

*Memories in Steam*

Steam Locomotives of the Southern Pacific

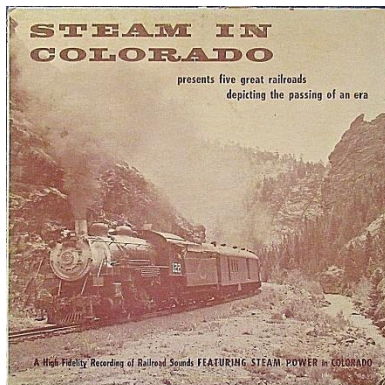
First advertised July 1958; released c. March 1958.



*Steam in Colorado*

Great Railroads of Colorado

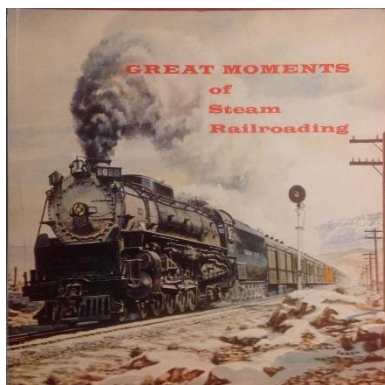
First advertised October 1958.



*Great Moments of Steam Railroad*

The Nostalgic Sound of Steam Locomotives

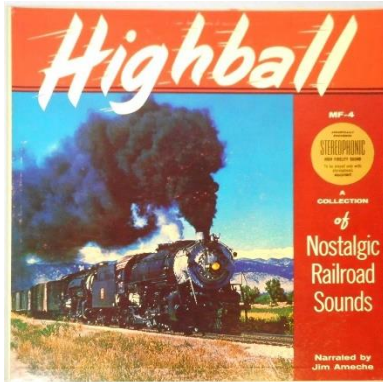
First advertised October 1958.



## Highball

Steam Locomotives (Jim Ameche)

The label's first stereo release. This album is on red vinyl; available in mono on black. First advertised Spring 1959.



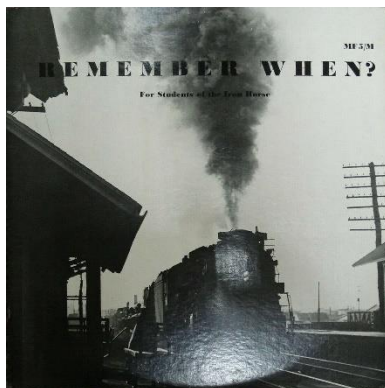
## Mobile Fidelity MF-4



"Highball: A Collection of Nostalgic Railroad Sounds." Jim Ameche, narrator. Mobile Fidelity MF 4, \$5.00 (LP); \$6.00 (SD).  
 "Nostalgia" is the key word for these loving sound-portraits of the surviving short-line and mainline steam locomotives of the Colorado & Southern, Great Western, Santa Maria Valley, Sierra, Southern Pacific, and Union Pacific railroads, "shot" at yard work, hill climbing, and railway-fans'-club outings, and knowingly described by Jim Ameche (who sounds like a true aficionado himself). This is easily the least sensational, most evocative, and historically valuable locomotive recording I've encountered to date. While the sounds themselves are all there in the technically excellent, somewhat higher-level, LP version, it is only in stereo that the sense of actual motion and full atmosphere comes fully alive. Insatiable collectors also will be interested in the companion-monophonic only—releases issued by the same producers: "Steam in Colorado" and "Great Moments of Steam Railroading."

## Remember When?

A compilation of steam engines. "Limited Edition" of 5000 copies. Reissued c. 1967. Released 1960.

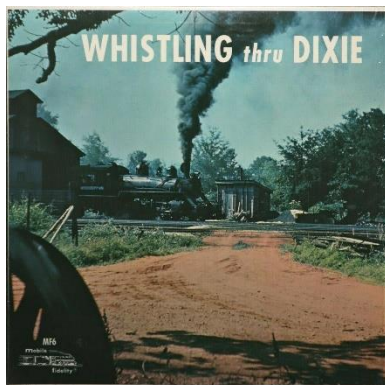


## Mobile Fidelity MF-5/M



## Whistling Thru Dixie

Whistle Echoes from the Deep South  
 First advertised c. January 1961.



## Mobile Fidelity MF-6



"Whistles in the Woods (This is Railroading, Vol. 3)." Kistler SK 105/6, \$4.98 (LP). "Whistling Thru Dixie." Mobile Fidelity MF 6, \$3.98 (SD). "Reading 2124: Sounds of Trains in Motion." North Jersey Recordings 1135, \$4.95; 1135, \$5.95 (SD). "Detroit Division: An Anthology of Grand Trunk Western Steam Locomotives." Roundhouse WLP 9839, \$4.95 (LP). "Remember When? . . ." Mobile Fidelity MF 5/M, \$3.98 (LP).

Some of the present collections will be relished best by buffs, particularly the "Reading 2124" program, most of which was recorded on "Iron-Horse" club "rambles" and filming runs in Pennsylvania and New Jersey, and the "Remember When?" anthology of short highlights from earlier Mobile Fidelity programs representing a wide variety of roads and engine types. Others are of special regional interest: "Whistles in the Woods" of the work-locomotives of Pacific Northwest logging companies; "Whistling Thru Dixie" of the Deep South backwoods lines; "Detroit Division" of both freight and commuter lines in Michigan. But in all of them the old steamers are lovingly immortalized, in jacket photographs and annotations as well as in their own distinctively individual brazen voices.

## The Choo-Choo Trains

Authentic Railroad Sounds

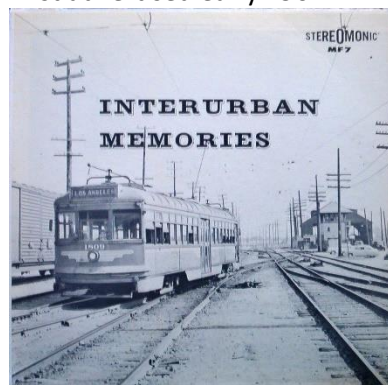
Released in late 1961 but advertised in January 1962.



## Interurban Memories

Pacific Electric and Chicago (electric) Trains

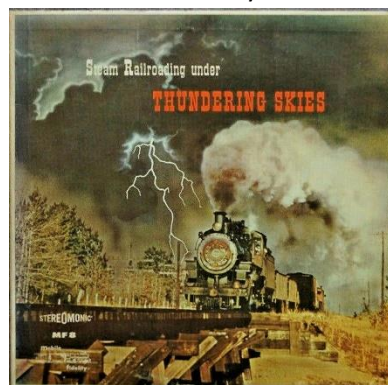
First advertised early 1962.



## Steam Railroading Under Thundering Skies

Storm sounds mixed with railroad sounds

First advertised early 1962.



## Mobile Fidelity MF-7

## Mobile Fidelity MF-8

"Interurban Memories." Mobile Fidelity MF 7, \$3.98 ("Stereomonic").

"Steam Railroading Under Thundering Skies." Mobile Fidelity MF 8, \$3.98 ("Stereomonic").

One of the most technologically enterprising of specialist recording companies, a pioneer in the adoption of the static-free "Polymax" disc materials, now advances a solution of the compatibility problem via the use of the sum-and-difference (rather than normal 45/45) disc-cutting technique. My guess is that the method used here is that suggested by Columbia before the standardization of 45/45 methodology some years ago, but at any rate it results in genuine stereoism (if perhaps somewhat more closely blended channels than usual), while the disc also can be effectively reproduced with a monophonic pickup (although of course I can't yet judge whether disc wear is greater in this mode).

There is a great deal more than novel technical interest in these programs, however. MF 8, starring the Baldwin locomotives of the Bonhomie and Hattiesburg Southern Railroad Company, is particularly dramatic in its "A"-side documentation of freight making-up and runs during the heavy storms of February 1961. The clatter of the train itself and the banshee whistling virtuosity of Engineer A. J. Lee are enhanced by some of the most startlingly realistic rain, thunder, and lightning ever captured on discs. MF 7, starring on one side the big red "blimps" of Pacific Electric's Long Beach line and on the other the electroliners and steeple-cab freight locomotives of the Chicago, North Shore, and Milwaukee Skokie Valley line, is one of—if not *the*—first sonic tributes to the onetime great interurban electric railroads. The highlights here are the long bands devoted to complete runs (recorded from the trains themselves) between Los Angeles and Watts, and between Skokie and Edison Court, Waukegan. The latter, at speeds exceeding 75 mph and with only one stop (in contrast with the many stops on the Watts Local run), is exceptionally exciting.

R.D.D.

## Steam Railroading Under Thundering Skies.

### Mobile Fidelity MF 8 stereo

Well, this one has added sound-effects, too. "Havoc! February, 1961! The full force of angry skies strike Hattiesburg, Mississippi. The stark reality of devastating rain and high water. . . ." Public relations in high gear, if you ask me, and I'll bet the guy who wrote that blurb didn't even own a hi-fi. But there is a real, honest thunderstorm here, just the same, one of those that keep coming back again and again (pre-frontal squall line, I'll insert in my capacity as an amateur meteorologist). The thunder cracks are solid enough and reasonably frequent, the rain just keeps pouring down and down, wetly. In the middle of the record I looked out my window at a perfectly dry city street and jumped perceptibly.

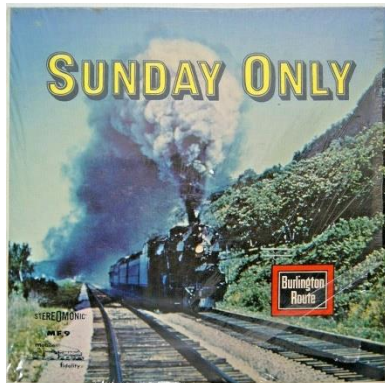
Against this sultry stern there is a train, match. Old engine No. 300, 2-8-2, comes rumbling along with its train of cars. Sounds just like an old small freight to me, and my only objection is that, as we listen, this train also keeps coming back, over and over again. I can't figure out its schedule. The darned thing seems to be shuttling busily over a couple of miles of dead-end line, judging from the sound. Whooo, whoooo, who-WOOD echoes the whistle through the stormy Mississippi hills, then choo-choo-choo-CHOO-CHOO, rattle-whooze-bang, and off it goes into the distance—only to turn right around and choo-choo straight back again to us once more. After a few times, this gets to be rather zany. Has the engineer gone mad? Or maybe it's a circular track.

Just a rather unimaginative job of tape editing, I suppose—but what, after all, are you going to do with one old steam train for a whole LP side? Can't just record it once on the daily run-through, then wait 24 hours for the next time.

There's a different train on the other side. Steam trains being so scarce, two complete trains, all different, is doin' pretty good for a single LP.

### Sunday Only

Locomotives of the Burlington Route  
First advertised late 1962.



### Mobile Fidelity MF-9



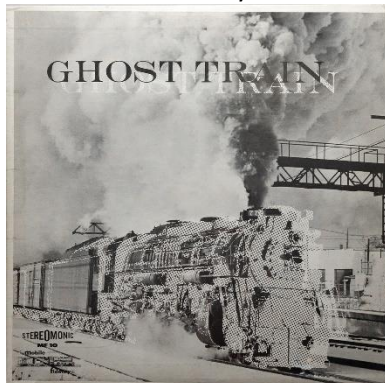
### Sunday Only

### Mobile Fidelity MF 9

Here is further evidence that Burbank, California, is one of the more active sources of steam railroad releases today. Riding the hard Polymax grooves of this latest Mobile Fidelity stereo disc are two star performers of the Burlington Route that stretches west out of Chicago. Midwesterners acquainted only with the Burlington's modern Zephyrs plying between Chicago and Denver may find it hard to believe that the line still maintains such an active interest in steam. This recording begins with a festive excursion from Chicago to Galesburg, Ill., held on Labor Day in 1959. Under the sponsorship of the Illini Railroad Club, perhaps the nation's most active railroad travel group, two famous locomotives were linked for a doubleheader—coal burner #6315, a Texas type 2-10-4 and the oil burning #5632, a 4-8-4. Carefully documented by recording engineers Brad Miller, Leo Kulka and Ilen Jordan are the dispatcher's voice and the ritual in the roundhouse as the tracks are cleared for the run of the special. The trackside scenes include a sound pickup alongside the powerful 4-8-4 at speeds up to 70 MPH as the mikes pace along at equal speed. A propitious vantage point is provided rail fans on Side Two of Sunday Only with the mikes placed on the tender of #5632 as she negotiates the grade of Burlington Hill, Iowa, past overhalls, rows of factory buildings and warehouses. One of the most effective touches in the album occurs in the way the recording crew uses an echoing mountain at Armour, Missouri. In one sequence, a railside position lets us hear the bounce of the passenger whistle as it collides with the side of the mountain. Then the mikes are placed atop the same mountain during another run—this time to probe the full panorama of sound in the valley below as the train wheels past at a distance of three-quarters of a mile. Thanks to the harder groove surface of this Polymax pressing, the important transients of railroad sounds come through with reassuring crispness.

### Ghost Train

Several different steam locomotives; label with red print (1963-64); black print (1964).  
First advertised May 1963.



### Mobile Fidelity MF-10



### Mister D's Machine(s)

"D" refers to Diesel. These are diesel locomotives. Old and new logos on cover.  
First advertised May 1963.



### Mobile Fidelity MF-11



**NOVELTY**  
**HEAR THAT WHISTLE BLOW**  
Mobile Fidelity MF 12  
**MISTER D'S MACHINE**  
Mobile Fidelity MF 11  
**GHOST TRAIN**  
Mobile Fidelity MF 10

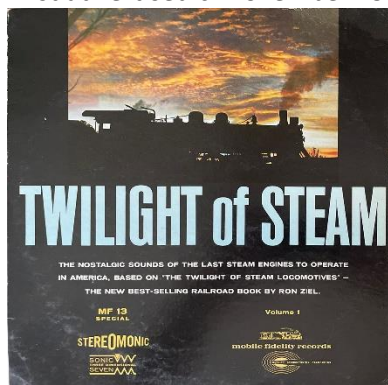
*Hear that Whistle Blow*  
 Steam Locomotives of the Southern Pacific  
 First advertised May 1963.



Mobile Fidelity MF-12



*Twilight of Steam*  
 The "Last" Steam Locomotives  
 First advertised c. November 1963.



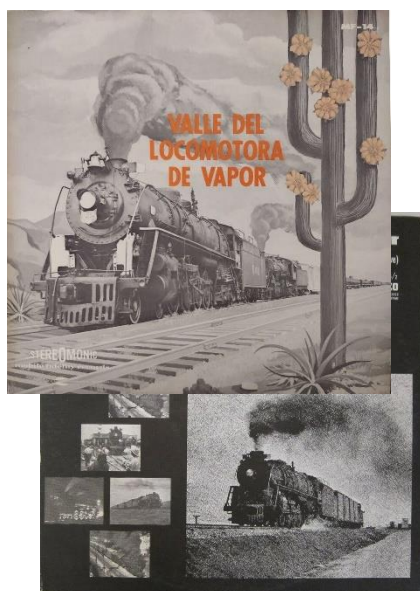
Mobile Fidelity MF-13



**Twilight of Steam**  
**Mobile Fidelity MF 13**

A new release by MF is always an event of interest to railroad buffs but this latest recording should have a special usefulness if you're just getting serious about steam. Album 13 is bound to have better than average luck in its specialized market because it is designed to accompany a new book published by Grosset and Dunlap entitled "The Twilight of Steam Locomotives." Since the recording attempts to offer a caption in stereo sound for most of the locomotives lavishly pictured in the book, episodes starring an individual train are briefer than those usually found on a Mobile Fidelity recording. The seventeen tracks on this disc offer a very comprehensive survey of surviving steam locomotives in all parts of this country and one area of Canada. As in past releases, MF makes a special point of pampering the sharp transients of their out-of-door prima donnas.

*Valle de la Locomotora de Vapor*  
 Mexican Steam Locomotives  
 First album with the new logo on the label. Two-record set.  
 First advertised fall 1964.



Mobile Fidelity MF-14-2



"Valle del Locomotora de Vapor." Mobile Fidelity MF 14-2, \$6.95 (Two SD).

Anyone only mildly interested in "train" records might well think that all the possible changes have been rung in the choice of pertinent materials. But this reasonable supposition is easily proved all wrong by the inexhaustibly imaginative Brad Miller of Mobile Fidelity. Finding no new worlds to conquer at home, he has simply lugged his equipment South of the Border. Here he has documented his discovery of a whole stable of working Niagara and Mikado steam locomotives by setting up his microphones in a 32-stall roundhouse, in a couple of en route cabs, and near appropriate junction points in the neighborhood of Mexico City. These admirably varied materials, which also feature some exceedingly virtuoso "warbling whistling," have been edited with unusual care to avoid the monotony so often characteristic of this particular repertory.

For fascinating materials alone, then, this would be an outstanding program of its kind at any price, let alone the present bargain one. Yet what most impressed me (who can take locomotives or leave 'em alone) was the very special clarity, naturalness, and vividness of the sound qualities themselves—exceptional even in a series as consistently fine technically as Mobile Fidelity's. The reason (apart from the customary skill and quality equipment) is disclosed in the accompanying notes: most of these recordings were made at night, in bracingly clear weather, and at a considerable altitude.

What the clarity of desert air means to astronomers is apparently paralleled here in sonic terms. I know of no other way to account for the superb sound throughout this program but perhaps at its very best (especially for fabulously wide dynamic and frequency-range characteristics) in Band 1 of Side 4. This five-and-a-half-minute tone poem of a 2-8-2 Mikado, No. 2210, steaming out of Huehuetoca at 1 p.m., past Brad Miller's mikes, and off—whistling thrillingly—on its way home to the Valle de Mexico yard is, without qualification, the finest sonic documentation of train sounds I've ever heard!

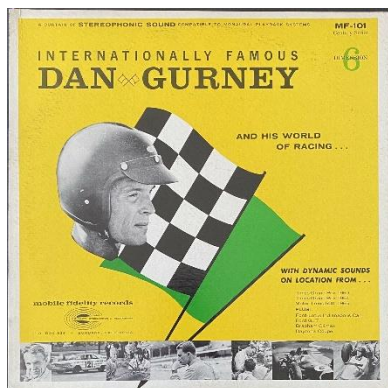
R. D. DARRELL



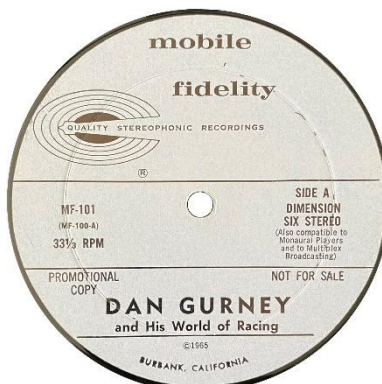
### His World of Racing

A "podcast" of Dan Gurney's racing victories.

Released February 1965.



### Mobile Fidelity MF-101



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### Sound Highlights

Sound Highlights of the 1965 Indy 500 and the US Road Racing Championship

Available in fall 1965.

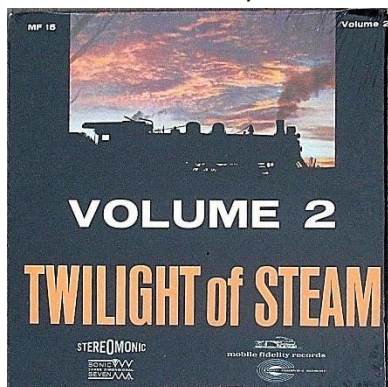
### Mobile Fidelity EP-2



### Twilight of Steam, Vol. 2

The "Last" Steam Locomotives

First advertised early 1966.



### Mobile Fidelity MF-15



### Twilight of Steam, Vol. 2

#### Mobile Fidelity MF 15 stereo

Aha! More steam! I always fall for these, no matter how many (and even if I don't know a 2-8-2 from a 25-64-78).

"Volume 2" refers to an earlier volume that was rather laboriously tied in with the book of the same title. (The tie-in was snafued by lack of visible page numbers in the book, by which you could locate the sight of what you were hearing the sound of.) Book itself was quite OK. So was the record. This time there's no tie-in at all and just as well. Just a bit of salesworthy public relations.

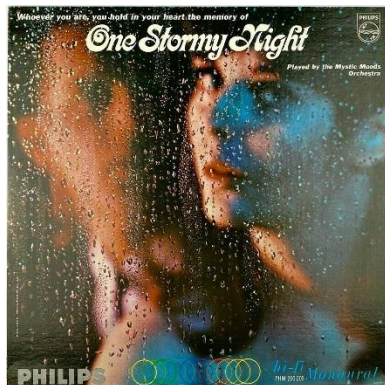
And, of course, two sides more full of steam. Plenty more choo-choos, lotsa whistles (*always* too many; these whistle artists can't resist the lure of a tape recorder beside the track!) and a great deal of assorted clanking and banging. Mostly excursion trains and obscurely dilapidated work trains; there isn't much of anything else left now.

Very so-so liner notes on this. Full of romantic allusions but minus such important details as to whether we are on board an engine or by trackside. If the train starts off manfully and never seems to get anywhere, just puffing and blowing in one spot, you can figure you and the mike are aboard. Frankly, the off-board ones are better listening, especially with a big natural echo—as in some excellent cuts on this record.

### One Stormy Night

The Mystic Moods Orchestra

First pressings have "Vendor" information in the rim text.  
Released April 1966.



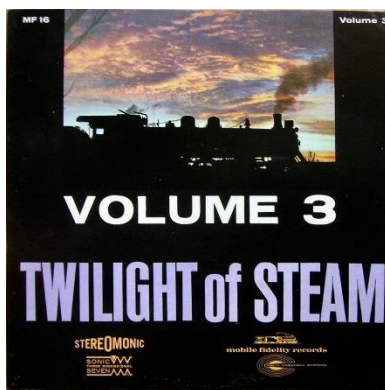
Philips PHM-200205/PHS-600205



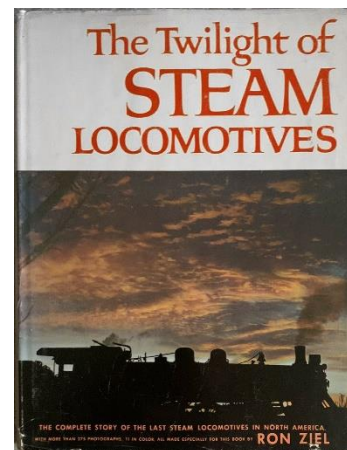
### Twilight of Steam, Vol. 3

The "Last" Steam Locomotives

First advertised November 1966.



Mobile Fidelity MF-16



### Twilight of Steam, Vol. 4

The "Last" Steam Locomotives. These volumes were based around the book by Ron Ziel.

First advertised November 1966.

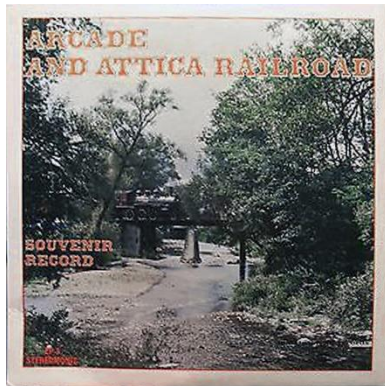


Mobile Fidelity MF-17



**SOUND EFFECTS**  
**STEAM RAILROADING UNDER THUNDERING SKIES**  
Mobile Fidelity MF 8 (S)  
**TWILIGHT OF STEAM, VOL. 4**  
Mobile Fidelity MF 17 (S)  
**TWILIGHT OF STEAM, VOL. 3**  
Mobile Fidelity MF 16 (S)

*Arcade and Attica Railroad*  
Souvenir Record  
Released 1967.



Mobile Fidelity EP-3



*Steam in the 60s, Vol. 1*  
Modern Steam Locomotives  
First advertised in September 1967.



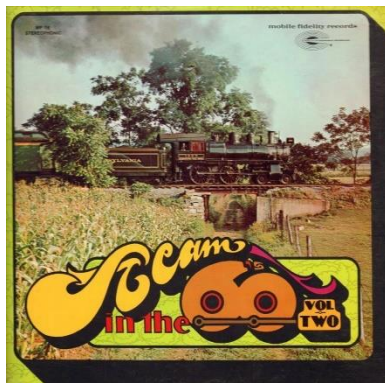
Mobile Fidelity MF-18



#### ☐ MOBILE FIDELITY

Steam in the 60's, Vol. 1; MF 18  
Steam in the 60's, Vol. 2; MF 19

*Steam in the 60s, Vol. 2*  
Modern Steam Locomotives  
First advertised in September 1967.



Mobile Fidelity MF-19



## The Mystic Moods Series

At the end of 1967, the Mobile Fidelity label vanished, after releasing a few albums in 1966 and 1967 – all of them about trains. Brad Miller remained busy, and most of his work was in an area that was unrelated to preserving the authentic sounds of train and automobile engines. His gig with Philips and the Mystic Moods Orchestra yielded a large repertoire of popular albums, all of which came out under the auspices of Mobile Fidelity.

*Nighttide*, PHS-600213

*More Than Music*, PHS-600231

*Mexican Trip*, PHS-600250

*Mystic Moods of Love*, PHS-600260

*Emotions*, PHS-600277

*Extensions*, PHS-600301

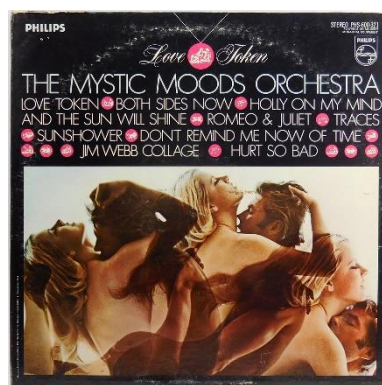
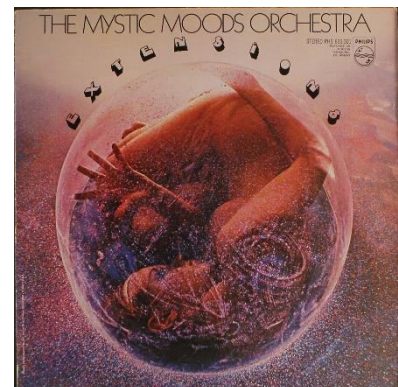
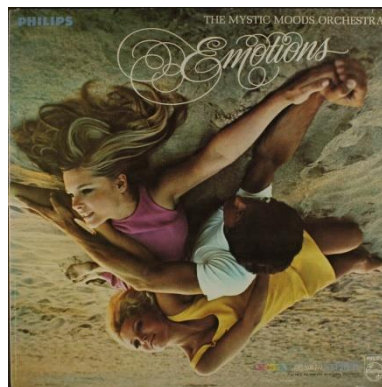
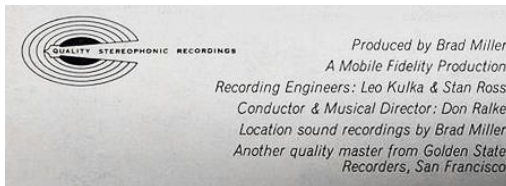
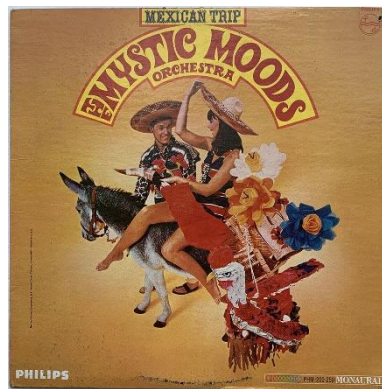
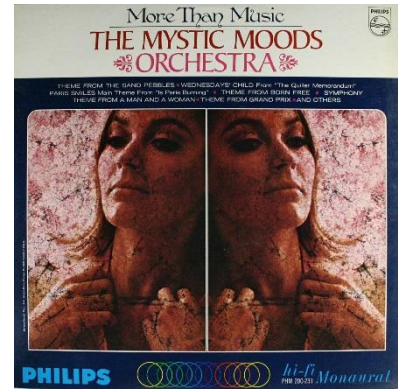
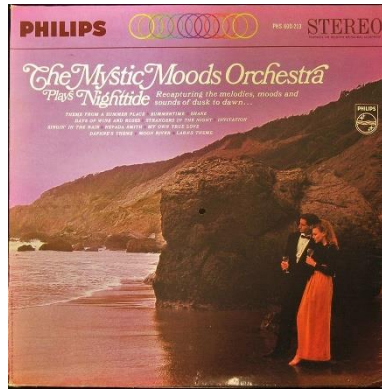
*Love Token*, PHS-600321

*Stormy Weekend*, PHS-300342

*English Muffins*, PHS-300349

*Country Lovin' Folk*, PHS-300351

The last Mystic Moods album for Philips came out in May 1971.



## Ampex Releasing B. Miller Discrete Reel and Cartridge

LOS ANGELES—Ampex Stereo Tapes, which has already released special 4-channel product, is issuing an additional quadrasonic title to specialty markets.

It will release a 4-channel discrete open reel and cartridge sound effects title, "Sound in Motion," by Brad Miller's Mobile Fidelity Productions. The release date is Feb. 15, 1972.

Miller, who produces the Mystic Moods, which is distributed by Warner Bros. Records, plans to release "Sound in Motion" as a discrete disk under his own label. JVC has the master tape in Japan

and is cutting "mothers" for pressing.

He is also planning two more 4-channel discrete albums in the spring. Mobile Fidelity's quadrasonic tape product lists at \$7.98, while discrete disks will list at \$5.98.

The Mystic Moods first album for Warner Bros., "Love the One You're With," will be released in February as a 4-channel cartridge (by Ampex Stereo Tapes), a stereo disk, and perhaps a 4-channel discrete disk, Miller said.

Miller has also cut a 4-channel album by Clare, a singer signed to Mobile Fidelity Productions. Her first single "Saunders Ferry Lane," was distributed by A&M Records.

In 1971, Brad Miller was continuing his work with the Mystic Moods Orchestra when the opportunity presented itself for him to release records in quadrasonic – some new, and some "old." He took the Mystic Moods records with him and created a new version of the Mobile Fidelity label. This time, Mobile Fidelity had an arrangement whereby the national distribution would be handled by Warner Brothers, who also picked up the new album in the Mystic Moods series.

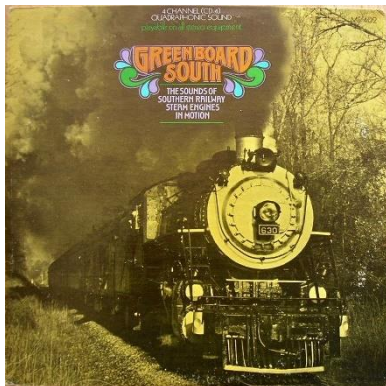
*Sound in Motion*  
Souvenir Record  
Released February 1972.



Mobile Fidelity MF-401

Released by WB in Quad as WSTQ-2656 (tape) in December 1972  
and as BS4-2656 (quad LP) in 1974.

*Greenboard South*  
Southern Railway Locomotives  
First advertised in February 1972.

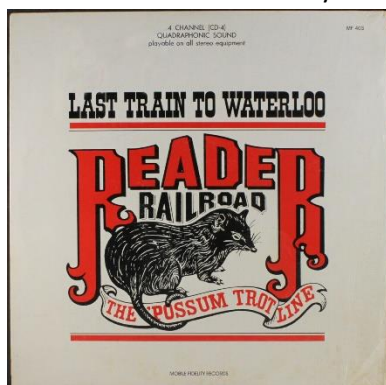


Mobile Fidelity MF-402



Released by WB in March 1974  
as BS4-2751 (quad LP).

*Last Train to Waterloo*  
Reader Railroad, the Possum Trot Line  
First advertised in February 1972.

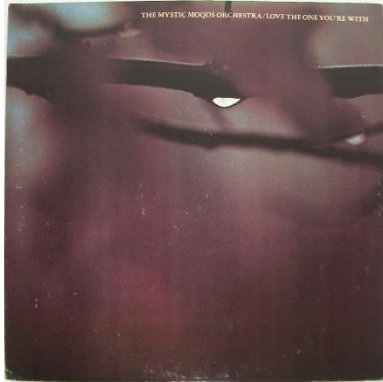


Mobile Fidelity MF-403



Released by WB in March 1974  
as BS4-2757 (quad LP).

*Love the One You're With*  
The Mystic Moods Orchestra  
First advertised in April 1972.



Warner Brothers BS-2577



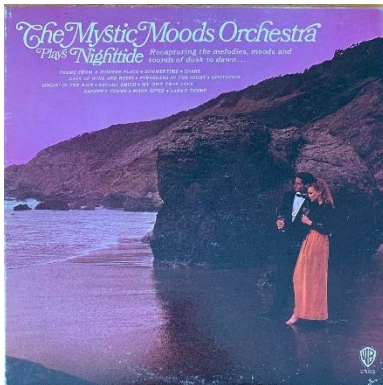
**MYSTIC MOODS ORCHESTRA**—*Love the One You're With*. Warner Bros. BS 2577

The Mystic Moods Orchestra proved an important chart item while on the Viva label. With their move over to Warner Bros. they should continue the hefty MOR play and sales they have enjoyed. Super mood program includes such highlights as John Lennon's "Love," Dylan's "Lay Lady Lay," and Still's "Love the One You're With." Two originals, "How Do I Love You," and "Sweet Rollin'" are also standouts.

Also released in Quad as a  
Reel-to-Reel tape.  
Reissued as a quad LP in 1974.

Reissue Albums  
The Mystic Moods Orchestra  
Reissued in March 1972.

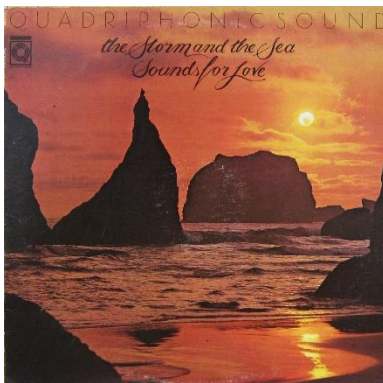
Warner Brothers BS-2593 to BS-2598



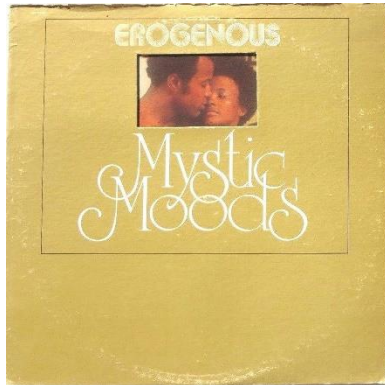
Warner reissued five albums in the Mystic Moods series in 1972,  
These being *Nighttide*, *One Stormy Night*, *Love Token*,  
*Stormy Weekend*, *Emotions*, and, *Mystic Moods of Love*.

*The Storm and the Sea*  
Brad Miller  
First advertised in May 1974.

Warner Brothers BS4-2788



Reissue Albums  
Mystic Moods Orchestra  
First advertised in March 1975.



Sound Bird SB-7501 to 7509

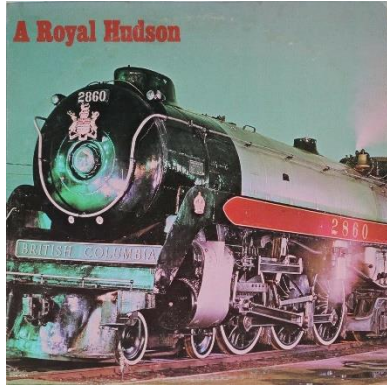
## Nine LP Release Planned by S-M

■ LOS ANGELES — Rick Sidoti, sales manager of Sutton-Miller Ltd., has announced that S-M's Sound Bird Records will ship its first lp release on March 5. The release will consist of nine Mystic Moods catalogue albums featuring an entirely new packaging concept for the line, and will be serviced by S-M's 17 independent distributors throughout the U.S.

The Mystic Moods Orchestra released three additional new albums for Warner Brothers. Then, in November 1974, Brad Miller lit out on his own again – this time forming a new label with Joe Sutton.

Sound Bird immediately reissued nine of the Mystic Moods albums – most with new “erotic” covers. The new label also reissued all three of the 1972 Mobile Fidelity LPs (as SB4-4501 to SB4-4503). At that point, they continued the mission of the Mobile Fidelity label of old...in quad!

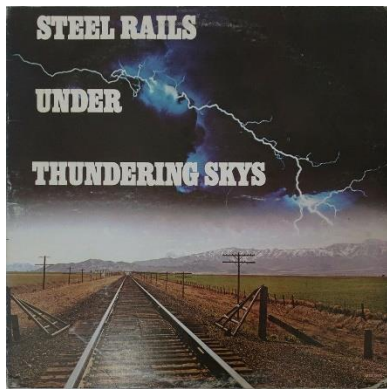
*A Royal Hudson*  
Train Sounds  
Released 1976.



Sound Bird SB4-4504



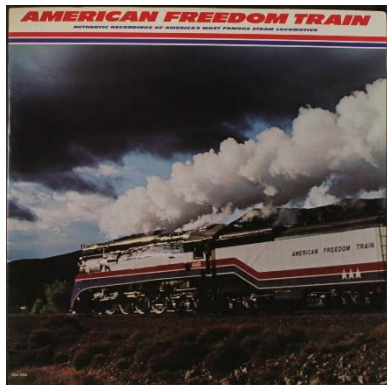
*Steel Rails Under Thundering Skys (Skies)*  
Trains in stormy weather  
Released 1976.



Sound Bird SB4-4505

Reissued c. 1983 on Bainbridge.  
Bainbridge started in 1980 in LA.

*American Freedom Train*  
Released 1976.



Sound Bird SB4-4506

*The Storm and the Sea*

Brad Miller

Reissued 1976 from Warner Brothers SB4-2788.

Sound Bird SB4-4551

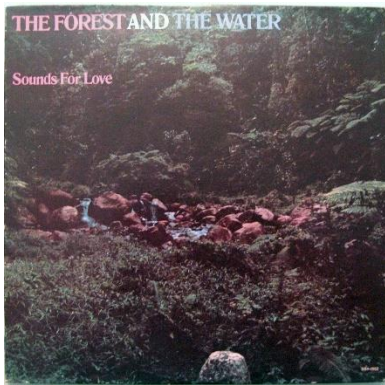


*The Forest and the Water*

Brad Miller

Released 1976.

Sound Bird SB4-4552



*Hawaii*

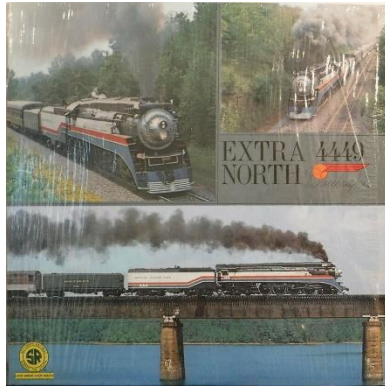
Brad Miller

Released 1976.

Sound Bird SB4-4553



Extra 4449 North  
Released October 1976.



Sound Bird SB4-4507

**IF YOU DON'T  
OWN THIS  
ALBUM  
That's A Shame!**

**Trains**

**RECOMMENDATION**

In conjunction with Bill Withuhn's critique of GS-4 4449 beginning on page 22, we would be remiss if we didn't alert you to and warmly recommend the stereo/quad 12-inch LP recording *Extra 4449 North* (SB4 4507 from Mobile Fidelity Records, Box 336, Burbank, CA 91503). Bill's article is for the mind. Side 2 of the record is for the ears—22½ minutes of on-board sound taped from behind the cab as the great Lima worked up from a standing start to 78 mph. Read Miller's nose captured all: unimpeachable thumps behind the backhead, alternating air and steam whistles; undulating stack talk—an evocation of everything that the mighty machine once meant to California and now means to all the nation. A 4449 hosanna. *Q*

June 1977

Volume 27 Number 6

**\$6.98** postpaid, for stereo LP album  
**\$7.98** postpaid, for  
Stereo 8 Tape, Quad 8 Track Tape or  
Stereo Cassette Tape

California Residents Add 6% State Sales Tax  
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**P. O. BOX 336**  
**BURBANK, CALIFORNIA 91503**



**EXTRA 4449 NORTH**  
12" LP or TAPE

Seven trackside scenes alongside the Southern Railway mainline between Birmingham and Alexandria, including two during a storm — thunder and all.

... And, a complete 22½ minute thrill of a lifetime, in the 4449's cab!



**Mobile Fidelity Productions**  
proudly presents

**EXTRA 4449 NORTH**  
12" LP or TAPE  
\$6.98 postpaid, for stereo LP album  
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**AMERICAN FREIGHT TRAIN**  
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\$7.98 postpaid, for Stereo 8 Tape, Quad 8 Track Tape or Stereo Cassette Tape

**STEAM RAILS**  
12" LP or TAPE  
\$6.98 postpaid, for stereo LP album  
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**A Night on the Water**  
12" LP or TAPE  
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**LAST TRAIN TO HAVANA**  
12" LP or TAPE  
\$6.98 postpaid, for stereo LP album  
\$7.98 postpaid, for Stereo 8 Tape, Quad 8 Track Tape or Stereo Cassette Tape

**KUBANCA**  
12" LP or TAPE  
\$6.98 postpaid, for stereo LP album  
\$7.98 postpaid, for Stereo 8 Tape, Quad 8 Track Tape or Stereo Cassette Tape

**The Sound of the Sea**  
12" LP or TAPE  
\$6.98 postpaid, for stereo LP album  
\$7.98 postpaid, for Stereo 8 Tape, Quad 8 Track Tape or Stereo Cassette Tape

**Hawaii Soundscapes**  
12" LP or TAPE  
\$6.98 postpaid, for stereo LP album  
\$7.98 postpaid, for Stereo 8 Tape, Quad 8 Track Tape or Stereo Cassette Tape

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Send check or money order only in the amount of \$6.98 for each album (S&H minimal) that you wish, to:  
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California Residents add 6% sales tax. Canadian/Foreign orders require a minimum of \$2 per order for postage, with an additional \$1 per two albums, U.S. Funds only.  
Please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery.  
**SPECIAL OFFER**—Order any four \$6.98 albums, and receive a fifth \$6.98 album of your choice, FREE.



\*Original Master Recording(s) is the trademark of the Mobile Fidelity Sound Lab

In June 1977, Brad Miller got together with Gary Georgi in Spokane, Washington, to discuss the release of audiophile albums. How could they improve the quality of the sound that they heard in the finished product? They created a partnership with Stan Ricker, a recording engineer at JVC in Los Angeles. Together, they cooked up the idea of releasing Original Master Recordings that were sourced from the album master tape. As was the case with some quadraphonic LPs, these albums would be mastered at half speed. The recordings would not be subjected to compression or limiting unless it was necessary in some way. Finally, they would press their albums on Japanese "virgin" vinyl. The result of this combination of measures would be a set of audiophile albums with vastly improved sound quality. Their new company together would be called Mobile Fidelity Sound Lab.

Mobile Fidelity prepared releases of three Mystic Moods albums and one album of train recordings for the company's debut.

## MOBILE FIDELITY New 'Import' Entry For Growing Hi Fi Disks

By STEPHEN TRAIMAN

NEW YORK—Newest entry in the audiophile recording area that is rapidly expanding through a growing network of hi fi dealers and record/tape outlets with hardware departments is the Mobile Fidelity Sound Lab.

The Los Angeles-based firm, headed by Brad Miller of Sutton-Miller Productions, has received test pressings from Europe of its first four releases—three featuring the Mystic Moods Orchestra and the other with unusual sound effects.

"With discriminating listeners complaining for years about the poor, and now deteriorating, quality of records made in this country, it's our intention to provide the finest pressings of superior master tapes," notes Gary Georgi, national sales manager and music director of KHQ, Spokane, Wash.

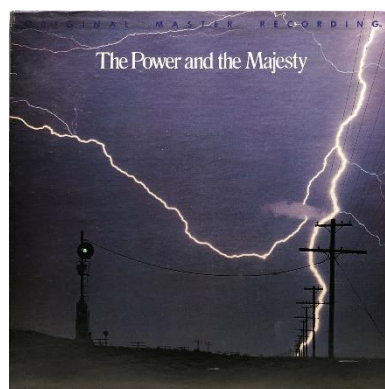
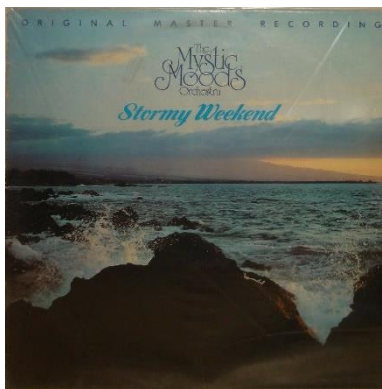
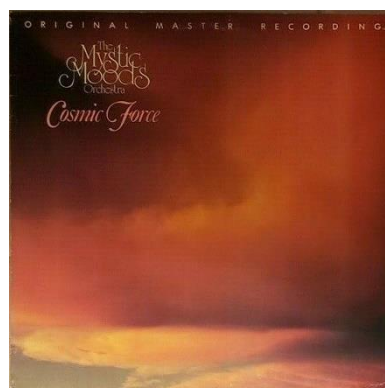
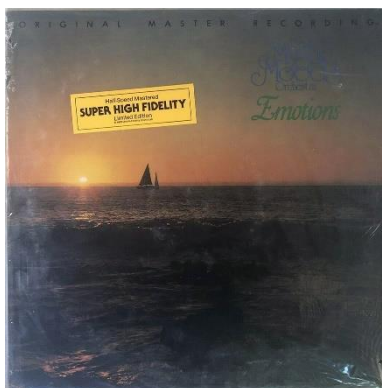
"We're looking for producers of high quality records, particularly in Europe, who want access to the American market," he says. "Additionally, we'll consider a re-pressing license of contemporary artists of U.S. labels, that have 'audiophile' standards."

Georgi and Miller are presently

leaves, offered under the trademarked "Original Master Recordings" banner, is \$12.95 each, through hi fi stores, selected record shops and by direct mail.

Included are the Mystic Moods Orchestra featured in "Emotions," recorded live with sound environments/effects; "Cosmic Force," contemporary vocals balanced with instrumental orchestrations; "Stormy Weekend," mood music scored to a thunderstorm; and "The Power And The Majesty," sound effects ranging from dead silence to a steam locomotive and a thunderstorm.

Dealer net is \$8.50 without discounts for each LP on 24-unit assorted minimum order, with a 5%



The First Four releases from  
MFSL – January 1978.

**EMOTIONS—Mystic Moods Orchestra, Original Master Recording (Mobile Fidelity Sound Lab), \$12.95 list.**

This album throws a one-two punch at the audiophile, delivering musical enjoyment combined with the excitement of reproducing environmental sounds on a home system. The production overdubs contemporary MOR orchestral arrangements with specialist Brad Miller's recordings of railroad engines, thunderstorms, rain, etc. The musical selections were taped in a "live" stereo mix, avoiding mix-down dubs, and the disk was mastered half speed by Stan Ricker at JVC. Try side 1, band 3 for the passing diesel engine segued into "Do You Know The Way To San Jose?" Brilliant sound and exciting sound concepts are the attraction with this series, but not absolute accuracy of reproduction.

YOU'VE SPENT ALL THOSE BIG BUCKS ON YOUR SUPER STEREO SYSTEM. NOW, WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO PLAY ON IT? THE NEXT EVOLUTIONARY STEP IN RECORDS IS HERE! THE MOBILE FIDELITY SOUND LAB PRESENTS ORIGINAL MASTER RECORDINGS... THE MOST INCREDIBLY THREE DIMENSIONAL, MUSICALLY ACCURATE AND SONICALLY EXCITING RECORDINGS YOU HAVE EVER HEARD! THE MYSTIC MOODS ORCHESTRA PERFORMS ITS MAGIC ON THREE OF THE ALBUMS, AND THE MOST PHENOMENAL RECORDING OF A THUNDERSTORM AND STEAM LOCOMOTIVE NO. 4449 IS ON A FOURTH ALBUM. THESE RECORDS HAVE NO SURFACE NOISE. THEIR ABILITY TO "TRANSPORT YOU THERE" IS BREATH TAKING AND, (HUZZAH) THEY ARE ENTERTAINING!!! OUR ORIGINAL MASTER RECORDINGS WILL BECOME THE REFERENCES BY WHICH YOU'LL JUDGE ALL OTHER RECORDS. WE UTILIZE HALF SPEED MASTER LACQUER CUTTING. "... THIS HALF SPEED TECHNIQUE IS THE PREMIER METHOD OF CUTTING STEREO DISCS TODAY, AND THE RESULTS ARE ABSOLUTELY SUPERB." - BERT WYLLIE, AUDIO MAGAZINE. ASK YOUR HI-FI DEALER FOR THESE IMPORTED PRESSINGS.

#001 - EMOTIONS, THE MYSTIC MOODS ORCHESTRA - \$12.95

#002 - COSMIC FORCE, THE MYSTIC MOODS ORCHESTRA - \$12.95

#003 - STORMY WEEKEND, THE MYSTIC MOODS ORCHESTRA - \$12.95

#004 - THE POWER AND THE MAJESTY - \$12.95

IF YOU CAN'T FIND THESE RECORDINGS AT YOUR DEALER, TELL HIM YOU'RE TICKED OFF AND SEND US A LETTER WITH CHECK OR MONEY ORDER. WE'LL PAY THE POSTAGE. WE ARE THE MOBILE FIDELITY SOUND LAB, P.O. BOX MF, VERADALE, WASHINGTON 99037. AND PREPARE YOURSELF FOR A VISCERAL THRILL!

## 'Super Fi' Issues Of Top LPs Due

By ALAN PENCHANSKY

CHICAGO—Special "super fidelity" editions of major label albums will begin appearing in hi fi stores shortly, as companies such as ABC, London and Warner Bros. Records are becoming involved in the expanding audiophile recordings market.

These labels—and others it is believed—have begun licensing catalog product for special production runs to be sold in hi fi stores alongside direct-to-disks and digital recordings.

The first release of the new super fi pressings is scheduled for June, according to Brad Miller, principal of Mobile Fidelity Sound Lab, company that is negotiating to secure

rights to a group of major's pop and classical titles.

Miller, whose company has concluded lease agreements with ABC, London and Warners, and is negotiating with A&M and MCA, says the super fidelity pressings will be packaged with original artwork. "We'll strip in our own catalog number, label identification and trademark," he explains.

The Mobile Fidelity series, called Original Master Recordings, will be launched in June with titles to include Zubin Mehta's "Star Wars/Close Encounters" (London) and John Klemmer's "Touch" (ABC). The imported pressings, with a list price of \$15, will be marketed by Mobile Fidelity, primarily to hi fi stores.

Miller also is seeking Steely Dan's "Katy Lied" (ABC) and Supertramp's "Crime Of The Century" (A&M) for the debut release. These titles were not cleared at presstime, however.

According to Miller, many con-

temporary pop recordings have outstanding production qualities that are masked by mass manufacture of the disks. Uncovering these qualities is the purpose of the reissues, he claims.

Miller, a sound engineer and record producer, says the Original Master Recording series will be cut from original master tapes, not submasters. Lacquers often are cut from second generation masters to meet the pressures of mass production, he observes.

Herb Belkin, vice president of operations for ABC Records, confirms that Mobile Fidelity will have access to ultimate source material.

"The music will be reproduced from original masters," says Belkin. "There are sufficient safeguards that we're satisfied the masters are protected."

According to Belkin, the ABC licensing pact imposes "limitations in terms of the manner and method of distribution."

The executive would not elaborate, but it is believed Mobile Fidelity distribution will be limited to audio shops and certain record stores.

"Nobody's ever gone out after this particular market segment. I believe it's going to be an interesting market to approach," states Belkin.

Leo Harman, attorney for Warner Bros. Records, describes the label's agreement with Mobile Fidelity as "very open ended."

"There is no commitment. He has the right to select a certain number of titles and we have the right to refuse," says the attorney.

"I think we have to approve a certain amount of product," adds Harman. "The deal is very similar to a tape license deal," he states.

Officials at London Records say they have "agreed in principle to provide 'Star Wars' for Miller's project," and London indicates that Mobile Fidelity's "Star Wars" lacquers already have been cut.

In April (1978), an amazing opportunity had opened up. Miller had been hoping to obtain agreements from major labels to press master recordings of famous albums. At first, there was no interest, but then a few labels accepted the proposal. This led to an explosion!

Interest in half-speed masters increased exponentially, and before long, everyone wanted them. Columbia Records decided to release their own half-speed masters, but it was Mobile Fidelity's Original Master Recordings that led the way. Their process became legendary – often imitated and never bested.

From January 1978 to December 1979, the banner at the top sported ordinary-looking letters. Beginning with *Abbey Road* (MFSL 1-023), the words were set in a new typeface and italicized to create an identifiable logotype.

*This article © 2021 Frank Daniels*



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## Top of the pile

### Mobile Fidelity's

#### "Original Master Recordings"

For the better part of the year, Brad Miller of Mobile Fidelity Record Company has been engaged in a unique venture. Sensing a need on the part of the audiophile for high-quality transfers and pressings of best-selling pop records, he has convinced several major record companies to lease him the master tapes for subsequent produc-

tion of audiophile-quality discs. The rationale as seen by the leasing company is that Mobile Fidelity production, because of its restricted distribution through high-fidelity channels, will not interfere with the sales of recorded product through record stores. At normal audiophile disc prices, this is probably a safe assumption. It is important to note that Brad Miller is using the very same master tapes for his

production that the record companies used for theirs. There is no remaking whatever from multitrack earlier generation sources.

When Miller secures permission from a company to issue what he calls an "Original Master Recording," the tape is transferred at half speed by Stan Ricker at the JVC Cutting Center in Los Angeles. Ricker and Miller analyze the product, establish what they consider an appropriate transfer level and perhaps make minor adjustments in the equalization of the tape. Normally, there would be no compression or limiting employed. The master discs are then sent to the Victor Company of Japan for replication. The pressings are made with typical Japanese care on CD-4 type vinyl for long life, and the records are packaged in high-quality plastic inner sleeves. The album jackets carry the same artwork as the original with the added legend, "Original Master Recording" appearing at the top on both front and back. At the present time, there are about 10 or 12 recordings licensed in this manner from major record labels. I have played a number of these discs and can attest to their superiority in all cases over the standard American production. The thing that is most striking is the extension of frequency response at both the high and low ends of the spectrum as well as the extremely low noise level on the discs. One senses as well better separation at high frequencies, more like listening to a master tape, and this may well be the result of the half speed transfer processes with its improved separation at high frequencies. Although the recorded spectrum tells only a part of the whole story, it is very interesting to look at these recordings on a 1/3-octave spectrum equalizer. For these measurements, we took three pairs of discs and played them back via an Ortofon MC20 moving-coil cartridge with left-plus-right preamp output being fed to a B&K Model 2131 1/3-octave spectrum equalizer. The B&K has a peak-hold capability plus storage; thus it was possible to play similar passages on the standard product vs. Mobile Fidelity product and compare the two later. Figure 1 shows the peak values measured on John Klemmer's *Touch*, originally issued by ABC

