-control pads can be used to adjust for efficiency mismatch. Both represent compromises and complications, however, and it is desirable to avoid them. In a biamplifier system it is only necessary to connect the woofer to the proper impedance taps on its amplifier, and the upper-range reproducers (via their own standard dividing network, if any) to the appropriate impedance taps on their amplifier. Efficiency differences can be adjusted easily by *input* level controls on the amplifiers, which do not degrade speaker damping nor waste amplifier power as speaker level pads do.

All these advantages are not merely theoretical. Several years ago we published an article* on the same subject; at that time, although biamplifier operation was just as appealing theoretically, we had to confess that practically the improvement was slight. Not so today. Working with the idea again recently, we have obtained immediately noticeable betterment of several speaker systems with biamplifier conversions. Perhaps degradation of damping factor is more apparent with modern ultrastable amplifiers; perhaps the distortion of our former high-impedance

* Roy F. Allison, "The Biamplifier System": HIGH FIDELITY, II (Nov.-Dec. 1952), 84-87.



filter, which was deplorable by today's standards, influenced our findings. Whatever the reason, our previous mild approval of the idea must be revised upward substantially.

This is not to say that a biamplifier conversion will make a basically poor system excellent, or even that it will make a radical improvement in every case. Rather, we believe that anyone who has a good multi-speaker system now, or is ready to buy one, can make it better — perhaps a good deal better — with biamplifier operation.

The results we obtained were interestingly varied, as the following specific examples show. The woofer of a conventional three-way Wharfedale system was installed in a large bass reflex cabinet with sand-filled panels; the middle-range and tweeter speakers were mounted on a flat baffle above. Crossover frequencies were 1,000 and 5,000 cps. With biamplifier drive this system benefited most remarkably from a lowered bass crossover frequency: it was easy to establish the optimal frequency as 300 cps. Better damping was obtained over the whole range, because the middle range was being reproduced by a smaller, crisper speaker and because the woofer was connected directly to the amplifier output terminals. This didn't sound like the same speaker system, but it certainly sounded a lot better.

Our second example is that of the Sherwood Forester. We found that the proper bass crossover frequency in biamplifier operation was the same as that provided by its single-amplifier dividing network. The improvement in bass definition, though, was obvious immediately to all listeners; it was no contest at all. We found this to be generally true of systems having front-loaded bass horn drivers.

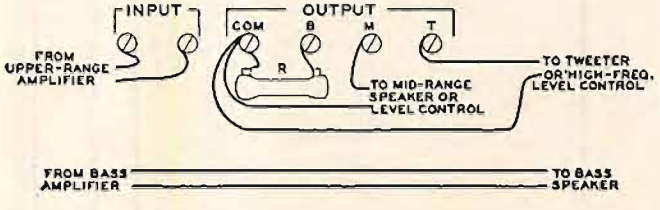
In a system which combines infinite-baffle Bozak or Acoustic Research woofers with a Janszen electrostatic tweeter, the woofers are ordinarily connected directly to the amplifier and permitted to roll off naturally; the tweeter is also connected to the amplifier output terminals. There is no crossover network at all in such a system except for a 500-cps high-pass filter built into the tweeter. Accordingly, amplifier damping is already fully effective on the woofer. When we tried a 500-cps biamplifier setup with a Bozak-Janszen system, we found it *less* satisfactory than single-amplifier operation — the normal tweeter-woofer overlap in operating range from 500 to 1,000 cps is, apparently, essential for natural middle-range reproduction. We adjusted our high-impedance filter to cut off at 400 cps in the treble channel and 1,200 cps in the bass channel, and that restored the middle range. Still, the only improvement obtained from biamplifier operation was cleaner sound at high power levels — in itself, perhaps, not a negligible benefit.

There are now available four widely-advertised types of dividing networks that operate between a preamp-control unit and two or more power amplifiers. First on the scene, a few years ago, was the Van-Amp (Variable Audio Network Amplifier) made by General Apparatus Company. This has a single continuously-variable control with which the crossover frequency between the low- and high-frequency output channels can be adjusted from 90 to 1,100 cps. Level controls are furnished for both output channels; the maximum voltage gain (relative to the input from the control unit) is 8 on each channel. Crossover attenuation rate approaches 12 db per octave. The Van-Amp is available as a kit, at $39.95, or completely assembled and wired for $56.95. A schematic diagram, parts list, and assembly instructions are furnished in the Van-Amp instruction book, which can be obtained alone for $1.00 (deductible from the kit price if you order it later on).

Similar in design, controls, and operating range is the PVC (Powered Variable Crossover) unit sold, in kit form, at $39.90 by the Walter M. Jones Apparatus Company. The assembly manual only costs $1.00; this can be applied to subsequent purchase of the kit. Fully assembled and wired, the PVC is available at $59.90. This company also sells (at the same prices) PVC units that operate from 900 to 11,000 cps, and custom variations at slightly higher prices.

The Heath Electronic Crossover kit, model XO-1, has an individual crossover frequency control for each output channel; switch-selected frequencies are 100, 200, 400, 700, 1,200, and 3,500 cps. It is possible to achieve an overlap in operating ranges by setting the low-frequency channel cutoff at, say, 700 cps, and the high-frequency channel cutoff at 400 cps — or, conversely, to produce a hole in the over-all electrical response by setting the bass channel cutoff frequency lower than that of the upper channel. Attenuation rate on each channel approaches 12 db per octave. Another switch is provided to bypass the filters entirely, routing the entire range to a third output jack. Individual level controls are furnished for the two filter channels. Negative feedback is employed in the XO-1, however, and the maximum voltage gain on each channel is unity. Price of the kit is $18.95; that of the instruction book only $1.00.

The most elaborate and versatile of such devices, the model 3-CFD Electronic Frequency Divider, is sold by Colbert Laboratory. This can be operated as either a two-channel or three-channel filter, with individual continuously-variable low-frequency and high-frequency crossovers, and output level controls for each channel. It has been designed for a constant *Continued on page 149*



BBC's Valentine Britten presides over . . .

A Half-Million Records

by Harold C. Schonberg

SPREAD over two floors in the British Broadcasting Corporation's Western House, on Great Portland Street in London, are about a half-million commercial phonograph records, ranging from jazz to Masses, worth goodness knows how many £s and weighing goodness knows how many lbs. This collection is claimed by the BBC to be the largest in the world, and nobody as yet has cared to come forth with a counterclaim to challenge the statement. The BBC Gramophone Library of Commercial Records (to give it its official name) starts (chronologically) with wax cylinders containing the voices of such dignitaries as Robert Browning and William Ewart Gladstone, proceeds to the first Berliner flat disks, covers the British music-hall singers, juts through the electrical recordings of the golden age of the Thirties, and now in the days of LP it ravenously gobbles up microgroove recordings just as soon as they are issued.

Miss Britten at work: one record request was for music suggestive of silence.

Presiding calmly over all this is Miss Valentine Britten, a tall, stately woman with upswept grey hair and a complexion that copywriters automatically refer to as "British." Miss Britten is demonstrably British, even unto her speech, which is studded with "By Jove's." She is a good talker and a good laugher, constantly in motion, aware of everything that happens in her little kingdom. If any bibliographic dust had the insolence to come near her — which is hard to imagine — it would instantly be vaporized.

More room will be needed soon.

She has a keen sense of history and of the importance of documenting history. The major, daily, bread-and-butter part of her job involves supplying the various BBC units with records and information about records. But just as important, she thinks, is the necessity of housing under one roof all that has ever been preserved on disks, so that it may be available for future generations to study. She does not claim to be a philosopher, and she has no highfalutin ideas about any such things as sacred missions or the importance of one disk over another. She is a gatherer, and she is content to leave it to others to judge the results of her gatherings. "I don't like people making judgments on what is art and what isn't," she says. "In a hundred years let them decide. We merely gather."

It is symbolic that in her office, under a glass case, sits a Berliner hand-driven gramophone and several 1896 Berliner flat disks. She will unpack the machine and enthusiastically crank away so that visitors can hear (if that is the word) Berliner himself recite *Mary Had a Little Lamb* or *The Lord's Prayer*. One of her favorite Berliner items, also cranked out by her able right hand, is *Listen to the Mocking Bird — Xylophone Solo.*

All of these rarities are housed in the library's Archive Collection, a varied assortment of about ten thousand disks. Not all these are acoustic. Whenever it can be established that original matrices have disappeared, or when special interest of one kind or another attaches to a record, that record goes into Archives, often with an explanatory note attached. Browsing through the Archives card file, the reader will come across fascinating oddments, such as the note typed on the entry of a disk containing a movement of Vaughan Williams' Sixth Symphony: "In July 1950, HMV informed us that the composer had rescored the third movement (scherzo) of this Symphony and that they had accordingly rerecorded this movement to replace the original recording, which was immediately withdrawn. For

musical interest we thought one of the original records should be retained for Archives, and this is it. Gramophone Librarian." This particular recording is for Archives only; it may not be used for broadcast.

In a way, the Archives constitute the romantic side of the library. The day-by-day work is of course much more prosaic than the collecting and preserving of historic oddities. Miss Britten's department concerns itself with commercial disks (the BBC has separate libraries of tape, acetates, and recorded programs). Recorded music plays a large part in British radio programing. Yet, while the record library has been in existence ever since the BBC was organized about thirty-five years ago, it was not until 1933 that it began to be intensively built up; and not until 1938 did the serious business of cataloguing begin. Miss Britten became librarian in 1942. She now has a staff of twenty-six people and says that she can put her hand on any of the 500,000 records within sixty seconds.

Miss Britten, who operates on what she calls "a good-sized budget," decides what to buy, though when she comes across rare items that demand an outlay of over £50 she has to get special permission. The record library gets nothing for nothing. It pays wholesale rate for all current records it receives (unless, of course, collectors want to donate to the good cause, as has occasionally happened). Three copies of every disk made in England automatically go to the library, and in many cases Miss Britten, knowing in advance the degree of popularity the record will achieve, may order an extra three, four, or five. She also scans all foreign catalogues and makes many purchases from the United States and other countries, trying to second-guess whether the disks in question will be released in England (foreign records cost considerably more).

Records, when they arrive, are placed in stamped master envelopes, called "bags" by the library. One copy goes to the cataloguers, two to the rack. After the bag is stamped with the make and number — say Folkways FF 8, or HMV ALP 1038 — it is entered in the accessories register by make, prefix number, title, composer, artist.

Then starts the actual cataloguing. All records are entered under three headings — composer, title, and artist. Most elaborate of these three indexes is the title card, which also lists all extant and/or extinct recordings of the same work in the library's collection. This card also contains make, prefix number, and distribution of movements on the disk. In addition, all kinds of cross-reference cards are made, each referring to the main entry. Titles of operatic arias are listed in many languages. "*Un bel di vedremo*": see *Madama Butterfly*; "One fine day": see *Madama Butterfly*; "*Sur la mer Calmée*": see *Madama Butterfly*; "*Fines Tages sehen wir*": see *Madama Butterfly*. Miss Britten has learned to distrust, on principle, all record-label information, and she is especially chary of spellings. Musical scores are always used in conjunction with the cataloguing process.

Finally, lists are drawn up and circulated to BBC affiliates every two weeks. Over a hundred people are on the circulation list and are entitled to borrow any disk in the library's possession. Borrowers are supposed to return records after a month ("But don't ask me how long they *do* keep them; it's ghastly!") and, on the average, eleven thousand disks are in circulation at any given time. They are played for the entertainment and edification of people living in the Scottish Region of the BBC, the Midlands, Northern Ireland, the Western Region, or any of the various Regions that nestle under the BBC parental wings. There is some damage in handling and transport, but very little breakage. The records most in demand are symphonies, light dance material, and present-day pop artists.

Were it not for microgroove, the record library would be bulging out of Western House, and consequently microgroove has no more voluble admirer than Miss Britten. As it is, she thinks that in ten years all available space will be used up. Last year over five thousand disks were issued by the British commercial recording companies. The library ended up with, on the average, six disks of each. Some thirty thousand disks a year absorb considerable storage space. In the present setup, the main floor of the library contains the banks of files and collections of catalogues, starting with HMV in 1901. It is a very rich but not complete catalogue collection. Individual copies of old catalogues can be very expensive. Miss Britten paid about $25 for the few pages of the 1901 copy. Outside the file room, on the main floor, begin the rows of metal record cabinets, all containing HMVs. Downstairs are housed all other labels, and there also are two listening rooms for the staff. The library, in addition, contains a small broadcasting studio and a magnificent file of analytical notes. By now each member of the staff automatically brings in program notes of any concert he has attended. Into the file they go.

The "rough classification" file of the record library is unparalleled. "You can call it ancillary reference, if you want to give it a grand name," says Miss Britten. Here, in loose-leaf binders, are lists of records by country of issue, biographical notes about composers, and all kinds of miscellaneous information. *Continued on page 142*

The voices of Caruso, Irving, Browning, and Gladstone.

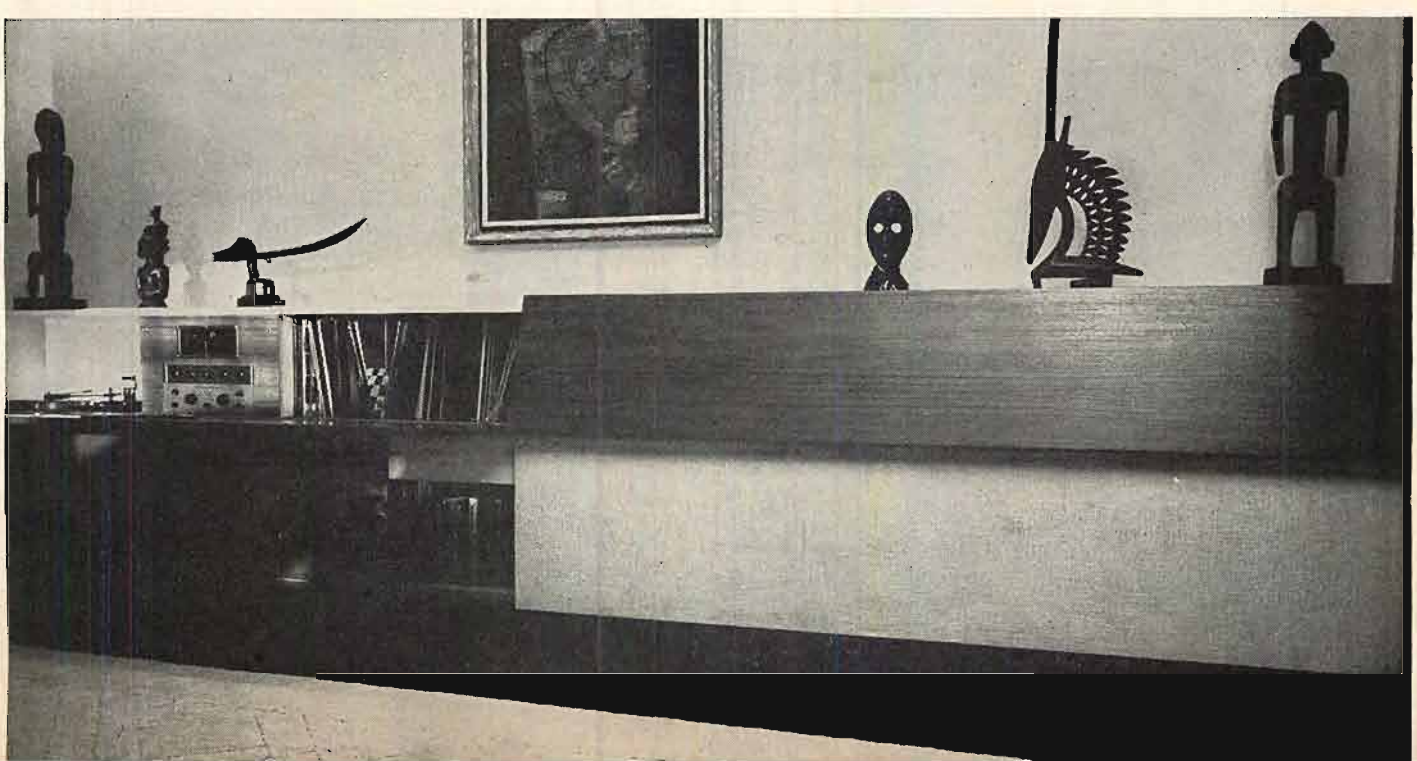
Living with High Fidelity

Harold Rome's Rig Wasn't Built in a Day

NO ONE SHOULD BE SURPRISED to find that the living room of the Fifth Avenue apartment of Mr. and Mrs. Harold Rome, in New York, is fashioned primarily for listening. It is, of course, a room that music built. Though Mr. Rome studied law and architecture at Yale, his whole livelihood has been musical. He played the piano in dance bands to pay for his studies; when he finished these and came to New York — into the thick of the Depression — he played the piano and wrote music for lack of a paying job in his profession. Out of this came his first surprise success: he was asked to write the songs for a benefit revue to be put on by the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. This was *Pins and*

Needles, which opened in a downtown theater, began at once to pack in audiences, moved uptown and, finally, ran a full four years on Broadway and the road. Subsequent musicals which have benefited from Rome scores include *Sing Out the News* (remember "Franklin D. Roosevelt Jones?"), *Call Me Mister*, *Bless You All*, *Wish You Were Here*, and *Fanny*. One of Harold Rome's favorite composers, understandably, is Harold Rome, but *the* favorite is W. A. Mozart. Bartók, Ravel, and Stravinsky also rate high. Rome's interest in good sound reproduction dates from 1939, when a friend wired for him a broadcast quality amplifier and two-way speaker system. His present setup is the joint production of an architect, Henry Kann, and George Schimmel, a custom sound engineer. It consists of Interelectronics Coronation preamplifier and amplifier; Fisher 70-RT tuner; Garrard RC-80 changer; Rek-O-Kut Rondine B12-H turntable; speaker units of a Bozak B310 system, infinitely baffled; Telefunken microphone, and Berlant tape recorder. The room is acoustically treated. Rome has made here three records, for the Heritage label, of Rome performing Rome: *A Touch of Rome*; *Harold Rome Sings Fanny*, and *Rome-antics*. Happily, Mrs. Rome shares her husband's enthusiasm for music and good sound. So does three-year-old son Joshua.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY FRED J. SASS



Love letter to an old speed

by JOHN BALL, JR.

THE ROOM, though large, was crowded and therefore hot. All of the newsmen, trying to make themselves comfortable on inadequate folding chairs, knew what was coming; *Billboard* already had carried the complete story and most of the New York papers had at least sketched the outlines. Behind the speaker's platform there was a stack of record albums at least eight feet high, a criminal arrangement that meant sure damage to the items near the bottom of the solid load.

After necessary preliminaries, a gentleman from Columbia Records, Inc., stood up with a bland smile on his face and a thin disk of vinylite in his hands. Formally he delivered a short speech about 33⅓ rpm and microgroove. Then he announced that he would play a selection by Buddy Clark. Fitting the disk on an adapter unit, he carefully fed the needle into the first groove and ushered in a new era of the phonograph.

Sometime around nine at night I put my column to bed and checked out of the *World Telegram* offices. Under one arm I had a cardboard carton containing an LP-adapter unit, in the other hand a package of the new records which had been given to me for review. All of the way home I kept wondering about this new development; something disturbing was in my mind.

Once in the house I tossed off my coat and hat, plugged the adapter into the Fisher, and then pulled four or five sets off my record shelves. For the next two hours I listened carefully, to the new LP versions of several recent recordings and then to the shellac editions of the same performances. They sounded pretty much the same — if anything the shellac had the edge. But that could have been a combination of the high quality pickup on the regular turntable and the fact that many of the 78-rpm disks were test pressings, which had been issued to me for purposes of annotation.

When I had finished I sat there for almost an hour, alone and quietly, just looking at the patient record library. There, row upon row, the albums waited: ready now, or years from now, to be brought to life and sound, to pour back the breath into stilled voices, to convey again the charged atmosphere of great performances, to release the infinite variety of musical forms and moods which generations of minds had created. Some eighteen thousand strong the shellac disks waited, ignorant of the gathering clouds of obsolescence. I wondered what was going to become of them in the still nebulous record future.

During the next decade the microgroove whirlwind swept on. It banished the three deadly "B's" of the record business: bulk, bother, and breakage. Tape techniques took over at the recording sessions, the term "hi-fi" entered the vernacular, and there appeared a new species of music listener, who, by the most fervent concentration at forty watts, could just detect the ticking of Ormandy's watch. The *1812* came forth with the final awful realization of the composer's full intentions — actual cannon shots and the supercharged clangor of real cathedral bells. The Fisher went back to the factory and was rebuilt with still more dials, knobs, and tubes to keep it in pace with the tremendous new techniques. And the eighteen thousand shellacs? Some of them, of course, have melted away. A few perished in action; some just wore out. Five thousand or so still remain on the shelves and there — for as far ahead as it is now possible to foresee — they are going to stay in honorable employ.

There are several reasons why they are going to stay, the prime one being that there are no adequate replacements available. I do not wish to quibble to the point of absurdity about the relative merits of performances, but rather to make a simple statement of fact. To cite an example, there is, to my knowledge, no LP version of the very pleasant Concerto in G for Piano and Orchestra on Chinese Themes and Rhythms, by Aaron Avshalomoff. My shellac set (Columbia M 286) offers the Shanghai Municipal Orches-

tra conducted by the composer with Gregory Singer as the soloist. I grant that this is reaching pretty far afield from the standard repertoire, but the record offers a most listenable and engaging work which I happen to enjoy. So the shellac set stays.

In the field of vocal music not only do the 78s hold their own, but also some ancient mechanical recordings still merit careful attention. With all respect to the Misses Pons and Munsel and to the kinetic Mme. Callas, I occasionally still like to hear my mad scenes given the kind of performance possible to Mme. Galli-Curci when that great lady was in the prime of a magnificent voice. Properly reproduced, with equipment designed for the purpose, some of these venerable disks can be made surprisingly presentable insofar as concerns the vocal part.

The sound on many 78s is far better than many present listeners realize. Nor is date of recording always a reliable guide to the merits of what lies in the grooves. There is a little stunt I like to pull on those occasions when someone comes over to hear my sound system. The victim having been made comfortable, the living room suddenly becomes filled with the electrically charged climax of the "Transformation Scene" from *Parsifal*. The orchestra rises to a peak of intensity, the brasses cut through in a sunburst of triumph, and then the air is almost shattered by the crashing impact of tympani thundering out the majesty and power of the knights of the Grail. As the music echoes away, there is always a startled expression and usually some hushed comments about the tremendous fidelity, near perfect but for a barely noticeable tape hiss. A slight hiss there is, but it's not tape: the recording was made at Bayreuth circa 1927 by Dr. Karl Muck (Col. 67364-D in set MM 337).

Of more recent date are some 78 recordings whose sonic quality is considerably superior to that of a great many LPs currently tagged "high fidelity" by their manufacturers. The shellac version of Vladimir Horowitz's reading of *Pictures at an Exhibition* matches sound to technique to make a highly-charged combination. Still talked about is Curzon's *Nights in the Gardens of Spain* despite the appearance of some superlative LP versions. A good percentage of London's "ffrr" series of imported shellac disks, particularly those devoted to piano or voice, still offer a most respectable sound if proper care is given to their reproduction. Perhaps the best sound on any American 78 set was that on Ralph Kirkpatrick's Concert Hall recording of Scarlatti Harpsichord sonatas — at least I have never heard one to surpass it. These albums were and remain of excellent quality — as do a great many others.

Some of the 78s which I retain in the library are preserved for documentary reasons alone. The prize item is a seven inch acid-etched disk from the hand of Emile Berliner — one of the first disk records ever produced. Then there are the voices of Sarah Bernhardt, Mahatma Gandhi, Joseph Jefferson, DeWolf Hopper, and certain other records whose historical interest entitles them to permanent respect. Here in this section too is a more recent item, a precious disk on which the great Heifetz raises his shimmering bow and creates for a limited, but grateful, posterity his own unique interpretation, with symphony orchestra, of *Mairsey Doates and Doasey Doates*.

Of both documentary importance and musical value are the sets and individual records in the composer edition section. Here you will find the Falla harpsichord concerto with Manuel de Falla as soloist, Ralph Vaughan Williams conducting his own symphonies, Maurice Ravel setting the tempo for the *Boléro* (most other conductors please note), Dohnanyi's delightful *Variations on a Nursery Tune* with the composer doing a superb job at the piano, and Sir Edward Elgar presenting his own conception of his violin concerto with the *Wunderkind* of the day, Yehudi Menuhin, doing a remarkably fine job in the solo part.

Does such a program begin to sound interesting? All right, then, here next is Holst conducting *The Planets*, Debussy at the piano accompanying Mary Garden in some of his own songs, Mascagni supervising a performance of *Cavalleria* with Gigli in the cast, and a real treasure, Sir Henry J. Wood conducting *A Serenade to Music*. If you don't happen to know this one, Vaughan Williams wrote it in Sir Henry's honor; it is a small scale masterpiece and employs in this recording one of the most distinguished choruses ever to be assembled in a sound studio — sixteen of Britain's top singers paying their personal respects to the conductor.

Having given you a glimpse of the composer section, I offer you next a listing of performances on shellac which I will replace if and when I can get their equal or better on LP. Here is my Mahler Second Symphony on shellac, in my judgment so superior to the one available LP version (at the time of writing) that I wouldn't dream of parting with it. A replacement of the same performance on microgroove would be most welcome, or a new version complete with all the trimmings lavished on the old one. Perhaps Mercury will oblige with the same orchestra (Minneapolis) and follow up the *tour de force* of its *1812* by giving us real bells in the smashing finale. Since Bruno Walter recently performed this massive Mahler work in New York, Columbia may have it on tape. But one on 78 is worth two in the vault.

I admit that there is an enormous selection of Beethoven Fifths from which to chose, but in this work performance is a vital factor. My choice, to date, is Furtwängler on Victor 426, and the sound is pretty respectable too. This same conductor has to his credit a Tchaikovsky Sixth that hasn't been beaten yet, at least not by anything that I have so far heard. Mengelberg is still the champ on *Les Préludes* (available on LP), and Gershwin himself provides the most dynamic *Rhapsody in Blue*. By the way, this ancient recording sounds a lot better than do the few bars dubbed from it on that *Hearing is Believing* disk — I suspect that the engineers fudged a little on that one to make it appear considerably worse than in actual fact it really is.

By careful intention I have had little to say about vocal records, for that is a special field of its own. Sufficient to say that while I do not hold that no worthy singer has appeared since the Golden Age, I have a long memory for some magnificently thrilling evenings in the theater; and my few hundred carefully hoarded old vocal records enshrine for my lifetime *Continued on page 146*

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by Roland Gelatt

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WHATEVER ELSE may be said for it, the year 1956 has been well appointed with anniversaries. As everyone is by now fully aware, Mozart was born two hundred years ago and Schumann died one hundred years ago, in token of which hundreds of new records have been issued. A third significant 1956 anniversary, the centenary of Bernard Shaw's birth, has so far gone unnoticed by the impresarios of LP; but this month RCA Victor will rectify that neglect with a complete (well, almost complete) recording of *Saint Joan* in which Siobhan McKenna, a young Irish actress already well known on records, plays the role of The Maid.

The production committed to disks is basically that of the Cambridge Festival, which opened in New England this summer and arrived at New York's Phoenix Theater in mid-September. Readers who keep *au courant* with theatrical doings in the East will know that this production has provoked a wide division of critical opinion. The differences center on Miss McKenna's Joan, a character thickly Irish in speech and rudely peasantlike in bearing and deportment. In some quarters this approach has made a rather unhappy impression. Brooks Atkinson found it apposite in the early scenes, but spiritually out of place when the play moves into a new dimension in the trial scene and the epilogue. For Wolcott Gibbs, "her portrayal is conceivably arresting, but it is too much on the same choked and primitive level." On the other hand, *Time*'s critic felt that "by subordinating effect to essence, what Joan does to what Joan is, she makes an audience feel itself in close contact with someone, however rare, who is in close communication with something, however intangible." And the *Saturday Review*'s Henry Hewes termed it a "miracle" that "without make-up and before our eyes we see a plain homely rustic change into a radiantly beautiful celestial being."

Having experienced Miss McKenna's Joan three times — at the recording session, during the edited playback a few days later, and in the theater itself — I have come to know it well, and to admire it with increasing respect. Radiant is indeed the word for Siobhan McKenna; she is radiantly forceful with Baudricourt and Dunois in the early, beat-the-English stages of the play; radiantly devout when she meets the Archbishop of Rheims and asks him for his blessing; radiantly tender toward the "gentle little Dauphin." Her voice — as Eric Bentley pointed out in these pages a few months ago when reviewing *Juno and the Paycock* — is by no means well produced, but despite its hoarseness and occasional stridency she manages to project the hard core of the part with wonderful conviction. When she informs the Dauphin that "I come from God to tell thee to kneel in the cathedral and solemnly give thy kingdom to Him for ever and ever, and become the greatest king in the world as His steward and His bailiff, His soldier and His servant," the capital H's can be heard unmistakably. And no one will easily forget the chilling scorn, the livid indignation with which she addresses her accusers in the trial scene: "You think that life is nothing but not being stone dead." The reverberations of that line still sound in my ears.

Siobhan McKenna: a radiant Joan.

Siobhan McKenna was at first disinclined to record the play for home listening. Previously she had made a taping of *Joan* for the Irish radio system that had not entirely pleased her. The Dublin tape had captured a wholly theatrical performance, every line projected just as it was on stage. When she heard it on the radio, Miss McKenna found it all too overstated, and she began to wonder whether *Joan* lent itself to a heard-and-not-seen presentation. Her associates in the present Cambridge Festival production were able to allay these misgivings, and for the RCA disks the cast attempted to strike a happy medium between a theatrical performance and a straight reading of the text. So that discourse would seem free and natural, most of the actors performed for the microphone from memory. As a result this recorded *Joan* departs from the printed *Joan* in many small details. Shaw, who had a keen appreciation of English grammar, might well have raised one of his bushy eyebrows at the sound of "I could let . . . the knights and the soldiers pass me and leave me behind like they leave the other women"; the adverbial "like" is Miss McKenna's, G. B. S. wrote "as." Neither might he have been pleased with the euphony of "even the blessed Michael will say things that I cannot foretell beforehand," especially as he had been careful to obviate that redundancy by writing merely "tell."

The actress followed the playback text in hand, and at every such slip she winced. "Shaw was always right, and we are always wrong when we inadvertently change his words," she said. "His rhythm suffers at the slightest alteration. You know, I think this play should be conducted like a piece of music. It should not be phrased like prose. Indeed, it is not prose; it is poetry, or at least poetic prose, and it has the most beautiful imagery and counterpoint." Despite the few departures from text, Miss McKenna had no hesitation in approving the recording. "Our memory slips do not change the meaning and do not seriously break the rhythm. We could have made it word-perfect by using our

Continued on page 73

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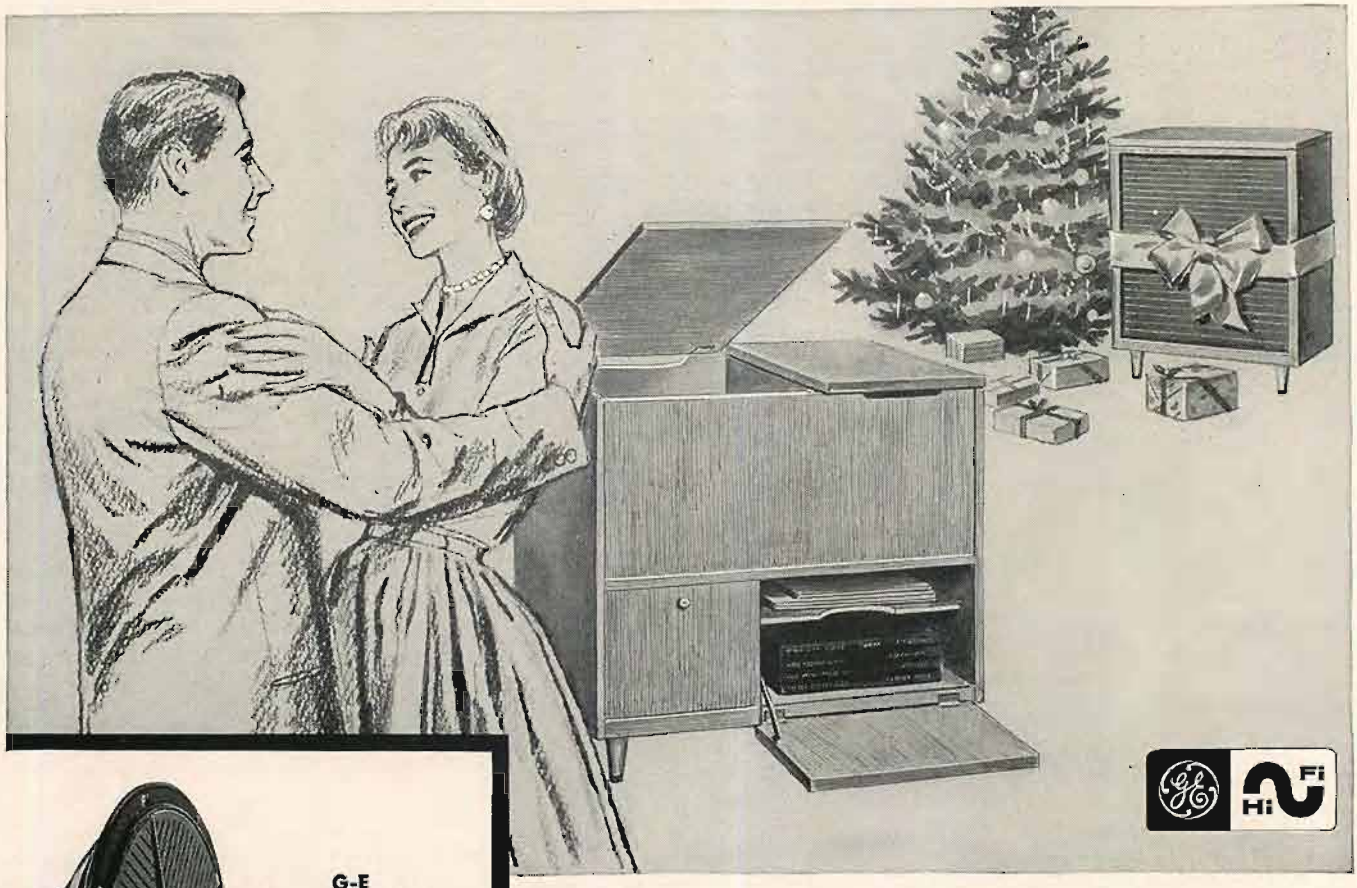

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scripts, but then the performance might have suffered." And did she think well of the recorded performance?, I asked. Miss McKenna gracefully avoided the opportunity for self-admiration. "I don't ever enjoy listening to myself," she said, "but I feel that I should."

LEONARD BERNSTEIN is prominently represented on Columbia's list of November releases, as composer, conductor, pianist, and analyst. In the latter role he has done a commentary on the Fifth Symphony that deals fascinatingly with Beethoven's compositional *modus operandi*. Bernstein has examined the preliminary sketches for the Fifth Symphony and reconstructed them as they might have sounded had Beethoven gone ahead and used them in his final orchestral version instead of discarding them for something better. Hearing these sketches in full orchestral dress is as intriguing as reading the deleted sections of a manuscript by a celebrated author.

Even though this approach to "music appreciation" will not supplant formal analysis *à la* Tovey, it serves as worthwhile collateral listening. Unfortunately, Bernstein barely digs into his subject before the record is over. We are allowed a glimpse into Beethoven's workshop, and then the door slams shut. At any rate, Bernstein has demonstrated the potentialities of this avenue of musical exegesis and has shown what could conceivably be accomplished on a larger scale. Similar ventures applied to other works and composers would be, I should think, of solid value to colleges and conservatories, but the cost would undoubtedly have to be underwritten by an educational foundation.

THE LENINGRAD Philharmonic journeyed to Vienna this spring and evoked some extremely flattering reports in the press — including a few by American critics not normally given to the bestowal of hyperbolic praise. On this side of the ocean the rapturous decriptions seemed a little hard to credit, for the recordings of the Leningrad orchestra that had appeared here were not especially noteworthy. On the Soviet-derived disks the orchestra sounded pallid and thin — a competent body of players, but nothing to write home about. These Russian recordings, it is now clear, bore false witness. During the Leningrad Philharmonic's tour of Germany and Austria, Deutsche Grammophon recorded the orchestra in proper style; and having listened to one of the DGG pressings, I am ready to join the chorus of praise-givers. It is a large orchestra (106 men) and sounds it. The string sections, despite their size, play with great precision and produce a solid, mellow tone, not unlike that of the Philadelphia. The woodwinds have a nasal quality, which I happen to like, and there are obviously some very able instrumentalists among the first-desk men.

Soviet conductor Eugene Mravinsky.

Toward the end of November, Decca will issue four of the DGG-Leningrad records: the Rachmaninoff Second and Tchaikovsky Fourth symphonies conducted by Kurt Sanderling, and the Tchaikovsky Fifth and Sixth conducted by Eugene Mravinsky. The latter at fifty-three is generally considered the Soviet Union's most accomplished conductor. He is a graduate of the Leningrad Conservatory and served his apprenticeship as a secondary opera and ballet conductor in that city. Since 1938 he has been at the head of the Leningrad Philharmonic. Kurt Sanderling, the second in command, was born forty-four years ago in what was then East Prussia and is now Poland. He studied in Berlin and had just started out as an assistant at the Städtische Oper when the Nazis took over and forced him to emigrate. He eventually settled in the USSR, where he was employed at first as a studio pianist for the Moscow radio station. Later on, in 1941, he was called to Leningrad and resumed his career as conductor. Sanderling, incidentally, is not the first German emigré to lead the Leningrad Philharmonic; for several years during the mid-1930s the orchestra's music director was Fritz Stiedry, formerly of Berlin and now one of the chief conductors at the Metropolitan Opera.

IN THE USSR the still mediocre quality of their tapes is apparently honestly recognized. Michael Stillman, of Leeds Music Corporation, was in Moscow a few months ago to renew his company's agreement with the Soviet recording bureau, and he had hardly time to take off his coat before the director began apologizing for the lackluster sound of Russian tapes. In the same breath, however, his Soviet host gave assurances of better things to come; future recordings, he promised, would be made with newly manufactured Russian equipment and tape much superior to what had been used before. Rather mysteriously, Stillman was given no opportunity to hear what this new equipment could do, though the apparatus itself was exhibited with evident pride. Since his return to New York, Michael Stillman has been expecting a shipment of tape recordings that would substantiate the promised Soviet "new sound." As yet, nothing; but at Leeds they are waiting hopefully.

In Moscow most recording sessions are held in a newish building called, in literal translation, the House of Writing Down Sound; hardly any tapes are recorded on location in opera houses or concert halls. The chief studio in this building, Stillman reports, is an ornate room replete with marble columns and other handsome architectural accouterments, large as studios go but nothing like a spacious auditorium. This may help to account for the tight, constricted sound that afflicts most made-in-Moscow recordings.

As a footnote to the above, it is interesting to note that Walter Legge, EMI's director of artists and repertoire, will be going to Russia this fall on an exploratory mission. "I'm just curious to hear and judge for myself the quality of musical performance there," he told me when he was in New York early in October. Would he be arranging for EMI's own recording team to do some work in the Bolshoi Opera House? Legge wouldn't say yes and he wouldn't say no, but I suspect that this eventuality may come to pass before too long.

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Other Rabin recordings: Paganini D Major Concerto and Glazounov A Minor Concerto (35259); Bach and Ysaye Sonatas for Violin Solo (35305).

EUGENE MALININ plays
Rachmaninoff Piano Concerto No. 2 in C Minor

Otto Ackermann, *conductor.*

Recorded in London with Philharmonia Orchestra. (Also contains Chopin Nocturne No. 8 in D Flat.)

One 12" record **Angel 35396**

Malinin has also recorded Moussorgsky's "Pictures at an Exhibition" (35317).

QUARTETTO ITALIANO plays
Beethoven "Harp" Quartet No. 10 in E Flat, Op. 74

One 12" record **Angel 35367**

The Quartetto Italiano has also recorded the Beethoven Quartet No. 13 in B Flat, Op. 130 (35064).

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Records in Review

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CLASSICAL

BACH: *Brandenburg Concertos (Complete)*

Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra, Karl Münchinger, cond.
LONDON LL 1457/8. Two 12-in. $7.96.

These performances were formerly available on three separate disks — two twelve-inch and a ten-inch. Their virtues and defects have been dealt with in detail in these pages (May 1956). Suffice it to say now that this is one of the best complete *Brandenburgs*, being surpassed, in my opinion, only by the Prohaska and equaled only by the Sacher. In the course of the transfer to two disks, the highs seem to have become slightly sharpened. N. B.

BACH: *Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor, BWV 582; Toccata, Adagio, and Fugue in C, BWV 564*

Carl Weinrich, organ.
WESTMINSTER W-LAB 7047. 12-in. $7.50.

Like the organ works on the other Weinrich disk in the Westminster Laboratory series, these are well performed and beautifully recorded. The registrations in the Passacaglia are sufficiently varied yet not overdone, the voices are clear and correctly balanced, and dramatic peaks and valleys are sharply drawn. If the C major Fugue could do with a little more snap, the difficult pedal part in the Toccata is played faultlessly. N. B.

BACH: *St. John Passion*

Agnes Giebel, soprano; Marga Höffgen, alto; Ernst Häfliger, tenor; Franz Kelch (Jesus), Hans-Olaf Hudemann (Petrus, Pilatus), basses; Thomanerchor and Gewandhausorchester (Leipzig), Günther Ramin, cond.
ARCHIVE 3045/7. Three 12-in. $17.94.

The late Günther Ramin was, like Bach, cantor at St. Thomas' in Leipzig. In addition the fact that the Passion is performed complete and in St. Thomas' and that the exact instrumentation prescribed by Bach — including *oboi da caccia*, viola d'amore, viola da gamba, and lute — is employed, would seem to create the most authentic possible atmosphere for a recording of this work. Like Kurt Thomas in the Oiseau-Lyre set, Ramin emphasizes the lyric qualities of the music; a little more passion and incisiveness in the passages allotted to the crowd would have brought out better the bitterness of those sections. On the other hand, Ramin is somewhat more imaginative than Thomas: his treatment, for example, of the chorus in which the soldiers decide to cast lots for Jesus' raiment (No. 54) is extraordinarily sensitive and effective.

The soloists are all excellent, though this listener would have preferred a somewhat weightier tone for the soprano and alto. Even so, Höffgen's singing of *Es ist vollbracht* is especially moving, and she is aided by Alwin Bauer's exquisite playing of the gamba obbligato. Häfliger, the Evangelist, sings his taxing role with flexibility and intelligence, and does not lapse into falsetto for the high tones. The first-class recording maintains clarity even in the most contrapuntal *tutti* sections. The tone of the chorus is pure and clean; it is well balanced except in the opening chorus and the *Ruht wohl*, where the tenors are a bit weak. All in all, as fine a performance of the *St. John* as is available on records, and in some respects better than the others. The German text and an English translation are provided. N. B.

BEETHOVEN: *Grosse Fuge, in B-flat, Op. 133*
†Mozart: *Adagio and Fugue in C minor, K. 456; Fantasy and Fugue in F minor, K. 608* (arr. string orch., Winograd)

String Orchestra Arthur Winograd cond.
M-G-M E 3382. 12-in. $3.98.

The conviction declared here before, that the vast Fugue needs more than four players to convey the grandeur in its rough turmoil, is supported by the most effective of the recordings for string orchestra. In several of the Winograd records, including this one, M-G-M has demonstrated a sound of startling and bluff — almost savage — realism. There is no doubt that friction produces this music, and anyone after hearing the Fugue and the Fantasy (originally for clockwork organ) on this record must recognize how much more compelling they are than in more distant and glossier sonics. The enormous difficulties of the Fugue have been met with an address equal to its roughness and its sudden refinements, and the supple bowing is not lost in the reproduction, equally responsive to large fortes and hushed *pianos*.

The Fantasy, always heard in transcription, bristles with too many shafts of color to be entrusted to strings alone, but the conductor has played it with persuasion if not conviction. It is interesting even though it does not sound right to those who have heard it on organ or transcribed for full orchestra. The sonic advantages make the shorter Adagio and Fugue preferable in this edition to the old Columbia conducted by Herbert von Karajan. C. G. B.

BEETHOVEN: *Sonatas for Piano: No. 14, in C-sharp minor ("Moonlight"), Op. 27, No. 2; No. 23, in F minor ("Appassionata"), Op. 57*

Harold Bauer, piano.
RCA CAMDEN CAL 311. 12-in. $1.98.

Has the additional title of *The Art of Harold Bauer, Vol. 1*, and it is not a bad idea to make available for today's music lovers a piano style beloved by yesterday's. Not that the two sonatas presented on this disk are ideally characteristic of the warmth of Bauer's playing: some of that warmth is dissipated in hurry, presumably dictated by an injunction to compress the music to a specified number of 78-rpm sides. Nevertheless, enough of the warmth and the clean-cut decision in favor of this mood or that remain to show that the more detached style of today is not necessarily always better. The sound was originally engraved more than twenty-five years ago, and the *Appassionata* will clatter with strong volume, but the *Moonlight* has long stretches of entirely acceptable piano. Two of the best short pieces by Franz Liszt are more brilliantly played than the record, boosting treble a little awkwardly, is now able to reveal.

Collectors to whom surface hiss is particularly odious ought to know that it is an unlucky but inevitable concomitant of LPs made from 78s as old as these. C. G. B.

BEETHOVEN: *Sonatas for Piano: No. 15, in D ("Pastoral"), Op. 28; No. 17, in D minor ("The Tempest"), Op. 31, No. 2*

Paul Badura-Skoda, piano.
WESTMINSTER 18210. 12-in. $3.98.

These are studies in immaculacy — of piano sound and piano technique. The full resonance of the bass and unblurred clarity of the treble are just about as good as we have obtained from disks, and seldom have they been united on one record as they are here. In technique, Mr. Badura-Skoda has developed a graduated scale of force from the most delicate *pianissimo* to hearty *fortissimo* in imperceptible increments; and he has added to a good *cantabile* a spotless staccato — insisted on too much in an otherwise excellent *Tempest*, and much too much in a *Pastoral* rich in finesse and penurious with the spirit of fresh contentment that ought to sparkle from it. C. G. B.

BEETHOVEN: *Sonata for Violin and Piano, No. 3, in E-flat, Op. 12, No. 3*
†Brahms: *Sonata for Violin and Piano, No. 3, in D minor, Op. 108*

David Oistrakh, violin; Vladimir Yampolsky, piano.
ANGEL 35331. 12-in. $4.98.

The most ingratiating Russian of our day here recalls Joseph Szigeti at his best. The judicious care given to the shape of every phrase and the subordination of detail to a dominating plan, in unshowy works so diverse in mood, underline a basic musicianship often and naturally overlooked in the violinist's records of more spectacular music. This is chaste playing, of quiet intensity and of course the most varied of tonal unction. Particularly admirable is the way the brilliance of the Beethoven is held in classic measure, while the darker shades of the Brahms are glinted with a welcome palliating light. The pianist, whose part is not secondary, jibes to perfection, and it is too bad that he was assigned, by judgment of the recording supervisor or by an encroachment of celebrity, a prominence a little — not offensively — inadequate. Close and living sound for the violin, not a whit shrill. C. G. B.

BEETHOVEN: *Symphony No. 5, in C minor, Op. 67*
†Mozart: *Symphony No. 40, in G minor, K. 550*

Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond.
COLUMBIA ML 5098. 12-in. $3.98.

Two stunning finales, and a G minor of high appeal from beginning to end. The Fifth, in sumptuous texture, is hurt by several startling blots of seepage and by a few passages in the first and second movements where the stroke is too comfortable or the tone is overripe — occupational ailments of the great virtuoso orchestras. But the big, enveloping sound, unified by reverberation but retaining brilliance even during its loudest roars, has a high glory perhaps capable of obliterating the memory of its faults. The texture is at its best when at full strength, and thus the Finale, with its added wind instruments and progressive vehemence, has a richness and grandeur not paralleled on another record.

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The G minor is not scored to make an orchestral effect like Beethoven's Fifth, but Mr. Ormandy, resisting the temptation now so fashionable to reduce his strings by three-fourths their strength, has given substance to the bitter music, while protecting its intensity by decision of accent and careful pointing of phrase, delivered at a measured and telling pace.

Unfortunately, echo again intrudes roughly into the rich orchestral fabric. Collectors to whom this defect is minor are advised to hear the record before buying, in spite of their tolerance, for their reproducers may not be able to do justice to the wide sweep of frequencies. On two apparatus used here the sound of the treble was uncomfortably shrill, while on a third, and the best, instrument, it was smoothly bright just where it had been worst. The record is too eloquent to be rejected in advance because its eloquence is precarious. C. G. B.

BRAHMS: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in D, Op. 77*

Zino Francescatti, violin; Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond.
COLUMBIA ML 5114. 12-in. $3.98.

When a work has been recorded as often as this one we expect to find, and usually do find, half a dozen versions of lofty merit, and the hard thing to determine is not which one is the absolute best — since that often is quite indeterminable — but what the qualities are that make one different from another when both are good. The beautiful performance here is not easy to characterize, for the only stable quality seems to be the relaxed orchestral presentation, favorable to a grave richness of deeply glowing tone. The soloist begins with a nervous pulse and strong, bright voice, which would permit some words on the excitement of contrasts if the violinist did not disoblige by imitating the orchestral relaxation, a special kind like the long surge of a slow ocean swell. Then he departs again in a lighter way, making use of the orchestra as a dark background before returning to merge with it. Contrast of course, but coalescence too, both effective.

Sonically this is a spacious, unitary exhibition of the Philadelphia Orchestra, with a solo violin just a trifle too forward to be in parallel with concert-hall proportion. This is not oppressive at any time, and is discernible only when the accompaniment is thin. It may actually be the result of a softness of the winds, blended and not prominent in a sweeping luxury of strings with a bass like dark fleece. For a full complement of this richness the record should be played loud. The solo violin will show edge on some reproducers but none on reproducers in good adjustment. C. G. B.

BRAHMS: *Sonata for Violin and Piano, No. 3, in D minor, Op. 108* — See Beethoven: *Sonata for Violin and Piano, No. 3.*

BRAHMS: *Symphony No. 1, in C minor, Op. 68*

Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, William Steinberg, cond.

CAPITOL P 8340. 12-in. $3.98.

No conductor can make a new revelation, at this date, of music like Beethoven's Fifth, Schubert's *Unfinished*, or Brahms's First Symphony, unless he misplays them. Misplaying perpetrated by a refined taste can produce exalted results, one time in a hundred trials, and the riskiness of the process curbs the instinct in all but the most flamboyant conductors. The talented conductor of the Pittsburgh Orchestra is not a flamboyant man, and for several years he has been recording for Capitol a parade of the most stalwart protagonists in the symphonic repertory. Almost without exception these records are imposing in a strong, honorable way, but they have no memorable irregularities to project, no eccentricities to excite discussion. The best of them may be called complete statements, and give deep satisfaction.

So it is with the Brahms First. Powerful, regular, and calculated, but without calulated deviations toward personal specialties of effectiveness, the performance is lofty but standard, the reproduction deep-glowing and substantial but clear. (It is best when played loud.) It is hard to say more. An exposition like Bruno Walter's for Columbia, electrifying in the eloquence of special traits, probably ought to be, and no doubt is, preferred by music lovers; but it cannot successfully be imitated by anyone except Bruno Walter. Of the more objective editions the Steinberg must be considered with the best.

C. G. B.

BRITTEN: *The Little Sweep*

Jennifer Vyvyan (s), Rowan; April Cantelo (s), Juliet Brook; Marilyn Baker (s), Sophie Brook; Gabrielle Soskin (s), Tina Crome; David Hemmings (treble), Sam; Lyn Vaughan (treble), Hugh Crome; Michael Ingram (treble), Gay Brook; Robin Fairhurst (treble), Johnny Crome; Nancy Thomas (c), Miss Baggott; Peter Pears (t), Clem, Alfred; Trevor Anthony (bs), Black Bob, Tom. Choir of Alleyn's School and English Opera Group Orchestra, Benjamin Britten, cond.
LONDON XLL 1439. 12-in. $4.98.

If not one of Benjamin Britten's biggest or profoundest scores, *The Little Sweep* is a brightly composed bit of an opera — and an anomalous one.

Done complete, *Let's Make an Opera!* — called "an entertainment for young people" — is in three acts. In Act 1, a group of English children and grownups decide to turn an old family story into a holiday entertainment. Since one of them (called, pleasantly, Norman Chaffinch) is a composer, they determine to make it an opera. Act II is preparation, including audience ensnarement and rehearsal of their songs. Act III is *The Little Sweep* itself — about how children at a nineteenth-century country place in Suffolk rescue a poor little boy from his brutal chimney-sweep master, with the aid of their sympathetic nurserymaid, Rowan; hide him from the snappish housekeeper, Miss Baggott; and smuggle him to safety. All this is accomplished in some variably arch verse set to music (scored for string quartet, piano four hands, and percussion) that is skillful and, in the best numbers, rather charmingly piquant.

Of the London set, one thing is sure: No one, certainly not in a live theater performance, is likely to have *heard* the

Beethoven's *Ninth*: "Enlisted in a Service of Purification."

THIS RECORDING has acquired an extraordinary fame in Europe. Only one other performance — the Scherchen — of the Ninth Symphony is even remotely like this one, whose amazing intensity of personal expression must unquestionably have been influenced by its environment and the memories attending that environment.

Richard Wagner conducted the Ninth in ceremonial dedication of the cornerstone of the Bayreuth Theater in 1872. The great composer had at last found a capital for his realm, in a new Germany triumphant in unprecedented military glory and infinite in her impatient expectations of a future that would dare deny her nothing.

Furtwängler conducted the Ninth as these records have it, in ceremonial rededication of the Wagner theater when the Festivals were resumed in 1951. The intoxication of German hope, at this performance, was another dead thing rotting under the ruins ingeniously contrived by the most preposterous of demagogues.

Furtwängler in his way had opposed the demagogue; and while he revived Wagner's house, the knowledge must have been strong within him that Wagner's line was tainted with a fawning on the scurvy contriver of Germany's devastation. He used the Ninth Symphony to cleanse the premises. He enlisted the cosmic evangelist — but a German — Beethoven, in a service of purification.

If the Ninth Symphony as Furtwängler has molded it is considered apart from his attribution of it to devout penitential recommencement, it will excite an angered impatience fifty times justified. A special emotional receptivity must be ready for it, founded on a knowledge of events remote from music. That is a lot for a conductor to ask. Once in a while it may be asked with propriety.

With what skill and patience can be imagined, Furtwängler has transformed the

KESSLER, BERLIN

Wilhelm Furtwängler

fierce conflict of the first movement into a confession and an appeal, the storminess organized into a rebuke of bitterness and an exhortation to forgive. Inflection is softened, the proportions of the essential notes in the essential phrases are altered, the tempos are crawled (to be suddenly speeded in affirmations), and terminal notes are held in long suspension.

The Scherzo in complete duration matches that in many other versions, but the impression here is of speed, because it starts fast, and in its many transformations repeatedly alters pace. Although forceful and animated, the scowl is removed from this movement with the breathless urgency, in favor of more equable pleasure, an effect obtained by mellowing the distribution of orchestral voices.

The slow movement is a long, long, long benediction. It is almost incredible that music can be dragged so and retain so serene a beauty. It is hard to give too much praise to the wonderful violins that have kept the line even, even when stretched to the limit before breaking. Furtwängler perverts the pace, have no doubt of it; and makes of the perversion a spellbinding bliss.

When the chorus enters with the clarifying word, one reviewer finds the spell broken. The eccentricities of tempo no longer bring magic with them. Instead they seem indubitably eccentricities. The tenor's *alla marcia*, at its best solid determination becoming an ecstasy of resolve, is a flipper excitement here, and it is impossible not to feel a striving for novelty in the times and stresses repeatedly enforced upon the chorus, even if we grant that novelty was not sought, but instead a supremacy of jubilation that the Festspielhaus, and Germany, and mankind, have been cleansed. The truth probably is that the evangelism of Beethoven attained its own supremacy in this Finale, and is not to be improved by tampering.

The records were made during public performance but are little vexed by background noise, while the sonic production for the most part is commendable, here and there admirable. The distinction of the strings is constantly apparent and the wind timbres are well realized although not with the pungency of several other editions. The timpani, used both broadly and subtly by the conductor, are notably clean no matter their force. It is not acoustic values that will determine the reception of this album.

Musically not easy to defend, emotionally hard to resist, the Furtwängler projection is both revelation and obscuration. No one should buy it until he knows which it is for him, but it lays an obligation upon everyone to hear it.

C. G. BURKE

BEETHOVEN: *Symphony No. 9, in D minor, Op. 125*

Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, soprano; Elisabeth Höngen, contralto; Hans Hopf, tenor; Otto Edelmann, bass; Orchestra and Chorus of the Bayreuth Festival, 1951; Wilhelm Furtwängler, cond.
RCA VICTOR LM 6043. Two 12-in. $7.96.

whole score so well done — if for no other reason than that the Alleyn's School children manage the songs (in which, in the theater, the audience actually participates and which are not easy, especially the 5/4-meter introduction and the birdcalls of the third one) with an expertness that could not be hoped for from ticket buyers. The cast is quite elite, with Peter Pears and Trevor Anthony, as the sweep masters, in relatively small parts; they sing and read very well, but come a bit short of the mark when called on to "laugh horribly." As Juliet, the oldest of the Children, April Cantelo is winningly sweet, and Jennifer Vyvyan is a nice-seeming Rowan. As Miss Baggott, Nancy Thomas sings well enough but does not project so well as a personality. In the title role of Sammy, David Hemmings, who sang Miles in *The Turn of the Screw*, is in good form. The other children do well most of the time, in parts that are really harder; my pet of the lot is Michael Ingram; the rest sing well, but he sounds particularly like a small boy who is really terribly concerned that things turn out well. Britten conducts at breathless tempos, whisking the cast along much as the Red Queen whisked Alice. They cope, but Lord help any less accomplished cast whose conductor copies this pacing. The spoken lines have been changed, sometimes radically, to make unseen action clear. The engineering is good. Off-the-beaten track and amusing to hear, at least from time to time. J. H., JR.

BRUCKNER: *Quintet for Strings, in F; Intermezzo for String Quintet, Op. posth.*

Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet; Ferdinand Stangler, second viola.
VANGUARD VRS 480. 12-in. $4.98.

These two compositions are Anton Bruckner's only chamber works. The Intermezzo was originally intended as the second movement of the larger work; the Scherzo was substituted later. In this recording, the Intermezzo has ben placed immediately after the Scherzo, so the Quintet may be heard with either as its second movement. Historically the Quintet falls between the Fifth and Sixth Symphonies; musically, it sounds rather as if it, too, should have been a symphony. Nevertheless, it has some pleasantly intimate moments, especially in the Adagio. In too many places, however, it is heavy-footed. The Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet's performance and the Vanguard recording have more brightness than the competing version by the Koeckert Quartet for Decca. This is a work to be approached with caution by all save Brucknerites. P. A.

CHADWICK: *Symphonic Sketches*

Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra, Howard Hanson, cond.
MERCURY MG 50104. 12-in. $3.98.

The elder statesmen of modern American music are perhaps the most sinfully neglected composers in history. Hanson has done a great deal to remedy that situation, however, and he could scarcely have chosen anything better calculated to exhibit one of them in a favorable light than this ur-

BLACKSTONE

Howard Hanson remedies a neglect.

bane, vivacious, and thoroughly delectable work.

The four *Symphonic Sketches* are brief tone poems which add up to a symphony of considerable size and unfailing interest. The first movement, "Jubilee," is the best known of the four. David Hall hits it off perfectly when, in his jacket notes, he calls this "a spirited blend of the Brahms-Dvorak manner with Americanistic overtones." One does not have to look far for the influence that shaped the English horn solo over softly divided strings in the second movement, entitled "Noel," but this observation simply places the work and is not in any sense an adverse criticism of it. The third movement is a brilliant scherzo called "Hobgoblin." Perhaps the most remarkable sketch of all is the last, "A Vagrom Ballad," wherein Chadwick kicks over the traces of professorial respectability, caricatures Bach on the xylophone, and has himself a wonderful time. The performance is superb, and so is the recording. A. F.

COPLAND: *Music for the Theater; Music for Radio; Music for Movies*

M-G-M Chamber and Symphony Orchestras, Izler Solomon (in *Music for the Theater*) and Arthur Winograd, conds.
M-G-M E 3367. 12-in. $3.98.

Music for the Theater is one of Copland's earliest works, but it remains one of his best, and it is the outstanding piece in this collection. It has been recorded several times before, but never with such affectionate concern for one of its principal qualities — the manner in which Copland makes piquant chamber music out of the sound of a pit orchestra. Something of the same chamber music quality suffuses *Music for Movies*, but this miscellany (derived from several different film scores) lacks the unity of conception that distinguishes *Music for the Theater*. *Music for Radio*, which here makes its debut on disks, is a pleasant piece for full orchestra somewhat reminiscent of the Wild West music Copland wrote for his celebrated ballets *Billy the Kid* and *Rodeo*. The recorded sound of the symphony orchestra is markedly inferior to that of the chamber ensemble. A. F.

COUPERIN: *Trois Leçons de Ténèbres; Motet de Sainte Suzanne*

Pierrette Alarie, Basia Retchitzka, sopranos; Antoine Geoffroy-Dechaume, organ; Manuel Recassens, cello (in the *Leçons*). Alarie; Léopold Simoneau, tenor; Georges Abdoun, bass; Ensemble Vocal de Paris; Orchestre de Chamber Gérard Cartigny, Ernest Bour, cond. (in the motet).
LONDON DTL 93077. 12-in. $4.98.

In the first two Lessons the solo part is sung by Miss Alarie, whose voice is sweet and round and silvery; in addition she has that rare thing among modern singers, a real trill. The tempos are brisk, the line never sags, and justice is done to the combination of strength, sensitivity, and pathos that characterizes these fine works. In the third Lesson, Miss Alarie is joined by Miss Retchitzka, whose voice is not quite as pure, flexible, or secure. Here the tempos are a little too snappy; it seems to me that the poignancy of this expressive work is better brought out in the Haydn Society recording. The motet is a more cheerful and open composition, happily affirmative in character. The soloists here are somewhat stronger than those in the Oiseau-Lyre version of this work, but the chorus there is firmer and clearer. Clean and spacious recording. N. B.

DEBUSSY: *Le Martyre de Saint-Sébastien*

Claudine Collart, soprano; Janine Collard, mezzo-soprano; Christiane Gayraud, mezzo-soprano; Choruses of Radiodiffusion Française; Orchestra of the Théâtre des Champs-Elysées (Paris); André Falcon, narrator; D. E. Inghelbrecht, cond.
LONDON DTL 93041/42. Two 12-in. $9.96.

Phyllis Curtin, soprano; Florence Kopleff, contralto; Catherine Akos, contralto; New England Conservatory Chorus; Boston Symphony Orchestra; Charles Munch, conductor and narrator.
RCA VICTOR LM 2030. 12-in. $3.98.

There are three ways to present *Le Martyre*. The music can be heard in conjunction with D'Annunzio's play, which is how Debussy originally conceived it in 1911; or it can be heard as a kind of oratorio, with sections of the text voiced by a narrator, which is how André Caplet revised it in 1922, after Debussy's death; or it can be heard without any spoken words at all, as incidental music pure and simple. The play-and-music version has been recorded by Pathé-Marconi but the disks have been issued so far only in France. The Caplet-oratorio version is heard on the London (Ducretet-Thomson) LPs above. The incidental music *sans parler* has been conducted for records by Victor Allessandro (Allegro) and Ernest Ansermet (London). The new RCA record under Munch is an abbreviation of the Caplet approach; it has some spoken text, but in considerably more moderate quantity.

D'Annunzio's redolent French prose, with its self-consciously mystical aspirations, is not at all my cup of tea, but I must concede that it bolsters and gives continuity to Debussy's score. Heard alone, the music seems too episodic and disjointed. The words, whatever their literary value, help bind it together. It would have been nice if Messrs. London and

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RCA had provided a text-*cum*-translation with their records. They have not, and their niggardliness can either be defended as a compliment to the linguistic ability of the record-buying public or excoriated as an example of misdirected parsimony. I lean to the latter interpretation.

There is little to choose between Inghelbrecht's and Munch's interpretations. Both conduct this music with obvious sympathy. The Boston instrumentalists, however, play with more finesse, the RCA engineers have provided sound of greater glint and glow, and Munch delivers the spoken text with quiet eloquence and with a surprisingly adept sense of timing — making a far better job of it than André Falcon, of the Comédie-Française, whose overstated histrionics become more than a little wearing. All told, Victor's is the preferable version of this work, whose appeal increases the more it is heard. R. G.

DVORAK: *Symphony No. 5, in E minor ("From the New World"), Op. 95*

RIAS Symphony Orchestra, Ferenc Fricsay, cond.
DECCA DL 9845. 12-in. $3.98.

Fricsay is usually such a dependable conductor that this curiously uneven reading of the popular *New World* comes as something of a surprise. I judge him to be much attached to this score, as attested by his treatment of the first two movements; in both he seems reluctant to let the music move along its natural course, holding on to phrases, or slowing them down, to an excessive degree. Oddly enough, the reverse procedure is in operation in the scherzo and the finale, where things are hurried along in very quick tempo. The result is a disappointing, unbalanced performance. The now defunct RIAS Orchestra of Berlin responds well to the conductor's every fancy; throughout, the playing is exceptionally good, particularly in the strings. Better than average Decca sound, especially for a recording which was probably made at least two years ago. J. F. I.

DVORAK: *Symphony No. 5, in E minor ("From the New World"), Op. 95*

Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond.
COLUMBIA ML 5115. 12-in. $3.98.

Symphony of the Air, playing without conductor.
12-in. (Available only by $12.00 subscription to The Symphony Foundation of America, Inc., Room 1101, Carnegie Hall, New York, N. Y.)

These two disks, I'm afraid, demonstrate the value and necessity of a conductor. As a promotion stunt the Symphony of the Air (formerly the NBC Symphony) recorded the *New World* without a conductor. The general spirit of Arturo Toscanini's direction may still be heard, but the necessity for precision of attack and the absence of a guiding hand have given this performance a certain stiffness, with few retards and practically no warmth or subtlety of phrasing. It is the product of ninety-two minds instead of only one mind. There is also the matter of balance; here brasses and tympani often override other sections of the orchestra. The idea behind the record is a noble one: the promotion of the orchestra and its ideals. As a musical souvenir of a valiant body of men trying desperately to survive (and, thus far, succeeding quite well), it is heartily recommended.

Ormandy presents the symphony in a warm, admirably thought-out interpretation, ravishingly performed. Attention must be called, however, to an unusual flaw in the processing of the recording. Under the opening English horn solo of the second movement can be heard the faint echo of the closing measures of the first movement. There must have been some sort of a leak in the tape during the transfer to disks. The matter has been called to Columbia's attention, and undoubtedly will be rectified in future pressings, but look out for this spot. P. A.

(Dissent) —— Harold Schonberg has voiced the opinion that Dvorak was at his very best when writing in folk meters, and I agree. This facility extended into dealings with folk meters other than Slavonic (just as Beethoven was able effortlessly to adopt an Irish idiom), and one result is the *New World* Symphony. The melodic idiom here is very largely and truly American (critics who dispute this, as it has been lately fashionable to do, I suspect of not knowing enough American folk music to recognize it when they meet it; for instance, I have never known any of them to comment on the patent kinship of the mid-portion of the scherzo to sundry American sleighing songs) and truly folk. Of such music, the best performances may be those incorporating (1) the most rhythmic spirit, and (2) the least arbitrary interpretative control. This is what we find in the Symphony of the Air version of the *New World*, and what to my taste makes it the most desirable version available. There is a little metronomic pacing at the start of the first and last movements, but elsewhere the co-operative rhythmic spirit makes up for the lack of a conductor, and the absence of a conductor guarantees an absence of unwanted distinguishing interpretative touches. The

Ormandy: admirably thoughtful.

recording was made at an actual concert performance, apparently, which may account for the microphoning, which is closer-to than David Sarser, who engineered it, usually attempts. The only ill effect of this is that the violins sizzle a bit in some passages; otherwise this is an exemplary and extremely exciting orchestral recording, of the kind that tempts the listener to play it as loud as his equipment will permit. J. M. C.

FRANCK: *Grande pièce symphonique, Op. 17; Final, Op. 21; Prière, Op. 20*

Jean Langlais, organ (St. Clotilde, Paris).
LONDON DTL 93071. 12-in. $4.98.

The principal attraction of this record *is* the instrument on which the music was performed — the same organ that Franck himself used. This lends an atmosphere of authenticity to the altogether commendable performances by Langlais of three of Franck's *Six Pièces pour Orgue, Opp. 16-21*, his first important organ works. If there is any heaviness in portions of the end movements of the *Grande Pièce Symphonique*, a veritable three-movement symphony for organ, or in the *Final*, it may be attributed to the acoustics of the church. Emphasis in the recording is on the lower and middle registers, but there are ample highs. Altogether, a reverent tribute to a reverent composer. P. A.

FRANCK: *Psyché*
†Saint-Saëns: *Carnival of the Animals*

Orchestre Symphonique da la Radiodiffusion Nationale Belge, Franz André, cond. (Jeanne Visele and Frank Vanbulck, pianists, in the Saint-Saëns).
TELEFUNKEN LGX 66028. 12-in. $4.98.

Franz André seems to be one of those conductors who believe in letting music speak for itself, presenting it unadorned, clear, and forthright. This he does in the two works recorded here. True, he allows a certain degree of interpretative poetry in the Franck — the usual four-movement suite extracted from the complete work — but he is too straightforward and too much in a hurry in the final movement, *Psyché and Eros*. I still prefer Van Beinum's reading of the suite for London or, if you want the full work, Van Otterloo's for Epic. As for the amusing Saint-Saëns parody, one could ask for nothing better — fine tonal solidity and plenty of humor. Good, clean reproduction too. P. A.

GESENWAY: *Four Squares of Philadelphia* — See Persichetti: *Symphony No. 4.*

GOTTSCHALK: *Piano Music*

The Banjo and other Creole Ballads; Cuban Dances; Negro Songs; Caprices.

Eugene List, piano.
VANGUARD VRS 485. 12-in. $4.98.

Louis Moreau Gottschalk is a figure who looms large in every history of American music. In modern terms, he was a cross between Horowitz and Liberace, as my friend R. H. Hagan has put it. He was one of the most brilliant piano virtuosos of the nineteenth-century, and his appeal to the ladies was at least as great as Liszt's. His music sounds today like a popularization of Chopin; actually it represents the general salon style of which Chopin is a refinement; but we have forgotten all about Chopin's background, and so when music of this kind is brought to

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Mr. Slatkin's cup of tea

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Orchestra conducted by Carlo-Maria Giulini (Angel 35210). [illegible] work) [illegible] by [illegible].

our attention we tend to think of it wrong end to.

Following the lead of Chopin, Gottschalk based piano pieces on the folk themes of his native New Orleans, and he is said to be the first composer in history to make use of American folk material in the larger forms. This is an important record because it is the first to present a collection of Gottschalk's piano pieces in their original versions; up to now one could hear this music on records only in Hershey Kay's orchestral transcription for the ballet *Cakewalk*. At least one of these pieces, *The Banjo*, is a little masterpiece; it is as fine as anything that has ever been done in that vein, and as one hears Eugene List play it with such brilliance and fire as he displays here, one begins to wonder if Debussy's *Golliwogg's Cakewalk* isn't indebted to it.

List provides other folklore pieces of Gottschalk, including the famous *Bamboula*, *La Savane* (which uses the tune of *Skip to My Lou*), *Le Bananier*, the *Souvenir de Porto Rico*, and *Ojos Criollos*. He also gives us Gottschalk's most celebrated concert pieces in the European tradition: *The Dying Poet*, *The Maiden's Blush*, and *The Last Hope*. For all their daredness, obviousness, and sentimentality, these things are still full of music, and the vitality of a very remarkable spirit shines through them. This is by no means a tongue-in-cheek excursion into Americana; old Gottschalk is worth all the skill and insight which List and Vanguard's recording engineers have lavished on him.

I should like to add a comment to the excellent jacket notes by List and Sidney Finkelstein. It is that Gottschalk's pianistic figuration, like the treatment of the theme of *The Banjo* in rapidly repeated notes in octaves high in the right hand, directly predicts the figuration which is characteristic of the mechanical pianos of the 1890s and early 1900s. There is a continuous great tradition here to which American musicologists might very well pay some heed. A. F.

HANDEL: *Concertos for Organ and Orchestra: No. 2, in B-flat, Op. 4, No. 2; No. 5, in F, Op. 4, No. 5; No. 7, in B-flat, Op. 7, No. 1; No. 11, in G minor, Op. 7, No. 5*

Lawrence Moe, organ; orchestra, Klaus Liepmann, cond.
UNICORN 1032. 12-in. $3.98.

Slipping into the catalogue as shyly as any disk bearing Handel can, this may well prove to be a sleeper. Hall acoustics have not often permitted a suavity of string tone nearly so caressing as that here, and the bright little organ in the Saarinen-designed chapel at M. I. T. has been caught expertly with its tinseled colors in engaging contrast with the smooth hues of the band. Mr. Moe communicates enjoyment with his lively kind of scholarship, and the orchestra gives out a tonal glow very uncommon from so small a group. Still, other players have been as persuasive in this music — other recording supervisors have not. C. G. B.

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Solomon's Glory — and Solomon's Love and Landscapes, Too

COMPOSED when Handel was sixty-three and in the fullness of his powers, *Solomon* even more than most long oratorios on a religious theme has been set to a sprawling text. But no more than the opera *Boris Godunov* has it been silenced by the episodic nature of its book, and criticism probably would be satisfied if less pretentious, more accurate, titles were substituted: *Some Exciting Events in Old Muscovy (Judaea) under Czar Boris (King Solomon)*. Admittedly these are a little wanting in flame, but they are oh, so accurate.

Sir Thomas Beecham, presumably the world's foremost exponent of this oratorio, who years ago recorded parts of it for Columbia, and who is a very astute fellow knowing in theatrical ways, is of course aware that a pristine *Solomon* is too long and too slow and dramatically too obscure for widespread appeal; and having examined its episodes and noted that almost any could be cut out without damage to dramatic continuity, he has worked happily at re-establishing the oratorio in a form palatable to modern tastes.

Beecham: exponent of oratorio.

He will be damned for his emendations by the diehards of "authenticity," as Rimsky-Korsakov is damned for smoothing *Boris* for production; and perhaps an integral *Solomon*, unchanged where it is possible not to change it, would more truly satisfy higher tastes. We have no way of knowing. We have these records, and they give a happy experience.

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Album, notes (by Sir T. B.), and text are supplied with the factory-sealed edition.

C. G. BURKE

HANDEL: *Solomon*

Elsie Morison and Lois Marshall, sopranos, Alexander Young, tenor, and John Cameron, baritone; Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and Beecham Choral Society, Sir Thomas Beecham, cond.
ANGEL 3546. Two 12-in. $9.98 (or $6.96).

Mr. Slatkin's cup of tea

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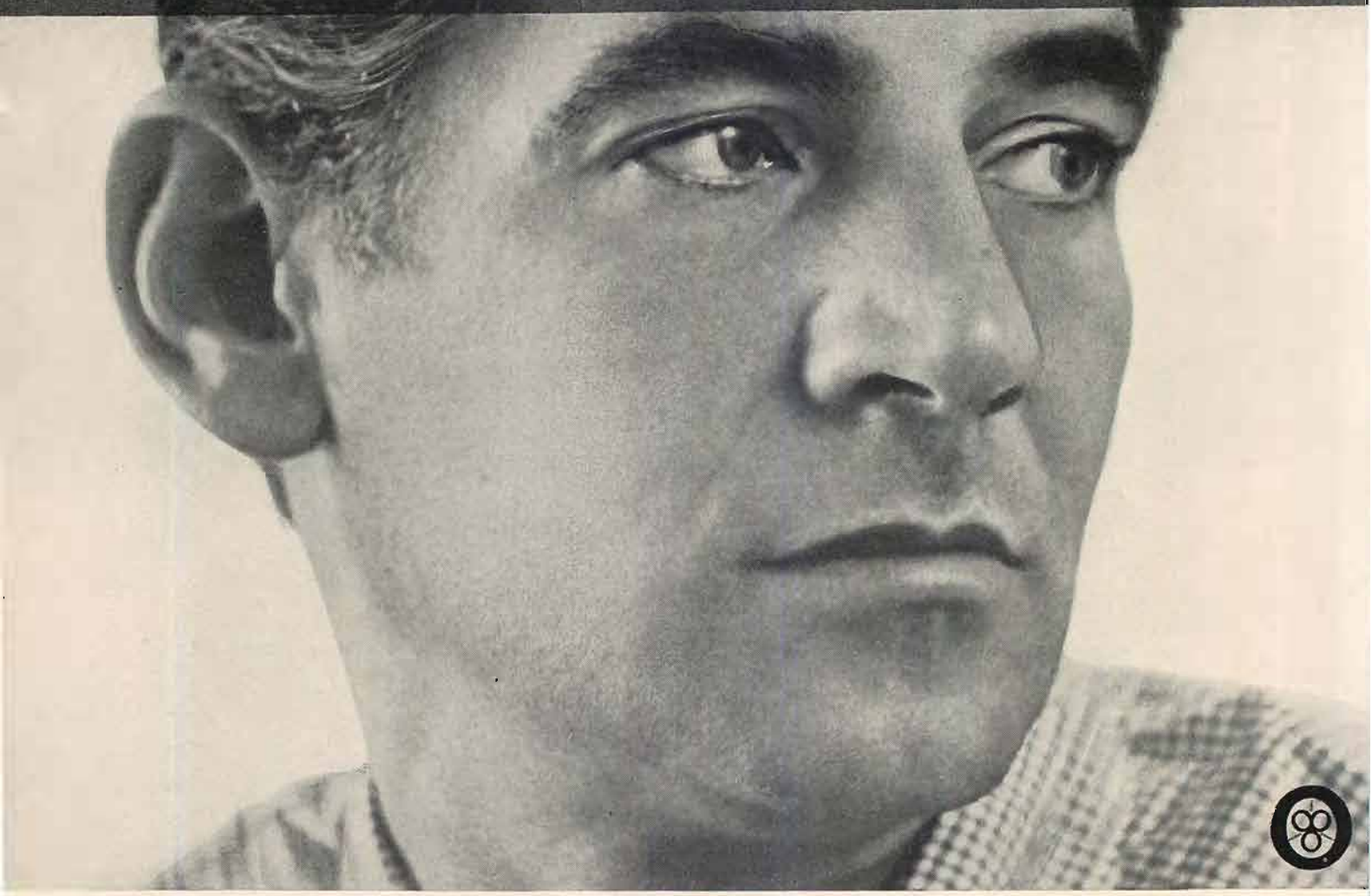

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THE SOUND OF GENIUS IS ON **COLUMBIA RECORDS**

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NATHAN BRODER CHOOSES BASIC INSTRUMENTAL WORKS OF VIVALDI AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES

THE three-quarters of a century from about 1675 to about 1750 saw a remarkable flowering of instrumental ensemble music in Italy. Important developments took place in various parts of the peninsula. Rome, Naples, Bologna, and Venice became centers of experimentation. Composers in those cities explored, among other things, the exciting possibilities offered by the discovery of the effectiveness of juxtaposing one or more instruments against a larger group of instruments. Out of this ferment came the *concerto grosso*, the double concerto, the violin concerto, and the concerto for other solo instruments — the cello, the oboe, the bassoon, the viola d'amore, even the trumpet. The works of the great masters of this period, particularly those of Corelli, and in some instances the composers themselves crossed the borders of Italy, to France, to Germany, to England. Handel knew some of this music. So did Bach, who made a close study of it, and profited thereby.

Until recently, this rich and abundant period was represented in the record catalogues only by a few scattered pieces by Corelli and Vivaldi. In the last three or four years, however, there has been a great spurt of interest in this music, with the result that there are enough recordings available now to make the task of choosing only ten of the outstanding ones rather complicated.

From the standpoint of musical values, the most important Italian composers of instrumental music in the period we are dealing with are Arcangelo Corelli (1653-1713) and Antonio Vivaldi (c. 1675-1741). Corelli was a violinist who spent some years as chief musician in the palace of Cardinal Ottoboni at Rome. He was not a prolific composer, and published only six groups of works. But they are all beautifully polished pieces, noble and eloquent music; their mellow sweetness makes it easy to understand the enormous popularity they achieved in their day. They still wear well. Three of the groups are available in good performances — the Twelve Church Sonatas, Op. 3, and Twelve Chamber Sonatas, Op. 4 (all in Vox DL 163), and the Twelve Concerti Grossi, Op. 6. Of the two available recordings of the complete Op. 6, the Westminster (WN 3301) is the superior. Either of these albums would make an excellent introduction to Corelli. If a single disk is preferred, the five concertos from Op. 6 played by the Societa Corelli on RCA Victor LM 1776 are recommended.

Vivaldi is represented on records far more generously than any of his Italian contemporaries — and yet not nearly generously enough. It will be remembered that he was not only a traveling virtuoso but was for years music director of a girls' conservatory in Venice. There he had many sorts of instruments at his disposal and trained their players into a highly competent orchestra whose fame attracted foreign visitors. Like Haydn in Eszterháza, he could try out whatever he wrote for it. He left more than 400 instrumental concertos alone. To judge by those available on disks, his batting average was high; more recordings from the store of his unfamiliar works would be welcome. Already in the catalogues are four collective works: *L'Estro armonico*, Op. 3 (Vox PL 7423); *La Stravaganza*, Op. 4 (Vox DL 103); *Il Cimento dell 'Armonia e dell 'Invenzione*, Op. 8 (Vox DL 173); and *La Cetra*, Op. 9 (Vox DL 203). They are all concertos for one or more violins with string orchestra. All of them display their composer's remarkable melodic inventiveness, his harmonic boldness, and his occasional emotional profundity. Listeners who are unfamiliar with Vivaldi might wish to begin with *Il Cimento*, which includes the famous group of four concertos known as *The Seasons*. But any one of the four sets — the performances are all acceptable or better — would make a good beginning.

Most popular of all of Vivaldi's concertos, during his lifetime as well as today, is of course *The Seasons*. Several excellent performances of this charming work are available on single disks. My own choice for all-around merit is that by the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Carlo-Maria Giulini (Angel 35216). Next, one might choose one or more of the four disks of Vivaldi concertos recorded by the Virtuosi di Roma on Decca (Vol. 1: DL 9575; Vol. 2: DL 9679; Vol. 3: DL 9684; Vol. 4: DL 9729 — this last includes three concertos from *L'Estro armonico*). Each disk contains four nicely assorted works, and all are performed with the warmth and polish characteristic of this fine ensemble. A third Vivaldi single that belongs in a basic list is the group of five first-class concertos very well played by an ensemble under Louis de Froment on Oiseau-Lyre OL 50073.

Tomaso Albinoni (1674-1745), another Venetian master, was not only a skillful violinist but also a singer. Very little is known of the some forty operas that he wrote, but his instrumental music shows him to have been a composer of considerable attainments. Of his Twelve Concerti, Op. 9 (Vox DL 193), four are for solo violin, four for a solo oboe, and four for two oboes — all with string orchestra. The slow movements are rather lightweight, but the fast ones have an appealing mellifluousness and a sunny grace. To listeners who would prefer to sample Albinoni on a single disk rather than in an album, I can recommend the two orchestral concertos from his Op. 5 and the four oboe concertos from his Op. 7 on Oiseau-Lyre OL 50041. While the oboe concertos are not as highly developed as those in his Op. 9, all of these works display the same vivacity and smooth elegance as the later ones.

Of about the same age as Corelli but active mostly in Bologna was Giuseppe Torelli (c. 1650-1708). He is important historically because his Twelve Concerti, Op. 8, include perhaps the earliest violin concertos ever written; and the same set is said to contain the first *concerti grossi* ever published (Corelli's Op. 6 may have been written earlier but was published later). Of the two available recordings of the complete Op. 8, the Vox (DL 113) is preferred. Five of these concertos are very nicely performed by I Musici on a single Epic disk (LC 3217).

Delightful examples of the late-baroque *concerto grosso* are the Six Concertini for strings attributed to Giovanni Battista Pergolesi (1710-1736). Whether they were actually written by that Neapolitan composer is doubtful; but their lively and often gay fast movements, and slow sections that sometimes probe deeply, still give much pleasure (Angel 3538B, together with a violin concerto and a sonata for cello and continuo definitely by Pergolesi).

One of the most interesting of the Italian composers of this period is the teacher of Pergolesi (and of many other celebrated composers of the time), Francesco Durante (1684-1755). A Neapolitan, he was famous mostly for his church music, but if the few available examples of his instrumental music are representative of his work in that field, we ought to have more of it. A good sample is the Divertimento, in F minor, performed by a chamber orchestra conducted by Gerard Cartigny on London DTL 93044. This disk also contains one of the six concertini by Pergolesi and a concerto for two cellos by Vivaldi (the latter, however, is better performed in Decca's Vol. 3.) Or you might try the two *concerti grossi* by Durante played by the Scarlatti Orchestra under Thomas Schippers on Angel 35335, along with a masterly Sinfonia by Vivaldi, a *concerto grosso* by him, and an overture by Antonio Salieri (who is, of course, of a later period).

Finally, mention should be made of one of the important links in the chain of great Italian violinist-composers that stretched from Corelli to Paganini. This link is Pietro Locatelli (1693-1764), who studied with Corelli in Rome and then settled in Amsterdam. He is represented by two concertos in an unusually engrossing group of four on Haydn Society HSL 147. The group comprises, in addition to the very fine work written by Vivaldi for the Dresden Orchestra and a cleverly constructed trumpet concerto by Torelli, a highly developed violin concerto by Locatelli and the same composer's programmatic orchestral work, *The Plaint of Ariadne*.

our attention we tend to think of it wrong end to.

Following the lead of Chopin, Gottschalk based piano pieces on the folk themes of his native New Orleans, and he is said to be the first composer in history to make use of American folk material in the larger forms. This is an important record because it is the first to present a collection of Gottschalk's piano pieces in their original versions; up to now one could hear this music on records only in Hershey Kay's orchestral transcription for the ballet *Cakewalk*. At least one of these pieces, *The Banjo*, is a little masterpiece; it is as fine as anything that has ever been done in that vein, and as one hears Eugene List play it with such brilliance and fire as he displays here, one begins to wonder if Debussy's *Golliwogg's Cakewalk* isn't indebted to it.

List provides other folklore pieces of Gottschalk, including the famous *Bamboula*, *La Savane* (which uses the tune of *Skip to My Lou*), *Le Bananier*, the *Souvenir de Porto Rico*, and *Ojos Criollos*. He also gives us Gottschalk's most celebrated concert pieces in the European tradition: *The Dying Poet*, *The Maiden's Blush*, and *The Last Hope*. For all their datedness, obviousness, and sentimentality, these things are still full of music, and the vitality of a very remarkable spirit shines through them. This is by no means a tongue-in-cheek excursion into Americana; old Gottschalk is worth all the skill and insight which List and Vanguard's recording engineers have lavished on him.

I should like to add a comment to the excellent jacket notes by List and Sidney Finkelstein. It is that Gottschalk's pianistic figuration, like the treatment of the theme of *The Banjo* in rapidly repeated notes in octaves high in the right hand, directly predicts the figuration which is characteristic of the mechanical pianos of the 1890s and early 1900s. There is a continuous great tradition here to which American musicologists might very well pay some heed. A. F.

HANDEL: *Concertos for Organ and Orchestra: No. 2, in B-flat, Op. 4, No. 2; No. 5, in F, Op. 4, No. 5; No. 7, in B-flat, Op. 7, No. 1; No. 11, in G minor, Op. 7, No. 5*

Lawrence Moe, organ; orchestra, Klaus Liepmann, cond.
UNICORN 1032. 12-in. $3.98.

Slipping into the catalogue as shyly as any disk bearing Handel can, this may well prove to be a sleeper. Hall acoustics have not often permitted a suavity of string tone nearly so caressing as that here, and the bright little organ in the Saarinen-designed chapel at M. I. T. has been caught experrly with its tinseled colors in engaging contrast with the smooth hues of the band. Mr. Moe communicates enjoyment with his lively kind of scholarship, and the orchestra gives out a tonal glow very uncommon from so small a group. Still, other players have been as persuasive in this music — other recording supervisors have not. C. G. B.

Continued on page 86

Solomon's Glory — and Solomon's Love and Landscapes, Too

COMPOSED when Handel was sixty-three and in the fullness of his powers, *Solomon* even more than most long oratorios on a religious theme has been set to a sprawling text. But no more than the opera *Boris Godunov* has it been silenced by the episodic nature of its book, and criticism probably would be satisfied if less pretentious, more accurate, titles were substituted: *Some Exciting Events in Old Muscovy (Judaea) under Czar Boris (King Solomon)*. Admittedly these are a little wanting in flame, but they are oh, so accurate.

Sir Thomas Beecham, presumably the world's foremost exponent of this oratorio, who years ago recorded parts of it for Columbia, and who is a very astute fellow knowing in theatrical ways, is of course aware that a pristine *Solomon* is too long and too slow and dramatically too obscure for widespread appeal; and having examined its episodes and noted that almost any could be cut out without damage to dramatic continuity, he has worked happily at re-establishing the oratorio in a form palatable to modern tastes.

Beecham: exponent of oratorio.

He will be damned for his emendations by the diehards of "authenticity," as Rimsky-Korsakov is damned for smoothing *Boris* for production; and perhaps an integral *Solomon*, unchanged where it is possible not to change it, would more truly satisfy higher tastes. We have no way of knowing. We have these records, and they give a happy experience.

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C. G. BURKE

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ANGEL 3546. Two 12-in. $9.98 (or $6.96).

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Agi Jambor **8344**

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MOZART: *CONCERTOS Nos. 12 and 14*
Denis Matthews; Festival Orchestra; Rudolf Schwarz, conductor **18015**

SCHUMANN: *DAVIDSBÜNDLER DANCES SYMPHONIC ETUDES,* Rudolf Firkusny **8337**

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Georges Solchany **18011**

GERSHWIN: *RHAPSODY IN BLUE (& AN AMERICAN IN PARIS)* Leonard Pennario; Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra; Felix Slatkin, conductor **8343**

BACH: *CHROMATIC FANTASY AND FUGUE, AND OTHER WORKS,* Agi Jambor **8348**

BEETHOVEN: *CONCERTO No. 3*
Ventsislav Yankoff; N.W.D.R. Orchestra; Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt, conductor **18002**

LECUONA: *ANDALUCIA SUITE*
ALBENIZ: *CANTOS DE ESPANA*
Leonard Pennario **8319**

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HAYDN: *Symphony, in B-flat*
†Michael Haydn: *Concerto for Clavier, Viola, and Orchestra, in C*

Vienna Orchestral Society (with Marjorie Mitchell, piano, and Paul Angerer, viola, in the Concerto), F. Charles Adler, cond.
UNICORN 1019. 12-in. $3.98.

Both are early works of the Haydn brothers, both recorded for the first time. The symphony, with its horn and oboe parts removed, was published as the fifth quartet of Haydn's Op. 1. It has a mild appeal and was worth recording. The performance is bald but satisfactory, and the close seizure of sound of the small orchestra gives reproduction of bluff vitality. The Haydn to whom we must give an initial surpasses his great brother here in distinction of ideas but drives them beyond their capacity for exploitation. In full transition from expiring baroque to incipient rococo, the Concerto in C (originally for organ or harpsichord instead of the piano used) is too long by a third. The difficult viola part is conscientiously handled by a rather dry instrument, and the direction is carefully sober. Close, hard, and effective sound. C. G. B.

HAYDN, Michael: *Concerto for Clavier, Viola, and Orchestra, in C* — See Haydn: *Symphony, in B-flat.*

HINDEMITH: *Nobilissima Visione; Symphonic Metamorphosis on Themes by Carl Maria von Weber*

Hamburg Philharmonic Orchestra, Joseph Keilberth, cond.
TELEFUNKEN LGX 66055. 12-in. $4.98.

A superb recording which, on its two faces, presents two different faces of Hindemith. His mystical and medieval side inspires *Nobilissima Visione* (the score for a ballet about St. Francis of Assisi), while his didactic, academic, manipulative side is to the fore in the *Metamorphosis*. Unfortunately, both these works have been recorded several times before, and pre-existing recorded interpretations are superior to Keilberth's. For my taste, at least, the best *Nobilissima Visione* is the one by Klemperer on Angel and the best *Metamorphosis* is the one by Hindemith himself on Decca. A. F.

INDY: *Jour d'été à la montagne, Op. 61; Symphonie sur un chant montagnard français, Op. 25*

Orchestre Radio-Symphonique (Paris), Ernest Bour, cond. (in *Jour d'été*); Daniel Wayenberg, piano; Orchestre du Théâtre des Champs-Elysées, Ernest Bour, cond. (in the *Symphonie*).
LONDON DTL 93069. 12-in. $4.98.

This is the first LP recording of *Jour d'été à la montagne*, a work in which d'Indy, despite his musical antagonism to Debussy, almost forsakes the Franckian school for the impressionist camp. It may be heresy so to say, but there is not a little in the atmosphere of its three movements — *Dawn, Day,* and *Evening* — that reminds me of portions of Debussy's *Iberia*. Bour's readings of this and the familiar — and more likable — *Symphony on a French Mountain Air* are forceful and perceptive; the typically French orchestral sound is apropos, and Daniel Wayenberg does expertly with the piano solo in the latter work. P. A.

McPHEE: *Concerto for Piano and Wind Octet* — See Sessions: *Quartet No. 2.*

MOZART: *Adagio and Fugue in C minor, K. 546; Fantasy and Fugue in F minor, K. 608* — See Beethoven: *Grosse Fuge, in B-flat, Op. 133.*

MOZART: *Sonatas for Organ and Orchestra* (complete)

Richard Ellsasser, organ; Hamburg Chamber Orchestra, Arthur Winograd, cond.
M-G-M E 3363/64. Two 12-in. $3.98 each.

Fourteen of these blandly secular interludes which Mozart composed for the Salzburg Cathedral are scored for organ and strings. Nos. 12, 14, and 16 are enriched by lively wind parts. This is the first recording of all seventeen, whose composition extended over thirteen years of Mozart's life. The hearer will be struck here by the modest role taken by the young organist noted for his brilliance, content to coalesce with the orchestra as if his instrument were no more than a part of the ensemble. He supplies a pungent color and a conversational commentary without pointing direction or implying opposition.

In general the small orchestra is led with spirit and plays brightly, finesse being supplied by the organist. Unluckily, Mr. Winograd, upon whose work with string orchestras the M-G-M engineers had previously bestowed a sound of compelling strength and realism, has chanced upon a day or place or other circumstances of tetchy acoustics, and his violins remain a little acid in reproduction even after sympathetic adjustment of a sensitive reproducer.

The seventeen little pieces last a minute more than an hour, and could have been fitted in easy comfort within three sides instead of the four in fact occupied. Balancing this is the convenience of a chronological ordination, especially commendable in view of the temptation to endow the first record with more appeal than it has, by arbitrarily removing some of the best sonatas — which are the later ones — from their natural place on the second disk, and putting them as bait on the first. C. G. B.

MOZART: *Symphonies: No. 39, in E-flat, K. 543; No. 41, in C ("Jupiter"), K. 551*

New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra, Bruno Walter, cond.
COLUMBIA ML 5014. 12-in. $3.98.

This *Jupiter* is charged with grief. The hearer suspects that the conductor, a highly charged man, led under the domination of knowledge that 1956 is Mozart's year, and that after the *Jupiter* there were no more symphonies from that incalculable mind. Every phrase that can be turned towards sorrow is helped in that direction, and the held note gives a lament. Grief has not been called inherent in this grand symphony, but no one tries to resist its propriety here, where it is unmistakable but nowhere an obstacle to the customary course of the music, in tempo and external shape not essentially different from the splendid version recorded by Dr. Walter years ago, which displays no grief.

Symphony No. 39, that extraordinary work which can be a bullet or a bouquet according to its playing, is diverted from commitment to either by its first movement in this version, alternating lags and little sped-up gushes, as if its mainspring were failing and being rewound. This seems unnecessarily unattractive, and the music as a whole is not redeemed by the splendid vigor of the Minuet and Finale.

The ability with which the New York Philharmonic responds to nonroutine directions, in both works, ought to arouse particular admiration.

Comprehensive sound, strong in the bass and calculated to project every high instrument out of the mass. Beneficial to detail, and indeed in its power very effective, the very abundance of detail necessarily involves some harshness in the *tuttis*. At several points the seeped "echo" is an obtrusive blemish; but better freckled power than lily-white impotence.

The *Jupiter* is not one that may be ignored. C. G. B.

MOZART: *Symphony No. 40, in G minor, K. 550* — See Beethoven: *Symphony No. 5, in C minor, Op. 67.*

OFFENBACH: *Offenbach in America*

Boston "Pops" Orchestra, Arthur Fiedler, cond.
RCA VICTOR LM 1990. 12-in. $3.98.

Possibly the greatest compliment ever paid to Offenbach's genius as a composer of light music came, oddly enough, from Richard Wagner. Writing to Felix Mottl in 1882, two years after Offenbach's death, Wagner expressed the opinion that "Offenbach could have been a Mozart." While Wagner had little cause to like Offenbach, who had so often satirized his music, he may have been overgenerous in this appraisal of his critic. It seems to me that Rossini was much nearer the mark in dubbing the composer "The Mozart of the Champs Elysées." The celebration of the bicentenary of Mozart's birth coincides with the eightieth anniversary of the Parisian Mozart's short, but enormously successful, visit to America. To commemorate the latter occasion, Victor offers this handsomely produced album of Offenbach music.

While some of the contents will be familiar to many listeners by way of *Gaité Parisienne*, most of the selections are considerably rarer. Two items have probably never been recorded before, the charming little ballet excerpt for cello and orchestra, *Musette*, and the lilting, almost Straussian waltz, *Les Belles Américaines*, probably composed in New York, as a tribute to the American girl, whom Offenbach found intriguing. A dashing galop from *Geneviève de Brabant* capers along, until suddenly, one hears phrases that surely served as the basis for *The Marine's Hymn*

Continued on page 88

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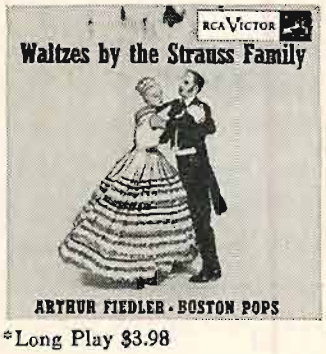

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("From the halls of Montezuma"), and it is a joy to hear the grand tunes from *The Grand Duchess of Gerolstein* set forth with such brilliance. My own favorite is the charming selection from Offenbach's wonderful score for *La Périchole*, a score that has Mozartean overtones and is full of truly delightful melodies.

Fiedler and the Boston "Pops" play these enchanting pieces with tremendous verve and finesse, and I would not hesitate to call this one of the best recordings this group has ever made. A lightish Victor sound is most appropriate to the occasion, and the record is highly recommended on all counts. Interesting liner notes by George R. Marek, and some amusing and pertinent caricatures by Alajalov add a certain fillip to the excellence of the album.

J. F. I.

OFFENBACH: *Gaîté Parisienne*

Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond.

COLUMBIA KL 5069. 12-in. $5.98.

You would hardly suspect from a hurried glance at the record sleeve or at its title, *The Pleasures of Paris*, that here is our old friend *Gaîté Parisienne* in its entirety. Not a cancan dancer adrons its cover, no lace, no frills, merely the Eiffel Tower standing starkly against a deep blue Parisian sky. And within the sleeve one finds Fred Grunfeld's fascinating booklet, with its pages of photographs, drawings, and sketches of figures (and what figures!) of the Paris of yesterday, so vividly recreated in Offenbach's gay music. Ormandy gives a refreshing and lively reading of the complete Manuel Rosenthal-arranged score. It seems to me to be even better than the abridged version by this orchestra, on Columbia CL 741, made about two years ago; it has more buoyancy, particularly in the frothier moments, and is much closer to the French style of playing this music. The orchestra instrumentalists appear to be thoroughly enjoying themselves, playing with wonderful spirit and *élan*. The sound is full of presence, not overrobust, and therefore entirely appropriate. This is one of Columbia's plushest packages, a cannily integrated mixture of eye and ear appeal, and is most highly recommended.

J. F. I.

PERSICHETTI: *Symphony No. 4*
†Gesensway: *Four Squares of Philadelphia*

Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, cond.

COLUMBIA ML 5108. 12-in. $3.98.

Continued on page 90

Die Kluge's Equivocal Fascination Expertly Displayed

SINCE the first impact here, a couple of years past, of his *Carmina Burana*, Carl Orff has drawn more and more attention, until now, with five titles on LP, he is by way of becoming almost a cult among those who pay attention at all to contemporary music. In a sense, this is odd, since Orff is one of the few composers with an exclusively theatrical output. The explanation, perhaps, is that although the *Trionfi — Carmina Burana*, *Catulli Carmina*, and *Trionfo di Afrodite* — are meant to be staged (and are staged, together or singly, in various German opera houses) they are not plotted and do not even have suggested scenarios. Thus the record listener can create his own imaginative *régie* for their brawling, tender, lascivious poetry.

Although *Die Kluge* relates to *Trionfi* musically, it has a plot — or, rather, a very specific scheme of action that the score is designed to support and that has to be imagined from stage directions when it cannot be seen. Like the other Orff theater pieces, *Die Kluge*'s only designation is an explanatory gloss of its title — *"Die Geschichte von dem König und der klugen Frau"* ("The story of the king and the wise woman"). Taken from a *Märchen* retold by the Grimms, it tells the story of a peasant who digs up a golden mortar and pestle, and is about to take it to the king when his daughter warns him not to — all the king will do is accuse him of stealing the vessel and have him locked up. As the piece begins, the peasant is sitting in prison bewailing his fate and moaning that he should have taken his daughter's advice. The king hears him, questions him, and demands to have the daughter brought. He asks her three riddles (much tougher than those in *Turandot*), and when she answers all correctly makes her his queen. But when she proves herself much cleverer than he in dealing with the great question of whether a donkey or a mule has given birth to a colt, he tells her to go; she, still cleverer, drugs his wine, then puts him in her trunk and takes him along. As her father remarks at the end, "So she found the pestle after all." But she tells her kidnapped king the real point: Her wisdom was no more than acting; "no one in this world can both be wise and love." As Orff has said, his concern in composing for the theater is solely with inner spir-

The Jailer and Three Vagabonds.

itual values. The listener is free to infer his own moral — if there is one.

This is told in a form that (insofar as it relates to conventional theater) is as much like *Singspiel* as anything — with long passages of spoken dialogue, especially for the three vagabonds who serve as a sort of chorus to the main story. But the music, when it comes, is purest Orff. In all basic ways very like that of *Carmina Burana* in its materials and usages, it makes a satisfactorily loud noise in spite of the absence of a chorus. The orchestra is of *Trionfi* size, with augmented winds and the typically Orffian battery of drums and special percussive instruments to give an almost *gamelan* or African effect in the rhythmic *ostinatos* on which the music is built — or over which the text is set forward. The treatment of the voices is much the same: The same sort of rapid *a tempo* declamation on single notes or simple triads; the same insistent repetition of words and groups of words over harmonically inert but rhythmically very vigorous figurations; the same coloration of the texture by manipulation of instrumental resources and by endlessly permutating metrics in the accompaniment; the same modality when something close to a lyric mood is called for. All in all, it is a score that ought to please those who admire the *Trionfi* for the music and not for the outspoken sophistication of some of the texts; how well they will cope with the spoken sections is, well, less sure.

The Angel performance is a completely expert and attractive one, and superbly recorded, although with not much aural sense of a stage and something occurring on it. In the theater, the wise woman of the title would seem to have long periods of just being on hand and looking enigmatic; but she also has somewhat to sing, including a lovely little lullaby as the king dozes off from the effects of his drugged wine, and Elisabeth Schwarzkopf does it all with lovely tone. As the King, Marcel Cordes is excellent in his projection of shifting tempers backed by not overmuch brains, and Rudolf Christ is easily as good as the indignant little man whose donkey's foal is assigned to muleparenthood by royal decree. In fact, the cast are consistently first-class all down the line, with more special credit due to Gottlob Frick as the Peasant and to Paul Kuen, Hermann Prey, and Gustav Neidlinger as the Vagabonds. Wolfgang Sawallisch conducts with firm control of the rhythms, and the Philharmonia players are in admirable form. Full text, with an excellent translation by William Mann, and good notes by Henry Pleasants. All told, a fascinating little work in its equivocal way and decidedly worth the hearing.

JAMES HINTON, JR.

ORFF: *Die Kluge*

Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (s), The Peasant's Daughter (*Die Kluge*); Rudolf Christ (t), The Man with the Donkey; Paul Kuen (t), First Vagabond; Marcel Cordes (b), The King; Hermann Prey (b), Second Vagabond; Gottlob Frick (bs), The Peasant; Benno Kusche (bs), The Man with the Mule; Georg Wieter (bs), The Jailer; Gustav Neidlinger (bs), Third Vagabond. Philharmonia Orchestra (London), Wolfgang Sawallisch, cond.

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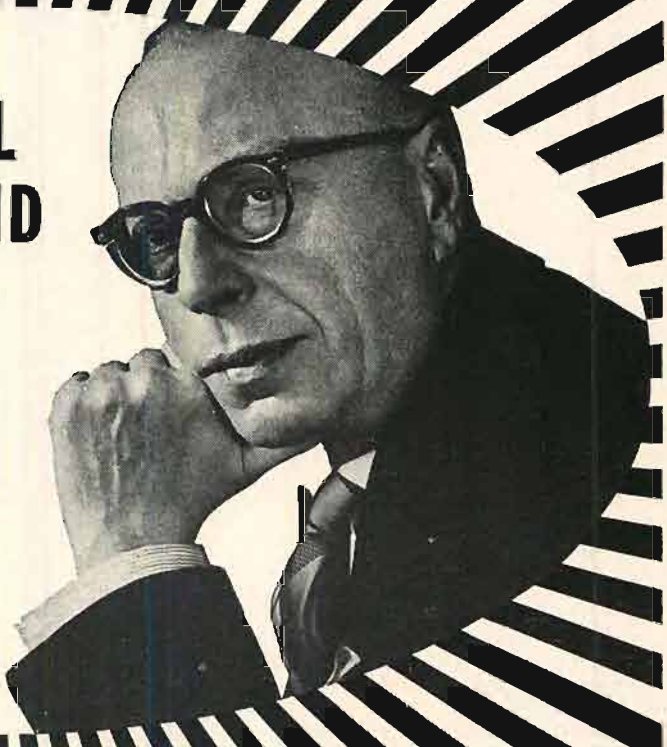

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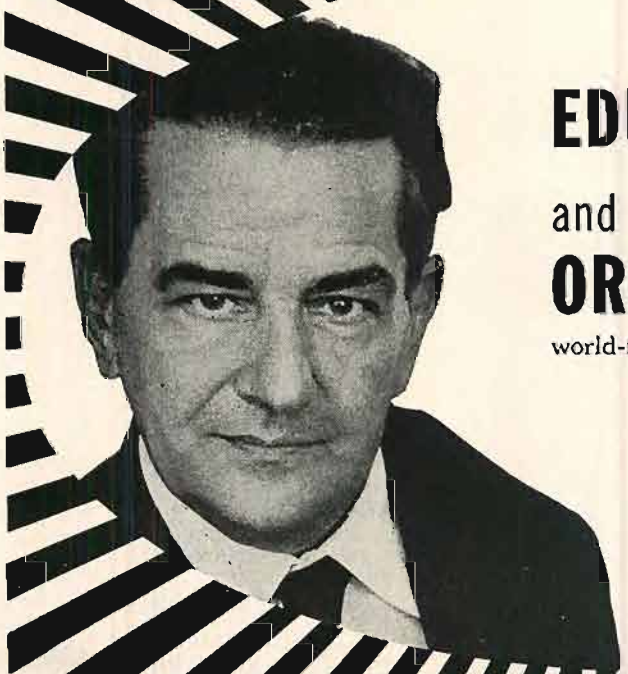

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Vincent Persichetti's Fourth Symphony is an essentially blithe affair; it erupts now and then with a brassy, Sibelian blare to remind us that it is a symphony, but these outbursts do not seriously affect the tonic, zestful, effervescent flow of Persichetti's ideas. It is the kind of music that is written by composers who delight in technical problems and who manage to convey in their music the intellectual and emotional pleasure they derive from finding their solution.

The jacket notes quote Max de Schauensee as saying that Louis Gesensway's *Four Squares of Philadelphia* does for the City of Brotherly Love what Respighi did for Rome in the *Fountains* and *Pines*. This is an apt and adequate description. Recordings and performances are first class. A. F.

RAVEL: *Ma Mère l'Oye; Rapsodie espagnole; Une Barque sur l'océan*

Orchestre du Théâtre des Champs-Elysées, D. E. Inghelbrecht, cond.
LONDON DTL 93087. 12-in. $4.98.

The competition is heavy, but it is difficult to imagine a more beautiful recording of Ravel's subtle, transparent orchestral fabric than is provided here or more authoritative interpretations in all respects. A. F.

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV: *Scheherazade*

Miriam Solovieff, violin; Vienna Staatsoper Orchestra, Mario Rossi, cond.
VANGUARD SRV 103. 12-in. $1.98.

Just how long Vanguard plans to make this, their third demonstration record, available at $1.98 is not known. At this price it is certainly a good buy, though not the definitive version of Rimsky-Korsakov's brilliant fairy tale. Musically I consider it inferior to the Steinberg, on Capitol P 8305. However, it does offer a healthy, sometimes robustious reading by Rossi, well played, and recorded in positively glittering sound. The conductor seems to me to have far more success with the lyrical sections than with the Festival or Storm episodes, in which, apparently eager to make every point, he permits things to become slightly raddled. It is here, too, that a slight edginess seems to creep into the orchestral tone, where before it had been remarkably clean and warm. Otherwise the playing seems to me to be first class, from solo violin all the way down. J. F. I.

ROZSA: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra*
†Spohr: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 8, in A minor, Op. 47*
†Tchaikovsky: *Sérénade mélancolique, Op. 26*

Jascha Heifetz, violin; Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Walter Hendl, cond. (in the Rózsa); RCA Victor Orchestra, Izler Solomon, cond. (in the Spohr); Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, Alfred Wallenstein, cond. (in the Tchaikovsky).
RCA VICTOR LM 2027. 12-in. $3.98.

Hungarian-born Miklos Rózsa came to Hollywood with an established reputation as a serious creative musician — and has managed to maintain it. While being able to turn out something as universally popular as the score for *Spellbound*, he has found time for something as important as his new violin concerto.

Important it certainly is, so important that, although it was only first performed last January by Jascha Heifetz (for whom it was written) with Walter Hendl and the Dallas Symphony, a first recording of the work by these same artists is already on the market. John Rosenfield, who wrote the enthusiastic jacket notes, thinks it is as significant a composition as the Sibelius, Bartók, and Prokofiev concertos, and he may very well be right. It is logically constructed, thematically sound, with vigorous, alive end movements separated by a beautifully songful slow movement. Perhaps because he had the close collaboration of Heifetz, the composer has written brilliantly and aptly for the violin, yet he has made the orchestra an integral part of the concerto. Since the performance and recording are all one could hope for, Rózsa may consider himself fortunate that his work has had such a gratifying presentation. So may the music-loving public, for this is a work not to be overlooked.

Beside the Rózsa, the Spohr Concerto in A minor seems rather pale. Written in one continuous movement of three sections, it was intended as the instrumental counterpart of an extended bravura operatic aria in the Italian style. As such, it is somewhat old-fashioned, though it does possess some appealing melodies. The piece benefits greatly from Heifetz's polished treatment. As for the Tchaikovsky *Sérénade mélancolique*, here is an unduly neglected little lyrical movement that may very well have been a preliminary study for the Violin Concerto.

This disk offers a wide and unusual variety of fare that should appeal to an equally wide segment of the listening public. P. A.

SAINT-SAENS: *Carnival of the Animals* — See Franck: *Psyché.*

SAINT-SAENS: *Symphony No. 3, in C minor, Op. 78*

Henriette Roget, organ; Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris, André Cluytens, cond.
ANGEL 35336. 12-in. $4.98.

Heifetz collaborates with the composer.

As I noted here recently, there just are no bad disk versions of this work. Bour, Munch, Toscanini, and Van Otterloo have each had their eloquent say on this powerful, melodic, and attractive symphony, and now along comes Cluytens with an equally fine interpretation. Pick any one of the five; you can't go wrong. P. A.

SESSIONS: *Quartet No. 2*

New Music Quarter.

†McPhee: *Concerto for Piano and Wind Octet*

Grant Johannesen, piano; wind octet, Carlos Surinach, cond.
COLUMBIA ML 5105. 12-in. $3.98.

Roger Sessions' Second String Quartet is one of the most important musical compositions of modern times. In structure it reminds one a little of Beethoven's Opus 131 — opening slow fugue, scherzo, variations — and the whole work is suffused with an Olympian serenity quite similar to that which is so characteristic of Beethoven's last quartets as a whole. Columbia's Modern American Music Series, to which the recording belongs, will have justified itself completely through the release of this one profound and magnificent score, especially since it is so beautifully played and recorded.

Colin McPhee's piano concerto, on the other side, is a peppery, neoclassical, athletic affair, written before its composer fell under the spell of Indonesian music and began to write his well-known works on Balinese themes. It is a good piece as far as it goes, which is not very far. The exuberant virtuosity of the performance is delightful. A. F.

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

NWDR Symphony Orchestra, Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt, cond.
CAPITOL P 18009. 12-in. $3.98.

This is an essentially Germanic conception of the Sibelius Second, exceptionally clear and analytical in its treatment and accorded appropriately clean-cut, very realistic reproduction. Sometimes clarity is achieved at the expense of forward motion, but much of the excitement and dramatic content of the symphony are retained in this always interesting reading. Not the ideal version, yet one to be admired and heard. P. A.

SPOHR: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 8, in A minor, Op. 47* — See Rózsa: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra.*

STRAUSS: *Elektra: excerpts; Salome: excerpts*
Le Bourgeois gentilhomme, Suite, Op. 60

Elektra: from *Allein! Weh, ganz allein* to entrance of Chrysothemis (Elektra); from *Was willst du, fremder Mensch?* to end of duet (Elektra, Orest); from *Elektra!*

Continued on page 92

WHEN HAYDN WALKED AMONG THE STARS

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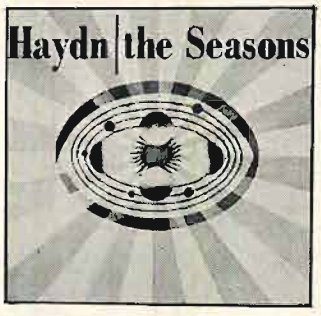

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Schwester! komm mit uns! to end. *Salome: Ach! Du wolltest mich nicht dein Mund küssen, Jochanaan* (Salome).

Inge Borkh (s), Elektra, Salome; Frances Yeend (s), Chrysothemis; Paul Schoeffler (b), Orest. Chorus from Lyric Theater of Chicago and Chicago Symphony Orchestra; Fritz Reiner, cond.
RCA VICTOR LM 6407. Two 12-in. $7.96.

First heard in 1909, the bloody pandemonium of Strauss's symphonic score and the spectral horror of Hofmannsthal's late-romantic Sophoclean tragedy combined in the final engulfment of Wagnerian music-drama. Beside *Elektra, Salome* seems musky naughtiness. And, two years later, *Der Rosenkavalier*, for all its hundred-piece orchestra, began a withdrawal towards the relative classic purity of the music for the Hofmannsthal gloss of Molière's *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, which is to say, towards *Ariadne auf Naxos*. Yet in spite of its notoriety, *Elektra* makes such great demands — orchestral and hence vocal — that it is relatively little performed. And for similar reasons, it was for long not to be heard at all on records.

By the same token, *Elektra*, so nearly self-sufficing aurally, would seem to be an ideal subject for the best modern microgroove attention. Yet, other than the Cetra set — blazingly conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos, but taken down at the 1950 Florence Maggio Musicale and subject to the failings of audience-present conditions — only excerpts, by Decca and RCA Victor and now RCA Victor again, have been released. Under the circumstances, the newest issue is almost more a frustration than a welcome addition.

Although late last season the Chicago Symphony assembled a cast (including Julius Patzak as Aegisth) for two full concert performances of the tragedy, at the last minute RCA Victor decided to record only excerpts — a pity in any case, and additionally so because this album turned out to be such a sorry botch, in spite of its merits. In place of an *Elektra*, the listener has offered him two disks that contain a swatch of three sections — in nonsensical order, with the finale in the middle — packaged with the most usual excerpt from *Salome* (presented concert style; no Herod or Herodias), and the suite from *Le Bourgeois gentilhomme* with two of the nine movements (the Lully minuet and the *courante*) crowded out.

The most impressive feature of the set, and particularly of the *Elektra* portions, is the power and glow of the orchestral sound obtained by Fritz Reiner and caught by the RCA engineers. In depth, color, and balance, this is much the closest anyone has come to recording the total effect of the score, from its psychotic quavering strings to the giant tam-tam strokes at the end; and if the voices are sometimes almost overwhelmed, as they are in live performance, they are never quite lost. As Elektra, Inge Borkh is extraordinary without seeming the ultimate in interpretation. The voice is big and quite clear, with a free and unproblematic top that has edge enough to cut through in almost all contexts, but with a certain lack of core in the middle and a tendency (scarcely, in this music, disqualifying) to develop a wide waver when under extreme pressure — especially in the scene with Chrysothemis (not otherwise excerpted on records), in which Frances Yeend obliges her by singing with very similar tone and a waver of the same frequency, if not in as good German. In the recognition-scene duet with Orest, and in her monologue, she is somewhat less demoniacally intense as a character than Christel Goltz, in the Decca excerpts (where the balances place the voices much more considerately, and less authentically, in the foreground of the mass), or than Erna Schlüter, in the old Victor recording (now out of Schwann, but findable) led by Sir Thomas Beecham;

Continued on page 94

Delicacy and Flexibility Distinguish Non-Danubian Strauss

THE VIENNESE have long cherished the proposition that the music of Johann Strauss can be played properly only by one of their own orchestras. There are, they aver, certain matters of musical style absolutely indispensable — and absolutely unexportable. Hesitations, anticipations, the lightest accent on the second beat after an almost imperceptible pause, and the all-important question of correct emphasis are some of the intangibles that are supposed to elude all but the orchestras of true Austrian heritage. Well, certainly there are some non-Viennese recordings in the catalogue so rigidly controlled and so unyielding in tempos as to support this contention; but it was merely a matter of time before a disk appeared that would prove the fallaciousness of such a chauvinistic musical claim. This month we find not one, but two excellent recordings of Strauss music — the first made in London, the second in New York — that can easily hold their own with any emanating from the Danube.

The Angel, appropriately entitled *Champagne for Orchestra*, is a heady brew of music by the brothers Strauss, Johann and Josef, brilliantly directed by Karajan and wonderfully played by the Philharmonia. No doubt, the conductor's affiliation with Vienna has much to do with the sunny and idiomatic performances, though it must be said that the English instrumentalists play with such enthusiasm and nuance that the Prater might easily be thought of as their operating base, rather than London's sober West End. They have been exceptionally well served by Angel's engineers in the matter of sound. Strings and woodwinds have a silvery sheen to them, the brass a glowing warm tone, both adding pleasure to an orchestral texture hard to fault. The over-all sound is big, with plenty of "room" around it, not at all empty, but suggestive of a well-filled and very large ballroom. I can't imagine a sound more appropriate for this music.

Bruno Walter is, of course, an old hand with Strauss, and though it must be nearly twenty years since he made those memorable records with the Vienna Philharmonic, for Victor, the delicacy, the touch, the mastery is as pronounced today as ever. As three works by Johann Strauss are common to each record, it is instructive to observe how each conductor treats them. Walter seems a little more tender in his handling of this music, treating it with a certain amount of wistfulness that is extremely attractive. Occasionally he seems to permit the tension to droop slightly, an effect that may be intentional, since it doesn't detract from the performance. Karajan's tempos are the merest shade faster, and they seem to brighten the orchestra color somewhat. Where delicacy and flexibility of phrasing are concerned, I think things are about equal between them. The playing of Walter's New York orchestra, while not quite the peer of the Philharmonia's, is always excellent, full of verve and very much in the true Viennese spirit. Columbia's sound is appropriately warm and mellow, but considerably more enclosed than that of the Angel disk. Whether this lessens the effectiveness of the performance will be a matter of personal taste. I happen to think that it does, if only slightly. Even so, I would be very happy with either, or both, of these records, which are herewith recommended without any reservations.

J. F. INDCOX

Strauss, brother Johann.

STRAUSS: *Waltzes and Overtures*

Johann Strauss: *Der Zigeunerbaron*, Overture; *Blue Danube* Waltz; *Artist's Life*; *Emperor* Waltz; *Pizzicato-Polka*. Josef Strauss: *Delirium* Waltz.

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but she is more on the mark as to notes, and accomplishes a good deal dramatically. As in the old RCA, Paul Schoeffler is a strong, authoritative Orest, although the dessicated sound of his voice does make it seem even odder than before for Elektra to address him as *"mein armes Kind."*

In the *Salome* concert-finale, Miss Borkh is — rightly, in my book — on the pure *ungeheuerische* side and, apart from oddities about her efforts to get *piano* tones, on the best level vocally. The incidental music for the comedy that was acted before the first version of *Ariadne auf Naxos* is quite well played, but better heard in other company and *in toto*. Texts for the excerpts given, but no really adequate notes to explain how the pieces of *Elektra* ought to fit with each other. J. H., JR.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Sérénade mélancolique, Op. 26* — See Rózsa: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra.*

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Ray Bohr, organ.
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Associate organist at Radio City Music Hall in New York, Ray Bohr upholds the highest traditions of the movie-palace organist. Like George Wright, he never loses his sense of rhythm, even in the most saccharine versions of sentimental pieces. He has a keen ear for harmonies and effects, timing his punctuating percussive devices with the utmost accuracy and delicacy. Sometimes, a bizarre sense of humor appears, as when he begins *This Can't Be Love* with the toccata figuration from Widor's *Fifth Organ Symphony*. The heavy-handed cuteness of *Teddy Bears' Picnic* should bring a wave of nostalgia to anyone who ever watched two-reel silent comedy films as they were accompanied by an organ. Mr. Bohr's instrument is unspecified, but with all its fancy accouterments it must be one of the giant Wurlitzers. An eminently satisfactory record of its kind. R. E.

FERRANTE AND TEICHER: *Original Variations for Two Pianos*

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Arthur Ferrante and Louis Teicher, two pianos.
WESTMINSTER XWN 18169. 12-in. $3.98.

Ferrante and Teicher, a pair of young American-born and trained pianists who have successfully invaded the concert field as a team, tackle here three worthy, if standard, thrice-recorded works. The playing has the scrubbed, impeccable quality one expects from the younger generation of pianists, but these two artists bring an extra warmth and intimacy to the Brahms and Schumann that give this disk its distinction. On the other hand, the Saint-Saëns is somewhat lacking in élan. The piano tone, limpid and mellow, is a pleasure to hear. For those who are interested in this grouping of works, it should be noted that Luboshutz and Nemenoff play them (plus a Mendelssohn *Allegro Brilliant*) on an inexpensive Camden disk; their performances are more brilliant than those on the present release, but the sound is outmoded. In the long run, I think the Ferrante and Teicher record will prove the preferred version. R. E.

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Ruth Barrett Phelps is organist of the First Church of Christ, Scientist, in Boston — the Mother Church — where Aeolian-Skinner has installed the largest church organ, with 13,389 pipes, in the Western Hemisphere. The specification was designed by Lawrence I. Phelps in conjunction with the late G. Donald Harrison, and the organ was completed in 1952. This is one of the less distinctive records in the admirable King of Instruments series, although Mrs. Phelps is a con-

Continued on page 96

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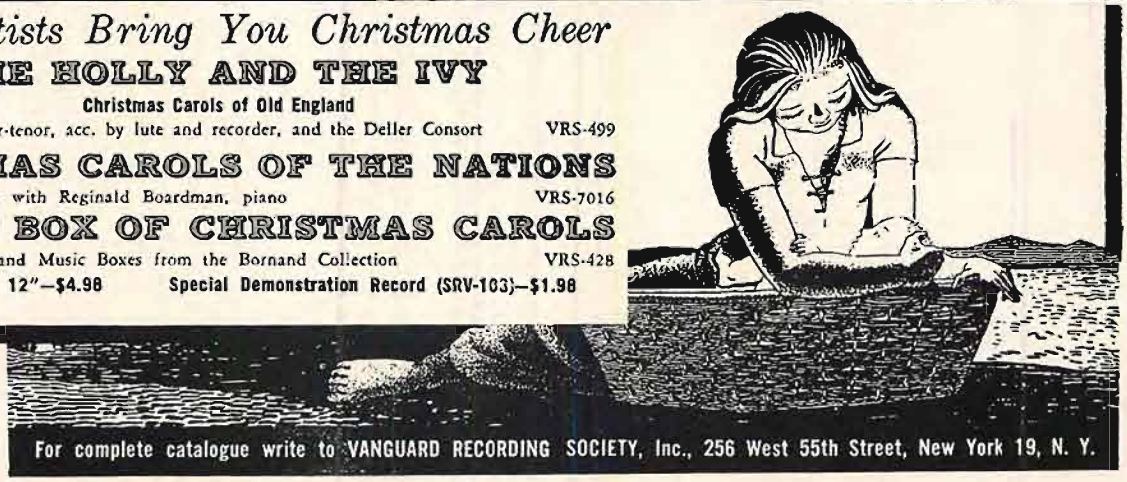

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scientious, first-rate organist; the instrument, for all its size, is a model of clarity; and the engineering is impeccable. While using appropriate stops for the various musical styles she handles here, Mrs. Phelps seems to favor conservative registrations, of a quiet, cool order, and the instrument's notable point is its transparent sound when some fairly heavy, non-bright stops are used. The organist's playing is outstanding in the Widor Adagio, where her dignified and serene style makes its greatest effect. R. E.

DICK LEIBERT: *Leibert Takes Richmond*

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Dick Leibert, organ.
WESTMINSTER XWN 18245. 12-in. $3.98.

Westminster has gotten on the "Mighty Wurlitzer Pipe Organ" bandwagon and done it in wholehearted, splendid fashion: this might be Carl Weinrich playing the complete works of Bach, for all the elaborate presentation. Mr. Leibert, organist of Radio City Music Hall since its opening, has become a familiar name to many people, and rightly so. Not as showy a technician as, say, George Wright, Mr. Leibert creates through various contrapuntal devices some effects that are seemingly improbable coming from one player. It is these devices and his subtle rhythmic changes in a piece that make his playing richer, more musically complex than that of his colleagues. The instrument displayed here is in the Byrd Theater in Richmond, Virginia, and a fine mammoth toy it is — you should hear what goes on in the *Little Clock Shop*. The specifications are listed, and just reading them is entertainment enough. There are short articles on the instrument, the theater, and the recording technique, and a four-page, highly satisfying hymn to the Mighty Wurlitzer by Ben Hall, whose purple prose does appropriate justice to the subject.

As is often the case with Westminster, the engineering is almost too intimate. Most theater organs sound, however clearly, as if they were at the other end of a cavern. But it is ungenerous to cavil about this kind of immaculate reproduction of a notoriously difficult instrument. Highly recommended to the Mighty Wurlitzer buffs. R. E.

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A brilliantly conceived and executed aural history of the evolution of musical instruments. The material is so organized as to give a comprehensive picture not only of the logical progression from one basic means of musical expression to the next higher, but also of the relationships between individual instruments and families of instruments.

The musical examples — which run from foot stamping through jew's-harps to hurdy-gurdies — have all been selected from the Ethnic Folkways Library. While necessarily spotty, the engineering has been improved wherever possible. An excellent illustrated booklet with text by Curt Sachs accompanies the album. H. L.

ED McCURDY: *When Dalliance Was in Flower*

Ed McCurdy, baritone; accompanied by Erik Darling, banjo, and Alan Arkin, recorder.
ELEKTRA EKL 110. 12-in. $4.98.

The tireless Ed McCurdy has shaped a collection of ribald Elizabethan ballads guaranteed to curl the vicar's hair. Most seem to have been culled from D'Urfey's magnificent, lusty, and lamentably neglected *Songs of Wit and Mirth*. McCurdy has done an outstanding job of setting the ballads to traditional tunes, all of which seem to reflect the precise spirit of the song in question.

As for the actual vocal work, McCurdy is, as ever, a pleasure to hear; and, as ever, his interpretations are both lively and intelligent. Erik Darling and Alan Arkin furnish inspired support with banjo and recorder respectively. Complete texts and well-written jackets notes by Nina Merrick round out a thoroughly pleasurable and superbly engineered release. But remember, the songs are *really* earthy. H. L.

MADO ROBIN: *Arias from Bellini Operas; Songs*

Bellini: *La Sonnambula: Come per me ser-*

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eno . . . . Sovra il sen; *Ah! non credea mirarti . . . . Ah! non giunge. I Puritani*: *Son vergin vezzosa* (Polacca); *Qui la voce . . . . Vien, diletto* (Mad Scene). Eva dell 'Acqua: *Vilanelle.* Heinrich Proch: *Theme and Variations.* Luigi Arditi: *Il Bacio.* Alexander Alabiev: *Rossignol.*

Mado Robin, soprano; London Symphony Orchestra, Anatole Fistoulari, cond.
LONDON LL 1403. 12-in. $3.98.

The reigning coloratura of a not-great generation in French opera singing, Mado Robin has appeared in this country only for one San Francisco Opera engagement, and then her success was at best ambiguous. However, her London recordings have won her a following, based in good part on the fact that she can, and does, produce high tones of the same general tropospheric incredibility that earned such singers as, say, Ellen Beach Yaw and Erna Sack earlier notoriety. Whether the tone is properly a tone or merely a zinging noise is perhaps debatable. But it *is* high.

Apart from such space-flight phenomena, the singing is rather ordinary, even if considered purely as technical display. The coloratura is variable — best when the music is fast and stabbing, least satisfactory when contours matter more. Miss Robin can spin out a pleasant line, but not, it seems, a communicative one, and her treatment of slow turn figurations in Bellini is square and mechanical. Thus she shines most brightly in such bits of young-girl high spirits as "*Sovra il sen*" and "*Son vergin vezzosa*," where a blank vocal personality makes at least some sense. The Bellini excerpts are done in "concert form," which means that they are pruned down to display essentials. The songs on the reverse are all of the kind that used to be interpolated in the lesson scene of *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* before it became the fashion to use the music Rossini wrote; they are sung with a good deal of surface brilliance. No texts; notes. The sound is quite good. J. H., JR.

TITO SCHIPA: *Canzoni napoletane*

Pisano; Cioffi: *'Na sera 'e maggio.* Barthelmy; Marvasi: *Chi se nne scorda cchiu'.* Turco; Denza: *Funiculi' funicula'.* Tagliaferri; Bovio: *Passione.* Manlio; Caslar: *Te sto' aspettanno.* Manlio; Gigante: *Desiderio 'e sole.* Murolo; Oliviero: *O' ciucciariello.* Schipa; De Giacomo: *Piannefforte 'e notte.*

Tito Schipa, tenor; orchestra, Mino Campanino, cond.
DURIUM DLU 96020. 10-in. $2.98.

For a singer so esteemed, Tito Schipa is decidedly not well represented on LP. So, for want of a microgroove drawn from Victor archives and a reissue (Camden?) of the fine old *Don Pasquale*, Schipa admirers have had either to ferret for his prewar 78s or do without. No change is in view on that front. Meanwhile, this release by Durium adds something new — performances of Neapolitan songs, well recorded, and seemingly of recent date. It repairs no old neglects, and the music *qua* music is on the candy-apple level of nutritional value; but the singing is frequently of remarkable quality.

When he made his debut, in 1911, Schipa was likened to Alessandro Bonci — then at his peak. In turn, numerous tenors have been likened to Schipa — and still are. Now he is all but retired at sixty-seven, yet still a symbol of perfection and purity of vocal style.

Basically a *leggero* tenor with a voice pleasant but not imposing, Schipa found his best métier in such operas as *La Sonnambula* and *L'Elisir d'Amore*, and he never, to my knowledge, attempted anything heavier than *Rigoletto* or *Lucia di Lammermoor.* Here, in music of modest demands, he sounds much as he did *ca.* 1948 — the tone not as fine-spun, darker, and momentarily unsteady under stress, but the voice intact and generally well kept. Like the late Giuseppe de Luca, who sang well into his seventies, like Mariano Stabile today, Schipa knows his resources and manages them with consummate poise, seldom going for an effect that might not come off. Thus there is no flourishing turn at the end of *Passione*, but the song makes its point. For the defining qualities are all here: the precision of line; the shaping of each syllable to its note; and, above all, the tact, the total absence of mannerism with which each song is made to seem a direct personal communication, offered as an honorable confidence to some one person sure to understand and protect it.

No texts, but fascinating biographical notes. Who knew that Schipa made his *real* debut in opera as the child who sings

Continued on page 100

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RECORD REVIEW

INDEX

A complete index to all classical, semiclassical, jazz, and spoken word record reviews which appeared in HIGH FIDELITY Magazine in 1955.

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The Music Between

by Murray Schumach

THE MUSE of the record business, a practical hussy who always keeps at least one ear attuned to the merry tinkle of the cash register, is very busy these days spreading the gospel of "mood music." What used to be considered not so long ago as just dance rhythms are now being hawked as indispensable atmospheric accompaniments for eating, drinking, romancing, and, above all, talking. These records, presumably, can transform liverwurst into caviar and make any small-town matron think her Saturday night get-together nothing less than a Parisian salon.

Because this sort of music, seemingly tailored to every need but listening, can easily change a mood from tolerance to aversion, the masters in this field have worked in among their musical platitudes a high order of crafstmanship — and of guile. For instance, the upper echelons of mood makers use only established tunes, such as those of Kern, Gershwin, Berlin, Rodgers, Porter. Nor do they take chances on inferior musicians. Very important too in their scheme, as I discovered in listening to a score or so of these records, is the work of the sound engineers. In point of sonic fidelity, the mood-music repertoire is almost invariably first-class.

Curiously, for all their apparent casualness these men are careful never to be moody. Gaiety — generally blatant, but sometimes unobtrusive — is the road to the home-style cocktail lounge. Beyond that, each of these maestros seems to adhere to his own formula.

An excellent example of music to talk to — either over or under — is Andre Kostelanetz's recent Columbia recording *The Thought of You* (CL 843). Mr. Kostelanetz, long established as a model of pleasant meaninglessness in the musical world, is just right for chatter about fashion, baseball, politics, or even for quiet drinking. His musicians glide without fear of collision through *Foggy Day*, and for *Sweet and Lovely* the marvels of sound engineering can make his horde of violins reek of honey. Mr. Kostelanetz shows the decorous concern of the fine waiter — not to mention the aplomb of the *maitre d'hôtel*.

A rival with a more sophisticated variety of heartburn music is the orchestra of Frank Chacksfield, working for London on a record called *Close Your Eyes* (LL 1440). Mr. Chacksfield goes in for the subdued manner with the steady dance beat, letting his trumpeter, Bobby Pratt, get just a mite salacious in solos for *Lullaby of the Leaves* or *Love is the Sweetest Thing*. His, I assume, is the suave touch to make the suburban hostess properly enjoy that Bloody Mary after the kids are in bed.

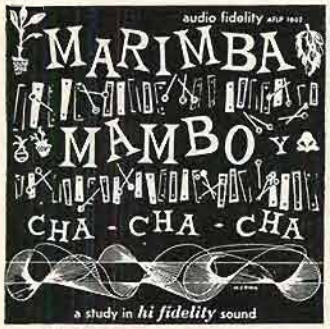
Some mood merchants now try to peddle a more bubbly sort of relaxation. For this chore RCA Camden has brought forth Henri René's orchestra to weave spells on *In Love Again* (CAL 312). Mr. René seems to strive for the romance that excites without embarrassment. For him Cole Porter is what Gustav Mahler is for Bruno Walter. He warms up *Were Thine that Special Face* with tambourines, and to *Wunderbar* he brings a sauciness that might, I think, suit even the fastidious Mr. Porter.

This gay approach can be carried too far. Personally, I'd rather spend an evening crying in my beer than depend for effervescence on Lawrence Welk, who is starring for Epic on *The Champagne Magic* (LN 3247). Mr. Welk takes off in his bouncy video-bound style for a song such as *My Man* as though he'd never heard the lyrics. At the other extreme, he seems anemic in trying to attack *Beer Barrel Polka*. For me, Mr. Welk's special magic lies in transforming either vintage champagne or sturdy ale into county-fair root beer.

I suppose, though, it is foolhardy to pick on the bucolic style. Guy Lombardo, for instance, has been growing musical corn so long I've come to think his Royal Canadians sired the Mounties. Yet here he is once again, sponsored by Capitol for *Guy Lombardo in Hi-Fi* (W 738). His millions of fans will probably find nothing wrong with the Vaselined brass in *Sweethearts on Parade* and they will think it quite right that his *Frankie and Johnny* should seem, with a well-behaved honky-tonk piano, all good, clean fun. With high fidelity highlighting his wonderfully disciplined musicians and his sure dance beat, it does no good to complain that he treats *St. Louis Blues* as though it were written for a college prom.

Like Mr. Lombardo, Frankie Carle has withstood a number of jazz styles without change and sees no reason to risk jarring his sizable following. Through courtesy of RCA Victor his piano is conservatively congenial and his violins still restrained as ever in *Frankie Carle's Finest* (LPM 1153). Mr. Carle's orchestra is the same whether the song is *Blue Moon* or *My Silent Love*. His atmosphere of the good hotel ballroom seems indestructible.

And now I'd like to turn to some records made for listeners. For those who yearn to recapture the joyous moments of Sunday band music in the park, I strongly recommend *Here's That Band Again*, featuring the Deutschmeister Band at work for Westminster (WP 6013). The waltzes, galops, folk music of this Viennese outfit are magnificent and so is the fidelity. Special audiences may like to hear another lusty recording from Europe called *Erich Kunz Sings German University Songs* (Vanguard VRS 477). Mr. Kunz, in customary fine voice, is supported by the male chorus and orchestra of the Vienna Volksoper, conducted by Franz Litschauer. Mr. Kunz, happily, can really create moods.



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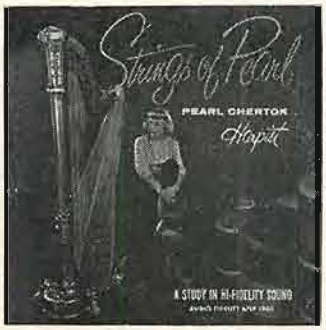

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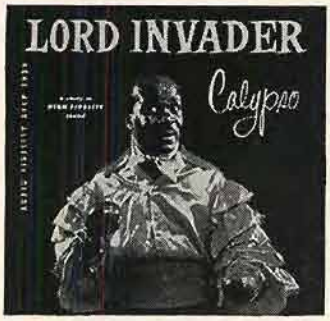

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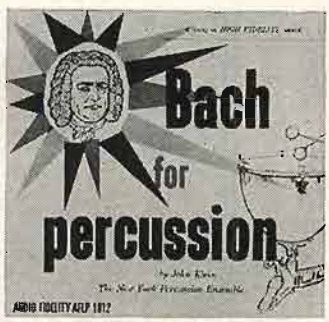

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"Vo' la tromba e il cavallin" in Act II of *La Bohème*? J. H., JR.

ARTURO TOSCANINI: *New York Philharmonic-Symphony Program*

Dukas: *L'Apprenti sorcier.* Verdi: *La Traviata*: Prelude; Prelude, *Act III.* Rossini: *Semiramide*: Overture. Wagner: *Siegfried Idyll.*

New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra, Arturo Toscanini, cond.
RCA CAMDEN CAL 309. 12-in. $1.98.

Here, for the first time, RCA allows its low-priced Camden label the distinction of the name of Arturo Toscanini — and of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony as he shaped its style for a decade. This move stirs up a swarm of possible inferences as to future Camden activity, but the move also brings its immediate rewards. For the performances restored to currency by this release are in the main — apart from their historical status — extremely fine measured by any standards, and at best still remarkably good in sound. And if the selection is a hotchpotch of styles, so are most such.

Toscanini first conducted the New York Philharmonic, as a guest, in 1926, and shared the next season with Mengelberg. When the Philharmonic and the New York Symphony coalesced in 1928, he chose men from both orchestras and trained the new ensemble. He remained its main conductor until 1936. Of the recordings issued on this LP (all cut in Carnegie Hall) the Dukas and the Verdi were made in March 1929 — that is, near the end of the first Philharmonic-Symphony season. The Rossini and Wagner were done in April 1936, shortly before his official "farewell."

Technically, they are of their times, but on a high level of low-fi, with a warm, comfortable Carnegie Hall reality that is far pleasanter — and truer — than the glassy distortions of many wider-range Toscanini recordings made later in NBC Studio 8-H. And Camden has done a notably honorable job of getting the best out of the masters without adding highs to the 1929 set or emasculating the forceful 1936 sound. As performances, all share in the familial Toscanini traits of steady pulse, precise articulation, and nervous forward impulse. The most distinctive of the lot are the *La Traviata* preludes, in which there breathes a tender enchantment not recaptured in later versions. The *Semiramide* is also superior — tremendous in its poise and dash. The Dukas scherzo is whizzingly fast and unplayful (yet it can be held that the music ought to make its own fun without its programmatic humor being underscored), the *Siegfried Idyll* very pure, but less evocative than the later reading that appears on LCT 1116. All told, a great conductor and great orchestra make up for any technical lacks. J. H., JR.

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All LP disks are recorded with treble boost and bass cut, the amount of which often varies from one manufacturer to another. To play a disk, the bass below a certain turnover frequency must be boosted, and the treble must be rolled off a certain number of decibels at 10,000 cycles. Recommended control settings to accomplish this are listed for each manufacturer. Equalizer control panel markings correspond to the following values in the table below: ROLL-OFF — 10.5: LON, FRRR. 12: AES, RCA, Old RCA. 13.7: RIAA, RCA, New RCA, New AES, NARTB, ORTHOphonic. 16: NAB, LP, COL, COL LP, ORTHOcoustic. TURNOVER — 400: AES, RCA. 500C: LP, COL, COL LP, Mod NAB, LON, FFRR. 500R. RIAA, ORTHOphonic, NARTB, New AES. 500: NAB: 630: BRS. 800: Old RCA.

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RECORD LABEL	NEW		OLD
	Turnover	*Rolloff*	*Record No. or Date: Turnover, Rolloff*
Allied	500	16	
Amer. Rec. Soc.	400	12	
Arizona	500R	13.7	To 1955: 400, 12.7
Audiophile	500	12	
Bach Guild	500R	13.7	No. 501-529: 500, 16
*Bartok	500R	13.7	No. 901-905, 308, 310, 311: 500R, 13.7 No. 906-970, 301-304, 309: 630, 16
Blue Note Jazz	500R	13.7	To 1955: 400, 12
Boston	500C	16	
*Caedmon	500R	13.7	No. 1001-1022: 630, 16
Canyon	500R	13.7	To No. C6160: 400, 12
Capitol	500R	13.7	To 1955: 400, 12.7
Capitol-Cetra	500R	13.7	To 1955: 400, 12.7
Cetra-Soria	500C	16	
Colosseum	500R	13.7	To January 1954: 500,16
*Columbia	500R	13.7	To 1955: 500C, 16
Concert Hall	500R	10.5	To 1954: 500C, 16
*Contemporary	500R	13.7	No. 3501, 2501, 2502, 2505, 2507, 2001, 2002: 400, 12. No. 2504: 500, 16
†Cook (SOOT)	500	12-15	
Coral	500	16	
Decca	500R	13.7	To November 1955: 500, 16
Elektra	500R	13.7	No. 2-15, 18-20, 24-26: 630, 16. No. 17-22: 400, 12. No. 16, 21, 23, 24: 500R, 13.7
Esoteric	500R	13.7	No. ES 500, 517, EST 5, 6. 400, 12
Folkways	500R	13.7	To 1955: 500C, 16
*Good-Time Jazz	500R	13.7	No. 1, 5-8: 500, 16. No. 3, 9-19: 400, 12
Haydn Society	500C	16	
HMV	500R	16	
Kapp	500R	13.7	No. 100-103, 1000-1001: 800, 16
Kendall	500	16	
*London, Lon. Int.	500R	13.7	To No. 846: 500C, 10.5
Lyrichord	500	16	
*Mercury	500R	13.7	To October 1954: 400, 12
Nocturne	500R	13.7	No. LP 1-3, 5, XPI-10: 400, 12
Oceanic	500C	16	
*L'Oiseau-Lyre	500R	13.7	To 1954: 500C, 10.5
*Overtone	500R	13.7	No. 1-3: 500, 16
Oxford	500C	16	
Pacific Jazz	500R	13.7	No. 1-13: 400, 12
Philharmonia	400	12	
†Polymusic	500	16	
RCA Victor	500R	13.7	To September 1952: 500 or 800, 12
Remington	500	16	
Riverside	500R	13.7	To 1955: 400, 12
Tempo	500	16	
Transradio	500C	16	
Urania	500R	13.7	No. 7059, 224, 7066, 7063, 7065, 603, 7069: 400, 12. Others: 500C 16
Vanguard	500R	13.7	No. 411-442, 6000-6018, 7001-7011, 8001-8004: 500, 16
Vox	500R	13.7	500, 16 unless otherwise specified.
*Westminster	500R	13.7	To October 1955: 500C, 16; or if AES specified: 400, 12

*Currently re-recording old masters for RIAA curve.
†Binaural records produced on this label have no treble boost on the inside band, which should be played without any rolloff.

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Continued on page 102

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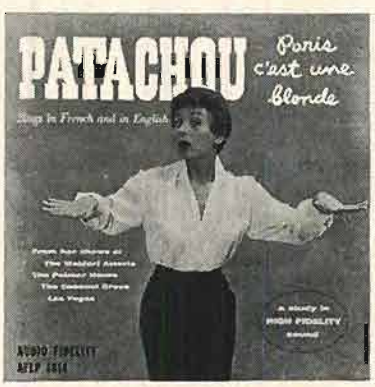

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voice of heroes makes unconvincing her rendition of the battle between heroes.

The passages from the *Odyssey* suffer less than those of the martial epic, perhaps because this narrative of a middle-aged traveler's trials and tribulations is essentially a kind of domestic drama. The "Allegory of the Cave" from Plato's *Republic* smacks of the lecture hall — and perhaps rightly so. The anonymous little "Love Stung by a Bee" succeeds best in conveying sense (or nonsense in this case) through sound. — The Greek texts with translations by diverse hands are provided. The interlinear translation to which Miss Wilson refers in the jacket notes is missing, and its lack must surely be felt by any except Greek scholars. J. G.

S. J. PERELMAN: *An Informal Hour with S. J. Perelman*

S. J. Perelman reading: *Kitchen Bouquet; The Sweeter the Tooth, the Nearer the Couch; And Thou Beside Me, Yacketing in the Wilderness; Is There an Osteosynchrondroitrician in the House?*
SPOKEN ARTS 705. 12-in. $4.98.

Having never heard a long-playing record of S. J. Perelman reading his whatever-you-call-thems, for the good reason that long-playing records of S. J. Perelman reading his whatever-you-call-thems have not been available, I approached this record with considerable alacrity and an armful of thesauri — in fact, I always approach S. J. Perelman long-playing records with considerable thesauri and an armful of alacrity.

Now I defy anyone to sit down and listen for an hour to the acknowledged master of literary mayhem and then try to write a sentence without its coming out like the above. It is not just the words Mr. Perelman manages to fire from his typewriter, but it is his prehensile ability to snaffle them together and prevent them from falling off the grammatical salver. See what I mean?

Of what Perelman can do with a sentence, one of the best examples on this record is the following:
"That Philomène was a manic-depressive in the downhill phase was, of course, instantly apparent to a boy of five. Several boys of five, who happened to be standing around and were by way of being students of psycho-pathology, stated their belief to me in just those words: 'Manic-depressive, downhill phase.'"

Perelman's reading is a bit disappointing at first, but after fifteen minutes you are quite comfortable with him and by the end of the record you are willing to acknowledge that nobody, but nobody except S. J., could do his essays justice.
R. H. H., Jr.

POLITICS U.S.A.

"Voices of American Politics," narrated by Will Rogers, Jr.
COLUMBIA ML 5123. 12-in. $3.98.

The release of this record has of course been timed for the election, and many people with only a moderate (to use a good political word) interest in politics probably will have heard more than their quota of political oratory by this time.

But for those listeners who savor a purple polemic with the same relish as Dylan Thomas enthusiasts savor a burst of Thomasian lyrics, "Politics USA" will not be *de trop*. Although the selections here are mostly culled from the old "Town Meeting of the Air" debates, there also are a goodly number of campaign selections ranging in style and flavor from the excerpts of Governor McKeldin's flowery nomination of Dwight D. Eisenhower at the 1952 Republican Convention, to Harry Truman's matter-of-fact words in '48: "I work for the Government and I'm trying to keep my job." R. H. H., Jr.

THE BEST OF JAZZ

by John S. Wilson

DAVE BRUBECK: *Brubeck Plays Brubeck*

Swing Bells; Walkin' Line; In Your Own Sweet Way; Two-Part Contention; Weep No More; The Duke; When I Was Young; One Moment Worth Years; The Waltz.

Dave Brubeck, piano.
COLUMBIA CL 878. 12-in. 38 min. $3.95.

Brubeck alone is a decidedly different Brubeck from the one we've heard with his quartet. He emerges as an essentially reflective pianist with a leaning toward romanticism, without the pounding climaxes that he affects with his quartet, and with a more fundamental sense of swing than he is generally given credit for. Although the disk's subtitle calls these selections "original compositions for solo piano," Brubeck disclaims the term "compositions" in his enlightening notes. They are, as he correctly points out, sketches upon which he improvises. He develops these improvisations with a pleasant melodic sense. At times there is a tentative quality about his playing, but on the whole he shows a very good grasp of the jazz approach.

JIMMY SMITH
A New Star — A New Sound

The Champ; Bayou; Deep Purple; Moonlight in Vermont; Ready 'n Able; Turquoise; Bubbis.

Jimmy Smith, organ; Thornel Schwartz, guitar; Donald Bailey, drums.
BLUE NOTE BLP 1514. 12-in. 41 min. $4.98.

Until now, the most successful efforts to draw jazz from the organ have been made by Fats Waller, Count Basie, and Oscar Peterson, all of whom have worked in a straightforward swing vein. Jimmy Smith appears to be the first to apply a modern jazz style with any degree of success. He has a facility which borders on the fantastic, enabling him to maintain a very fast pace in *The Champ* — a virtuoso display which unfortunately, goes on far too long. The rest of his selections reveal a well-developed sense of the dramatic, combined with a manner of breaking up what might normally be sustained notes that produces an insistent, prodding beat. There are occasional excursions into a "mighty Wurlitzer" effect.

LUCKY THOMPSON: *Vol. 1*

Tom-Kattin; Old Reliable; Deep Passion; Translation: Lucky Thompson, tenor saxophone; Jim Whatsmyname, trombone; Hank Jones, piano; Oscar Pettiford, bass; Osie Johnson, drums.

Tricrotism; Bo-Bi My Boy; A Lady's Vanity; OP Meets LT: Thompson; Pettiford; Skeeter Best, guitar.

ABC-PARAMOUNT 111. 12-in. 35 min. $3.98.

Accent on Tenor Sax

Tune for Tex; Where or When; Mr. E-Z: Lucky Thompson, tenor saxophone; Jimmy Hamilton, clarinet; Billy Taylor, piano; Sidney Gross, guitar; Oscar Pettiford, bass; Osie Johnson, drums.

Kamman's A-Comin'; Ever So Easy: Same, except Gross out.

URANIA 1206. 12-in. 42 min. $3.98.

Lucky Thompson has been one of the most capable tenor saxophonists in jazz for almost ten years, but for most of that time he has been largely ignored on records. The neglect that he has suffered is certainly not explained by his consistently flowing, polished playing on these two disks. His style, unobtrusive but still individual and personal, is almost a summation of the history of the tenor saxophone in jazz. One hears reflections of Coleman Hawkins' intense attack, of Lester Young's lyricism, even of Stan Getz's floating drive. He is given his best opportunities on ABC-Paramount 111, on which he is heard in the relaxed intimacy of a trio on four numbers and as part of a well-chosen quintet in the remaining four. His playing with both groups is warmly expressive — he is, in the best sense, a "hot" jazz man — and his ideas are developed with compelling logic. The quintet selections are made additionally attractive by some of Hank Jones's piano solos.

He also has excellent associates on Urania 1206 (Jimmy Hamilton has not often been heard on records playing with the unforced, swinging feeling he displays on this disk) but, despite several good performances, the over-all quality of the set is brought down by an overlong and eventually tiresome piece which takes up most of the second side.

Other November Jazz

Mainstream: The echoes of the Benny Goodman Sextet on *Swinging Swedes* (Telefunken LGX 66050. 12-in. 37 min. $4.98) are not the least bit dim. The Swedes are led by Ove Linde, who plays a light, lyrical clarinet in Goodman's most winning manner, and they swing with the happy urgency that characterized the Goodman group at its best. Selections are reminiscent too — *Air Mail Special, Flying Home, I Want to Be Happy, A String of Pearls*, etc. — but the performances are as fresh as though all this had never been done before.

Wild Bill Davison is no bending reed (of course not: he plays cornet) and when he is accompanied on *Pretty Wild* (Columbia CL 871. 12-in. 34 min. $3.95) by the enormous string section to which every jazz soloist seems doomed these days, he gives no ground but remains his customary raffish self, barking, snapping, and chewing his way through *If I Had You, Sugar, Ghost of a Chance*, and similar laments. It's not really a happy background for the Wild One, but he pays it little mind and forgets it completely on *Wild Man Blues*.

The Dukes of Dixieland (Audio Fidelity 1823. 12-in. 38 min. $5.95) is a brilliant job of clear, full-range recording, technically one of the best recordings of a jazz band that I have heard. Unfortunately, this care has been lavished on a New Orleans two-beat band of no special distinction playing a standard program of Dixieland material. They don't play much, but you sure can hear that tuba! An impressive collection of names has been gathered for the two groups making up *After Hours* (Grand Award 33-334. 12-in. 38 min. $3.98) — Cozy Cole, Coleman Hawkins, Rex Stewart, Claude Hopkins, Tyree Glenn, and Billy Bauer are in one; Jimmy and Marion McPartland, Jimmy Raney, Joe Morello, and Trigger Alpert in the other — but neither group gets off the ground. There are moments during which Stewart or Glenn try to set the first group afire and almost succeed, but the second group is completely shrouded by some of Jimmy McPartland's least effective trumpet playing.

Horns, French and Tenor: Julius Watkins, operator of an unusually adventurous French horn, provides provocative playing, arranging, and composing on *Les Jazz Modes* (Dawn 1108. 12-in. 36 min. $3.98). Both in his solos and duets with tenor saxophonist Charlie Rouse, Watkins

Condon on Disk and in Print

Eddie Condon's Treasury of Jazz is the title of both a record and a book, which have almost no other connection beyond the association of Condon with each. The book (edited by Condon and Richard Gehman, Dial, $5.00) is an anthology of writing on jazz which covers a wide range of territory despite the editors' efforts to associate Condon with almost every aspect of the music. The disk, however, is straight Condon — performances by the customary Condonites of tunes associated with some of the people mentioned in the book. It is the least successful of the generally excellent series of disks which Condon has recently been making for Columbia. Contrivance, an element usually absent from Condon recordings, would seem to have tripped him up this time. Instead of simply sitting down and playing, his men have been faced with the revolutionary prospect of a planned program which takes them into such uncharted (by Condon) dangers as Turk Murphy's *Duff Campbell's Revenge* and Duke Ellington's *Don't Get Around Much Anymore*. An air of effort, alien to a proper Condon performance, hovers over much of the playing, although Wild Bill Davison and Pee Wee Russell are their proper selves on selections designed to celebrate themselves, and Cutty Cutshall and Peanuts Hucko get in a few good licks.

The book, on the other hand, is good and informative fun once you get past the opening impression that it might more accurately have been called *Eddie Condon's Treasury of Eddie Condon* and provided you can overlook some of Condon's self-serving intrusions on the work of other authors. Condon and Gehman have put together a mélange of articles about jazz personalities and the peripheries of jazz by familiar by-liners in the field (Nat Hentoff, Whitney Balliett, Otis Ferguson, Marshall Stearns, John Hammond, et al.) and some occasional venturers into the field (Murray Kempton, John Crosby, Gilbert Millstein, Maurice Zolotow, and others). The selections vary widely in quality and depth but the total effect is of a lively potpourri which occasionally provides fresh insights on the human beings behind the instruments.

Eddie: tripped by contrivance.

The book concludes with a group of short stories about jazz by James Jones, Shelby Foote, Clellon Holmes, and Osbirn Duke, among others. The brooding, otherworld style which once characterized the nonfiction approach to jazz (a style which has happily been discarded, as the articles in this book indicate) shadows almost all of this jazz fiction, reducing it to a monochrome. Fiction and jazz, it appears, have still to meet on easy, natural terms.

JOHN S. WILSON

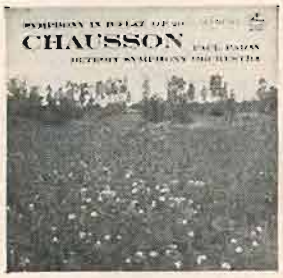
EDDIE CONDON: *Eddie Condon's Treasury of Jazz*

I'm Gonna Sit Right Down and Write Myself a Letter; Don't Get Around Much Anymore; I'm Confessin'; Sometimes I'm Happy: Wild Bill Davison, cornet; Cutty Cutshall, trombone; Pee Wee Russell, clarinet; Gene Schroeder, piano; Eddie Condon, guitar; Walter Page, bass; George Wettling, drums.

Someday You'll Be Sorry; Since My Best Gal Turned Me Down; Just Friends: Add Billy Butterfield, trumpet; Peanuts Hucko, clarinet, tenor saxophone.

I've Got a Crush on You; Duff Campbell's Revenge; I've Found a New Baby: Butterfield; Cutshall; Hucko; Ralph Sutton, piano; Condon; Page; Wettling.

COLUMBIA CL 881. 12-in. 37 min. $3.98.



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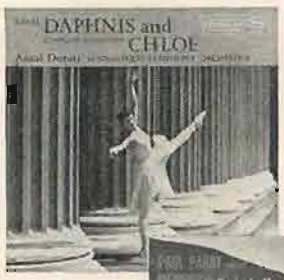

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NEW RELEASES

1 **CHAUSSON** Symphony in B-Flat, Op. 20. Detroit Symphony, Paray conducting. **MG 50108**

2 **STRAUSS** Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks; Suite from "Der Rosenkavalier." Minneapolis Symphony, Dorati conducting. **MG 50099**

3 **CHRISTMAS CAROLS** in HI FI. Carlos Salzedo, harp. **MG 50116**

4 **BORODIN** Polovetsian Dances (with chorus); **RIMSKY-KORSAKOV** Le Coq d'Or Suite. London Symphony Orchestra, Dorati conducting. **MG 50122**

5 **RAVEL** Daphnis and Chloe (complete ballet). Minneapolis Symphony, Dorati conducting. **MG 50040**

6 **DEBUSSY** Iberia; La Mer; Prelude to "The Afternoon of a Faun". Detroit Symphony, Paul Paray conducting. **MG 50101**

7 **BEETHOVEN** Symphony No. 4 in B-flat; Symphony No. 8 in F Major. Minneapolis Symphony, Antal Dorati conducting. **MG 50100**

8 **VAUGHAN WILLIAMS** Symphony No. 8 in D Minor; **BUTTERWORTH** A Shropshire Lad; **BAX** Garden of Fand. Halle Orchestra, Sir John Barbirolli, conducting. **MG 50115**

9 **SESSIONS** The Black Maskers; **HOVHANESS** PRELUDE AND QUADRUPLE FUGUE; **LO PRESTI** The Masks. Eastman-Rochester Orchestra, Howard Hanson cond. **MG 50106**

HIGH FIDELITY CLASSICS LIVING PRESENCE

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shows a probing jazz mind. On several selections he makes use of a wordless soprano voice, much as Duke Ellington has done on *Transblucency*, though not always with Ellington's judiciousness. Where Watkins leans toward a brooding mood, his West Coast counterpart, John Graas, writes and plays with linear glibness. *John Graas French Horn Jazz* (Kapp 1046. 12-in. 37 min. $3.98) is a sprightly collection of Graas's California-influenced performances originally made for the defunct Trend label.

Tom Stewart's tenor horn, an instrument almost never heard in jazz, gets a rare display on *Tom Stewart Sextette, Quintette* (ABC-Paramount 117. 12-in. 31 min. $3.98). Stewart plays in an easy, agile, swinging style, assisted by Steve Lacey's soprano saxophone, Herbie Mann's flute, and Dave McKenna's dependable piano, among others. The tunes are mostly worthy veterans of jazz attacks — *Rosetta, Out of Nowhere, Fidgety Feet*, etc. Both Stewart and Lacey join Don Stratton, trumpet, in a group of genial, driving Neal Hefti arrangements on *Whitey Mitchell Sextette* (ABC-Paramount 126. 12-in. 31 min. $3.98). Mitchell, a knowledgeable and well-mannered bassist, takes his due as leader in solos, but otherwise these are well-balanced, unpretentious performances with a suggestion of Gerry Mulligan about them.

Solo Horns: A strong, vigorous-toned trumpet player, Jack Millman, leads his quartet through a dozen tunes on *Blowing Up a Storm* (Era 20005. 12-in. 33 min. $3.98) in a style that is direct and forceful, producing some honest, unadorned jazz that occasionally becomes just a bit too casual. Coleman Hawkins works under wraps on a good deal of *The Hawk in Hi-Fi* (RCA Victor LPM 1281. 12-in. 39 min. $3.98) but whenever he can blow the strings and woodwinds out of his way he takes off in the headstrong, surging Hawkins manner. Johnny Hodges, who rarely gets very far off the beam, is well on it on *The Blues* (Norgran 1061. 12-in. 40 min. $3.98) and closer to it than some of his fellow Ellingtonians on *Creamy* (Norgran 1045. 12-in. 46 min. $3.98). Lester Young and Harry Edison, both ex-Basieites, rejoin forces on *Pres and Sweets* (Norgran 1043. 12-in. 36 min. $3.98) but, like many reunions, this one turned out to be mutually depressing.

Numbers Games: Eight trombones make up the ensemble led by J. J. Johnson and Kai Winding on *Jay and Kai + 6* (Columbia CL 892. 12-in. 35 min. $3.98) and, in the arrangements written by Winding and Johnson, they are made the core of a colorful group. The performances have the propulsion and shading which have been at the heart of the Johnson-Winding duets, with greater range and flexibility permitted by the larger ensemble. *The Drum Suite* (RCA Victor LPM 1279. 12-in. 38 min. $3.98) is built around four drummers — Osie Johnson, Gus Johnson, Teddy Sommer, and Don Lamond — but, far from producing a series of drum solos, composers Manny Albam and Ernie Wilkins have written a series of instrumental pieces, based on various uses of drums, which are played with driving eloquence by a band of top Eastern studio men.

HIGH FIDELITY DISCOGRAPHY NO. 30

Russian Opera on Microgroove

by HERBERT WEINSTOCK

PREPARING this discography of Russian opera now available on microgroove has turned out, in part, to be a self-defeating attempt to solve a series of interlocking puzzles. The operas of Borodin and Mussorgsky either were not completed by their composers or exist and are performed in numerous highly edited versions. One of Tchaikovsky's operas, based on the Gogol story from which Rimsky-Korsakov's *Christmas Eve* also derives, not only exists in more than one form, but is also known by a bewildering variety of names, including *Vakula the Smith*, *Cherevichki*, *The Golden Slippers*, *The Slippers*, and *Oxana's* (or *Oksana's*) *Caprices*. If "Russian opera" be defined as opera composed by men born and educated inside the old Russian Empire or the USSR (the definition here accepted), it must then include operas to texts in Russian, Armenian, and Ukrainian —not to speak of English (Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress*) and other languages.

Another difficulty arises out of this thicket of problems: that of determining whether or not a given recorded version is "complete." This is easy with, say, Tchaikovsky's two most familiar operas or Prokofiev's *The Love for Three Oranges*, of which dependable scores are at hand. But I had no sooner begun to listen to records of Russian operas than I discovered that most of the scores I needed were not publicly available in the United States. I also learned that neither recordings marked "complete" nor even so-called "complete" scores were so in fact, except by very loose definition. In most cases, I have had to abandon the effort to make any pronouncement on this issue.

A third problem involves the fact that Russian is written in the Cyrillic alphabet—and that no uniform system of transliteration has been employed by the recording companies in providing, in our alphabet, pronounceable equivalents of the names of operas, roles, singers, and conductors. In so far as possible I have tried to maintain a consistent spelling for titles and the names of composers and performers. But to have attempted to wrest uniformity from the maddening diversity of transliterations of the names of characters in the operas would have produced chaos worse confounded. I have therefore followed the particular record sleeves and labels under consideration. In some cases, to be sure, I am not quite certain whether two names are merely two differing transliterations of the same Russian name or whether they represent two different roles.

I have come away from many days of listening to the records listed below (and to others cut from current catalogues since I began to listen) with the conviction that *Boris Godunov*, *Eugene Onegin*, and *Pique Dame* soar miles above all other Russian operas of the nineteenth century. (*Prince Igor* and *Khovanshchina* appear to me to be too patchy, too compounded of banalities, to qualify.) Of what I have been able to hear from the more recent repertoire, *The Love for Three Oranges* and *The Rake's Progress* seem similarly to top the skyline. But what I should think of several other operas (*Le Coq d'or* is the chief example) if I could hear them in recording — or of several operas represented in this discography if they were to receive worthy recordings — I cannot, of course, imagine. There are strange and striking gaps in the representation of Russian opera on LP.

Whenever I have been unable to check a piece of information given on a record sleeve or in an accompanying text, I have tried to indicate that I am quoting and have given the source. Life would have been simpler if Russian composers of the nineteenth century had been willing to complete their own operas and had not been subject to so ungovernable an itch to rewrite each other's.

BORODIN, ALEXANDER PORFIRYEVICH (1833–87)

PRINCE IGOR (2 Editions, plus excerpts)
Prince Igor (*première*, St. Petersburg, Nov. 4, 1890), prologue and four acts, to a libretto by the composer; left unfinished; completed by Glazunov and Rimsky-Korsakov. The complex, disjunct plot (with scenes in half-pagan Russia, A. D. 1185) deals with the schemes of Prince Galitsky to usurp the position of Prince Igor; the Polovtsi are a people against whom Igor is waging war.

Known especially for its barbaric, semi-Oriental Polovtsi scene, the opera otherwise suffers from stylistic indecisiveness and an intermittent stasis that even good staging can scarcely overcome. The textually complete Yugoslav recording for London is a likeness of the score; its superiority to the cut Russian recording on the Period label lies only in its completeness and (not by much) in its engineering. The Russian singers, most particularly the men (and especially the Galitsky and Konchak, who have the plums among the arias), are vastly superior. But, tradition or no, I cannot prefer a version that omits — as the Period set does — all of Act III and also suffers from other, briefer excisions.

The London set includes good descriptive notes by M. Montagu-Nathan; though it was issued some time ago, I have been unable to see the libretto-text. The Period set has pedestrian notes and a libretto giving the recorded passages in transliterated Russian and stilted English. Recommendation: despite the unquestionable superiority of the Russian singers, the London version is the set to own if one cannot own them both.

Of the plethora of records offering excerpts from *Prince Igor*, and most particularly of the Polovtsi Dances with and without chorus, the Colosseum disks are almost identical with the same passages in the Period recording; Angel 35144, with Igor Markevitch leading the Orchestre National de la Radiodiffusion Française and a chorus singing in French, is very kinetic and startlingly lifelike; a Westminster disk (W-LAB 7039), with Arthur Rodzinski and the Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of London, is just as lifelike and measurably less violent. Although it is impossible to mention here many other recorded excerpts of both historic and intrinsic interest, a special word must be set down for the manner in which Raphael Arie sings Galitsky's "I hate a dreary life" in *Russian Operatic Arias* (London LL 1317); this all but brings back Chaliapin at his best.

—Valeria Heybalova (s), Yaroslavna; Biserka Tzveych (s), Polovtsi Girl & Yaroslavna's Nurse; Melanie Burgarinovich (ms), Konchakovna; Noni Zhunetz (t), Vladimir; Drago Petrovich (t), Ovlur; Nikola Janchich (t), Eroshka; Dushan Popovich (b), Prince Igor; Zharko Tzveych (bs), Galitsky and Konchak; Dragomir Ninkovich (bs), Skula. Chorus and Orchestra of the National Opera, Belgrade, Oscar Danon, cond. LONDON XLLA 30. Four 12-in. $19.92.

—E. Smolenskaya (s), Yaroslavna; A. Ivanova (s), Polovtsi Maiden; Korneyeva (s), Yaroslavna's Nurse; Borisenko (c), Konchakovna; S. Lemeshev (t), Vladimir; A. Serov (t), Ovlur; F. Godovkin (t), Eroshka; Andrei Ivanov (b), Prince Igor; A. Pirogov (bs-b), Galitsky; M. Reizen (bs), Konchak; I. Skobtsov (bs), Skula. Chorus and Orchestra GABT of USSR, Alexander Melik-Pashayev, cond. PERIOD SPL 552. Three 12-in. $14.94.

—Overture, Prologue (Poutivle Scene), Act I, Scenes 1 & 2. Cast of PERIOD version, but "Chorus and Orchestra of the Bolshoi Theater under Alexander Melik-Pashaieff." COLOSSEUM CRLP 166. 12-in. $3.98.

—Act II (Polovtsi Scene), Complete. Cast as above. COLOSSEUM CRLP 10220. $3.98.

DARGOMIZHSKY, ALEXANDER SERGEYEVICH (1813–69)

RUSSALKA (excerpts)

Russalka (*première*, St. Petersburg, May 16, 1856), four acts, to a libretto by the composer (after Pushkin). The plot, related to the plots of Dvorak's *Russalka*, Adam's *Giselle*, and Puccini's *Le Villi*, concerns a peasant girl who drowns herself and becomes a water sprite. The Prince who has betrayed her repents and returns to the scene of her death. The Miller, father of the girl, and now mad, demands that the Prince restore his daughter to life. In the final scene, the Prince imagines that his young daughter by a princess speaks of the Russalka as her mother. As he stands at the edge of the water, the enraged Miller flings him to his death in the rushing stream.

While the excerpts on Colosseum manage to present some conception of what the entire opera may be, the disk is poorly recorded. The women's voices, reedy and file-edged, are inferior to the men's—especially as the latter include the noble bass of Mark Reizen. The orchestral playing (as much of it as can be heard) seems ragged and gluey. The record also contains excerpts from Dargomizhsky's *The Stone Guest* (see below), Napravnik's *Dubrovsky* (q. v.), and two operas by Anton Rubinstein: *The Demon* and *Nero* (q. v.).

What may well be the same recording of the Mad Scene from Act III is very much better in sound on the Concert Hall disk. The singers, and particularly the Chaliapin-like Reizen, tend to cover the orchestra, but in part that may easily be the composer's fault. Both Reizen and Nelepp sing with style, color, and conviction.

—Highlights (Russalka's Song, Act I; Mad Scene, Prince's Cavatina, Natasha's Aria, Act III). Eva Smolenskaya (s), Natasha; Klavdya Djerzhinskaya (s), Russalka; Sergei Lemeshev & Georgi Nelepp (t), the Prince; Mark Reizen (bs), the Miller. Bolshoi Theater Orchestra, Vassily Nebolsin, Alexander Orlov, Samuel Samosud, conds. COLOSSEUM CRLP 139 (with arias from various other operas). $3.98.

—Mad Scene, Act III. Georgi Nelepp (t), the Prince; Mark Reizen (bs), the Miller. Chorus and Orchestra of the Bolshoi Theater, Vassily Nebolsin, cond. CONCERT HALL CRS 1302 (with Glazunov: Symphony No. 5). $3.98.

THE STONE GUEST (excerpts)

The Stone Guest (*première*, St. Petersburg, Feb. 28, 1872), three acts, an unaltered setting of the dramatic poem by Pushkin. The plot is much like that of Lorenzo da Ponte's libretto for Mozart's *Don Gio-*

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vanni, but with some characters having different names.

The two very brief mezzo-soprano arias on this disk are sung ineptly by Maria Maksakova, who has been recorded as if through the fog over Granada which the first aria describes. It is impossible to obtain even an impression of the opera from these snippets—beyond that of Spanish local color (the first aria opens with part of the Spanish melody employed in Glinka's *Jota Aragonesa*).

—Arias (Laura's arias). Maria Maksakova (ms); the Bolshoi Theater Orchestra, Alexander Melik-Pashayev, cond. COLOSSEUM CRLP-139 (with arias from various other operas). $3.98.

GLINKA, MIKHAIL IVANOVICH (1803–57)

A LIFE FOR THE CZAR (IVAN SUSSANIN) (2 Editions, plus excerpts)

A Life for the Czar, also called *Ivan Sussanin* (*première*, St. Petersburg, Dec. 9, 1836), four acts and epilogue, to a libretto by G. F. Rosen, the first and more popular of Glinka's two operas. With *Russlan and Ludmilla*, a grandfather of Russian opera, which also had two farhers: Dargomizhsky's *Russalka* and *The Stone Guest*. Unfortunately, it is made up of vast steppes of banality achieved in inept imitation of Italian opera. Here and there —it is true—Russian, Tatar, even Mongol faces peer through; but the prevailing physiognomy is still that of the predecessors of Verdi.

The scenes of *A Life for the Czar* occur in and near Moscow and in a Polish camp in 1613. The chroniclelike libretto, dealing with the way in which Ivan Sussanin gives his life to save the first Romanov czar from the Poles, is enlivened by a romance between Sussanin's daughter and an orphan boy he has adopted. The shifting between Russian and Polish scenes forcefully suggests *Boris Godunov*.

The London recording appears to be complete (no reliable score is at hand); it is an admirably earnest attempt by a second-rate company. The older Vanguard version is passably well conceived and recorded, but the piercing voice of Tanya Shpieler is disaffecting. Weighing virtues and drawbacks, I incline to recommend the London, particularly as the Vanguard suffers from inexplicable deletions.

No notes or libretto for the London set were available at time of writing. The Vanguard set carries dated notes from Rosa Newmarch's *Russian Opera* (1914) and a text printed only in an obfuscating translation.

Of the excerpts listed below, the Colosseum disk of Antonida's Romance and most of Act IV has been given a muffled recording; but Barsova's voice is vastly more engaging than either Shpieler's or Glavachevich's. The Ivan Sussanins are identical in this and the Vanguard recording. The mindlessly dull ballet music from Act III is given routine performance on the other Colosseum record.

Although I am far from convinced that the musical interest of *A Life for the Czar* can ever match its putative historic importance, I should still prefer to wait for some future recording before judging it too harshly. For the register and the purposes of students, the London made-in-Yugoslavia version will, in the meantime, serve. A small sample of what the opera might resemble in a first-class performance is to be found on London LL 1317, *Russian Operatic Airs* sung by Raphael Arie, who projects Sussanin's "They guess the truth" with fervor and majesty, and who is handsomely supported by the Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris under Alberto Erede. A complete recording on this level and with colleagues worthy of Arie might make Glinka's pioneering opera seem the masterpiece that many Russian critics have claimed it to be.

—Maria Glavachevich (s), Antonida; Militza Milodinovich (c), Vanya; Drago Startz (t), Bogdan Sabinin; Bogolub Grubach (t), Polish Messenger; Miro Changalovich (bs), Ivan Sussanin; Ivan Murgashki (bs), Russian Soldier; Vladeta Dimitrievich (bs), Sigismund, King of Poland. Orchestra of the National Opera, Belgrade, Chorus of the Yugoslav Army, Slobodan Krstich, cond. LONDON XLLA 43. Four 12-in. $19.92.

—Tanya Shpieler (s), Antonida; Elena Antonova (c), Vanya; Georgi Nelepp (t), Bogdan Sabinin; Ivan Skobtsov (t), Polish Messenger; Maxim Mikhailov (bs), Ivan Sussanin; Serge Khossov (bs), Russian Soldier; Serge Svetlanov (bs), Sigismund, King of Poland. Chorus and Orchestra of the Bolshoi Opera, Alexander Melik-Pashayev, cond. VANGUARD VRS 6010/12. Three 12-in. $14.94.

—Antonida's Romance and Act IV (nearly complete). V. Barsova (s), Antonida; M. Mikhailov (bs), Sussanin. Chorus and Orchestra of the Bolshoi Theater, Samuel Samosud, cond. COLOSSEUM CRLP 10170 (formerly 117). $3.98.

—Ballet Music, Act III. Bolshoi Theater Orchestra, Samuel Samosud, cond. COLOSSEUM CRLP 10110 (with *Prince Igor*: *Polovtsi Dances*). $3.98.

RUSSLAN AND LUDMILLA (1 Edition, plus excerpts)

Russlan and Ludmilla (*première*, St. Petersburg, Dec. 9, 1842), five acts, to a libretto based on Pushkin. Glinka's second, last, and less popular opera. Scenes: near Kiev, tenth century. Ludmilla, daughter of Svetozar, Grand Duke of Kiev, is abducted at her wedding. Ratmir and Farlaf, both in love with Ludmilla, join Russlan in the search for her. Chernomor, a wizard, has borne her off. After magical and knightly adventures, Russlan and Ludmilla are reunited.

Conventional in almost every respect, *Russlan* surprisingly boasts a young baritone hero; a contralto prince; a bard and an old magician who are tenors; and a heroine who is a coloratura straight out of Donizetti. The whole-tone scale made one of its first appearances in composed European music in passages in which Chernomor figures.

The first complete recording has special values for students, and will offer to many listeners the shock of revelation when they find that the rapid opening section of the familiar Overture is the much-discussed *"Slava!"* chorus that ends the opera—or that the romantic second section of the Overture is a lament by Russlan—or that the renowned "Russian" touches are all but lost in apings of Weber, Rossini, Bellini, and Donizetti.

Westminster has provided superior surfaces and a complete libretto in Russian, in transliteration, and in English. The transliteration is unfortunately based upon a prearranged system rather than upon the phonetics of the singers' speech, and the translation by Victor Seroff is comfortable rather than accurate (when, for example, the Russian says "going to Kiev," the translation reads "going home").

Swift, metallic, accurate, and cold, Vera Firsova is the best of the uninspiring singers. Kiril Kondrashin conducts with limp hands, evoking uniformly inexact ensemble. Above the generally dreary level of uneven music raggedly performed rise, not the ballet music (which is of the Minkus-Pugni school), but only the ever-fresh overture; Russlan's impressive Act II aria; Ludmilla's aria with string obbligato in Act III; the march and *lezginka* in Act IV; and the concluding chorus. The recording, technically almost up to current Western standards, unmercifully exposes both the spottiness of Glinka's taste and talent and the inferior singing, orchestral attack, and choral discipline. Recommended only for students.

The excerpts issued with selections from Rimsky-Korsakov's *Sadko* and *Snegourotchka* on a Colosseum disk are recorded so poorly that I can only surmise Irina Maslennikova's superiority to Vera Firsova in the florid role of Ludmilla. Not recommended.

—Vera Firsova (s), Ludmilla; Nina Pokrovskaya (s), Gorislava; Elena Korneyeva (ms), Naina; Evgenia Verbitskaya (c), Ratmir; Georgi Nelepp (t), Finn; Sergei Lemeshev (t), Bayan; Ivan Petrov (b), Russlan; Vladimir Gavrushov (bs), Svetozar; Alexei Krivchenia (bs), Farlaf. Chorus and Orchestra of the Bolshoi Theater, Kiril Kondrashin, cond. WESTMINSTER OPW 1401. Four 12-in. $15.92.

—Excerpts: Overture, three arias (Russlan, Bayan, Ludmilla). Irina Maslennikova (s), Sergei Lemeshev (t), Mark Reizen (bs). Chorus and Orchestra of the Bolshoi Theater, Alexander Melik-Pashayev and Vassily Nebolsin, conds. COLOSSEUM CRLP 159 (with *Snegourotchka* and *Sadko* excerpts). $3.98.

KABALEVSKY, DMITRI BORISOVICH (1904–)

COLAS BREUGNON (excerpts)

Colas Breugnon (*première*, Leningrad, 1938), to a libretto based on Romain Rolland's novel. Colas Breugnon, Master of Clamécy, has been described as a French Renaissance Robin Hood, a character somewhat derived from Rabelais. No vocal excerpts have thus far been issued here on records. These four instrumental excerpts breathe vigor and a genuine zest for life. They have unfortunately not been recorded with all the clarity they ask for, and Maestro Schuechter is at times more vigorous than exact. But this sampling is enough to make me eager to hear a complete recording of *Colas Breugnon*—and not merely several more versions of its overture.

—Suite, Op. 28 (Overture, *Popular Festival*, *Public Disaster* [*The Plague*], *In-*

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surrection). Philharmonia Orchestra, Wilhelm Schuechter, cond. M-G-M E 3112 (with Prokofiev: *The Gambler*: *Four Portraits*). $3.98.

TARAS' FAMILY (excerpts)
Taras' Family, opera to a libretto by S. A. Tzenin based on Boris Gorbatov's novel *The Unconquerable*. A typical literary product of "socialist realism," Gorbatov's novel—and presumably the libretto of Kabalevsky's opera—deals with the heroic struggles of simple Soviet workers and their families against the Nazi invaders of the Second World War. Although no text is provided with these excerpts, the brief quotations from the libretto reveal the crushing, unsmiling naïveté that goes with straight propagandistic art. The composer, no naïf of that stripe, appears to have supplied a score of ringing vitality, fruity melodies, neat (and sometimes original) harmonic investiture, and pleasant rhythmic variety. The recording is surely one of the best ever to have come from Russia (are the acoustics of the Kirov Theater the reason?), which is fortunate, as the performance is expertly conducted, handsomely sung, and neatly played. As long as one forgets the nonsense of the libretto (which to us can only seem cruelly to misuse suffering and genuine nobility), this is thoroughly enjoyable second-flight operatic music. Good descriptive notes by James Lyons.
—Excerpts (Overture, *The Departure of the Two Sons, In Taras' Home, In the Forest with Stepan and the Partisans, The Meeting of Nastia and Pavka, Andrey's Return from Captivity, The Burning of the School, At the Factory*, Finale). S. A. Kashevarova (s), Antonina; B. K. Kalyada (s), Nastia; S. P. Preobrazhenskaya (ms), Efrosinia; I. A. Nechaev (t), Nazar; V. G. Ulianov (t), Andrey; V. Ivanovsky (t), Pavka; A. K. Alexandrovich (t), Vanya; I. Alexeyev (b), Stepan; S. E. Strezhnev (b), Vassya; V. M. Luganin (bs-b), Semyon; I. Yashugin (bs), Taras; also V. A. Volokitina, E. V. Svirskaya, B. E. Lensky, A. P. Altantov, T. V. Melentev, and N. Shmelev. Chorus and Orchestra of the Kirov Theater of Opera and Ballet (Leningrad), B. E. Khalkin, cond. CLASSIC CE 3004. Two 12-in. $9.96.

LYSENKO, NIKOLAI (1842–1912)

NATALKA POLTAVKA (1 Edition)
Natalka Poltavka, three acts, is an opera in Ukrainian. The recording issued on the Argee label is so poor, dim, and unrewarding that it seems to multiply the banalities and clichés of the chauvinistic score. It would be unfair to judge the performers on the basis of this recording. A witty friend of mine said that the composer might well be a relative of the famous Russian geneticist Lysenko, so full is this score of acquired characteristics. Not recommended even to the curious.
—Zoya Gaidai, Natalka; I. Kozlovsky, Petro; I. Patorzhinsky, Viborny; Litvinenko-Volgemut, Terpilikha; M. Grishko, Mikola; S. Ivashtchenko, Vozny. Chorus and Orchestra of the Kiev Opera House, B. Tchistiakov, cond. ARGEE RGLP 702. Five 10-in. $15.00.

MUSSORGSKY, MODEST PETROVICH (1838–81)

BORIS GODUNOV (3 Editions, plus excerpts)
Boris Godunov (*première*, St. Petersburg, Feb. 8, 1874, prologue and four acts—nine scenes), to a libretto by the composer after Pushkin and N. M. Karamzin. The most renowned and by common consent the greatest of Russian operas, *Boris* has given rise to more discussion, polemic, and high-flown nonsense than any other. It became world-famous *in a somewhat* bedizened version by Rimsky-Korsakov; but all pretension that any performance is "pure Mussorgsky" is naïve or worse, for there is no single ur-text, and an editorial hand is absolutely required before the opera can be staged, played, or sung, if for no larger purpose than that of choosing among the three versions left by the composer himself. Its plot, complex and semi-historical, is too well known to require summarizing here.

In the full Rimsky-Korsakov version (which unquestionably prettifies and brightens up Mussorgsky's original conceptions), the Boris Christoff — Victor recording is unquestionably the best *Boris* now available. As Chaliapin never recorded more than snippets of what may (with Mary Garden's Mélisande) have been the greatest operatic characterization of modern times, and as Victor has withdrawn the set of Chaliapin highlights (RCA Victor LCT 3, 10-in.), we must make shift with Christoff, who sounds like Chaliapin's brother. It was a mistake for even so accomplished a singer to double as Pimen and Varlaam, as it was for others in the cast to perform similarly in more than one role. But performance, recording, surfaces, and packaging make this set one of the peak operatic recordings. The notes by Gerald Abraham and the complete libretto in English (by Louis Biancolli, and very sensible too) and transliteration are superbly thought out. Very highly recommended.

The recording of the Yugoslav National Opera of Belgrade on London is a tangle of compromises among the various versions: it is mostly Rimsky-Korsakov, and it omits Rangoni. The performance is not quite first-rate; the recording is very good indeed. I have not seen the accompanying printed materials.

Some interest clings to the recording variously available on Colosseum, Period, and Royale, as well as in excerpt. It is in part straight Mussorgsky, but Rimsky occasionally peeks through. The voices are inferior across the board to those in the Victor set, though Pirogov has moments of great power as Boris, and both Mikhailov and Kozlovsky are superior singing actors. The Colosseum album has an English text, but no transliteration. The Royale album has no printed matter whatever.

The Stokowski–Rossi-Lemeni disk of excerpts is more Stokowski than Rossi-Lemeni and much more Stokowski than either Rimsky-Korsakov or Mussorgsky. Avoid it. The highlights conducted by Kabalevsky can make us wish that he had been given better singers to work with, a better orchestra, and better recording. For this movie sound-track shows him as a

vigorous and sensitive conductor, and the excerpts are as nearly pure Mussorgsky as is possible.

Of chiefly sentimental and historic interest are the souvenirs of two renowned Metropolitan singers of Boris. Pinza was an impressive Boris despite the total unsuitability of the Italian version in which he sang, and the recording shows signs of its age. Kipnis, having been born in Russia, was naturally more in the vein, and the record of excerpts benefits enormously from the enunciated power of his Russian as he characterizes both Boris and Varlaam.

Raphael Arie, singing Boris's death scene (London LPS 98, 10-in.) and both Boris's "I have attained the highest power" and Varlaam's "In the town of Kazan" (London LL 1317), suggests that he would make a Boris to match Christoff's in vocal beauty, psychological awareness, and idiomatic insight. He is heard in non-Rimsky versions.

—Ludmila Lebedeva (s), Xenia; Eugenia Zareska (ms), Feodor and Marina Mnishek; Lydia Romanova (ms), Xenia's Nurse and Innkeeper; André Bielecki (t), Prince Shuisky, Missail, and Khruschov; Nicolai Gedda (t), Grigori (the False Dimitri); Wassili Pasternak (t), The Fool; Gustav Ustinov (t), The Court Boyar; Raymond Bonte (t), Lavitski; Boris Christoff (bs), Boris Godunov, Pimen, and Varlaam; Kim Borg (bs), Andrei Schelkalov and Rangoni; Stanislav Pieczora (bs), Nikitich; Eugené Bousquet (bs), Chernikovski. Choeurs Russes de Paris, Orchestre National de la Radiodiffusion Française, Issay Dobrowen, cond. RCA VICTOR LHMV 6400. Four 12-in. $19.92.

—Sofia Yankovich (s), Feodor; Zlata Sesardich (s), Xenia; Biserka Kaluchich (ms), Innkeeper; Melanie Bugarinovich (c), Marina; Melitza Miladinovich (c), Nurse; Stepan Andrashevich (t), Prince Shuisky; Miro Brajnik (t), Grigori (the False Dimitri); Zhika Milosavlievich (t), Khruschov; Stepan Vukashevich (t), Missail and The Fool; Nikola Yanchich (t), Yurodivy; Dushan Popovich (b), Schelkalov; Miro Changolovich (bs), Boris Godunov; Zharko Tzveych (bs), Varlaam; Branko Pivnichki (bs), Pimen; Ilya Gligorievich (bs), Nikitich. Chorus and Orchestra of the National Opera, Belgrade, Kreshemir Baranovich, cond. LONDON XLLA 31. Three 12-in. $14.94.

—E. Kruglikova (s), Xenia; M. Maksakova (ms), Marina; T. Turtchina (ms), Innkeeper; M. Verbitskaya (c), Nurse; B. Zlatogorova (c), Feodor; G. Nelepp (t), Grigori (the False Dimitri); N. Hanaiev (t), Prince Shuisky; I. Kozlovsky (t), The Fool; S. Lubenzov (t), Varlaam; N. Pevegoodov (t), Khruschov; A. Bogdanov (b), Schelkalov; A. Piragov (bs), Boris Godunov; M. Mikhailov (bs), Pimen; N. Yakushenko (bs), Missail; I. Krassovsky (bs), Nikitich; M. Sipaiev (bs), Mitiukha. Bolshoi Theater Orchestra and Chorus, N. Golovanov, cond. COLOSSEUM CRLP 124/6. Three 12-in. $11.94. (The identical recording has been issued as PERIOD SPLP 554 and as ROYALE 1390/2.)

—Highlights. Nicola Rossi-Lemeni (bs); San Francisco Symphony Orchestra, San Francisco Opera Chorus, Leopold Stokowski, cond. RCA VICTOR LM 1764. $3.98.

—Highlights. I. Orlova (s), Marina; V. Bezzubenko (t), The Fool; I. Gavrenko (t), Shuisky; O. Petrov (t), Dimitri; G. Orlov (bs), Boris; V. Morozov (bs), Officer of the Guard. Chorus and Orchestra of the Marinsky Theater, Dimitri Kabalevsky, cond. COLOSSEUM CRLP 10170 (formerly 117). $3.98.

—Abridged. Cast of Colosseum-Period-Royale recording listed above. PERIOD SPL 565, 12-in. $4.98.

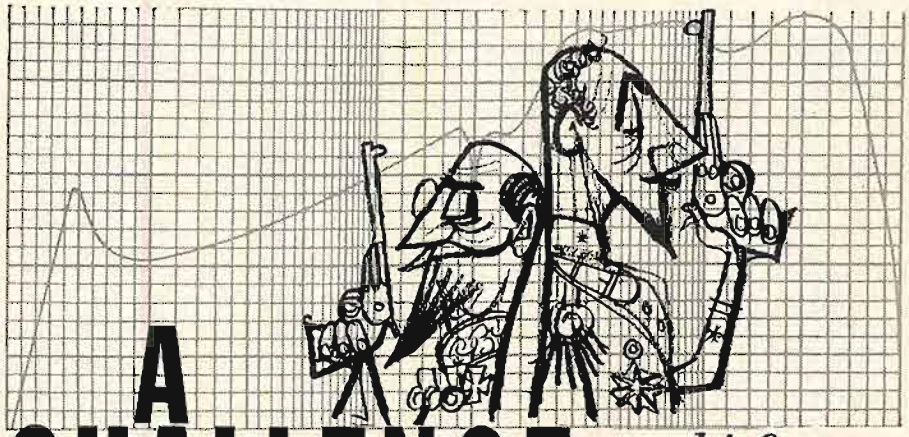
—Scenes. Ezio Pinza (bs); Chorus of the Metropolitan Opera Association and Orchestra, Emil Cooper, cond. COLUMBIA ML 4115. $3.98.

—Scenes. Alexander Kipnis (bs), Ilya Tamarin (t). RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, Nicolai Berezowsky, cond. RCA VICTOR LBC 1082. $2.98.

KHOVANSHCHINA (1 Edition, plus excerpts)

Khovanshchina (*première*, St. Petersburg, Feb. 21, 1886), five acts to a text by the composer. No ur-text of *Khovanshchina* exists, and to claim "completeness" for any version of it is to make a claim that can be neither accepted nor denied. Rimsky-Korsakov completed and orchestrated one version, from which he omitted sections that might better have been included. The opera has become known, when at all, chiefly in variants of the Rimsky version; Stravinsky and Ravel both had their hands in the renowned version first given in Paris on June 5, 1913.

The London recording appears to be nearly the Rimsky version almost complete. Like all the other Yugoslav re-



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cordings on the London label, it is estimable, well-engineered—and not quite first-rate. The singers are good, but not very good, and the orchestral playing leaves very much to be desired by the highest standards. Bugarinovich as Martha, Zharko Tzveych as Khovansky, and Dushan Popovich as Shaklovity stand up above a general level of acceptable mediocrity. The plot, pseudohistoric in nature, is even less integrated than that of *Boris Godunov*; the score is both somewhat less powerful and less startlingly unlike any other score. Good notes by M. Montagu-Nathan, but (to date) no text. Recommended until something better comes along.

The excerpts on the Vanguard recording, made from Russian tapes, are non-Rimsky and include notable high spots omitted by that busy pedant. The chorus — a protagonist of nearly first importance in Mussorgsky's plan — is here of the very first order. The Martha—this time Zara Dolokhanova — is again the outstanding performer. Again we have notes (sketchy ones by S. W. Bennett) and no text. Recommended for those who already know the opera and who would like to know Mussorgsky untouched by Rimsky-Korsakov (though undoubtedly touched by some editor or conductor).

—Sofia Yankovich (s), Emma; Anita Mezetova (s), Susanna; Melanie Bugarinovich (ms), Martha; Alexander Marinkovich (t), Prince Andrew Khovansky; Drago Startz (t), Prince Vassily Golitsin; Stepan Andrashevich (t), The Scrivener; Zhivoin Iovanovich (t), Third Streletz and Streshnev; Dushan Popovich (b), Shaklovity; Zharko Tzveych (bs), Prince Ivan Khovansky; Miro Changalovich (bs), Dositheus; Zhivoin Milosavlevich (bs), Varsonofiev; Krsta Krstich (bs), Kuzka; Vladimir Popovich (bs), First Streletz; George Djurgevich (bs), Second Streletz. Chorus & Orchestra of the National Opera, Belgrade, Kreshimir Baranovich, cond. LONDON XLLA 29. Four 12-in. $19.92.

—Great Scenes. Zara Dolokhanova (ms), Martha; Pavel Pontryiagin (t), The Scrivener; Veniamin Shevtzov (t), Kuska; Alexander Pirogov (bs) and Alexander Tikhonov (bs), Shaklovity; Boris Dobrin (bs), Prince Ivan Khovansky. Orchestra of the USSR Radio, etc., Vassili Nebolsin, Alexei Kovalev, Samuel Samosud, conds. VANGUARD VRS 6022. $4.98.

THE MARRIAGE (1 Edition)

The Marriage (*première*, St. Petersburg, Apr. 1, 1909), incomplete opera consisting of one act in four scenes, to a prose comedy by Gogol. Mussorgsky's attempt to imitate Dargomïzhsky's procedure in setting a Pushkin play, unchanged, to music is dull, though it may be of special dramatic interest to those who can understand the Russian text. (The opera was later completed by Ippolitov-Ivanov.) The Oceanic recording is not notable except for the roaring performance of the Podkolessine, Nicolas Agroff. Recommended primarily for specialists.

—Charlotte Demazures (c), Fiokla; Jean Mollien (t), Kotchkarew; Nicolas Agroff (bs-b), Podkolessine; Alexandre Popovitzky (bs), Stepan. Orchestre Radio-Symphonique de Paris, René Leibowitz, cond. OCEANIC OCS 36. $5.95.

NAPRAVNIK, EDUARD FRANZEVICH (1839–1916)

DUBROVSKY (excerpt)

Dubrovsky (*première*, St. Petersburg, Jan. 15, 1895), four acts to a libretto by Modest Ilyich Tchaikovsky (after Pushkin), was the most successful opera of the noted Czech composer-conductor long domiciled in Russia. The Colosseum disk, poorly recorded, contains Dubrovsky's once-famous aria, in which the hero recalls the scenes and happiness of his childhood and longs for extinction. The tenor Ivan Kozlovsky is scarcely the master of its difficulties, but the excerpt does hint that Napravnik's opera must stand somewhere between Tchaikovsky and Dvorak in style.

—Ivan Kozlovsky (t), Dubrovsky; Bolshoi Theater Orchestra, Nicolai Golovanov, cond. COLOSSEUM CRLP 139 (with excerpts from various other operas). $3.98.

PROKOFIEV, SERGEI SERGEYEVICH (1891–1953)

THE GAMBLER (excerpts)

The Gambler (*première*, Brussels, Apr. 29, 1929), four acts to a libretto by the composer (based on Dostoevski's novel). A scheduled performance of *The Gambler* at the Maryinsky Theater, St. Petersburg, was canceled by the Revolution of 1917; the *première* therefore was given in a French translation at Brussels twelve years later. The M-G-M recording does not contain four excerpts from the opera; the "four portraits" are, rather, a four-section symphonic poem that Prokofiev himself derived from that score. It is only passably well played and recorded, which is very sad, as *The Gambler* is one of Prokofiev's major compositions.

—"Four Portraits." Philharmonia Orchestra, Wilhelm Schuechter, cond. M-G-M E 3112 (with Kabalevsky: *Colas Breugnon*, Suite). $3.98.

THE LOVE FOR THREE ORANGES (1 Edition, plus excerpts)

The Love for Three Oranges (*première*, Chicago, Dec. 30, 1921), four acts to a libretto by the composer (after Carlo Gozzi), a setting of a "fairy tale" written in defense of the *commedia dell' arte*. Its intricately complicated stage investiture and story are excellently recounted on the record sleeves in notes by Harold Lawrence and an unsigned synopsis. There is, however, no text in either Russian (or transliterated Russian) or English, an omission that clearly diminishes the usefulness of the set. One of Prokofiev's most sardonic displays of *diablerie* and fairy-tale enchantment is here given a rousing, modulated performance that must be truly stirring when seen on the stage. (A friend who saw this company at the Paris Opéra in June described the production as brilliant and effectively stylized.) Even without the enhancement of visual spectacle, this opera—requiring characterization and humor much more consistently than it demands beauty of singing—is the best evidence we have of the talents of a Yugoslav company. The excellently recorded orchestra would seem to exceed the Belgrade group in precision, variety of tone, and sheer pliability. The

result is entirely diverting, a swirling riot of sustained color and hilarity into which the familiar excerpts intrude at first almost as though they were interpolations. Highly recommended from every point of view. This is certainly the best recording of a Russian opera yet made in Eastern Europe.

Of the several available recordings of the suite from this opera, two seem to me to be worth special consideration: that conducted by Martinon with the Lamoureux Orchestra (Epic LC 3042, with the *Classical* Symphony) for its fine ensemble textures; that conducted by Désormière with the French National Symphony Orchestra (Capitol P 8149, with the suite from *Lieutenant Kijé*) for its superior insight into the wit and satire of the music.

—Vanda Guerlovich (s), Fata Morgana; Sonia Khochevar (s), Ninette; Bogdana Stritar (ms), Princess Clarissa; Bogena Glavak (ms), Nicolette; Elza Karlovatz (ms), Smeraldine; Vanda Zikherl (c), Linette; Yanez Lipushchek (t), The Prince; Drago Chuden (t), Truffaldino; Slavko Shtrukel (t), Master of Ceremonies; Danilo Merlak (b), Leandre; Vekoslav Yanko (b), Pantaloon; Latko Koroshetz (bs), King of Clubs; Zdravko Kovach (bs), Tchelio; Friderik Lupsha, hoarse (bs), Kreonta; Vladimir Dolnichar (bs), Farfarello; Simeon Tzar (bs), The Herald, etc. Orchestra and Choir of the Slovenian National Opera, Ljubljana, Bogo Leskovich, cond. EPIC SC 6013. Two 12-in. $7.96.

RACHMANINOFF, SERGEI VASILYEVICH (1873–1943)

ALEKO (1 Edition)

Aleko (*première*, Moscow, May 9, 1893), one act, to a libretto by V. I. Nemirovich-Danchenko (after Pushkin), was composed when Rachmaninoff was only nineteen, and was staged at the insistence of Tchaikovsky. Although much of its score is clearly imitation Tchaikovsky, sections of it show Rachmaninoff momentarily toying with the coloristic effects of such nationalist composers as Borodin and Mussorgsky. The recording is good; the performance is notably vital and electric, being marred only by the saw-tooth-edge singing of Nina Pokrovskaya, who is (as in almost all Russian operatic performances) cleanly outdistanced by her male colleagues. Not great art, perhaps, but living music vitally performed. Recommended.

—Nina Pokrovskaya (s), Zemfira; Anatole Orfenov (t), The Young Gypsy; V. Zlatogorova (c), An Old Gypsy Woman; Ivan Petrov (b), Aleko; Alexander Ognivtzev (bs), The Old Man. Chorus and Bolshoi Symphony Orchestra, Nicolai Golovanov, cond. CONCERT HALL CHS 1309. $3.98.

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV, NIKOLAI ANDREYEVICH (1844–1908)

MISCELLANIES

I list the Colosseum disk of assorted arias first because it contains some of the finest singing among the very numerous Rimsky-Korsakov operatic recordings and because it contains excerpts from operas not otherwise represented on currently available records. The bands, clearly recorded at different times and under varying conditions, are not all good, but all except one of them (that from *Le Coq d'or*) are pleasurably listenable.

D. Pantofel-Netchetskia sings the "Hymn to the Sun" from *Le Coq d'or* well enough to have deserved adequate recording, which she did not receive. S. Lemeshev handles Levko's arietta from *May Night* with true mastery; his is one of the few unquestionably great voices among those of recently recorded Soviet singers. I. Kozlovsky, who sounds almost like a countertenor, does far less well with Levko's aria from the same opera. The baritone A. Ivanov is not especially distinguished in Mizguir's aria from *Snegourotchka*, but Lemeshev again (alone in Czar Berendey's cavatina, and with the soprano A. Ivanova in the duet of Czar Berendey and Koupava) provides truly remarkable interpretative singing. Lemeshev handsomely revives the well-worn "Song of India" from *Sadko*, but the bass B. Freitkov and the soprano N. Kazantseva do only a minimum with, respectively, the "Song of the Viking" and Volkhova's lullaby from the same opera. N. Shpieler, a soprano not always sure enough of her control to make listening to her a pleasure, makes something remarkable of Marfa's aria from *The Czar's Bride*, as Lemeshev does of Lykov's aria; M. Maksakova, a mezzo with a lush, almost Italianate voice, lacks only intellectual control in her otherwise satisfying singing of Liubasha's aria. Despite its poor mechanical qualities, this disk is recommended as an indication of the most applauded operatic singing in present-day Russia.

—Arias from *Le Coq d'or, Kashtchay the Immortal, May Night, Sadko, Snegourotchka, The Czar's Bride.* D. Pantofel-Netchetskia (s), A. Ivanova (s), N. Shpieler (s), N. Kazantseva (s), M. Maksakova (ms), S. Preobrajenskaya (ms), S. Lemeshev (t), I. Kozlovsky (t), A. Ivanov (b), B. Freitkov (bs). Orchestra of the Bolshoi Theater, A. Orlov, Kiril Kondrashin, N. Golovanov, conds. COLOSSEUM CRLP 121. $3.98.

The *omnium gatherum* from M-G-M is included only because it provides selections not otherwise easy to come by. *Mlada* was originally designed as a four-act opera, one act each to be written by Rimsky, Borodin, Cui, and Mussorgsky. It was never produced, and Rimsky rearranged his music as an opera-ballet and later as a concert suite. The *Cortège*, well played and recorded, is a typical Rimsky display of banners and panoply. The other excerpts on this disk (which also includes Rimsky's Piano Concerto and what is described as his "orchestration" of Glinka's *Kamarinskaya*) are all competently—but not brilliantly—set forth.

—"Rimsky-Korsakov Program." *Mlada*: *Cortège. May Night*: Overture. *Snegourotchka*: *Dance of the Birds*; *Whitsunday Festival. Le Coq d'or*: *Bridal Procession*, etc. Philharmonia Orchestra, Anatole Fistoulari, cond. London Symphony Orchestra, George Weldon, cond. M-G-M E 3045. $3.98.

CHRISTMAS EVE (excerpts)

Christmas Eve (*première*, St. Petersburg, Dec. 10, 1895), four acts to a libretto by

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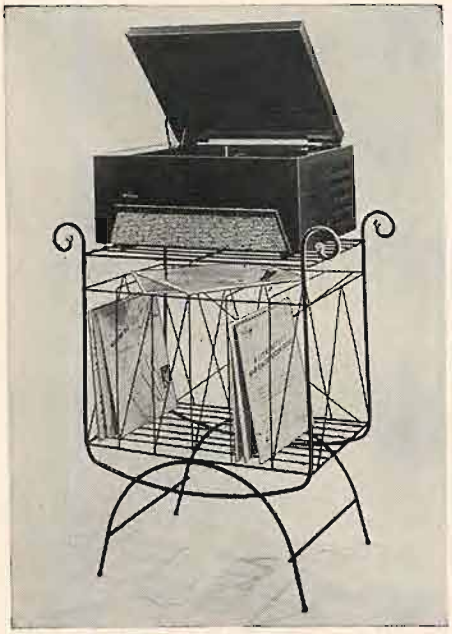

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the composer (after Gogol), is based on the same story as Tchaikovsky's opera variously called *Vakula the Smith*, *Cherevichki*, *Oksana's Caprices*, and *The Golden Slippers*. The orchestral suite, played well on the Urania disk, was all taken from Act III except for the introduction. It is typical Rimsky-Korsakov story book music, blatantly bright-colored and somewhat inconclusive.
—Suite. Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin, Leopold Ludwig, cond. URANIA URLP 7045 (with Sinfonietta, Op. 31). $3.98.

LE COQ D'OR (excerpts)
Le Coq d'or (*première*, Moscow, Oct. 7, 1909), opera in three acts to a libretto by V. I. Byelsky (after Pushkin). This enchanting satiric fairy-tale opera has proved to be Rimsky-Korsakov's most enduring stage work. That the Russian opera probably standing just below *Boris Godunov* in frequency of performance should never have been recorded is perhaps the most inexplicable of recording vagaries. The suite he made from it, however, has been recorded plethorically. Of the recordings listed below, the Dobrowen is a high-fidelity fan's dream (as is the suite from *Czar Saltan* on the reverse); the Ansermet is almost its match; the Beecham is the most mellow and magisterially orchestral; and the Soviet version (which claims to be the "uncut original edition"), while orchestrally inferior, maintains real interest by demonstrating the wide gap between Western and Russian ideas about this music. The Western treatment seems closely related to the gouts of color that Bakst and others supplied for Diaghilev; the Soviet concept is much closer to the satire and slight misfocusing that Rimsky undoubtedly had in mind. There are other disks of this suite, some of which may well have distinct virtues of their own; those below were the only ones submitted.
—Suite. Philharmonia Orchestra, Issay Dobrowen, cond. ANGEL 35010 (with *Czar Saltan*, Suite). $4.98.
—Suite. Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Ernest Ansermet, cond. LONDON LL 694 (with *Capriccio espagnol*). $3.98.
—Suite. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Sir Thomas Beecham, cond. COLUMBIA ML 4454 (with Franck: *Le Chasseur maudit*). $3.98.
—Suite. State Radio Orchestra of the USSR, Nicolai Golovanov, cond. VANGUARD VRS 6000 (with Mussorgsky: *Night on Bald Mountain*). $4.98.

CZAR SALTAN (excerpts)
Czar Saltan (*première*, Moscow, Nov. 3, 1900), opera in a prologue and four acts to a text by V. I. Byelsky (after Pushkin), once popular in Russia, is known elsewhere chiefly as the source of the "Flight of the Bumble Bee," which is not included in the suite drawn from the opera by Rimsky. Of the three recordings listed below, the Angel disk completely outdistances the others in aptness and brilliance of performance, in recording and processing, and in packaging. It has excellent notes by Gerald Abraham.
—Suite. Philharmonia Orchestra, Issay Dobrowen, cond. ANGEL 35010 (with *Le Coq d'or*, Suite). $4.98.
—Suite. Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra, Henk Spruit, cond. CONCERT HALL CHS 1155 (with Massenet: *Le Cid*, Suite). $3.98.
—Suite. Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin, Otto Dobrindt, cond. URANIA URLP 7078 (with Glière: *Red Poppy*, Suite). $3.98.

IVAN THE TERRIBLE (PSKOVITYANKA) (excerpts)
Ivan the Terrible, also known as *Pskovityanka* (*The Maid from Pskov*) (*première*, St. Petersburg, Jan. 13, 1873), four acts to a libretto by the composer (after L. A. Mei). It was first called *Ivan the Terrible* by Diaghilev when he presented it in Paris in 1909. The suite heard here does not seem to have been edited by the composer himself. The unsigned notes accompanying the record say that the listener "will surely be struck . . . by the similarity of certain sections of this suite to later works by Rimsky-Korsakov and to the *Boris Godunov* of Mussorgsky," which is accurate, as all of Rimsky's orchestral music has a strong family *Gestalt*—and this in particular resembles those orchestral parts of *Boris* which are more Rimsky than Mussorgsky. Performance and recording are good, but not surpassing.
—Suite. London Symphony Orchestra, Anatole Fistoulari, cond. M-G-M E 3076 (with Balakirev: *Tamar*). $3.98.

LEGEND OF THE INVISIBLE CITY OF KITEZH (excerpts)
The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh and the Maiden Fevronia (*première*, St. Petersburg, Feb. 20, 1907), four acts to a libretto by V. I. Byelsky. This symbolic opera, sometimes loosely called "the Russian *Parsifal*," has always been popular in Russia. The suite, apparently not chosen by the composer, includes the Prelude, Bridal Procession, Battle Scene from Act III, and Final Ascent to the Invisible City. It is brightly played, rather indecisive music.
—Suite. Bavarian Symphony Orchestra, Kurt Graunke, cond. URANIA URLP 7115 (with *Russian Easter Overture*; D'Indy: *Istar*). $3.98.

MAY NIGHT (1 Edition)
May Night (*première*, St. Petersburg, Jan. 21, 1880), three acts to a libretto by the composer (after Gogol), a humorous love story with supernatural overtones, including a *russalka* or mermaid who was once a love-deceived maiden. The performance here recorded does not rise to second-rate status; some of the singing, particularly that of Maslennikova, sounds strictly amateurish. The recording is not much better. Interesting for the document, but not otherwise possible to recommend.
—Irina Maslennikova (s), Pannochka; Valentina Borisenko (ms), Ganna; Natasha Klyagina (ms), First Mermaid; Elena Gribova (ms), Second Mermaid; Olga Insarova (ms), Third Mermaid; Elena Verbitskaya (c), Svoiachenitsa; Serge Lemeshev (t), Levko; Viacheslav Shevtsov (t), Vinokur; Peter Volovov (b), Kalenik; Serge Krasovsky (bs), Golova; Vladimir Tyutyunnik (bs), Pisar. Chorus and

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MOZART AND SALIERI (2 Editions)
Mozart and Salieri (*première*, Moscow, Dec. 7, 1898), opera in two acts to Pushkin's poem. A conscious tribute to Mozart and to Dargomizhsky's theories of using a poet's text unchanged as a libretto, this curious opera consists of uninteresting recitative relieved occasionally by quotations from Mozart scores, including the Requiem. The Oceanic disk benefits from the better of the two tenors and from superior recording; the Russian tape, as processed for both Concert Hall and Colosseum, excels in its idiomatically sung Russian text (as against the French adaptation) and the magnificent characterization of Salieri by Mark Reizen. The French text as sung is supplied with the Oceanic disk; nothing but an approximate English translation comes with either of the Russian versions.

The "action"—if monologues and conversations can be so called—of *Mozart and Salieri* revolves about the unfounded legend that the jealous Salieri, a composer of some distinction, poisoned Mozart, his more talented rival. A dramatic opera could possibly be made from this material; Pushkin and Rimsky-Korsakov have been satisfied with meditative and conversational scenes entirely devoid of dramatic content.
—Jean Mollien (t), Mozart; Jacques Linsolas (b), Salieri. Paul Jacobs (piano) and L'Orchestre Radio-Symphonique de Paris and Chamber Chorus, René Leibowitz, cond. OCEANIC OCS 32. $5.95.
—Ivan Kozlovsky (t), Mozart; Mark Reizen (bs), Salieri. State Radio Chorus and Orchestra of the USSR, Samuel Samosud, cond. CONCERT HALL CHS 01315. $3.98.
—The same, with added "encores" by Mark Reizen. COLOSSEUM CRLP 10420. $3.98.

SADKO (1 Edition)
Sadko (*première*, Moscow, Jan. 7, 1898), opera in seven scenes to a text by the composer and V. I. Byelsky. The fantastic story, drawn from folk legends, takes place largely in eleventh- and twelfth-century Novgorod. No attempt is made at historical realism, and both text and score abound in obvious anachronisms. The basis of the text is a colorful pantheism involving the semideification of rivers and the ocean; the intricate plot cannot be condensed here. One of Rimsky's richest compositions, *Sadko* is here given in a cut version despite an assurance to the contrary on the record sleeve. An English translation is supplied, but neither the Cyrillic nor a transliteration of the text as sung.

Once allowance is made for the partial blotting-out of the orchestra by over-recorded voices (many of them not of the highest quality), this is a generally good performance. Recording and processing stand high above the average for Russian tapes. In quality of vocal art, the singers of the leading roles are outshone by Mark Reizen as the Viking Guest, Pavel Lizeetzian as the Venetian Guest, and (singing the hackneyed "plum" of the score, the "Song of India") Ivan Kozlovsky as the

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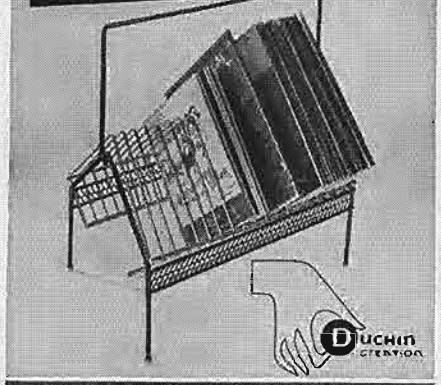

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Hindu Guest. Otherwise recommended.

On London LL 1317, Raphael Arie handles the fine "Song of the Viking Guest" with abounding voice and artistry. The excerpts (the "guest scene" of Act II) from *Sadko* on Colosseum CRLP 159 (with excerpts from *Snegourotchka* and from Glinka's *Russlan and Ludmilla*) appear to have been taken from the tape of the "complete" version discussed above. If they were, something dire intervened, for they are dimly heard as if through falling gravel.

—Elizaveta Shumskaya (s), Volkhova, Princess of the Sea; Vera Davidova (ms), Liubava; Elizaveta Antonova (c), Niejata; Georgi Nelepp (t), Sadko; Tikon Tchereniakov (t), First Elder; Alexander Peregudov (t), Sopiel; Ivan Kozlovsky (t), Hindu Guest; Pavel Lizeerzian (b), Venetian Guest; Ilya Bogdanov (b), Ghost; Sergei Krasovsky (bs), King of the Sea: Stepan Nikolau (bs), Second Elder; Sergei Koltipin (bs), Douda; Mark Reizen (bs), Viking Guest; others. Chorus, Stage Band, Orchestra of the Bolshoi Theater, Nicolai Golovanov, cond. CONCERT HALL CHS 1307, Two 12-in. $7.96.

SNEGOUROTCHKA (THE SNOW MAIDEN) (1 Edition, plus excerpts)

Snegourotchka (*The Snow Maiden*), (*première*, St. Petersburg, Feb. 10, 1882), opera in prologue and four acts to a text by the composer after a play by A. N. Ostrovsky, is a fairy-tale work with a plot that defies condensed retelling. The Yugoslav recording on London is not of a first-class performance in the vocal department, but it is very brightly presented. In patches excellent, it is something less than that whenever Sofia Yankovich takes over, for her voice is definitely not to Western taste. I have been unable to see the packaging, and therefore cannot report on notes or text.

The purely orchestral excerpts (M-G-M E 3017) are brilliantly played and excellently recorded; they include the orchestral highlights of the score. The ballet music on Urania URLP 7035 is indifferently played, indifferently recorded. The orchestral-vocal excerpts on Colosseum CRLP 159 are poorly performed and badly recorded.

—Sofia Yankovich (s), Snegourotchka; Valeria Heybalova (s), Coupava; Biserka Tzveych (ms), Spring Fairy; Lubitza Versaykoun (ms), Bobilicka; Anita Yelinek (ms), A Page; Militza Milodinovich (c), Shepherd Lell; Drago Dimitrievich (t), The Spirit of the Woods; Stepan Andrashevich (t), Czar Berendey; Nikola Lanchich (t), Bobil; Krsta Krstich (t), Second Herald; Dushan Popovich (b), Miskir; Miro Changalovich (bs), King Frost; Ilya Gligorievich (bs), Bermata; Ivan Murbashky (bs), Carnival; Bogolub Grubach (bs), First Herald. Orchestra and Chorus of the National Opera, Belgrade, Kreshemir Baranovich, cond. LONDON XLLA 45. Five 12-in. $24.90.

—Suite. Philharmonia Orchestra, Anatole Fistoulari, cond. M-G-M E 3017 (with *Skazka*). $3.98.

—Ballet Music. Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin, Leopold Ludwig, cond. URANIA URLP 7035 (with excerpts from *Boris*, etc.). $3.98.

RUBINSTEIN, ANTON (1829–94)

THE DEMON (excerpts)

The Demon (*première*, St. Petersburg, Jan. 25, 1875), opera in three acts to a text by P. A. Viskovatov (after Lermontov), was the most successful stage work of the great pianist. The present recording includes the Demon's monologue from the Prologue, the Demon's aria, and the recitative and aria of Prince Sinodal. Execrably recorded and badly processed, these excerpts indicate only that Rubinstein was a thoroughly Westernized composer. They do not leave me longing for a complete recording. The disk also contains one excerpt from another Rubinstein opera, *Nero* (1879), "Vindek's Hymn to Hymen." It is badly sung by the baritone Andrei Ivanov. A far more accurate idea of what a Rubinstein opera might resemble if adequately performed can be gained from Raphael Arie's singing (on London LL 1317) of a moving bass aria from *The Demon* (here listed as "I am he whom you called").

—Excerpts. Ivan Kozlovsky (t), Prince Sinodal; Andrei Ivanov (b), The Demon. Bolshoi Theater Orchestra, Leopold Khudoley, Alexander Melik-Pashayev, Samuel Samosud, conds. COLOSSEUM CRLP 139 (with arias from various other operas). $3.98.

STRAVINSKY, IGOR (1882–)

MAVRA (excerpt)

Mavra (*première*, Paris, June 2, 1922), opera in one act to a text by Boris Kochno (after Pushkin). The English-language version formerly available on Dial 12 has unfortunately been withdrawn. Despite the unease with which the English text had been fitted to the very Russian music, the recording—with Robert Craft conducting the New York Wind Ensemble and Orchestra, Phyllis Curtin, Sandra Warren, Arline Carmine, and Robert Harmon—provided a fair facsimile of the score. All that is currently available of *Mavra* is Parasha's Song, superbly sung by Maria Kurenko with piano accompaniment by Soulima Stravinsky on Allegro AL 64. A complete recording of *Mavra* is clearly called for.

THE RAKE'S PROGRESS (1 Edition)

The Rake's Progress (*première*, Venice, Sept. 11, 1951), opera in three acts to a text by W. H. Auden and Chester Kallman, may well turn out to be, with Alban Berg's *Wozzeck*, the finest of mid-twentieth-century operas. The text, a "fable" or morality tale, owes little except its setting to Hogarth, for Tom Rakewell's downfall is brought about by lack of imagination and intelligence rather than by overindulged passions. This definitive recording, with a generally well-chosen Metropolitan cast under the composer's superior direction, is a historic document of the greatest weight. It is also a delight to the ears and to the mind. The accompanying printed matter unfortunately does not provide the sung text, though it contains a statement by Stravinsky, a précis of the plot, and obscurantist notes by Robert Craft. Nor does the fact that the opera was composed—and is sung—in English excuse the lack of a libretto;

as in any other opera, many passages are puzzles to the listening ear without a printed text. But among the recordings of operas by Russian composers this one stands out, one of the few giants among many dwarfs and cripples. Highly recommended.

—Hilde Gueden (s), Anne Trulove; Martha Lipton (ms), Mother Goose; Blanche Thebom (c), Baba the Turk; Eugene Conley (t), Tom Rakewell; Paul Franke (t), Sellem; Mack Harrell (b), Nick Shadow; Norman Scott (b), Trulove; Lawrence Davidson (bs), Keeper of the Madhouse. Chorus and Orchestra of the Metropolitan Opera Association, Igor Stravinsky, cond. COLUMBIA SL 125. Three 12-in. $11.94.

LE ROSSIGNOL (1 Edition)

Le Rossignol (*première*, Paris, May 26, 1914), opera in three acts to a text by the composer and S. N. Mitusov (after Andersen) has a curious history. Stravinsky composed the first act in 1908–9 in what might be called his Rimsky-Korsakov manner, the second and third acts in 1913–14 in somewhat the style of *Le Sacre du Printemps*. He later made the symphonic poem *Le Chant du Rossignol* from portions of the score.

The Angel recording, which quite properly won a Grand Prix du Disque, is sung in a French translation made by M. D. Calvocoressi. It is entirely enchanting, having been beautifully conducted by Cluytens, beautifully sung by a cast made truly notable by the fabulous singing of Janine Micheau, expertly recorded, and superbly processed. What relationship this delightful enterrainment bears to a performance of the opera in Russian as Stravinsky completed it more than forty years ago is beyond my competence to state. Its retelling of the Andersen tale of the Emperor of China and the real and mechanical nightingales is (as Alfred Frankenstein suggested in these pages in August), *chinoiserie*—but it is Orientalizing with a difference. Very highly recommended, especially for those who enjoy watching a pupil beat his master (in this case, Rimsky) at the master's own favorite game.

—Janine Micheau (s), Le Rossignol; Geneviève Moizan (s), La Cuisinière; Christiane Gayraud (c), La Mort; Jean Giraudeau (t), Le Pêcheur; Lucien Lovano (b), L'Empereur de Chine; Michel Roux (bs), Le Chambellan; Bernard Cottret (bs), Le Bonze. Chorus and Orchestra of Radiodiffusion Française, André Cluytens, cond. ANGEL 35204. $5.98.

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quality) or for the recording and processing, this record is of real interest as providing a cross-section of Tchaikovsky's operatic manners and styles.
—Arias. Eva Smolenskaya (s), Eva Kruglikova (s), Zhukovskaya (s), Vera Davidova (ms), Sergei Lemeshev (t), Georgi Nelepp (t), Andrei Ivanov (b), Pavel Lisitsian (b), Ivan Petrov (bs-b), Alexander Pirogov (bs-b). "A Bolshoi Theater Production." COLOSSEUM CRLP 138. $3.98.

EUGENE ONEGIN (2 Editions, plus excerpts)
Eugene Onegin (*première*, Moscow, Mar. 29, 1879), opera in three acts to a text by the composer and K. S. Shilovsky (after Pushkin). The story of the unhappy Tatiana's love for the haughty Onegin (and the interpolated story of his killing of Lenski in a duel) supplied Tchaikovsky with the best libretto he ever set. The opera has won and kept world-wide renown, but has never established itself in the repertoire in the United States.

London's Yugoslav recording is *faute de mieux* the only possible choice of the available "complete" versions. Although the singers of the Belgrade National Opera are not of the first rank, and though the orchestral playing and direction are less than excellent, this spirited performance, well recorded, completely outdistances the now ancient—and never very good— Russian version available in a very muddy processing on the Period disks, a somewhat clearer and cleaner one on Colosseum. I have been unable to see the London packaging, and therefore cannot report on notes and text. The Period set contains a very bad translation and no sung text; the Colosseum set contains no notes or text whatever. A faithful picture of what a great dramatic singer at the top of her form can do with Tatiana's famous "Letter Scene" from the second scene of the first act is given by Ljuba Welitch, with the excellent help of the Philharmonia Orchestra and Walter Süsskind. The recording, not of recent vintage, retains its original good qualities. Those who cannot wait for a possible better "complete" *Eugene Onegin* should acquire the London set; and everyone who admires fine dramatic singing ought to have the Welitch disk.
—Valeria Heybalova (s), Tatiana; Mira Vershevich (ms), Larina; Melanie Bugarinovich (ms), Filipjevna; Biserka Tzveych (c), Olga; Drago Startz (t), Lenski; Stepan Andrashevich (t), Triquet; Dushan Popovich (t), Eugene Onegin; Miro Changalovich (b), Prince Gremin; Alexander Veselinovich (bs), A Captain; Ilya Gligorievich (bs), Zaretsky. Orchestra and Chorus of the National Opera, Belgrade, Oscar Danon, cond. LONDON XLLA 41. Three 12-in. $14.94.
—E. D. Kruglikova (s), Tatiana; L. G. Rudnitzkaya (ms), Larina; V. V. Makorova (ms), Nurse; E. I. Antonova (c), Olga; I. S. Kozlovsky (t), Lenski; S. M. Ostroumov (t), Triquet; P. M. Norzoff (t), Eugene Onegin; M. D. Mihailoff (b), Prince Gremin; M. D. Mihailoff (b), Zaretsky. Bolshoi Theater Chorus and Orchestra, Alexander Melik-Pashayev, cond. COLOSSEUM CRLP 127/9. Three 12-in. $11.94. (Same recording on PERIOD SPL 507.)
—Abridged. Same performers as in preceding set. PERIOD SPL 502. $4.98.
—Tatiana's Letter Scene. Ljuba Welitch (s); Philharmonia Orchestra, Walter Süsskind, cond. COLUMBIA ML 4795 (with Strauss: *Salome*: final scene, etc.). $3.98.

MAZEPPA (1 Edition)
Mazeppa (*première*, Moscow, Feb. 15, 1884), opera in three acts to a text by the composer and V. P. Burenin (after Pushkin). Ivan Stepanovich Mazeppa was a historical character, a seventeenth-century Cossack hetman. After attempting to win independence for the Ukraine, he fled with Charles XII of Sweden to Turkey after the disastrous *battle of Poltava*. Mazeppa figures in both Byron's famous poem and in Pushkin's *Poltava*, on which the libretto of Tchaikovsky's opera—a lyric tragedy—is based.

As a performance, this one is many steps higher than what we have become accustomed to from Russia—but the recording is poor even by the Soviet standards of yesterday. Curiously, its quality as sound wavers from moment to moment (may this be a flaw in the processing rather than in the recording?). As seems standard practice with Russian performances, the men greatly outsing the women. Thus, Alexei Ivanov both sings and interprets the role of Mazeppa with impressive quality and insight, while the Maria, Nina Pokrovskaya, is very bad in the beginning, though she manages to improve a little as the opera moves along. The accompanying notes do not tell the story; there is a passable English translation, but no sung text in either Cyrillic or transliteration. *Mazeppa* is one of the Tchaikovsky operas that might well repay the expense of staging it well with first-class musical forces, for it is crammed with the special sort of lyrico-dramatic inspirations that only Tchaikovsky among the Russians (and not many composers of other nations) has known how to command or to use. With reservations, recommended.
—Nina Pokrovskaya (s), Maria; Vera Davidova (ms), Liubov; Georgi Bolshakov (t), Andrei; Feodor Godovkin (t), A Drunken Cossack; Tikhon Tchereniakov (t), Iskra; Alexei Ivanov (b), Mazeppa; Ivan Petrov (bs), Kochubei; Vsevolod Tyutyunik (bs), Orlik. Chorus, Band, and Orchestra of the Bolshoi Theater, Vassily Nebolsin, cond. CONCERT HALL CHS 1310. Three 12-in. $11.94.

THE QUEEN OF SPADES (PIQUE DAME) (4 Editions)
The Queen of Spades (*Pique Dame*, *première*, St. Petersburg, Dec. 19, 1890), three acts, to a text by Modest I. Tchaikovsky (after Pushkin). The tragic love of Lisa and Hermann, complicated by the secret of three winning cards known only by Lisa's aged grandmother, the Countess. With its element of the supernatural and its interpolated tribute to Grétry and Mozart, this is a gripping and entirely stageworthy opera—if mounted with proper attention to style.

Choice between London's Yugoslav version and Concert Hall's Soviet version (both sung in Russian) is difficult. The Soviet recording is better sung and more idiomatic; the Yugoslav has plenty of

verve and insight. I am inclined to prefer the Russian as a more faithful picture of what Tchaikovsky had in mind.

The Colosseum version, also from Russian tapes, is inferior in every department to the Concert Hall set. The Urania performance is badly condensed, extremely Teutonic in manner, and poorly recorded.

I have been unable to see the London packaging, and therefore cannot report on notes or libretto. The Concert Hall set has skimpy notes and a merely possible English translation (no Russian text). Ditto the Colosseum version. The German recording contains better notes, no sung text, and a reasonable English translation by Boris Goldovsky.

Hear at least part of both the London and Concert Hall sets before acquiring one of these recordings of a very charming opera.

—Valeria Heybalova (s), Lisa; Anne Jeninek (s), Masha; Mira Verchevich (ms), Governess; Melanie Bugarinovich (ms), The Countess; Biserka Tzveych (c), Paulina; Alexander Marinkovich (t), Hermann; Dragi Petrovich (t), Tchekalinsky; Zhika Yovanovich (t), Tchaplitsky; Nicolas Yanchich (t), Master of Ceremonies; Jovan Gligor (b), Count Tomsky; Dushan Popovich (b), Prince Yeletsky; Vlada Popovich (bs), Narumov. Orchestra of the National Opera, Belgrade, Chorus of the Yugoslav Army, Children's Chorus of Radio Belgrade, Kreshemir Baranovich, cond. LONDON XLLA 44. Four 12-in. $19.92.

—E. Smolenskaya (s), Lisa; N. Kositzina (s), Mary; V. Firsova (s), Chloë; E. Verbitskaya (ms), The Countess; E. Korneyeva (ms), Governess; V. Borisenko (c), Paulina (Daphnis); Georgi Nelepp (t), Hermann; Alexander Peregudov (t), Tchekalinsky; F. Godovkin (t), Tchaplitsky; V. Shevtsov (t), Master of Ceremonies; Alexei Ivanov (b), Count Tomsky (Plutus); Pavel Liseetzian (b), Prince Yeletsky; Vsevolod Tyuryunik (bs), Sourin; Ivan Skobtzov (bs), Narumov. Chorus and Orchestra of the Bolshoi Theater, A. Melik-Pashayev, cond. CONCERT HALL CHS 1305. Three 12-in. $11.94.

—K. G. Djerzhinskaya (s), Lisa; N. S. Tchubienko (s), Masha; V. V. Barsova (s), Pryleppa (Carina); M. P. Maksakova (ms), Paulina; M. K. Schervinskaya (ms), Governess; M. P. Maksakova (ms), Mylovzor (Bellamor); B. Y. Zlatogorova (c), Countess; N. S. Hanaiev (t), Hermann; S. M. Ostraoomov (t), Tchekalinsky; M. K. Novozhenin (b), Tchaplitsky; P. S. Biellinik (t), Master of Ceremonies; A. I. Baturin (b), Count Tomsky; P. M. Nordzov (b), Prince Yeletsky; V. M. Politmovsky (b), Zlatagor; I. I. Manshavin (bs), Sourin; K. N. Terekin (bs), Narumov. Bolshoi Theater Orchestra and Chorus, Samuel Samosud, cond. COLOSSEUM CRLP 130/3. Four 12-in. $15.92.

—Elisabeth Grümmer (s), Lisa; Margarete Klose (c), Countess; Anneliese Müller (c), Paulina; Rudolf Schock (t), Hermann; Cornelis van Deyck (t), Tchekalinsky; Kurt Reimann (t), Tchaplitsky; Jaro Prohaska (b), Count Tomsky; Hans Heinz Nissen (b), Prince Yeletsky; Otto Hopf (bs), Sourin; Wilhelm Lang (bs), Narumov; other soloists. Chorus of the Berlin Civic Opera, Symphony Orchestra of Radio

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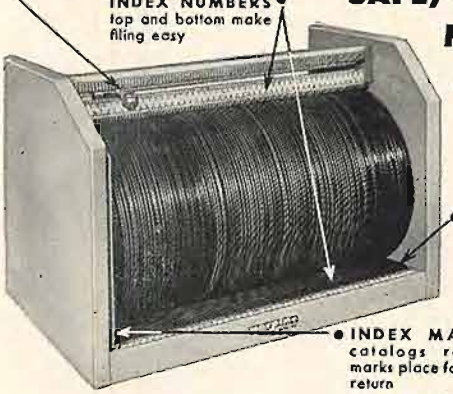

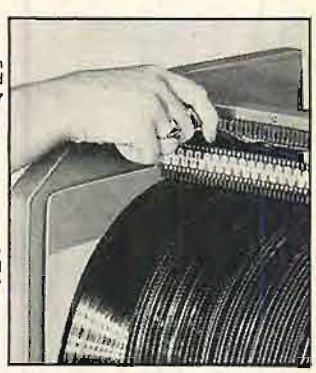

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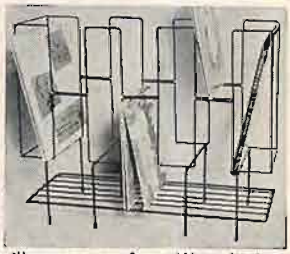

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THE SLIPPERS (CHEREVICHKI) (excerpts)

Cherevichki (*première*, Moscow, Jan. 31, 1887, a revision of *Vakula the Smith*, 1876), opera in four acts to a libretto by Y. P. Polonsky (after Gogol's *Christmas Eve*). This disk contains the Introduction (Exorcism and Snowstorm), Minuet, Introduction to Act III, Russian Dance, Cossack Dance, and Finale. The music is good Tchaikovsky, and it is well presented. —Suite. Philharmonia *Orchestra of London*, Anatole Fistoulari, cond. M-G-M E 3026 (with *Mozartiana*, Op. 61). $3.98.

TIGRANIAN, ARMEN TIGRANOVICH (1879–1950)

ANUSH (1 Edition)

Anush (*première*, 1912, but revised until 1938), opera in five acts to a text based on Hovhaness Toumanian's national poem *Anush*. Superbly recorded, with modulated clarity and a sparkling verisimilitude, this very Oriental-sounding folk opera will undoubtedly delight Armenians and students of Armenian music. For others, however, it will almost certainly seem monotonous in its constantly melismatic vocal lines, its thin, wailing orchestration, and its lack of what Westerners have come to consider musical drama. The voices are surprisingly good—far better than in most tapes from the Soviet Union. The accompanying booklet gives the plot of the opera, biographical sketches of both Tigranian and Toumanian—and the complete text of the poem *Anush* (which may or may not be equivalent to the sung text) in Armenian typography, at the sound and meaning of which I cannot even guess. What this well-processed Westminster recording inevitably suggests is that records made from Russian-made tapes can be far clearer and much better defined than most of them have been to date.

—Goar Gasparian (s), Anush; Anush Garibian (ms), Anush's Mother; Maria Chemeshkian (ms), Saro's Mother; Avak Petrosian (t), Saro; Vagram Grigorian (b), Mosi; Sergei Galustian (b), Best Man; Karlos Markosian (bs), Kokhva (Village Elder); Vozgen Alenakian (bs), Ogan; Ivan Grekov (bs), Village Watchman. Chorus and Orchestra of the Armenian State Theater of Opera and Ballet, Mikhail Tavrizian, cond. WESTMINSTER OPS 1302. Three 12-in. $11.94.

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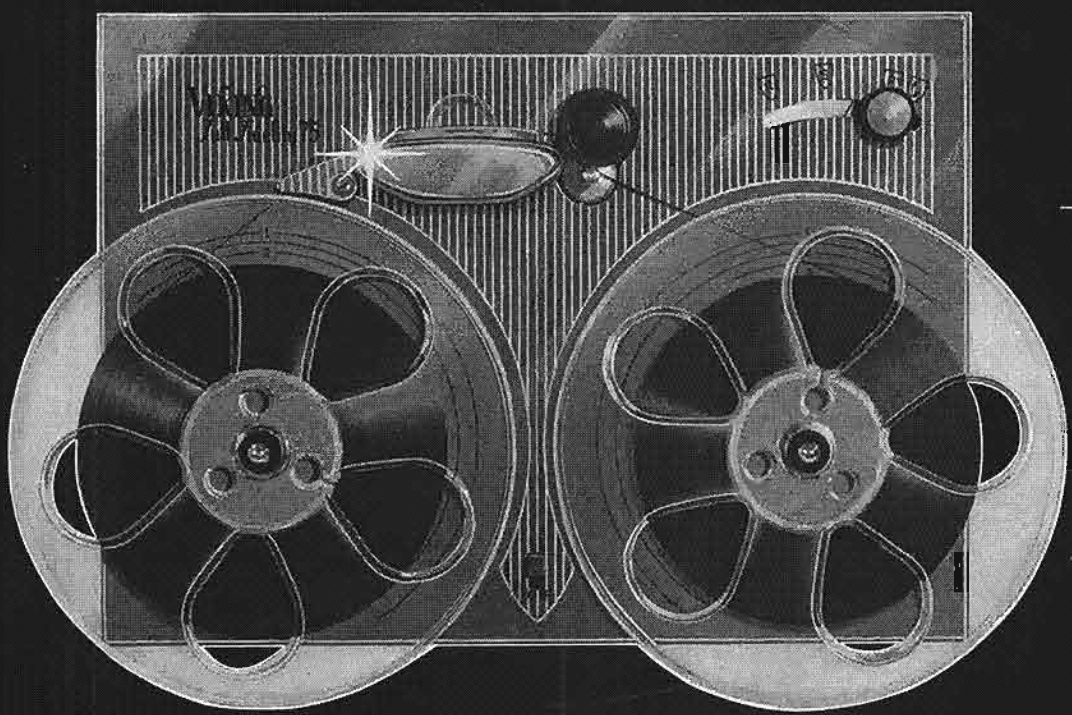

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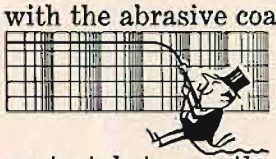
The 7 Old-Fashioned Villains of Tape Recording

...and How irish BRAND FERRO-SHEEN Foiled Them All

Once upon a time, 7 Old-Fashioned Villains like this were wreaking endless woe on Decent People with Tape Recorders. The 1st Villain was Oxenscheid the Oxide Shedder.

He scraped away at the crumbly oxide coating of old-fashioned tape and gummed up tape recorders with the shedding particles. The 2nd Villain was Wearhead the Head Wearer.

He filed down the magnetic heads with the abrasive coating of old-fashioned tape. The 3rd Villain was Frickenshaw the Frequency Discriminator.



He dragged down the high-frequency response of old-fashioned tape through inadequate contact between the "grainy" coating and the head. The 4th Villain was Noysenhiss the Noise Generator. He generated tape hiss and modulation noise

as a result of the random vibrations and irregular flux variations caused by the uneven magnetic coating of old-fashioned tape. The 5th and 6th Villains were Dropofsky the Drop-Out Artist and Pringlethorpe the Print-Through Bug.

They put nodules and agglomerates into the oxide emulsion of old-fashioned coated tape, causing "drop-outs" whenever these trouble spots lost contact with the record or playback head, and inducing "print-through" on the recorded tape when the extra flux at the trouble spots cut through adjacent layers on the reel. The 7th Villain was Brattleby the Embrittler.

He dried out the plasticizers in old-fashioned coated tape and embrittled irreplaceable recordings. Then: OCTOBER, 1954! That's when a very un-old-fashioned little man by the name of F. R. O'Sheen

announced that he had developed the revolutionary new **irish FERRO-SHEEN** process of tape manufacture and presto!

the 7 Old-Fashioned Villains were sent a-scurrying with cries of "Confound it—Foiled again!" Yes, F. R. O'Sheen had made the new magnetic oxide lamination of **irish FERRO-SHEEN** tape so smooth-surfaced and non-abrasive, so firmly anchored and homogeneously bonded to the base, so free from nodules and agglomerates, that the 7 Villains were evicted—for good! **Moral:** Don't let Old-Fashioned Villains do you out of your hi-fi rights!

Just say "No, thanks" to ordinary coated tape and ask for F. R. O'Sheen **irish FERRO-SHEEN**, that is! ORRadio Industries, Inc., Opelika, Alabama.

the Tape Deck

by R. D. Darrell

IT ISN'T always the "best" music, performance, or recording which galvanizes a reviewer into special alertness and makes certain releases exceptionally fascinating to hear and discuss. Sometimes it is a highly novel choice of material or interpretative approach; and on rare occasions it's merely an unexpected point of origin — as in the case of two "Sony Stereocord" reels which have just reached me, via Intersearch importers of Cincinnati, from the faraway Tokyo Tsushin Kogyo Company, one of Japan's leading tape-recorder manufacturers. Stereo sound certainly is spreading far and wide these days.

I won't ask you to hold your breath until the Sony releases are available at your local dealer's (unless, of course, you're a variant of the old-time discophile for whom the attraction of exotic record labels was irresistible by itself), since I can't possibly credit any outstanding musical or technical excellence to the two samples I've heard. Nevertheless, when they appear on the American market shortly, you well may find them mildly enjoyable for their actual contents and you certainly will find them refreshingly off the beaten track in every other way.

Note: As usual, all tapes reviewed are 7.5 ips and — unless specifically noted as stereo — are 2-track single-channel recordings. The symbol • • prefixed to a review indicates stereo tape. If a date in parenthesis is appended to the review, it refers to the issue of HIGH FIDELITY in which the corresponding disk review appeared.

• • On a 5-in. reel (Sony R 5, $6.95), the Culo Costello Male Chorus displays its linguistic versatility — and its better than usual Glee-Club voices — in a program of pieces in English (*Loch Lomond*), German (*Blauer Montag* and the "O Isis" chorus from *Die Zauberflöte*), and Russian (*Slavim Platove* and *The Volga Boatmen's Songs*). The group sings rather cautiously, mostly to piano or accordion accompaniments, and without marked stylistic distinction, but it no less carefully avoids the dreadful archness and vocal "effects" indulged in so often by corresponding American organizations. And while the recording itself is surely not wide-range nor even particularly brilliant, the rich sonorities of the voices themselves are beautifully airborne in the stereo medium — which is here proved again the ideal one for all types of choral music.

• • Stereophony adds less to the playing of Shigenori Ohara and his "Blue Coats" dance band (Sony D 3, 7-in., $11.50): an undeniably corny but spirited ensemble which delights in the "swung classics" of not so late fragrant memory: — *Moonlight* Sonata, *Clair de Lune*, the Arabian Dance from *Peer Gynt* in mild boogie-woogie style, etc. But someone (I presume the more Hibernian than Nipponese sounding Ohara) plays the piano very competently indeed, and the sidemen not only maintain a catchy, steady beat, but more attractive standards of tone quality than many of their better-known non-hot American colleagues. "Square" as the performances may be, they're both surprisingly appealing and highly danceable.

Such material is a far cry from the Nipponese venturesomeness of ancient 78 days, when a Japanese Phonograph Society selected the last piano sonatas of Scriabin for its first subscription releases and an album of Mussorgsky songs for its second. Perhaps goals like that again may be attempted later. Meanwhile, the Japanese engineers have a bit to learn about eliminating the built-in hum and recording or duplicating speed change which mar the choral reel in particular; and they still have to discover the superiority of brown-oxide tape over the black variety used here. So far, even the noted (or notorious) ability of the Japanese to cut prices is scarcely evident, especially when one realizes that there's only a little over twelve minutes of music on the smaller of the two reels. Yet, for all this, these two releases have been pleasantly surprising in themselves as well as whetting the appetite for more ambitious recording attempts from other exotic locales still to be explored by stereo pioneers. Who'll be the first to tackle the Gamelan Gong orchestras of Bali in the new medium?

BACH: *Brandenburg Concertos, Nos. 1-6 (Complete), BWV 1046-51*

Anonymous orchestra, Jascha Horenstein, cond.
PHONOTAPES-SONORE PM 136. Two 7-in. $17.90.

In the race to realize the first complete taping of the *Brandenburgs*, the anticipated Omegatape reels by the unpredictable Scherchen (unrepresented as yet by American LPs) are just nosed out by the ingratiating, if probably less exciting, Horenstein performance already well known in the Vox LP album DL 122. The merits here are fully authentic instrumentation, always vital and sympathetic — if seldom deeply penetrating — readings, and a warmly colored blend of sonorities which, against the soothing background of tape flow, charms one's ears even more than in disk reproduction. The disadvantages are a cruel abbreviation of the Winternitz annotations (and no bonus scores) and a lack of commanding authority in the solo instrumental roles, which, moreover, seldom emerge from the over-all sonic textures with properly italicized and proportioned aural distinction. I must confess, however, that except in direct comparison with the preferred recordings (of which I know and like best Münchinger's), Horenstein's on tape is a richly pleasing one. (Feb. 1955)

• • BEETHOVEN: *Symphony No. 7, in A, Op. 92*

Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Fritz Reiner, cond.
RCA VICTOR ECS 11. 7-in. $14.95.

Toscanini has imprinted his imperious hallmark so deeply on the Seventh that for most listeners even Reiner's supreme lucidity may not compensate for his more nervous, if also more resilient, temperamental idiosyncrasies. For myself, I find both treatments strenuously and far from pleasurably exhausting. Except in the soberly eloquent, beautifully articulated, and sweet-voiced *Allegretto* (the best reading of this movement I know), it seems to me that the technical brilliance in both performance and recording here is carried to extremes at which I must marvel indeed, but which leave me emotionally unmoved. Yet the extraordinary skills of the present engineers reveal innumerable details in Beethoven's scoring which I very much doubt emerge as clearly in the LP version (LM 1991). Up to now, I have felt that stereo sound brought less notable benefit to symphonic works of the "classic" era than to music of perhaps any other type or age, but the present tape conclusively proves that assumption mistaken. (Oct. 1956)

• • BERLIOZ: *Le Carnaval Romain, Overture*
†Liszt: *Les Préludes*

Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra, Walter Goehr, cond., in the Berlioz; Symphony Orchestra, Paul Hupperts, cond., in the Liszt.
CONCERT HALL CHT/BN 11. 7-in. $11.95.

Stereo sound's uncanny power of freshening both overfamiliar music and oversophisticated listener responses is impressively demonstrated by this first release in the new Concert Hall tape series to reach me. The orchestras (and their string sections in particular) are run-of-the-mill, neither conductor attempts more than a routine reading, nor is the recording itself notably brilliant by the highest current standards. Yet while I'd probably hastily dismiss both works in single-channel LP versions (in which they have not yet appeared), I've listened to the stereo tapings with rapt attention: pleased by the clean articulation of solo wood-wind lines, the lack of any blurring even in obviously highly reverberant acoustical settings, and above all by the rejuvenating vitality with which these strictly technical characteristics reanimate the original verve and impact of of the music itself.

Continued on page 123

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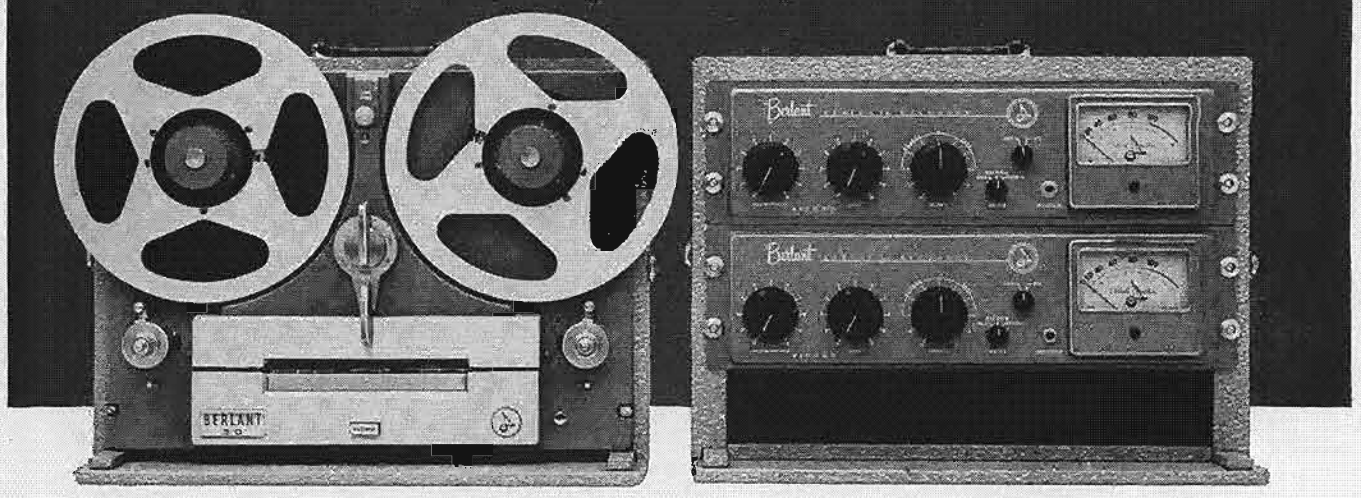

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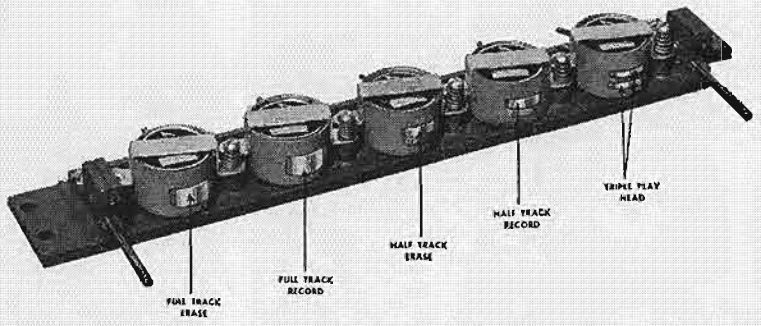

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TAPE DECK

Continued from page 121

• • BERLIOZ: *Symphonie fantastique, Op. 14*

Boston Symphony Orchestra, Charles Munch, cond.
RCA VICTOR GCS 6. 7-in. $18.95.

It's regrettable that the shocking price-tag on this release (even if partially justified by the use of a thin-based Mylar tape which extends the normal half-hour playing time of a 7-in. reel by 50%) may bar it from the attention of many listeners who found the LP version (LM 1900) lacking in sonic "glint and richness." Whatever the fault there, the Bostonians seldom if ever have sounded better than in this superbly open reproduction. The never fully appreciated brass choir in particular truly comes into its own in stereo — as, for that matter, so does all the peculiarly "spaced" scoring to which Berlioz was prone and which often impresses casual listeners as disconcertingly "thin." For what he really had in mind, stereo supplies both the clue and the aesthetic justification, in some ways perhaps even more effectively than anything but the very finest "live" performances.

Yet while my ears and sonic sensibilities revel in the tonal luxuriousness, part of my mind is curiously unsatisfied, if not dissatisfied, with Munch's reading. Perhaps there is an absence of over-all "point"; perhaps merely some loss of sustained personal thrust and conviction. Whatever the lack is, the performance never strikes me as achieving a single, truly Berliozian, integration despite the splendor of every isolated detail. Yet for its great moments — perhaps above all for those in the superdramatic, multi-dimensioned Witches' Sabbath — hearing this stereo *Fantastique* provides some absolutely unparalleled sonic experiences. (Oct. 1955)

BRUCKNER: *Symphony No. 9, in D minor*

Pro Musica Symphony Orchestra, Jascha Horenstein, cond.
PHONOTAPES-SONORE PM 125. 7-in. $8.95.

Spellbound as I so often seem to be nowadays with the exciting and oftentimes unexpected results of explorations in stereo sound, it is salutary indeed to be reminded on occasion that the tape

medium also commands special enhancements of certain single-channel materials. Here it must be the distinctively even and soothing background qualities which make Bruckner's music more appealing — and far less glacially slow — than it ever has seemed on disks. At any rate, Horenstein's warmly sympathetic insights and an orchestra truly inspired to outdo itself give the present version of this mammoth, yet

Continued on next page

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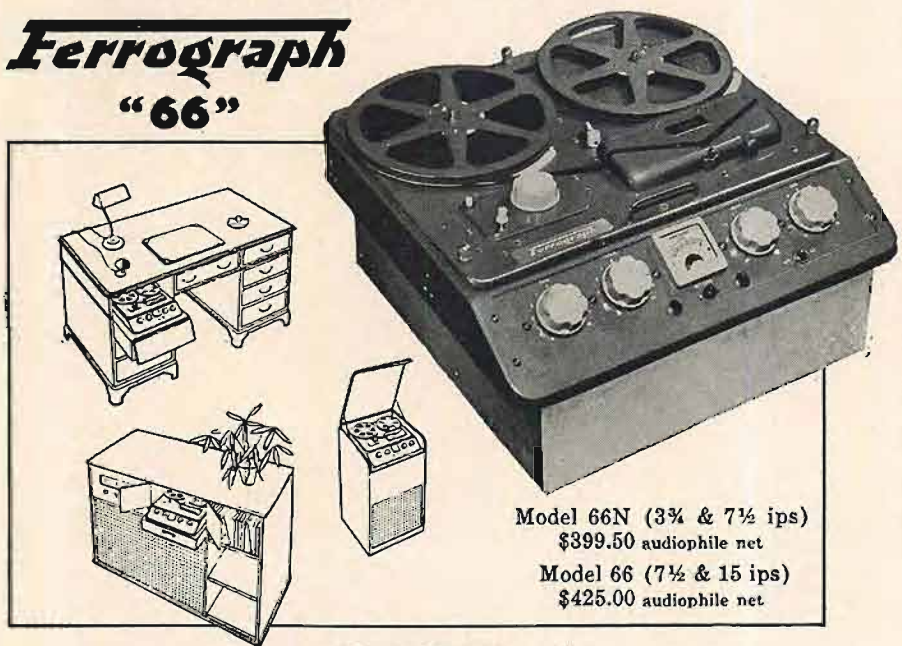

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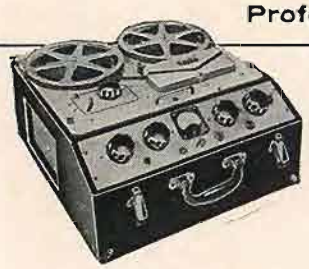

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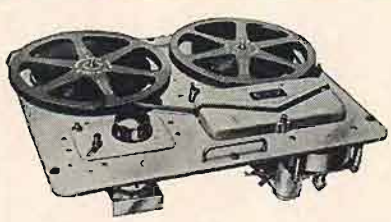

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TAPE DECK

Continued from preceding page

nobly eloquent symphony, overwhelming evocative charm and power. If you've been an anti-Brucknerite in the past or never have been especially stirred by his other works, I can't recommend any more persuasive introduction to the man at his best. (Vox PL 8040; Mar. 1954)

FRANCK: *Le Chasseur maudit*
†Dukas: *L'Apprenti sorcier*
†Saint-Saëns: *Danse macabre, Op. 40*

Vienna Staatsoper Orchestra, Artur Rodzinski, cond., in the Franck; Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of London, Argeo Quadri, cond., in the Dukas and Saint-Saëns.
SONOTAPE SW 1020. 7-in. $7.95.

Here technical and sonic ultra-brilliancies are the decisive attractions: too overwhelmingly demanding, probably, for listeners who wish to be soothed rather than electrified, but irresistibly intoxicating for those willing to be swept off their feet in tumultuous seas of sheer sonorities. Quadri's almost mincing precision in the familiar Dukas and Saint-Saëns pieces makes his recorded performances (originally part of Westminster W-LAB 7009) near parodies of hi-fi fanatics' ideal — all glittering sound and very little musical meaning. But in the less hackneyed *Accursed Huntsman* (originally part of Westminster WL 5311), Rodzinski makes better use of the seemingly limitless technical resources to breathe new life and conviction into what I had previously considered to be a rather old-fashioned and uninteresting tone poem. It is anything but that in this version, the first to do full justice to the composer's not generally conceded virtuosity as an orchestrator and to his hitherto unsuspected mastery of the smashing climax. Perhaps some of the solo passages and those for percussion in particular are given a prominence never obtainable in the concert hall, but at least they are also endowed with a crispness of tonal definition rarely achieved from LPs even today and certainly unimaginable in the reproduction of recorded tapes less than a year ago. (Quadri, Feb. 1956; Rodzinski, Jan. 1955)

• • MUSSORGSKY-RAVEL: *Pictures at an Exhibition*

Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra, Walter Goehr, cond.
CONCERT HALL CHT/BN 3. 7-in. $11.95.

If only the dramatic grip of Toscanini's reading, the sonic incandescence of Rodzinski's recorded performance (both reviewed in this column for Sept. 1956), and the acoustical spaciousness of the present stereo version could have been miraculously combined in a single release! However, we cannot expect perfection, and proud pioneers in stereo experience will exult so blissfully in the translucency and "lift" of the present air-borne sonic textures that they'll probably never real-

Continued on page 126

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TAPE DECK

Continued from page 124

ize that what they are hearing is actually a quite cursory performance.

• • R. STRAUSS: *Tod und Verklärung, Op. 24*

Utrecht Symphony Orchestra, Ignace Neumark, cond.
CONCERT HALL CHT/BN 12. 7-in. $11.95.

The particular nature of this Strauss tone poem demands much more than interpretative and executant competence — *and that* something more is the opened-up lucidity of intricately scored instrumental detail and the enhanced luminosity of climactic apotheosis which are uniquely realizable in stereo sound. While Neumark and his Dutch orchestra are not outstanding virtuosos and this version is not comparable with Toscanini's as a performance, its effect must be compared not with Toscanini's in a "live" concert, but with that of his or any other single-channel recording in one's home listening room. And here the present stereo version is far more dramatically compelling and hence, aesthetically as well as technically, truer to the composer's intentions. *Death and Transfiguration* has bored me for years on records, no matter how well played: a confession which throws into high relief my tribute to the consistently gripping sorcery of this truly spellbinding tape.

ORCHESTRAL MISCELLANIES

"COLLECTIONS" seem to attract tape manufacturers no less magnetically than they do disk makers — and perhaps the record-buying public as well. And for beginning collectors in particular, or those untempted by the goal of an ideally "best" or "definitive" version of any work, however short, orchestral miscellanies like the following often can give a maximum of varied listening pleasure for a minimum expenditure.

That is especially true of Perlea's Bamberg-Symphony program of familiar short works by Smetana, Dvorak, Enesco, and Kodály (Phonotapes-Sonore PM 127, $8.95; originally Vox PL 9500, March 1956) — none of which is really outstanding, but all of which are played with warmly attractive tonal coloring and relaxed lyrical charm. On the other hand, Sheldon Burton's children's program with the Pro Musica Orchestra of London (Omegatape OT 8004, $10.95) is distinctive for one item only: the *Children's Fantasy* Suite by one Czonka. Both music and composer are new to me, but this unpretentious, mildly "modern" little work is surcharged with infectiously gay and festive melodiousness. And for good measure, it is more spiritedly played and far more brightly recorded than the accompanying *Nutcracker* and Prokofiev *Summer Day* Suites, both earlier Omega (or Alpha) tape releases which still seem to make no imperative demands for reissue.

Hi-fi *aficionados* only are likely to take

Continued on page 128

Only "Scotch" Magnetic Tape was sensitive enough to capture

a madman's madrigals

Don Carlo Gesualdo

In 1613 the psychotic Italian nobleman and composer Don Carlo Gesualdo died.

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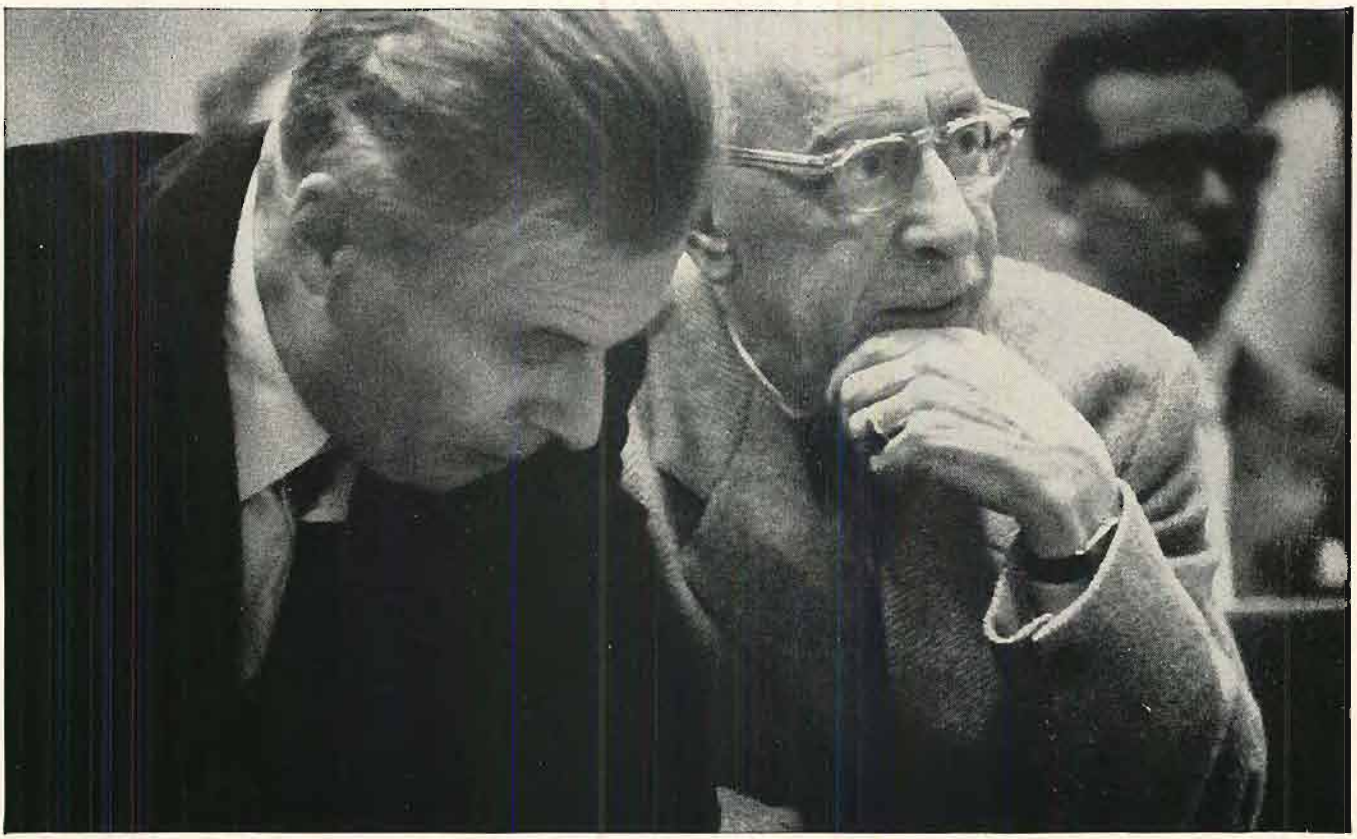

ALDOUS HUXLEY AND IGOR STRAVINSKY at the Gesualdo madrigals recording session.

SCOTCH BRAND Magnetic Tapes

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TAPE DECK

Continued from page 126

unlimited pleasure in Sonotape SW 1005 ($7.95), which combines Quadri's Chabrier *España*, Mossolov *Iron Foundry*, and Revueltas *Sensemaya* (from Westminster W-LAB 7004, Oct. 1955) with Scherchen's Honegger *Pacific 231* (from W-LAB 7010), and as a tape bonus adds a special *Study in Percussion* (not on microgroove). Everything is crystal clear, but all three Quadri performances are pretty dry acoustically (which makes his Mossolov more than ever painful to tender ears); the *Percussion* study is a glorious but insufficiently varied racket; and even the Scherchen-driven locomotive ride is not exceptionally — musically at least — rewarding.

It is perhaps the newcomer to recorded music in general, as well as to stereo in particular, who is likely to get the greatest pleasure out of the Borodin-Mussorgsky-Sibelius Florence May Festival program by Gui (• • Audiosphere 703 BN, $10.00; $7.50 to Livingston Tape Club members). Yet while these devil-may-care, lusty, if somewhat coarse performances of the *Polovtsian Dances, Night on Bald Mountain*, and *Valse triste* might not attract special attention on LPs, any of their interpretative mannerisms or performance inelegancies are quite forgotten in the infectious sweep of their expansive sound. Though this was released nearly three years ago, I have discovered that it bears comparison with all but the top-ranking stereo tapes of today for its power of bursting living-room walls to achieve an astonishingly vivid illusion of big concert-hall spaciousness.

REEL MUSIC NOTES

• • ATLANTIC: Wilbur de Paris' *New New-Orleans Jazz* claims very near top honors in the domain of stereo jazz, running a close second to Barbarin's AT 7-8 BN as far as rollicking playing is concerned and equally close to the Dickenson-Braff A-V 707 for brilliant exploitation of the new medium's finest technical potentialities. It should be heard not only for its here sonically enhanced "array of muted effects" (for which John S. Wilson praised the LP version, Atlantic 1219, Jan. 1956), but in particular for the Sidney de Paris tuba solo starred in "Hot Lips" (AT 7-9 BN, 7-in., $10.00; or $7.50 to Livingston Tape Club members).

AUDIO-VIDEO TAPE LIBRARIES: Sol Yaged, his clarinet, and his quintet hardly live up to the title *It Might as Well Be Swing* (A-V 755 J; originally Herald LP 0103), but if this is far from torridly hot jazz, it is attractively expressive — and occasionally quite imaginative — dance music, strongly and reverberantly recorded with if anything an overabundance of "presence." There is just as much of the last, but to more pertinent purpose in *Josh at Midnight* (A-V 852 J; originally Elektra LP 102, June 1956), where for once the protean balladeer not only shares honors, but at moments (as in "Peter" and "Jelly") largely relinquishes them to a

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colleague, Sam Gary. The extremely near miking makes for some spitty sibilants in the vocals, but also for superb close-ups of the accompaning guitar. (7-in., large-hub reels, $8.95 each.)

• • CONCERTAPES: "Kaz Jaz" struck me as just about the most unappetizing title I've yet come across even in these vintage days of zany labelings, but I resolutely put the reel itself on anyway. And while I couldn't find anything extraordinary in Peggy Taft's two vocals, the three instrumentals by Fred Kaz's Trio alone held my alerted attention throughout, both for the imaginative (often quite rhapsodic) playing and the extremely brilliant, if somewhat heavy, recording. Kaz himself seems to have a special flair for mildly exotic effects, perhaps distantly derived from the *Limehouse Blues* genre, but he never lets it get out of hand. I hope to hear more of him *sans* vocalist, even one who sings as competently and is recorded with such breath-taking presence as Miss Taft here. (507, 5-in., $7.95.)

OMEGATAPE: *Pianorama* and *Three Coins in the Fountain* by Sandauer and his Rhythm each divides attention about equally between standard pop tunes and those of mildly exotic, mostly Latin-American, flavoring. But except for Sandauer's own fluent, admirably recorded piano playing, there is little real distinction to these performances — better suited for cocktail-hour background listening than for actual dancing (OT 5014-5, two 5-in., $6.95 each; or boxed as DS 6, $12.95).

PHONOTAPES-SONORE: As one who always relishes the sound of first-rate Spanish guitar playing, but who seldom finds marked interest in the musical vehicles themselves, I was, surprisingly, as much delighted here with the passionate Andalusian *cante hondo* examples in *Flamenco* (or at least with the gypsy intoxication of Mario Escudero's playing) as with the powerfully vibrant, yet always immaculately clean tones of his plucked strings — captured with a sparkling authenticity I've rarely encountered before on either tapes or disks (PM 5008, 5-in., $6.95; originally Folkways FP 920, Sept. 1955).

SONOTAPE: After my unkindness to the first Deutschmeister Band tape release recently, when I suggested that Strauss waltzes were hardly appropriate to the celebrated Viennese organization's somewhat limited if notable talents, it's a pleasure to meet Herr Herrmann and his men again, this time in the repertory in which they unquestionably excel. Their present program of "Marches of Many Nations" features the best-known marches of some ten nations, not excluding our own *The Stars and Stripes Forever*, all done with bang-up energy and — happily — no pretence to "concert-band" finesse. And every gruff tone color is captured on tape just as well as — if not better than — in the LP version, Westminster W-LAB 7037, of June 1956. (SW 1034, 7-in., $7.95.)

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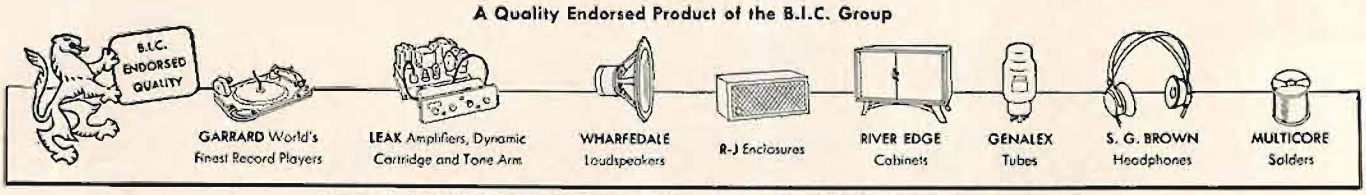


BRITISH INDUSTRIES CORPORATION PORT WASHINGTON, NEW YORK

Equipment reports appearing in this section are prepared by members of HIGH FIDELITY'S *staff, on the basis of actual use in conjunction with a home music system, and the resulting subjective evaluations of equipment are expressed as the opinions of the reviewer only. Reports are usually restricted to items of general interest, and no attempt is made to report on items that are obviously not designed primarily for high fidelity applications. Each report is sent to the manufacturer before publication; he is free to correct the specifications paragraph, to add a comment at the end of the report, or to request that it be deferred, (pending changes in his product) or not be published. He may not, however, change the report. Failure of a new product to appear in TITH may mean either that it has not been submitted for review, or that it was submitted and was found to be unsatisfactory. These reports may not be quoted or reproduced, in part or in whole, for any purpose whatsoever, without written permission from the publisher.*

Rack 55

A TITH report on a product such as this may seem an unusual undertaking. It can serve to describe the product for readers, which no doubt can be done equally well in the advertising pages. If the equipment has merit, it can also reassure readers of quality.

The illustration of the rack is pretty well self-explanatory. Rack 55 is delivered assembled; all shelves are stationary. Depth is 17¾ in.; width, 23 in. Depth of the narrow shelf (second from top) is 11 in. Space between shelves is, going from the top down, 9¼, 7, and 13⅜ in. Over-all height, from floor to top of top shelf, is 36 in.

Scheller's Rack 55 equipment console.

What cannot be told from the illustration is the answer to the all-important question: is it sturdy and strong? Answer: definitely yes. Shelves are ¾-in. thick, and the wrought iron legs are ½-in. in diameter. You can bounce this stand on one corner without the least bit of play.

Several models are available, the differences being in finish. The standard model costs $39.50; shelves are unfinished temper-treated hardboard, tan in color; legs and grille are black lacquered. Models are available with blonde finish and black legs, or mahogany finish and brass lacquered legs. Either one costs $54.50.

Manufacturer is E. and R. Scheller, 1630 W. Granville Ave., Chicago 26, Ill.

This is a fine product, well worthy of today's smartly styled high-fidelity equipment. — C.F.

Gray Concert Duet

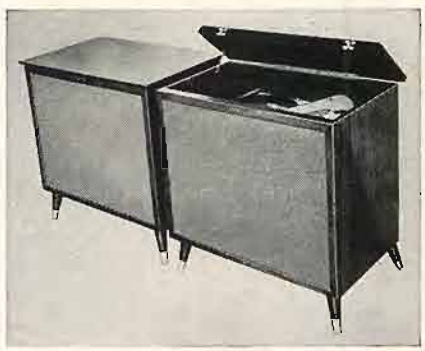
SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): **MODEL 700** — a system consisting of two matching cabinets for speaker and equipment. **MODEL 750** — turntable, amplifier, and preamplifier assembly. **MODEL 760** — speaker and enclosure. Model 750 includes the Gray HF500A hysteresis-synchronous turntable, with Gray 108C viscous-damped arm; a GE turnaround cartridge with diamond 1-mil and sapphire 2.5 mil styli; Gray AM-2A preamplifier; and Gray AM-50 50-watt power amplifier. Speaker enclosure, Model 760, is of infinite baffle type, with 12-in. woofer and two cone-type tweeters. **Frequency response:** from 30 to 17,500 cycles. **Price:** both units, in hand-finished mahogany, $695. Available in walnut or blonde finishes at slightly higher prices. **MANUFACTURER:** Gray Research and Development Co. Inc., Manchester, Conn.

It wasn't very long ago that Gray was known primarily — and yet very widely — for only one hi-fi product: their viscous-damped arm. Then came other products, including a fine turntable and an amplifier. Now they are marketing a pair of matching furniture units. As indicated above, one houses a superlative array of record reproducing equipment: turntable, arm, cartridge, preamp-control unit, and amplifier. The other is the speaker enclosure. Both are attractive and identical in appearance; the front of the speaker cabinet is covered completely with grille cloth; so is the turntable console. Both are the same size: 19 by 31 by 24½ in.

This means about 7 cubic feet of internal volume for the loudspeaker, and from a cabinet of this relatively small size, some quite remarkable sound emerges. It is hard and crisp in the bass, but with plenty of body and ample low-end response. The middles are also crisp and clean, but the highs do not shriek. The cone tweeters are quite directional, however; best listening is on axis. All in all, I liked the sound, and even began to wonder a bit about the richer, more mellow sound from a huge corner horn which was in my listening room at the time I was testing the Gray system.

The phonograph console houses an impressive array of equipment. The turntable and viscous-damped arm arrangement were described in the August 1956 TITH section. The amplifier is a 50-watter which exercises very tight control over the speaker; this helps to account for the crispness referred to in the preceding paragraph. A GE cartridge is supplied as standard equipment; others can be used. The preamp-control unit is of high quality and low distortion, with plenty of flexibility. It has separate treble and bass tone controls, of course, plus separate bass and treble equalization facilities (four positions of bass turnover, six of treble rolloff). Three high-level input channels are provided for TV, tape, FM tuner, or what have you. (There is room for an FM tuner to the left of the turntable.) There is also a tape output connection.

This adds up to some of the best equipment and sound available today, all ready for simple and quick installation. This, we feel, is a step in a direction which must be taken sooner or later. There are many people who want true high fidelity but who are not willing to assemble and interconnect a group of components. The



The Duet: a pre-assembled hi-fi system.

Gray system, and others of similar quality, is the thing for these people.

We might mention that the components used are more than adequate for much

Continued on next page

Continued from preceding page

larger speaker systems. Hence we suggest that Gray may have some customers who will buy the phonograph console, complete, but will use it with a different speaker system of more grandiose capabilities.

By the way, one more item: Gray has finally solved the problem of what to do with the record jacket. The fold-back portion of the lid has a ledge along its bottom. There you can rest the empty

The 750 houses player and amplifiers.

jacket as well as, of course, other records to be played.

We congratulate Gray in putting its best foot forward in so effective yet simple a fashion. More power to them, and to others who are making hi-fi ever easier. — C.F.

MANUFACTURER'S COMMENT: The speaker used in the 760 enclosure has been carefully matched to the rest of the system. Where greater power and coverage are required, additional 760 units may be added to the system, without taxing the amplifier's power-handling capability.

Colbert Three-Channel Electronic Crossover

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): an electronic crossover for biamplifier or triamplifier systems, with integral 10-watt power amplifier for mid or high channel. **FREQUENCY DIVIDER — Channels:** two or three, selectable by front panel switch. **Crossovers:** 160 to 1,500 cycles; 750 to 6,000 cycles, continuously variable, for triamplifier operation. 160 to 3,000 cycle crossover, continuously variable, for biamplifier operation. **Gain:** 0 db, with level controls at maximum. **Input:** one, at high impedance. **Controls:** low channel level; 3-way/2-way selector; low-to-mid range crossover frequency; mid channel level; internal amplifier connection selector switch (**MID/HIGH**); mid-to-high range crossover frequency; high channel level. **Outputs:** two at low impedance to high-impedance amplifier input; one at 4, 8 or 16 ohms to speaker. **Hum and noise:** 90 db below full output. **AMPLIFIER — Frequency response:** ±1.0 db, 100 to 30,000 cycles. **Rated power:** 10 watts out at 0.4% harmonic distortion. IM distortion: 0.6% at 5 watts out; 120 and 2,000 cycles, 4:1. **Noise:** 90 db below full ouput. **Sensitivity:** 1 volt required for 10 watts out. **Dimensions:** 9 in. deep by 4 1/2 high by 12 1/4 wide, over-all, in cabinet. **Tubes:** ECC-83, EZ-80, 2 — EL-84, 3 — EC-90. **Price:** $154.50. Blonde or mahogany cabinet: $15.00. **MANUFACTURER:** Colbert Laboratory, Inc., 160-09 Hillside Ave., Jamaica 32, N. Y.

If you happened to see the price of this amplifier before anything else, you may have done a bit of wondering. But there is much more to this than meets the eye! In the first place, it is an electronic dividing network of advanced design which operates either as a two- or three-way system. In the second place, the Colbert channel divider includes its own 10-watt ultra-linear amplifier. This amplifier may be switched into either the mid-range or the high-range channel.

Let's look at that bill of particulars a little more closely. Suppose you start with a standard, high-quality, hi-fi system employing a single amplifier and a two-way speaker. You want to switch to biamplifier operation, using an electronic frequency divider. This will clean up the lows as well as the middles, and will make for improved definition in sound over the whole range. Normally, you would have to buy another power amplifier, plus the necessary electronic crossover unit. The Colbert will serve both functions. Set the switches to two-way and high. The first switch determines whether the input signal is divided into two or three bands. The second switch, in the high position, connects the built-in power amplifier into the high-frequency channel's output circuit. The continuously-variable low-range crossover control then permits you to vary the crossover frequency over a range of 160 to 3,000 cycles. The relative outputs of the two speakers are controlled by the low-range control and the high-range control. (The mid-range level crossover controls are inoperative when the unit is in two-channel operation.) Then you connect the input of your existing power amplifier to a standard phono jack labeled "low," and your new speaker to screw terminals (marked 0, 4, 8, and 16) on the back of the Colbert unit.

If, later on, you should wish to add a third speaker — say a mid-range — to your system, along with a new amplifier, you can shift those two selector switches and the unit is set up for tri-channel operation. In a three-way system of this type, it would be my suggestion to drive the tweeter with the Colbert amplifier. A wide-range amplifier (according to current thinking) should be able to put out more than 10 watts. On the other hand, a high-crossover tweeter should never require 10 watts.

This triamplifier connection then provides separate channel level controls for each speaker, and two continuously-variable controls for crossover frequency. The crossover between the low and mid-range speaker can be varied from 160 to 1,500 cycles, and between the mid- and high-range speaker from 750 to 6,000 cycles.

In operation, the divider is somewhat more complicated than the figures above would seem to indicate. There is an area of overlap which amounts to slight boost in output around the crossover point. It seems as if almost any aural effect can be achieved with the Colbert unit by adjusting the mid-to-high crossover frequency and the mid-range channel level. Vocalists can be made to move back and forth, and you can almost re-mike any recording. For this reason, it would be advisable to have all the fun and confusion you want for a short time, then follow the manufacturer's instructions as to the crossover's proper adjustment. After this, for sanity's sake, you'd better hide it and lock it up where you won't fiddle with the controls.

Over-all output is excellently clean; cut-off rates are 6 to 9 db per octave; levels change somewhat with adjustment of crossover controls; hum and noise are not audible — which is quite an accomplishment for an electronic crossover. Just proves it can be done if enough attention is paid to design and manufacture.

The Colbert electronic crossover unit.

All in all, highly commendable. If anyone doubts the value of an electronic frequency divider, this should convince them. — C.F.

Pampa Electrostatic Tweeter

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): a single-ended non-powered electrostatic tweeter installed in cabinet. **Frequency range:** 5,000 to beyond 20,000 cycles, substantially flat. **Power rating:** for use with amplifiers of up to 25 watts output. **Distribution angle:** 360 degrees in horizontal plane. **Impedance:** matches 4, 8, or 16-ohm source. **Divider network:** built into tweeter; no external network required. **Efficiency:** about 10 per cent. **Power supply:** tube pin adaptor draws polarizing voltage from external amplifier. **Dimensions:** 4 1/2 in. wide by 4 1/2 deep by 12 high, over-all. **Price:** $29.50. **MANUFACTURER:** Pampa Electronics Corp., 7354 Frankford Ave., Philadelphia 36, Pa.

The low-cost "bargain" electrostatic tweeter has rarely, if ever, been a bargain to the purchaser, partly because of its fragility and tendency toward electronic breakdown, and partly because of the inconvenience of attaching power take-off connections from the amplifier to the tweeter. Current production techniques have pretty well dealt with the electrical breakdown problem, and Pampa Electronics has come along with the neatest answer to the power supply problem that I've seen.

The more expensive electrostatic speakers contain their own built-in power supply to provide the necessary polarizing voltage for the speaker's plates. Low-cost electrostatics, though, are produced without an integral power supply, so the polarizing voltage that they need must be drawn from the power amplifier chassis. Ordinarily, this would mean that the user must install his own power take-off connection, but Pampa supplies their tweeter with a long (15 ft.) cord and a wafer-like adaptor that fits between one of the amplifier's power output tubes and its socket. The adaptor thus draws the power off from the plate connection of the tube, which would give between 300 and 450 volts — quite enough for this tweeter.

For safety's sake, and to prevent the long cable from unbalancing the amplifier's circuitry, a resistor has been installed at the adaptor wafer, in series with the take-off cable. This effectively isolates the

Continued on page 136

New Craftsmen Maestro

Complete HI-FI System

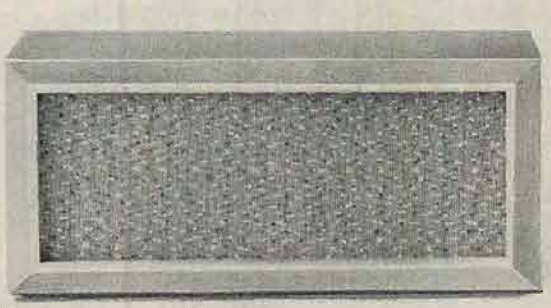
Priced under $200

If you're looking for a top quality high fidelity system that will give you years of enjoyment, that is fine furniture, can be proudly displayed on a table or bookshelf, and is kind to your budget, here it is. The Maestro Hi-Fi system will surpass the most critical examination of the audiophile. Here are the components:

CRAFTSMEN AMPLIFIER-PREAMP WITH EQUALIZATION, LOUDNESS, AND FULL-RANGE TONE CONTROL, 10 WATTS OUTPUT. FOUR-SPEED RECORD CHANGER WITH 4-POLE MOTOR. G.E. VARIABLE RELUCTANCE CARTRIDGE. 1 MIL DIAMOND STYLUS, 3 MIL SAPPHIRE STYLUS.

All the above components housed in two beautiful cabinets available in mahogany or comb grained oak. One cabinet contains the famous Craftsmen CS-16 complete speaker system. It is well known that no single speaker can adequately reproduce every sound from one end of the audio range to the other. The CS-16 contains three speakers. There is an 8 inch woofer, an 8 inch mid-range speaker, a 3 inch tweeter, to ensure the ultimate in sound reproduction.

From a specifications standpoint the Craftsmen Maestro is the outstanding buy in high fidelity. But you must see and hear it to discover why audio experts throughout the country have hailed the Maestro as a milestone in the development of high fidelity. Visit your Craftsmen dealer today or write for new illustrated Craftsmen catalog.



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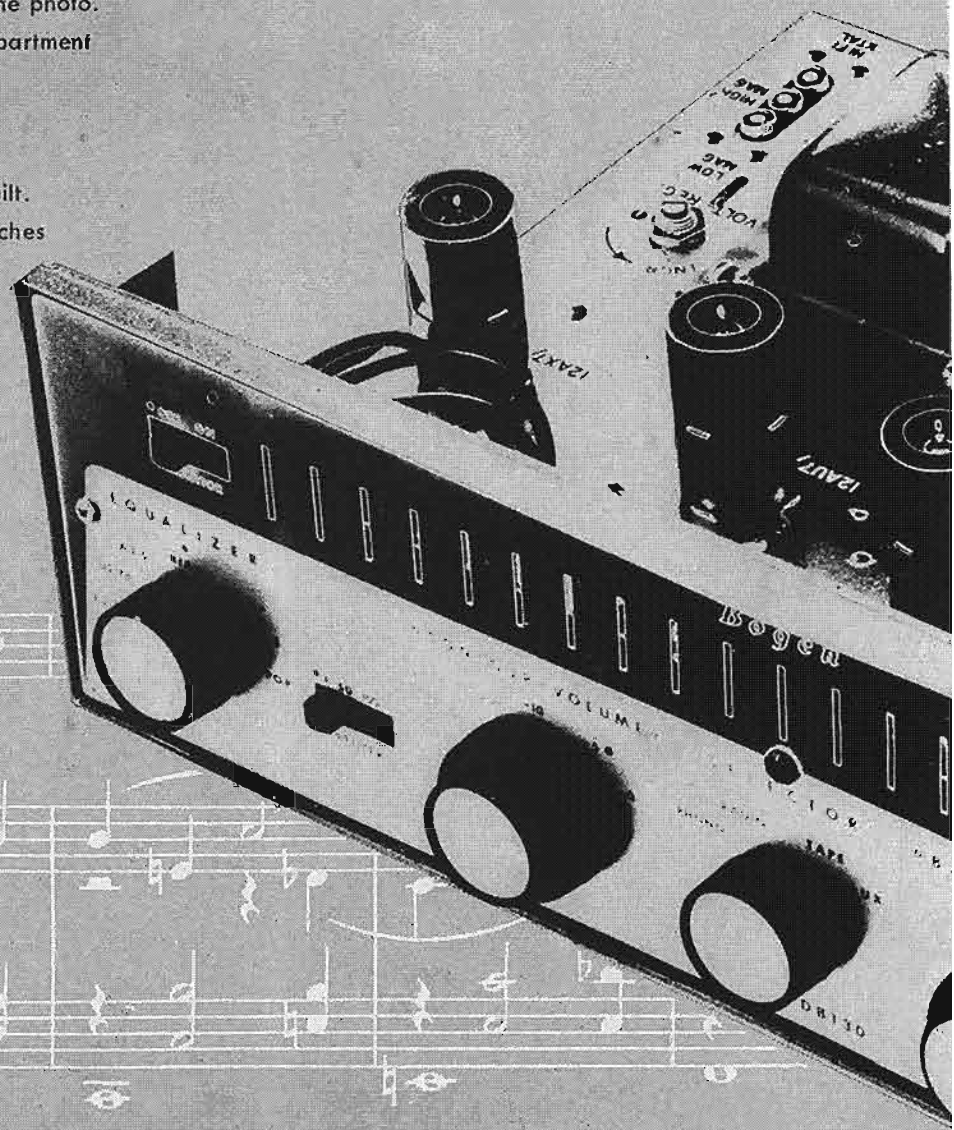
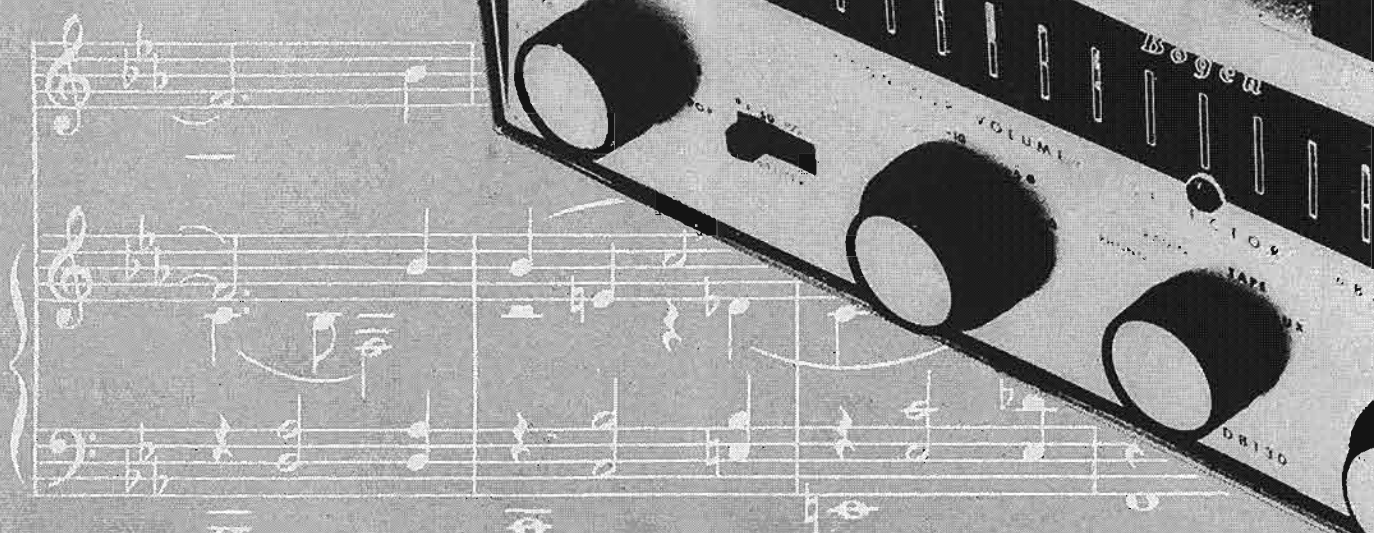
BOGEN DB130 35 WATT AMPLIFIER

Glance down at the "specifications and controls" or at the control panel in the photo. It's obvious that our engineering department (largest in the high-fidelity industry) hasn't spared itself on the DB130. Many experts consider this the finest "full-control" amplifier ever built. Spin those knobs and flick those switches at your nearest Bogen Sound Salon. You'll get the hi-fi thrill of your life.





Fm6 Fm7 G7

POWER: 35 WATTS, PEAK: 100 WATTS • FREQUENCY RESPONSE: 15-30000 CPS WITHIN 0.5 DB • DISTORTION: 0.3%, AT 35 WATTS • INPUTS: LOW MAGNETIC, HIGH MAGNETIC, HI-FI CRYSTAL, TUNER, TAPE, AUXILIARY (2) • OUTPUTS: SPEAKER(S), TAPE • CONTROLS: POWER (ON-OFF) • CONTINUOUSLY VARIABLE BASS AND TREBLE • SEPARATE CONTINUOUSLY VARIABLE LOUDNESS CON-TOUR SELECTOR • INPUT SELECTOR: PHONO, RADIO, TAPE, AUX, 7-PO RECORD EQUALIZER • INFINITE DAMPING CONTROL • LO FILTER (FLA 100C) • HI FILTER (FLAT, 8KC, 4KC) • SPEAKER SELECTOR SWI AB, B • TAPE MONITOR (ON-OFF) • AUX ADJUSTER • HUM AD CHASSIS: $115.00 • BLONDE OR MAHOGANY-FINISHED ENCLOSURE:

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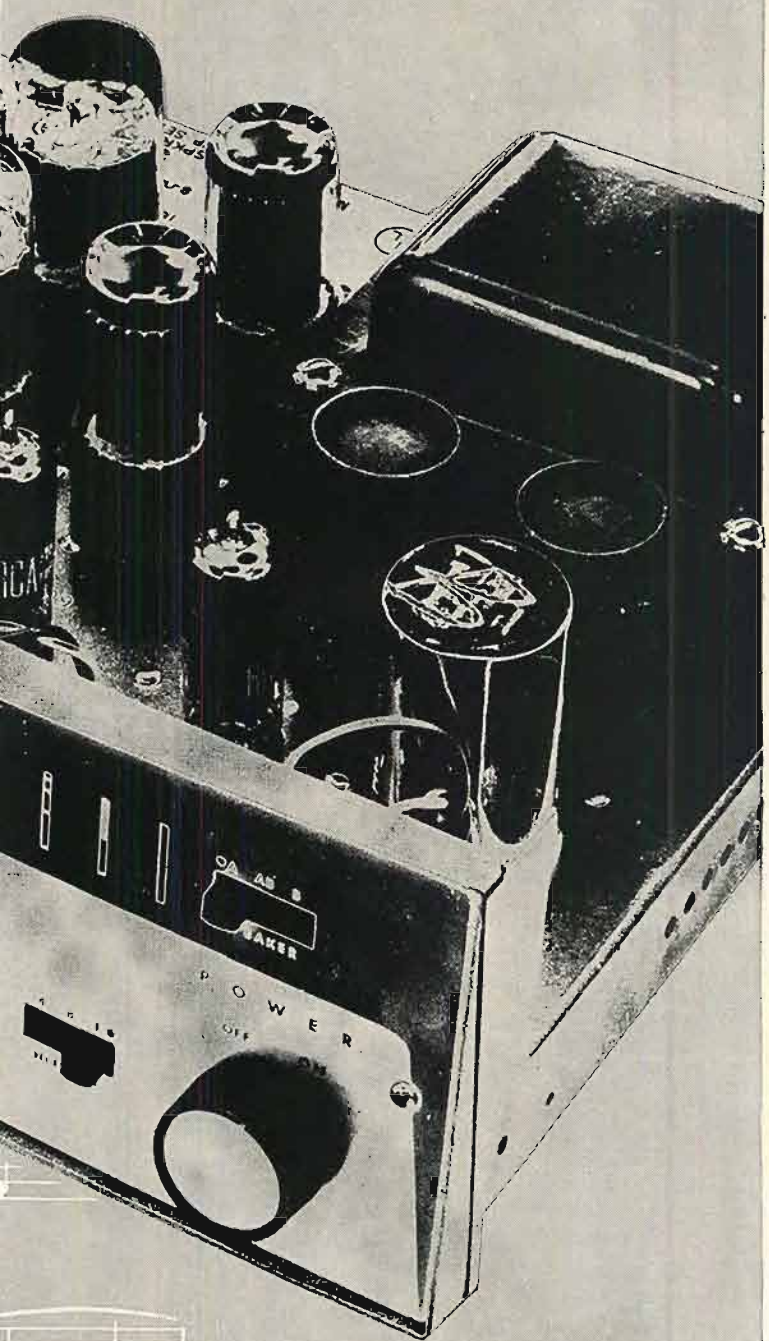
because it sounds better . . .



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what the 'sound men' say...

Anton Schmitt, Harvey Radio, known to thousands of New York audiophiles as one of the most knowledgeable hi-fi consultants in our industry.

"....I get lots of calls for Bogen from the high-fidelity fans who really know what they're doing. This is especially true of Bogen's premium amplifiers and tuners. And as far as the budget-conscious beginners go, I've started a lot of them out on Bogen's DB110 12 watter . . . and most of them wind up as confirmed Bogen enthusiasts.

"I handle many fine brands of equipment here at Harvey. I'm sure that none of these manufacturers would object to my saying that Bogen's complete line of tuners, amplifiers, receivers and record players is a marvelous hi-fi value throughout."

Anton Schmitt

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TESTED IN THE HOME

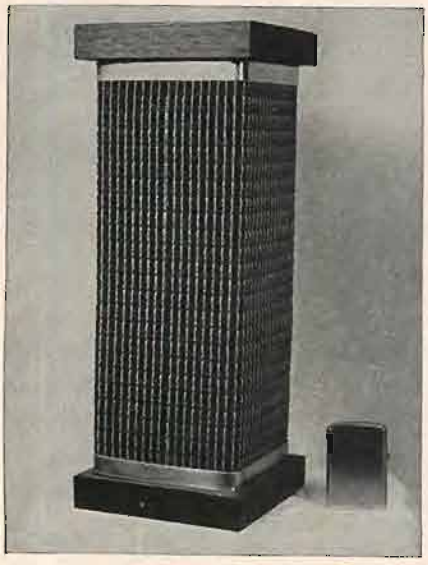
Continued from page 132

tube's plate circuit from the tweeter, but the very low current passing through the resistor keeps its voltage loss at a minimum.

The other leads coming from the Pampa tweeter connect to the amplifier's speaker connections. No external divider network is required — the tweeter is simply connected in parallel with the rest of the speaker system, and an impedance-matching transformer in the tweeter matches it to the low-impedance speaker line.

Efficiency of the Pampa tweeter is quite high; high enough in fact to match any loudspeaker system. When used with low-efficiency woofers it will be found that the tweeter's efficiency is too high, so the manufacturer recommends using the amplifier's treble control to reduce the high end. The usual T-pad inserted in series with the tweeter leads cannot be used to control the level of an electrostatic tweeter, because its capacitive nature will create severe high-frequency losses. The effect would be similar to that of a treble tone control, which would tilt the high response downward rather than depressing the entire treble range.

A small amount of attenuation (up to 6 db) can be obtained by connecting the tweeter to a lower impedance tap on the amplifier. A wider range of control (but resulting in increased distortion) would be provided by the installation of a



Cigarette lighter shows tweeter's size.

potentiometer on the tweeter's power supply lead, thus enabling its power supply voltage to be varied, dropping its efficiency without affecting its excellent high-frequency response. I have been informed, though, that Pampa will be adding an integral level-set control to subsequent production models, eliminating the level matching problem altogether.

Listening tests with this tweeter indicate that it does indeed have the range and smoothness that are claimed for it. There does not seem to be any audible limit to its high-frequency range, and its smoothness is comparable to some of the best conventional tweeters. Being a single-ended (rather than push-pull) device, its sound is not as velvety-smooth as that from the much more expensive push-pull electrostatic tweeters, but its high-frequency dispersion is about as broad as that from any tweeter I've heard. There is no audible change in high-end response in any place in the listening room.

This is one of the most successful low-cost electrostatic tweeters to date. It is very neat in appearance, fairly easy to install, and an excellent performer within its few limitations. — J.G.H.

MANUFACTURER'S COMMENT: Full efficiency is obtained from the Pampa tweeter when it is connected to the 16-ohm tap on the amplifier. The extent to which its level can be varied by using lower output taps is as follows: 8-ohm tap—½ of total efficiency; 4-ohm tap—¼ of total efficiency. For use with very low efficiency woofers, additional attenuation may be effected by judicious use of the treble tone control on the amplifier's control unit.

Fenton B&O Special A+ Cartridge

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): a high-quality magnetic cartridge with built-in radioactive static eliminator strip. **Frequency response:** ± 2 db, 20 to 16,000 cycles. **Output voltage:** Model 350, 30 millivolts; Model 72, 15 millivolts. **Compliance:** 5 x 10^{-6} cm/dyne. **Stylus mass:** 3 mg. **Recommended load:** Model 350, 100,000 ohms; Model 72, 1,000 ohms or Hi-Z. **Price:** $11.60 with sapphire stylus, $25.20 with diamond stylus. **DISTRIBUTOR:** The Fenton Company, 15 Moore St., New York 4, N. Y.

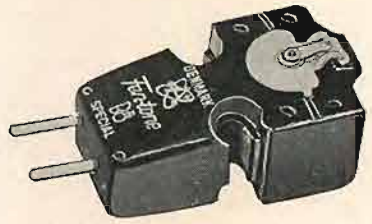
The B&O Special A+ cartridge is available in two models; a high-output high-impedance type, and one having very low impedance and medium output (as magnetic cartridges go). We received one of the high-output cartridges for testing, and I can vouch for the fact that its claim for "high output" is not at all exaggerated.

Output is rated at 30 millivolts, which is close to the limit that most preamplifiers can handle without the insertion of one of the simple attenuator networks recommended in B&O's instruction sheet for use with "some lower-priced preamps." When properly installed, however, this is a remarkable performer.

Its most immediately noticeable characteristics are extreme smoothness and lack of coloration or screech. This cartridge does not have any built-in brightness; my first impression, as a matter of fact, was that the B&O Special was slightly deficient in high end response. Further listening indicated that this was an unfounded suspicion, and subsequent spot checks with several test records and a meter removed all trace of doubt. Response proved to be very nearly linear out to about 13,000 cycles, and began to slope off very gradually out to around 19,000 cycles, where it dropped off rapidly. Considering the difficulty of ever exactly duplicating anyone else's test results on a pickup cartridge, this shows remarkable correlation with B&O's published response curve.

Another outstanding characteristic of this cartridge is its low-end performance, which is very clean and extended to well below the limitation of most practical loudspeakers.

Its tracking ability is very good, showing signs of stress only on the most heavily-recorded musical passages. The cartridge is quite able to cope with organ pedal notes and the heaviest bass



The B&O Special anti-static cartridge.

drum beats normally found on music records.

Some care should be exercised when choosing a turntable for use with the B&O Special, though, for it has some tendency to pick up radiated hum from an unshielded turntable motor. For the same reason, it should not be located too close to the associated amplifying equipment either.

B&O's instruction sheet does not recommend any stylus force value for this cartridge, but its compliance and stylus mass ratings suggested that 6 grams might be a reasonable figure. This turned out to be so, since with that force it could track most recordings quite cleanly, and additional stylus force did not materially change its tracking ability.

There are, admittedly, pickup cartridges with higher compliance and lower stylus mass than the B&O Special, but for the price, the B&O Special is going to be very hard to beat. — J.G.H.

MANUFACTURER'S COMMENT: Since many transcription arm or record changer arm manufacturers recommend different tracking force for their products, Bang and Olufsen prefer to leave the choice of tracking force to them. The B&O Special cartridge will track properly in arms requiring stylus force from 3 to 10 grams. B&O considers 5 or 6 grams the best tracking force for LP records and 8 to 9 grams for 78-rpm records. The extreme ease of stylus change at home without tools permits the use of the same cartridge body with a pair of stylus armatures, one for LP and one Standard. This represents a considerable saving over the cost of two separate cartridges. In spite of the low price, the B&O cartridge includes the built-in A+ static-repellent feature which helps prolong record and stylus life by minimizing dust attraction.

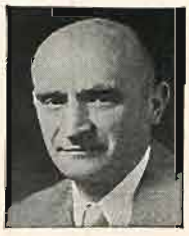
Fisher FM-40 FM Tuner

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): an FM-only tuner with meter tuning indicator. **Sensitivity:** 3 microvolts for 20 db quieting; 5 microvolts for 30 db, on 300-ohm antenna. **Response:** 20 to 20,000 cps ± 1 db. **Antenna input:** single set of input terminals for 72 or 300-ohm antenna. Twin-lead folded dipole antenna supplied. **Tuning meter:** center-of-channel type, on dial face. **Controls:** combined AC on-off and volume control, and tuning knob, on front panel; detector-multiplex output switch on top of chassis. **Outputs:** main audio output, at low impedance, affected by volume control; output direct from detector before de-emphasis network (multiplex position of selector switch) or after de-emphasis (detector position of switch). Volume control does not affect this output. **Tubes:** 6BQ7A, 6U8, 3-6BH6, 6AL5, 12AU7A, 6X4. **Dimensions:** 4 in. high by 12 3/4 wide by 7 3/8 deep, not including control knobs. **Price:** $99.50; mahogany or blonde cabinet $17.95. **MANUFACTURER:** Fisher Radio Corporation, 21-25 44th Drive, Long Island City, N. Y.

When Fisher's FM-80 tuner reached dealers' shelves it created quite a stir because of its unique design, control flexibility, and superb performance. I recall

Continued on page 138

PIONEER ACHIEVEMENTS



1925 – the first "corner" speaker system... 1927 – the first multi-diaphragm system for highs and lows... 1928 – the first commercial electronic cartridge and tone-arm... 1935 – the first "radial-slot" speaker system, etc. ALL INVENTED BY MAXIMILIAN WEIL, who holds over 260 patents – and whose know-how created the new achievement described below:

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NOW – the "Blue Chip" Compass-Pivoted Tone-Arm in KIT form – *and at HALF price!*

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You do-it-yourself with no tools other than a nail-file or small screwdriver.

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The new KT models are the crowning achievement of a quarter-century of constant refinement and re-engineering of the very first commercial electronic pickup arm (Audax 1928)... to the *fewest possible parts*. It is this very *nth degree engineered simplicity* that makes the new KT Tone-Arms possible.*

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TESTED IN THE HOME

Continued from page 136

thinking at the time, though, that it was priced just high enough to prevent a lot of people from buying it — people who couldn't use its very high sensitivity to good advantage, for example.

Apparently many others felt the same way, for now we have the FM-40. This isn't just a stripped-down version of the FM-80, however it is a new design, different from the input circuit onward, and intended to achieve maximum possible performance at its price. The major difference: a balanced ratio detector and three IF stages, rather than the two IF stages, two limiter stages, and discriminator in the FM-80. Sensitivity and AFC controls are not supplied, and the volume control has been moved from the back panel to the front — possibly because it was thought that the FM-40 was more likely to be used with only a power amplifier and speaker.

The FM-80 has two meters: a center-of-channel tuning meter and a signal-strength indicator. The FM-40 has only the former; this is, of course, by far the more important of the two. It is especially important because automatic frequency control (AFC) is not furnished. With the meter, tuning can be done more precisely than an AFC circuit can manage.

Output circuits of the FM-40 are *more* elaborate than those of the more expensive model. The main output, from a cathode-follower, is subject to the volume control setting. Cables from this output jack may be of any reasonable length. Another output jack is fed directly from the ratio detector. A switch on top of the chassis determines whether this jack is connected in the circuit before the de-

The FM-40 installed in blonde cabinet.

emphasis network (for future multiplex reception) or after it, for obtaining another normal output signal fixed in amplitude. Leads from this jack must be kept short.

Only one set of antenna input terminals is furnished, representing a compromise between 72- and 300-ohm impedance. It is stated that negligible mismatch will be obtained with either type of lead-in transmission line. I suspect, from our experience, that the "negligible" term applies more accurately for 300-ohm lines than for 72-ohm cable.

To be entirely candid, our FM-40 results differed only slightly from the FM-80's performance. Sensitivity of the new model is very high. After a five-minute warm-up period there was no perceptible tuning drift in our test model. With such stability, and a precise tuning indicator, we can see no need at all for AFC. The dial is well spread out and, as is Fisher's helpful custom, a logging scale is supplied. Sound quality meets the Fisher standard in every way.

In our particular locality (one with fairly weak FM signals), I should say that the FM-40 is as satisfactory as the FM-80 — and that's high praise. Users in urban locations, where variable sensitivity is important, or in extreme fringe FM areas, will undoubtedly be better off with the FM-80. — R.A.

MANUFACTURER'S COMMENT: As this goes to press, the FM-80 tuner to which you referred in this report is being superseded by the FM-90, an entirely new concept in FM tuner design, and a unit which we believe will set the standard for the tuner of tomorrow.

Radio-Craftsmen CA-11 Concerto Amplifier

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): a compact combined preamplifier-control unit and power amplifier. **Power rating:** 10 watts at 3% IM distortion. **Frequency response:** ± 1 db, 20 to 20,000 cycles. **Power response:** ± 1 db, 30 to 10,000 cycles at 10 watts. **Damping factor:** 8. **Hum and noise:** 55 db below 10 watts, phono channel. **Sensitivity:** phono channel, 8 mv for 10 watts output; high-level channels, 1 volt for 10 watts output. **Inputs:** Tape, TV, Tuner, Magnetic phono, Xtal phono. **Controls:** selector and bass turnover (TAPE/TV, TUNER, RIAA/AES, BR/ffrr, LP); treble rolloff (BR, ffrr, AES, RIAA/LP); AC power and loudness contour; bass (± 15 db, 50 cycles); treble (± 17 to − 13 db, 10,000 cycles). **Outputs:** speaker (4, 8, 16 ohms); tape (low impedance from output transformer secondary). **Tubes:** 2 — 12AX7, 2 — 6V6GT, 5Y3GT. **Dimensions:** 13 in. wide by 4 high by 7 1/4 deep, overall. **Price:** $57.50. **MANUFACTURER:** Radio Craftsmen, Inc., 4223 W. Jefferson Blvd., Los Angeles 16, Calif.

As much as we all may wish we could afford to own the very ultimate in a high-fidelity system, there is usually at least one factor that stands between us and perfection; the economic factor. This is the reason why many of us must settle for ten watts rather than 100 watts of power or for an 8-inch wide-range speaker instead of a multiple woofer three-way system or a monster corner horn.

Hence, the persistent demand for high-quality budget-priced amplifiers like the Craftsmen Concerto. Like many of its counterparts, the CA-11 is neat and compact in appearance, and, considering its modest cost, it has unusually flexible control facilities. Separate bass turnover and treble rolloff controls for record equalization provide 15 equalization combinations, for accurate compensation of 78-rpm and LP records. The RIAA position on both equalizer controls is marked in red for the benefit of nontechnical users who don't know AES from LP and who care less. The bass turnover control is combined with the selector switch, and there are enough high-level input positions to handle all the additional equipment that might be used with a medium-priced system.

The bass and treble controls operate to vary the over-all balance of the sound, and their range of control is more than adequate to handle any aberration in the program material.

A single rear-chassis level-set control allows the loudness control to be set within its correct range of operation. The latter is very definite in its action, becoming effective at positions lower than

Craftsmen's CA-11 control-amplifier unit.

the 3 o'clock setting. Loudness compensation is effective at both the high and low-frequency extremes, and the low end boost seems to take place more rapidly and more vigorously than is necessary. This turns out to be an asset when using a speaker system that is inherently thin in the bass range, but a better quality speaker starts to boom with the volume control turned to a low setting. Actually, a medium-priced speaker (as would be used with a medium-priced amplifier) is more likely than not to benefit from this accentuated loudness compensation.

Other features on the CA-11 include a switched convenience AC outlet, and a tape output connection which is taken from the 15-ohm tap on the output transformer, to provide a low-impedance source to the recorder. Thus there is practically no limitation to the length of the cable that can be run from it, as there would be were the output connection at high impedance. All controls, including volume, affect the tape output connection.

Sound from the Concerto amplifier is about as might be expected in view of its specifications; quite clean at levels up to its modest 10-watt power rating, and with a crisp, well-defined high end. Bass cleanliness is remarkably good for a low-powered amplifier, and the controls handle smoothly and positively. The Flat positions on both tone controls are precisely as indicated; flat response all the way through the range, and there are no clicks or pops when switching controls.

All in all, a very nice amplifier, and one that looks as if it is built to give years of trouble-free service. — J.G.H.

MANUFACTURER'S COMMENT: The CA-11 Concerto was, indeed, designed for medium and low-budget systems. This, to us, also implied the use of medium and low priced speakers, hence the heavier bass compensation in the loudness contour control. After the first shipments, it was found that as many experienced hi-fi enthusiasts as novices bought the CA-11, and are using it with the most elegant speaker systems. Consequently, the loudness control was modified to make the system fully applicable to a wider variety of speakers. The flexibility of controls assures fine reproduction with any speaker system. The other characteristics of the CA-11 remain unchanged.

Stereo by Holt

SPECIFICATIONS (furnished by manufacturer): a high-quality power amplifier with built-in phase shifting networks; which is used with an existing high-fidelity system and a second loudspeaker, to add stereo effects to a monaural program. **Input:** high-level full-range signal, obtained from output of present amplifier or preamp-control unit. **Controls:** combined AC on-off and bass tone; volume; treble tone. Push-pull balance adjustment under acorn nut on back panel. **Output:** 4, 8, and 16 ohms to speaker. **Frequency response:** 40 to 20,000 cps, ± 2 db. **IM distortion** (60 and 7,000 cycles, 4:1, with 117 volts AC supply): less than 2% at 10 watts; less than 0.2% at 5 watts; and less than 0.1% at 1 watt output. **Phase shift:** fairly

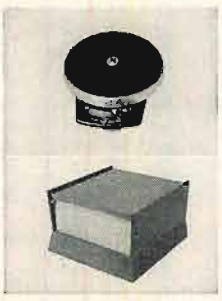
Continued on page 140

SKITCH . . . on his Presto Turntable

"MY CUSTOM HI-FI OUTFIT is as important to me as my Mercedes-Benz sports car," says *Skitch Henderson,* pianist, TV musical director and audiophile. "That's why I chose a PRESTO turntable to spin my records. In my many years working with radio and recording studios I've never seen engineers play back records on anything but a *turntable*—and it's usually a PRESTO turntable.

"My own experience backs up the conclusion of the engineers: for absolutely constant turntable speed with no annoying 'Wow' and 'Flutter,' especially at critical 33⅓ and 45 rpm speeds, for complete elimination of motor noise and 'rumble,' I've found nothing equals a PRESTO turntable. It's heavy . . . it's brilliantly machined . . . . it's the only instrument on which the genuine audiophile should ever allow his records to be played."

Visit the Hi-Fi Sound Salon nearest you to verify Mr. Henderson's comments. Whether you currently own a conventional "one-piece" phonograph—or custom components—we think you'll be gratified with the difference you'll hear when you play your records through custom hi-fi components teamed with a PRESTO turntable. Write for free brochure, *"Skitch, on Pitch,"* to Dept. WYY, Presto Recording Corporation, P.O. Box 500, Paramus, N. J.



MODEL T-2 12" "Promenade" turntable (33⅓ and 45) four pole motor, $49.50

MODEL T-18 12" "Pirouette" turntable (33⅓, 45 and 78) four pole motor, $75.00; with Hysteresis motor (Model T-18H), $131.00

MODEL T-68 16" "Pirouette" turntable (33⅓, 45 and 78) four pole motor, $99.00; with Hysteresis motor (Model T-68H), $170.00

WALNUT "PANDORA" Turntable Cabinet by Robert W. Fuldner, $42.50

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COMPLETE HI-FI

"Golden Ensemble"

by Rauland

Tuner, Preamp and Amplifier in a single, compact BALANCED HI-FI unit at extremely low cost . . .

The Very Best for Less!

Here's the quality unit for simplest installation—merely add speaker and record changer and have your complete, superb FM-AM-Phono home music system. No cabinet required—saves money, space, installation problems. You get the ultimate in wide-range musical enjoyment and you pay less for it. Features are outstanding. Response: FM ± 0.5 db, 20 to 20,000 cps; AM, ± 3.0 db, 20 to 5,000 cps; Phono, ± 0.5 db, 20 to 20,000 cps. Sensitivity: FM, 3 mv. for 20 db of quieting; AM, 5 mv. for 0.5 watt output. Harmonic distortion: Radio input, less than 2%; Phono input, less than 0.7%. Separate front ends for AM and FM; tuned RF stage on FM; discriminator with dual limiters; AFC with defeat on function switch; FM dipole antenna; AM has RF stage, ferrite loop. Separate bass, treble controls; RIAA record equalization; choice of standard or equal loudness control; full 12 watts output, etc. Ultra-compact design, only 5¾" high; decorator-styled in handsome charcoal black with marbleized gold finish. Fits anywhere beautifully. See and hear the "Golden Ensemble" soon.

NEW! HI-FI SOUND FOR TV!

EXCLUSIVE RAULAND TV55 TELEVISION SOUND TUNER

Designed for use with the "Golden Ensemble". Makes your TV sound "come alive" for thrilling listening or tape recording. Just plug in, tune and enjoy Hi-Fi audio on any VHF channel, played through your RAULAND music system! See it—hear it now.

Visit your Hi-Fi dealer for a personal RAULAND Hi-Fi audition. See and hear the "Golden Ensemble" and TV 55 Sound Tuner—and you'll *know* you're getting the very best for less.

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TESTED IN THE HOME

Continued from page 138

constant over audio range; at least 270° and not more than 360° from 40 to 20,000 cps. **Tubes:** 2-12SL7, 12SN7, 2 – 6V6, 5Y3. **Dimensions:** 7 3/4 in. deep by 11 wide by 6 high, over-all. **Accessories:** shielded input cable and plug; spring clip for speaker lead, to facilitate phasing. **Price:** $59.50 plus postage, or $62.00 prepaid in U.S. **MANUFACTURER:** Stereo by Holt, 4712 Magnolia Blvd., Burbank, Calif.

Before getting into a discussion of the Holt Stereo unit, let it be understood that this is not (by our definition) a true stereophonic or binaural system. That requires at least two separate and simultaneous recording and playback channels, to preserve the *true* directional qualities of the original sound by re-creating its phase and amplitude relationships as sampled from two or more distinct points. The aim of the Holt system is to form an acceptable *illusion* of a stereo wave front — to modify monaural (single-channel) sound in such a way that the ear is tricked into believing that it might be hearing a stereo playback. This it can do with a surprising degree of success.

The Holt Stereo adaptor is designed for use with any existing high-fidelity (or low-fi, for that matter) sound system. An input signal for the special Holt amplifier is obtained from the output terminals of the main amplifier, or from the preamp-control unit. A speaker (not supplied) is connected to the output terminals of the Holt amplifier and placed some distance away from the main speaker system — preferably along the same wall, or in an adjacent corner. Then the volume control on the Stereo amplifier is turned up until the space between the two speakers seems to fill in with sound; if the fill-in is not obtained, the speaker lead clip is reversed. Bass and treble controls on the Holt amplifier are adjusted for the desired balance and then left alone. The volume control can also be left at the optimum setting if it is desired to have the Stereo unit operative continuously; if not, it can be turned off easily.

According to Mr. Holt, the complex circuitry of the Stereo amplifier gives a phase shift of at least 270°, and not more than 360°, over the entire range above 40 cps. This is not an instantaneous phase reversal, such as an amplifying tube stage produces, but it represents an actual time difference between the input and output signal. The lower the operating frequency, of course, the greater is the time difference between sounds issued by the main speaker and the speaker connected to the Stereo amplifier. With proper adjustment of the relative volume levels, this frequency-dependent time delay serves to position each instrument of the orchestra somewhere on a line going through both speakers, according to the instrument's frequency range. Changes in apparent position can be accomplished by adjustment of the Stereo amplifier's volume, bass, and treble controls; the best adjustment of these controls will be determined by room acoustics, and the relative speaker positions and characteristics. The bass and treble controls are operative over small ranges, but their effects are significant.

Naturally, it is easier to obtain a realistic pseudo-stereo effect with full orchestral program material than with instrumental and voice soloists, or small groups. With very careful adjustment of the Stereo amplifier controls, however, we found that it was possible to achieve a combination of settings that would keep a solo voice in one place as it went up and down the scale. It is easier to do this if the two speaker systems have similar middle- and high-frequency characteristics, although dissimilar speakers can be used. Extended bass isn't necessary for the auxiliary speaker; but clean bass *is* important in its operating range.

In use, the Holt stereo system never created any problems of two-source effect. Even when the speakers made as wide an angle as 90° with the listener, the space between them was easy to fill in with sound. With very wide speaker separation the movement or shift of solo instruments was more marked than with narrower speaker separation, as would be expected. But with proper control adjustment, as we have said, this shift can be minimized; if it is disturbing, the Holt amplifier can simply be turned off except during large orchestral or choral works. It is in these that I, at least, found Holt Stereo most impressive and ear-pleasing, giving a roundness and reverberative effect that is a vital characteristic of live sound.

The Holt Stereo amplifier chassis.

So far as objective quality is concerned, the Holt amplifier gives an excellent account of itself. In stability, low distortion, and definition, it is in the same class (up to its rated power) as the best amplifiers on the market. And since it is meant only to augment the standard sound system, its 10 watts will certainly be adequate for any but exceptional circumstances.

Not all the HIGH FIDELITY staff members were as favorably impressed with this device as I; some were more so. I suspect that a few listened with unavoidably preconceived opinions. It is our consensus, though, that it is well worth a trial by anyone — particularly if he has an extra high-quality speaker. Stereo by Holt is sold on a 5-day trial basis. — R.A.

MANUFACTURER'S COMMENT: We feel that some of HIGH FIDELITY's more skeptical readers may be misled by the usage here of the words "trick," "illusion," and "pseudo." It should be pointed out that these words are necessitated in this case by the definition of true stereo at the beginning of the report. This is merely a matter of semantics, and it is important for readers to realize that there are other definitions in use in the trade. It is also important that those who are not familiar with stereophonics realize that the problems mentioned in connection with this system also crop up in true multi-channel stereo systems.

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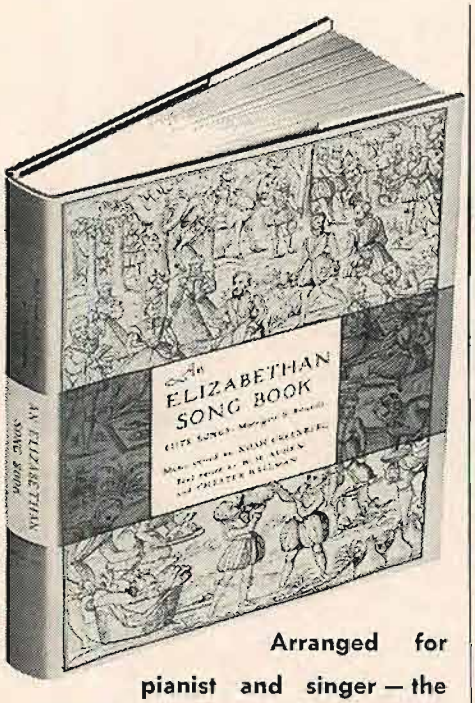

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HALF-MILLION RECORDS

Continued from page 63

One young woman, some time ago, started making hand lists of all records in the library. Russia alone took her three years to get through, and yielded a 185-page catalogue of fairly awesome scope.

Very dear to Miss Britten's heart is the Archives' collection of English music-hall and comedy recordings, by far the world's greatest. About six or seven years ago she purchased, for more than $10,000, the entire collection of a British specialist in this type of esoterica. She has been adding to it ever since. Some of these records go back to the 1890s. They are hard to locate. As Miss Britten explains it, they had a short life and soon disappeared. Today the endisked performances of such former headliners as Florrie Ford, George Robey, Marie Lloyd, Henry Champion, and Wilkie Bard are very valuable. When Miss Britten gets a rare music-hall item she puts it on tape. America once had its spurt of similar recordings; remember *Cohen on the Telephone* and other such masterpieces of humor? American examples, of course, do not overly concern Miss Britten, who has enough to do tracking down rare British items. And when, occasionally, these are played on documentary or nosralgic programs, Miss Britten feels she has not worked in vain.

There are certain special requests that Miss Britten must fulfill. She is regarded in BBC circles as a high priestess of records — a woman who has listened to all there was and probably all there is to be. And thus she gets hurry calls from BBC producers who want a certain type of music to accompany their programs, but who do not in the least know what the music should be. One recently sent in a request for something that would fit *Music to Sew By*. Miss Britten sent him the *Dorabella* Variation from Elgar's *Enigma*. Roy Spears, responsible for a popular show named Educating Archie, once sent in a desperate requisition that read exactly as follows: "Big lush end-of-film music — I've found you at last — darling I've been a blind fool." Miss Britten glanced at this, laughed, and sent him *Vision of Delia* by Croudson and *Throughout the Years* by Williams (not Vaughan). "Real

Continued on page 144

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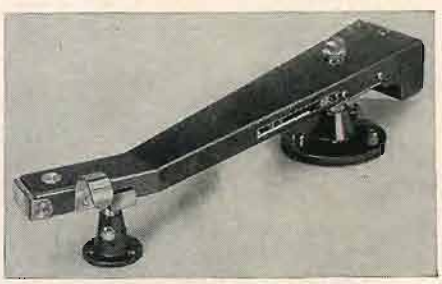

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AR-1

Report from the
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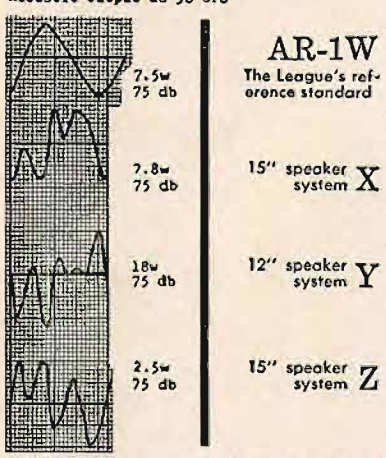
Fig. 5
Acoustic Output at 30 CPS



**Vol. 1 No. 9, Oct., '55. Authorized quotation #28. For the complete technical and subjective report on the AR-1 consult Vol. 1 No. 11, The Audio League Report, Pleasontville, N. Y.*

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HALF-MILLION RECORDS

Continued from page 142

cinema stuff." Somewhat more difficult was a poet's demand for some kind of music on his broadcast that would suggest silence. "*Silence!*" said Miss Britten. "By Jove! Did you ever?" She came up with a selection, and is rather pleased that musicians to whom she later described her predicament told her that no better choice could have been made. "What would *you* have chosen?" she asked this visitor. Visitor hemmed and hawed and allowed as how it was a difficult decision to make. When she told him what it was, visitor nodded in respect. No better choice *could* have been made. By Jove.

RUSSIA

Continued from page 58

kind of comic desperation he called my interpreter to the orchestra pit and through her asked if I would be able to repeat the aria. I loosened my tie, took off my jacket, and—via Mme. Alexandra—said, "If the audience can take it, so can I." And we repeated the aria right there during the dress rehearsal.

The actual performance turned into a kind of diplomatic event. Our wonderful Ambassador and Mrs. Charles E. Bohlen were in their official box. The Minister of Culture, ambassadors from India, Israel, and other countries, members of the American press; it was something! It all ended in a twenty minute ovation—not so much, I like to feel, for me as for the United States.

Our next stop was Kiev; and it was a wonderful feeling to be met right at the airport by the Artistic Director and the entire cast of our forthcoming opera, Verdi's *Masked Ball*. Of the three cities I visited during my Russian tour, Kiev, on the whole, seemed to me the most friendly. People on the street smile a lot, there is an easygoing atmosphere reminiscent of the feeling of "southern towns" all over the world.

For me, it was especially gratifying to learn that the Kiev Opera had revived *Masked Ball* after a long period of absence, because its Artistic Director, Viktor Gontar, had heard the Toscanini RCA-Victor album of this

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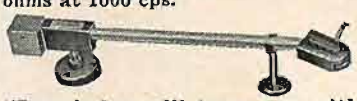

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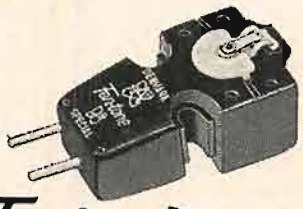

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opera and, as soon as it was announced that I would come to Russia, had decided to revive the opera in a brand new production, with me in the role of Riccardo, which I had sung for the record.

Michael Grishko was Renato, Lia Lobouva, Amelia, and Elisabeth Chowdar, who had recently been on a Canadian tour, was an exraordinarily fine Oscar. As at all Russian opera houses, the orchestra — this one under Maestro Tolbo's baton — was first rate. Although *Masked Ball* had never been a "draw" in Kiev, we sang it to sold-out houses. I gave my concert at the opera house and after the second *Masked Ball*, Grishko and his wife gave a feast which lasted into the early morning hours and which produced a never-ending flow of amiable and lengthy toasts.

Back in Moscow I had three more "farewell" concerts at the large Conservatory Hall, and after the last one the Minister of Culture gave a special luncheon. My young daughter Susan had flown in for the last recital, which added a particularly cheerful note, and she was also present when — to my great surprise — the Minister of Culture invited me to return next year, not only to appear in concerts and operas, but to teach a Master Class at Moscow's Conservatory. He explained that it would be a course for "advanced students" and mentioned some of the most illustrious names among Russia's present-day singers, all of whom had made a special request to this effect. "They all still want to find out," he said, "where you keep all that breath."

I promised to be back, if my other schedules permitted, and although I have never taught voice production in my life, I was honored to be offered such an assignment.

We said a fond goodbye to Ambassador and Mrs. Bohlen who, during our visit, had become close and dear friends. I cannot count how often Alice and I said to each other, "What a blessing, that we have men like Bohlen representing us here." The Ambassador told us that he felt "my mission" had exceeded his most optimistic hopes, and I'm vain enough to believe he really meant it.

I have no illusions that my visit to Russia has helped to ease international relations between our two countries. But I do think that both Isaac Stern, who toured the Soviet

Continued on next page

AR-2

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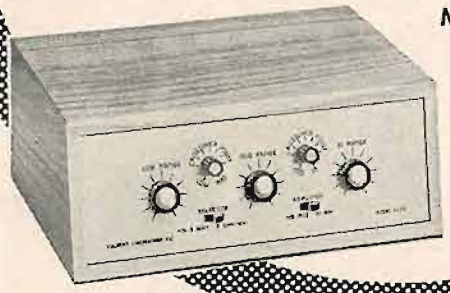

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RUSSIA

Continued from preceding page

Union just before me, and I did establish the fact that America produces not only automobiles, iceboxes, and skyscrapers but also some good, solid musicians.

P. S. In re-reading this article I can't help thinking of the famous instrumentalist who, on being asked how his recent concert tour went, quipped, "It would be immodest to be modest about it." I have taken both success and failure in my stride. I have always felt you can't go to pieces about a bad review and take only the good ones as gospel truth. I've always been highly critical of my own work. But when I've done a good job I just don't believe artificial, false modesty should staccato every second phrase. Pirs had a success in Russia, thank you, and Pirs worked for it.

OLD SPEED

Continued from page 67

enjoyment, barring accidents, the glory that was Gadski and the grandeur that was Homer.

There are present blessings to be counted. RCA Victor has presented us with the Camden pressing of *The Art of Josef Lhevinne* and the Critic's Choice series of vocal reissues. More, praise be, are coming. Most of us, certainly, wish that modern techniques had been available when Signor Caruso was bellowing so magnificently down tin horns. Since such was not the case, we still listen to him, tuba players and all, and let the shadow in some measure suggest what the substance was. But in most acceptable sound we can hear such roundly enjoyable music as John Charles Thomas polishing up the handle on the big front door and Richard Crooks giving the anonymous second tenor a very hard time on his notable recording of the "Serenade" from the *Student Prince*. The low-priced reissues in many cases approach the priceless in what they contain; long may they sell and prosper.

Of course I am "for" LP, hi-fi, and all other achievements of modern sound engineering and recording

Continued on page 148

12 WATTS

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25 WATTS

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32 WATTS

MODEL RF-471—Coaxial mounting of tweeter and woofer . . . Frequency response of 30 to 15,000 cps . . . Better than 100 degrees angle of coverage . . . 12" low-frequency unit with 1½" voice coil on aluminum form . . . 2" high-frequency unit with ¾" voice coil. Aluminum spider and Carpinchoe leather suspension . . . 20 oz. Alnico V low-frequency unit magnet . . . 2.15 oz. Alnico V high-frequency unit magnet.

32 WATTS

MODEL RF-466—Precision engineered coaxial speaker . . . Frequency response of 30 to 15,000 cps . . . Better than 100 degrees angle of coverage . . . 15" low-frequency moisture-resistant cone with 2" voice coil, 20 oz. Alnico V Magnet . . . 2¾" high-frequency unit with ¾" voice coil, 1.75 oz. Alnico V Magnet . . . Magnet completely enclosed for full protection.

35 WATTS

MODEL RF-465—True coaxial speaker system with "Omega M-Voice Ring" horn loaded 2½" tweeter and separate 15" low-frequency woofer . . . Moisture-resistant cone . . . Frequency response: 30 to 20,000 cps . . . Better than 90 degrees angle of coverage . . . Brilliance control provides variable control of high-frequency response . . . Total magnetic flux at voice coils is 20,000 gauss.

40 WATTS

MODEL RF-475—10½ pound Alnico V magnet . . . Moisture-resistant cone . . . Audible response of 30 to 20,000 cps . . . Better than 90 degrees angle of coverage throughout frequency range . . . Low-frequency unit equipped with 15" Seamless cardinal cone having a 3" voice coil . . . An exponential compression tweeter horn utilizing a phenolic diaphragm, and a 10-element acoustic lens for unusually smooth, silky highs.

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"More treble, please." **"Boost that bass."**

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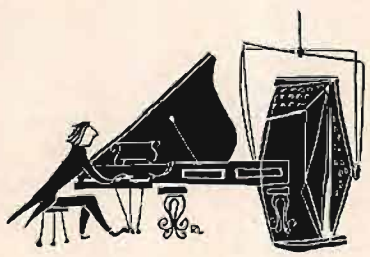
OLD SPEED

Continued from page 146

techniques. I have absolutely no objection to hearing someone's shoe laces tap-tapping on the stage during the bird song in Toscanini's version of *The Pines of Rome*, and I admire some of Mr. Cook's releases in the same spirit of awe with which I sometimes regard Orson Welles.

The hi-fi era has already given some magnificent things to the phonograph: Mme. Novaes' *Nights in the Gardens of Spain*, the complete *Parsifal*, Segovia's recitals for Decca, and untold more. My somewhat elastic budget still cannot be made to surround them all. Now and then, after listening to some of the expansive sound which my best LPs can transmit, I return to the era of off-center wobble, slippage, side breaks, chapped edges, surface noise, and hefty sets of symphonies or opera just to hear good music. I hear Kreisler play the Mendelssohn concerto and Casals the Dvorak. I listen to Lehmann and Melchior in *Die Walküre*. And the magic of the music takes its hold. The side breaks become moments of reflection, now, and a discreet dynamic noise suppressor removes the surface hiss. The air is filled with the harmonies of great art.

But the bulging Schwann Catalog is compulsive, which is why I plan to write a historical novel — they always sell. To insure that the sale will be a splendid one, I will endow my heroine with every biological potential and I will see that the potential is richly realized as the pages of my thrilling narrative unfold. Thus I



will make a great deal of money. With this money I will buy more records, LPs of course, and add hundreds of hours of listening to what is already on my shelves. However, when all this has been done, and the want lists have vanished before a tidal wave of recorded splendor, you can be sure that at least some of the hardy 78s will have survived the deluge.

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Now, with W/B Stentorians, you can enjoy high-quality high fidelity at unbelievably low, low cost!

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Model 812-U (8") Response, 50 — 12,000 cps.; bass resonance, 65 cps.; 12,000 gauss; 2 lb. Alcomax Magnet System. Other specifications as above. $13.95

Model HF 816-U as above but with 16,000 gauss; 3½ lb. Alcomax Magnet System $29.50

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Model HF 610 (6") Response, 60 — 12,000 cps.; bass resonance, 70 cps. $8.95

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*T/M Whiteley Electrical Radio Company

WHY BIAMPLIFY?

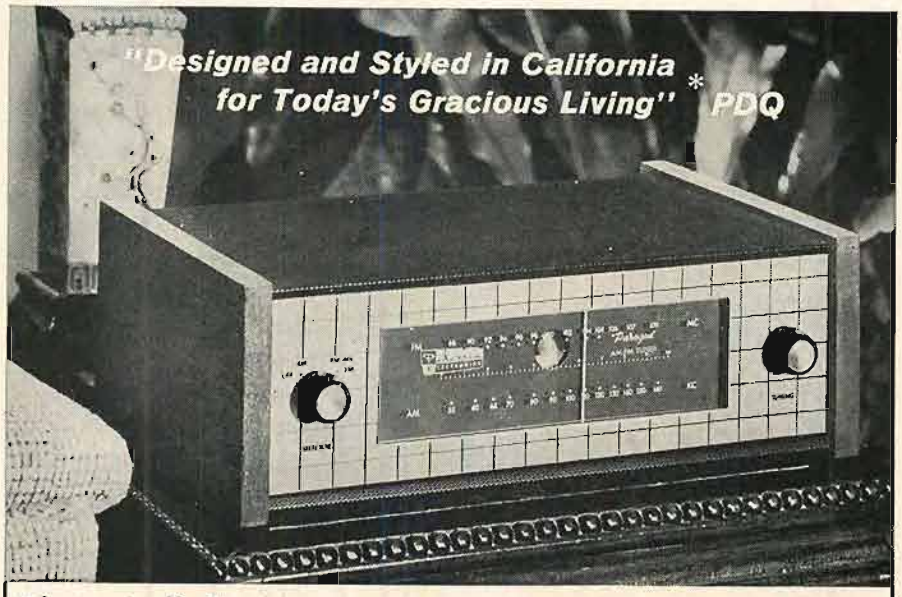
Continued from page 61

overlap of roughly one octave at each crossover frequency: the bass channel cutoff frequency, according to our measurements, is variable from 202 to 480 cps while the middle-range channel low-frequency cutoff varies from 87 to 248 cps. The high-frequency crossover control varies the middle-range channel high-frequency cutoff from 430 to 1,500 cps while simultaneously changing the treble channel cutoff from 235 to 860 cps. When used as a two-way dividing network the upper crossover control, and the middle-range level control, are inoperative; everything above the low-frequency crossover point is fed to the treble channel output jack, and its level is adjustable by means of the treble level control. In addition, there is a built-in 10-watt power amplifier that can be used on the treble or middle-frequency channel (when three-channel operation is elected), on the entire upper range (for two-channel operation), or not used at all! The price is $154.50 for the chassis alone, and $169.50 with a cabinet.

Other equipment worth investigating, if you're considering a biamplifier system, are the so-called "binaural" power amplifiers made by Bell and Newcomb. These units have two separate power amplifiers on a single chassis, with integrated controls. Stan White has also made dual-channel power amplifiers with plug-in high-impedance dividing networks. A complete three-speaker three-amplifier system, with a special preamp-control unit, is manufactured in England by Sound Sales and distributed here by Ercona Corp.

A few precautions: if you use two amplifiers to drive a two-way speaker system, there should be no problem with the old crossover network — it won't be used at all. If your two-way speaker is coaxial, however, you *may* have a little difficulty finding the individual voice-coil leads, because the crossover network may be inside the cover over the magnet assembly. If it is, better check with the manufacturer on how to get at it. With most high-quality two-way systems the crossover network is separate or attached to the speaker basket, so that the woofer and tweeter leads are easily accessible.

Continued on page 152



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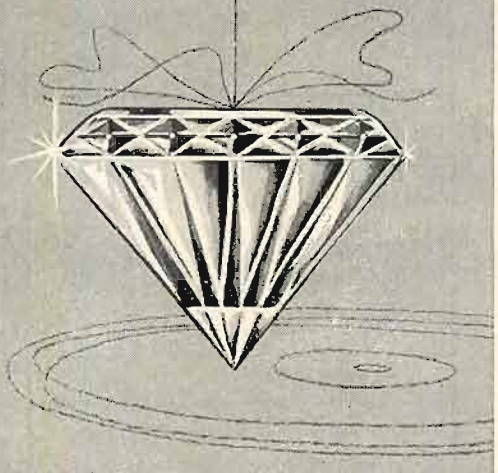

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illustrated below is a typical HUDSON CERTIFIED high fidelity system

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GARRARD RC98 "CROWN II" 3-speed super-auto-manual record changer featuring full automatic and manual operation. An outstanding feature: continuous + or − variable control on all 3 speeds with which the RC98 can be "tuned" to match a musical instrument, or for perfect pitch. Entirely new 4-pole shaded-pole motor. "Simpli-Mix" permits 12, 10 & 7" records to be mixed and played at one time. Pusher platform. True-Turret drive.

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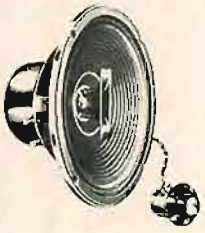

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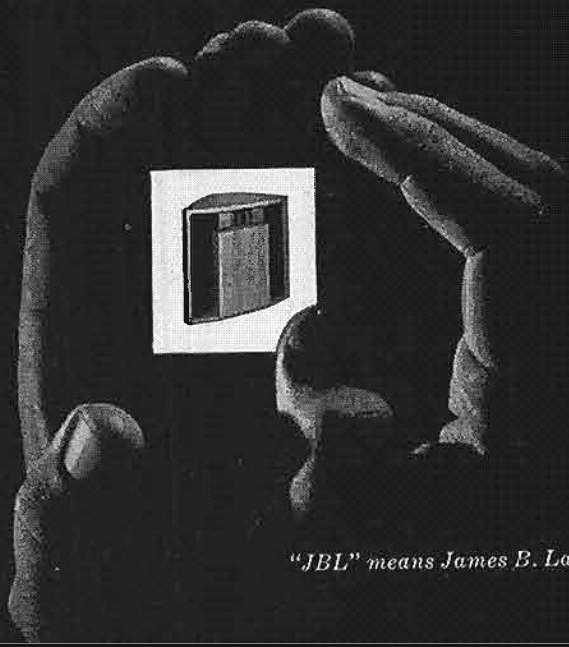

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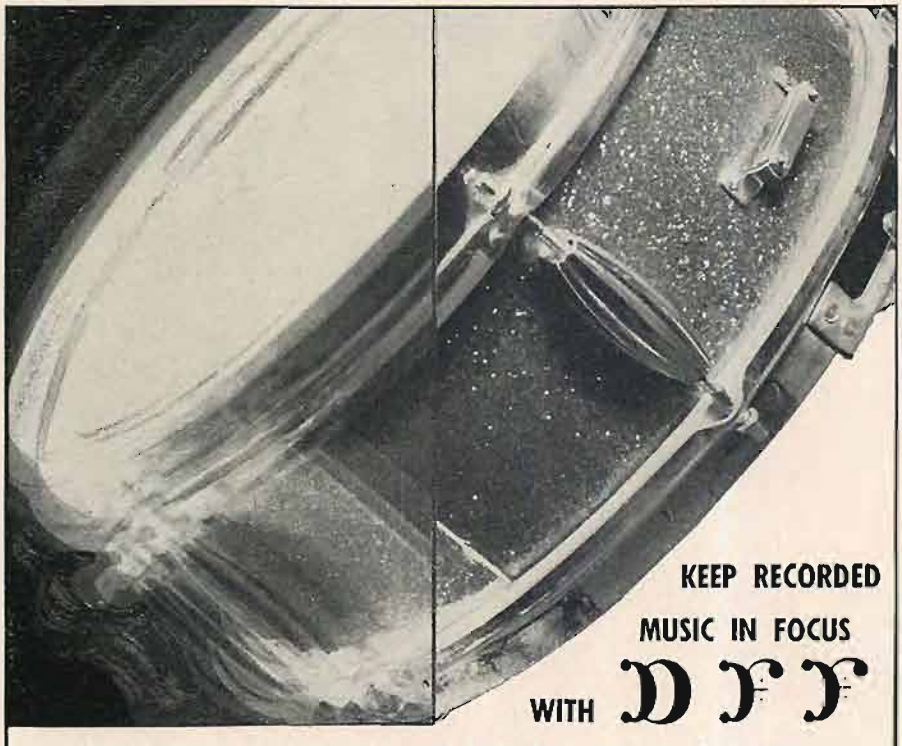

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WHY BIAMPLIFY?

Continued from page 149

Fortunately, the network is contained in a separate box with all three-way and four-way speaker systems. If you decide to use three amplifier channels to drive a three-way system, again there is no problem: the old network can be dispensed with entirely. But when you use two amplifiers with a three- or four-way speaker system, as in Figure 2, the post-amplifier network must be retained to separate the upper-range amplifier output into appropriate frequency bands for all reproducing units except the woofer. It is important in such a system to terminate the unused woofer output channel properly; that is, to install a resistor of the same value as the system impedance on the woofer terminals of the network. Ten watts should be an adequate power rating for this resistor, since it will receive significant amplifier power only in the immediate region of the bass crossover frequency. How this would be done in a typical three-way system is shown in Figure 3. For an 8-ohm system R should be 7.5 ohms; for a 16-ohm system, 15 ohms.

Phasing will be just as important as before, of course. If connections from the old network to the upper-range reproducers are left as they were, they will still be properly phased one with another. The woofer can be phased with them — or, in a two-way system, with the single tweeter — by interchanging the bass speaker leads, at the bass amplifier output terminals, after a rough balance in level is obtained. That connection which yields the smoothest, best-focused, and filled-in sound — of orchestral music, in particular — is the proper one.

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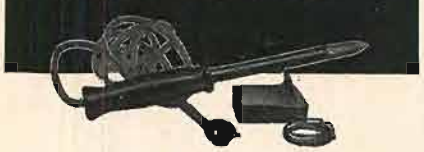

SIR:

The bass response of my corner speaker system seems to be too resonant and boomy, when I am in the same room as the speaker. But when I go into another room, the bass is clean and nicely articulated.

I was wondering if there could be some way of getting this clean bass when listening in the same room as the speaker. Also, is there a solution to this problem which would not entail the installation of costly acoustic materials in the room?

Richard Novotny
Harvey, N. D.

It is possible that the boomy bass you are getting from your system is a result of standing waves and other resonance effects in your living room.

Try moving your speaker enclosure to different parts of the room, and don't necessarily feel obliged to place it in a corner if it sounds better in the middle of a wall. Also, when you seem to be getting close to the balance you want, you may find that an inch or so change in position is all you will need to trim it up. Very possibly, all you will have to do is to move it farther into or farther out of the corner it is already in.

SIR:

Because I live in what is generally considered a fringe area for FM reception, I was advised to buy a Yagi antenna. This I did, and have installed it in my attic, where it is about 15 feet above ground level.

With this aerial pointed to the northwest I am able to get pretty good reception from two FM stations in Ithaca and one in Cortland, all about 50 miles away. With the antenna in the same position I also get a pretty good signal from Scranton, which is about 70 miles to the south. When I aim the antenna in the direc-

Continued on page 155

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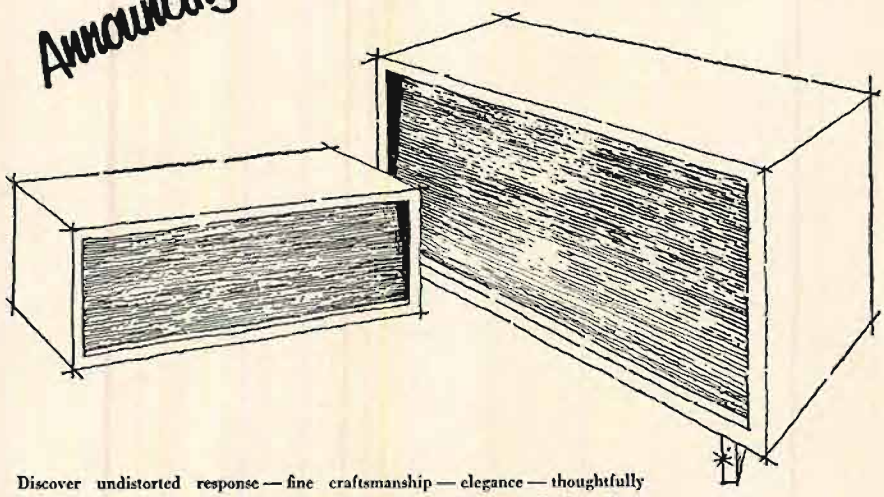

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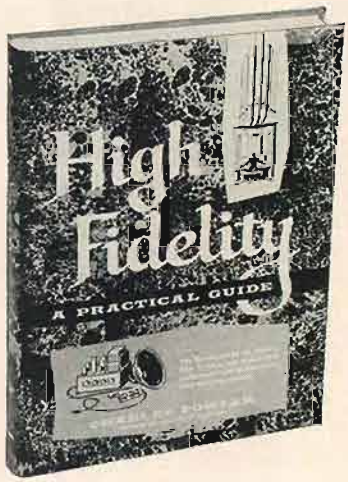

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AUDIO FORUM

Continued from page 153

tion of Scranton, it doesn't seem to improve the Scranton signal very much but it does reduce the strength of the signal from Ithaca and Cortland. When the aerial is aimed toward the northeast, I pick up the signal from a television station in Schenectady (about 88 megacycles) nearly 150 miles away.

On one of the stations I am able to pull in, the signal usually comes through fairly well, but there is annoying fading and drifting from time to time. Sometimes this can be overcome by retuning, other times not.

In your opinion, would I be appreciably better off if I were to put the antenna on a short mast above my roof? This might bring it 8 to 10 feet higher than it is now.

Another thing I would like your advice about is whether or not a signal booster would be worth the investment. Naturally, I would like to extend my FM reception to as many good-music stations as I can. Of course, it would be wonderful if I could get WQXR in New York, but that is 175 miles away, and there are some low mountains between here and there.

Kenneth S. Johnson
Binghamton, N. Y.

You would almost certainly effect an improvement in your FM reception were you to move the antenna to a mast on top of your roof.

Also, if your tuner's sensitivity is not very great, a booster would probably bring your distant stations in with better quieting and less fading. The difference it would make to a given station is something that could not be guessed at. You'll just have to try it with your tuner and in your particular receiving location.

SIR:

Several months ago I purchased and built a kit amplifier, which worked perfectly until recently when it developed a higher-than-normal hum level. The hum did not start suddenly . . . it seems rather to have built up over a period of a few months. Also, I notice when I turn the amplifier on, its hum becomes quite loud and then dies down to its "normal" level, which is still higher than it was when new.

Continued on next page

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AUDIO FORUM

Continued from preceding page

I have tried replacing the filter condenser sections, and have added some additional filtering to the amplifier's bias supply, but to no avail. These things helped, but not materially. I have also tried installing a heater balancing potentiometer in the filament circuit, but this makes no difference at all. I'm out of ideas. Do you have any suggestions?

A. Palmer
Roanoke, Va.

Since you have ruled out nearly every other possibility for the cause of your high hum level, about the only thing left is an imbalance in the plate currents of the output tubes, which reduces the effectiveness of hum cancellation in the push-pull output stage. Since it would not be a simple matter to install a balancing control in your amplifier, the best solution would be to replace the output tubes with new ones.

Also, check to make sure the bias voltage on the output tubes is set at the precise value suggested by the manufacturer. Too low a bias voltage will shorten the life of the output tubes and could well cause them to deteriorate in the short time you have had your amplifier.

SIR:

I read with interest the question by Christopher B. Sykes about electronic crossovers, in the June "Audio Forum." Since I happen to have two quality power amplifiers on hand, and am dissatisfied with my system's present performance, I am contemplating rigging up the two amplifiers with an electronic crossover for biamplifier operation.

Before I go ahead with this, though, I would like to know what you think of my projected conversion. I have a three-way speaker system installed in a small Klipsch-type corner enclosure, but its low end seems thin and not resonant enough. Would a biamplifier system help to bring up the low end on my speaker? In other words, does the quality of my speaker system warrant the additional expense of an electronic crossover? I don't plan on replacing my speaker, but I might do so if you feel this would be more worthwhile than the biamplifier conversion.

Continued on page 158

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AUDIO FORUM

Continued from page 156

If I were to switch to biamplifier operation, which of my amplifiers should I use for the high-frequency channel and which for the low channel? Both seem to be perfect performers at both the high and low ends, but they have different gain figures. Should I use the high-gain or the low-gain one for the bass channel? Or doesn't it matter?

Another question. In your reply to Mr. Sykes's letter, you said that if the amplifier seems to have too much damping for the bass speaker, move it to the next highest tap on the amplifier. How come? I thought this would create an impedance mismatch, yet you suggest that it may *improve* bass performance? Also, you said that if the speakers seem to be out of phase, try reversing the leads between the treble amplifier and its crossover network. To which crossover are you referring — the electronic crossover or the one between the treble amplifier and its tweeter and super tweeter?

Donald T. Harris
Tacoma, Wash.

You would probably not obtain any improvement in the low-end response of your system by switching to biamplifier operation. One of the effects of a biamplifier hookup is to increase the damping (and hence the low-frequency definition) on the woofer, and the subjective effect of this is a reduction in middle-low bass response, rather than a strengthening of it.

Your most immediately noticeable improvement would probably result from the use of a larger horn enclosure than your present one, or a properly adjusted bass reflex woofer enclosure, of about 6 to 8 cubic feet in capacity. You might ultimately plan also to replace your woofer with one having a free-air cone resonance of about 40 cycles or less, and at that time you may find you have too much deep bass, without very much definition. That is the time to switch to biamplifier operation, and with the amplifiers you have, it will not make any difference which you use for either channel.

When connecting your biamplifier system, follow the suggestions made in the "Audio Forum" reply that you referred to.

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Continued on page 161

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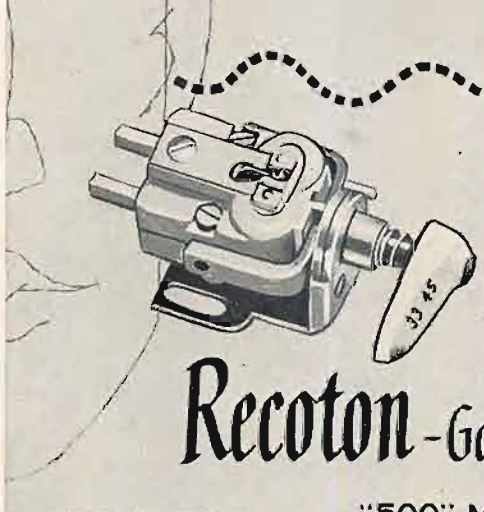

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AUDIO FORUM

Continued from page 158

will usually be found to require as much damping from an amplifier as it can get. Lesser amounts will produce varying degrees of bottom-heavy sound, introducing a broad peak in the range between 30 and 40 cycles, and reducing some of the potential cleanliness of the low-frequency end.

Lesser systems are generally somewhat thin in the bass range, so if they are used with an amplifier having a very high damping factor, the cone will not be as free to "flop around" on its own, accentuating its low end response. For such speaker systems, the divider network generally introduces enough DC resistance into the speaker circuit so that the amplifier's damping factor isn't enough to control firmly the cone motion. Thus there is enough floppiness to fill out the low end. Removing the divider network will allow the amplifier's damping to become fully effective, so the bass may then be a little thin. Since the effective *output impedance (source impedance) of an amplifier remains as a constant fraction of the nominal impedance, the source impedance can be raised by using a higher output tap. The speaker's impedance remains unchanged, so the effect is to reduce the damping factor. An impedance mismatch in the low direction (8 ohms feeding a 16-ohm speaker), will limit the amount of power that can be delivered to the speaker, while a mismatch in the other direction will increase the power into the speaker, slightly raise the distortion at high power levels, and decrease the damping on the speaker.*

SIR:

When buying by mail, how is it possible to be certain that the specific speaker you are purchasing has a frequency response as advertised? I am particularly concerned about the woofer that I purchase, and insist that it have a response as low as 30 cps.

James R. Carr
Boston, Mass.

There are many different ways of measuring and rating loudspeaker performance, and there is not even universal agreement as to what characterizes the ideal loudspeaker. So much depends upon the requirements of the listener himself that it is a very diffi-

Continued on next page

QUOTE

"Startling, full-bodied bass . . . crisp, clear mid-range . . . vibrant shimmering treble."
Leading Hi-Fi Magazines. May 1956

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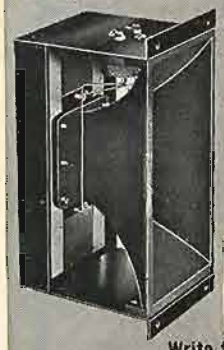

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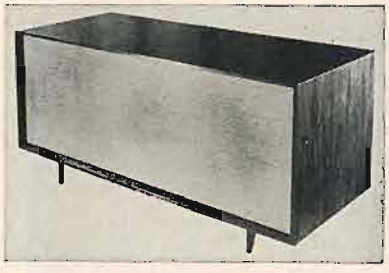

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AUDIO FORUM

Continued from preceding page

cult task to determine from published specifications whether an unheard loudspeaker will or will not satisfy him.

Another thing that can profoundly influence the performance of any loudspeaker is the listening room itself, and there is no way of telling beforehand how this will behave until you have tried the speaker in it. Your best guarantee of satisfaction from a speaker is to borrow it and try it out in your home before buying. Or, if you can't arrange that, get a recommendation from someone whose taste in sound seems to coincide with yours. A manufacturer's published specifications, such as appear at the head of "Tested in the Home" reports, can serve as a valuable guide to loudspeaker quality, but the best test is prolonged listening in the home, if possible.

SIR:

Recently I seem to have had more than a little bad luck with purchases of tubes for my 50-watt amplifier. The amplifier uses 6CA7s, and out of the three pairs of replacement tubes I have purchased, three tubes have been intermittently noisy and microphonic. The noise occurs when I touch the bulb of the defective tube. I have tried cleaning the tube pins and swapping the tubes in their sockets, so I am positive the tubes themselves are at fault.

So, to the point of this letter. Are there any other output tubes that you know of that I could use instead of the 6CA7s, and which would have as low distortion as the 6CA7?

David Hilliard
Sellersville, Pa.

No tube manufacturer can guarantee that all of his products will be consistently good. Quality control can do just so much toward stabilizing mass-produced items, but it can't weed out every potentially defective item in a production run. You were probably just unfortunate in having hit a bad production run.

Several correspondents to "Audio Forum" have pointed out that many of the "noisy" output tubes encountered in audio equipment are caused by nothing more than poor soldered connections at the tips of the base pins, and can be remedied by resoldering

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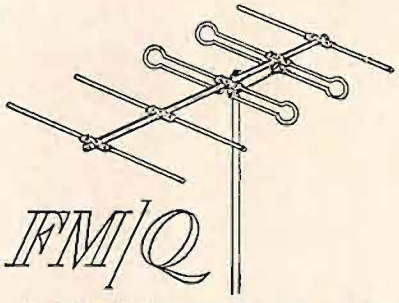

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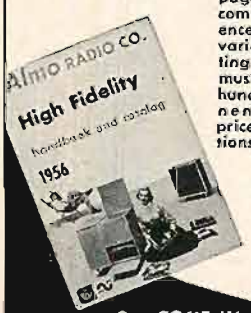

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the tips, using a hot iron, a good grade of solder, and a very small amount of non-acid soldering paste. To check on the thoroughness of a tube pin's solder joint, use the iron with a little solder on it to melt the joint (holding the tube horizontally) and then draw it rapidly away from the joint. This will bring the soldered tip out to a point, which should then be gently snapped off with a pair of needle-nosed pliers. If the connection in the pin is sound, the solder itself will break, leaving the tip of the pin filled with solder. If it is not, the entire blob of solder will come free from the tube pin, leaving the end of the pin open and exposing the internal wire.

If the latter occurs, put a small amount of the paste flux into the end of the pin, and reapply the solder from a hot iron, holding the base of the tube upward so the solder will run into it.

To answer your original question, though, the 6550 tube is often used as a replacement for the 6CA7, but it requires a slight upward adjustment of the bias voltage. Query the amplifier manufacturer as to how to go about modifying the bias voltage in your amplifier.

SIR:

I have been annoyed for some time by a very pronounced hissing sound, especially on voice records, in words containing the "S" sound. Instead of a clean "S," I get the sound preceded by a whistle, much the same as when a person talks "through his teeth." I am also able to detect slight distortion on high violin passages and high trumpet passages.

Can you suggest what might be causing this?

Robert E. Garrett
Binghamton, N. Y.

There are several possible causes for the "hissing" sound that accompanies reproduction of sibilants from your high-fidelity system.

Most probably, you have a defective pickup cartridge, which has lost its original compliance or is introducing a bad peak into the response. Return it to the manufacturer for checking and repair if necessary.

A second possibility is higher-than-normal distortion, or high-frequency instability, in your amplifier. This should be instrument tested to deter-

Continued on next page

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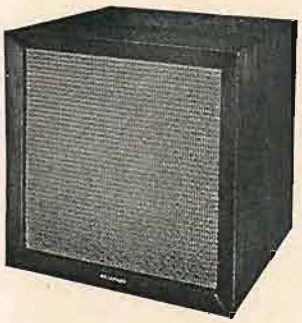

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AUDIO FORUM

Continued from preceding page

mine whether or not it meets manufacturer's specifications.

Thirdly, your phono equalization control (rolloff) may be defective or incorrectly set. See "Dialing Your Disks," in the record review section of HIGH FIDELITY.

Another very likely cause of your trouble is high-frequency peaks and distortion in your loudspeaker.

Finally, it is possible that your equipment has been improperly installed. The shielded lead from the cartridge to the preamplifier should be no longer than 36 inches. The resistive termination on the pickup cartridge should be as recommended by the manufacturer. Also, some speakers perform better when facing to one side of the listening position rather than aimed directly at it.

SIR:

Why is it that some of the record companies have not enough sense or consideration for their customers to print equalization information on the record or on its jacket? Although we know that most of the recent records use the RIAA characteristic, we are left completely in the dark with regard to earlier editions. In your "Dialing Your Disks," for instance, one will read: Columbia . . . to 1955: 500C-16; Mercury . . . to Oct. '54: 400-12; RCA Victor . . . to Sept. '52: 500 or 800-12.

No date of recording is, however, on the records or on their covers. How can we possibly know what equalization is needed for such records?

Evidently the record manufacturers who do not give information on correct equalization are interested in their products only up until the time they are sold, and have no concern thereafter about how a buyer may go about playing them properly.

I make it a point to buy *only* those records which have complete equalization data printed on them, and I invite my other hi-fi friends to do the same, and to boycott those record companies which can't be bothered helping their customers to get the most out of the records they buy.

Eric Bock, M. D.
Waukegan, Ill.

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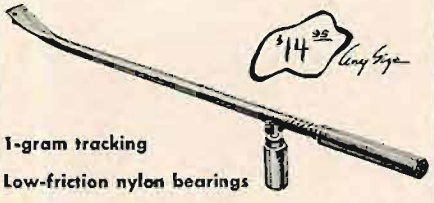

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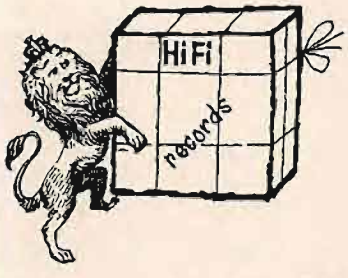

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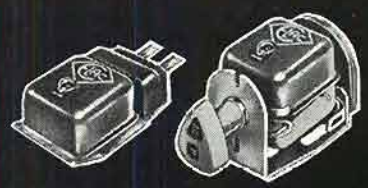

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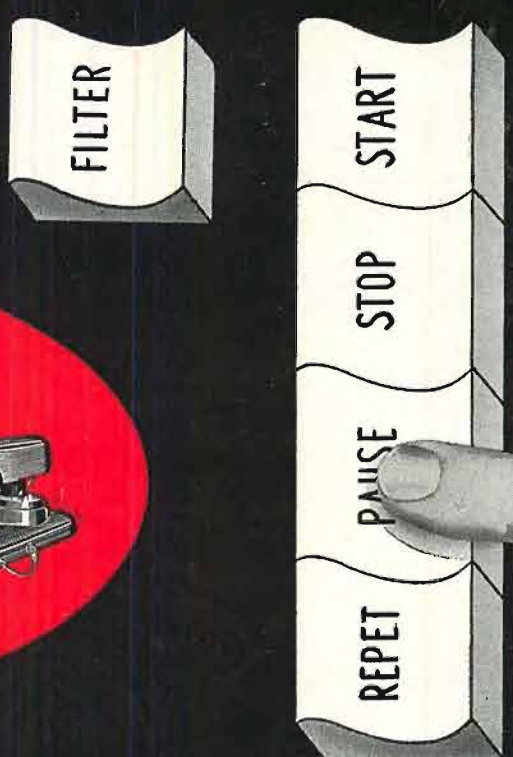

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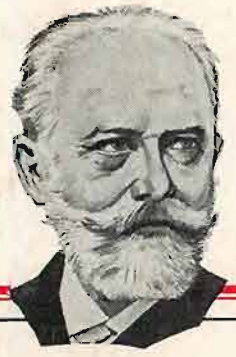

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