

# QUARTER NOTES

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THE TELARC INTERNATIONAL NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 1990

## TELARC EXPANDS JAZZ HORIZONS WITH A GREAT NEW LIVE RECORDING BY OSCAR PETERSON

by Donald Elfman



▲ OSCAR PETERSON: *Live At The Blue Note* with Herb Ellis, guitar, Ray Brown, bass, and Bobby Durham, drums (CD-83304, CS-33304) September

At a recent New York tribute to Ella Fitzgerald, a surprise guest entered from the wings and sat down to play the piano. The stage was filled with luminaries from the jazz world — Stan Getz, Clark Terry, David Sanborn, Phil Woods, Benny Carter, and more — but every eye was on the man at the keyboard — the legendary Oscar Peterson. As New York jazz writer Jeff Levenson put it, "No one moved a muscle, no shirt cuffs were straightened, no music stands adjusted, while Peterson affirmed that he, above all other musicians on the planet, holds title to the accolade 'Most Imposing Instrumentalist in Jazz'..."

Peterson is in a league by himself." Not long after this momentous performance, the unique Oscar Peterson played in another, perhaps even more, historic engagement. His great trio from the 1950s — Ray Brown on bass and Herb Ellis on guitar — plus drummer Bobby Durham reunited for two magnificent weeks at a great New York jazz venue — the Blue Note. It had been twenty years since the trio had played an extended engagement and more than thirty years since the inception of the

group, regarded as one of the great jazz trios of all time.

The phenomenal pianist from Canada, Oscar Peterson, forged a style of majestic power, virtuosic control of the keyboard and dizzying, dazzling lines of seamless invention. He's been turning heads since Norman Granz invited him to appear in a 1949 *Jazz At The Philharmonic* concert at Carnegie Hall. Ray Brown has been at the top of the jazz world for some forty years and has a remarkable tone and

(continued on page 11)



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## CLASSICS OF THE SILVER SCREEN

by Jan C. Snow



Music is to movies as butter is to popcorn. It's an integral part of the experience; the lights go down and the music comes up.

Music has always played an important part in film. Even silent movies were viewed in the company of a running musical commentary that said, "This is a romantic scene...Here come the cops again...Look out — something scary is going to happen."

With the advent of sound, music was no longer a variable added by the theatre organist but another important artistic tool in the director's hands. "Music," director Milos Forman has said, "is as important as photography." *Classics of the Silver Screen* by Erich

▲ CLASSICS OF THE SILVER SCREEN Erich Kunzel/Cincinnati Pops Orchestra (CD-80221, CS-30221) May

Kunzel and the Cincinnati Pops Orchestra (CD-80221, CS-30221) celebrates the special role of operatic and symphonic music in the movies with seventeen classical selections heard in film scores.

Directors (including Forman, whose *Amadeus* is represented on the recording by the Allegro from Mozart's *Eine kleine Nachtmusik*) have chosen music from the classical repertoire to support the mood of a scene or as counterpoint to the visual image. The frenzy of *Roger Rabbit* is amplified by the energy of *Friska* from Liszt's *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2*. The lack of genuine emotional connection between the characters of *Ordinary People* is underscored with the formality of Pachelbel's *Canon in D Major*. The music has the power to add to and even alter our perception of the visual image.

(continued on page 3)

# ANDRÉ PREVIN PLAYS THE SONGS OF HAROLD ARLEN AND DUKE ELLINGTON UPTOWN

by Donald Elfman



▲ **ANDRÉ PREVIN: *Uptown*** with Mundell Lowe, guitar, and Ray Brown, bass (CD-83303, CS-33303) August

The success of André Previn's *After Hours* (CD-83302, CS-33302) both critically and commercially proved that there is still a strong and solid audience for intelligent, well-played and relaxed treatments of classic music. The album, after its release in September of 1989, sold consistently well and made it to the *Billboard* jazz charts. It was nominated for two Grammy Awards.

For that recording, Previn, guitarist Joe Pass, and bassist Ray Brown went into an auditorium in Pasadena, California and just played tunes that were suggested and put together right there at the session. No "killer tempos," no technique merely for technique's sake — just simple, quiet, swinging jazz played by three expressive and simpatico artists.

*Uptown* is different, in that it had a focus, a setting on the other coast of America, and a different guitar player. But what happened at the session, and the feelings communicated by three sterling musicians surpasses the first release in spirit, class, and musicianship.

*Uptown* was recorded on March 9 and 10, 1990, at New York's Academy Of Arts And Letters. It's a small auditorium with intimate

acoustics, and it's perfectly suited to the land of graceful and elegant expression that Previn and his cohorts create. It's also about as uptown Manhattan as one can go.

Ray Brown is once again on bass. His inventive playing and brilliant sound have made him *the* top bass player for some forty years. He provides much direction and focus on both of the Previn recordings.

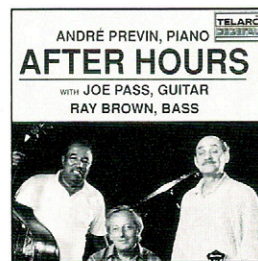
The new voice this time out is the acclaimed and inspired guitarist Mundell Lowe. He has a truly diverse background as a soloist and accompanist with a career that stretches from work in the big bands and the Grand Ole Opry in the 1940s and 1950s, to professional artistry in television and movie studios in the 1970s. Throughout and up to the present he has been active as a jazz performer backing such greats as Billie Holiday, Charlie Parker, Sarah Vaughan, and Carmen McRae. More recently he toured Japan with Benny Carter and played the White House in the 1980s, and is currently leading his own group, Transit West. He is highly regarded as an inventive and harmonically rich guitarist without peer.

The musical focus this time around comes from two of America's most celebrated songwriters, whose work clearly transcends the popular music worlds in which the songs came into being.

Harold Arlen's songs, says his biographer Edward Jablonski, "are woven into the musical fabric of the American tradition, so much so, in fact, that we tend to take them for granted, as if they have always existed." These exquisitely crafted songs have long been part of the jazz player's repertoire because they appeal to both public and musician and offer fertile ground for improvisation.

Duke Ellington is one of the greatest and most creative geniuses that jazz has produced. Much of his work defies analysis, offering up startling effects and brilliant and lasting qualities of warmth, intelligence, humor, and soul. Jazz musicians will play his works forever because they present a constant challenge and a never-ceasing opportunity for invention.

Day one of the sessions is set aside for the Arlen tunes. As on the earlier recording, the trio begins with what amounts to skeletons of the compositions and then, by a communicative process that involves conversations, anecdotes, a good deal of humor,



▲ **ANDRÉ PREVIN: *After Hours*** with Ray Brown, bass and Joe Pass, guitar (CD-83302, CS-33302) September 1989

and, of course, much "let's see if this works" playing, they build the tunes into more intricate frameworks into which they pour finely drawn and inspired musical expression. Nothing is pre-conceived. This is true jazz improvisation.

They play the familiar Arlen songs "Over The Rainbow," "Stormy Weather," "Come Rain Or Come Shine," "Let's Fall In Love," and "Between The Devil And The Deep Blue Sea" and then also tackle the more rarely essayed number "A Sleeping Bee" (which comes from Arlen's show *House of Flowers*.)

Ellington is reserved for day two of recording. Ray notes that even though a player has performed a song a million times, in jazz a good player can create something new each time. These three most certainly make you rehear old familiar songs. They play creative games with tempos and phrasing and make a chestnut like "It Don't Mean A Thing" sound like they are playing it, and you are hearing it, for the first time. The Ellington tunes, particularly, have a strong sense of the blues and Previn, Brown and Lowe even make the blues seem new. They gently caress Ellington's sacred piece "Come Sunday" and the ballads "Daydream" and "Prelude To A Kiss," which they subtly blend into an exquisite medley. And then they deliver a good share of funky soulfulness on "Good Queen Bess," "Five O'Clock Whistle," and "C Jam Blues."

At the end of the day, Previn, Brown and Lowe go in separate directions. Mundell Lowe is on his way back to California where he's just recently recorded his own album. Ray Brown is off to the Blue Note in downtown New York where he's near the end of the first of two weeks with the legendary Oscar Peterson. And André Previn is about to return to his wife and kids before resuming one of his countless musical activities — orchestra, chamber music, etc. — that keep him busy throughout the year. But here he's shown again that jazz is another one of the things he does very well indeed. 


## SILVER SCREEN

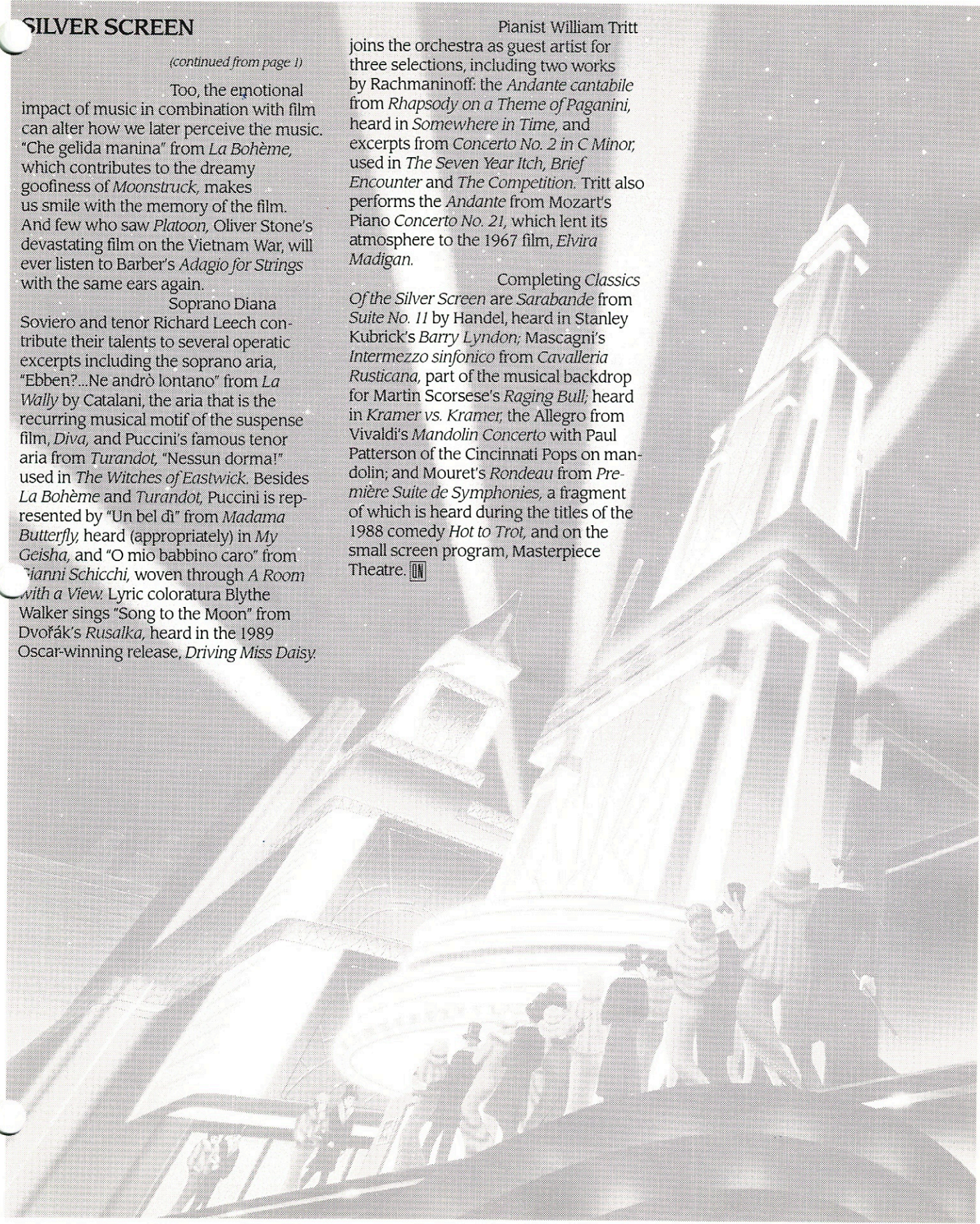
*(continued from page 1)*

Too, the emotional impact of music in combination with film can alter how we later perceive the music. "Che gelida manina" from *La Bohème*, which contributes to the dreamy goofiness of *Moonstruck*, makes us smile with the memory of the film. And few who saw *Platoon*, Oliver Stone's devastating film on the Vietnam War, will ever listen to Barber's *Adagio for Strings* with the same ears again.

Soprano Diana Soviero and tenor Richard Leech contribute their talents to several operatic excerpts including the soprano aria, "Ebben?...Ne andrò lontano" from *La Wally* by Catalani, the aria that is the recurring musical motif of the suspense film, *Diva*, and Puccini's famous tenor aria from *Turandot*, "Nessun dorma!" used in *The Witches of Eastwick*. Besides *La Bohème* and *Turandot*, Puccini is represented by "Un bel dì" from *Madama Butterfly*, heard (appropriately) in *My Geisha*, and "O mio babbino caro" from *Manni Schicchi*, woven through *A Room with a View*. Lyric coloratura Blythe Walker sings "Song to the Moon" from Dvořák's *Rusalka*, heard in the 1989 Oscar-winning release, *Driving Miss Daisy*.

Pianist William Tritt joins the orchestra as guest artist for three selections, including two works by Rachmaninoff: the *Andante cantabile* from *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini*, heard in *Somewhere in Time*, and excerpts from *Concerto No. 2 in C Minor*, used in *The Seven Year Itch*, *Brief Encounter* and *The Competition*. Tritt also performs the *Andante* from Mozart's *Piano Concerto No. 21*, which lent its atmosphere to the 1967 film, *Elvira Madigan*.

Completing *Classics of the Silver Screen* are *Sarabande* from *Suite No. 11* by Handel, heard in Stanley Kubrick's *Barry Lyndon*; Mascagni's *Intermezzo sinfonico* from *Cavalleria Rusticana*, part of the musical backdrop for Martin Scorsese's *Raging Bull*, heard in *Kramer vs. Kramer*; the *Allegro* from Vivaldi's *Mandolin Concerto* with Paul Patterson of the Cincinnati Pops on mandolin; and Mouret's *Rondeau* from *Première Suite de Symphonies*, a fragment of which is heard during the titles of the 1988 comedy *Hot to Trot*, and on the small screen program, *Masterpiece Theatre*. 



# ARTIST PROFILE

## HORACIO GUTIÉRREZ

by Jan C. Snow

His father was a land surveyor, his mother, a pianist and music teacher. "The musical genes are on my mother's side," says pianist Horacio Gutiérrez, "and they go back to my great-great grandfather who was a conductor in Spain."

Gutiérrez, whose 1989 Telarc recording of Brahms' *Piano Concerto No. 2* and Haydn's *Variations on a Theme for Orchestra* with André Previn and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (CD-80197) has enjoyed both critical acclaim and brisk sales, has recently completed his second Telarc release: Tchaikovsky's *Piano Concerto No. 1* and Rachmani-



See Preview page 11

noff's *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini* with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, David Zinman conducting (CD-80193).

Born in Cuba, Gutiérrez moved to California with his parents while still a youngster. The family's choice of Los Angeles as an adopted home proved ultimately to be a fortuitous one.

"It really was just circumstance," Gutiérrez says of his professional debut with Zubin Meta and the Los Angeles Philharmonic in 1970. "If Glen had not gone to Russia, if his father had not been a member of the orchestra, if we had not both been from Los Angeles, I honestly don't think that concert would have happened."

Gutiérrez, then 21, had just returned from winning the silver medal in Moscow's Tchaikovsky competition. The fifth prize winner in the competition was Glen Dicterow, a young violinist whose father Harold was principal second violinist with the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

"The idea was to present these two young L.A. musicians in a concert," says Gutiérrez. "My career was really launched as a result of this concert."

He suddenly began, as he puts it, "living on air-planes." His career has since taken him to stages across North and South America, Europe, Israel

◀ **TCHAIKOVSKY:**  
*Piano Concerto No. 1*  
**RACHMANINOFF:**  
*Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini*  
Horacio Gutiérrez,  
Piano  
David Zinman  
Baltimore  
Symphony  
Orchestra  
(CD-80193) May

and the Soviet Union. He has performed with major orchestras in Berlin, London and Paris, as well as Cleveland, New York, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Boston, Chicago, Montreal, Detroit and Washington, D.C.

While he admits that the travel is sometimes wearing, the much greater difficulty, he feels, is the constant pressure of performing. "Anytime you are in front of the public you are very vulnerable," he says. "You always want to do your best but there are still times when you don't. So you have to get through those times and then sort of pick yourself up and go on to the next thing."

An admitted theatre and film fanatic ("I'm a serious amateur"), Gutiérrez finds that too often he can't attend the theatre in the cities he visits. "I get there very shortly before the concert," he says, "and then I leave right away. Also, as a pianist, you have to practice whenever something is available. You don't carry your instrument with you."

◀ **BRAHMS:**  
*Piano Concerto No. 2 / Haydn Variations*  
Horacio Gutiérrez, Piano  
André Previn  
Royal  
Philharmonic  
Orchestra  
(CD-80197)  
February 1989

Still, his "some day" fantasy is to write a play. "As far as I know," he says, "I have no talent but I say, 'one of these days when I have time...'"

Meanwhile, there is the never-ending list of music to be learned. "You are always challenging yourself to learn new repertoire," he says, "but at the same time you must play works that you have performed before and keep them fresh."

To be tallied on the positive side are incalculable rewards. "To perform at peak form — that is a high. I know it sounds like a cliché, but when you're performing, you want to move the audience. Nothing can take the place of that," Gutiérrez says. "You want to reach them, to touch their hearts or excite them, and fortunately there are times when one can do that. I would like to extend that experience between me and as many people as possible. And recording is one very good way to do that." **IN**

EVERYTHING YOU HEAR IS TRUE. 

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## AFTER THE ORCHESTRA LEAVES

Behind the scenes with two of Telarc's prime production people

by Jan C. Snow

*The session is over...the musicians pack up their instruments, the crew dismantles its equipment, and everyone heads for home. They're finished recording, but the recording is far from finished...*

"The very first thing I do," says Telarc's senior recording editor Rosalind Ilett, "is try to sort out which piece is first." She correlates the producer's log with the machine operator's log to determine what music was recorded on each take, and what tape it's on.



Photo: Michael Bishop

Rosalind Ilett,  
Senior Recording Editor

That accomplished, she turns to the editing "map," the musical score that the producer has marked during the session. This may tell her which take to use in any given section, or it may simply tell her what not to use, leaving several other possibilities open.


"It may say what's wrong with things or just note that a particular take is good," says Ilett, who holds a degree in sacred music and organ performance. "I might have to make my own deduction about what to use."

Working at the editing console, Ilett builds a single performance from the session tapes. "As we edit, we're not cutting anything," she says. "What we're really doing is recording a new tape."

So-called "miracle fixes" are those edits that are occasionally necessary to deal with problem spots. "You can sometimes make things sound perfect even though they never were, by cutting in very small, very critical areas," she says. When all else fails, she may resort to "cloning," or borrowing a note from another spot in the piece.

Then there's the ever-present problem of extraneous noises — chair squeaks, breathing, etc. "If it's a very small noise, sometimes I can nick it out by making two very small cuts and putting them together, but I always approach an edit as a compromise," she says. "I'm always concerned with whether it's worth interrupting the performance."

The best parts of her job, says Ilett, are the gratification of making decisions that contribute to the wonderful quality of the final performance, and the music itself. "I get to *wallow* in orchestral sound," she says.

Of course, every situation has its downside and in this case, it's stress and tension from prolonged periods of concentration. The average number of editing hours spent on a Telarc disc is about sixty and often more. "We take a great deal of time," says Ilett. "If something can be improved, we do it. We know that we're fussier than most people." 

Many of us are willing to go to great lengths to do our jobs well. But gallop around on a horse at 3 a.m., or spend all night locked inside a wild animal park?

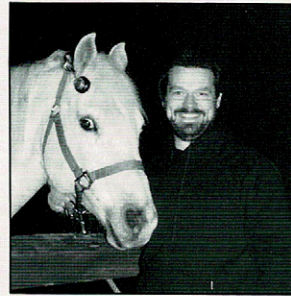


Photo: Wendy La Tessa Bishop

Michael Bishop, (R)  
Technical Services Coordinator,  
and Ricky (L)

"We were trying to get a recording of a lion roar," says Michael Bishop. "The lion growled and snarled when he saw us with the microphones, but he never did roar."

As technical services coordinator for Telarc, it's Bishop's job to see that all the recording equipment is functioning properly and is in the right place at the right time. He both engineers and provides general technical assistance on recording sessions, and he

keeps the equipment in the editing room running.

So why was he spending all night hanging around with lions?


"Telarc has always gone out of its way to see that everything is pure digital recording," says Bishop. "Part of my job responsibilities here include collecting digital sound effects, with the highest fidelity possible." That mission has made him Telarc's post-production illusionist.

The lion roar-that-never-was had been planned as a digital update on the old MGM trademark for a recording of film music, *Hollywood's Greatest Hits* (CD-80168, CS-30168), and, as it turned out, wasn't needed. The sound of Bishop's horse, Ricky, is heard on *Round-Up* (CD-80141, CS-30141), along with the vocal expressions of some bovine residents of White Oaks Farm in Hiram, Ohio.

With the microphone cables strung through the feed yard ("through the manure and everything"), Bishop recorded the cattle as they were heading for breakfast. "That's the time that they're most likely to moo a lot," he says. "The way it was edited gave the illusion that we were out in the wild West."

Another aural illusion Bishop created is one of spring-time in the Swiss Alps for *The Sound of Music* (CD-80162, CS-30162). "At the time of year we were putting this together, there were no birds chirping in the Swiss Alps," he says. "We got a mono recording of some kind of Swiss finch from Cornell University, with trucks in the background."

Bishop eliminated the trucks and the hiss by filtering, and dubbed the bird's song over a number of times to make it sound like many birds in different locations. Recordings of birds chirping and a babbling brook, both in the woods near his home, were mixed for the background, and an Alpine meadow was born.

"I figured I could get away with Ohio birds in the background if I had Swiss birds in the foreground," he says. "So far we haven't gotten calls from any bird experts." 

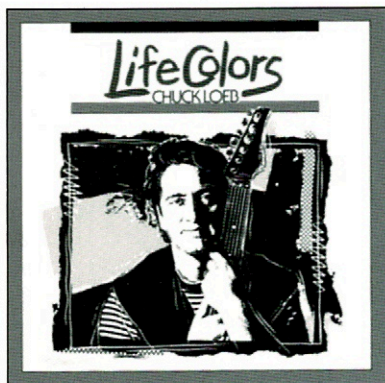
# dmp THE CONTEMPORARY JAZZ GUITAR

by Donald Elfman

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The intimate and live recording approach of DMP continues to reveal new and varied colors from the spectrum of contemporary jazz. As the summer months arrive, the warm-to-hot and acoustic-to-electric sounds of the guitar come to the forefront on rich and original new recordings by two of the most personal voices on the instrument.

*Life Colors* is the newest recording by guitarist Chuck Loeb who was introduced to DMP audiences on a unique collaboration with pianist Andy LaVerne, *Magic Fingers*. That album is a current favorite on contemporary jazz radio and provides a strong foundation for Loeb's special solo project. The new



▲ CHUCK LOEB: *Life Colors*  
(CD475, CS475) May

album features ten songs that spotlight Loeb's special abilities as a player and songwriter. He combines a hot and exciting technique with a flair for appealing and accessible melodies. Says Chuck, "I feel so fortunate to have the opportunity to commit to disc my current musical visions of life's hues and shades in the hope that they touch someone."

The songs range from an expressive tribute to one of Chuck's idols — guitar great West Montgomery — to a lovely Spanish ballad he co-wrote with his wife Carmen Cuesta (she provides the gorgeous vocals).

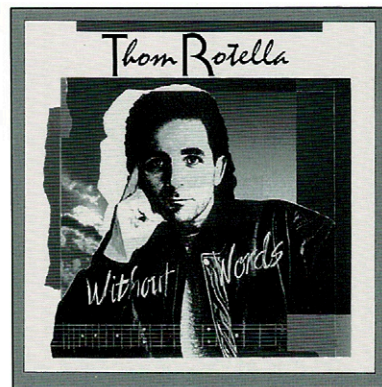
Chuck is joined here by some other bright lights of current jazz including Will Lee (from the *Letterman* TV show) on bass, and the popular and versatile Michael Brecker on tenor sax on two tracks.

*Life Colors* is richly diverse, of the moment, and very musical, but it also reflects a joyous sense of expression and, says Chuck, "was about as much fun as you can have without breaking the law."

• • •

Thom Rotella is one of DMP's real and developing success stories. Each of his first two albums for the label — *The Thom Rotella Band* (CD460, CS460) and *Home Again* (CD469, CS469) — have increased his

audience and made him a favorite on contemporary jazz and adult radio. *Home Again* was, in fact, one of the top radio albums of 1989 and has enlarged awareness of Thom both at home and abroad.



▲ THOM ROTELLA: *Without Words*  
(CD476, CS476) August

*Without Words* is an extension of some of the feelings and directions advanced on *Home Again*. It's an all-acoustic set (Thom has even bought a brand new, special classical guitar) that features tunes which, according to Thom, are "vocal." "Even though the songs have no words," he comments, "they have a quality and shape to them that suggest lyrics. This is intentional — it expands the scope of instrumental music and makes it more immediately listenable."

Another interesting development on *Without Words* is the subtle and sensitive integration of all string instruments. It's not just synthesized string sounds playing background, but a vital and intelligent use of the mandolin, cello, guitar, and more to create music that is, at once, spontaneous and well-structured.

Finally, the new album is a jazz album, and as such, leaves room for finely textured improvisation without forgetting the song-like qualities that have found delighted new audiences for Thom Rotella. **DN**



## SPIES NEW MUSICAL JOURNEYS "BY WAY OF THE WORLD"

by Donald Elfman



▲ *SPIES: By Way Of The World*  
(CD-85508, CS-35508) September

Composer, producer, engineer, Paul Freeman, says that the concept of Spies has now evolved into a definite group of solid players. "Our first album, *Music Of Espionage* (CD-85503, CS-35503), was made by Ken Kaplan and myself joined by a multitude of California studio musicians. The new album features a group — Rick Hahn, Jon Crosse, Jay Anderson, Dave Witham, and myself — that acts as the creative core for a set of songs and musical ideas that bespeak a world of influences."

*By Way Of The World* is the next progression of Spies according to Freeman and his arranging partner Rick Hahn. Most specifically, it takes off from the first album's tune "Smooth As Glass." That was a high-energy, high-tech jazz tune with a pop flavor and a state-of-the-art sound. Now, says Hahn, the group has made a whole album with a similar richness of sound and the sonic flavors from a wide world of contemporary music and technology. "You can't really compare it to anything," says Hahn, a sentiment shared by Freeman. "It's jazz that's aggressive and powerful but also down-to-earth and reflective of the many styles and sounds from the diversity of our backgrounds."

*A Day in Tunisia* suggests Dizzy Gillespie's *Night In Tunisia* and the colors of what Rick Hahn calls an Arabian B-movie, with its sinuous melody, hypnotic rhythm, and collection of mysterious sounds. *The Rite*

*Of Passage* tells the story of an Indian brave's progression from childhood to manhood with spiritual lyrics and a chant-like quality to the music. *One for Tutu*, written for the South African leader Desmond Tutu, is actually a dance tune with a reggae feel. And *The Third Rail* pulses with the electrifying, on-the-edge energy of urban America.

Spies is now clearly a band. Paul Freeman — whose credits for Telarc range from the Sixties surfin' music of *California Project*, and the band, Papa Doo Run Run (CD-85501, CS-35501) to the contemporary dance sounds of *Ileana* (CD-85506, CS-35506) and places in-between — plays keyboards and synthesizers and is responsible for much of the arranging. Rick Hahn plays a similar role — keyboards and arranging — and has also worked on the first *Spies* album as well as on *Ileana*.

Saxophonist Jon Crosse has his own label — JazzCat Productions — where he has explored the possibilities of uniting jazz with children's lullabies and nursery rhymes.

Jay Anderson is a vital and in-demand bassist. He's worked with such varied artists as Michael Brecker, Carmen McRae and Frank Zappa and he's currently playing in the beautiful trio led by pianist Warren Bernhardt. (Check out his work on the DMP album *Heat Of The Moment* [CD468, CS468].)


Dave Witham adds another keyboard and synthesizer voice. His supple touch and depth of emotional colors have enriched the music of such artists as George Benson, Chick Corea, and Lee Ritenour.

The core group is joined by a number of guests from the L.A. area — including Alex Acuña on percussion, Chad Wackerman on drums, and Michael Thompson on guitar — plus a host of others who provide the ethnic flavors. There's a children's choir, an African dance group that hum, buzz, and offer other vocal effects, an African percussion group, and more. Altogether the music is jazz-influenced but it has pop sensibilities that make it accessible in the best sense.



▲ *SPIES: Music of Espionage*  
(CD-85503, CS-35503) September 1988

And the music is spectacularly complemented by technology including a true sonic breakthrough. *By Way Of The World* is the first commercial recording to utilize the Stereosurround® audio production format developed by Shure HTS. This is a refined version of the audio format used in the movie theaters to expand the depth and fullness of the sound. Now that more and more consumers have home theater systems, network and cable television as well as laser discs and videocassette, manufacturers have begun to make use of this special encoding format. But this is the first time the format will enhance a recording on compact disc. Says Telarc engineer Mike Bishop, "This is an exceptional system and not just a gimmicky fad, like quad, for example. Stereosurround® is definitely here to stay."

*By Way Of The World* is then, a beautiful marriage of artistry and sound, of human endeavors and technology. And, of course, it's that combination that defines Telarc. 

## O'CONOR AND BEETHOVEN: THEIR TIME HAS COME

by Valerie D. Thorson



▲ **BEETHOVEN: Piano Sonatas, Volume V.** Sonata No. 5, Op. 10, No. 1, Sonata No. 6, Op. 10, No. 2, Sonata No. 7, Op. 10, No. 3, Sonata No. 12, Op. 26, "Funeral March." John O'Connor, Piano (CD-80137) August

In his review of Irish pianist John O'Connor's Beethoven Piano Sonatas Volume IV, David Vernier of *CD Review* concludes: "This Beethoven Sonata series promises greatness. When

it's finished..., it should become the complete set of choice for the next decade."

In a feature article on O'Connor for *The New York Times*, Allan Kozinn called O'Connor's Beethoven series "eloquent" and "poetic."

Mr. Vernier and Mr. Kozinn are not alone in their enthusiasm for John O'Connor's continuing traversal of the thirty-two Beethoven Sonatas on Telarc. Major reviewers across the United States and Europe have employed adjectives such as "brilliant," "noteworthy," "prodigious," "intriguing," "lucid," and "virtuosic."

This is, indeed, high praise for the Irish pianist who, although he was well-known in Europe, had to raise the money to present his debut recital at Alice Tully Hall in New York in 1983.

The forty-two-year-old O'Connor has been steeped in Beethoven for the last year or so, playing the entire Sonata cycle (in chronological order) in a series of concerts in New York, Boston, and most recently, in London. Understandably, he has firm ideas on how Beethoven should be performed: "I will not play Beethoven as a romantic composer. If you want that, fine. There are loads of pianists who will do it that

way...But there's no way to properly express his music by imposing a late-nineteenth century style on it."

He has equally strong thoughts about what sort of piano Beethoven would choose, were he alive and performing today: "Beethoven was constantly railing against the piano of his day...If he'd gotten a modern day Steinway, he'd have been thrilled." Critics have been thrilled, certainly, by the round, bell-like tone of O'Connor's Hamburg Steinway in the Telarc releases, as well as by the wonderfully natural acoustic of Mechanics Hall in Worcester, Massachusetts, where most of the cycle has been recorded.

In spite of his increasing acclaim, John O'Connor remains warm, genuine and very concerned about the state of the fine arts in his native country, and anxious to help young Irish musicians. He is working to establish some sort of conservatory in Dublin. "For years, Irish artists were tempted to leave the country and stay away. There's been a big change in the sense that people are coming back, and pouring their efforts back into the country...We don't need any more expatriates in the arts." □

## UPDATE: TELARC CLASSICAL CASSETTES

In the summer of 1988, Telarc released its first ten cassettes featuring Erich Kunzel and the Cincinnati Pops Orchestra. They were such a hit with consumers that one year later, Telarc added to their cassette collection six more titles from Kunzel and the Pops as well as five of the best-selling classical recordings from the Telarc catalog.

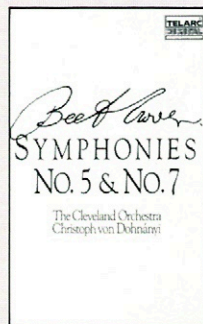
Telarc cassettes have become popular not only for the quality of the performances, but also, of course, because of their incredibly high-quality sound. Utilizing TDK SA-Type-II tape, and the DAAD (Digital Audio Analog Duplication) process, the cassettes offer a realistic sound quality which was previously impossible to achieve. Telarc learned about this duplication process early in its development and was the first major label to make use of it.

Continually increasing demand for more titles to be released in this format has brought the total num-

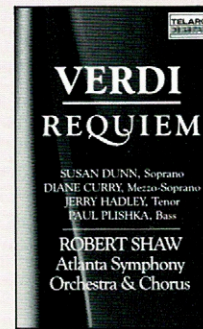
ber of Telarc cassettes available to fifty-two! Now, four more titles will join the "most-wanted" list: Holst: *The Planets* (CS-30133), Beethoven: *Symphonies No. 5 & No. 7* (CS-30163) and *No. 9* (CS-30120); and the Verdi: *Requiem* (CS-30152).



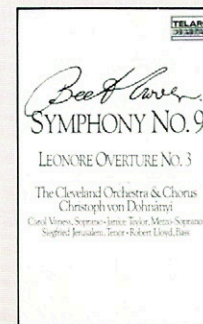
◀ **HOLST:**  
*The Planets.*  
André Previn  
Royal  
Philharmonic  
Orchestra  
(CS-30133)  
May



◀ **BEETHOVEN:**  
*Symphonies*  
*No. 5 & No. 7*  
Christoph von  
Dohnányi  
The Cleveland  
Orchestra  
(CS-30163)  
May



◀ **VERDI:**  
*Requiem*  
Robert Shaw  
Atlanta  
Symphony  
Orchestra  
& Chorus  
Soloists  
(CS-30152)  
May



◀ **BEETHOVEN:**  
*Symphony No. 9*  
Christoph von  
Dohnányi  
The Cleveland  
Orchestra  
& Chorus  
(CS-30120)  
May

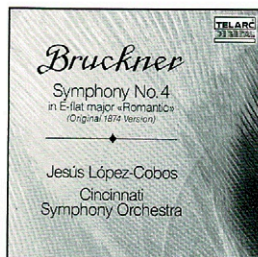
As Telarc Chairman Jack Renner commented: "Telarc's pioneering spirit continues to provide a state-of-the-art product." □

-VDT

# PREVIEWS

## BRUCKNER

Simple and pious, Anton Bruckner longed for the comforts and security of a real home and family of his own, like other men. Thus he was continually searching for "a suitable dear girl" for matrimony, which he was never to find.



◀ **BRUCKNER:**  
*Symphony No. 4*  
(Original  
1874 Version)  
Jesús López-Cobos  
Cincinnati  
Symphony  
Orchestra  
(CD-80244) July

It was during this time of unfortunate courting that Bruckner composed his Fourth Symphony, the "Romantic." And it is romantic, using that most romantic of instruments, the horn, to great advantage — it has been jokingly called Bruckner's "Horn Concerto." But Bruckner's characteristic lack of self-confidence caused him to make revisions to his symphonies in an attempt to make them more "acceptable." The Fourth underwent the most severe alteration of any of Bruckner's works, existing today in no fewer than five different versions!

The discovery of a previously unknown copy of the original score at Columbia University allowed the publication in 1975 of the Original Version of the Fourth Symphony, 100 years after its composition. This has enabled us to hear what Bruckner's original vision of the Fourth was, before the "revising bug" had hit him. It is this original version that Maestro López-Cobos has chosen to present for Telarc.

Bruckner's music is like Bruckner the man — direct, yet sublime. In the words of Ethan Mordden, "Bruckner is extreme: loud, deep, repetitive, and long. He is the last word in symphonic flamboyance, world creation and world's end." Clearly, this is not background music. Bruckner demands much from the listener, but yields great rewards to those who will hear. [M]

—WCB

## BEETHOVEN

In 1787, Mozart said of the sixteen-year-old Beethoven: "Keep your eyes on him; someday he will give the world something to talk about." It seems fitting, then, that Telarc should follow its first Classical compilation, *The Best of Mozart* (CD-80222, CS-30222), with *The Best of Beethoven*.



◀ **THE BEST OF BEETHOVEN:**  
(CD-80240,  
CS-30240) June

Available on both compact disc and cassette, this release will feature eight splendid performances drawn from the Telarc catalog, by some of the finest artists on the Telarc roster.

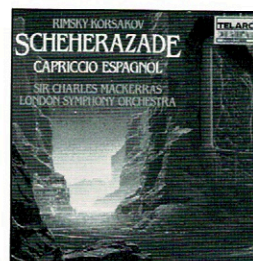
Excerpts include full movements from Symphonies No. 6 and No. 9 with Christoph von Dohnányi leading The Cleveland Orchestra, The Cleveland Orchestra Chorus, and soloists; the lovely Adagio sostenuto from Piano Sonata No. 14 "Moonlight," with John O'Connor, piano; the spirited Hallelujah from *Christ on the Mount of Olives* performed by the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and Chorus led by Robert Shaw; the *Egmont Overture* and the Allegro from Symphony No. 5, with Seiji Ozawa conducting the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

Whether you're a long-time Beethoven fan or are beginning to build your musical collection, you'll enjoy hearing this array of Telarc talent in such a variety of stunningly recorded presentations. [M]

—VDT

## RIMSKY-KORSAKOV

It's exciting when a world-famous conductor and one of the world's great orchestras get together to record sonic showpieces of the calibre of these two all-time favorites. Both *Scheherazade* and *Capriccio espagnol* represent the height of Rimsky-Korsakov's orchestral mastery, coming at the climax of a period when he concentrated on orchestral composition, just before turn-



◀ **RIMSKY-KORSAKOV:**  
*Scheherazade;*  
*Capriccio espagnol*  
Sir Charles Mackerras  
London  
Symphony  
Orchestra  
(CD-80208)  
June

ing almost exclusively to writing operas. Both are brimming with evidence of his genius at colorful orchestration, his way of clothing a composition in just the right instrumental combinations to complement mood and melody. Little wonder that they are often chosen to show off the prowess of great performers.

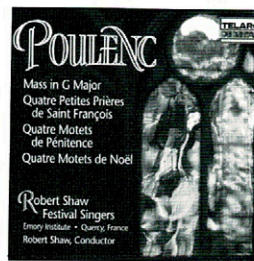
The beautiful lady for whom *Scheherazade* is named is, of course, the clever teller of 1,001 fantastic stories in *The Arabian Nights*. She is the latest wife of the cruel Sultan Shahriar, and like all her predecessors she is doomed to die after one night with her husband, another victim of his murderous jealousy. But each night she leaves another tale unfinished, and the Sultan, enthralled by the latest adventure of Sinbad or some tragic story of doomed young lovers, puts off Scheherazade's death for yet another night.

Rimsky's *Capriccio espagnol* pulls out all the stops in painting a bright travel poster of Spain. Praised by Tchaikovsky as an orchestral masterpiece, it suggests sunny merriment and smoldering Spanish passions. It took the arrival of the compact disc to allow these two spectacular works to be heard together. [M]

—NJ

## POULENC

There are few sounds that can compare with the lushness of a full-throated, perfectly-in-tune *a cappella* chorus such as this one, recorded last summer in Southwestern France.



◀ **POULENC:**  
*Mass in G Major*  
*Four Motets for Christmas*  
*Four Motets for a Time of Penitence*  
*Four Short Prayers of St. Francis*  
Robert Shaw  
Robert Shaw  
Festival Singers  
(CD-80236) June


(continued on page 10)

# PREVIEWS

(continued from page 9)

Mr. Shaw has welded his sixty-voice choir into a seamless entity, capable of responding to his every musical whim. In the highly varied, rhythmically complex choral music of Francis Poulenc, conductor and chorus create a feast for the listener.

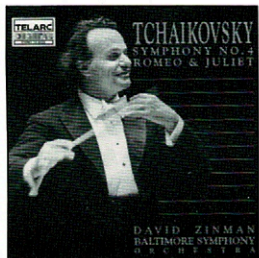
From the chant-like simplicity of the Four Short Prayers of St. Francis (poignantly rendered by unaccompanied male chorus) to the energetic opening of the Kyrie from the Mass; from the austerity of the Motets for a Time of Penitence to the serenity of the solo soprano's "Dona nobis pacem" at the close of the Mass, we are carried along irresistibly by streams of luminous tone.

Naturally, all this gorgeous sound is captured superbly by Telarc, who enable us to hear all the lofty glory of the Church of St. Pierre in Gramat, France. This is a listening treat not to be missed. 

-VDT


## TCHAIKOVSKY

Tchaikovsky claimed, in a letter to one of his most devoted benefactors, that his Fourth Symphony was modelled after Beethoven's Fifth, with its challenging opening fanfare (named "Fate" by the composer) which returns in the final



◀ **TCHAIKOVSKY:**  
*Symphony No. 4  
Romeo and Juliet*  
David Zinman  
Baltimore  
Symphony  
Orchestra  
(CD-80228)  
July

movement. The Fantasy-Overture, *Romeo and Juliet*, is one of the most widely-performed pieces in the orchestral repertory. It was premiered in 1870, but was revised by Tchaikovsky several times before he finally allowed it to be published a decade later, in the form we know today. All of the conflict and passion of Shakespeare's tale of the doomed

lovers explode in this work, which contains a "love theme" of great lyrical beauty. This release marks the debut of a series of the orchestral works of Tchaikovsky to be recorded by Telarc with the Baltimore Symphony, led by Maestro David Zinman. 

-VDT

## MOZART

Telarc and Sir Charles Mackerras have been making "Mozart magic" ever since the premier recording of Symphonies No. 40 and No. 41 (CD-80139) in this animated symphonic cycle was released in 1986. These two latest recordings will make a total of eight discs in the series to date.



◀ **MOZART:**  
*Symphonies  
No. 14, No. 15  
No. 16, No. 17  
No. 18*  
Sir Charles  
Mackerras  
Prague  
Chamber  
Orchestra  
(CD-80242) July


The series features the talented Prague Chamber Orchestra. Though not performed on original instruments, Sir Charles' attention to historical performance practices in this cycle commands the respect of serious Mozart listeners. He splits the first and second



◀ **MOZART:**  
*Symphonies  
No. 32, No. 35  
No. 39*  
Sir Charles  
Mackerras  
Prague  
Chamber  
Orchestra  
(CD-80203)  
August

violins to the right and the left, respectively, giving them the positions normal for Mozart's day. He also uses a reduced orchestra and a harpsichord continuo. Following the latest research by Mozart scholars, Sir Charles observes all of the repeats called for in the original manuscripts and takes brisk tempos in the Minuets to give them a more historically correct proportion. In spite of the fact that these departures from a more traditional style have aroused some controversy, the accolades have been quick to

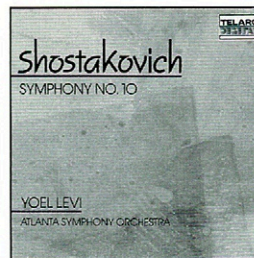
come. Charles Ward of the *Houston Chronicle* declared: "The interpretations...are clear and brilliantly assertive." Joseph McLellan wrote in the *Washington Post*: "...bright, alert, beautifully phrased and recorded with striking presence." Michael Ullman wrote for *Fanfare*: "thoroughly delightful...played with zest and polish." And in *The New York Times*, Allan Kozinn stated: "The Prague players respond with performances that are precise, rich-toned and vivacious."

If you haven't yet sampled the delights of this series, don't wait any longer to hear for yourself why critics and consumers alike have made it so successful. 

-VDT

## SHOSTAKOVICH

It was in the new atmosphere of artistic freedom created by the death of Stalin in 1953, that Dmitri Shostakovich began his Tenth Symphony, after an eight-year interim since the composition of the Ninth, the longest period between any of his symphonies.



◀ **SHOSTAKOVICH:**  
*Symphony No. 10*  
Yoel Levi  
Atlanta Symphony  
Orchestra  
(CD-80241) August

But Shostakovich did not enjoy such artistic freedom while Stalin was still alive. Not once, but twice in his career, Shostakovich was the target of official Party censures at the hands of Stalin, scathingly condemning him for "modernist formalism" in his "fidgety, screaming, neurotic" music.

The premiere of the Tenth provoked heated debate in the Soviet Union, ultimately resulting in the official opinion that the new symphony was "an optimistic tragedy." But the implicit approval finally established once and for all Shostakovich's right to freedom of artistic expression for which he had striven so long. With Prokofiev gone, he now assumed his place as the dean of Soviet composers, and the Tenth became universally recognized as his masterpiece.

(continued on page 11)

## OSCAR PETERSON

(continued from page 1)

astonishing attack. And Herb Ellis plays the guitar with an elegant lyricism, an understated immediacy, and a freedom from showy, technical displays.

From 1953 to 1958, this group was popular the world over for its celebratory approach to jazz. This approach has remained evident in the individual work of its players through the years and obviously was an inspiration for the reunion.

Says Peterson, "We're putting it together because it's been twenty years since we've worked on the same stage — day in and day out... We met a few years back and got together and it was apparent that we wanted to see how we've developed and grown — individually and together."

The reunion was, to no one's surprise, a great event and a tremendous success. Stanley Crouch, in the *Village Voice*, said, "The group's shrewd

and heated fluctuations of complex drama and subtlety achieve the improvised clarity that jazz bands have added to the canon of Western performing art with perhaps matchless singularity." After detailing the unique contributions of each of the players — including drummer Bobby Durham, "he swings with the absolute attention to everything happening on the bandstand that you only hear from the best drummers" — Crouch concludes his review with this on the aesthetic of the group: "The empathetic detailing heard from Peterson, Ellis, Brown and Durham made this reunion much more than a virtuoso pianist abetted by three cowed accompanists. Like conquistadors planting flags on hills, these men are raising heat waves that will long remain in your memory when you think of the impassioned empathy meant by the blues, by good time music, by jazz."

The celebration of this most outstanding reunion continues now in recorded form, thanks, in large part, to Telarc's chairman and senior engineer. Jack Renner has been an avid fan of Peterson's for many years and has steadfastly dreamed of finding a way to get a Peterson recording on the Telarc label.


"This is the culmination of a personal and professional dream of mine," says Renner. "Oscar Peterson represents the quintessential jazz musician to me. He's got it all — an incredible sound, dazzling technique, brilliant command of the keyboard, and an encyclopedic repertoire of classic and original tunes."

On the weekend of March 16-18, the closing week of the group's run at the Blue Note, Jack Renner and a skilled group of assistants brought his dream to brilliant clarity and stunning immediacy. *The Original Oscar Peterson Trio Live At The Blue Note* sits you smack down in the heart of a vital, thriving jazz club, part of a wildly exciting crowd hearing the best sound that jazz has to offer.

Renner was delighted with the results. "The evening at the Blue Note exceeded my expectations from every standpoint. Though we were faced with the challenge of a live performance recording — something relatively rare for Telarc — and the confines of working in a small space, we achieved what we think is the best possible sense of the excitement of being in the club. And we passed the real test: Oscar listened to a tape and said, 'beautiful!'"

And beautiful it is — a sound that is ever familiar but, amazingly, continues to surprise, delight, and communicate. The group finds new beauty and wonder in classic tunes and settings because its members understand the art of listening and create an environment where, as Stanley Crouch notes, "the music and beat breathe, regardless of tempo." Telarc has truly recorded a jazz event. 

Full of vim and vigor, the Tenth is widely considered the greatest of Shostakovich's fifteen symphonies, with its tragic, yet positive outlook, and the darkly tempestuous Scherzo — his "musical portrait" of Stalin. The Tenth truly runs the gamut of human emotion, from deepest tragedy to jubilant exultation.


This release follows the great success of Yoel Levi's renderings of the Fifth and Ninth Symphonies of Shostakovich with his Atlantans. They're a young and exciting combination that are thrilling audiences everywhere. 

—WCB

## TCHAIKOVSKY & RACHMANINOFF

Telarc and the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra are whipping up a recipe for some romantic listening: a measure of Tchaikovsky, garnished with a *souçon* of Rachmaninoff!

Gifted pianist Horacio Gutiérrez, internationally renowned for his interpretations of the Romantic piano repertoire, lends his talents to a recording of the Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto No. 1 and the Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini by Rachmaninoff.

These two well-loved works contain some of the most enchanting melodies ever to be written, contrasted with dazzling displays of technical virtuosity. 

—VDT



◀ **TCHAIKOVSKY:**  
*Piano Concerto No. 1*  
**RACHMANINOFF:**  
*Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini*  
Horacio Gutiérrez,  
Piano  
David Zinman  
Baltimore Symphony Orchestra  
(CD-80193) May