

The Golden Ear

March 1998

Newsletter of the *Chicago Audio Society*

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This Month's Meeting

March 15th

General Music Program Great Performances and Recordings

Due to a cancellation we will have a general meeting to listen to fine music members bring to play. The emphasis will be on excellent *non-audiophile* recordings you know, the treasures you have discovered either by accident or upon a recommendation. Let's hear some things you *haven't* brought to meetings before that are outstanding. The play list will appear in next month's newsletter.

We will have an excellent system to play back your CDs and LPs, so bring an assortment. Most kinds of music are welcome, with an emphasis on classical and jazz; please, no Greek bagpipe music (!).

Meetings are held on the third Sunday of each month at The Dance Building in downtown Des Plaines. The meeting begins at 2pm, doors open at 1. The Dance Building's phone number is (847) 824-2475. Nonmembers are always welcome to attend meetings without obligation: a \$5 fee is refundable on joining.

Change of Meeting Location

Effective immediately, we will be meeting at **The Dance Building**, located in downtown **Des Plaines** (see map enclosed). We discussed the possibilities last month, including alternate locations. We didn't want to move, and if Nordic Hills had been willing to not raise the room rate, we were strongly considering staying there. But they were only willing to keep the rate at \$125 for the first six months of '98, then

raising it to \$150. With the new venue costing \$80, we felt it in the best interest of the Society to move. We haven't signed any agreement with The Dance Building, so we have the option of going somewhere else if and when we outgrow the capacity of the facility. And that could include Nordic Hills, when the group is large enough to justify the expense.

The vote tally is as follows:

In favor of the move: 11 at the meeting, 2 by email, 2 in person. 15 total.

Against the move: 8 at the meeting.

Thus by a significant majority vote, the motion to move is carried. Since the vote and subsequent verbal notification to various people who expressed reservations about the new location, those people have expressed their full support of the decision and will continue to attend meetings and participate.

With the new venue, we will have refreshments at the meetings. Soft drinks and snacks will be available, probably with a nominal (\$1) donation to help cover the cost. Suggestions are welcome, and we greatly appreciate volunteers to help.

Last Month

We discussed and demonstrated a number of system tweaks, most which affected the sound (in the subjective opinions of those demonstrating them, suggesting what differences they made). Various cones, tiptoes, spikes, and absorptive materials such as Sorbothane were used to isolate components, while various treatments for CDs (Windex with Ammonia D for the play side, Nordost Eco 3 on the label side) and connectors (contact cleaners) were demonstrated for effectiveness (before and after).

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Other devices such as the Bedini Ultra Clarifier for CDs and the Discwasher Zerostat for LPs, as well as a moving coil phono cartridge demagnetizer, were demonstrated. In the system used (described below), the Shakti stone was considered to have a negative effect on the sound when placed atop the (Stan Warren modified) Adcom amplifier, and the Shakti Onlines (small things which clamp onto interconnects) were considered to have no effect.

The system consisted of:

Linn Sondek/Ittok/Asak turntable/arm/cartridge
Vendetta Research SCP-2A phono preamp stage
Teac CD changer (Stan Warren modified)
BAT VK-5i line stage preamp
Creek passive attenuator (late in the meeting)
Adcom 555 amplifier (Stan Warren modified)
Mirage M-3si speakers
Interconnects: Lectrafile between phono stage and preamp; homebrew combination Nordost between CD player and preamp; Purist Colossus from preamp to amp. Purist Colossus speaker cable.
Accessories: various, include Virtual Mode digital filter, Black Diamond cones on preamp.
Thanks to Gregg Straley for bringing the amp, speakers, passive attenuator, and various accessories.

Martin DeWulf, editor, chief cook and bottle washer of *Bound For Sound*, stood up to say a few words, and then he kept going, to a very enthusiastic crowd. Marty spoke about some of his experiences reviewing equipment and views of the industry, about the other reviewers for his fine publication, and some aspects of system matching often unknowingly disregarded by reviewers and audiophiles, such as impedance matching. Good info and a lot of fun! We

understand Marty had a great time, and he s welcome back any time. Subscribe if you don t already: (309) 856-5515.

Future Meetings

April 19 - to be announced. Stanley Marquiss of American Power & Light, who was scheduled for April, will come in October instead. It will be worth the wait!

May 17 - **Frank Doris**, representing **Valve Amplification Company (VAC)**, showing the new Visionary Series of components. Not to be missed! Frank is a very cool guy with lots of experience, both with Dobbin Bolgla (the PR firm he s with, representing VAC) and in the past as Managing Editor (and still a music reviewer) for *The Absolute Sound*.

Industry News

The Absolute Sound has recently had a major cash infusion by a private party, intended to enable resuming publishing. Good news!

Happy Listening!

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