

# Quarter Notes

VOLUME 2, NO.2

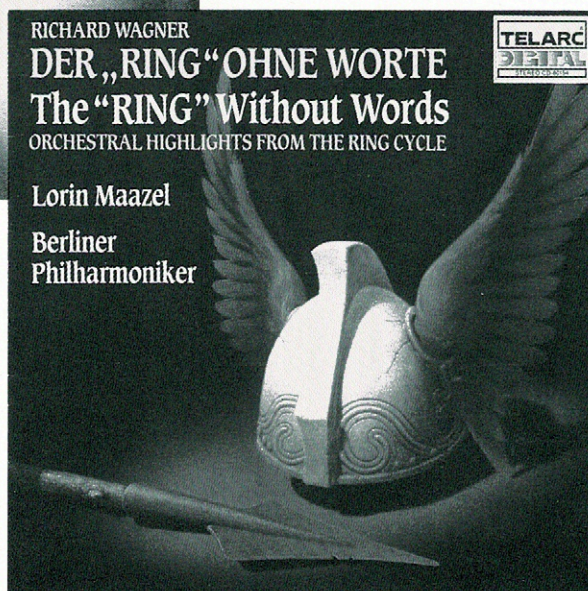
THE TELARC INTERNATIONAL NEWSLETTER

SPRING/SUMMER, 1988



RICHARD STRAUSS: *Also sprach Zarathustra* / *Tod und Verklärung* (Death and Transfiguration) / André Previn / Vienna Philharmonic. (CD-80167) April 1988.

WAGNER: *The "Ring" Without Words* / Lorin Maazel / Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. (CD-80154) May 1988.



RICHARD WAGNER  
DER „RING“ OHNE WORTE  
The "RING" Without Words  
ORCHESTRAL HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE RING CYCLE

Lorin Maazel  
Berliner  
Philharmoniker

## TELARC ON THE CONTINENT: A Tale of Two Cities

by Jan C. Snow

"It's one thing to record the Berlin Philharmonic and another to record the Vienna Philharmonic," says Telarc Chairman Jack Renner. "But it is absolutely incredible for a company like Telarc to record them back-to-back."

The recording sessions, held late last fall, resulted in two of Telarc's most prestigious releases to date: *The "Ring" Without Words* (orchestral highlights from Wagner's Ring Cycle (*Der Ring des Nibelungen*), Lorin Maazel conducting the Berlin Philharmonic at the Philharmonie (CD-

80154); and the Vienna Philharmonic playing Richard Strauss' *Also sprach Zarathustra* and *Tod und Verklärung* (Death and Transfiguration) under the direction of André Previn at Vienna's Musikvereinsall (CD-80167). "This may well be the first time that these orchestras have been recorded in their own homes in such a way that the listener has a chance to really get a feel for what it's like to hear them in their own environments," says Renner.

Both recordings were accomplished in a single week. "The second recording day in Vienna was Friday (the first was on Thanksgiving), the final day was Monday, and we had to start the first session in Berlin at 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday," says Renner. In order to meet (continued on page 3)

## Telarc's Grammys Total Lucky Thirteen

by Bill Baxter

Many people think the number 13 is unlucky, but for Telarc, thirteen's the charm. On March 2, 1988, Telarc received three 1987 Grammy Awards, bringing the company's all-time total to thirteen.

This year's awards were:

**Best Classical Performance (Non-opera)**  
Hindemith: *When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd* (A Requiem for Those We Love)  
Robert Shaw / Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and Chorus (CD-80132)



The Grammy is a registered trademark of The National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences. N.A.R.A.S.

### Best Engineered Recording, Classical

Fauré: *Requiem* / Duruflé: *Requiem*

Robert Shaw / Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and Chorus (CD-80135)

Jack Renner, engineer

### Classical Producer of the Year

Robert Woods

In its ten-year history, Telarc has had close to three dozen Grammy nominations, a fact of which Woods and Renner are justifiably proud. "The first time we won [1980] was great," says Woods, "but each award is equally thrilling."

Among the Grammys in Telarc's growing collection are four *Classical Producer of the Year* (continued on page 4)

# Publisher's corner

by Robert Woods

## What's In A Name?

**The name *Telarc* is the result of a little desperation, investigation, perspiration and inspiration.**

**TELARC alias ADVENT**

"Could you spell that for me" says the uncomprehending voice on the other end of the telephone. "TELARC, T-E-L-A-R-C, one word" I repeat in an over-enunciated delivery.

Since adopting our name in 1977, our mail has arrived with a number of variations (on our theme): *Tel Arc, Telark, Telrec, Telmark* and some so far astray that they fell victim to the post office's ultimate round-trip service, "return to sender".

After ten years things are finally improving — at least our banker and attorney spell it correctly. "But where did your unusual name come from?" we are often asked. Not from where a writer for a hi-fi magazine thought — a take-off on *Teldec*, the German classical label, which since 1978 has been a manufacturing source for vinyl records.

In January of 1977 we were scheduled to record The Cleveland Orchestra and then music director Lorin Maazel using the wonderfully terrifying technique of "direct to disc". From 1970 until that time our name was *Advent Records*, aka *Advent Recording Corporation* of Ohio. We were of course aware of, and had a friendly relationship with, the *Advent Corporation* of Massachusetts, then popular for their speakers, cassette decks and video beam TV's.

*Advent* of Massachusetts had produced one recording in the early 70's; a Bach program as I recall. We received orders for their recording and they for ours. *Advent Records* had about fifteen titles in its catalog; mostly solo and chamber music releases. It was still a friendly situation and things were fine until near the end of 1976 when we received a not-so-friendly letter from their attorneys telling us to "cease and desist" use of the name *Advent*. *Advent* of Massachusetts had been sold to the Sprague Corporation and they didn't have the same (continued on page 6)



A closer look at Billboard Magazine's Classical Crossover chart-buster.

## An Interview With the Blasphemous Don Dorsey

by Jan C. Snow

Everybody's heard *Für Elise*, that melancholy little piece so many of us first met in childhood piano lessons. As our fingers struggled with the trill-like opening and climbed laboriously up the arpeggios, we wondered who in the world this Elise was and why Beethoven wrote such a strange, sad tune for her.

Well, in the hands of synthesizer virtuoso Don Dorsey, the mysterious *Elise* emerges as a dark-eyed Latin

approach I was happy with," says Dorsey. It would have been easy, he felt, to just pick a nice sound from the synthesizer's broad palette of available timbres and play the piece straight, "but I felt there was something more in there that wanted to be brought out. It was pretty, but it didn't say anything."

Dorsey has been saying things with synthesizers since 1973. He had studied piano since he was a small



Don Dorsey and his orchestra.

Lady whose drawing room is invaded by flamenco dancers. And elsewhere on Dorsey's new *Telarc* release, *Beethoven or Bust* (CD-80153), a Wild West shoot-out takes place in the second movement of Beethoven's Sonata No. 18 in E-flat major and the old master's A-flat major Bagatelle ends in a car crash.

"When I'm getting ready to record, I do a lot of listening," says Dorsey. "I get several recordings of any piece I'm interested in doing and study the music along with the recordings. Then I try to play each piece several different ways, and in that process my ideas as to how to interpret them emerge."

*Für Elise*, partly because it is so familiar, proved especially difficult. "It took five days for me to come to an

child and entered California State University at Fullerton as a composition major in 1972. The next year he bought his first synthesizer and his performance in a concert at a nearby community college caught the eye (and ear) of a Disney producer. Two years later Dorsey began an association with Disney that continues today, initially to program and perform synthesizer, and later as a recording engineer and producer, audio coordinator and computer programmer.

But a car crash at the end of Beethoven's A-flat major Bagatelle? "I was on my way back from Epcot Center last spring," says Dorsey, "and some people pulled out in front of our van." Though the van was totaled, Dorsey's injuries, thanks to his seat belt, were (continued on page 7)

This newsletter is published to keep *Telarc* customers informed. We welcome your questions regarding this newsletter. Address inquiries to: Editor, Quarter Notes, TELARC International Corporation, 23307 Commerce Park Road, Cleveland, Ohio 44122.

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DESIGN: Neal Gearhart © 1988 *Telarc* International Corporation

## A Tale of Two Cities (continued from page 1)

he schedule, Renner and James Mallinson, a British producer who works on many of Telarc's European recordings, went to Berlin over the weekend. They installed and tested the recording set-up before shuttling back to Vienna to finish the recording there.

When the Berlin project was first discussed, it was assumed the recording would be of the standard set of orchestral excerpts from Wagner's twenty-hour cycle of music dramas. However, Maazel found those excerpts didn't excite his imagination and decided instead to make a new synthesis of orchestral music from the "Ring".

The 70-minute work flows seamlessly from the first notes of *Das Rheingold* through "The Ride of the Valkyries," "Siegfried's Rhine Journey" and many of the "Ring's" other famous themes and leitmotifs, to the final chords of *Götterdämmerung*. Every note is Wagner's; even the transitional material is from the original scores.

"This recording is a world premiere," says Renner. "This work was not performed before it was recorded in Berlin."

The recording process itself was not without challenge. "The Philharmonie is a stunning hall in which to attend a concert, but it's difficult to work in," says Renner. "Like many concert halls, *sans* audience it becomes very bright and boomy.

Most recording companies overcome these problems by using a lot of mikes. I used a very simple approach: my basic three omni-directional mike set-up augmented by a pair of directional mikes to help with detail."

The same combination was used to deal with similar problems in the Musikvereinsall. "That hall too was one of the most difficult I've ever worked in," says Renner. With most of its schedule given over to its role as the orchestra of the Vienna State Opera, the Vienna Philharmonic gives few concerts and makes even fewer recordings. "We were extremely fortunate to be slotted into the schedule in Vienna," says Renner, "and we wanted to make the most of the opportunity."

The combination of Strauss, Vienna and Previn was a musical "dream team."

Previn has conducted this orchestra often, frequently leading it on tour, and is an acknowledged master with works of the late Romantic period. "It's one of those ideal situations where a 'love affair' between orchestra and conductor brings about some very special music making," says Renner.

Then, too, Vienna was Strauss' city. "Nowhere else in the world do you get Richard Strauss played like this," says Renner. "Strauss himself conducted that orchestra and there are people in it today whose fathers and grandfathers played these pieces with him."

After winding up the final session in Vienna at 6:00 p.m., Renner and Mallinson, with Telarc president Robert Woods,

dashed to the airport to board an evening non-stop into East Berlin. "The three of us sat in the last row of this dimly-lit, smoke-filled, clanky old Russian jet, flying through a driving rainstorm, wondering if we were ever going to see Berlin or our families again," says Renner. Obviously, they made it. ☺



(above) André Previn conducts the Vienna Philharmonic in Richard Strauss' *Also sprach Zarathustra*, *Op. 30* and *Tod und Verklärung*, *Op. 24*, recorded on November 26, 27 and 30, 1987 at The Musikvereinsall in Vienna.

(left) Lorin Maazel conducts the Berlin Philharmonie in Wagner's *The "Ring" Without Words*, recorded on December 1, 3 and 4, 1987 at The Philharmonie in Berlin.

(below) The Telarc / Lorin Maazel relationship dates back more than a decade. This picture was taken during the 1977 recording of *Direct From Cleveland • Falla / Bizet / Tchaikovsky / Berlioz*, in which Lorin Maazel conducted The Cleveland Orchestra in the very first modern direct-to-disc recording of a full orchestra. (L-R) Robert Woods, Lorin Maazel and Jack Renner.



# Telarc's Grammys Total Lucky 13



(continued from page 1)

awards and two awards for *Best Engineered Classical Recording*. "We've been very fortunate," says Renner. Fortune smiles on Telarc because of its perfectionist approach to recording technique, selection of outstanding artists and repertoire, and the meticulous attention to detail that has become a Telarc trademark.

This year's Grammy Awards ceremony was telecast live from New York City's Radio City Music Hall. Woods was seated in the second row, next to members of the rock group U2. When he was nominated for a Grammy as the Producer of the *Classical Recording of the Year* (a second award goes to the artist), the camera panned in for a close-up of Telarc's president. Renner, seated with his family further back in the hall, hob-nobbed with many celebrities from the music industry.

This is the first time that Woods has attended the ceremony, and joked that doing so might jinx his chances. "Over the years you tend to get a little cynical," Woods says, "seeing some win that really shouldn't, while others that are really deserving go unrecognized. But face it — every time we win, it makes us feel good."

(Following are two complete reviews on these Grammy award-winning works. — Ed.)

*DURUFLÉ: Requiem / FAURÉ: Requiem*  
Robert Shaw / Atlanta Symphony Orchestra  
and Chorus. (CD-80135).

To have two Requiems by French composers on the same disc certainly invites comparisons. Superficially similar, the works are actually quite different: both are conceived for small-scale performance, both rely on the organ, and neither places any great demands on chorus or orchestra. The differences concern mood and even intent. Fauré's Requiem has survived all kinds of performances, both amateur and professional, without losing its ability to move hearers with its gentle hymn for the dead. The Duruflé has not achieved this kind of public appeal. A commissioned work, and not unified in style, this requiem is enjoyed by those who sing it; audiences tend to find it bland.

The present recording would be hard to improve on. The sonic picture is all that anyone could wish for: both ex-

trêmes of volume sound natural, and inner parts are clear. The accompanying leaflet assures us that the entire recording process was "transformerless".

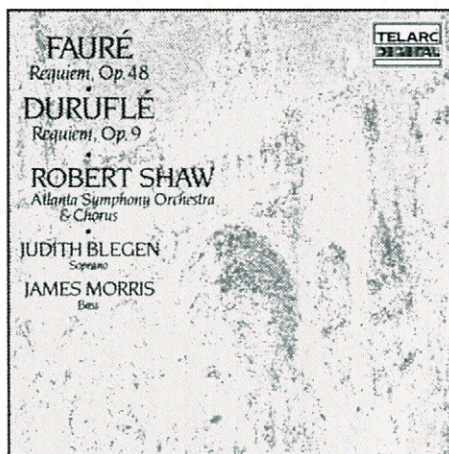
As to the performance, it need hardly be said that whatever chorus Robert Shaw chooses to direct automatically becomes the best chorus in America. No other conductor has managed such control, diction, beauty of tone, and unfussy rightness. The only possible criticism is that the chorus is not French, and consequently cannot duplicate the charm of church Latin sung with a French accent.

The solo parts in the Fauré are well taken. Judith Blegen is successful in scaling down her voice to the size required for the simple but difficult Pie Jesu. James Morris is sturdy and sincere in music usually sung by a baritone. There is nothing Gallic about either of these distinguished singers' performance.

The solo parts in the Duruflé are taken by the sections involved. The mezzo soprano solo, as sung by Shaw's alto section, is a beautiful example of what choral singing should be.

These are fine performances, treated in a manner more American than French, and magnificently recorded.

— Harold Lynn, *Stereophile*,  
Vol. 10 No. 7, October 1987



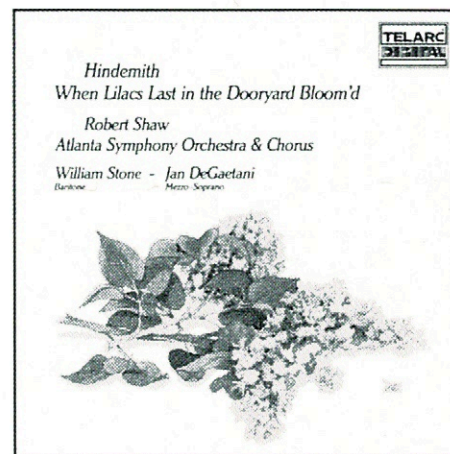
*HINDEMITH: When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd* / Robert Shaw / Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and Chorus. (CD-80132).

Hindemith's Requiem includes a tragedy-laden sinfonia, arias, recitatives, marches, a massive double fugue and a pas-sacaglia.

In the work's 40-year existence there have been only three recordings, two of them conducted by the composer.

Shaw, of course, knows the work perhaps more intimately than anyone, and he makes the most of every expressive nuance, every shade of dynamics, every verbal inflection, though without losing the overall shape. There is greater subtlety in the playing of the prelude than ever before; the big brass chords have weight and fullness without stridency (a splendid outburst at "the tolling bells' perpetual clang"), and the orchestral playing generally is first-rate; it would scarcely be possible to find a more sympathetic baritone than William Stone, an unforced lyrical singer (of whom we must hear more in future!) with clean technique and exemplary enunciation, or a sweeter or purer-voiced mezzo than Jan DeGaetani; and the chorus is wonderfully alert to the words and has a fine command of tone-colour. Add to this a technical balance which for the first time on record allows the choral introduction to the fugue to be clearly heard and properly keeps in the distance the lump-in-the-throat entry of "taps" on the bugle, and which builds an overwhelmingly thrilling climax at "Lo this land" and you will understand why this disc will certainly be among my Choices of the Year.

— Gramophone  
July 1987



# profiles by Jan C. Snow

## Jack Renner

*Chairman*

February 20, 1962 was more than just another weary winter day in Ohio. It was the day of two important launchings for Ohioans: John Glenn went into orbit and Jack Renner went into the recording business. "I watched him take off and then went to Grafton, Ohio to record the Midview Junior High School Band," says Renner. "It was my first project."

Glenn, of course, was an astronaut. Renner was a moonlighting teacher, the high school music director in Geneva, Ohio, and a hi-fi hobbyist turned part-time small businessman, making recordings of high school bands and choirs. His second career rapidly overtook his first and in June 1963 he left teaching. "I immediately withdrew my retirement account and burned all the bridges," he says.

When Renner, a 6' 2-1/2" trumpet player, left his hometown of Freeport, Ohio to go to college in West Virginia, it was as a basketball player of moderate height who had his eye on coaching. He ultimately changed both his major and his school and wound up a tall music education major at Ohio State University.

On the road from teaching to Telarc, Renner recorded uncounted school and college groups, and in 1972 hired Robert Woods, another moonlighting music teacher, to edit tapes for him. That same year Renner ventured into commercial recording, the vehicle being a project with the Cleveland Composers Guild, and turned his attention in the direction that ultimately led to the historic session at Severance Hall.

Now Renner plays neither basketball nor trumpet and in some years flies as many as 150,000 miles traveling to recording sessions across the country and in Europe. "I can order beer in several languages," he says, "and I've become fluent in English, which is very different from American." As the person most responsible for the Telarc sound, he looks after all the technical aspects of recording projects, including testing and refining new equipment, surveying new recording locations and supervising the set-up on the session. In addition, he teaches recording techniques as an adjunct Professor at the Cleveland Institute of Music.

Knee surgery three years ago ended his athletic activity. ("I was a jogger," he admits. "That combined with racquetball was my undoing.") Now that their three children (Elizabeth, Scott and John) are grown, his wife Carol travels with him when her schedule as an educator permits. The two spend as much time as possible at their vacation home on Atwood Lake in Eastern Ohio. "There really isn't much time away from Telarc but when there is, I like to fish and relax. And I like photography," says Renner. "Maybe that will be my third career." ☺



## Robert Woods

*President*

In a way, history is nothing more than a mix of accidents and incidents, heavily leavened with happenstance. If George Gershwin had had no brother Ira he might have written only instrumental music, and, if baritone Robert Woods had not spent his summer at the Blossom Festival School in 1970, there might be no Telarc International. "I was rooming with an oboe player and one night a nice young female oboe player came over to make reeds," he recalls. "I thought, 'She's pretty cute. I think I'll ask her out.'"

Woods not only asked her out: at the end of the summer, with typical single-mindedness, he followed her to Cleveland where he met Jack Renner a short time later. Ultimately the oboe player, Pamela Pecha, became Pamela Pecha Woods, Assistant Principal Oboe with the Cleveland Orchestra, and Renner and Woods formed Telarc International.

After graduating from Otterbein College in Westerville, Ohio, Woods completed two years of teaching public school music. "I found I didn't have the patience for it," he admits. During his first years in Cleveland, he shuttled back and forth between classrooms at Hiram College and Kent State University, directed his own chorale and orchestra in Columbus, and sang wherever he could. Woods met Renner through a fellow chorister at Cleveland's Church of the Covenant and began editing tapes for what was then Advent recording. "I needed the money," he says. "I was really broke and I had a little bit of experience."

Woods' interest in recording had been kindled when he was a child and his family bought a tape recorder. ("One of the first," he says.) At Otterbein he set up a recording program, taping recitals and concerts. "I even got an interview with Tom Frost who was head of CBS Masterworks because I was interested in being a record producer. I kind of lost sight of that for a while."

Now as producer of most of Telarc's releases, he is responsible for all musical aspects of a recording: juggling schedules for the session, serving as liaison with the performers, following the score during the recording session and conferring with the conductor or artist as the session proceeds. "The thing I enjoy most is the A & R (artist and repertoire) planning," he says. "That's the creative part."

Woods stopped singing in 1975 because of lack of practice time and "too much talking on the telephone. It ruins your voice," he says. Still, with his work, a wife in the Cleveland Orchestra, and a daughter studying both violin and piano, music is central to his life. "We eat, drink and sleep music," he says.

He also eats, drinks and sleeps Telarc. What little time is left belongs to his family. "Until the kids came along (Melissa is five, Jonathan is two), if I was in town, I was in the office every night," he says. "Now I try to be a more respectable family person and get out of here by six." ☺

## Publisher's Corner

(continued from page 2)

amicable feelings about our use of their name.

We tried to defend our right to use the name, having grown comfortable and identifiable with it for 'lo those six years. The copyright authorities had to break the news that *Advent* of Massachusetts had filed for use of the name in connection with recordings a mere two months prior to our first substantiated commercial use of the name. We had to find a new name and in a hurry! It was quite a coup to have convinced The Cleveland Orchestra to record with us and we didn't need to have that first venture soured by a lawsuit.

We hired (for as much as we could afford) the services of an agency to help us come up with our new "handle". No luck. Brainstorming sessions abounded. Fruitless.

At the eleventh hour while thumbing through a dictionary I came upon the idea of combining the prefix "TEL", extracted from the Greek "telo" (which means "end") with the acronym of the existing company name "ARC" (Advent Recording Corporation) in order to symbolize the end of our present company and the beginning of a new one. In the grand manner of the fabled firebird, from the ashes of who we were, we became *Telarc*.

It seemed to stick and, quickly christened, we hung our new



logo in its original version (see insert) above the door of the control room the night before the first session on January 14, 1977. Just in time. After all, The Cleveland Orchestra could not announce that they were recording for the "We-don't-know-who" record company on the "They-don't-have-a-name-yet" label. ☺

### TELARC ON TAPE

#### The Erich Kunzel and Cincinnati Pops Collection

Now the Grammy Award-winning sound of Telarc is available on ten cassette tapes.

Our Kunzel Collection cassettes are on TDK SA-Type II tape, the industry standard of excellence. Made from the same digitally recorded and edited masters as our CDs, the sound quality is pure Telarc and true to the live performance.

TCHAIKOVSKY *1812*; GROFÉ *Grand Canyon Suite*; *Star Tracks*; *Ein Straussfest*; *Time Warp*; *Pomp and Pizazz*; *Round-Up*; *Star Tracks II*; GERSHWIN *Rhapsody In Blue*; and *Hollywood's Greatest Hits*.

## previews

by Bill Baxter and John Eustace



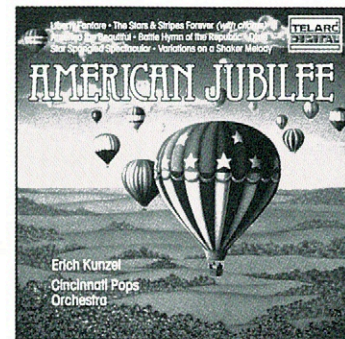
*Sampler Five Plus (with special Bonus Tracks)*. (CD-80005) June 1988.

By popular demand, Telarc announces the release of our fifth in the best-selling series of Sampler CD's. Like the others, Sampler Five features selections from Telarc CD's — twenty in all. And Sampler Five has an added bonus — 18 pure digital tracks of sound effects from Telarc's vaults! Sampler Five is the Artillery Edition — cannons from the 1812, aerial bombs, pistols and rifles from *Ein Straussfest*, and the *Gunfight at OK Corral* from *Round-Up*. This sampler marks the beginning of a "library"; a series of bonus tracks with sound effects, thus creating a small collection of all-digital sound effects from Telarc's recordings, for testing and demonstrating stereo systems. A true sonic *tour de force*!

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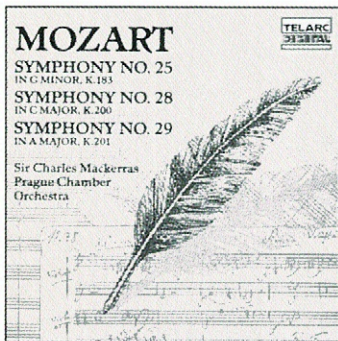
*AMERICAN JUBILEE*: Erich Kunzel / Cin-  
cinnati Pops Orchestra / *May Festival Cho-*  
*rus*. (CD-80144) June 1988.

Telarc presents a festival of serious and not-so-serious music by American composers: *American Jubilee*. Performed by the "Tops in Pops" under the baton of Erich Kunzel, the selections on this disc span more than 100 years in American history. The disc begins with John Williams' *Liberty Fanfare*, written for the Statue of Liberty birthday celebration in 1986, and continues with arrangements of famous American tunes by America's foremost arrangers: Richard Hayman: *Yankee Doodle*, *Dixie* (with a great Dixie-land band section); John Cacavas: *Star Spangled Spectacular* (music by George M. Cohan); Peter Wilhousky: *Battle Hymn of the Republic*; and Carmen Dragon: *America the Beautiful*. Also included are outstanding works by our greatest compos-

ers, based on traditional themes, such as Charles Ives' *Variations on "America"*, George Chadwick's *Jubilee* from *Symphonic Sketches*, *Three Selections from "Cakewalk"* by Louis M. Gottschalk, Aaron Copland's *Variations on a Shaker Melody*, Irving Berlin's *God Bless America* (arranged by Roy Ringwald), Morton Gould's *American Salute*, and *The Stars and Stripes Forever* by John Philip Sousa (what recording of Americana would be complete without it?).

Many of these melodies were actually "borrowed" from other European popular songs of the day. The words were often changed to present pro-American sentiments. Thus, for example, "God Save the King" became "God Save America", and then became "My Country 'Tis of Thee". "Yankee Doodle" was originally a derogatory song against Americans sung by the British; but somehow it has become one of our most famous patriotic songs. No tune — hymn, march or even bawdy song — was safe from this musical "liberation". But whatever the source, these melodies have come to mean *America* whenever they are heard.

The upbeat, energetic performances on this disc are presented as part of Telarc's continuing commitment to American music.



MOZART: *Symphony No. 25 in G minor* / *Symphony No. 28 in C major* / *Symphony No. 29 in A major* / Sir Charles Mackerras / Prague Chamber Orchestra. (CD-80165) May 1988.

This recording adds a third disc of Mozart's symphonies to Telarc's catalog. The first two (Symphonies No. 40 and No. 41, CD-80139, and No. 36 and No. 38, CD-80148) created quite a stir among critics. This new one promises to do the same. Again, Sir Charles Mackerras leads the Prague Chamber Orchestra, whose tradition of Mozart performances dates back 200 years.

A reduced orchestra, split violins (first violins on the left, second violins on the

right) and harpsichord, help convey the original spirit of Mozart's music.

Some controversy surrounds these recordings. Following the research of musicologist William Malloch, Sir Charles takes the minuets at brisk tempi. Malloch maintains that the minuets have been played much too slowly all these years and were actually conducted "one-to-the-bar" (*One-Two-Three*) instead of "three-to-the-bar" (*One-Two-Three*). This faster pace means that repeats make much more sense and give these movements a new proportion. Allen Kozin wrote in *The New York Times* of CD-80139: "the minuets not only survive this novel treatment, but emerge with a convincing solidity and cohesiveness." *Sensible Sound* called them "quite invigorating." Of CD-80148, *Stereophile* wrote that, "the erstwhile shock at hearing the familiar unfamiliarly presented gave way to exhilaration and pleasure at the revealed felicities." At 77 minutes, our longest disc yet!



BEETHOVEN: *Missa solemn*is, in D major, Op. 123: Sylvia McNair, soprano; Delores Ziegler, mezzo soprano; Jerry Hadley, tenor; Tom Krause, baritone / MOZART: *Mass in C minor*, K. 427 (417A) ("Great"): Edith Wiens, soprano; Delores Ziegler, mezzo-soprano; John Aler, tenor; William Stone, baritone / Robert Shaw / Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and Chorus. (CD-80150, 2 CD Set) April 1988.

Beethoven's *Missa solemn*is and Mozart's "Great" *Mass in C minor* were composed for similar reasons that were unusual. Most masses were composed out of grief-stricken inspiration; these works were intended to be performed at specific ceremonies, with the idea of honoring a certain person.

Beethoven conceived of the *Missa solemn*is as the music of the ascension of his friend and patron Archduke Rudolf to the post of Archbishop of Ormutz. Beethoven was aware of the date of the occasion a full year ahead of time, but it was finished four (continued on page 8)

## Don Dorsey

(continued from page 2)

limited to bruises and back strain. "But," he says, "the sound of the crunch was very memorable."

While he was at work on *Beethoven or Bust* that sound reasserted itself. "I hear stories in music," Dorsey explains. "Just like in a movie or a novel, there's the introduction of important characters, some sort of interaction and conflict, and then the resolution." The repeated major thirds of the *A-flat Bagatelle* suggested automobile horns to him and, in his mental scenario, the viewpoint of the piece alternated between that of the car and a train traveling beside it "until the road takes a turn and goes across the tracks." The car and the train then come together in a most conclusive fashion.

Dorsey's madcap spirit has a natural appeal for the young, and young-at-heart. "One of the most satisfying things to come out of *Bachbusters* and *Beethoven or Bust* is that they seem to be exposing a lot of people to classical music who normally would not listen to it," says Dorsey. "I get letters from young people saying how much they love the recordings, letters from teachers who play them for their third grade classes, and so on. These are really exciting to me."

Although most find Dorsey's work delightful, a few might brand such tinkering with the classics a travesty, or even blasphemous. (Indeed, the latter word has been applied to *Bachbusters*.) "Of course, that's the purists' reaction," says Dorsey, "but I think anybody who is seriously interested in the music of Beethoven would be interested in anything that gives a new perspective on his work. Maybe it will just reinforce their opinion that they like it better the way they've always heard it. I don't mind if people don't like it. But I have a hard time with people who say that I shouldn't be doing it." (A great many people think he should be doing it. Far from being a bust, *Beethoven or Bust* is booming. It hit #1 on the *Billboard* magazine Top Crossover Albums chart the week of April 16, and has remained there since.)

In one sense, realizing Beethoven on a synthesizer is a lot like playing Scarlatti on a piano. The instrument wasn't developed during his lifetime but, Dorsey agrees, we can assume he probably would have written for it had it been available to him. "The synthesizer is just a new instrument," he says, "and it's meant to be used for what it does well. That doesn't outdate violins. Or anything else, for that matter." ☺

When she was in the third grade, Cleveland arts writer Jan C. Snow, a frequent contributor to *Quarter Notes*, played *Für Elise* in a piano recital. She still likes the piece.

# Musings

by Jack Renner

## Telarc: The Next Decade

It is my goal and sincere hope that in the next ten years Telarc will:

- take its place as *the* pre-eminent international classical label;
- continue to limit its catalog to retain the "hand crafted" approach;
- remain the industry leader in sonic quality;

- continue to emphasize mainstream classical and orchestral "pops" with prudent broadening into other areas that are a good "fit", with pop artists like Liza Minnelli, jazz, electronically-derived product, other forms of contemporary music, and some surprises;

- refine the Telarc "artist roster" by working more closely with a "core" group;

- move into different recording and storage mediums for field and editing use, starting with hard disc systems;

- continue to upgrade in all areas of equipment: microphones, cables, consoles (when the *right* digital console comes along), digital processors, amps, and speakers;

- remain always at the forefront of intelligent developments in the field, so that we always produce "the highest state of the newest art".

## COMING IN OUR FALL ISSUE

### New Releases:

- TELARC's FIRST MUSICAL: *The Sound of Music*
- SPIES: Telarc ventures into the realm of jazz-fusion...conspicuously!
- ORCHESTRAL SPECTACULARS II: Erich Kunzel and the Cincinnati Pops with their second high-energy recording of favorites.
- THE BEST OF THE BIG BANDS: "Take the A-Train" back to the Big Band Era with Erich Kunzel and an all-star cast!
- Music from: *It's A Wonderful Life*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Miracle on 34th Street*, and *The Bishop's Wife*: The original movie scores become holiday classics of their own.

Plus...Jon Kimura Parker's second Telarc release; Brahms *Alto Rhapsody* with Marilyn Horne; Nutcracker Highlights; Mendelssohn *Symphony No. 3*; the best of Henry Mancini; our regular features, and of course, a few surprises!

## previews (from page 7)

years late, in 1824. His tardiness may be excused as he was also working on the last four piano sonatas and the Ninth Symphony.

Mozart's mass was meant as a show of sincerity to his beloved bride-to-be Constanze, and was written with her in mind as the soprano soloist. It was to be performed in Salzburg during their first trip as newlyweds to visit Mozart's father. His father strongly opposed the marriage, and Mozart probably felt that having Constanze dazzle him with her voice would be a good way to win him over. When the ceremony took place, the work was still unfinished; Constanze's voice was weak, and her new father-in-law was not impressed. It remains unfinished to this day.

Robert Shaw is one of the world's finest interpreters and conductors of choral masterpieces. His recent recording of Verdi's *Requiem* (CD-80152) received great critical acclaim and is now climbing the classical charts. On Telarc he has won two Grammy's for Best Choral Recording; the Berlioz *Requiem* (CD-80109) and Hindemith's *Lilacs* (CD-80132). Telarc is proud to present its interpretation in pure digital sound to these definitive interpretations.

RAVEL: *Bolero*; *Rapsodie espagnole*; *Alborada del gracioso*; *Valses nobles et sentimentales*; *La Valse* | Jesús López-Cobos | Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra. (CD-80171) July 1988.

Ravel is considered the quintessential French composer. A small, frail man, Ravel kept a certain emotional reserve in his life, and expressing his inner feelings only through his music. Of Basque descent on his mother's side, Ravel had a hot-blooded Spanish nature beneath his cultured and dignified French exterior.

Debussy once commented that Ravel possessed "the finest ear that ever existed." This Ravel comes to the fore in these five pieces for orchestra, idiomatically performed by the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Spanish-

born Jesús López-Cobos. *Bolero*, a study in orchestral crescendo, was a phenomenal success at its 1928 premiere. *Rapsodie espagnole* and *Alborada del gracioso* exemplify orchestral tone-painting in the French style, but with a Spanish flavor. The lovely *Valses nobles et sentimentales* is given an outstanding reading by Maestro López-Cobos. *La Valse* is a model of the exciting orchestral waltz. Here's a program of the French Ravel, with a fiery Spanish flair.

BERLIOZ: *La Marseillaise*; *Overture to Benvenuto Cellini*; *Selections from The Damnation of Faust*; *Love Scene from Romeo & Juliet*; *Royal Hunt and Storm*; *Trojan March* | Le Corsaire Overture | Sylvia McNair, soprano | Richard Leech, tenor | David Zinman | Baltimore Symphony Orchestra & Chorus. (CD-80164) July 1988.

Telarc's reputation was built with lesser-known American orchestras such as the Saint Louis Symphony and the Cincinnati Pops. Early buyers purchased Telarc records (remember them?) on the strength of reviews that focused more on sound quality than performance. People who paid attention to the music found that there were more than a handful of talented American orchestras. Fine, often great, performances were recorded from ensembles that had a limited discography.

Now Telarc has recorded another rising American orchestra, the Baltimore Symphony, conducted by the talented David Zinman. For their Telarc debut, they have chosen a varied program of Berlioz "chestnuts". Included are some of Berlioz' most popular short works and orchestral passages from his operas as well as his inspired arrangement of the French National Anthem, "La Marseillaise". The detailed sound on this recording is amazing; the performance is nothing short of breathtaking. This recording makes it clear that America's musical talent has yet to be fully tapped. Telarc maintains a commitment to support American orchestras and will continue to give little recorded, high-calibre orchestras an opportunity to be heard internationally through Telarc all-digital recordings.



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