

Lend Me Your Ears

How to Talk to Your Audio-dealer

By JIMMY CARROLL

EDITOR'S NOTE: We called on Jimmy Carroll of Harvey Radio, one of the best-known audio "customer's men" in New York, to explain what you ought to tell your audio dealer when you come in to buy hi-fi equipment.

I WOULD say there are two main ways of approaching your audio dealer to give him the information he needs to help you get what you want. Remember that we sell a great variety of brands over a very wide range of prices. Thus, the job in audio selling, much more than in most other fields, is finding a combination of units that will satisfy the customer at his price.

The hundreds of units of widely varying characteristics and prices on our shelves make the job difficult, if not downright impossible, if you come in and say, "play a few systems for me until I hear one I like." There are literally thousands of possible combinations. Moreover, we can always dazzle you by jumping from a medium-priced system to one at ten times the price. But this is not a realistic or useful method. Who comes into an audio shop, or any other kind for that matter, prepared to spend either \$200 or \$2,000, depending on which system seems better? A customer subjected to this approach will be thoroughly confused in a few minutes. He will not be able to evaluate the qualities of units he can afford, and will probably leave the shop without any system at all, feeling depressed and baffled.

If you are not familiar enough with the various hi-fi units to know some-

thing about what you want, tell us right at the beginning the total amount you want to spend. Tell us also what program sources you want—radio, tape, discs, or all three. Tell us the size of the room you expect to use the system in, and how much "soft" material—rugs, drapes, upholstered furniture—it has in it.

Then we can demonstrate for you in ten minutes or so two or three systems of differing tonal quality in your price range, including something just a little better. Your reactions to this demonstration will have real significance.

If you, on the other hand, have some familiarity with the available hi-fi units, and have worked with catalogues or advertisements to make a list of choices which add up to your price, tell us about this at the beginning. We can immediately switch together the systems you have in mind and let you hear them. We can advise you about the "compatibility" of the units you are interested in, and suggest substitutes of similar price and performance if any you have chosen are technically unsuitable. Again, in ten minutes or so we can come very close to giving you what you want, and at your price.

HERE I want to turn some attention on a point that is apparently very little recognized. The demonstration of hi-fi systems in the audio sales-room is far more than a selling "gimmick," because people fall into very definite classes in their tastes in reproduced sound. Long experience has beaten into us the fact that we must find out early in the proceedings to which class you belong or we will

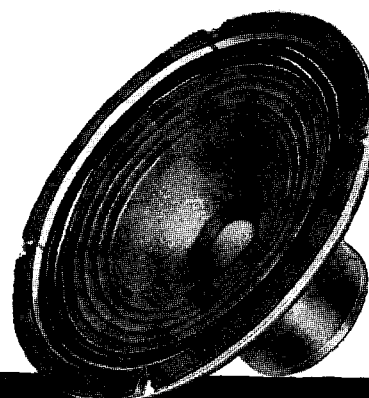
Especially

where

space

is

limited



the
GOODMANS
Axiette
8 inch
HIGH FIDELITY
LOUDSPEAKER

MADE IN ENGLAND

ROCKBAR CORPORATION, Dept. LK-4
215 East 37th St., New York 16, N. Y.

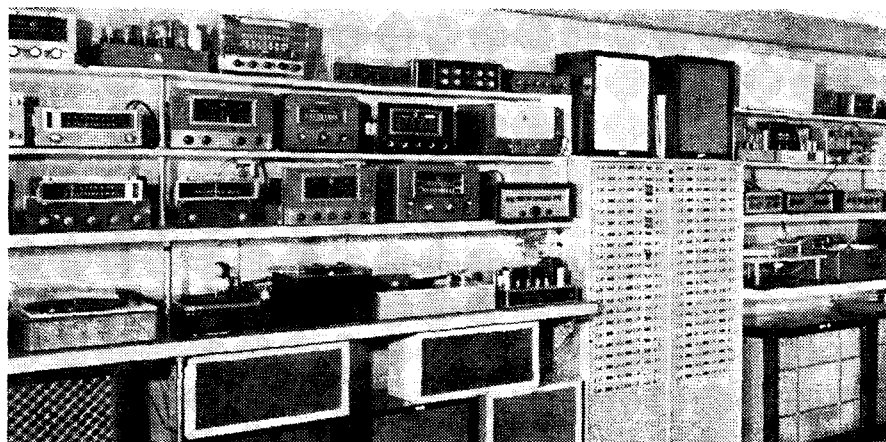
Please send complete description of the
Goodmans Axiette.

Name.....

Address.....

City..... Zone..... State.....

My Dealer is.....



—Interior of Harvey's New York.

"There are literally thousands of combinations."

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not be able to satisfy you permanently. Our demonstrations are designed to get this information.

And I want to emphasize strongly that there is no character of "better" or "worse" that can be attached to these classes. None is superior or inferior to any other. They are just different, and so different that a person in one class will become increasingly unhappy with equipment that produces a different class of sound, after he gets his system home.

I remember a very well-known entertainer in popular music who came in full of phrases from high-fidelity articles to tell us the quality of sound he wanted. We set up a system for him, but in a very short time he began to complain that it didn't sound right—it was dead, lifeless, no oomph. We struggled to improve performance, still working toward what he had told us in the beginning. Nothing helped until he told us about a system he *did* like. When we listened to this we found, of course, that it was at the opposite pole from what we had tried to give him. We made changes; he is happy; we are happy.

The discussion of these taste classes would take a lot of space and get us into deep technical water. I can say that they differ principally in the balance of highs and lows as related to the mid-range, and in the degrees of resonance or weight in the reproduction. To help us find what you want listen not only to the middle-range notes, which usually first get your attention because they occur much more frequently in music, but also to the low bass and high treble. The only sure way to get a line on your taste trend is by the *comparison method*. Listen closely to the bass and resonance of one speaker, for instance, and then to the same qualities in the next one we play for you. The *differences* between the two speakers will give you reference points for charting what you like.

One trap that some people fall into is to be taken by very strong, super-brilliant highs at first hearing. Often when they get such a system home, with the speaker in a smaller room and probably closer to them, the brilliant highs seem more and more screechy as time goes on. This is particularly true if the listening room is on the "hard" side, with bare floor and walls. The opposite can happen, of course; if the listening room is full of drapes, upholstered furniture, and thick rugs the system will sound duller than it did in the salesroom.

One thing I am sure of: if we find out what you like, we can make you happy. So lend me *your* ears.

The Major Miller Mood



"Miller's ideas ran to the ultimate."

THAT long serial-story which has run through two sizable Glenn Miller Memorial Albums as well as numerous individual LPs has finally reached an approximate conclusion in RCA Victor album LPT-6702, containing five full LPs drawn from the files of the Glenn Miller Army Air Force Band. "Approximate" it is in the sense that the wonderful playing herein utilized came from the period when the band was still based in America. It doubtless attained further distinction in the many months in Europe before and after the unfortunate accident in which Miller lost his life.

But there is all the evidence at hand to show that what is remembered of that superb organization—upward of fifty men, what with arrangers, copyists, instrument repair men, etc.—is accurate: that it attained the highest precision, polish, and refinement ever known in the playing of American popular music, while retaining enough jazz flavor to make the final sound inimitable. And the procession of sides shows, too, that Miller's own skill and sensitivity in these areas was greater than ever in the last work he did.

For those who are unaware, the circumstances may be recalled. Glenn Miller, civilian tycoon earning more

money than he ever had in his life, became Captain Glenn Miller in October 1942, at the usual Army pay. This was part of a plan by (the then head of the AAF Technical Training Command) General Yount to expand and modernize the training of Air Force musicians. (Yount was also involved in the assignment of Cpl. Samuel Barber to the AAF, where he wrote a well-remembered symphony.) Miller had a high priority to requisition musicians as they were drafted, and took with him a nucleus of men from his own band: the sterling Jerry Gray, arranger extraordinary; bassist Trigger Alpert; and trumpeter Zeke Zarchy, who became first sergeant of the organization. Later came vocalist Tex Benecke. By June of 1943 the fine comb of the draft (plus numerous volunteers) had added such outstanding performers as drummer Ray McKinley, pianist Mel Powell, guitarist Carmen Mastren, trumpeters Bernie Privin and Bobby Nichols, reed man Peanuts Hucko, vocalist Johnny Desmond, etc.

Since Miller's ideas ran to the ultimate, he integrated what was basically a hand-picked dance orchestra with a string section made up of the best young (they had to be young to be of military age) players from the nation's symphony orchestras: George Ockner, David Sackson, Maurice Bialkin, Harry Katzman, Henry Brynan, and Stan Harris are a half-dozen names known to me (from membership in the NBC Symphony, a prominent string quartet, the Cleveland Symphony, etc.) from the total of twenty in the organization. Add to arranger Gray such others as Ralph Wilkinson and Norman Leyden (who graduated to become composer of the background music for "The \$64,000 Question"), technical director George Voutsas (known now for his fine work on many NBC programs), and the vocal ensemble called the Crew Chiefs, and you have an array of manpower unlikely ever to work in conjunction save in the special circumstances that existed.

As time went on the plans for the Air Force music program got sidetracked in the shuffle of global war, but nothing could sidetrack Miller from reaching out to new musical horizons. With "duty time" being spent in rehearsals and preparations for a weekly broadcast, the opportunities for working and reworking the