

**ULTRA** from preceding page

At a cost of \$2,495 to \$9,600, kit form or factory built, ultralights make the dream of flying one's own machine relatively inexpensive. Most kits take between 15 to 40 hours to put together and can be assembled with general workshop tools, requiring nothing more than the ability to drill holes, rig cables, and install fabric, bolts, and hardware. Essential flying gear includes a helmet, earplugs, goggles, and a parachute.

Simple as it may sound, it is essential that flying instruction be undertaken before jumping into an ultralight. Most dealers offer flight training priced from \$300 to \$500. It's advisable to contact an AOPA (Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association) Air Safety Foundation registered examiner and for \$15 to \$25 take the voluntary flight examination before taking to the air. Most dealers are examiners.

Although these carefree craft are defined as recreational, they are also catering to other markets.

Following a flight demonstration for local officials, the city of Monterey Park, Calif., decided last February to reinstate police surveillance using a specially equipped twin-engine ultralight. Ray said

**Despite their troubles, ultralights are here to stay: the longing to fly is too deeply embedded in everyone's dreams.**

David Brownee, two Union County, Miss., farmers, use their ultralight to spot crops and conditions from the air. They say it is more fuel and time efficient than crisscrossing fields and creeks in a pickup truck.

Flying farmers use ultralights for crop spraying, at 10 percent of normal cost.

However, there's a dark side to the ultralight. It is currently being considered for use in the insurgency wars of Central America and elsewhere. US officials are concerned that the craft could become the tool of terrorists.

There is another cloud hanging over ultralights; the question of safety. This was recently brought into focus by an ABC "20/20" segment that showed the death of Steve Douglas, a well-known Washington, D.C., news personality who fell out of his Pterodactyl Ascender ultralight when it collapsed in midflight. The National Transportation Safety Board says there have been 62 fatalities in ultralights since April 1983.

"The time has come for ultralight enthusiasts everywhere — pilots and manufacturers alike — to commit totally to the concept of self-regulation or face being legislated out of existence," said John Baker, AOPA president. "The future of the sport as well as the lives of the participants [is] at stake."

Despite these persistent and often troubling problems, ultralights are not fly-by-nights. The longing to fly for fun is too deeply embedded in everyone's dreams.

"Have fun. Enjoy it and play safe," said Steve as we floated back to earth and cruised to a gentle stop. Breathless, frozen, laughing, I climbed unsteadily out of the machine, which now stood in silent and stationary ignominy. The magic was over but flying and flying machines will never be the same again for me. That little ultralight has left a permanent impression on me and my dreams.

**ON MUSIC** from preceding page

not fall. This was a rather-projected portrayal that blustered and blazed with commitment.

And in her recorded performance, the voice encompasses the same range, even if, as I said earlier, the microphones are not always kind to the upper end of her instrument. Also impressive is the haunting Nabucco of Piero Cappuccilli, and the lightweight but vocally lovely Zaccaria of Evgeny Nestorenko. Lucia Valentini Terrani struggles too audibly with the small role of Fenena, and Plácido Domingo is in sour voice in the equally small role of Ismaele.

This is one of DG's less-than-noble efforts sonically, for despite the clarity of orchestral timbres, all the voices sound devoid of ambience. Giuseppe Sinopoli (whose name appears more prominently than Verdi's) makes his operatic recording debut in a reading that accentuates the handlike nature of the music. Unfortunately, he makes the exciting, if occasionally primitive, score something cheap and coarse.

If you happen to live near a record store that deals in imports, a lovely Bulkatton record (BOA 2064) features Miss Dimitrova in various Italian arias that show off the numerous facets of her voice to splendid advantage. Otherwise, you'll just have to wait until she "catches on" with opera managements around the country — including the Met, which by rights should have brought her here first.