

MEETING NOTICE - Sunday, January 25th, 2 PM - 5 PM

Arlington Heights Historical Society
Arlington Room, 110 W. Fremont
Arlington Heights, IL

For directions go to:

<http://www.chicagoaudio.org/directions.htm>

We will be comparing the sound of the Benchmark PRE DAC-1 and the Grace M-902 preamp/dacs, both of which have attracted significant attention in recent months. These components are being supplied by Sam Rodgers of Sweetwater Sound (a large pro audio supplier (www.sweetwater.com)). Our thanks to our member Mark Malboeuf for coordinating this effort and supplying the associated system consisting of the following equipment:

Arcam AVR300 (amp for Sapphires and crossover to subs)
Audio Concepts Sapphire XL Speakers
Hsu VTF-3 Mk III subwoofer
Hsu VTF-2 (2nd subwoofer)
Cambridge Azur 840C (used as a transport with pre/dacs)

Finally, there should be the opportunity to listen to the Cambridge 840C as the full digital source (CD player) which has also received very favorable reviews. This comparison came about as a result of being unable to find a way to hear these two units side by side locally. Now we will have that opportunity. It's the football bye week so see you all this Sunday!

++++
PLEASE NOTE!

Newsletters compiled by Rich Sacks and previously re-emailed through Reed Rehorst to overcome Comcast email spam filters. We are now able to more easily send this to all of you through gmail, but PLEASE don't use this email for any communication as it is not checked regularly. For any communication please use the emails on the website:

<http://www.chicagoaudio.org/whoweare.htm>

++++

DECEMBER MEETING RECAP

We had a special off-site holiday meeting at Edge Audio Video in Palatine featuring Martin Cooper from Wadia demonstrating their unique i170 audiophile Ipod interface as well as their other fine digital products. The i170 utilizes an Apple signal that disables the DAC and analog electronics in the Ipod allowing only the digital data stream which is available at a coax output to any existing audiophile DAC. With lossless music data files (Apple or Windows) this enables the iPod to have sound quality capability competitive with the finest digital transports. The cost--\$379! A few members brought their iPods along with excellent results through the top of the line Krell Evolution Series components including speakers.

Edge Audio had a number of very attractive listening rooms (as a review of their website will show) featuring speakers such as the Verity Parsifal and the new Klipsh Palladium line. Particularly impressive were the electrostatic speakers from Final Sound (www.finalsound.com) driven by McIntosh electronics.

They provided great refreshments to all in keeping with the Holiday spirit. Our thanks to Ray Mazeika of Edge Audio Video and his staff for their hospitality and opening up their entire store to the group for this meeting.

Do check out the website- <http://www.edgeaudiovideo.com>

+++++

CLASSICAL CORNER by Len Cronin

If its January it must be that time of year to make a resolution and my resolution is to write an article a month for 2009. So let's get started.

The Sinfonia Pirenaica (Pyrenean Symphony) by Spanish composer Jesus Guridi is a composition that is steeped in the traditions of Basque folk music, while retaining its classical form. In trying to describe this music, one could say that it's a Spanish equivalent of Vaughan Williams 'A London Symphony'. This music pays homage to the mountain countryside as opposed to a metropolitan area. The Bilbao Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Juan Jose Mena makes a compelling argument for the symphony. The Naxos recording (8.557631) is good but not great.

A little closer to home we encounter the music of Aaron Copland performed by The Elgin Symphony Orchestra and St. Charles Singers conducted by its music director Robert Hanson. This is a very interesting disc in that it contains the Piano Concerto (Benjamin Pasternak, soloist), the 'Old American Songs' arranged for chorus and orchestra, and The 'Suite from The Tender Land. Try this sometime, when you have someone over to listen to music, play the piano concerto but don't tell who wrote it. They are more likely to say Bartok than Copeland. This music was written while he was still a young turk . The other two pieces are very much in the style that most people recognize as Copland. This is a really good disc in very good sound.

This is going to be an all Naxos day. If you are not familiar with the music of Albert Roussel , this just might be the perfect disc to sample his music. That disc is his Symphony #3 and his Suites No. 1 & 2 from Bacchus et Ariane. This is a sort of greatest hits recording that comes with knockout sound and driving performances. The Royal Scottish National Orchestra is under the direction of Stephane Deneve and gives us a real sonic and musical blockbuster. Highly recommended.

John Antill is an Australian composer that is known for one work in America. That would be the music he wrote for the ballet 'Corroboree'. The ballet was based on Aboriginal music and rituals that makes use of a lot of exotic sounds and music. Yes, the perfect audiophile album except that this music is very well written and deserves to be heard. James Judd leads the New Zealand Orchestra in this fun release from Naxos.