

RECORDINGS REPORTS I: Orchestral LPs

WORK, PERFORMER, DATA

REPORT

Bartók: *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta*. Hindemith: *Concert Music for Strings and Brass*, Op. 50. Leonard Bernstein conducting the New York Philharmonic Orchestra. Columbia ML 5979, \$4.98; stereo MS 6579, \$5.98.

Bernstein's affinity for the Bartók masterpiece is of long standing and even greater productivity. It thus ranks high in the top category of versions by Karajan, Reiner, and Ansermet; tonally, it is second to none, especially in the differentiation of the subtle colors that account for so many of the values in the writing. Equally remarkable as an intellectual achievement and even more impressive as a musical one (if only for its lesser familiarity) is the performance of the Hindemith *Concert Music*. Composed for the fiftieth anniversary of the Boston Symphony in 1930, it moves with a propulsion and rhythmic animation that are all but irresistible. It strikes me as superior to the composer's prior version (on Angel) and the older Ormandy (on Columbia), both now withdrawn. Altogether, a recording highly creditable to all.

Bartók: *The Miraculous Mandarin*. János Ferencsik conducting the Budapest Philharmonic Orchestra and Chorus; *Cantata Profana*. György Lehel conducting the chorus and orchestra of the Hungarian Radio with József Réti, tenor, and András Faragó, bass. Deutsche Grammophon 18873, \$5.98; stereo 138873, \$6.98.

Acceptable as it may be in the theater, with the action of a ballet to share the attention, the score of *The Miraculous Mandarin* doesn't contain enough of the better grade Bartók to reward listening on its own. Ferencsik applies himself to the problem with all diligence, but there are too many unabsorbed elements of others—Stravinsky in particular—to be reconciled by any conductor, no matter how adroit. The *Cantata Profana* of a dozen years later (1930) is quite another thing: a choral work of power and originality in which the inclinations Bartók had demonstrated in *Bluebeard's Castle* are carried forward. The two vocalists are members of the Budapest Opera, apt enough for their mostly declamatory duties. The place of the recording is not identified, but it yields a spacious, well-balanced sound for the cantata.

Glazounov: Concerto in A minor. Jascha Heifetz, violin; Walter Hendl conducting orchestra. Mozart: Symphonie Concertante in E flat (K. 364). Izler Solomon conducting orchestra. RCA Victor LM 2734, \$4.98; stereo LSC 2734, \$5.98.

If one must listen to the Glazounov concerto—and to some it is a secret vice, as salted peanuts or potato chips are to others—this is, on the whole, the preferable way to do it. As in the recent recording of Bruch's *Scottish Fantasy*, Heifetz combines ease of manner with a feeling for substance that are brilliantly complementary in such literature. Others, Oistrakh or Milstein, may come close, but Heifetz's facility is such that any pattern of difficulty can be comprehended at an ideal tempo for its musical significance. Hendl provides an appropriate orchestral background, alert without being aggressive, wholly in keeping with the soloist's stylistic requirements. The Mozart is a recoupling of a performance much admired when first issued and still equal in quality to any available issue. None, indeed, equal its sophistication in passages where the two instruments perform together, for the simple reason that no other viola player has yet equaled Primrose at his best, as he is consistently here. Solomon's participation as well as the reproduction are altogether satisfactory.

Handel: Water Music (complete). Rafael Kubelik conducting the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. Deutsche Grammophon 18799, \$5.98; stereo 138799, \$6.98.

Where Kubelik acquired his feeling for this particular work, no present information discloses (perhaps in the years he spent in England during the 1950s as musical director of Covent Garden). It is, in any case, remarkably right and flavorful, one of the best performances these wonderful works (Kubelik's sequence, derived from the Arnold edition of the eighteenth century, takes in eighteen pieces, ending with the Coro: Menuet) have ever had on records. Even in competition with such specialists as Boyd Neel, Thurston Dart, and Richard Schulze, Kubelik sustains a rhythmic vitality and melodic zest that give definition and contour to each section. The excellent first chair men of the Berlin Philharmonic make a contribution of their own, as does the orchestra as a whole. Fine sound, too.

Haydn: Symphonies No. 26 in D minor and No. 32 in C major; Overture to *Lo Speziale* (*The Apothecary*). Max Gieberman conducting the orchestra of the Vienna State Opera. Haydn Society 14, \$4.98.

Neither symphony is currently in the Schwann catalogue, though No. 26 (*Lamentations*) once circulated in a version bearing the label of the Haydn Society. This one is, of course, better reproduced, though not so well favored as one might expect from the recent time of origin. It suffers from the characteristic lack of bass writing in early Haydn, and not enough has been done to offset this in the studio arrangement. However, the most interesting music of the two sides is contained in the overture, written for an opera produced at Esterházy in 1768, which pleased his patron greatly, leading to many others. The special interest of this is that the slow section bears a marked resemblance to some of the "pleading" music in the later *Farewell* Symphony and may have then been designed to hint, gently, at Haydn's long devotion to his interests. An ingratiating piece in any case.

Mozart: Serenade No. 7 in D (K. 250), (*Haffner*). Rudolf Koeckert, violin; Rafael Kubelik conducting the orchestra of the Bavarian Radio. Deutsche Grammophon 18869, \$5.98; stereo 138869, \$6.98.

A new version of the *Haffner* with the physical resources commanded by Kubelik and reproduced according to the DG standard should be well worth having, especially with a violinist of Koeckert's quality collaborating in the inner movements. However, Kubelik's tempi tend to be fast, his sense of the work as a whole lacking the gaiety and playfulness appropriate to it. Koeckert commands a lovely tonal quality, and he phrases the slow movement of his "concerto within a serenade" ideally. In the rondo, however, he is subservient to Kubelik's leadership, which returns us to the rather prosaic, humorless manner that prevails elsewhere. The recording, at least, sustains the highest expectations for it.

Rossini: Overtures to *Barbiere di Siviglia*, *Scala di Seta*, *Italiana in Algeri*, *Semiramide*, and *Gazza Ladra*. Leonard Bernstein conducting the New York Philharmonic Orchestra. Columbia ML 5933, \$4.98; stereo MS 6533, \$5.98.

Rossini's idiom is clearly one for which Bernstein has a sympathetic feeling, as much for its racy play of musical wit as for its flashing patterns of melody and contrast. He also shows, in *L'Italiana in Algeri* and *La Gazza Ladra*, a sure control of the orchestral means for producing the crescendo to which the composer attached so much importance. Here and there some of the climaxes are over produced, and the orchestral sound loses lightness, but it is, altogether, idiomatic Rossini. The label credit for oboist Harold Gombert is honorably earned.

Schubert: Symphony No. 9 in C. Karl Böhm conducting the Berlin Philharmonic. Deutsche Grammophon 18877, \$5.98; stereo 138877, \$6.98.

The externals of this score are under sure control in Böhm's hands, the tempi mostly just, dynamics and orchestral values well equalized. However, the kind of lilt in the rhythmic relationships, the flexibility and "bend" of the melodic line that make this utterance the personal thing it is, are mostly undervalued in Böhm's treatment. This is all care and devotion so far as the specifics of the writing are concerned, but that leaves the non-specific but indispensable elements that are uniquely Schubertian not merely submerged but inaudible. The finale develops some of the insistence and power written into it by the composer, because the conductor adheres to the text as written. Elsewhere, however, the acts of divination and intermediation necessary to complete Schubert's purpose are withheld. In short, Böhm goes as far as he can with the means at his disposal, but they are insufficient in this instance.

—IRVING KOLODIN.

Strauss Discography

Continued from page 63

TILL EULENSPIEGEL'S LUSTIGE STREICHE, OPUS 28. *Karajan*, Vienna Philharmonic, London CM-9280, CS-6211; *Krauss*, Vienna Philharmonic, Richmond B-19043; *Munch*, Boston Symphony, RCA Victor LM-2565, LSC-2565; *Stokowski*, New York Stadium Orch., Everest LPBR-6023, SDBR-3023; *Szell*, Cleveland Orch., Epic LC-3439, BC-1011; *Toscanini*, NBC Symphony, RCA Victor LM-1891; *Reiner*, Vienna Philharmonic, Victrola VIC-1004, VICS-1004; [*Fritz Busch*, BBC Symphony Orch., Victor 11724/25 (78)]; *Furtwängler*, Vienna Philharmonic, RCA Victor LHMV-19; *Koussevitzky*, Boston Symphony, Camden CAL-101].

TOD UND VERKLAERUNG, OPUS 24. *Horenstein*, Bamberg Symphony, Vox PL-9060; *Klemperer*, Philharmonia Orch., Angel 35976, S-35976; *Reiner*, Vienna Philharmonic, Victrola VIC-1004, VICS-1004; *Szell*, Cleveland Orch., Epic LC-3439, BC-1011; *Walter*, New York Philharmonic, Columbia ML-5338; [*Furtwängler*, Vienna Philharmonic, RCA Victor LHMV-1023; *Mengelberg*, Concertgebouw Orch., Telefunken LGX-66032; *Victor de Sabata*, Berlin Philharmonic, DGG DGS-23 (78); *Stokowski*, Philadelphia Orch., Victor M-217 (78)].

INSTRUMENTAL and CHAMBER MUSIC

ENOCH ARDEN, OPUS 38. *Claude Rains*, reader, with *Glenn Gould*, piano, Columbia ML-5741, MS-6341.

QUARTET IN C MINOR, OPUS 13. [*Bernardo Segall*, piano; *José Figueroa*, violin; *Frank Brieff*, viola; *George Ricci*, cello, New Records NRLP-201].

SERENADE FOR 13 WINDS, OPUS 7. *Fennell* cond. Eastman Wind Ensemble, Mercury MG-50173, SR-90173; [*Ormandy*, Philadelphia Orch. winds, Columbia ML-5129; Vienna Philharmonic Wind Group, Westminster XWN-18173].

CELLO SONATA, OPUS 6. *Joseph Schuster* & *Friedrich Wührer*, Vox PL-9910; [*Raya Garbousova* & *Erich Itor Kahn*, Concert Hall C-14 (78); *André Navarra* & *Ernest Lush*, Capitol P-18045].

PIANO SONATA, OPUS 5. *Alfred Brendel*, SPA 48.

VIOLIN SONATA, OPUS 18. *Leonid Kogan* & *Andre Mitnik*, MK 1561; [*Jascha Heifetz* & *Brooks Smith*, RCA Victor LM-2050; *Heifetz* & *Árpád Sándor*, RCA Victor LCT-1122; *Ruggiero Ricci* & *Carlo Bussotti*, London LL-770; *Ginette Neveu* & *G. Beck*, HMV DB-4663/66 (78)].

SONATINA IN F FOR WINDS. *Eric Simon* cond. Boston Wind Ensemble, Boston B-406, B-1016.

STIMMUNGSBILDER FOR PIANO, OPUS 9. *Grant Johannesen*, HMV CLP-1243 (not issued USA); [No. 2 only, "An einsamer Quelle," arr. violin *Heifetz* & *Bay*, Victor 14369 (78)].

(Continued on page 71)

RICHARD STRAUSS

played by his beloved

VIENNA PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA



The Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra



Georg Solti



Herbert von Karajan



Clemens Krauss



Karl Böhm



Erich Kleiber

SALOME

Nilsson, Wächter, Stolze—Solti
Stereo OSA-1218 Mono A-4247

ARABELLA

della Casa, London, Gueden—Solti
Stereo OSA-1404 Mono A-4412

Highlights from above

Stereo OS-25243 Mono 5616

DER ROSENKAVALIER

Reining, Jurinac, Gueden, Weber—Kleiber.
Mono A-4404

Highlights from above

Mono 5615

DIE FRAU OHNE SCHATTEN

Rysanek, Hopf, Schoeffler, Goltz—Böhm
Mono A-4505

DEATH & TRANSFIGURATION

TILL EULENSPIEGEL'S MERRY PRANKS
DANCE OF THE SEVEN VEILS
von Karajan
Stereo CS-6211 Mono CM-9280

DON JUAN

(with Tchaikovsky's Romeo and Juliet)

— *von Karajan*
Stereo CS-6209 Mono CM-9278

ALSO SPRACH ZARATHUSTRA
von Karajan

Stereo CS-6129 Mono CM-9236

RICHMOND RELEASES

SALOME

Goltz, Patzak—Krauss
Mono RS-62007

TILL EULENSPIEGEL'S

MERRY PRANKS
DON JUAN
Krauss
Mono B-19043

Trademarks Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.



FULL FREQUENCY RANGE RECORDING

RECORDINGS REPORTS II: Miscellaneous LPs

WORK, PERFORMER, DATA	REPORT
Bartók: Improvisations, Op. 20; Etudes, Op. 18. Liszt: <i>Don Juan Fantasy</i> ; <i>Sonnetto del Petrarca</i> (No. 104); Hungarian Rhapsody No. 10. Charles Rosen, piano, Epic LC 3878, \$4.98; stereo BC 1278, \$4.98.	"Commercial appeal," no doubt, has dictated the designation of the Liszt pieces as side I of this issue, but it would seem to some that there is even greater commercial appeal in the Bartók Etudes, which are rarely heard and even more rarely recorded (the "improvisations" have been circulating in a version by Leonid Hambro for some time). These are works of power and originality that suggest Bartók found his idiom as a piano composer somewhat earlier than he did in, for example, <i>The Miraculous Mandarin</i> (noted on page 68). They are products of the same period, but not the same composer (speaking in terms of individuality). Rosen plays them with absorbing authority and a convincing sense of purpose. The Liszt is also well selected, and there is no less musicianship in the performance. What Rosen lacks is a flair for this idiom as strong as he possesses for that of Bartók. One feels from time to time (and especially in the <i>Don Juan Fantasy</i>) that his mind may be on the performance but his heart is not in it.
Bach: Overture in the French Manner; Fantasia in C minor; Toccata in C sharp minor; Overture in G (after an unknown master). Rafael Puyana, harpsichord. Mercury MG 50369, \$4.98; stereo SR 90369, \$5.98.	Save for the C-minor fantasia and, possibly, the French counterpart to the better known "Italian" overture, this literature is among the less familiar areas of Bach's enormous output, which puts that much more of a burden on the performer. It is one that Puyana bears with admirable resource of mind and muscle, in a demonstration of musicianship that is both enlivening and thought-provoking. Puyana's art is most remarkable for its lack of anything like affectation, in its concentration on essentials. In the Concerto in G, which could be an elaboration of a work by Telemann, it tends to penalize the lack of personality in the music; but elsewhere, it makes Bach's rather than Puyana's dominant. Very faithful likeness of the harpsichord in the reproduction.
Debussy: Quartet, Op. 10. Ravel: Quartet in G minor. Stuyvesant Quartet. Nonesuch 1007, \$2.50.	Recent praise for the coupling on Artia of these works in a fine performance by the Vlach Quartet makes mention of this reissue mandatory. Reacquaintance with it after a lapse of several years (it was originally circulated on the Philharmonia label) leaves little doubt that it is one of the finest quartet recordings ever made in this country, and a close competitor in total quality to the Vlach versions. Moreover, at the time of issue it was one of the best examples of quartet recording accomplished anywhere, and nothing has happened to alter that judgment since. All of which proves that qualified performance in a suitably resonant surrounding (in this case, the Village Church of Bronxville, N.Y.) still provides the components of a durable experience. At the reissue price it should attract attention not only to the ensemble (Sylvan Shulman and Bernard Robbins, violins; Ralph Hersh, viola; and Alan Shulman, cello) but also to the new label on which it may now be heard.
Schubert: Mass in G. Mozart: Missa Brevis in B flat (K. 275). Herbert Froitzheim conducting the soloists, chorus, and orchestra of the Freiburg (Breisgau) School of Music, with Barbara Wittelsberger, soprano; Dagmar Naaff, alto; Hans Wilbrink, tenor; and August Messthaler, bass. Decca 10091, \$4.98; stereo 710091, \$5.98.	It is difficult to imagine any pair of composers more suitable for bracketing in this wise than the twenty-one-year-old Mozart and the eighteen-year-old Schubert. Any other composer faced with the melodic abundance displayed by Schubert in G or Mozart in B flat would certainly be judged inferior. Further words would be superfluous, save to say that each side proves the thesis that great musical performance is indivisible—that is, a conductor capable of making a choir sing with such unanimity and balance as Froitzheim does would almost necessarily have a sense of tempo, phrasing, and dynamics to match those he demonstrates here. The identity of the soloists (save for Wilbrink, who performed Pelléas at Glyndebourne last summer) is unknown, but they are all good. The source of the open, resonant recording is not disclosed, either.
Shostakovich: Preludes and Fugues (Nos. 4, 12, 14, 15, 17, and 23). Sviatoslav Richter, piano. Philips 500048, \$4.98; stereo 900-048, \$5.98.	At first hearing the interest of these works is not commanding, but they reward closer attention. When the impression of what Shostakovich is about sinks in, it becomes clear that, rather than trying to emulate the Bachian precepts of the "48," he is utilizing their structural and formal example to augment the literature of Russian piano music going back from his own earlier works through Prokofiev to Moussorgsky's <i>Pictures</i> , some of whose characteristics reappear in various of these pieces. As Richter is a pre-eminent interpreter of both Prokofiev and Moussorgsky, his dynamism adds much to the magnetism of the music.
Strauss, J.: <i>Emperor Waltz</i> (trans. Pennario). Mendelssohn: <i>Scherzo</i> (trans. Rachmaninoff). Saint-Saëns: <i>Danse Macabre</i> (trans. Liszt). Shostakovich: <i>Polka (Age of Gold)</i> . Prokofiev: <i>March (Love for Three Oranges)</i> . Ravel: <i>La Valse</i> . Kreisler: <i>Liebesleid</i> (trans. Rachmaninoff). Gounod: <i>Waltz (Faust)</i> (trans. Liszt). Leonard Pennario, piano. RCA Victor LM 2714, \$4.98; stereo LSC 2714, \$5.98.	Where the problems are wholly or primarily mechanical, Pennario combines deftness with entertainment in pleasurable proportions—as in the Kreisler transcription by Rachmaninoff or his own version of Strauss's <i>Emperor Waltz</i> or Liszt's recreation of <i>Danse Macabre</i> . However, where more specific elements of style intrude, as in the Shostakovich arrangement of his own polka, or Ravel's <i>La Valse</i> , Pennario's tendency to reduce everything to a common denominator of bland non-differentiation is inadequate for more than a surface likeness to the essential work. His sound is always good, likewise the reproduction of it.
Vaughan Williams: Folk Song Suite; Toccata Marziale. Holst: Suites 1 and 2. Granger: Hill Song No. 2. Frederick Fennell conducting the Eastman Wind Ensemble. Mercury MG 50388, \$4.98; stereo SR 90388, \$5.98.	At first glance or even at second, it might be reasonably supposed that this is a remake of a disc that was among the best ever made by Fennell at Rochester, even though he has been for several years past associated with Stanislaw Skrowaczewski at Minneapolis. However, it is only on looking closely at the reverse of the "sleeve" that one observes that this is an "electrically created" stereo, from the "original master tape" that was recorded "monaurally only." Certainly there should be something on the face of the album to distinguish this kind of stereo from the authentic. For whatever it is worth, it may be noted that the material is as attractive as it was when the disc was first issued in 1956, the performances no less good. The stereo doesn't strike me as much of an asset in any case.
Wagner: Sonatas in A and B flat major; Fantasia in F sharp minor, <i>Albumblätter</i> in E flat, A flat, and C; <i>Züricker Vielliebhen</i> and <i>Ankunft bei den Schwarzen Schwänen</i> . Martin Galling, piano. VOX VUX 2022, \$6.95; stereo SVUX 52022, \$6.95.	The contents of this Vox twin parallels those of an issue from the Bayreuth Festival Master Classes in 1961, a pioneering venture on behalf of the scholarship program of that institution to which the Australian pianist Bruce Hungerford made a notable contribution in artistry. Compared to his discreet, musicianly appreciation of the merits and demerits of the very early works of Wagner, Galling seems determined to prove that every derivation was divinely decreed, every repetition as inspired as Bruckner's. The result is an over-insistent laboring of the obvious in a vain attempt to prove that the music is better than it demonstrably is. As for the mature pieces infused with various strains of sentimentality, Galling's effort is closer to the salon than the recording studio. The reproduction is tonally good, but no better than the earlier product of a Munich studio.

—I. K.

(Continued from page 69)

SUITE FOR WINDS, OPUS 4. [Vienna Philharmonic Wind Group, Westminster XWN-18173].

OPERA (excluding orchestral excerpts)

DIE AEGYPTISCHE HELENA, OPUS 75—"Bei jener Nacht" & "Zweite Brautnacht!" [R. Pauly, Decca 25850 (78)].

ARABELLA, OPUS 79. Solti cond. Vienna State Opera, with Lisa Della Casa, George London, et al., London A-4412, OSA-1404; Keilberth cond. Bavarian State Opera, with Della Casa, Fischer-Dieskau, et al. (to be released by Deutsche Grammophon this year); [Excerpts: "Er ist der Richtige" & "So wie sind." Viorica Ursuleac, Margit Bokor, Alfred Jerger, DGG EPL-30541 (45-rpm, not issued USA)].

ARIADNE AUF NAXOS, OPUS 60. Karajan cond. Philharmonia, with Schwarzkopf, Streich & Seefried, Angel 3532-C/L; Böhm cond. Vienna State Opera, with Reining, Seefried, et al. (composer's 80th birthday performance), DGG LPM-18850/52; [Excerpts: "In den schönen Feierkleidern." Lotte Lehmann, Decca 25186 (78); "So war es mit Pagliazzo." Maria Ivogün, RCA Victor LCT-1115].

CAPRICCIO, OPUS 85. Sawallisch cond. Philharmonia, with Schwarzkopf, Gedda, Fischer-Dieskau, Angel 3580-C/L [Final scene. Viorica Ursuleac, with Krauss



cond. Bavarian State Opera Orch., Polydor 68125 (78)].

DAPHNE—excerpts. [Marguerite Teschemacher & Torsten Ralf, with Böhm cond. Saxon State Orch., Victor M-660 (78)].

ELEKTRA, OPUS 58. Böhm cond. Dresden State Opera, with Inge Borkh, Jean Madeira, D. Fischer-Dieskau, DGG LPM-18690/91, SLPM-138690/91; [Final Scene only. Beecham, Royal Philharmonic, with Schlüter, Weltsch & Schoeffler, RCA Victor LCT-1135].

DIE FRAU OHNE SCHATTEN, OPUS 65. Böhm cond. Vienna State Opera, with Rysanek, Goltz, Hopf, et al., London A-4505; Keilberth cond. Bavarian State Opera, with Borkh, Thomas, Fischer-Dieskau, Hotter (to be released this year by DGG).

DER ROSENKAVALIER, OPUS 59. Kleiber cond. Vienna State Opera, with Reining, Günden, et al., London A-4404; Karajan cond. Philharmonia, with Schwarzkopf, Seefried, et al., Angel 3563-D/L, S-3563-D/L; Krauss cond. Bavarian State Opera, with Milinkovic, Ursuleac, Kern, Weber, Vox OPBX-140; Heger cond. Vienna Philharmonic, with Lehmann, Schumann, Olszewska, Mayr, et al. (abridged), Angel GRB-4001; [Excerpts—Lemnitz, Milinkovic, Trötschel, with Leitner cond. Württemberg State Orch., Decca DL-9606; Letter Scene & Waltz, Mayr &

Andrassy, Walter cond., Columbia 9087-M (78)].

SALOME, OPUS 54. Krauss cond. Vienna State Opera, with Goltz, Patzak, et al., Richmond RS-62007; Solti cond. Vienna State Opera, with Nilsson, Stolze, et al., London A-4247, OSA-1218; [Final Scene only: Ljuba Welitsch, with Reiner cond. Metropolitan Opera Orch., Columbia ML-4795; Marjorie Lawrence (in French), with Coppola cond. Pasdeloup Orch., Camden CAL-216].

CHORAL & SONG

OLYMPISCHE HYMNE (1936). [Bruno Kittel Choir, Decca 20294 (78)].

OPHELIA'S SONGS, OPUS 67. Erna Berger, Urania UR-7060.

TAILLEFER. Maria Cebotari, Walther Ludwig, Hans Hotter, with Rother cond. Berlin Radio Chorus and Orch., Urania UR-7042, US-57042.

VIER LETZTE LIEDER. Lisa della Casa, Böhm cond. Vienna Philharmonic, in London Arabella album, A-4412; Schwarzkopf, Ackermann cond. Philharmonia, Angel 35084.

WANDERERS STURMLIED, OPUS 14. Swoboda cond. Vienna Akademie Kammerchor & Vienna Symphony Orch. Westminster W-9600. —RICHARD FREED.

NEW



HANDEL/The Water Music (complete)

(New edition by N. D. Boyling)

The Bath Festival Orchestra, directed by Yehudi Menuhin (S)36173

MOZART/Sinfonia Concertante in E Flat (for violin, viola and orchestra), K. 364

HAYDN/Concerto No. 1 in C (for violin and orchestra)

Yehudi Menuhin (violin), Rudolf Barshai (viola) and the Bath Festival Orchestra, directed by Yehudi Menuhin (S)36190

SAINT-SAËNS/Symphony No. 3 in C Minor ("Organ")

The Paris Conservatoire Orchestra, Georges Prêtre conducting, with Maurice Duruflé, organ (S)35924

PROKOFIEV/Romeo and Juliet—Ballet Music

The Philharmonia Orchestra, Efrem Kurtz conducting (S)36174

MOZART/Concerto in C (for flute, harp and orchestra), K. 299

TELEMANN/Suite in A Minor (for flute and strings)

Elaine Shaffer (flute), Marilyn Costello (harp), the Philharmonia Orchestra, directed by Yehudi Menuhin (S)36189

Angel

NEW RELEASES JUNE

Electronic Future

Continued from Pg. 59

monic pace of his structure, for deciding upon those areas that must be affirmatively diatonic in order to compensate those in which the extravagant passions of the chromatic idiom had been indulged. And he learned to build primary cadences of a uniquely cumulative power and resonance. In part, these derived from his habit of treating the bass lines of his harmony as though they were magnetized to the tonal foundation. In this sense, Strauss is closer than any late-Romantic composer, and for that matter any nineteenth-century composer after Mendelssohn, to the genuinely Baroque technique of preserving a structural autonomy in those lines and motives that comprise the foundation for his vertical structures. There is an almost divisible unity about his bass lines, a kind of independent pride and purpose, that is found nowhere else in late-Romantic music.

Above these privately resonating bass forms the texture may be more or less contrapuntal, depending upon the nature and purpose of the particular work. There will almost certainly exist, whatever the texture, a harmonic language that makes frequent and elaborate use of *double entendre*, just as does the harmonic idiom of most other composers of the period. The short-term effects of the hints and feints of the harmonic progressions are just as clear, or more accurately, just as purposefully unclear as in the vocabulary, let's say, of Mahler's Tenth Symphony, or of Schönberg's First String Quartet—both written in the first decade of this century and both leaning toward that indulgence of chromaticism which was shortly to dissolve the tonal language. But it is in its long-term consequences that this ambiguous harmonic language fulfills a different function in the works of Strauss. In the long term the devices of harmonic ambiguity are not, in Strauss's music, as persistently indulged. To take an easy instance, the kind of sequential variation which sets off some form of non-diatonic or extra-diatonic contrast which Bruckner likes to use as a household motto and to develop for its long-range harmonic consequences as well, and which Schönberg exploits in such music as *Verklärte Nacht* in which it is already preparing for its role as the variative mechanism of "atonality," was apparently indefensible within Strauss's harmonic ethics.

As one observes Strauss's career as a whole, one finds that this sense of mediation that he possessed between the elaborate introduction of dissonant or dissonantly suggestive factors and

the cadential formulae necessary to particularize their diatonic or, for that matter, their non-diatonic connection, grows almost consistently more subtle and encompassing. *Metamorphosen*, for example, which one need not praise by noting that its composer was then eighty, is a work in which the harmonic consequences of triads that divide between them the twelve-tone capacity of the chromatic scale—the same triad relationship that Schönberg developed as the basis of the tone row in his, coincidentally, contemporaneous work *Ode to Napoleon, Opus 41*—are mined here not for the significance of their mutually complementary interval relationships (upon which Schönberg develops his structure), but rather for the comparison of those relationships with the casual but never perfunctory sequences of purely diatonic cadence that they resemble and by which they are, at most pivotal moments in the work, quietly supplanted.

ONE may say, then, that for all practical purposes, very genuine dramatic ends are served by those inhibitions that Strauss acknowledged in regard to tonality and that caused him always to regard apprehensively the organic application of dissonance *per se* and to search instead for new ways of employing the ornamental, or the exotic, or, as in *Ophelia*, the neurotic qualities of non-functional dissonance and of reconciling them within the tonality that he had expanded to accommodate them. The question then is not whether he succeeded, because most everyone agrees that his success as this world knows success was dazzling, nor even whether he contributed something genuinely new, because by any standard other than the blindest assumptions of chronological conformity what he did was new indeed, but simply whether he did right by the historical progression of which we want to make him a part—whether by denying in his music the condition and vocabulary of that ambiguity which has become the stimulus of most art today, he denied himself not a greater achievement, but a more pertinent achievement.

It is important to realize that if the demands and situations of the electronic age change the function and relevance of the composer to society, they will also change the categories of judgment by which we determine the matter of artistic responsibility. By far the most important electronic contribution to the arts is the creation of a new and paradoxical condition of privacy. The great paradox about the electronic transmission of musical sound is that as it makes available to the most enormous audience, either simultaneously or in a delayed encounter, the identical musical

experience, it encourages that audience to react not as captives and automatons but as individuals capable of an unprecedented spontaneity of judgment. This is because the most public transmission can be encountered in the most private circumstance, and because the auditor or, if you like, the ultimate composer-performer-critic-consumer hybrid will be exposed to the most astonishing variety of idiom without necessarily having to encounter it in any specific social situation in which the inevitable compromises of multiple audition and of contemporary circumstance are most strongly felt.

IT WOULD be most surprising if the techniques of sound preservation, in addition to influencing the way in which music is composed and performed (which is already taking place) does not also determine the manner in which we respond to it. And there is little doubt that the inherent qualities of illusion in the art of recording—those features that make it not so much a representation of the known exterior world but of the idealized interior world—will eventually undermine that whole area of prejudice that has concerned itself with finding chronological justifications for artistic endeavors and which in the post-Renaissance world has so determinedly argued the case for a chronological originality that it has quite lost touch with the larger purposes of creativity.

Whatever else we would predict about the electronic age, all the symptoms suggest a return to some degree of mythic anonymity within the social-artistic structure. Undoubtedly most of what happens in the future will be concerned with what is being done in the future, but it would also be most surprising if many judgments were not retroactively altered because of the new image of art. If that happens, as I think it must, there will be a number of substantial figures of the past and near past who will undergo major re-evaluation and for whom the verdict will no longer rest upon the narrow and unimaginative concepts of the social-chronological parallel. There is no figure in recent times of whose reputation these prejudices have taken such a toll as Richard Strauss. Whatever the limitations of his personality, whatever the restrictions upon his artistic imagination, he has been victim of the most violent prejudices and has been measured by a yardstick to which it was never his ambition to conform. It is entirely likely that Strauss, a man who seemed remote from the time in which he lived and totally unconcerned about the future will, because of the new orientation of that future, gather a greater admiration than he ever knew.

Reels, Wheels, and Economics

THE controversy over the possible replacement of the disc record by tape has been a most gentlemanly one, with the proponents of tape modestly proclaiming that they are only the wave of the distant future. But the quiet introduction of the Revere tape cartridge system at last year's New York High Fidelity Music Show, coupled with Bell's recent abandonment of the RCA cartridge system, has cast a good deal of attention upon the question.

Pre-recorded music is now available in three basic forms: the phonograph disc, the reel-to-reel tape, and the tape cartridge. The phonograph disc—whose long supremacy is only now being challenged—owes a good deal of its popularity and convenience to its shape. Because the entire recorded surface is exposed at all times, selections from the middle of a record may be located and played instantaneously, and both recorded surfaces can be quickly inspected by eye for gross defects. Moreover—and this was a prime factor in the cylinder's replacement by the disc—disc recordings can be duplicated easily and economically, with the entire recording copied instantaneously in a single operation of the press.

A continuous-band medium, such as tape or wire, has many advantages, too, though not all of them are significant for playback of pre-recorded music. The two most significant of these advantages were shared by the cylinder recording: a constant recording speed (the linear velocity of 33 1/3 rpm phonograph record groove diminishes from twenty-five inches per second at the outer grooves to ten ips at the inner ones, owing to the lesser circumference of the inner grooves), and—since the recording and playback heads maintain the same angle relative to the recording—there is no distortion due to tracking error. Unlike the disc or the cylinder, though, tapes can be edited and portions added, deleted, or re-arranged at will. But for duplication, inspection, and location of specified sections, the entire length of a tape or wire must be run through the recording or playback machine. Here is a serious drawback, indeed, for the cost of dubbing a tape is far higher than the almost insignificant cost of pressing a record.

The phonograph uses a physical recording medium—the tape, a magnetic one. Since electrons are smaller and lighter than any stylus and move considerably faster, tape offers—theoretically—far better high frequency and

transient response than discs can hope to. The tape head is a far simpler device than the phonograph pick-up cartridge, and offers potentially far fewer problems than any transducer that must convert physical motion to electricity. In practice, neither tape nor disc reproduction has yet reached its fullest development, but other advantages of magnetic and physical recording media are of great practical consequence to the listener.

Because it is a physical medium, the phonograph record is subject to wear, warp, dust, and damage. Because record wear imposes severe limitations on the tracking pressure of the phonograph pick-up, most record players will repeat or skip grooves if the floor they rest on is jarred. And only a phonographic recording is subject to that eternal bugaboo, the repeating groove.

Tapes can be damaged: under stress they may break or stretch (breaks can be easily repaired, stretched portions cannot), the oxide—which contains the recorded information—may flake off the plastic backing (though this is likely to happen only to some poorly made recording tapes, not to pre-recorded tapes from even half-way reputable manufacturers). Tapes can be spilled or snarled, the signal may print through from one layer to the next, accidental exposure to magnetic fields can increase a tape's noise level, or even erase it entirely. But these are uncommon accidents, and the tape user is spared the record-handling rituals required of the careful phonograph listener.

How, then, has the phonograph survived this heady competition? Easily. The most potent factor in the phonograph's continued popularity is its low cost. Complete stereo phonograph playback systems may be purchased for under sixty dollars, while the least expensive stereo tape players with speakers for both channels would cost over a hundred. The cost per recording is far higher, too: the average pre-recorded tape costs about \$2.00 more than its disc equivalent, save for certain longer works, such as operas. Of course, as the

problems of slow-speed tape recording and playback are gradually solved, the speed of tapes—already lower than the linear velocity of even the inner grooves of the 33 1/3 rpm record—will fall, and the costs of tape recordings fall accordingly.

Another factor in the disc record's popularity is its convenience. A child can place a disc on a turntable and deposit the stylus in the groove, but threading a wisp-like tape through narrow slots, guides, and rollers is a deterrent to the mechanically timid. Tapes can be made that will run longer than any present disc, but the record-changer allows a longer continuous program than any present-day pre-recorded tape can boast.

Though the cost factor has not yet been affected, the tape cartridge systems now available do operate at low speeds (3 3/4 inches per second for the RCA cartridge, 1 1/2 ips for the Revere) with fidelity nearly comparable to that of the reel-to-reel, 7 1/2 ips tapes, and are virtually as easy as phonograph records to load and play. Moreover, the new Revere system offers the first tape changer, an expensive (\$270.00 and up), sluggish (change cycle of 35-55 seconds, vs. the record changer's 15) monster that can out-do the disc record-changer in at least one respect: its fifteen-hour, twenty-cartridge capacity can encompass the entire Ring Cycle in one sitting—far more, in fact, than most listeners can take.

Unfortunately, while tape offers a greater potential—and the best pre-recorded tapes are usually better than their disc equivalents—the quality of the average pre-recorded tape is still below that of the average disc, and consistency of tape quality is far below the disc's. With every pre-recorded tape virtually an individual product, the quality of any given batch may run the gamut from superb to horrible in quality; and the only way to check out a tape is to play it through—an expensive procedure on the production line. Many tape reviewers, in fact, specify that such defects as hiss, muddiness, and dynamic constriction were found on "the tape submitted for review"—for the tape copy you buy may be far better, or far worse.

The good tape, however, stays good. Despite modern advances in record care and record playback equipment, disc records do wear. Tapes need not. In the long run, they may even be more economical than discs. Once the problems of cost and quality control are licked, tape—probably in cartridge form—should finally start replacing the disc, as the disc did the cylinder. But it may take a while, yet; it did take the disc about twelve years to overtake the cylinder.

—IVAN BERGER.

