

The Golden Ear

Newsletter of the
Chicago Audio Society
June 2003

Meeting Notice

Sunday, June 22nd – 1:30pm to 5:00pm

Steve Huntley – Great Northern Sound

Bill Eisen – Creative Cable Concepts

Jud Barber – Joule Electra

Dr. Roger West – Sound Lab

Please note the June meeting is scheduled for the fourth Sunday of the month and will start 30 minutes earlier than the usual time.

Steve Huntley began his audio career at Audio Research Corporation as their first Field Service Manager managing the service department, writing technical bulletins and suggesting product enhancements. Steve went on to California Audio Labs in Huntington Beach California, managing the service department, designing power supplies and chassis, and voicing audio products.

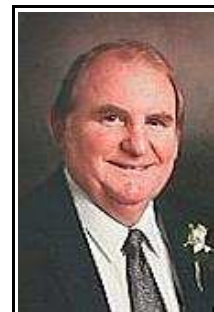


At Wadia Digital, Steve served as Service/Quality Control Manager, Technical Services Manager and National Sales Manager. Steve was involved in product development, upgrade programs, product voicing, and acted as liaison between the sales department and the engineers.

Later, Steve used his accumulated technical expertise to found Great Northern Sound Company based on the philosophy that well designed audio components can be voiced to the requirements of the discriminating listener by eliminating sonic compromises and implementing selective parts enhancements.

Website: www.greatnorthernsound.com

Jud Barber first became interested in audio in the early fifties, well before transistors and other high tech materials became available to the audio industry. He was constantly looking for ways to improve in the quality of sound production, even before the development of stereo vinyl. Jud found the tube technology used for amplification was very mature by this time and probably much better than he realized. He felt the transducers were limiting the quality of



Chicago Audio Society, P.O. Box 313, Barrington IL 60011, tel. (847) 382-8433

www.chicagoaudio.org

We meet on the third Sunday of each month at 2pm at the Arlington Heights Historical Society, 110 W. Fremont St., Arlington Heights IL. Nonmembers are welcome (\$5 fee per meeting, or join - \$40 annual dues). CAS is a volunteer organization of audio and music enthusiasts dedicated to having fun. Our constitution and bylaws are available on our website or in printed form upon request.

reproduced sound.

The advent of the transistor in the fifties and early sixties, with its absence of noise and ease with which good specifications could be achieved for a modest cost, prompted Jud to quit designing and building tube-based equipment. The CD player, introduced in the early eighties, revolutionized the beginning of the audio reproduction chain and the new materials available were allowing designers to develop phono cartridges and speakers with dramatically improved characteristics.

However, he felt there was still something missing in most music reproduction. Jud says that for fifteen years the audio community struggled with the realization that tube hardware used judiciously in a playback system almost always produced a more enjoyable sound and a better illusions of live music.

Jud Barber contends that well designed tube equipment coupled with a good output transformer will sound more musical and is more satisfying to listen to than solid state at any price. The next level of sonic achievement can be obtained by use of an all tube OTL, which is the basis of design of the amplifiers to be demonstrated at the meeting.

Website: www.joule-electra.com

Roger West's education culminated with a Ph.D. degree from Stanford University in Psychoacoustics / Medical Electronics. Roger's career began with aerospace design and development engineering positions at Philco-Ford and Sylvania. Following that, he held positions with Stanford University (Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences and as a post-doctoral fellow, the latter involving experimentation in short term auditory memory and development of point source constant velocity acoustic source) and with the Stanford Research Institute as a research psychoacoustician. For several years Dr. West designed and developed electrostatic loudspeaker systems for both home and professional applications for Electronic Industries Corp. (JansZen), also performing R&D of an advanced electronic clinical thermometer. His desire to create state of the art electrostatic loudspeakers resulted in his founding of Sound Lab in 1978, with the assistance of Dr. Dale Ream.



Dr. West holds several patents, including one referred to as the Distributed Resonance Principle, which significantly improves bass response in electrostatic loudspeakers.

The results of Roger West's research and continual efforts for the past 25 years will be demonstrated at the meeting - the proof is in the listening. He will give a presentation and will be available for questions.

Website: www.soundlab-speakers.com

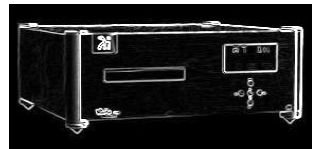
Bill Eisen has been in business for four years, producing and refining his Creative Cable Concepts designs. His Green Hornet digital cable has been rated highly by the audiophile press, and since then he has introduced the Silver Bullet digital cable as his ultimate model. Bill's interconnects are used by some members of the club, and a few have his power cords and speaker cables. These products will be used for this month's demonstration, and Bill will be open for questions.

Equipment to be demonstrated:

Joule Electra VZN-220
Rite of Passage OTL
mono amplifiers



Wadia 860 CD player
with X upgrade,
Reference level mods



Sound Lab Ultimate-1
electrostatic
loudspeakers



Creative Cable Concepts interconnects, power cords, and speaker cables will be used throughout the demonstration system.

Last month

Steve Deckert of **Decware** (www.decware.com) demonstrated electronics and speakers he makes and sells direct. These included the Zen Torii push-pull pentode stereo amp (12 w/ch Class A, \$1095, \$1149 with volume control), the SE-84C Zen Triode single ended amp (5 w/ch, \$499), and the Radial RL-2 speakers (\$1495/pr.).

Mark Haugen very kindly brought along his Klipsch LaScala speakers for use with the Zen Triode amp and his turntable, which he describes as follows: Pioneer PL-514 (\$130 in 1978) modified by bolting to cherry wood box filled with 50 lbs of cement, mounted on vibrapods, record clamp also cement - 8 oz. mods=\$20, tonearm - stock Pioneer "S" arm. cartridge: Sumiko Blue Point Special (\$300)

Next month: (July 20th, 2pm)

To be announced.

The Classical Corner

Len Cronin

Peteris Vasks was born in Latvia in 1946, the son of a Protestant minister. Because of his father, Peteris was not allowed to further his musical education in his native Latvia. Instead he completed his initial musical education in Lithuania, then returned to Latvia where he became a double bass player in several of the local orchestras. Later he was accepted in the Latvian Academy of Music, where he studied composition. His initial compositions could be considered avant garde. After the fall of the the Soviet Union and the newly won independence of Latvia, his music became more conventional and he has become known as the voice of Latvian music. The two compositions on this disc (ONDINE ode 1005-2) are from this latter period. The Symphony No. 2 and the Violin Concerto, Distant Light, are both single movement works that can only be attributed to someone who has suffered under Soviet domination.

The Second Symphony is one of the best new compositions I have heard in a long time. Parts of it are quiet and beautiful, while other parts are

loud and violent. The Violin Concert is basically one long slow and sad movement. The sound is top notch. This recording will definitely be on my 'best of' list at year's end.

The first recording by Gerard Schwarz and the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra on Telarc is of the music of Alan Hovhaness and is titled Mysterious Mountains. The four pieces, Mysterious Mountain, Hymn to Glacier Peak, Mount St. Helens, and Storm on Mount Wildcat, are all about the spiritual aspects that mountains represent. I can think of no better introduction to the music of this composer than this disk. The sound is up to Telarc's high standards. The disk (SACD-60604) I listened to is a hybrid SACD. Highly recommended.



Go For Baroque!

Annotated Playlist for April 27, 2003 CAS Meeting
Brian Richardson

PDQ Bach on the Air, track 2: New Horizons in Music Appreciation. Vanguard VMD 79268

This CD, made in 1967, is not the epitome of audiophile quality, but it provides classic humor from Peter Schickele, aka P D Q Bach, including "What's my melodic line?" and "Schleppet in E Flat Major," etc.

Renaissance of the Spirit, the Music of Orlando di Lasso and his Contemporaries, by Di Lasso and other Renaissance composers, performed by Richard Werthen with I Fiamminghi and Erik van Nevel with Currende. Telarc DSD recording, CD-80521, 1999. Tracks 5, 4, 2. Although the Renaissance era preceded the Baroque era, I recommend this recording most highly. It has authentic sounding flawless performances in a beautiful acoustic environment ? the Centrum Bovendonk Hoeven in the Netherlands. If you've n ever thought of buying a CD of Renaissance music, this is the one you should buy. It may even get you hooked. Play it at night when you?re in need of something to put you in a mellow and profound mood.

Renaissance Holiday; by various composers, performed by the London Symphony Orchestra Strings, Arnie Roth and Musica Anima Renaissance Consort, Pittsburgh Symphony Brass, Asbury Brass Quintet, Chicago Chamber Musicians Brass Quintet; produced by Chip Davis and Arnie Roth. American Gramophone AG 298-2., Track 1. An audiophile's dream recording. Absolutely lifelike recording by the guys who brought you the "Fresh Aire" series of recordings by Mannheim Steamroller. A great "Christmas" album that doesn't sound like a "Christmas" album in any way because there aren't any songs that are part of the American cultural pantheon of tired, stale kitschy Christmas tunes. Play it and be proud of your musical sophistication and audiophile discernment.

(to be continued next month)

<i>President</i>	<i>Vice President</i>	<i>Treasurer</i>	<i>Secretary</i>
Brian Walsh	Rich Sacks	Reed Rehorst	Bill Sweet
(847) 382-8433	(847) 843-2554	(847) 913-9336	(847) 593-7790
bpwalsh@speakeasy.net	richsacks@attbi.com	iguana_love_you@msn.com	spindrif@xnet.com
