

The New Recordings

COMPOSITION, PERFORMER, ALBUM NUMBER, NUMBER OF RECORDS	ENGINEERING		PERFORMANCE AND CONTENT
	Recording Technique	Surface	
TOCH, THE CHINESE FLUTE (1923). Pacific Symphonetta, Manuel Compinsky. Alice Mock, sop. Alco AC 203 (3)	Unusual recording of extremely light sounds (side 1), low level. But loud peaks blast. Very wide range. Outstanding job, even with faults.	AA+ to A-	A remarkable work, for small ensemble and solo voice: astonishing tonal effects, exotic atmosphere, economy of instr. means. Easy listening, but good music too.
BACH, CONCERTO IN D MI. VIOLIN, OBOE AND ORCH. Pacific Symphonetta. M. Compinsky, vl. G. Schoenberg, ob. Alco A 202 (2)	Oboe far too close for this wide-range work—a nasty pinched sound. (Shld. be 20-40 ft. from mike.) Otherwise a good balance.	AA+	A seldom-heard original (?) of familiar 2-clavier concerto—an excellent idea. But performance rough, oboe is sour, badly recorded. Piano accept. ill advised.
HINDEMITH, SONATA FOR VIOLA D'AMORE (1929). Milton Thomas; Sara Compinsky, piano. Alco AC 204 (2)	Wide tonal range gives interesting realism to a highly colored instrument. Piano sounds bit off-mike, in background. Last side fuzzy, my copy.	AA+	A warm and ingratiating sample of minor Hindemith <i>gebrauchsmusik</i> ; a good piece, expressively played on this tinny but charming instrument.
SHOSTAKOVITCH, TRIO IN E MINOR (1923?). Compinsky Trio. (Violin, cello, piano.) Alco A 3 (3)	Excellent balance, and resonance; but again blasts in heavy spots. First side defective my copy (fuzzy).	AA to A- (my copy)	If this was composed at 17 (doubtful) it is incredibly skilful. Sounds recent to me. Brilliant, well written, but unprofound; too long, with inevitable marches.
IVES, "IN THE BARN," "REVIVAL." (VIOLIN SONATA #2 2ND & 3RD MVTS.) 1907-10. Sol Babitz, vl. Ingolf Dahl, piano.	Violin is excellent, piano sounds bit off-mike, in background. Again, some fuzziness. Is this in the pressing?	AA	Welcome bit of Ives, the hugely prolific, highly listenable Amer. pioneer folkist-modernist. Striking mixture gospel hymn, square dance, dissonance!

WEST COAST COOPERATIVE

THE Alco Recording Company, founded two years ago on the West Coast, has been selling its records nationally for several months. The company is organized as a musician's cooperative, owned and operated by the musicians themselves. Its artistic nucleus is the Compinsky Trio and its artist roster is rounded out with prominent Coast performers. The company, like most others founded since the war, makes a point of choosing unusual music, hitherto unrecorded, of a sort not likely to be tackled by the big mass-production outfits—a policy which this column has long advocated. The musical repertory puts a healthy emphasis on good, sensible contemporary music, without pretentiousness. The choice so far is well made, nicely complementing that of other companies such as Concert Hall and Keynote (and with such a world of music available why should there be any repertory competition!). An enterprising venture is a series of public

concerts given by Alco on the Coast, featuring both the performers and the music available on Alco records.

Technically, Alco features wide-range recording, pressed on extremely quiet plastic (rather thin) or alternatively on shellac, with only 50¢ difference in price. In an effort to achieve very wide dynamic range (aided by quiet plastic) Alco has produced some remarkable extreme-low-level recording. But the loudest parts are frequently over-recorded, with blasting. Acoustically the records are excellent in contrast to some Hollywoodish West Coast recording. There is trouble with fuzzy reproduction (see above), probably due to pressing difficulties.

But most exciting Alco innovation is alternative pressings of all major works on big sixteen-inch, slow-speed records, with fifteen uninterrupted minutes to a side. The company also sells record players to match.

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the Phoenix Nest

SUSANNA AND THE ELDERS

Susanna

I AM Susanna, delicate and young,
And sleep somehow escapes this
quiet hour.

The moon of Babylon is silver hung
In memory patterns here within my
bower.

The stars tonight are warm and soft
and close,

The night and I, in truth, the best of
friends.

Oh, see! across the moon the wind
tiptoes

Then hurries back to whisper swift
amends!

But now enough of midnight make-
believe!

A woman such as I must be sedate.
Are not my wrists grown long from
out my sleeve,

And are my breasts not woman-wise
of late? . . .

Joachim, good husband, dream you
not of sorrow.

Sleep well! you shall have need of
strength tomorrow

The Elders

All day a strange warmth in my
thinning blood,

Sun of midsummer flowing through
these veins!

Her smile, though not for me, un-
loosed this flood,

A coursing river after springtime
rains.

Susanna! of the smile beyond com-
pare,

No incense turned to mist more lin-
gering,

No raven feather blacker than her
hair,

Susanna! white against leaf pillow-
ing.

The shade about the garden limns a
shell.

The pool bears lonely witness to her
beauty,

Restraint is noble—know I not too
well?

But does not one to oneself owe a
duty?

Susanna! . . . harsh across the pool
it sped

And stained the leaves as if her heart
had bled.

Susanna

Now who is there to say it otherwise?
They laugh and do not listen to my
word.

The Elders jeer in innocent disguise,
And over all Joachim is scarcely
heard.

I know them well who choose the
hardest stone,

Their hands were over quick to break
my bread.

Into my bowl of wisdom, newly-mown,
I weep, but oh, I weep for them in-
stead!

And so it is and will be world on end
As every woman knows without the
telling!

But deepest scar of all that will not
mend

Is voice of my own voice the loudest
yelling.

Too soon, too soon, I shall walk with
the dawn

A path my flesh unrolls through
Babylon.

Song

Oh, every quiet heart one time has
known

The narrow winding paths of Babylon;
A bruise from impact of a small cold
stone,

The scar from a harsh word hard
put upon!

And every hand one time has
scratched the clay

Until the pebble glistens duly bright—
But always dust from action of the
day

Beshadowing content like candlelight!

Susanna, roses bloom still with a
brier,

For living ever knows the touch of
thorn.

Susanna, as the burnt one seeks the
fire,

So hearts reach out for happiness re-
born.



Susanna, life holds sorrow, just the
same,

The petal is soft and ah, the flame
. . . the flame!

JUNE WROBLESKI.

* * *

Harry Ober, certified public ac-
countant, writes me:

Replying to Miss (Mrs.?) Lucy
Newell who wants to know how
about that single foot print:

FRIDAY HAD NO HELICOPTER

To the rescue of Daniel I here
come affyin'.

You will find here some guesses,
but truly, no lion.

Tho my name is not Daniel nor
even Defoe,

It's not too hard to tell you where
all footprints go.

There's erosion by wind, and a
wave washed erosion,

Then there's Friday a-hop on one
foot near the ocean.

But perhaps there's a visit by wild
life, or/and

There is driftwood or seaweed that
smooths out the sand.

Then this fact rises up and per-
force will not die,

That some sand is quite wet, while
some other is dry;

And that walking is not always
straight and oftentimes,

There are people whose feet are
apart, in warm climes.

Now, Lucy, I've given you plenty
of hints,

As to how there was left only one
of the prints.

* * *

CURATOR OF BOOKS

She served her city well for many a
year

As Curator of Books—Librarian,
A tireless worker since her term be-
gan.

Busy with lists and fees; chief En-
gineer

Of intricate, machinery; skilled to
steer

This vehicle of culture—guide her
clan

In varied tasks. But now her faithful
span

Was closed—she had resigned—the
date was here.

She strolled through the familiar
rooms to take

Her leave of richly-laden shelves.
"No more

'Twill fret me what the Branches
may be needing.

Books—books—and always books! To-
day I wake

To glorious freedom—how my spirits
soar

To think now I can catch up with
my reading!

JULIA BOYNTON GREEN.

* * *

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.

The Saturday Review