

Recordings Reports II: Miscellaneous LPs

WORK, PERFORMER, DATA	REPORT
Albeniz: "Mallorca," "El Albaicin," "Asturias," "Cordoba," "Rondeña," and "El Corpus en Sevilla." Raphaël Arroyo, piano. London International TW 91151, \$4.98.	Arroyo's name is an unfamiliar one, but he has all the competence to play this music convincingly. Included in his equipment are the lightness and delicacy for such works as "Mallorca" or "Rondeña," plus the breadth and dexterity for such a formidable pianistic problem as "El Corpus en Sevilla." Included in his background are studies with Cortot and Marguerite Long, mentors who are honored by his fine artistry. Superior recording.
Bach: Concerti (after Vivaldi) in G minor, F, G, D, G and C. Sylvia Marlowe, harpsichord. Capitol P 8361, \$3.98.	One has been hearing from time beyond recollection of the "Bach concerti after Vivaldi" but Miss Marlowe is the first artist—in my knowledge—to make an integral project of them. She furthers her reputation for scholarship in clear projection of their strong lines. Nor does she forget that there is content within the design. Her harpsichord attack is sometimes too muscular for resonant sound, especially in recording as acute as she has here.
Bach: Toccata in C minor, others by della Ciaia, Czerny, Alkan, Schumann, Prokofiev (opus II), Debussy ("Pour le piano"), Ravel ("Tombeau de Couperin"), Jelebinsky, Lewenthal and Menotti. Raymond Lewenthal, piano. Westminster XWN 18362, \$3.98.	Lewenthal accomplishes his appointed task with remarkable versatility, a considerable pianistic fluency, and a fine capacity to differentiate the styles of the composers represented. Not all are equally congenial to him, the fine performance of the magnificent Bach work (with two fugues) showing a degree of artistry not conveyed by the Debussy and Ravel, for example. Of special interest is the absorbing "Ricercare and Toccata," based by Menotti on a theme from his "The Old Maid and the Thief," a notable example of contrapuntal craft by one not celebrated for such skills. Very good piano sound.
Bartók: Sonata (1926), others of Prokofiev and Rozsa. Leonard Pennario, piano. Capitol P 8376, \$3.98.	A rather mixed bag of sonorities, with the most consecutive interest in the Prokofiev of 1917, which Pennario plays with a keen sense of its lyric content. He also makes an integrated experience of the Rozsa sonata (1948) which is more than can be said of the composer's derivative style. The Bartok is an experimental piece, more concerned with sonorities than emotional communication. The performances support the recent evidences of growth in Pennario's artistry.
Beethoven: Sonatas (opus 5, Nos. 1 and 2, opus 69, opus 102 Nos. 1 and 2), three sets of variations. Zara Nelsova, cello, with Artur Balsam, piano. London LLA 52, \$11.94.	The first impression of this ambitious enterprise is that Balsam is taking the place of prominence due Miss Nelsova, but reflection reminds that such was the case with Schnabel and Fournier, indicating something about the way the works are written. However, she is still a little lacking in assertiveness in the later works where the cello has more prominence. The three records contain all the music written by Beethoven for cello and piano, including the delightful variations on themes of Handel and Mozart.
Beethoven: Sonatas (opus 12, Nos. 1 and 3). Leonid Kogan, violin, with Gregory Ginsburg, piano. Vanguard VRS 6029, \$4.98.	Kogan's refinements of style and suavity of sound are of expectable advantage to these early works, his partner a pianist of uncommon abilities. Plainly they are practised in the arts of chamber music, not casual companions for a recording session. Not the ultimate in sound, but fair enough.
Bloch: Concerto Grosso No. 2, Richter: Lament, Antheil: Serenade. Izler Solomon conducting the MGM String Orchestra and the Guilet Quartet. MGM E 3422, \$3.98.	A well chosen trio of works from the contemporary string literature ranging from the substance of Bloch to the flippancies of Antheil by way of the anomalous Richter. The Bloch of 1952 lacks the rugged strength of its celebrated predecessor but is remarkably constructed. Antheil's piece is full of influences by such improbable predecessors as Kreisler and Tchaikovsky done up as an aural montage, the Richter a study in sonorities resulting in what Ernest Newman recently described as "tonal doodling." Solomon treats them all with equal consideration, and a fine consistency of sound.
Lees: Quartet No. 1, Denny: Quartet No. 2. Juilliard String Quartet. Epic LC 3325, \$3.98.	Two quartets of more than ordinary quality, produced for records through the cooperation of the Fromm Music Foundation. The Lees quartet is notable for a free flow of ideas, resourceful treatment of the medium and a considerable personality of expression. Denny's is rather more objective writing, but very well accomplished. The performances are both meticulous and animated. Fine recording.
Mozart: Quartets for flute and strings (K.285a, b, and K.298). Hubert Barwahser, flute, members of the Netherlands String Quartet. Epic LC 3368, \$3.98.	Mozart wrote these works for a Dutch amateur of the flute he met in Mannheim in 1777 which may or may not explain their attractiveness to the excellent first flutist of the Concertgebouw orchestra and his able associates. The qualities they share are highly professional, the end products full of the zest and interest Mozart provided for the unconventional combination of instruments. In clarity and balance, the sound could hardly be bettered.
Palestrina: "Missa Brevis." "Missa ad Fugam." Bach: "O Lamm Gottes unschuldig," etc. Netherlands Chamber Choir conducted by Felix de Nobel. Epic LC 3359, \$3.98.	Both works of Palestrina are beautifully sung, with a purity of texture and a cleanness of line that are admirably suited to the material. Also of positive value is the spacious frame for the sound provided by the use of a resonant hall or apt introduction of an echo chamber. However the impersonal timbre of the choir is not as appropriate to the Bach ("Herr liebster Jesu" and "O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden" in addition to "O Lamm Gottes" etc.) and Handel ("Ecce Quomodo"). These, as well as Lotti's "Vere Languores Nostros" and "Crucifixus" and Lasso's "Adoramus Te, Christe" are devalued by the use of a small studio and a closeup microphoning.
Saint-Saëns: "Havanaise" and "Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso." Sarasate: "Zigeunerweisen." Wieniawski: "Legende." Alfredo Campoli, violin, with the London Symphony conducted by Anatole Fistoulari and Pierino Gamba. London LL 1625, \$3.98.	In such works as those of St. Saëns, Campoli's silky sound and refined way of manipulating it make for a high standard of violin playing. At bottom, however, his methods are more suitable to the salon than the concert hall (what would Kostelanetz give for an orchestra of Campoli's?), the lack of personal force depriving the Sarasate and Wieniawski works of the special urge they possess. It is a pleasure to hear the orchestral backgrounds for music usually played with piano, the two conductors adapting themselves well to Campoli's special needs. Outstanding sound.
Soutullo y Vert: "La Leyenda del Beso." Dolores Pérez, Jose Picaso, Alberto Aguila and others conducted by Enrique Estela. Montilla FM 93, \$4.98.	Familiar as we are with the Viennese concept of the Gypsy ("Zigeunerbaron"), the Italian ("Il Trovatore"), the French ("Carmen"), even the English ("Bitter Sweet") and American ("Naughty Marietta"), the Spanish comes as something of a novelty. The title relates to a gypsy who was seduced by a king and whose daughter (Amapola, beautifully sung by Mme. Pérez) returns to make life miserable for his son. A hereditary curse fortunately intervenes to prevent a Siegmund-Sieglinde union. The fluently attractive music is well sung by Pérez and the oddly-voiced Picaso, whose tenor timbre has a suggestion of flamenco. The printed text is over-economically confined to Spanish. Good sound. —I. K.

Tapes in Review

EDITOR'S NOTE: With this issue **RECORDINGS** inaugurates a monthly coverage of pre-recorded tape in all its aspects—monaural as well as stereophonic, popular, classical, experimental, etc. The department will be under the editorship of Mildred Norton, former music critic of the Los Angeles Daily News, and well known to SR readers for reports on music in the West Coast area.

The Toch Detail

TOCH: *Symphony No. 3.* William Steinberg conducting the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. Capitol stereo tape ZF-7, \$19.95.

SO NEW IS THE field of stereophonic recording, and so limited its present frame of reference, that any critical evaluations or pronouncements can in no wise be regarded as categorical. However, among the tapes recently released, none better illustrates the value of comparative listening than the present Toch symphony, which in its only slightly earlier LP release by Capitol (P-8366) started off with the twin advantages of a fine performance and a first rate processing.

It is only when one hears the stereo version immediately after the disc that one realizes how much of detail and color was absent from the latter, and how greatly the restoration of these enhances the work's significance. Detail is the essence of Toch's writing; this, and a curious imperative to entrust the musical design rather too often to the inner voices. Unless these are cleanly brought out the

result is apt to seem merely prolix and without unity.

Unity, to be sure, is scarcely the Third Symphony's strong point. What it does have, in abundance, are exotic, lucent timbres, icy melodies in an alpine register, bold engagements of percussive forces. Stereo's ability to capture such instrumental and harmonic subtleties, and present them, furthermore, with fidelity to Steinberg's own sure sense of balance, makes a strong case for the two-channel medium. However, the tape does not include the disc's overside bonus of Hindemith's "Mathis der Mahler," performed by the same ensemble.

From Kenton to Pitt

A STUDY IN STEREO: Capitol stereo tape ZH-2, \$16.95.

HOWEVER FEW the releases so far available on stereo tape, there is no dearth of introductory packages, offered like musical hors d'oeuvres to whet the appetite for more substantial fare. This particular appetizer is more costly than the same company's "Intro to Stereo" (see **PRERECORDED TAPES**), but its contents are directed at a wider variety of musical tastes. These range from Stan Kenton to the Pittsburgh Orchestra, with each selection featuring some particularly persuasive attribute of the stereo medium.

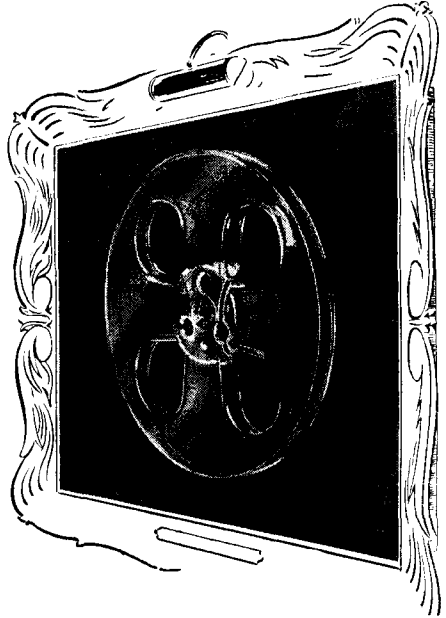
Benny on Wolfgang

MOZART: *Concerto in A for Clarinet* (K. 622). Benny Goodman, clarinet, with Charles Munch conducting the Boston Symphony Orchestra. RCA Victor stereo-orthophonic tape DCS-39, \$12.95.

MOZART'S DECEPTIVELY limpid music might easily be overlooked in the first fine careless rapture of stereo's infatuation with tonal glamour, and therefore RCA's release on tape of this, his last concerto, is a gracious *Luftpause* in the recording industry's seeming determination to find an answer to CinemaScope. Unfortunately, though, this latest processing is no great improvement over the RCA disc (LM-2073), which was itself something less than an ideal performance.

Goodman's clarinet tone is clean and full, and his technical mastery well adequate to the considerable demands of the solo role, but in subtle phrasing and coloristic variety he cannot

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