

Editor's note: This series of essays by Dr. Hospers was written in the 1970s and were originally published by Robert D. Kephart in his Libertarian Review as a ten-part series of shorter installments. This series contains references to specific phonograph recordings. These are no longer available (except perhaps in collectors' markets that specialize in vintage vinyl). Digitally remastered versions of these performances are often available today either as downloadable MP3 files from the Internet or on audio CDs as those technologies have superseded phonograph records. This series of essays on music listening has also been posted by Roger Bissell on the Objectivist Living website.

INTRODUCTION TO CLASSICAL MUSIC

A Guide to Recorded Classical Music in Six Parts

By John Hospers

PART V. VOCAL MUSIC: SONG AND OPERA

The earliest music of the Western world that has come down to us is entirely vocal. In Parts V and VI we shall examine vocal music, both with and without instruments. In Part V we shall consider secular music--songs in all their varieties, oratorios, operas. In Part VI we shall consider sacred music, sung primarily by choral groups.

Medieval music sounds strange and somewhat eerie to most 20th-century ears. Secular music of the period is comparatively well represented on records: for example, Everest 3270, "Medieval Music and Songs of the Troubadors"; Decca 79438, "Medieval Roots"; Bach 70680, "Medieval Europe"; Argo 5443, "Medieval English Lyrics"; and Nonesuch 71120, "In a Medieval Garden."

One of the loveliest of the early (twelfth century) songs that have survived is "Summer is Icumen In," which is the first song in the four-record album, "Folk Song and Minstrelsy" (Vanguard 7624). The old English folksong, "Greensleaves," (the song which is the basis for the famous Vaughn-Williams "Fantasia on a Theme from Greensleaves") follows it, but most of the album is devoted to folk songs of the nineteenth century.

Particularly interesting as an example of vocal-with-instrumental music is Telefunken 9524, "Ceremonial Music of the Renaissance," containing selections from the thirteenth- and fourteenth-century vocal music with instrumental accompaniment—such instruments as tenor and alto trombones, recorder, zinc, and crumhorn, Nonesuch 71058, "Music from the Court of Burgundy," contains fascinating fourteenth- and early fifteenth-century songs and Odyssey 32160178 contains vocal selections from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

Secular music of various nationalities is well performed on Turnabout 34058 and Mace S-9062, both entitled "Music of the Renaissance." A three-record

set, "Seraphim Guide to Renaissance Music," contains representative songs from various European nations, many of them memorable and others that are of more historic than aesthetic interest.

Interesting vocal selections from the fifteenth century include: Nonesuch 71010, "Masterpieces of the Early French and Italian Renaissance"; Turnabout 34316, "Airs from the Courts and Times of Henry IV and Louis XIII"; Nonesuch 71272, "Amorous Dialogues of the Renaissance," with love-lyrics of the sixteenth century by Lasso, Gabrieli, Willaert, Morley, et cetera; and (less interesting musically) Turnabout 34485, a collection of "Kissing and Drinking Songs." If you can get Pleiades-label records, you will find very profitable their series on early music: Pleiades 250, late medieval; 252, late fifteenth and early sixteenth century; and 255 and 256, late sixteenth century. Very enjoyable is Nonesuch 71012, "Court and Ceremonial Music of the 16th Century." Also interesting is Candide 31005, "English Secular Music of the Late Renaissance," and Decca 7942 is a fine set of vocal music from the Italian baroque.

Earlier in this series I mentioned the partly instrumental, partly vocal two-record set, "Music of Shakespeare's Time." Get it; it is a real gem. Two interesting single records are "Shakespearean Songs and Consort Music" (RCA VICS-1226), and "Songs of Shakespeare's Time" (Everest 3348). And the most representative single record of the period is "Elizabethan and Jacobean Ayres and Madrigals" (Decca 79406).

The above are all collections (music by various composers on the same record), and listening to some of them is the best way to become introduced to music of the early centuries. But if you are interested in records devoted to individual composers, these are some of the best:

1. Pierre de la Rue (1495-1518): His harmonies, often too subtle for modern ears, are highly moving when one becomes acclimated to them. Try some of his songs on Telefunken S-9471.

2. Clement Jannequin (1475-1560): The songs (chansons) of this early French composer are sometimes light and lilting and sometimes yearning and melancholy. For an expression of moods familiar to all of us in a musical idiom that is not familiar (but highly rewarding after one gets the feel of it), try the collection of his songs on Vanguard S-298.

3. Orlandus de Lassus (1532-1594): One of the major Renaissance composers, he wrote primarily choral music. A sample of his songs is on Nonesuch 71084, with dances by Michael Praetorius (1571-1621) on the other side.

4. William Byrd (1543-1623): The first major composer of the English school, he wrote (during Shakespeare's time) many memorable songs, some of which are on Lyricord 7156.

5. John Dowland (1562-1626): Here is another great composer of vocal lyrics of Shakespeare's day. A good sample of his songs is on RCA VICS-1338. His "dances for lute," with dances by Byrd on the other side, are

on RCA LSC-2819.

6. Thomas Morley (1557-1602): This sixteenth-century composer wrote an array of marvelously singable and rhythmic songs, most famous of which is "My Bonnie Lass She Smileth." A collection of his madrigals is well performed by the Deller Consort on Vanguard HM-4, and his "ayres" on Telefunken S-9568.

7. Thomas Weelkes (1575-1623): Another fine English lyricist, his work is represented by a selection of madrigals on London STS-15165.

8. John Wilbye (1574-1638): Listen to the works of this Elizabethan song composer on London STS-15162.

The great age of English music was the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Italian music of the same period was dominated by two great vocal composers, Don Carlo Gesualdo (1560-1613) and Claudio Monteverdi (1571-1621). These two are the emotional precursors of Mahler. Their songs are for the most part introspective, plaintive, longing, and highly romantic in style, yet in a different musical idiom from the nineteenth century. The songs of Gesualdo are almost painfully beautiful, for their time (and even ours), extremely innovative and daring harmonically. There are excellent collections of Gesualdo's madrigals on Nonesuch 71277, Argo ZRG-645 (which also contains some of Monteverdi), Philips 839789, and Columbia 6318. "Gesualdo: Madrigals" has Gesualdo's madrigals juxtaposed with Stravinsky's adaptation of three of them. The complete set of Gesualdo madrigals is on seven Telefunken records (25086).

As for Monteverdi, his complete madrigals are on eight records in two Philips sets, 6799006 and 6703035; but for a briefer sample, try two beautifully performed records by the Deller Consort, RCA VICS-1438 and Vanguard HM-10. For a single-record album of Monteverdi's madrigals (which includes the incredibly beautiful "Lasciatemi Moriri"), get "Monteverdi: Madrigals."

Collections of lyrics by Monteverdi, Gesualdo, Morley, and others, are excellently done on Vanguard 5031 and 5051, and RCA VICS-1428. French vocal pieces of the period—by Lully, Lalande, Blanchard, and Charpentier—are extremely well done on Nonesuch 71039, "Ceremonial Music of the French Baroque." (If you want more of the French masters, get the catalog of the French label, Erato, which, in my opinion, has the choicest collection of records in the world. The Schwann catalog lists recordings on the French label, Oiseau-Lyre—also excellent—but not those on Erato. Some dealers carry Erato, and those that do not will usually order the records for you.)

This brings us to Henry Purcell (1659-1695), whose work constitutes the culmination of the great period of English music. His "Come Ye Sons of Art" is on Vanguard HM-14, and a collection of his "ayres" on RCA VICS-1506. Perhaps the best of all his songs are on Vanguard S-280.

But Purcell's greatest contribution to vocal music lies in his operas, not in his songs. These early operas are sometimes performed today in "concert performances," but not as full-stage operas because there is very little in the way of on-stage action. The music, however, is superb. The limpid purity and controlled passion of Purcell's dramatic music is something that one never tires of once one has acquired a taste for it. Purcell's opera, "Dido and Aeneas," is musically as lovely an opera as one will discover anywhere, and fortunately there are five good recordings of it currently available, The Deller consort performance is excellent on Vanguard S-279, as are Barbirolli on Angel S-36359, and Colin Davis on Philips 5400131. Less well known but charming music is "The Fairie Queene" (London 1290, 2 records); and the "Ode for St. Cecilia's Day" (Argo ZRG-563) is dramatic, sumptuous, and resplendent music. But in my opinion Purcell's greatest work is the magnificent "King Arthur." For an exquisite combination of majestic and lyric music, with deeply felt emotion as well as pomp and ceremony (nobody, except possibly Charpentier, does trumpet fanfares like Purcell) and tunes you want to whistle and stamp to, this work is unsurpassed. Try it on the two-record set, "Purcell: King Arthur." The orchestral suite taken from "King Arthur" is on RCA VICS-1432, but excellent as it is, you should be satisfied with nothing less than the entire work.

Among the works of the early period of opera, I would call special attention to "Il Ritorno de Ulysses in Patria," by Monteverdi, on Turnabout 34131 (3 records); "Incoronazione di Poppea," by Monteverdi, on Seraphim S-6073 (2 records); "Juditha Triumphans," by Vivaldi, on RCA VICS-6016 (2 records); and most satisfying of all to my taste, "Castor and Pollux," by Rameau, on Telefunken 9584/7 (4 records).

Georg Frederic Handel (1685-1759) was a German composer who spent most of his life in England. His numerous oratorios will be considered together here (a few of them are sometimes performed as operas), although some of them should be classified as sacred rather than secular music, depending on their subject-matter. Doubtless his "Messiah" is his greatest work, in its depth of feeling, richness of texture, and great multitude of immortal arias and choruses. Which recording you prefer will depend on whether you prefer performances with small orchestras and choruses such as existed in Handel's day or the more massive modern ones. My own preferred recording, a compromise between these two extremes and an extraordinarily sensitive performance, is the one by Colin Davis on Phillips SC-71AX300 (3 records). An introspective, moving performance by a smaller orchestra and chorus is by Scherchen on Westminster 8163 (3 records), but there is no lack of first-rate performances other than these.

In much of Handel's oratorio music the listener is (at least initially) likely to be annoyed by the numerous solo recitatives which keep the narrative going but are of minimal musical value. However, the rewards of Handel's other oratorios are so great that one can easily put up with (if not enjoy) these intermittent passages in order to hear the gems that come after. In my opinion, Handel's oratorio, "Saul," is almost up there with "Messiah" in overall greatness, and not far behind come "Solomon," "Judas Maccabaeus," "Israel in Egypt," and "Theodora"; and not far behind come "Samson," "Semele," "Alexander's Feast," "Ariodante," "Julius Caesar," "Hercules," "Rodelina," and "Rinaldo." There are some arias and choral passages in each of these works that are as thrilling as anything in the "Messiah," but they are just not as densely distributed. The immensity of Handel's productivity—unknown to that vast majority of listeners who know him only by a few airs from the "Messiah"—is staggering, almost as great as Bach's. Every one of these oratorios contains melodies of great directness and simplicity, but with an emotionally moving quality that strikes directly at the heart. One could listen to Handel oratorios every day for months and discover new gems each day.

And now we come to modern dramatic opera as we know it today. The first great master of it, Mozart, is (in the opinion of many critics), the supreme all-time master of opera, outdoing even his own great-chamber and orchestral works. Mozart, in the immense prodigality of his genius, wrote numerous comic operas which have never been matched in their genre: "The Abduction from the Beraglio," "Idomeneo," and best of all "Cosi fan Tutte." But the three operas which all would list among the finest ever written are "The Marriage of Figaro," "Don Giovanni," and "The Magic Flute." "Don Giovanni" is a perfectly unified and coherent piece of operative construction, finished in every detail, and with the music perfectly fitting the story; to see it is a great aesthetics experience. There are currently five listings of it in the Schwann catalog, of which my own favorite is on DG 271 1006 (4 records), because of the combination of Böhm's sensitive conducting and Fischer-Dieskau's fine singing as the Don.

But the Mozart opera that I prefer to any other is "The Magic Flute." This is his last great work, which he was still signing to himself on his deathbed at the age of 35. Its plot is silly, and it is much more disconnected in detail than "Don Giovanni," but its arias are without peer—such utter simplicity of melody, with such unerringly moving effect (a combination matched only in melodies by Handel and Purcell), makes me want to agree with George Bernard Shaw that the melodies from this opera are "the only melodies ever written that would not sound out of place coming from the mouth of God." If the term "melodic beauty" applies anywhere, it applies here. The delicacy of line and phrasing of this work is best brought out by Solti (again with Fischer-Dieskau) and "Mozart: The Magic Flute" (3 records).

The early nineteenth century produced many fine operatic composers. Gaetano Donizetti (1797-1848) wrote many operas, of which the best known is "Lucia di Lamermoor," with five good recordings available. Recently Beverly Sills has made Donizetti's "Maria Stuarda" and "Roberto Devereux" known again through her memorable performances. During his short life, Vincenzo Bellini (1801-1835) was a prolific opera composer. His "Norma" is his most famous and probably his best; vocally the best performance is by Callas on Angel S-3615, sonically best is Sutherland's on London 1373. Bellini's "I Puritani" also has many breath-taking areas (Sutherland on London 1381). Gioacchino Rossini (1792-1868) wrote numerous delightful operas, mostly comical, of which I prefer *Semiramide* (London 1383) and "The Barber of Seville" (London 1381). Beethoven wrote only one opera, "Fidelio," but it surely ranks among the best (Angel S-3773). And "Carmen," by Georges Bizet (1838-1875) is surely among the most singable, tuneful and sprightly operas in existence (Angel S-3767). A neglected masterpiece, until revived in recent performances, is "Mefistofele," by Arrigo Boito (1842-1918); the monumental "Prologue in Heaven" alone is worth the price of the set (London 1307).

The two opera composers who dominate the nineteenth century are Verdi and Wagner. Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901) is usually held to be the overall greatest opera composer of them all, considering the great quantity combined with the uniformly high quality of his work. He wrote more first-rate operas than anyone else, and more of them are performed each year than those of any other composer. Verdi is a total master of matching the music to the story; he also has deeper characterizations than Mozart, and he is equally at home in melting lyricism and stark dramatic power. His acknowledged greatest operatic masterpieces are "Aida," "Il Trovatore," "La Traviata," "Otello," and "Falstaff." There are so many good recordings of each of these—and your choice will depend so much on which soloists you prefer—that I shall say only that the supreme master of Verdi conducting was Arturo Toscanini, and anyone lucky enough to get a copy of his discontinued mono performance of "Otello" has a rare treasure—perhaps the greatest live performance of an opera ever committed to records. Only slightly less noteworthy are *Rigoletto*, "La Forza del Destino," "Ernani," "Don Carlos," "Nabucco," "Macbeth," and "Un Ballo in Maschera." Even Verdi's earliest operas are full of ravishing melodies. As with Handel's oratorios, one could spend many months listening with enjoyment to nothing but Verdi operas. He is the operatic composer par excellence, blending perfectly story, character, and music. He can give you a lavish spectacle à la Gabrieli and then just as expertly a deep probing introspective scene à la Monteverdi (such as the "Willow Song" and "Ave Maria" from "Otello") that stuns you with its emotional impact. For an excellent introduction to the Verdi style on a single record, get either of the records entitled "Verdi Choruses," London

25893 (conducted by Franci) or RCA LSC-2416 (conducted by Robert Shaw).

Another opera composer who has only recently come into his own with the general public is Giacomo Puccini, whose death in 1924 spells the end of Grand Opera as we know it. "Madame Butterfly" and a few other operas of his are well-known and popular, but his early opera "Edgar" is a masterpiece with more than a hint of Wagner, and before long it should become as popular as "Butterfly"—just as lyrical but also powerfully dramatic. Even at this late date Puccini's star is rising.

By contrast, the operas of Richard Wagner (1813-1883) are like long symphonies in which the soloists are instruments in the orchestra. While Verdi is in the great Italian vocal tradition from Monteverdi to Bellini, Wagner is in the German symphonic tradition of Beethoven, Weber, and Brahms. One has only to hear the masterly counterpoint in the prelude to "Die Meistersinger" to realize what a master of structure he is; and his uncanny ability to achieve mood-effects is evident in, for example, the ethereal prelude to "Lohengrin," the "Good Friday Spell" from "Parsifal," and the recreation of the feeling of impending doom in the prelude to Act 3 of "Tristan und Isolde" (so intense as to make the skin prickle). Unfortunately today the preludes are usually heard in isolation from the operas of which they are a part. One should hear, and preferably see, the opera; Wagner considered the story and the visual spectacle to be as important as the music. From his early opera, "Der Fliegende Holländer," to his last one, the Easter opera "Parsifal," they all bear the touch of the master of composition and orchestration. His most perfect work is undoubtedly "Die Meistersinger" (Karajan on Angel S-3776, 4 records); Paderewski, doubtless with some exaggeration, called it "the most perfect work of art ever created in any medium." If one sees only one opera of Wagner, it should be this one. "Tristan und Isolde" is more intense and harmonically interesting, but it is overlong and many passages are dull, as is indeed the case with other operas of his which are still great ones, such as "Lohengrin" and "Tannhäuser."

But Wagner's most unique Götterdämmerung achievement, nowhere else even approached in music, is his cycle of four operas "Der Ring des Nibelungen" ("Das Rheingold," "Die Walküre," Siegfried," and "Die Götterdämmerung"), which is in effect a 16-hour-long symphony. There are at least 150 major musical themes or leit-motifs, in this cycle, and by the time you get to the last half-hour of the last opera so many of them are going at once, carrying such emotional impact accumulated gradually through the previous operas, that the listener is overwhelmed. Each one is so integrated into the fabric of the music and the story (Wagner wrote the libretto too), that one often knows from the music being played what the character on the stage is thinking. The incredible richness of texture that results from these interacting and

interlocking themes must be heard to be believed. The operas should be seen (or heard) in their proper order, since the thematic material from the first opera is developed in the following three. I have seen the entire "Ring" cycle at least twenty times, and there is nothing like it in music, from the opening of "Rheingold" at the bottom of the Rhine to the immolation-scene and final holocaust at the end of "Götterdämmerung" alone a five-hour performance). I suggest getting the Solti recordings (on London records) of all these operas. The primitive savagery and fiery intensity of the music are better conveyed by Solti than by any Wagnerian conductor since Furtwangler.

If I had to select a dozen of my favorite operas—those I would most want to see and hear again and again—at least four of them would be by Verdi ("Otello," "La Traviata," "Aida," and "Il Trovatore"); but the five operas I value most highly of all are Mozart's "Magic Flute," Wagner's "Meistersinger" and "Götterdämmerung" (in the latter case, only in the context of the thematic buildup of the previous three in the cycle) and two others not yet mentioned, "Les Troyens" ("The Trojans") by Hector Berlioz and "Boris Godunov" by Mussorgsky. "Les Troyens" is another five-hour epic, dramatizing classical history from the fall of Troy to the founding of Rome. It is a work of art of incomparable grandeur and pageantry, high drama, electrifying tension, and devastating emotional intensity. The marvelous love-scene between Dido and Aeneas, surely equals the more famous love-music from Wagner's "Tristan und Isolde," great as that is. Fortunately the five-record set by Colin Davis does full justice to this long-neglected masterwork.

Mussorgsky's "Boris Godunov," based on the life of the medieval Russian czar, is another shattering experience, from the savagely pagan ceremonial music at the beginning ("The Coronation of Czar Boris") to the hair-raising suffocation and death scenes at the end. "Boris" is in a genre by itself; it has the primitive savagery of "Götterdämmerung," but in a musical idiom peculiar to Russian music, an idiom of which Mussorgsky was virtually the sole creator and founder, and through the creation of which Russian music ascended from oblivion to total mastery in one step. This opera is as far away from "The Magic Flute" as 10-proof vodka is from sparkling champagne, but each in its own way is perfect. Unfortunately only the Rimsky-Korsakov adaptation of "Boris" is thus far available on records, although Mussorgsky's original version has often been performed. But, in the meanwhile, remembering that Russians tend to do Russian music best, get Columbia MS-696 (4 records), from a Bolshoi theater performance.

Of Smetana's fine comic opera "The Bartered Bride," only the infectious overture and dances are currently available on records. But there are many eminently forgettable nineteenth- and twentieth-century operas. Among them are Borodin's "Prince Igor" (forgettable except for the sensuously exciting "Polyvetsian Dances," of which you should get a recording with voices),

Rimsky-Korsakov's "Sadko" and "Le Coq d'Or," and most of all, the works of Giacomo Puccini (1858-1924), whose works are as beautifully lyrical as anything in the realm of opera. His were the last of the Great Operas. "Turandot," his last opera, is one of the most powerful works in the literature of vocal music; but so is his early work, virtually unknown until recent ears, "Edgar," which is highly dramatic as well as lyrical. Audiences are both soothed and shattered by this powerful work.

The twentieth century has only one universally acknowledged master of opera, Richard Strauss (1864-1949). His two short operas "Salome" and "Elektra" (less than two hours each) work up to such a peak of tension as to leave audiences limp. They must be seen, but if you can only hear them on records, get Solti on both "Elektra" (London 1296) and "Salome" (London 1218). The rest of his operas are more mellifluous, from the delightful comic tour de force "Ariadne auf Naxos" (DG 2709033) to the dramatic "Die Frau ohne Schatten" (Richmond 64503). But the greatest of his opera remains "Der Rosenkavalier," containing such liquid lyrical passages as one has not heard since Berlioz' "The Trojans." The opera is dazzlingly performed by Solti on London 1435 (4 records). Since the first half of the opera, however enjoyable when one sees it, has less purely musical interest than the latter half, you may want to purchase only selections. In this case, rather than get the well-known "Rosenkavalier" suite for orchestra, get the vocal highlights of the opera—including most of the nostalgically bitter-sweet last act—in one of the most perfect performances on records, by Neidlinger on the German label, Da Capo (C-047028566). Failing this, get the selections on London 26200.

The English composer Frederic Delius (1862-1934) wrote many lovely lyrical operas, of which I recommend "A Village Romeo and Juliet" (Angel 3784X, 2 records).

The twentieth century has produced many other operas. These include: a host by Benjamin Britten (1913-), such as "Peter Grimes," "Billy Budd," "Owen Wingrave," "Albert Herring," and "Death in Venice," often impressive and occasionally involving; Stravinsky's "The Rake's Progress," more cerebral than moving; "Wozzeck" and "Lulu" by Alban Berg (1885-1935), too atonal and too horrifying in plot to command a large audience; "Carr Nation," "The Devil and Daniel Webster," and "The Ballad of Baby Doe" by the American composer Douglas Moore (1893-), which are quite tuneful and sometimes engaging; and Delius' "Koanga" (Angel S-3808X), which is musically interesting though undramatic as opera.

One interesting deviation from the operatic norm, "Carmina Burana," partly opera but mostly dance with voices, by Karl Orff (1895-), is full of verve and rhythm and eschews all harmony by returning to the single melodic line of early plainsong. (It is expertly done by the Berlin Opera and Chorus on DG 139362.) Its successors, "Catulli Carmina" and "The Triumph of Aphrodite,"

do not come up to its high standard, and Orff's other operas, "Der Mond" and "Antigona," are mostly speech with very little musical support.

Let us now return to song. The great period of song was the late Renaissance, and song has been almost a lost art since. But the nineteenth century did produce some lovely songs, especially by Schubert, Schumann, Brahms, and Hugo Wolf (1860-1903). There are so many of them that I cannot discuss individual songs, but for a starter you might select almost any of the numerous records of Schubert, Schumann, and Brahms songs sung by Fischer-Dieskau on Angel and DG, and the lovely neglected "An die Ferne Geliebte" ("To the Far-off Beloved") by Beethoven on DG 139197. The Brahms "Alto Rhapsody" for contralto and orchestra is well-performed on Turnabout 34281, together with the Wagner "Wesendonck" songs and Mahler's "Songs from Rückert."

Gustav Mahler (1860-1911) wrote some exquisitely moving songs for soloists and orchestra. I do not rate his "Des Knaben Wunderhorn" and "Kindertotenlieder" as high as the "Songs from Rückert," but his "Das Lied von der Erde" ("The Song of the Earth") is a great contribution to song, and many consider it his greatest work. (I don't—yet; but older colleagues who have been hearing Mahler for half a century say that the "Lied" grows on them more through the years than any other Mahler work.) You can get a fine performance of this work—Bernstein conducting and Fischer Dieskau replacing the contralto—on London 26005, but I advise getting the three-record set by Ormandy, which includes Mahler's Tenth Symphony.

One other composer's songs will be mentioned—again for solist and orchestra—and those are by Richard Strauss. The most intimate outpouring of his heart seems to have gone into his songs. The "Four Last Songs" in particular (especially those written to poems by Herman Hesse) are so deeply moving that even the magic of Mahler does not excel them. A selection of Strauss songs, including the "Four Last Songs" (Strauss' last work), is superbly performed by Elizabeth Schwarzkopf; this record is a "must" for any collection.