Since about the turn of the century newly invented methods of sound recording began to be used regularly to document the activities of performing artists in many fields. In the last eighty years or so many examples of musical and theatrical performances, and also of literary readings and political oratory, have been preserved through the medium of recorded sound. The academic world's recognition of the educational and scholarly value of this material has been slow, and even today it is by no means universal. Yale University was one of the first institutions of higher learning and research in this country to perceive this value and, as the result of this perception, the Yale Collection of Historical Sound Recordings (HSR for short) was established as a part of the University Library in 1961.

The Collection's purpose, which was formulated at its inception and which continues to guide its activities, is to collect, preserve, and make available for study sound recordings in the fields of the Western classical music and theater, poetry and literature, history and politics. It was decided initially not to collect jazz, popular, folk, or non-Western music, because the University did not offer courses in these fields and also because they were represented in fine archives already in existence. Recently however, the Collection has accepted gifts of jazz and ethnographic records, since courses are now offered at Yale which may use such material.

The man to whom HSR mostly owes its conception and continuing existence is Laurence C. Witten, II, Mus. B. Yale 1951. His interest in the various 19th-century schools of singing naturally led him to record collecting, and over the years he has been able to acquire an impressively comprehensive collection of the recorded examples of early vocalism. It was
the initial deposit of the Witten collection at Yale and the continuing donations from it which made the inauguration of HSR at all possible. Mr. Witten continues the acquisition and donation of early vocal recordings, and his collection forms the largest and most important part of HSR. In 1960 he acquired the renowned collection of rare vocal recordings of George T. Keating of California which, combined with his own collection, made his the most important single holding of such material anywhere; the entire Witten collection has been available for study at Yale since 1964. In 1968 the collection of the late Albert Wolf of New York City added several hundred important new acquisitions to the Witten holdings.

HSR's preeminence in the field of early vocal recordings thus established, it was important to make the Collection's holdings more comprehensive in the domains of later vocal, as well as instrumental and spoken, records. The attainment of this goal has been made possible thanks to judicious acquisition policy and a series of generous donations, only the most important of which can be mentioned in a short article.

In the first several years of its existence HSR was enriched by five major gifts: Mr. H. William Fitelson made the first donation from his collection of private recordings of the Theatre Guild radio productions which document an important facet of American theatrical life during the 1930's and 1940's. The late Mr. Warren H. Lowenhaupt, Yale's Curator of Bookplates, gave his and his late brother's collection which, in addition to some early phonographic equipment, contains impressively complete runs of certain series of middle-period European records and a large set of radio broadcasts by Toscanini, Hofmann, and others. Mr. Lucius H. Barbour, Yale 1926, donated the collection of his late father, Lucius B. Barbour, Yale 1900, remarkable for its vertical-cut records. Mrs. George J. Openhym gave a fine collection of European recordings formed in the period of 1935-1950, and later she acquired and gave to Yale the world-famous S. J. Capes Collection of piano recordings. Other especially generous donations have been
made by Edgar H. Ailes, Robert L. Autrey, Frank Brief, Mrs. Arthur Cavanaugh, John T. Finkenstaedt, H. William Fitelson (further recordings of Theatre Guild radio productions), Peter Fritsch, the late Herbert Gfroerer, Joseph Greenspan, Professor and Mrs. S. Ellsworth Grumman, the late Loomis Havemeyer, Mr. and Mrs. C. Beecher Hogan, Mrs. Mircea M. Iurascu, David Kendig, Robert E. Kimball, Mrs. George E. Lindsay (the important collection of the late Austin Morris), Thomas E. Marston, Milton Academy, Mrs. Quincy Porter, Samuel P. Puner, Stuart Ryder, the late Herbert R. Simonds, the late Walter Toscanini, Richard Warren Jr., The Westminster School, John Wolfson, and The Yale Club of New York City.

These and many more donations as well as constant acquisitions have resulted in the Collection's well-balanced holdings of old records. Current recordings of potential historical value have not been neglected either. Several companies and individual producers have realized the mutual benefit—for them and for HSR—of having their current issues stored in a well-established institutional archive; numerous other companies have been particularly generous in offering discounts. As a result, the Collection's holdings have more than doubled in the first twelve years of its existence: from the original gift of approximately 20,000 records from the Witten Collection in 1961 to the present tally of more than 60,000.

Recordings of music account for by far the largest part of these holdings. An important group among them consists of performances by composers of their own works. This is not the place to discuss the attitudes that various composers have taken toward the phonograph, attitudes that cover the whole spectrum from total indifference to enthusiasm. It suffices to say that for the 20th-century composer the phonograph recording has gradually acquired the double role it plays today. First of all, it is an important supplement to the score, amplifying written performance indications and making the composer's intentions with regard to the performance more explicit than was ever possible by means of print alone. Secondly, the function of recording is similar to that of the piano.
score in the 19th century: it makes fast dissemination of new works possible. Today this double role of recordings is almost universally recognized by composers, and it can be assumed that most of the important works premiered since the Second World War have been made available in recorded form soon after their first performances, often with the participation of the composers themselves. HSR recognizes the importance of this documentation for the history of 20th-century music and regards the acquisition of composer-related records as being of top priority as far as current issues are concerned. Luciano Berio, Pierre Boulez, Benjamin Britten, John Cage, Aaron Copland, Hans Werner Henze, Witold Lutoslawski, Olivier Messiaen, and Karlheinz Stockhausen are only some of the present-day composers whose recordings are represented in the Collection.

Before the introduction of the long-playing record, composers' recordings were probably less widespread, but still most of the major composers active between the two world wars used the medium of the phonograph at one time or another. The Collection has complete or nearly complete files of recorded performances by such important figures of that era as Béla Bartók, Henry Cowell, Edward Elgar, George Gershwin, Paul Hindemith, Arthur Honegger, Charles Ives, Darius Milhaud, Francis Poulenc, Sergei Rachmaninoff, Maurice Ravel, Arnold Schoenberg, Richard Strauss, and Igor Stravinsky. For some of them the encounter with the phonograph was brief and inconsequential; for others (notably for Strauss, Elgar, Hindemith, Stravinsky) it was a regular, life-long affair. The recorded heritages of Strauss and Stravinsky are particularly interesting, since the exceptionally long careers of both composers allowed them to record some of their works several times.

For obvious reasons composers' recordings dating from the earliest period of the phonograph, that preceding the introduction of the electrical recording process in 1925, are even less common than those of the pre-LP times. Nevertheless, even then some such recordings were made, and the HSR is proud to list among its discs those made by Claude Debussy, Enrique
Granados, Edvard Grieg, Ruggiero Leoncavallo, Camille Saint-Saëns, and others.

The recorded works of composers who were in some way connected with the Yale School of Music are given special consideration by HSR. The Collection endeavors to have as many recordings as possible of the music of two of the most important of those composers—Charles Ives and Paul Hindemith. The Ives file is particularly interesting, since it includes some unique private recordings made by the composer himself.

A related category of collected material consists of recordings made by musicians who were in one way or another acquainted with the composer (e.g., as his students or friends), musicians whose performances were approved by him, who participated in premieres, to whom a work was dedicated, etc. The value of such recordings as documenting the authentic wishes of the composer should be treated very cautiously, and at any rate each case has to be weighted on its individual merits. Nevertheless, short of recordings made by the composer himself, they are the next best thing. The quantity of material in this category is much too large to allow a complete discussion here. There is hardly an important composer from the late 19th century onward who did not have some close associates who made records.

Probably the largest single category of documents collected at HSR consists of recordings of performers who were not necessarily associated with any particular composer but who were famous and influential enough to be important in their own rights. The value of composer-related sound recordings notwithstanding, it is in the field of late 19th- and 20th-century performance practice that the Collection has most to offer to the scholar and student alike. For the historian of composition, sound recordings are valuable as supplementary material to more basic sources, such as scores, compositional sketches, etc. For the student of performance practice in the last hundred years or so the most important source material is preserved on discs.

As was mentioned before, HSR's greatest strength
lies in its holdings of early vocal records. Particular emphasis is put on collecting those recordings which might--directly or indirectly--throw some light on the 19th-century schools of singing. Thus, the pupils of the great teachers of the last century, e.g., of Manuel Garcia (1805-1906), Pauline Viardot-Garcia (1821-1910), Francesco Lamperti (1811-1892), Mathilde Marchesi (1821-1913), Giovanni Sbriglia (1832-1916), and Julius Stockhausen (1826-1906) are well represented.

Documentation exists for virtually every important operatic center in Europe and America. In recent years the Collection has concentrated its efforts on the recordings which are among the most difficult to obtain in the West--those of the singers of the Imperial Opera in St. Petersburg, Moscow, and other important Russian centers. Among the earliest and most important of these recordings, the ones made by the great soprano and creator of several of Tchaikovsky's heroines, Medea Mei-Figner (1858-1952), might be mentioned.

The earliest singers of the Vienna State Opera who made records were active during the directorship of Gustav Mahler. Recordings of Marie Gutheil-Schoder (1874-1935), Anna Bahr von Mildenburg (1872-1947), Sarah Cahier (1870-1951), Selma Kurz (1874-1933), Leo Slezak (1873-1946), Sophie Sedlmair (1857-1939), Fritz Schrödter (1855-1924), Wilhelm Hesch (1860-1908), and others offer a glimpse of this celebrated era.

Activities at the other great Central European opera houses, especially Berlin and Bayreuth, are also well documented; in the case of the Wagner Festspielhaus, virtually from the very beginning. Among the earliest recorded Bayreuth singers are Marianne Brandt (1842-1921), Ernest van Dyck (1861-1923), Adolf Wallnöfer (1854-1946), and--most notably--Lilli Lehmann (1848-1929), who sang three roles during the first Bayreuth Festival in 1876, and Hermann Winkelmann (1849-1912), the creator of the role of Parsifal.

Operatic singing in Italy is documented even more completely: there is hardly an important Italian singer active during the past seventy years who is not represented in Yale's holdings. Among those who did
record were some active already in the 1860's (e.g., Adelina Patti) and the 1870's (e.g., Francesco Tamagno, Francesco Marconi, Mattia Battistini, Francesco Navarini, and others).

Some of the first recorded French singers were active even earlier. The Collection has a cylinder, believed to be unique, made by the famous baritone and teacher Jean-Baptiste Faure (1830-1914), who made his debut at the Opéra-Comique in 1852. There is an impressive group of recorded artists who were performing already in the 1860's, e.g., Victor Capoul (1839-1924), Léon Melchissedec (1843-1925), Pierre Gailhard (1848-1918), and Victor Maurel (1848-1923).

Of the early recorded singers active mostly in England we might mention Emma Albani (1847-1930), Edward Lloyd (1845-1927)—the creator of the title role in Elgar's The Dream of Gerontius, and Sir Charles Santley (1834-1922) who studied with the Garcias. However, the greatest opera houses of both England and America, Covent Garden and the Metropolitan, retained a more cosmopolitan character (both in their repertory and in the roster of their artists) than theatres elsewhere in Europe. The recent history of those two theatres is practically synonymous with the history of great operatic singing of the last seventy years, and it is well preserved on records.

Operatic singing, however, is not the only kind of vocal recording collected at Yale. German, French, English, and American operetta is represented too and so is Lieder singing. The Collection has creator records from the operettas of Johann Strauss, e.g., from Der Zigeunerbaron made by Mizzi Günther (1879-1961) and Alexander Girardi (1850-1918), Franz Lehár, Jacques Offenbach, Gilbert and Sullivan, Victor Herbert, and others. Among the early recorded examples of Lieder singing it is worth mentioning the remarkable discs made by Sir George Henschel (1850-1934), who was the first to devote an entire concert to Lieder, and who followed the old tradition of self-accompanied Lieder singing. Another of the early Lieder specialists whose records are preserved at HSR is Gustav Walter (1834-1910), the friend and interpreter of Brahms.
Although piano playing was never recorded as extensively as singing (nothing was), Yale has much to offer students of late 19th- and 20th-century pianism. The teachings of the great 19th-century pianists are documented in the recordings made by their pupils. The school of Clara Schumann and Johannes Brahms is represented by Fanny Davies (1861-1934), Nathalie Janotha (1856-1932), Adelina de Lara (1872-1961), Carl Friedberg (1872-1955), and others. A large number of Franz Liszt's pupils made records too: Moritz Rosenthal (1862-1946), Arthur Friedheim (1859-1932), Frederic Lamond (1868-1948), Emil von Sauer (1862-1942), Conrad Ansgorge (1862-1930), José Vianna da Motta (1868-1948), and Eugène D'Albert (1864-1932) being the most celebrated ones. The Collection has a large number of the recordings made by Josef Hofmann (1876-1957), who was Anton Rubinstein's most important pupil. The last great 19th-century piano school, that of Theodor Leschetizky, is well documented in the recordings of Ignacy Jan Paderewski (1860-1941), Arthur Schnabel (1882-1951), Ossip Gabrilovich (1878-1936), Mieczyslaw Horszowski (born 1892), and many others. The French tradition is preserved on records made by Francis Planté (1839-1934), Louis Diémer (1843-1919), Raoul Pugno (1852-1914), Isidore Philipp (1863-1958), Edouard Risler (1873-1929), and Alfred Cortot (1877-1962). The very selective lists of artists presented here are meant just to indicate the scope of the material at HSR. The whole history of pianism since the beginnings of recorded sound until the most recent times is well documented by the holdings of the Collection.

Among the organists who made records, the pupils and friends of César Franck are certainly the most venerable group. Charles-Marie Widor (1844-1937), Louis Vierne (1870-1937), and Charles Tournemire (1870-1939), recorded their own works and improvisations, thus preserving the late 19th-century French tradition of organ playing.

A more international representation is available for the early violin records. Joseph Joachim (1831-1907), Pablo de Sarasate (1844-1908), Eugène Ysaÿe (1858-1931), Jenö Hubay (1858-1937), and Leopold Auer (1845-1930) are the oldest recorded violinists. Their
recordings, as well as those of the most important violinists active since their time, are available for the researcher in the Yale Collection. Some of the early recorded string quartets might be mentioned in this context also: the Capet, the Rosé, the Bohemian, and the Flonzaley Quartets were most famous in their times.

The orchestra did not record well by the acoustic process, and for this reason there are very few interesting orchestral recordings made before 1925. Most of the important conductors who did record in the acoustic era lived long enough to make electrical recordings also, a fact which limits the interest of their acoustical discs. Nevertheless, the art of at least two conductors of great significance, Arthur Nikisch (1855-1922) and Edouard Colonne (1838-1910), was preserved by means of the acoustical process only.

In the short survey above I have concentrated on the earliest recorded items simply to indicate the chronological limit of historical sound recordings. Although the Yale Collection does emphasize the early performers in its holdings, I do not want to imply that the more recent artists are neglected. In fact HSR strives to document the entire history of performance practice available on records, from the beginning in the later 19th century to the present.

A special category of materials collected at HSR embraces The Yale Collection of the Literature of the American Musical Theatre, founded by the late Robert L. Barlow, '33, and preserved at Yale for many years before HSR was created. Recently, however, it was decided to combine the holdings of both Collections in order to avoid unnecessary duplication of the materials. The American Musical Theatre Collection consists of records, sheet music, scores, librettos, books, and related materials. Probably the most valuable part of the Collection consists of personal papers (manuscripts, scrap-books, etc.) left to Yale by several famous composers and librettists of the American musical scene, most notably by Cole Porter.

The spoken records at Yale consist mostly of the
recordings made by authors themselves. This type of recording did not really become popular until the arrival of the long-playing record. Nevertheless, interesting examples exist from much earlier times. Let it suffice to mention here the recordings made by Alfred Tennyson (1809-1892), Robert Browning (1812-1889), William Butler Yeats (1865-1939), James Joyce (1882-1941), Guillaume Apollinaire (1880-1918), Paul Valéry (1871-1945), Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910), Vladimir Mayakovsky (1893-1930), and many others. From recent years, original tapes for the Yale Series of Recorded Poets have been housed in HSR.

The voices of the famous actors of the past are also collected. The earliest among those are the Americans Edwin Booth (1833-1893), Ada Rehan (1860-1916), Joseph Jefferson (1829-1905), Edward H. Sothern (1859-1933), Julia Marlowe (1866-1950), and Otis Skinner (1858-1942). A large set of the recorded rehearsals for the Theatre Guild broadcasts is a priceless document for the more recent past of the American stage.

Among the earliest English recorded actors are Sir Henry Irving (1838-1905), Dame Ellen Terry (1848-1928), Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree (1853-1917), and Sir Johnston Forbes-Robertson (1853-1937). The voices of the important actors of later generations, including the present one, are also preserved at HSR.

The French theater is represented by recordings of Sarah Bernhardt (1844-1923), Mounet-Sully (1841-1916), Victorien Sardou (1831-1908), Coquelin aîné (1841-1909), and others. The earliest of the German actors on records are Bernhard Baumeister (1829-1917), Josef Kainz (1858-1910), and Adolf von Sonnenthal (1834-1909). Louise Phister (1816-1914), Otto Zinck (1824-1908), Emil Poulsen (1842-1911), Olaf Poulsen (1849-1923), and Henrik Klausen (1844-1907) represent the early Scandinavian theater, and from the Italian stage come the recordings of Tommaso Salvini (1830-1915).

The Collection has also some interesting early recordings made by political figures, e.g., the presidential campaign records made by William Jennings Bryan (1860-1925) and William H. Taft (1857-1930) in 1908.
However, the documentary recordings of more recent times are collected less extensively, since it is believed that sound film is a more adequate medium for the preservation of current events.

One final group of spoken materials should be mentioned here. Mrs. Vivian Perlis, Lecturer in American Studies and Assistant Curator for Yale's Charles E. Ives Collection, has been conducting for several years an oral history project consisting of recorded interviews with persons who knew Charles Ives. She has begun a related project of recorded interviews with composers and performers who have been important figures in American music of this century. Copies of these interviews, which present invaluable research material, are deposited at HSR.

Thus I have presented in a most sketchy way the scope of the Yale Collection of Historical Sound Recordings. The media on which the recordings are preserved at the Collection are first of all discs, and to a lesser extent cylinders and tapes. It is the ambition of HSR to have each recording the way it was originally issued. Dubbings are collected only when the originals are not available. Due to their notorious unreliability as documents, piano rolls are not collected.

The sound recordings are supplemented by an extensive collection of printed materials of related interest, for example, the catalogues of many record companies, complete runs of many important relevant periodicals, discographies, books, and other publications concerning recorded artists and the history of the sound industry. Although early phonographic equipment is not sought, interesting examples are always welcomed as donations.

In addition, a unique research tool has been created over the years at the HSR. Staff members have been compiling matrix-number tables embracing 78 rpm records seen either at the Collection or during special research at other collections. The tables give matrix numbers, label information, recording dates, engineers, additional performers, and similar data. The project has
embraced the records manufactured by the following international companies and all of their subsidiaries, affiliates, and licensees: Columbia, Deutsche Grammophon, The Gramophone Company (His Master's Voice), Odeon and Fonotipia, Parlophone, and Victor. The tables have rendered invaluable services in discographical research, allowing researchers to estimate recording dates, for example, where exact information is not available.

The Collection is open to students and researchers regardless of whether they are affiliated with the University or not. It operates weekdays from 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. No appointment is necessary for research which does not involve help from the staff or listening to recordings; however, in most cases users are advised to make an appointment at least a week in advance. No materials can circulate, but the equipment available on the premises ensures the best reproduction of recorded sound that is possible today. Because of limited personnel only brief research questions can be answered by mail; however, given sufficient time, the staff will try to check final drafts of discographical research projects against HSR's holdings when visits are not possible (as numerous discographies published in recent years acknowledge). Tape dubbings are made on the Collection's own professional equipment for the purpose of reissue of historical records by original or authorized companies. Among the record companies which have been assisted in this way in the past have been Columbia and Deutsche Grammophon.

At the present time HSR serves more than 2,000 users each year, from casual listeners to serious researchers. Several Yale classes meet regularly at the Collection, and tapes are made for others. The Collection proudly points to the first doctoral dissertation based in part on its holdings¹ and to the numerous discographies compiled at Yale. Most recently the Collection inaugurated its own publication series with

the discography of Charles Ives, compiled by Curator Richard Warren Jr.² This discographical series will be continued in the future.

The Yale Collection of Historical Sound Recordings may be used for entertainment, for educational purposes, or as the subject of scholarly research. The history of HSR, undoubtedly one of the finest archives anywhere in the world, illustrates the gradual recognition by the general public as well as by the academic community that the heritage of the phonograph can have a serious educational and scholarly value.

² Richard Warren Jr., comp., Charles E. Ives: Discography (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Library Publications Office, 1972). Historical Sound Recordings Publication Series Number One. (Box 1603A, Yale Station, New Haven, Conn. 06520.)

Karol Berger, a full-time employee for HSR, 1971-73, is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Music at Yale University and currently at work on his dissertation.