



Ice Age 5

Larry & Noreen Shaw, 16 Grant Place, Grant City, Staten Island, N.Y.

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Here there bee ICE AGE #5, a FAPazine created by Larry and Noreen Shaw, 16 Grant Place, Staten Island 6, New York for the May, 1961, 95th Mailing of FAPA. Except for the Wilsey article and the newspaper quotes, the above mentioned Shaws are liable for the contents. Interior illo by Pat Ellington. Cover by ATOM.

ICE AGE THE FAPAZINE THAT GROWS SLOWLY DO NOT OF THE NORTH COUNTRY AND DESTROY

ICE AGE IS APT: As I wrote to Marion Bradley (through whose good offices we just made the last mailing) "You shouldn't know from it, Marion". Through a horrible chain of circumstances completely beyond our control, we wound up, last deadline, with just a week to get our package to Marion. The previous Friday was a FANOCLAST meeting and we intended to pick up our ICE AGES from Ted White, who had mimeographed them, and mail them the next day. That Friday the radio kept saying "Snow to a depth of 3 or 4 inches". After what we've had this winter, 3 or 4 inches didn't faze me and I left the house about 4 p.m. to meet Larry in Manhattan for dinner before going on to the meeting at the Lupoffs. For once, I was sensible and wore slacks, heavy long sleeved sweater, knee socks and fur boots. I needed them. As I went out the door, the very first flake fell and settled gently on my nose. By the time I met Larry, you could not see to walk (remember this was coming on top of an accumulation of 20 inches that had not melted) and a full-fledged blizzard was raging. We decided to risk going to the meeting and, after a mind-shattering experience with the subway, bus and a cab, arrived in a big white bundle at the Lupoffs. I must say the view from their penthouse window of the storm was lovely, but I fear I had no eye for beauty. Ted White arrived with the mailing and we left for home early - about 10 p.m. We struggled 6 blocks through knee-high drifts to the subway. I had the ICE AGES and Larry had his brief case stuffed to the gills. We managed to get a train down to Grand Central where we change for the South Ferry Express. Only there was no South Ferry Express, as we discovered after waiting 45 minutes on a deserted platform. We got on a local that would deposit us at City Hall, which seemed to be as close as we could get to South Ferry. (City Hall is perhaps one mile from the Ferry.) At City Hall, we emerged onto the wind and snow swept plaza that fronts the Hall and tunneled across it to another subway line. The steps of this line were so covered with snow that they resembled a ski run. We slid down them in time to miss a train. Larry only had a \$10 bill anyway and the man wouldn't change it. I found 28¢ and Larry found 2¢. so the man graciously let us buy 2 tokens. We sat down and waited 45 more minutes for another train. It surprised us. It came. Along about now, I started to cry, feeling certain I would never get home to see the baby again. Also wondering if the sitter would have sense enough to wait. We finally arrived at the Ferry and got one with no trouble at all. We had an uneventful trip to the Island and then began a long wait for a train and/or bus. People were milling uselessly around the train, so we went upstairs and searched the long, long platforms for a likely bus. No bus. No cab. We got back to the train just in time to run for it as it pulled out. As it turned out, we needn't have hurried. After going perhaps 1/2 a mile, the third rail covered with snow and we were marooned without heat or light until 5 a.m. It was cold, I'll tell you. Also boring. We couldn't get off, because we were on a trestle 20 feet in the air. There was nowhere to go anyway. Every once in a while, the engineer would walk back



and say, "It'll be a while, yet, folks". This cheered us. So, about 5:15 a.m. we came to Grant City and began the trek down from the station to our house. The main street, which is about 4 blocks long, was not too bad because cars had been through and we walked in the ruts. Grant Place, however, was a very different kettle of fish. We live at the end of the street and the view from the opposite end was highly unpromising. The snow was level with the stoops of the houses, curb to curb - it was waist-high. Still clutching the ICE AGES in my arms, we swam through these drifts. I fell several times and Larry pulled me up again. For the first time, I understood why people can just quit in a blizzard and freeze to death. After only a few steps, you are completely exhausted. Finally, covered with snow from head to toe, we fell in our front door, frightening the baby-sitter out of her wits. The next day, nothing moved on the whole East Coast, so going to the post office was out of the question. Somehow or other, I feel we are due a medal for "Performance to TAPA beyond the call of duty."

YOU CAN'T WIN: At the last FANOCIAST meeting, the radio was playing softly in the background. It was a program devoted to the achievements of Yuri Gagarin and his impression of space. We had a non-fan visitor at the meeting who was puzzled by us. "What are these things?" he said, waving a fanzine about. He was told. "I have one other question," he said, "What is science fiction?" Again, he was courteously told. There was a long pause while the radio droned "It was all blue. The whole earth is blue from space." Our visitor's look of bewilderment cleared up. "Oh," he said, happily, "You mean that Buck Rogers stuff." So help me God. I have witnesses.

I CAN'T LAUGH AT THE JOHN BIRCH SOCIETY: When I first read of this outfit, months ago, it didn't strike me funny and it still doesn't. It is exactly the kind of crack-pot organization that can make definite headway. It appeals to all that is base and selfish in ignorant people. The know-nothings are always with us. Now they are organized and have a voice. THE NEW YORKER, as usual, made the most cogent comment on them when it stated and I paraphrase, "It shows the strength of our country if indeed the President and the Chief Justice were in the pay of the communists and still the Republic stands. Even Moscow didn't seem to know they had such highly placed agents working for them." I am not one to try to silence people because I disagree with them, as so many are today. I think the John Birch Society should have a fair hearing, if they want one, and let the people decide if they truly have any facts to present. I doubt if they do. My feeling is that we have quite enough to do, worrying about the communists in Russia and China without worrying about the communists in Des Moines.

MELT RUSS WILSEY: (Larry speaking) - In 1944, Wollheim created the Arisians, a club meeting at his apartment on alternate Sundays and consisting mostly of teenage fans. Among the members were such fannish immortals as Al Weinstein, Austin Hamel, Monroe Kuttner--and Russ Wilsey. It was Hamel who, looking darkly out the window at the sun-drenched reaches of Forest Hills outside one day, muttered the classic line: "What am I doing here when I could be playing baseball?" But such youthful stirrings of rebellion

(continued on backover)



## FANZINES FOR BREAKFAST

Comments on the 94th Mailing, by Noreen

CELEPHAIS: Evans - I enjoyed your trip account very much indeed. Your comment that Marshall Field's makes Macy's look like Woolworths reminds me that I have found the NY "name" department stores to be disappointing in the extreme. The only one I would rate as a really top-notch store is Bloomingdale's. The Higbee Company, in Cleveland, beats Gimbel's, Stern's and Macy's all hollow...The description of the trip into San Francisco made me heart-sick. I am one of the millions to whom San Francisco is a spiritual home... I knew a railroad fan in Cleveland who used to keep record of where the steam engines were and take last rides and so on. I believe there are a few left in the area...Bill, believe me, nothing would make me happier than for Larry to do some comments, but it seems impossible at this time...Add songs with frank lyrics, "I Want To Be Loved" by Billy Rose...

REVOLTING DEVELOPMENT: Alger - Speaking of frozen foods, when I worked in the air-conditioning and refrigeration industry, I read things about them that have kept me forever away, far away, from frozen food cases...Except in one instance and that is Stouffer's frozen Welsh Rarebit. I used to be very fond of this dish and it was nice when unexpected people would drop by but they upped the price from the original 43¢ a package to 89¢, and it just isn't worth it. For 89¢, I can make gallons of Welsh Rarebit..Your statement about boiled dinners reminds me to ask if anyone besides me knows what "cottage ham" is. It is a tiny ham that you boil with cabbage and potatoes and we had it at home all the time but I haven't seen a single one in NY and no butcher seems to know what I mean when I try to describe it.

LOGARITHMIC: Silverberg - I find it extremely interesting that the "numbered fandom" concept should be the (or one of the) most controversial things in general fandom. Otherwise normal people break out in a pink rash and beat their heads against solid mimosas when numbered fandoms are mentioned. Kingsley Amis said something in "New Maps Of Hell" which may be applicable here to the effect that science-fiction's constant preoccupation with and recounting of its own history was a sure sign of its immaturity. I have been forced to sit quietly in a room for 5 hours, listening to violent and bitter arguments about what number fandom so and so belonged to and I've just about had it with the whole damn thing...Leman may well be only 5'9", but he's built like a brick Rex Rotary...

STEFANTASY: Danner - Very glad you liked "Rogue Moon", we liked it very much too...You were a little too hard on Hirenberg, who is really a very nice guy, but I must agree that we simply don't need mailing-wrapper humor.

SALUD: E. Busby - Yes, Elinor, I still have my doll. Her name is Rose Anne. I also have lots and lots and lots of stuffed animals. My pride and joy is my genuine Pooh Bear and a pink teddy named Gordon that was won for me at Coney Island by a sharpshooter who had been a member of an Israel terrorist group. I also have an owl named Archibald that I took with me into the labor room... I also try to comfort myself with the knowledge that some women have large families and still look good. Witness Cyd Charisse... but then, I never looked like that...I felt 17 for about 10 years,



then one day I suddenly felt 27 and have remained stuck there for some time...I was fascinated by your quoting Jane Austin to the effect that no young woman reaches the age of 15 without changing her name as far as possible. I am one of the few people in the world who are completely satisfied with their name. I have always felt that my parents did a first-rate job when they chose "Noreen". What I did though, was to change how I wrote it. I decided that plain old N was too drab, so when I was about fourteen, I began to make an N - much to the annoyance of my teachers. Curiously, whenever I am agitated or tense or hurried I revert, without thinking to n...I think fans are above average in intelligence...I must agree with you that Buck Coulson does sort of radiate negative thinking. I'm not putting him down for this - I like him as he is and he has a right to radiate whatever he wants, but he does sort of have a negative aura about him...I've been told the same thing about myself, constantly, by the people I have worked with. I couldn't stand most of them, so I suppose it showed...Gee, if I'd been born even 50 years ago, I'd have been dead at 10 months with pneumonia or at 20 years with appendicitis...I think that was brandy in the pie at Pittsburgh...Reminds me that Playboy's inane "food editor" had a big spread (nopun) on how the man of the house bakes pies. It seems he buys them frozen and defrosts them. Not a single word about how to make pie crust. I rather thought they'd skip that one... MissRheingold is just as insipid as Miss America. I amuse myself each year by picking the winner in advance from the picture in the paper. It's easy - she's the one who looks most like the old Miss Rheingold..S. J. Perelman has a funny sf parody in one of his books.. I just read a "woman's novel" that I loved. "Mistress of Mellyn" all about this governess, the handsome lord of the manor, the way the first wife died mysteriously and all that. Great fun.

LIMBO: Rike - The report of your Peace March should be interesting... I, myself, think you are beating your head against a wall, but it's your head...DONAHO - Larry wanted to tell you this himself, but I guess I'll have to. Where you said that "even the most well-behaved and adorable children cause a dislocation in their parent's social life", well, Larry says to tell you that so does anything that comes along that is more interesting than what you were doing before. Like learning to read, discovering fandom, sex, etc. All these things dislocate your social life and leave you with less free time because you find them more interesting than your old way of life. So it is with children, but it's impossible to convey this to anyone who isn't a parent, I guess...Speaking of bland foods, mustard has gotten blander and blander over the years until it's just yellow nothing now. We discovered a new brand called Kosciusko in the local market and WOW, I almost went through the ceiling. Wonderful! I work at getting food to taste good. You have to because the way they grow it today, they care only about shipping and not about taste. I read a wonderful all-purpose recipe that I will pass on to you. "If you can't put garlic in it, put chocolate in it."... I've seen white chocolate for years. Any speciality candy shop has it, Bill...You said you hadn't seen the stars for years. How about on our Solacon trip?...I'm with you. As long as it's legible, who cares how it's bound...OK, Pelz was at least half guilty of killing the "Who Killed SF?" panel, but I dislike Campbell so much that I blame him more than I should...Anyone who owns and drives a car in Manhattan is either filthy rich or out of his mind...Agree with you completely about labor and management. Without something to back up it's demands, labor would still be where it was 100 years ago. Management isn't going to give anything away, ever...





SERCON'S BAME: Busby, F. M. - Gee, your mentioning Fancy, Expensive Restaurants reminds me that one day last summer I met Larry for a long lunch and he asked me where I wanted to go. "The Algonquin?" I quickly replied, "I've always wanted to see the dining room there." So we went and had lunch and it was \$18.00! And all I had was welsh rarebit and Larry had London Broil or something. I'm used to expensive restaurants, but this really was a little too much. No roundtable visable, either...I am in full agreement about the convenience of a car, provided you have some place to keep it. I'd rather be sitting in my own car in a traffic jam than in a public conveyance at the mercy

of the driver. We've had many, many cases recently of people on subway trains stalled four and five hours without a word from those in charge or any kind of help from the authorities...No, the World's Prize Idiot Driver is the Missourian...What's wrong with just using the full term "correction fluid"? I worked in an office for three years where the girls cut stencils all the time, every day, and it never seemed to bother them to say "correction fluid"...

LAUNDRY MARK: Hevelin - Nothing.

VANDY: Coulson - I didn't know Lichtman was originally from Ohio. His letter brought back a flood of traumatic memories concerning Dairy Dells. I was forced to take tap dancing lessons in a studio situated above a Dairy Dell and I used to look in the window at the people eating All Kinds of ice cream, with my tongue hanging out. When I finally got old enough to go in one and/or had the money, they had deteriorated and didn't have much selection, etc... "Well, I'm back" is the last line that always makes me cry. Even just thinking about makes me cry. We played Terry's last line game with A.J. and got all but one or two, I'm proud to report...

LARK: Danner - I can't understand this school bus kick. I know it's trite to say so but, by God, when I was a kid, we walked and liked it and I don't see that it harmed me any...I didn't want to come right out and say so, but both my eyes aren't OK and that's why I don't have depth perception. I thought the implication was obvious in my remarks... A birth injury left me totally blind in my left eye and the right has been slipping ever since.

SCIENCE FICTION AGE: Moskowitz - I don't care what anyone says, Sam is not the New Jersey leader of the John Birch Society.

MELANGE: Trimbles - I love the script typewriter. Does that make me unique?...Enjoyed it all but especially Burbee.

EPIMETHEUS: Speer - Game arrived in good condition and ungrateful us haven't even written to thank you yet.

DESCANT: Clarkes - I love commas,,,,,,see! I was taught to set all kinds of phrases off by commas and, need I say it, Larry hates commas too and always tries to edit them out...AND HERE HE COMES NOW absolutely hilarious and I'm a Kennedy fan and supporter. I could see that scene clearly in my mind's eye. It WILL happen.



SECRET MYTHOS: Parker - I must bow down. You are the Easter Bunny - you must be, because someone left me a basket, a pink stuffed bunny (no doubt a distant friend or relation) and a foot-high chocolate rabbit (with solid ears) from Fanny Farmer's. They weren't there when I went to bed...Enjoyable issue.

DAY STAR: Bradley - Craig Cochran's heavy-handed article amused me. I can see he has never kept house, only read articles about how easy it is to keep house today. Dishwasher - what a laugh. You have to scrape all the dishes, wash the crystal, silverware and pots and pans separately and then they don't get clean anyway. Who needs it? Or even more important - who can afford it? I'd rather do my dishes by hand, unless like Jean Grennell, I had a large family. I don't think anyone would ever accuse Jean of being lazy. I fail to see where washing diapers by hand is so amobling that we should scorn clothes washers. I am lucky enough to have a diaper service, but if I didn't, I'd for damn sure be grateful for a washer. Woman's Work isn't getting that easy, you know. I manage to keep every second of the day quite full and not by watching TV, either...Liked your article on the RING trilogy. Can you imagine how the people who read the books as they were published must have suffered, waiting for the next one to come out?...I'm Gemini too. When is your birthday? Mine is June 6 - D-Day. I got quite a reputation as a seeress when I was in high school by predicting that D-Day would fall on my birthday. No one was more surprised than I when it actually did. People were really impressed...I have run into that orange and onion recipe for a salad in many, many cookbooks, but have never seen one served. I hope I never do.

PHLOTSAM: Economou - Phyllis, please feel better...Gosh, I didn't know there were so many old movie fans around. I am also (as you probably know) an old radio fan. I understand there is a book, called A PICTORIAL HISTORY OF RADIO, which I faunch to get. I read a good one by Ben Gross called I LOOKED AND I LISTENED. All about the A & P Gypsies, the Alka-Seltzer Blue Bottles and other giants of the airwaves...

THREE-CHAMBERED HEART: Champion - I think there should be a division of fandom known as Sid Coleman Fandom. We should hire someone to follow him around and be his Boswell.

HORIZONS: Warner - You mentioned the name of Jack Chapman Miske. He was living in Cleveland some years ago when I ran across him. I knew the name, of course, and had heard a lot about his fannish career. Anyway, he spoke on a panel of some sort at the local library on "Is SF Literature?" or some such silly topic. He made it quite clear that he was most embarrassed by his fannish origins and tried to put us in our place by stating, "I'm interested in serious things now. Like Moby Dick(!)". So, after that, he appeared at the Clevention and kept hiding behind me in a little conference room and peeling out at fans. He said "You don't know who I am and just leave me alone." I said, "Oh, yes I do, Mr Miske, are you looking for some old fannish faces?" He blanched and was not seen again...Very stuffy type...I was hoping we might get to see 423 Summit Avenue if we went to the Disclave, but now it looks like we won't make it...One of the most annoying facets of the way the department stores are always 6 months ahead of



themselves is the difficulty in buying clothes in season. Right now is suit weather and I am in the market for a suit. What do the stores have? Bathing suits and cotton dresses. In July, when I'm interested in these items, they will have heavy wool and velvet cocktail dresses and fur coats. I don't feel like buying winter clothes in July. January is the big summer clothes season in NY. All the cruise shops go full blast...IN GLASS HOUSES telegraphed its ending far in advance, I'm afraid...Harry, that was undoubtedly one of the finest con reports I've ever read. You must go to future cons and give us your marvelous sense of perspective again...You always seem to be able to stand a little outside yourself when giving your impression of events.

BANDWAGON: Ryan - Enjoyed your first-hand account of the inauguration...I like the word "fantacts" and I believe it should be assimilated into the culture...I always thought the keyboard of the typer was made up so that the strongest fingers would be brought into use hitting the most-used letters...I also thought raising the right hand when taking an oath had some connection with the idea that the blood in the arm led directly to the heart. I don't know where I get these ideas. Maybe I make them up.

PHANTASY PRESS: McPhail - I wouldn't exactly call Cleveland "the wilderness of the midwest"...All America did for years was to plunder the Cuban economy, NOT "improve and stabilize it." Where do we get off playing God with another nation's economy, anyway? Castro may be insane, granted, but I do not think a revolution against him has a chance. The great mass of peasants are with him. The outraged screams you hear are from the small (numerically) middle class. They are the refugees who have poured into America and they are not strong enough to invade him and win...I don't feel like writing poetry and fiction to please Chris. Should I shoot myself?

LIGHTHOUSE: Graham - Yes, the Jehovah's Witnesses did meet in Yankee Stadium a few years back. I was told that would be their last mass meeting, because Yankee Stadium just wasn't big enough... I AM NOT A TV SNOB! I don't give a damn who watches it or what other people do with their time. I don't happen to like it. You said I would take a set if someone gave it to me. Well, someone did give us a set a few months ago. It just needs a little repair and it will be fine. We are going to break it up and use the wood for a toy chest for Mike...We have to go to movies when the opportunity presents itself, not when we feel like it. Consequently we can't wait until things show up at the cheaper houses but must see them when and where we can. We paid \$2.00 per to see THE LEAGUE OF GENTLEMEN. It was good...but not that good. A real tip-top provocative issue... I foresee many comments to you this time or I'll turn in my crystal ball.

WILLIS FUND WILLIS FUND WILLIS FUND WILLIS FUND WILLIS FUND WILLIS

I would have very much liked to have commented on every item in the mailing, but as usual, time presses. There is just time for a word from your sponsor. Support the Willis Tenth Anniversary Fund, please. Cash and checks to Larry Shaw, 16 Grant Place, Staten Island 6, New York. Information at same address on request. Ellik for Taff, Join the Season, Give to the Red Cross...no, NOT THAT!



## HIGH FIDELITY AND THE LOWLY LISTENER

by Russ Wilsey

(Author's note - In its issue for January, 1960, Harper's Magazine published an attack upon high fidelity sound reproduction entitled "High Fidelity - To What?" by Hubert Lamb, chairman of the Music Department at Wellesley College. Professor Lamb's deepest concern appeared to be with the fact that high fidelity enthusiasts of his acquaintanceship demonstrated a rude disregard for the musical integrity of the sound they were high fidelity-ing. The following was written as a rebuttal to Professor Lamb's article. Unfortunately, Harper's did not chose to accept it for publication. I prefer to think this was due to my own inadequacy as a writer, for I believe the article contains certain home-truths about high fidelity which deserve publication, and I was only too happy at Larry Shaw's kind offer to have them see something of the light of day in his fanzine. While the present audience may be somewhat restricted in numbers as compared to Harper's, I am sure it is no less perceptive. Although the article was written a year ago, on re-reading it I find no points I would qualify except perhaps with reference to stereo. Further experience with stereophonic sound this past year has convinced me of its undoubted value in high fidelity music reproduction.

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A novelty ash tray I recently noticed in a gift shop was decorated with a touching scene. It depicted a sorrowful little individual squatting in the midst of a jumbled pile of high fidelity components, staring sadly at the surrounding tangle of wires with a look both guilty and depressed. The caption underneath read, "It has much more fidelity than I do." There's a moral here.

I feel considerable concern with the growing tendency in some circles to belittle high fidelity sound reproduction, to suggest it has failed its original promise, which was to provide music lovers with the sound of fine music at a convenience not possible in the attending of live performances. While the engineers press relentlessly closer and closer to electronic perfection, while the manufacturers gear up to exploit the whole new market of popular "hi fi" with vapid and pale imitations of high fidelity sound systems enclosed in ingeniously decorated plywood consoles, the true music lovers, the devoted band who participated in the birthing of high fidelity out of the components of public address systems and the professional turntables of radio studios, the satisfying of whose needs the whole high fidelity empire theoretically rests upon, show signs of restiveness, of disappointment, of rejection of high fidelity as a false pursuit.

Learned articles by eminent professional musicologists in which the angry finger of a purist's scorn is pointed at the "Commonness" of high fidelity may dramatically underline the existence of this phenomenon. But these are not the only signs, nor the most important. Many of the "lay" intellectuals who formed the first public for high fidelity in the late Forties and early



Fifties have turned a deaf ear to the charms of high fidelity; if they are still actually playing their original component systems, they no longer fiddle with the controls on their preamplifiers but leave them set flat for each and every record. More likely, it sits unused, crowded into a corner by the television set, or has been replaced altogether by a popular "hi fi" which is easier to operate. It is this large-scale desertion by the early advocates of high fidelity which truly disturbs, and which may possibly suggest to those more recently made aware of high fidelity that it is a failure and a washout, and serves now only the economic function of filling in the gaping hole caused by the absolute flop of the color television sales campaign.

Fruitful discussion of any subject demands an agreement on the terms of reference. What, really, is high fidelity? Edward Tatnall Canby, in his excellent book High Fidelity & The Music Lover, succinctly describes it as "a big-time hobby backed by a major art form." This definition accurately suggests that there are two kinds of high fidelity enthusiasts, the hobbyist and the music lover. In most instances there is an inevitable combination of both in the one individual. The justification of the term hobby lies in the means the high fidelity seeker must make use of to obtain good sound at reasonable cost. The brand name consoles cannot meet these requirements. The few packaged and cabined systems that do produce good sound, such as Grundig, are astronomically expensive. The answer remains to assemble one's own system from the staggering array of individual components currently available, acquiring separate record player, tape deck, tuner, preamplifier-control center, power amplifier, and speaker system. The record player alone constitutes a bewildering field in itself, ranging from the entirely complete and fully automatic changer to the separately purchased turntable, tone arm, cartridge and stylus. The enthusiast may even become involved to the extent of assembling, through kits, the components themselves. On the other hand, he may limit his personal participation to buying one of the new models of the nascent high fidelity "receiver" which combines tuner, preamp.-controls, and amplifier in one neat package, leaving him nothing more to do except plug in record player at one end and loud speaker at the other, with possibly a complete tape recorder thrown in for good measure. But he must still exercise some knowledge and discrimination in the choice of his units, and will not avoid the hobby aspect of controls-diddling and record maintenance, to say nothing of the possibilities of tape manipulation.

However, with many who account for the surviving popularity of high fidelity, the means has become the end; the dynamic, the driving force, is the assumption of the role of amateur audio engineer, a role which may be played with any degree of personal contribution. It may strike some as an activity culturally superior to golf, skin diving, or sports car racing, but what results is simply sound insofar as the hobbyist is concerned. The engineering impulse finds its outlet in a mania for gadgetry and experimentation, and asks only that the reproduced sound faithfully ape another sound - which almost incidentally just happens to be the original sound of live and preferably complex music. (It has a close parallel in the field of photography, with the camera enthusiast who applies hours of devotion and the use of expensive equipment to the taking of pictures which have everything, except the slightest drop of aesthetic value.)



What I construe as the real dynamic and goal of high fidelity is not principally concerned with attaining the highest possible degree of fidelity in the copying of sound, and herein I think is a truth which is crucial. Before I can explore the importance of this truth, if it be one, I feel obliged to clearly distinguish the music lover from the amateur audio engineer, despite what feelings may be hurt and even though these two positions may manifest themselves to some extent in one person. It is a question of values - which is more important to the listener, sound which is technically arresting, or music.

Up to this point I have cited hard facts. What follows, the reader must understand, I cannot fully support with easily demonstrable proofs. But the great value of high fidelity sound reproduction is a thing I hold with deep conviction, and the urge to share the joy of an art with others compels me to argue as strong a case as possible, even at the risk of arguing from a position of highly personal opinion. Together with this plea on behalf of high fidelity, I shall put forward an equally personal formula whereby those newly acquainted with it may discover its real potential while avoiding those intruding factors which can work to its detriment.

In discussing the act of listening to fine music, it is difficult to avoid certain hackneyed expressions, such as music lover and musical appreciation, which have unfortunately become covered over with and debilitated by negative and snobbish connotations. But those fortunate to have a receptivity to the absorbing beauty of fine music know that there is a moving experience which these maligned terms attempt to describe. Full concentration upon the sounds of any artistically successful musical composition results in far more than a simple awareness of pleasing melodies, harmonies, rhythms, or whatever else has gone into its creation. The listener has before him a living, vital thing, a continuously unfolding line of sculpture that has its being in time rather than static material. In listening, our attention becomes so fully claimed that our very own physical existence takes its meaning from the existence of the music. We are somehow transported to a universe of unique dimensions, entirely distinct and apart from the universe of our normal sense perception. Then, as the music reaches its inherently natural completion, with the cessation of sounds our existence returns to its normal frame of reference. But it is not at all as though, through the music, we had retreated or escaped from ourselves, only to be thrust back into a hostile world of reality when the music ends. Rather, we are more fully re-integrated with the real world, as though this act of listening has some magical power of replenishing and strengthening the listener, of increasing his ability to function better in terms of the reality he returns to.

Those readers who have experienced it will know at once what I am trying to describe despite my lame and inept groping for adequate words. It does not require on the part of the listener any formal training in music, nor any knowledge of the historical context of the particular music, for him to attain this enjoyment. (An especially beautiful and moving portrayal of this experience is to be found in Carson McCuller's novel, The Heart Is A Lonely Hunter, where the young heroine has discovered a certain house,



the inhabitants of whom are entirely unknown to her, from which at certain times there comes a glorious music, captivating her with its beauty as she crouches outside in the darkness. The novelist's poetic evocation of the girl's feelings as she listens to this music might well be commended to many an overly-analytical espouser of music appreciation as evidence that we listen and hear with the heart as well as the brain.)

- II -

There is, then, an enjoyment of music which transcends the ear's following of a pleasant tune or an intriguing sound. This enjoyment attains its most natural fulfillment when we are present at the actual performance of any distinguished music, be it symphonic, chamber or opera. With reference to the value of high fidelity sound reproduction, the pivotal concern would seem to be whether reproduced sound can induce enjoyment of the same nature, the same complete and satisfying involvement of the listener during the act of listening. Guided exclusively by my own experience - but the veracity of which is, for me at least, beyond question - I can say yes without hesitation. However, I concede at once that the intensity of the enjoyment obtained through recorded music cannot be as great. Leaving aside for the moment all other considerations, partly because some of them I wish to treat in another context further on, and partly because I am anxious at this point not to distract attention from a most important aspect of high fidelity, I will attribute the inferior intensity of the enjoyment as largely due to the simple and unchallengable fact that the sound of reproduced music as registered by our ears is far from being identical to the sound of live music.

Happily, plain ignorance enables me to avoid exploring this assertion in a prolonged scientific analysis of the comparative cycles per second, distortion, harmonics, response transient and otherwise, and etc. But for irrefutable proof I would instruct any fair juror to attend the live performance by an only half-competent orchestra of any mediocre music, and immediately afterwards sample the sound of the finest recording of the finest music on the finest equipment available. The record, as the saying has it, speaks for itself. I had this regrettably brought sharply to my attention recently while present in the high fidelity salon of a large music store during a demonstration of a magnificent high fidelity system, the very acme of the art. The reproduced sound was that of a great piano sonata, performed by a gifted and sensitive artist. I positively thrilled to the music. Stumbling my way towards the store's exit almost in a trance, I passed immediately through a department where sheet music was being sold. A professional plugger suddenly began hammering out one of the more inane popular songs of the moment (one can hardly say "of the day" any longer, so ephemeral is the life-span of most of these ditties) on an old upright. My trance shattered instantly by the sound, I at first experienced a tragic, cold shudder, followed a moment later by an impulse to laugh at my own fatuousness. I had been so deeply distressed because, in terms of pure sound, the recording had so obviously been a diminished and shrunken copy of the full voice of this live piano sound, regardless of whatever disparity I felt there to be between the merits of the two different pieces of music.



Many of the high fidelity enthusiasts, particularly of the amateur audio engineer camp, are vehement in their acclaim for a certain component system as being infinitely higher in its fidelity. In conversation with them, you may be initially amazed to discover that their reference of "highness" relates entirely to the imputed "lowness" of some other component or system. There is no reference to the theoretically final yardstick, the highness of a live performance. Quite often, they are innocently unaware of what a live orchestra really sounds like, having never in their whole careers as high fidelity enthusiasts attended a live concert.

By now I might seem to have successfully backed myself into the camp of those who deny the artistic validity of recorded music. Not so, because I do not believe we require anything like perfect reproduction of the original sound to obtain from the musical content an enjoyment which is of the same nature as that provided by live music, although as admitted earlier we cannot experience perhaps the same degree.

Let me introduce here a common phenomenon which everyone who has ever used a telephone is acquainted with. The fidelity of sound reproduction as performed by a telephone is shockingly poor. Yet none of us has any difficulty in recognizing immediately the voice of a friend or associate as heard via this instrument. We don't give it a moment's thought, the voice of a close friend seemingly sounding quite natural and lifelike. The explanation put forth by the experts in these matters is that we carry, unconsciously, an extensive memory of the exact speech patterns and individualistic tones of everyone we converse with. When listening to the thin, weak dilution of a friend's voice on the 'phone, the mind of the listener automatically and unconsciously fills in from memory the gaps, adds the timbre, the resonances, all the nuances of vocal coloration which the missing cycles per second of sound vibration would provide except that the telephone fails to reproduce them.

High fidelity experts long ago saw the obvious working of this principle in the act of listening to recorded music. We ourselves have been recording music in our own minds every time we have listened to a musical composition. Our minds are libraries of recorded memories of every piece ever heard. These musical memories, as with all memories, are held much longer and in much more detail than our limited ability at conscious recall would suggest. In listening to a recording, the listener's mind "plays back" its own recording of music, supplementing and reinforcing the recorded sound. Even if the memory playback is not of the particular composition being heard, there are still the memories of the actual sounds of the various instruments as heard in other compositions to be drawn upon.

While, as mentioned, this aspect of high fidelity listening has been commented upon by many, it has often struck me that it is seldom that any writer on the subject has explored an obvious implication. By way of following up this implication, I will repeat a statement made earlier, that the real function and purpose of high fidelity, the utilization of it by the music lover to obtain his own unique participation in the enjoyment of music, is not principally concerned with the degree of fidelity. I am, of course, hedging in italicizing "principally;" certainly the more faithfully to the original the music is reproduced, the more



acceptable a substitute will it be to the listener. But of equal if not greater importance, at least to the music lover in sharp distinction to the amateur audio engineer, is the strength of the listener's inner memory of the original, the extent to which his memory can fill in what is missing in the reproduced sound. It seems to me there is a definite correlation between the enjoyment that can be obtained from high fidelity listening and the extent to which the listener is familiar with the original which is being reproduced. I do not believe at all that a constant attendance of live music performances will breed a contempt for the weaknesses of recorded music. Rather, I think it is the converse which is true. I suspect what may have "killed" high fidelity for some of its early champions was the mistaken assumption on their part that the availability of good sound reproduction did away with the need to attend live performances. They listened to nothing but recordings, until finally their musical memories were nothing but repositories of recorded sound, and their mental facility for filling in the color and vibrancy of live music became impaired.

So the first rule I would lay down for enjoying high fidelity is that the listener understand the need for a good deal of listening to live music in the concert hall, as much of it as circumstances and finances will permit, even if this involves spending less on his high fidelity equipment. And if the hearing of a record should stir an interest in him for a form of music he has never heard at an original performance, he should make a point not of simply listening to more records of this type of music, but seek out live performances as well.

(No doubt more than one reader might care to suggest that I am now busily engaged in having the tail wag the dog. It's quite true, I am putting things backwards by having the attending of live performances of music support the listening to high fidelity; a more logical statement would be that high fidelity should be used to support the attending of live performances. But either way, both the concert managers and the record manufacturers benefit, to say nothing of the cause of good music. And it is not the last named I am intent on arguing the case for, the case hardly needing arguing as evidenced by the understood manner in which I am free to apply the adjective "good" to music, but only its adjunct, high fidelity. As for the query, why bother with high fidelity at all, why not rely simply on the attending of live performances, I present all of the initial arguments originally put forth when high fidelity was first developed, and which I feel are still valid. It is physically impossible, for most of us, to attend a live performance every time we wish to hear good music. Even if we as the audience have the time, outside of New York City and a few other centers of musical activity there just aren't that many performances of good music. An infinitely wider taste in music may be exercised through the general availability of records of every description. And, by and large, high fidelity can mean lots of good music at a very low price. As a not entirely unrelated aside, however, I must admit I have never seen anyone set out in calculated terms the equivalent number of tickets to live concerts represented by the cash outlay for some of the ultra high fidelity systems and extensive record libraries consumed by the elite of the high fidelity purchasers. I have heard and read of systems and libraries the cost of which would buy one practically a life-time attendance



pass at every musical performance of any kind at Carnegie Hall, these same systems being fortunate if they got an hour's airing once a week when there was company about to impress. But enough mooting of this perfidious consideration.)

- III -

There is another relationship between the two forms of listening, live at a concert hall and reproduced via high fidelity, which needs stressing. In both, all of the energies of the listener should be given over to the act of listening. In the concert hall this requirement is satisfied almost without the listener being aware of its need. And here is a very important aspect of attendance of live performances which some of the over-zealous advocates of high fidelity have failed to take note of. For the deepest appreciation, art, like any love object, must be courted with equally deep devotion. Courting has a function to both the pursued and the pursuer; it heightens the intensity of culmination for each.

Attending a live performance of music involves an inherent array of acts of courtship. The attendee must exercise some thought and discrimination in judging what he considers worth the effort of hearing. There is the expenditure of leisure time, and of course a certain outlay of money. Then there are the incidentals of dressing for the occasion and traveling to get to the place of performance. Who, in our material society, is going to spend time, money, and energy without actively seeking a solid return? Having reached his seat in the audience, our listener has courted his love over some distance, and is eagerly receptive to the culminating act of listening.

Other factors in the concert hall work to achieve this proper and very necessary emotional preparation. The listener is surrounded by a great number of others all obviously intent upon listening. How unnatural it would be for him to do otherwise! Whether or not he couples his listening with an attentive visual following of the movements of the conductor and/or the musicians, the listener can hardly avoid an awareness that here is an assembly of highly skilled practitioners engaged in what is obviously a most demanding undertaking. A sense of social obligation if nothing else demands that he give at least some attention to what they are doing, what it is they are striving to achieve. For many, there is a compelling fascination in watching the incredible precision and unity with which a symphony orchestra goes about its business, a magical wholeness which is linked to the beauty in sound which results.

What of the music lover comfortably ensconced at home with his high fidelity system, what acts of courtship are required of him? Once the initial outlay of his equipment is made, and records - purchase at some time other than the present moment - are at hand, the expenditure is nil except for the fractional amount the power requirements of his system may add to the electric bill. What dress is required of the home listener? Assuming it is his own home, any or none will do. What selection of music is open to him, what discrimination of choice must he exercise? Limited only by the extent of his record collection, he can easily run the risk of an embarrassment of riches.



What social support has he from other listening-bent music lovers? If he is a family man, and if his system is parked in the living room, this is all too often more an unfortunate matter of competition with talkative wives (or husbands, as the case may very well be), children, or dogs, not to mention television sets, telephones, door bells, and neighborly neighbors. And the compulsive vision of conductor and musicians hard at work? Only what the eye of the imaginative can conjure up.

These circumstances can lead to cruel frustrations for the music lover seriously intent on listening. There is nothing more devastating to the sensitive soul lost in the beauties of music than to suddenly have another's hand abruptly squash the volume, so carefully adjusted, because the music is waking the baby, or somebody can't hear somebody else on the telephone. A Beethoven coda silenced before its time because company has arrived can bring on a form of misanthropy inhuman in aspect.

Like all of man's minor tragedies, the above is funny - at a distance. And minor tragedies have the saving virtue distinct from major ones in that nobody dies. One survives, and the serious music lover will shake it off, to try again.

A much more invidious development is the attitude of nonchalance towards music having high fidelity in the home can breed. The once-serious listener can fall into the habit of loading up his automatic changer with hours upon hours of superb music, then picking up a book or magazine to while away the time with reading until the changer stops to indicate it is ready for a refill. Worse still is the FM tuner left playing constantly, providing background music for every conceivable activity (even, in one instance personally witnessed, to television viewing). The home is richly furnished in an ever-renewed wall tapestry of music, which might thrill anyone who paused to listen to it. But soon no one does. Eventually the high fidelity system is junked with last year's automobile, replaced by a transistorized portable radio that's easier to move about and which provides the time and news every hour as well as music in between.

Faced with these problems, how is the serious music lover to make use of his high fidelity system in attaining musical enjoyment? By now I think it obvious to the reader that the answer does not lie in the direction of a frantic scramble for electronic perfection or labor-saving gimmickry, but in a considered and mature integration of high fidelity music listening with the other activities present in any home. If you live alone and without close neighbors, or are filthy rich and have a dozen extra rooms to spare, part of the problem is already solved. But fortunately or unfortunately, most of us do not fit into either category. Of course, the listener may be blessed with a household of fellow music-loving listeners, and can set up his system anywhere, even in the living room. But this is an unusual state of grace. Privacy is usually required for undisturbed listening, and it must be had, even if this involves retreat to a seldom-used sun parlor, or even an attic or basement. In any event, it is best to keep the high fidelity system out of the living room, the focal point of everything else going on in the house. For the apartment dweller, this may be physically impossible. Undisturbed listening then becomes a matter of scheduling, of picking just those



few hours each week when listening will be free of all or most distractions. A choice of the type of music may also have to be applied; the prime hours reserved for string quartets and extended symphonies and operas, while overtures, operatic selections and miscellaneous potpourri are best fitted into brief respites in the general clamour.

Once the goals of privacy and non-disturbance have been achieved, certain externals of the high fidelity system itself can be manipulated to psychologically prepare the listener for the music about to be unfolded. The writer's own approach involves a number of steps. The first is the choice of composition or compositions to be heard; this is usually approached some hours in advance, with a mental deliberation over the records currently available for playing and some "inner-ear" listening to musical memory playbacks. The actual steps begin with the removal of the loudspeaker cabinet from its normal resting place atop a bookcase and its carefully adjusted placement on a stool so that it is in the ideal position in terms of the listening room's own acoustical properties, which place has been determined only after very considerable experimentation. (The place happens to be almost smack in the middle of a doorway, which accounts for the business with the stool. If a stereo record is to be played, the manipulation of the two speakers is too complex to be described here; optimum placement has yet to be determined, and all kinds of arrangements are being tried.) The system is switched on and the amplifier is given some minutes to warm up. In the meantime the desired record is located, removed from its jacket and then from its dust-cover, scrupulously wiped with a special cloth to free it of any speck of dust or static electricity, and finally placed on the turntable. The turntable is started and the needle, after also being inspected for dust and possibly wiped with a special brush, is delicately lowered by hand. The first few minutes of music is played, during which the music is listened to as objectively as humanly possible, and the volume, bass, treble, recording curve compensation, and if need be loudness control and rumble and scratch filters, are established in the optimum positions for the particular record. Adjustments completed, the turntable is stopped, the needle returned to the lead-in grooves, and, at last, the performance is begun.

I have no doubt but what the spectacle of the above rignarole would strike the ordinary phonograph changer-loader switch-thrower as somewhat ridiculous. And I admit the technical value of any of these steps may be open to question. This is unimportant. What is important is that the ritualistic nature of all this preparation for the simple act of playing a record also helps to prepare the listener. There is not a sudden transition from no music to music, from mundane surroundings to the dimension of musical sound. Instead, each step is charged with an increasing awareness of and attention to the music which is about to be heard. When the music does begin to unfold, the listener has been made ready, his receptivity alerted.

Needless to say, really serious music listening precludes eating, drinking or thumbing through magazines. Personally, I have found even smoking a distraction and generally refrain, but I believe stronger wills than mine may not find this so. Certainly the advertising of high fidelity equipment would be hard put to thrive without those charming photographs of the handsome young



intellectual reflectively puffing his pipe while the music rolls out of the ash blond speaker cabinets (positioned all of two or three feet distant from his face!), and a matching ash blond beauty curls lovingly on the floor at his knee.

- IV -

I have outlined what I consider the two main tenets governing the attainment of real musical enjoyment from high fidelity sound reproduction: a frequent hearing of live music to keep the inner ear fresh and accurate in its response to recorded music, and as sincere approach to the act of listening as one would put forth in a concert hall. In addition, I should like to draw the reader's attention to several of the pitfalls in the path of an unwary approach to high fidelity.

The manufacturing of high fidelity components is big business. And as is sadly the case with most big business today, the manufacturers have come to rely upon planned obsolescence to move their wares. Fortunately for the consumer it has proven more difficult to build into a power amplifier the tendency to short life-span that one finds in modern washing machines and power lawn-mowers. Inherently, electronic devices are more durable than mechanical apparatus because there is not the friction of moving parts. Also, the early tradition of professional quality engineering in high fidelity components, plus a high degree of technical savvy amongst many users, have helped to keep the standards of the industry far above the average.

What has appeared is a tendency to render equipment obsolete through engineering developments. Each year brings a block of improvements which move the reproduced sound authentically closer to the original. That the distance covered in these moves is sometimes almost imperceptible to the human ear, and can be detected only by fancy testing instrumentation or an optimistic imagination, in no way deters the manufacturer from implying in his advertisements that all previous components have been made immediately obsolete.

This constant move forward towards better sound has done much for high fidelity. Major break-throughs are occasionally made, such as the magnetic cartridge, the Williamson-type amplifier. But the wise listener will content himself with obtaining the best available at the time of purchase, then diligently avoid the component-replacing treadmill. It is too expensive an indulgence for most, and it will spoil the enjoyment of his system; a shadow of anxiety will constantly fall between him and the music. How much better would a warped record sound with a viscous dampened pickup? Is he missing the true highs, does his speaker system need a horn super-tweeter? This way lies neurosis, if not madness. Rest content with the thought that in five or ten years' time you can entirely revamp your system, and avail yourself of all the improvements developed in the intervening period.

It is for much the same reason that I do not feel a steady reading of any of the several high fidelity magazines is a good practice. Their intent may be laudable, their standards thoroughly honest. Their true function is suspect. Who, leafing through the reams of brilliantly composed advertising copy, glancing at the



artfully high-lighted photographs, can avoid the suspicion that his own system has aged past the point of usefulness?

Certainly the initiate to high fidelity needs all the technical awareness he can master to cope with the incredible multiplexity of components at the time of purchase. There are several excellent primers, in book form, available. One should be selected and read with diligence before a nickel is spent. I have already mentioned Canby's High Fidelity & The Music Lover; being myself no expert nor widely read in the literature of the field, I cannot truthfully say it is the best. But it is well written, and Mr. Canby rightfully relegates electronics as secondary to music, while frequently stressing the importance of assigning the proper dollar value to a given nth of perfection in sound reproduction. (Three hundred dollars will buy a good system. Six hundred will buy a better one, but it will not be twice as good as the first system. Twelve hundred will buy a superb system, but its superiority to the six hundred system will be less than that of the six hundred dollar system to the three hundred. Beyond a certain point, you get what you pay for but less of it with each additional dollar.) Further, Mr. Canby is the only expert to my knowledge to give extensive consideration to a subject strangely ignored by many others, perhaps because it involves not a dime extra of spending. This is the matter of speaker placement in relation to a room's acoustical properties. Anyone following his clearly presented instructions can make a cheap speaker sound good, and a good speaker marvellous. In stereo sound reproduction, the proper positioning of speakers assumes critical importance.

As with equipment, so with records does constant development and improvement work to elude the pleasure of the unwary. Again, the best approach is to sample all that is available in the way of recordings of a given composition. But once the preferred recording is purchased, let it represent the subject composition and ignore all subsequent recordings, whatever claims you hear or read about them. Eventually your original record will wear out, and can be replaced with the then best-available. Here, also, manufacturers make major break-throughs that the music lover cannot entirely ignore, and which may stimulate a complete restocking of one's record library. The superiority of microgroove records to the old 78's was such as to force an immediate and complete revolution, and indeed to permit the very development of true high fidelity. The introduction of the stereophonic record is currently working another revolution. At some opportune moment in the near future, when the manufacturers are satisfied the large-scale marketing of records has reached the saturation point, we may expect the wraps to come off the pre-recorded magnetic tape cartridge with fool-proof self loading mechanism. In turn, its superiority to the record will deal the latter a death blow. But it will take several years for the flaws to be eliminated, and for the industry to arrive at mutually accepted technical standards, as was the case with the microgroove recording and compensation curves, during which time the music lover can restock his library gradually and painlessly through a policy of attrition, replacing only those records which have become too worn for enjoyable playing.

I have deliberately skirted until now a full questioning of two concerns in high fidelity listening, one as old as the recording



process itself, the other comparatively new. The latter is the true value of stereophonic sound reproduction. Any high fidelity enthusiast who has given stereo sound a fair and full hearing must by now admit it is more than a gimmick. Properly applied, stereo has great musical importance. But those new to high fidelity should know at once that stereo involves almost double the cost of a comparable monophonic system, that as yet the number of good stereo records is limited, that stereophonic broadcasting is still very much up in the air, figuratively as well as literally, pending official adoption of the Crosby multiplex system, and that an effective utilization of stereo sound necessitates a good-sized listening area and a highly delicate positioning of the speakers both in relation to each other and to the listener to obtain the required "flooding" with sound. (It is fascinating, however, to conjecture upon the use of impending true three- and four-channel stereo in conjunction with trios and quartets to produce recorded sound that would, finally, deserve the appellation "high fidelity". There would be no technical limitation to following this with 120-channel stereo for full orchestra recordings, except that something like a concert hall would be required for the accomodating of the 120 separate playback systems that would be required. One can't help suspecting the engineers themselves may bring us full circle in the quest for music.)

The other concern cannot be so lightly treated. From its inception, proponents and opponents of high fidelity have argued the question as to the artistic validity of a "reproduced" musical performance. Each live performance of a musical composition is unique, having attributes peculiar to itself over and above the fixed musical notations of a given score. Even the same conductor, leading the same orchestra, over the course of time may display a considerable alteration in his interpretation of a particular work. Let us grant that the hearing of a recorded performance cannot be the same as the hearing obtained through presence at an actual performance. So what? Must this admitted change in kind necessarily invalidate the aesthetic potential in the music? I think anyone who has truly enjoyed listening to a fine recording may feel free to say no. And a curious thing about seeming faults is that they frequently turn out to be merits in disguise. If, in listening to a record, knowing I need not consider what this conductor does as opposed to that conductor, how this performance differs from that, what is superficially unique to this performance - having already determined these things during the very first hearing of the particular record - am I not the more free to familiarize myself with what is done, and how it is done? Perhaps at one listening the purist "live-music-only" listener is capable of completely fathoming all dimensions of the Eroica, as performed by Toscanini on a certain date, with a certain orchestra. I haven't achieved this, even after dozens of hearings. Somewhat like Prince Ferdinand, who on first hearing the Eroica demanded a second and yet a third playing at the same performance (princes, apparently, had quite a bit of spare time in those days), I want to hear the same thing again and again, for each time it is somehow both old and new, both known and unknown, both to be recognized as familiar and discovered as strange. I regret having to labor the point, but the objection seems so entirely so pernicious a one. Most people recognize that reading a work of literature twice over has artistic justification. Apparently the distinction between a printed book



and a recorded piece of music may be drawn on the basis that each copy of the book is an "original", and the reading of it an original experience, while a musical recording, as with a copy or print of a painting, is only an imitation, and the hearing of it an imitative experience. Leaving aside the question of the inevitable thinning of sound involved in the recording and reproduction process, the purists would appear to contend that the author of a work of literature intends that his work shall be read by an individual exactly as it is written, a composer that his work shall be performed (with all the connotations of expansion and interpretation implied by this verb) before a live audience on a strictly one-time-only basis, and that recording a musical performance is a dastardly counterfeiting of the artistic intent. In answer to this, I find myself conjuring up a picture of some Greek pundit of long ago aghast at finding his students wasting their time reading the Iliad. "This will never do," he cries with shock. "The flat, cold, lifeless written word has none of the power, the emotion, the subtle inflections and nuances of the spoken declamation. You must hear the Iliad from the lips of a poet, as it is spoken live." If he were an old pundit, we might hear him adding, as an afterthought, "And only Homer himself did it real justice."

As an afterthought of my own, I should like to observe that the complete high fidelity system will usually include an FM tuner and a quality tape recorder. The serious listener has no trouble in obtaining advance knowledge of the performance to be broadcast by the many stations devoted to good music. He is in a position to note when he may hear an actual, live performance of a work that interests him. While he is listening to the performance, which is the unique experience a recording is not, he may simultaneously record it on his own tape machine. Later, he can, by listening to the tape, re-live this unique experience as often as his musical interest prompts him to. This is known as having both the cake and the eating of it.

Composers have to eat as well, and I doubt that their views about musical recordings line up with the antagonisms of the musical purists. In the early heyday of our Western culture, all artists were supported by patrons, who were either royalty or the Church, these being the only parties with money to burn on such frivolities as art. They were also the only people around at the time who had the leisure to cultivate a sophisticated appreciation of art. Modern printing methods and mass literacy freed the authors from the bondage and strictures of one-man patronship. Good writers, really good writers who write, today don't starve to death. Maybe they don't get filthy rich like the hacks of popular fiction, Hollywood and television, but they don't starve. And if they live long enough, they even get Nobel prizes and (glory be!) medals from presidents at inauguration time. (As for those who decry mass literacy because of the hacks and the flood of garbage emptied out by the movies and tv, I can only feel spite for their holier-than-thou attitude. What miracles of evolution do they expect from the human race? Mass literacy is a very recent thing, and goes back less than a dozen generations.)

I see no reason not to hope that music recordings may effect mass musical literacy. Composers, under patrons, lived chancy lives, and the rewards seldom were in proportion to the talent. Mozart, by anybody's reckoning one of the greatest men in music, lived all



of 35 years and died in poverty, possibly of malnutrition. Matters are still not much improved today. A few years ago Bela Bartok died in New York City, in a condition that may not have been poverty but was far from what was due one of the musical geniuses of our time. Perhaps high fidelity will serve as the vital link between the composer and the mass audience.

With that happy thought in mind I bid you good listening.

- END -

Too bad W. C. Fields didn't live to join the Mickey Mouse Club

I'LL TELL YOU WHAT'S IN THE DAILY NEWS!

Being snippets collected more or less at random from the newspapers, mostly by Noreen, but Larry finds some too.....

From the New York Times, March 17, 1961

A new play, "Not In Our Stars," by Leonard Lee, has caught the fancy of Martin Goodman, who plans to produce it on Broadway next season with the Marquis de la Passardiere.

Mr. Goodman was the sponsor of the author's last work, "Deadfall," on Broadway in 1955, which co-starred Joanna Dru and John Ireland.

"Not In Our Stars" is described by Mr. Goodman as "being the opposite of science fiction--a dramatic factual account of the first Russian and American permanent bases on Mars in the year 1976."

(OK, I give up. What is science fiction, Mr. Zilch?)

From the Newark-Star Ledger, February 12, 1961 - a column called "Stars and Lovers"

My son has fallen in love with a silly little girl who hasn't a brain in her head. Of course, I may be judging her from a parent's viewpoint. But at the age of 21 she seems to me not to have any serious thoughts. I am a Ph.D., and our whole family are interested in music, art and literature. This Libra girl has won my son's heart but has nothing in common with him or any of us. He finds her fascinating. Why? Her conversation are about clothes, frivolous subjects, etc. She is, however, domestic and enjoys cooking.

Recently she surprised me by a certain loyalty for my son during his illness. He is not a strong young man. His profession is demanding and drains his strength. But he was never the athletic type. I wonder at the wisdom of their marriage, although I will not try to stop him. What do you think?

signed "Worried Mother of Gemini"

(A Ph.D, huh?)

Apartment for Rent Ad in the New York Times of March 14, 1961 one day after tenants of Washington Square Village had filed suit against the developers for "making false promises".

Washington Square Village                      2 Bedrooms \$315 & up

3 Bedrooms \$390 & up

"A new mode of living for the city dweller"



are sometimes misleading; Hamel grew up to be a public relations man, and it was Wilsey who turned into our one undisputed genius. Unless you want to dispute him, that is.

Fandom at large first heard of Russ when he published and I distributed a single-sheet (labelled both "Vol. I, No. I" and "A One-Shot Publication") newsletter sort of thing describing a sort of convention at the home of Joe Kennedy in Dover, N.J. The one copy I kept would be useful for blackmail purposes, being as neo-ish and semi-literate as they come. Russ signed himself "Felix," and a short while later began publishing a half-sized reprint zine called "FELIX, THE CATZINE" with myself as co-editor. In all fairness, I should confess that in FELIX I signed myself "Glub".

Russ went through fandom fairly rapidly, in what seemed to be a typical blaze-and-burnout fannish career. Since then, however, he has gone through numerous other hobbies in the same fashion. It begins to appear that he is a completist in the field of hobbies: if there's one he hasn't had, he fully intends to get around to it.

Meanwhile, he has become an expert at installing I setups for book publishers and makes good money at it. I knew he lived on Staten Island before we moved out here, but didn't know we'd meet each other on the S.I. Rapid Transit fairly frequently, or that he'd be dropping in at our house most Sunday evenings to talk about politics, literature, art, babies, fandom and such. It's been fun.

It's doubtful if he'll get any deeper into fandom this time around than contributing articles to Ice Age--too many other things he hasn't gotten around to yet, one of which is making a couple of million dollars. He now signs himself "R. Wilsey" for a reason, by the way. He figures the most famous people of all are those known by their last names alone, like Hemingway, Faulkner, Hitler, Lincoln, Picasso, Roosevelt...Roosevelt? Anyway, he further figures the process can be worked in reverse, and he can become famous faster by signing just his first initial and last name. He hasn't explained yet how doing this in FAPA is going to make him famous, but he'll undoubtedly have an explanation. He always does. LTS

Larry & Noreen Shaw  
16 Grant Place  
Staten Island 6, New York

Chicago in '62!

The Willis Fund Wants You!

Ron Ellik for TAFF!

FAPA 95  
May, 1961

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