

First Home Reception of Color TV Proves Effective in Operatic Field

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OLD GREENWICH, Conn., Oct. 31—A color telecast of Bizet's opera, "Carmen," which was staged at the Colonial Theatre in New York, was watched here this afternoon on one of the first color sets to be released for home use.

Seeing the new system of color television in one's own living room, something that members of the Federal Communications Commission have not done, was a breathtaking experience during a number of the scenes. The doom of black-and-white TV seems only a question of time.

The color production of "Carmen," presented by the National Broadcasting Company under special permission from the F. C. C., could be seen on existing monochrome sets in the usual black and white. The opera was televised over Channel 4 from 5:30 to 6:30 P. M.

Reception here of "Carmen" in

color provided the initial opportunity for the layman to tune a color receiver for himself, make his own adjustments in tints and see if a color set was fit for practical operation in the home.

All previous color showings, including those held in New York this afternoon, have been invitation affairs, conducted under conditions controlled by engineers rather than average viewers.

The color set used here was made by the Emerson Radio and Phonograph Corporation under technical specifications laid down by the National Television System Committee. The specifications are scheduled to be approved by the F. C. C. within a matter of a few weeks, perhaps before Christmas, for the formal commercial introduction of color TV.

As the color images were re-

Continued on Page 85, Column 3

COLOR TV RECEIVED IN HOME FIRST TIME

Continued From Page 1

ceived over a distance of about twenty-five miles from the Empire State Tower, the most effective colors were produced when the stage background was not too dark. Then the colors had vividness, warmth and variety. During some of the darker scenes there was a trace of green overcast, apparently introduced for special effect, that at home proved somewhat disconcerting.

On the whole, however, the electronic reproduction of delicate shadings seemed pure magic. Color TV in the home now is much better than the earliest black-and-white.

Tuning a color receiver, about which there has been considerable discussion, proved surprisingly easy. The familiar controls on the black-and-white receiver — station selection, fine tuning, brightness and contrast controls — are first adjusted in the conventional way. Then the one major new control—the chrome control—is used.

When this control is in the counter-clockwise position, the picture is black-and-white. Turn the chrome control to the right and the color springs onto the screen in all its brilliance. Depending upon how far the control is turned, one can have a choice between barely discernible tints to deep hues. A half-way adjustment, producing delicate and restful shadings, seems best.

Determines Primary Colors

There is also another control that may need occasional adjustment. It is called the convergence control and determines whether the primary TV colors—red, blue and green—are each in their correct place on the center of the picture tube.

By and large, the adjustments on a color set are more critical than on a black-and-white receiver but there is one advantage over a monochrome set. The contrasting hues act much like a "tuning-eye" and for the layman it is easier to tell whether the adjustments are right or wrong.

Pending the development of color tubes of greater brilliance, on which substantial progress already has been made, the room lighting must be turned down or even off to watch color. But with the images in different hues there is not the sense of glare that comes from watching monochrome video in a darkened room.

The size of the color picture seen this afternoon was roughly twelve inches and was reproduced on a tube made by the Radio Corporation of America, parent company of N. B. C., which pioneered the color transmission that can be used without disrupting present black-and-white reception.

Early Morning Adjustment

The color TV viewer at the moment, however, must have a sturdy constitution and not quibble over loss of sleep if he wants to adjust his set under most favorable conditions.

In preparation for "Carmen," the N. B. C. station ran tests starting at 1:40 A. M. on Friday and continuing far into that morning. On the screen was projected a test slide that, looking from left to right, gave bars of green, yellow, red, magenta, blue, blue-green and green.

A pattern of dots also was projected on the screen. By detuning the convergence control slightly, a viewer could actually see the red, blue and green dots that comprise a color TV picture.

Color television seems certain to precipitate some lively family discussions. The wife, who has deferred to the head of the house in black-and-white TV matters, may be coming into her own. The hoots and howls that are set up when the husband insists he has properly tuned in magenta can be very disturbing to masculine dignity. The severest critics of color TV are apt to be the girls; they are going to love to tinker with the chrome control.