

Haunted Castle") and the delicious waltz tune from *Gasparone*.

The playing is as thoroughly reliable and enjoyable as one would expect from an orchestra and conductor specializing in music of this sort, though the effect is reduced a little by the fact that some of these recordings are no longer in the first flush of youth. Operetta enthusiasts will know well enough whether they want an 'operetta for orchestra' collection such as this, whilst others may reasonably be attracted for agreeable background listening or as an introduction to this rich field.

A.M.L.

SALON MUSIC. *Die Berliner.* Orfeo/Harmonia Mundi © C126901A (52 minutes: DDD).
E. Strauss: *Helenen-Quadrille*, Op. 14.
Gounod: *Sérénade*. J. Strauss II: *Wein, Wein und Gesang—Waltz*, Op. 333. Tchaikovsky: *Swan Lake*, Op. 20—Dance of the swans.
Leoncavallo: *Mattinata*. Fučík: *Florentiner-Marsch*, Op. 214. J. Gilbert: *PUPPCHEN—Puppchen, du bist mein Augensterne*. Ketèlbey: *In a Persian Market*. Lincke: *Geburtstagsständchen*. Schmalstich: *Sehnsucht*. Fetrás: *Mondnacht auf der Alster*. Lehár: *DIE BLAUE MAZUR—Ich bin zum ersten Mal verliebt*.

There are salon orchestras and salon orchestras. Of the continental variety, I Salonisti manage to get by with a string quartet and piano, but the resultant sound is for me a shade spartan for works conceived for full orchestra. Quite how many players *Die Berliner* boast, I don't know. However, with the harmonium that is a valuable feature of the German salon orchestra, they manage a remarkably full sound. In Johann Strauss's *Wein, Wein und Gesang* and Fučík's *Florentiner-Marsch* one has to make few concessions for the size of orchestra and even fewer for playing that is thoroughly stylish throughout the collection.

Among less familiar items, the inclusion of Jean Gilbert's "Puppchen, du bist mein Augensterne" and Paul Lincke's *Geburtstagsständchen*—two utterly delightful examples of Berlin light music pre-First World War—invites a direct comparison with the Cölln Salon Orchestra's "Berliner Salon" album (Deutsche Harmonia Mundi—nla), with little to choose between the two orchestras. Of the other pieces in this collection, Eduard Strauss's *Helenen-Quadrille*, on themes from *La belle Hélène*, was an imaginative selection to attract lovers of Offenbach as well as Strauss.

For me, though, the major attraction comes in the final two items. For too long we have awaited a recording of Oscar Fetrás's gorgeous waltz *Mondnacht auf der Alster* to follow up Paulik's 1950s Vanguard LP recording (reissued on Philips, 6/63—nla). The performance here might have benefited from a little of Paulik's dash (as well as his full orchestra), but it is a delight to have the work in the catalogue again. Then, as a rousing finale, comes an orchestral arrangement of a swinging march duet from Lehár's little-known operetta *Die blaue Mazur* that sets the seal on a quite captivating programme.

A.M.L.

STAGE & SCREEN

Christmas may now be a distant memory but festive cheer abounds in John Williams's music for the seasonal comedy-thriller *Home Alone* (CBS © 40-46595; CD46595: 57 minutes: DDD). Despite two songs with some saccharine lyrics from Leslie Bricusse, this is one of the composer's least top-heavy scores for some time and, with its frequent allusions to *The Nutcracker Suite*, certainly the most instantly likeable. First-rate recording, too. John Schlesinger's *Pacific Heights* (Varèse Sarabande/Pinnacle © VSC5286; VSD5286: 37 minutes: DDD) is a rather more unpleasant thriller with an appropriately tense and atmospheric score from Hans Zimmer, a British

composer currently enjoying a productive period in Hollywood (*Driving Miss Daisy* and *Days of Thunder* are just two of the recent American films he has worked on). His music has been sensibly presented on disc as a suite in four parts rather than a series of brief cues, but although both recording and performance are admirably slick, scores for this type of drama inevitably lose something when divorced from the film.

Bernard Herrmann provided several celebrated scores for the thrillers of Alfred Hitchcock and whilst *North by Northwest* (Unicorn-Kanchana © UKCD2040: 38 minutes: DDD) may lack the compelling intensity and romantic ardour of, say, *Vertigo*, the "kaleidoscopic orchestral fandango" (to use the composer's own words) which opens the film and is then adapted throughout the score is definitely one of Herrmann's most dazzling creations. If Laurie Johnson and the London Studio Symphony Orchestra cannot quite capture the pungency of the original performance (a fact compounded by the clean but rather dry recording), this is nevertheless a worthwhile reissue.

Henry Mancini's association with the director on *Frenzy* in 1972 was a less happy one; his entire score was scrapped on the grounds of being "too menacing" and replaced with music by Ron Goodwin. However, thanks to "Mancini In Surround: Mainly Monsters, Murders And Mysteries" (RCA Victor Red Seal © RK60471; RD60471: 61 minutes: DDD) we can now hear his rejected main title for the first time and question Hitchcock's decision, as the Mancini piece seems far more in keeping with the mood of the opening sequence (the camera journeys slowly down the River Thames to rest on a corpse) than its successor. Amongst the other previously unrecorded themes featured in this typically ingratiating and impeccably performed collection are *Fear, Without a Clue, Nightwing* and *Mommie Dearest*, along with a suite from the unfortunate Peter Sellers version of *The Prisoner of Zenda* (which includes a most sumptuous Coronation waltz) and a selection from a couple of the monster movies Mancini worked on (anonymously) during his days at Universal in the 1950s. Collectors of the "Classic Film Scores" reissues will already be aware of the extra presence the Dolby Surround encoding system has added to those albums, but this is the first to be both recorded and mixed using the process and the results are certainly impressive (even when reproducing the disc conventionally).

John Corigliano's resolutely modernistic score for *Altered States* (RCA Victor Gold Seal © GK83983; GD83983: 40 minutes: ADD) must rank as one of the most adventurous ever written for a major Hollywood production. The film's fantastic plot depicted the results of dangerous experimentation into primal regression via a series of increasingly hallucinatory images, and the score could be regarded as a *Rite of Spring* for the 1980s, especially for those who admired Disney's interpretation of Stravinsky in *Fantasia*. However, away from the screen, the music's unrelenting brutality (even the love theme affords little sanctuary), heightened by the excellent remastering, will not appeal to the faint-hearted.

The most winning disc to come my way this month is the CD transfer of suites from Miklós Rózsa's *The Thief of Bagdad* and *The Jungle Book* (Colosseum/Pinnacle © CST34 8044: 48 minutes: ADD). Scored for Sir Alexander Korda in 1940 and 1942 respectively, the former's exotic setting and magical set-pieces inspired Rózsa to produce the most inventive and vibrantly romantic work of his career. The seven excerpts (including the meltingly beautiful love theme and scintillating "Gallop of the Flying Horse") are so brilliantly presented by the composer and the Nuremberg Symphony Orchestra that one wishes they had recorded this eminently fertile score in its entirety. However, *The Jungle Book* (heard here minus the German narration that accompanied its original release) is equally alluring and conductor Klaus Peter Seibel brings out the score's colour and sweeping excitement with great success. The warm and quite spacious recording serves both suites admirably.

Rózsa is also the subject of "Spellbound: The Classic Film Scores of Miklós Rózsa" (RCA Victor Gold Seal © GK80911; GD80911: 54 minutes: ADD), which on its original release (1975) was slightly overshadowed by three albums the composer recorded for Polydor. Now those volumes are no longer available (but surely destined for reincarnation on CD before long?) Charles Gerhardt's more lushly recorded collection can be better appreciated. The composer's singularly rhapsodic style is well represented by the three genres with which he is most strongly identified—the oriental fantasy (*Thief and Jungle Book*), the psychological drama (*The Red House, The Lost Weekend, Spellbound*) and the costume epic (*Ivanhoe, Knights of the Round Table*)—making for a strong and involving programme performed with all the National Philharmonic's now well-acknowledged flair.

"Lost Horizon: The Classic Film Scores of Dimitri Tiomkin" (RCA Victor Gold Seal © GK81669; GD81669: 46 minutes: ADD) features all of the familiar trademarks (the ebullient use of counterpoint, the lavishly detailed orchestration, the liberal employment of a large chorus, the seemingly endless expanse of melody) that make Tiomkin, more than any other film composer, so prone to either total admiration or outright abhorrence. As this collection has always been the most oddly unsatisfying in the series, with Gerhardt's readings more overly-respectful than usual, it is therefore unlikely to sway his critics. However, for the converted, the 23-minute suite from *Lost Horizon* (one of Tiomkin's most opulent works, performed here by 157 musicians), the grandiose choral finale from the Cinerama travelogue *Search for Paradise* (which, courtesy of the film's stereo soundtrack, must have blasted the original 1958 audience out of the cinema!) and the muscular prelude from *The Guns of Navarone* provide some staggering moments of musical showmanship, preserved in another aptly spectacular production.

ROBERT SEELEY.

BRASS & MILITARY

"A Concert Performance" is certainly what is provided by the band of HM Royal Marines (C-in-C Naval Home Command), a mixture designed to please a bandstand audience, old, middle-aged and young. Three resurrections from what now seems the past are Schubert's *Marche militaire*, Suppé's *Morning, Noon and Night in Vienna* and the bassoon classic *Lucy Long*, continuing with a *March of Youth*, Khachaturian's *Sabre Dance*, and the old circus march *Barnum and Bailey's Favourite*. Arrangements of *Here's a Health*, *All Through the Night*, and Grieg's *Dance of the Imps* (the latter in pop style), precede a *Northern Echoes Suite* based on Geordie songs. The finale, and *pièce de résistance*, is Tchaikovsky's *Marche slave*, which I have always found very resistable. Here it is given a rousing performance, if a little laboured in places, and ends a programme I found well planned and well played (Music Masters © MMC0665; MMCD412: 52 minutes: DDD).

"Tournament For Brass" by the Williams-Fairey Engineering Band gets its title from the second item on the programme, a standard work for BB by the late lamented Eric Ball, who provided so much fine music in the genre. A little dated for modern ears perhaps, but impeccably written for the medium, shapely and melodious. William Relton provides a jazzy piece called *The Trouble with the Tuba is...* Nothing wrong with it here as played by Shaun Crowther. Another BB luminary, Roy Newsome, has a *Fantasy on Swiss Airs* which features Ian Peters' euphonium, and is also the arranger of a movement from Massenet's *Neapolitan Scenes*, the one which audiences can't resist clapping before the last chord. After which *Bohemian Rhapsody*, a promising title, turned out to be the pop tune by Freddie Mercury of Queen.

GRAMOPHONE