blance to the original scene, it would have to be judged a very poor copy. [**AKG C12, Index 17**] Similarly, the listener who prefers his sound shrill and brassy is perfectly entitled to his preference, but *he* is not choosing on the basis of fidelity, either.

"This raises the question of whether high fidelity can, or should be, *better* than the real thing. [**AKG C12 (modified), Index 18**] Certainly it can be made to sound richer, or bigger, or more highly detailed in a recording than it ever is in the concert hall, and the net result may actually be more exciting than anything heard at a live performance. The gimmicked recording may even, on occasion, serve the intent of the music better than a concert hall performance, but whether it sounds better or worse than the original, it is not *true* to the original, and thus cannot be considered as a high-fidelity reproduction.

[**EAR The Mic, Index 19**] "Sound recording may eventually become a creative art in its own right, producing musical sounds that bear no relation to any natural sounds. Indeed, some branches of it—pops and so-called electronic music—are already well on their way in that direction. This is *not* high fidelity, though, and there's no sense pretending that it is.

"As long as we are concerned with the realistic reproduction of sound, the original sound must stand as the criterion by which the reproduction is judged."

[6] E. E. Bagley: *The National Emblem* (ADD) **1:18**
Nether Providence High School Band
Recording Venue: Nether Providence, PA
Recording Date: 1948
Recording Engineer: J. Gordon Holt
Microphone: Brush crystal
Recorder: Brush BK401 Sound Mirror ¼" open-reel recorder (mono)
Transfer to digital: Nakamichi 1000 R-DAT
Digital Transfer Engineer: Robert Harley

[7] Theodore Dubois: *Les Sept Paroles du Christ* (excerpt) (ADD) **4:32**
Philadelphia Oratorio Choir
Recording Venue: First Baptist Church, Philadelphia, PA
Recording Date: 1961
Recording Engineer: J. Gordon Holt
Microphones: two Sony C37 cardioids in ORTF configuration
Recorder: Ampex 60 1/2 ¼" open-reel recorder at 7.5ips (NAB EQ)
Transfer to digital: Nakamichi 1000 R-DAT
Digital Transfer Engineer: Robert Harley

[8] Maurice Ravel: *Chanson hébraïque* (Absolute Polarity Test) (ADD) **2:34**
Sam Jones (tenor), pianist unknown
Recording Venue: University of Wisconsin
Recording Date: 1964
Recording Engineer: J. Gordon Holt
Microphones: two Sony C37 cardioids in ORTF configuration
Recorder: Ampex 60 1/2 ¼" open-reel recorder at 7.5ips (NAB EQ)
Transfer to digital: Nakamichi 1000 R-DAT
Digital Transfer Engineer: Robert Harley

[9] Armas Järnefelt: *Praeludium* (ADD) **2:31**
Delaware Symphony Orchestra (in concert)
Recording Venue: Wilmington Opera House, Wilmington, DE
Recording Date: 1977
Recording Engineer: J. Gordon Holt
Microphones: two Sony C37 cardioids in ORTF configuration
Recorder: ReVox A77 ¼" open-reel recorder at 15ips, with dbx noise reduction (NAB EQ)
Transfer to digital: Nakamichi 1000 R-DAT
Digital Transfer Engineer: Robert Harley

These four recordings made by *Stereophile*'s founder, J. Gordon Holt, were selected from many hours of tape, and we are sure you will agree that the venerable JGH (in whose ears we trust) is truly talented when it comes to picking the best spot to place his pair of microphones. We are particularly proud to be able to present Gordon's very first tape recording, made in the year the magazine's current editor, John Atkinson, was born! (Gordon was 18; American tape recording was 2!)

A note on Gordon's preferred microphone technique as used in the three stereo tracks: "ORTF" refers to a technique devised by the French broadcasting organization (*Office de Radiodiffusion-Télévision Française*) whereby two directional ("cardioid") microphones are angled at 110° and spaced apart by around 7", the average distance between a human being's ears. The two microphones basically encode the directions of the voices and instruments by the different loudnesses they pick up. In itself this would give a very narrow stereo image—"fat mono" is how one writer described it—but by spacing the microphones apart, a little time information is added which ensures that the image extends across the full spread of the loudspeakers. (Sound reaching the microphones from the left, for example, will reach the left-facing microphone approximately 0.7ms before it reaches the right.) This is but one of a number of "purist" techniques, all of which share the characteristic of being able to capture a "real" soundstage, so that the listener's loudspeakers seem to disappear. Individual vocal and instrumental images on tracks 7–9 should be precisely located in the space between and behind the loudspeakers.

Track 8 features an "absolute phase" demonstration. The sound starts out with its overall polarity one way around, but finishes with its polarity inverted. According to many writers, especially Clark Johnsen in