

HISTORISCHE AUFNAHMEN

DUSSEK: La Chasse; FIELD: Nocturne No. 9; JENSEN: Erotikon, Op. 44--Eros; A. RUBINSTEIN: Prelude & Fugue, Op. 53, No. 2; RAFF: Rigaudon, Op. 204, No. 3; PADEREWSKI: Legende, Op. 16, No. 1; CHABRIER: Bourree Fantasque; GODOWSKY: The Gardens of Buitenzorg; REGER: From My Diary, Op. 82--Adagio & Vivace; CASELLA: Two Contrasts; BUSONI: Sonatina No. 2; MOSZKOWSKI: Waltz, Op. 34; MacDOWELL: To a Wild Rose, Op. 51, No. 1; RAVINA: Etude de Style, Op. 14, No. 1. Arthur Loesser, pianist. International Piano Archives IPA 102.

This was originally one of the International Piano Library's first records. Since it comes from a tape (mono, but good quality) of a recital given in 1967, the sound quality has not needed any particular improvement, and there is thus no particular advantage in the new release over the original. However, I am glad to see the record receiving wider distribution than it had previously.

Although there is quite a bit of unusual, otherwise unrecorded music here, I find the record most interesting for the playing. Loesser made quite a number of records, but nearly all of them were done for small, obscure labels. Thus even for many dedicated pianophiles the current release may prove their first opportunity to hear the work of one of the least-known great pianists of the 20th century. Loesser's color, facility, imagination and penetrating intellect rescues some rather poor music from its graveyard. Where he has sufficient charm or beauty inherent in the music (as, for example, in the pieces by Chabrier, Paderewski, and Moszkowski), his performances are ravishing. And he does fine service for the truly wicked wit of Casella, whose "Contrasts" are among the few really funny pieces of music I know.

Loesser's own program notes are as engaging as his playing.

BACH: The Well-Tempered Clavier, Book 1--Prelude & Fugue No. 1 in C; Chorale Prelude, "Rejoice, Beloved Christians" (arr. Busoni); BEETHOVEN: Ecossaises (arr. Busoni); CHOPIN: Etudes, Op. 10--No 5 in G flat (2 performances); Etudes, Op. 25--No. 5, in e; Nocturne in F sharp, Op. 15, No. 2; Preludes, Op. 28--No. 7, in A; LISZT: Hungarian Rhapsody No. 13 (abridged). Ferruccio Busoni, pianist. BUSONI: Fantasia on "Carmen" (after Bizet). Michael von Zadora, pianist. BACH: Partita No. 2, in d, BWV 1004--Chaconne. Egon Petri, pianist. BUSONI: Indian Diary, Book I. Edward Weiss, pianist. International Piano Archives IPA 104.

This is a revised reissue of an earlier International Piano

Library release. As with several of these new IPA issues, the recordings have been remastered by engineer Ward Marston with noticeable improvement in sound quality. The disadvantage of the new release is that only the back of the jacket has been used for program notes, reproducing only Edward Weiss's essay on Busoni from the booklet accompanying the earlier release. Thus we have only a few words on Weiss himself and nothing on Zadora or Petri. IPA now has the exact recording information on Busoni's records, which were made on February 27, 1922, in London.

What a pity that Busoni died at the age of fifty-nine in 1924! We are fortunate to have any recordings by him at all, but they are all of brief works, a poor representation of this mighty thunderer who loved to play the "Hammerklavier" Sonata and the "Goldberg Variations" as part of a recital. Of all these recordings, the only one which gives us a good idea of the pianist's power is the abridged Liszt performance, which is hair-raising. The other performances are interesting in various ways. The two versions of the Chopin Etude are quite different although recorded on the same day, evidence that Busoni's legendary intellect was counterbalanced by inspiration of the moment. I find the Bach Chorale Prelude ludicrously fast and insensitive, but otherwise the performances are obviously those of a major master. The possibility of Busoni, at the unattained age of sixty-five, making an electrical recording of the "Hammerklavier" will always haunt me. But let us not discount the great value of the recordings which do exist, and I am grateful to IPA for making them available in so excellent a presentation.

The records of Busoni's music by his pupils make an appropriate coupling and are well worth hearing, although I find little of interest in the music itself. (I have always been repelled by Busoni's famous transcription of the Bach Chaconne, however valid it may be on its own unBachian terms.)

This record certainly belongs in any serious piano collection, as much for the interest of the playing as for "historic" reasons.

MOZART: Symphony No. 25, in g, K. 183; Symphony No. 38, in D, K. 504, "Prague." London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Georg Solti. London Treasury Series R 23238.

In the years since the old Richmond orchestral series was eliminated, Decca/London has restricted their mono U.S. issues to vocal music. (The one exception I can recall, the Lipatti/Ansermet Schumann Piano Concerto, was electronically rechannelled for stereo, probably just so it could be published in the Stereo

Treasury series.) Meanwhile, many worthwhile mono reissues (some in rechannelled stereo) have been published in England in the Decca Eclipse series. Now, the "Stereo" has been deleted from "Stereo Treasury" and we are receiving domestic editions of some of the Eclipse series.

This Solti LP was first issued in the U.S. as London LL 1034. It was late mono-only issue and didn't even last into the 1960's; the original pressing is now quite scarce. I presume it has been reissued due to Solti's present celebrity. The performances are worthy, although not miracles of Mozartian interpretation. The "little" G Minor Symphony, an amazing production for the seventeen-year-old genius, is played quite well, lacking only a certain snap in the syncopated rhythms of the first movement. Wöldike's even older performance with the Danish State Radio Symphony Orchestra (Haydn Society HS LP-1055) had deeper insight, but we are hardly likely to see it again. The "Prague" Symphony is also a fine performance, again without the greatest eloquence we have heard in the music. The finale, admittedly marked Presto, seems somehow too fast. Perhaps more incisive rhythmic emphasis at the same tempo would change that impression.

In short, this is a pleasant, worthwhile set of performances, but I don't feel they are of the greatest distinction. One of the most positive features of the record is the recorded sound—mono, nearly a quarter of a century old, but beautiful in quality and balance. The violins sound a bit thin in a few passages, but that was probably a failing of the orchestra itself. The old Richmond orchestral reissues were degraded in sound; they were equalized with a pronounced bias towards upper frequencies, probably to sound more "brilliant" on inexpensive players, and they were pressed in the U.S. on styrene. The new Treasury pressings are imported from England, and this one sounds excellent.

BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 6, in F, Op. 68 ("Pastoral"). Orchestra dell'Augusteo, Rome, conducted by Victor de Sabata. World Records (England) SH 235 (Peters International import).

This is the first LP edition of a major recording by the late Victor de Sabata, whose forced retirement in 1953 due to ill-health deprived us of what would have been the appropriate number of recordings by this great conductor. The recording was made in 1947 and was originally issued as by the Orchestra of the Academy of St. Cecilia, Rome; even this edition was never published in the U.S.

I usually expect inferior playing from Italian orchestras, but not under the direction of de Sabata. Surely enough, this performance is beautifully played, with scarcely a spot of impre-

cision and excellent tone. The recording sessions were spread over five separate days, evidence of the conductor's insistence on excellence. If anything, the interpretation is even more distinguished than the quality of the playing. Tempos are fast, with a great deal of rhetorical inflection. Dynamics are sharply contrasted. While I must admit that I am not especially fond of this symphony, in de Sabata's hands it takes on a rare and compelling eloquence.

The transfer was done by that king of dubbing engineers, Anthony Griffith, and is scarcely distinguishable from a good early-fifties LP. I recommend the results most strongly.

ALBÉNIZ: 2 improvisations. Isaac Albéniz, pianist. MALATS: Serenata; CHOPIN: Waltz in c sharp, Op. 64, No. 2; LISZT: Hungarian Rhapsody No. 13; WAGNER-Liszt: Tristan und Isolde—Liebestod. Joaquin Malats, pianist. GRANADOS: Spanish Dances Nos. 7 & 10; El Pelele; SCARLATTI-Granados: Sonata in B flat, L. 250, K. 190. Enrique Granados, pianist. GRIEG: Norwegian Dances, Op. 35—No. 2. Frank Marshall, pianist. CHOPIN: Nocturne in B, Op. 32, No. 1; Waltz in a, Op. 34, No. 2. Alicia de Larrocha, pianist. International Piano Archives IPA 109.

This is among the most valuable historical LP records ever issued, but it must be approached with extreme caution. Most of the recordings are reproduced from previously unpublished, privately recorded cylinders. IPA's program notes do mention poor sound quality, but I feel they understate the case drastically. I would describe their typical sound as a short wave broadcast picked up from a transatlantic phone call, with all the limits of frequency range and added noise these imply. As with many early cylinders, there is also a great deal of annoying flutter. In short, it will take a dedicated listener to get anything of value from these recordings. These limitations are inherent in the source material, and I do not mean to imply that IPA has done poor work in processing. On the contrary, having heard the original unprocessed tape of one of the cylinders, I marvel at how well they have been improved. (The report that William Santaella spent over 100 hours removing the clicks from a cracked Albéniz cylinder is not exaggerated.) But they are still poor sounding recordings, and had I produced the record I would have placed a prominent warning to that effect on the front of the jacket.

What we have on the cylinders are the only recordings in existence of Albéniz and Malats, and the only solo recording of Frank Marshall. I would, alas, dismiss the Marshall selection. The man was obviously a great pianist, but little of his quality comes through this horribly fluttery recording of a trivial piece. Of Albéniz, one of Spain's greatest composers and pianists, we have only two little and relatively unimportant improvisations.

Whatever the tonal qualities of his playing may have been we will not learn here, but his rhythmic flair does come across with arresting impact. The great discovery, at least for this listener, is Joaquin Malats. This was a great artist whose powerful personality transcends the severe sonic limitations of his recordings. His playing of Liszt's Thirteenth Hungarian Rhapsody, or what one can hear of it, seizes the listener's attention at once. I can only imagine what color this man produced at the keyboard, but his powerful rhythms and virtuosity alone make their impression.

The remaining recordings come from commercially issued, although extremely scarce, disc recordings, and by contrast they sound almost like high fidelity. I am a little disappointed in the playing of Granados. He certainly has the style and rhythms of his own music under impressive command, and his fascinating alterations of his own El Pelele (listed as an improvisation on that piece) demonstrate immense command. (Annotator Albert McGrigor tells us that Granados's teacher Juan Bautista Pujol stressed improvisation.) However, there is something soft-edged, salon quality, about Granados's playing, which shows up most strongly in his exaggerated Scarlatti sonata but can be heard in all of his playing. For all the immense difference in sound quality, Albéniz makes a better impression on me.

Finally we have the two performances by the nine-year-old Alicia de Larrocha, which are nothing short of miraculous. This genius child must have been one of the great prodigies of all time to give such beautiful, mature Chopin performances at such an early age. Of course, she has developed into one of our greatest mature pianists, but the talent was already audible when she made her first record.

Despite my various reservations, this is a record I would not want to be without. It took an immense effort on IPA's part to produce it, and I feel that effort was justified.

BRAHMS: Sonata No. 3, in f, Op. 5; BACH: The Well-Tempered Clavier, Book I--Prelude & Fugue No. 3, in C sharp; SCARLATTI: Sonata in A, L. 345, K. 113; HANDEL: Suite No. 5, in E--Air & Variations ("Harmonious Blacksmith"); COUPERIN: Le Carillon de Cythere; SCHUBERT: Moments musicaux, Op. 94--No. 3, in f; SCHUMANN: Romances, Op. 28--No. 1, in b flat; MENDELSSOHN: Charakterstücke, Op. 7--No. 4, in A; BRAHMS: Waltzes, Op. 39--Nos. 15 & 16; CHOPIN: Berceuse, Op. 57; DEBUSSY: Reverie. Harold Bauer, pianist. International Piano Archives IPA 112.

These were Bauer's last recordings, made in 1939 for G. Schirmer's short-lived record label. The pianist might even have made LPs--he lived until 1951--but his career as a soloist

was already ended (apparently by choice) when these records were made. They were well below the best in sound quality for their period, but IPA has done an excellent job of remastering them for the current release. The same program was issued briefly on the Veritas label, but even if you have that record I'd suggest you throw it out—or trade it in to IPA, if you're a member—and acquire this new edition, thanks to a great improvement in sound.

Not all of this playing shows Bauer at his best. He seems tired of some of the encores, and while his playing is never ugly, there are careless moments and even some surprisingly hard tone for this most poetic of pianists. However, the difficult Brahms Sonata is a triumph, more than worth the price of the LP in itself.

I love Bauer's playing, and I'm happy to see an hour of it restored to availability. Now, if someone would just do me the favor of restoring his Victors....

CHOPIN: Sonata No. 2, in b flat, Op. 35; DEBUSSY: Suite bergamasque—Clair de lune; SINDING: Frühlingsrauschen, Op. 32, No. 3; CHAMINADE: Scarf Dance; The Flatterer; RUBINSTEIN: Melody in F, Op. 3, No. 1; TCHAIKOVSKY: The Months, Op. 37—June (Barcarolle); SCHUBERT-Godowsky: Die Schöne Müllerin—No. 8, Morgenruss; Winterreise—No. 1, Gute Nacht. Leopold Godowsky, pianist. International Piano Archives IPA 113.

Unlike most of the new IPA editions, this one is entirely new to LP. The Chopin Sonata comes from British Columbia 78s made in 1930; the shorter pieces are from 1925-26 Brunswicks. IPA's excellent engineer Ward Marston has let us down a bit in the Sonata, which lacks the richness of tone heard in the originals, but it remains listenable enough. The Brunswicks, from horribly recorded and pressed originals, are surprisingly good and quite listenable.

I have usually found Godowsky unrewarding to hear as a pianist. His greatness is well documented in reports from his contemporaries, but he played for the public in an emotionally inhibited manner far removed from his private performances. Most of his records are similarly inhibited, and as much as I respect the pianism they are dull experiences.

The Chopin Sonata is an exception to my general description, and seems to me the most emotionally committed playing Godowsky recorded. Here the playing has, at times, an intensity that suggests what the pianist could do in private. The first movement (with repeat!) is more "poetic" than "architectural;" the moment by moment expression is stressed above the shape and de-

velopment of the music. I don't prefer this emphasis, but it is done with great conviction and its own logic. The Scherzo, with its constant interruption of rhythms, I find unsuccessful, but even here the pianist's concept is convincing on its own terms. The Funeral March is very beautiful and very moving, a wonderful blend of expression and organization. The enigmatic Finale has a few odd emphases, but Godowsky does capture the mysterious sweep of the music. Unlike IPA's annotator Edward Blickstein, I find Rachmaninoff's playing of the finale unequaled but Godowsky has something worthwhile to say also.

Clair de lune is played so beautifully and straightforwardly that it is worth hearing once more, however sick of the piece you may be. I don't care at all for Godowsky's Schubert transcriptions, which seem to lose the original music in a maze of intellectually-motivated harmonic changes. However, they are certainly unique, and one could never hope to hear them better played. The remainder of Side 2 shows only how much pianistic resource a great artist could waste on totally unworthy music. Buy this record for the Chopin Sonata, not the encores.

DVOŘÁK: Symphony No. 9, in e, Op 95, "From the New World." Concertgebouw Orchestra conducted by Willem Mengelberg. Mack Records MACK-002. (Available from Mack Records, P.O. Box 315, Allendale, N.J. 07401.)

This is a characteristic late Mengelberg performance, taken from scarce 1941 Telefunken originals. The sound of the great orchestra is thrilling, the conductor's technical command virtually an end in itself. The interpretive distortions which came more and more to dominate Mengelberg's performances as he grew older are also present. At times this is more Mengelberg's music than Dvořák's. This is certainly not my idea of a great performance, but more a great exercise of a performer's ego, and as such it has its own following.

The transfer is an example of good, well-intentioned amateur work. Pitch and basic sound quality have been well attended-to, and most of the splices between sides are OK. Such niceties as proper equalization—especially in compensating for the difference between inner and outer grooves—are beyond the interest or ability of the engineer, leading to some drastic changes in sound at splices. (This is not a matter of surface noise.) In short, you can certainly listen to the record with whatever pleasure the performance allows, but it could have been done better.

MENDELSSOHN: Violin Concerto in e, Op. 64; TARTINI: Violin Sonata in g, "The Devil's Trill;" SPALDING: Sonata in e for unaccompanied violin; Etchings, Op. 5. Albert Spalding, violinist;

Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy (in Mendelssohn); Andre Benoist, pianist (in Tartini and Etchings). GRIEG: Violin Sonata No. 2, in G, Op. 13; RACHMANINOFF: Vocalise; TCHAIKOVSKY: Violin Concerto in D, Op. 35. Eddy Brown, violinist; Clarence Adler, pianist (in Grieg & Rachmaninoff): orchestra conducted by Frieder Weissmann (in Tchaikovsky). MANEN: Concerto da Camera. Juan Manen, violinist; orchestra conducted by Herman Neuman. Clear TLC-2586, 3 records.

I would unhesitatingly rate this as Thomas Clear's most important, worthwhile, and enjoyable publication. It presents the work of three major violinists in large-scale compositions, and gives us three previously unpublished recordings. The price of the set is \$25 a copy, higher than Clear's previous issues, but I'd rate it a bargain anyway.

Albert Spalding was one of the first American artists to gain a major international reputation. (Among instrumentalists, only Gottschalk seems an obvious predecessor.) His historical importance is great, but I value far more the beauty of his performances. He was a technically accomplished violinist, but above all a profound and satisfying interpreter.

The Mendelssohn and Tartini performances provide excellent evidence of Spalding's abilities. In the Mendelssohn, in particular, the violinist's playing is ardent yet poised, avoiding the usual traps of over-emphasis in one direction and blandness in the other. I have never heard a more satisfying performance of this work, despite the lack of most of the slow movement (to be explained shortly). Ormandy's accompaniment is typically insensitive and atypically sloppy in places, but it detracts little from the overall impression. The Tartini Sonata is also beautifully played—straight, unaffected music-making, with some startlingly effective passages in which two voices are so clearly differentiated they sound like two instruments.

Spalding's Sonata for unaccompanied violin is hardly a masterpiece, but it is a listenable piece, doing sufficient homage to Bach, and containing some wonderful writing for the instrument. The composer presents it with obvious devotion. This recording too is previously unpublished. The less ambitious Etchings set makes for better listening, I think, because these modest pieces last just long enough to hold the listener's attention. Clear has reprinted the program notes which accompanied the original Victor release of this recording (an extremely scarce 10" set), and if I am following the descriptions of the pieces correctly only the first seven are present, despite listings for six more. Very puzzling.

Also puzzling is the omission of most of the slow movement of the Mendelssohn Concerto. There is a side break at the end

of the introduction to this movement, but the music continues at the beginning of the next side with the final section of the movement. Clear says the original test pressings are consecutively numbered, which would tend to indicate that no sides are missing, but it is hard to imagine that such an abridgement would have been made deliberately, especially since it results in an odd number of sides (five).

Eddy Brown, another American artist, is even less well remembered than Spalding although he lived much later (until 1974). He is a fine violinist, although not, I feel, on an artistic level with Spalding. His playing of the Grieg Sonata, although rather different in tonal qualities, reminds me a bit of Elman; emphasis is on the beautiful moment in the music, rather than on continuity. The effect may be appropriate for this salonish music, but I have heard stronger performances.

Brown's Tchaikovsky Concerto sounds extremely brilliant at first, until you realize the recording is pitched a half-step high. Even at correct tempo, it remains an exciting performance, better conceived than the Grieg. The labels and booklet credit the accompaniment to Furtwängler and the Berlin Philharmonic, and Brown apparently did make an early recording of this work with those forces. However, this is not it. The publisher himself has provided the correction. The recording is a late acoustic version, very scarce but actually published. This dubbing was taken from test pressings (hence the confusion), and an edge chip has deprived us of a brief section of the last movement.

Manen was a major Spanish violinist and a composer of minor but solid ability. His only published records (all considerable rarities) are acoustics, but here we have him in 1950, at the age of 67, playing his own music over New York radio on a brief visit to the U.S. The Concerto, a piece with obvious Spanish overtones, is in two long movements. There is more than a bit of corn in it, but it remains a well-constructed and listenable piece although I'm sure I wouldn't want to hear it every month.

The aging violinist/composer shows some occasional insecurities—passing moments of questionable intonation and shaky tone. For the most part, he tosses off his own virtuosic writing with considerable command and lovely, unpretentious musicianship. The recording, taped off the air, has overload distortion when the orchestra plays throughout the first movement. You can hear someone turn down the volume near the beginning of the second movement, after which the quality improves considerably although it is never better than tolerable. Fortunately, the violin sound is clear and pure.

I think this set has most to offer to those who share my

admiration for Albert Spalding, but the Manen tape is certainly a major discovery and Brown's recordings are OK. The small edition (only 100 copies) makes it an automatic "collector's item," but it is even more interesting as a way to hear some beautiful violin playing.

BEETHOVEN: (1) Symphony No. 1, in C, Op. 21; (2) Symphony No. 4, in B flat, Op. 60; (3) The Ruins of Athens, Op. 113—Overture; (4) Coriolan Overture, Op. 62; (5) BRAHMS: Variations on a theme of Haydn, Op. 56a. Casals Orchestra of Barcelona (in Nos. 1, 2, & 3) and London Symphony Orchestra (in Nos. 4 & 5) conducted by Pablo Casals. Electrola Dacapo 187-03 039/40, 2 records.

(1) BOCCHERINI—Grützmacher: Cello Concerto in B flat; (2) BRAHMS: Double Concerto, in a, Op. 102; (3) MENDELSSOHN: Trio No. 1, in d, Op. 49; (4) Song without Words in D, Op. 109; (5) SCHUMANN: Trio No. 1, in d, Op. 63; (6) Kinderscenen, Op. 15—No. 7, Träumerei (arr. anon.); (7) BOCCHERINI: Sonata No. 6, in A—Adagio & Allegro; (8) TARTINI—Grützmacher: Concerto in D—Grave ed espressivo; (9) DVORAK—Grünfeld: Songs my Mother Taught Me, Op. 55, No. 4; (10) RIMSKY-KORSAKOFF—Strimer: Tale of Tsar Sultan—Flight of the Bumble Bee; (11) BACH—Siloti: Suite No. 3, in D, BWV 1068—Aria; (12) Sonata No. 2, in a, BWV 1003—Andante; (13) HAYDN—Piatti: Sonata No. 1, in C—Tempo di Minuetto; (14) BEETHOVEN: 7 Variations on "Bei Männern," G. 158; (15) VIVALDI—Stutschewzky: Concerto in d, Op. 3, No. 11—Largo; (16) VALENTINI—Piatti: Sonata in E, Op. 8, No. 10—Gavotte; (17) DE LASERNA—Cassadó: Tonadilla in D. Pablo Casals, cellist; London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Landon Ronald (in No. 1); Jacques Thibaud, violinist (in Nos. 2, 3, & 5); Casals Orchestra of Barcelona conducted by Alfred Cortot (in No. 2); Alfred Cortot, pianist (in Nos. 3, 5, & 14); Blas Net, pianist (in Nos. 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, 16, & 17); Otto Schulhof, pianist (in Nos. 6 & 11). HMV Treasury RLS 723, 3 records.

The Dacapo album presents on LP for the first time all of the 78rpm recordings of Casals as conductor. Along with the Brahms Double Concerto included in the HMV Treasury album, these are also the only relics of the Casals Orchestra of Barcelona, founded by Casals in 1919 and maintained largely at his personal expense until the Spanish Revolution of 1936. The recordings of the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Casals were made in 1928, those of the Casals Orchestra in 1929.

I have heard, at various times, nearly every recording published of Casals as conductor, and I was acquainted with some of the originals reproduced in the Dacapo album. It has long been my feeling that Casals became a great conductor only in the

last decade of his life, that even in the Prades and Perpignan recordings of the 1950s the conducting is relatively crude compared with the degree of control Casals demonstrated on the cello. In the Dacapo album, I find corroboration for this belief. The performances are all competent, but they are in no way distinguished. Tempos in the Beethoven pieces are relatively fast, with a corresponding bad effect on articulation. The orchestras never fall apart, but they do not play with that security and precision which are marks of a great performance. The music sounds lightweight, relatively uninflected, and with a crippling lack of dynamic and rhythmic incisiveness. Probably the worst example is the Coriolan Overture, which is made to sound distressingly trivial.

Best of these performances is the Brahms Variations, which moves along with a nice rhythmic swing and good balance among voices. Here, though, one need only compare this performance with Casals' 1969 performance (with the Marlboro Festival Orchestra, issued only in Columbia album M5 30069) to hear his immense growth as a conductor. The later performance is superior in every respect, particularly in the conductor's control of the syncopated counter-rhythms. The 1969 performance is magnificent, that of 1928 only adequate.

The recorded sound on the Dacapo album is, as one might well expect, severely dated. Upper and lower registers are reasonably clear and as usual the woodwinds sound beautiful, but the midrange is congested and many details are difficult or impossible to hear. A better job of equalizing would have improved matters some, but when all is said and done this album is at best a relic of a famous musician, not a great listening experience.

The HMV album is quite a different story. Here we have some of the major recordings which made and preserve Casals' reputation as a cellist. Needless to say, most of these performances are many times familiar and have been or are available in alternate LP editions. Since HMV's transfers were done by Anthony Griffith, though, they immediately demand investigation.

The most astonishing example of Griffith's work, for this listener at least, is to be heard in the Brahms Double Concerto. This has previously been available on LP in a transfer by EMI's Paris engineers (as Angel COLH 75, and currently in Seraphim album IC-6043). By comparison, the new transfer opens a window between us and the performers; the sound quality is greatly clearer, brighter, more vivid. The trio performances have also been available in Paris-made transfers, and again the new job is greatly superior, although the difference is not as marked only because the sound of the smaller ensemble was less full than that of the orchestra.

The Boccherini Concerto and five of the encores (Nos. 7, 8, 13, 15, & 16) are contained in the above-mentioned Columbia album M5 30069. Both dubbings are more than adequate. The Columbia transfers have brighter, slightly clearer sound, with a bit more surface noise. HMV's transfers are mellower in quality. I can listen to either with pleasure.

In short, those who have already been collecting Casals on LP will be buying the HMV album for a few encores which are new to LP and for excellent sounding transfers of material they may already have. I think the investment is worthwhile. The Brahms Double Concerto is a magnificent performance, and it is a great pleasure to have it on LP in sound that does not degrade the originals. The trios are fascinating performances, not so much the work of a unified ensemble (although the three players had been performing as an ensemble for more than two decades when the recordings were made) as a meeting of three great musicians trading their ideas and inspirations through the medium of chamber music. Other versions have more unified expression; these remain unique. I do not much care for Casals' highly rhetorical approach to the Boccherini Concerto (nor for the old Grützmacher edition), but it is an exhibit of the legendary cello personality and can be enjoyed as such.

As for the encores, I still wince at some of the outmoded baroque transcriptions even while appreciating the expressive way Casals treats them. The Beethoven and Mendelssohn are excellent, though, and I would be tempted to buy the album alone for the hair-raising playing of The Flight of the Bumble Bee, a piece I can otherwise live without forever.

In general, HMV's album would make a good introduction to Casals' art for the neophyte, but it also has much to offer the experienced collector. The program booklet is full of interesting information and comments, but shame on EMI for the inadequate identifications offered for many of the short pieces.

Leslie Gerber