

# The Golden Ear

Newsletter of the  
Chicago Audio Society  
July 2003

## Meeting Notice

Sunday, July 20<sup>th</sup> – 2:00pm to 5:00pm

Steve Sammet – SAS Audio Labs

SAS Audio Labs is located in Morton, Illinois, near Peoria. Steve Sammet has been making audio electronics for several years and sells them direct by mail order and through his website, [www.sasaudiolabs.com](http://www.sasaudiolabs.com). Steve will show quite a few of his products at this month's meeting, so there should be something for everyone. Here's a list of what he'll be bringing to demonstrate:

- ◆ SE7.0DC SET amp. This amp features 2 total stages on the chassis. Using a separate preamp seems to improve the performance.



- ◆ New 25DCT, all triode, 2 stage DC coupled, push-pull monoblocks in Class A operation.
- ◆ 10A Line Preamp. This preamp features 5 inputs, 2 outputs, AC polarity switch, dual volume controls, and automatic muting circuit.



- ◆ SAS Audio Labs 1 meter interconnects, made with special permission from Jennifer Crock to produce modestly priced interconnects utilizing her multistrand, 6N pure copper wire, and using Cardas Rhodium connectors.
- ◆ SAS Audio Labs speaker wire, which is multiple strands of Jena Labs 18 gauge, 6N pure copper wire.

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

[www.chicagoaudio.org](http://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.

◆ A pair of System Audio 1270 loudspeakers.

We also will have a pair of higher efficiency speakers for demonstration.

### Last month

About 70 people were on hand for our June 22<sup>nd</sup> extravaganza, featuring all-out assaults on state of the art equipment. One look and listen at the system and you could have concluded it was our version of “shock and awe” when it comes to high end audio.

Steve Huntley of Great Northern Sound started things off, telling about some of the things he has been doing with Wadia digital gear as well as electronics including Audio Research, and why he does them.

Bill Eisen spoke briefly about his Creative Cable Concepts products but mostly let the cables (interconnects, speaker cables, and power cords) speak for themselves.

Joe Lavrencik told about his isolation stands he builds, customizing each for the component it supports. Joe's handout

went into some detail about the objectives of the stands and described the levels of isolation available.

Jud Barber of Joule Electra spoke in some detail about the design of the amplifiers and preamplifiers he designs and builds, with flip charts showing circuit configurations. The LAP-150 preamp and VZN-220 Rite of Passage monoblocks were a joy to behold.

Dr. Roger West of Sound Lab described design features and principles of the full range electrostatic loudspeakers he has been building and improving upon for the past 25 years. The Ultimate-1 speakers demonstrated are his top of the line product.

Although we allowed extra time for the meeting, each of our guests could have filled the time with interesting points to make and answer the many questions people had. We tried to balance the talks with music listening the best we could.

### Next month: (August 17<sup>th</sup>)

To be announced.



Pentatone Classics was started by three former executives of Philips Classics with the intent of releasing both remastered quadrophonic material from the 70's and new recordings using DSD technology. All Pentatone recordings will be issued as hybrid SACDs. All recordings reviewed below are new.

The first three recordings were made by the Concertgebouw Chamber Orchestra under the direction of Marco Boni.

### **SACD-5186 002 Mozart & Mendelsson Violin Concertos / Schubert Rondo; Vesko Eschkenazy**

This is a recording that one wonders why it was made. It's well recorded, but that just might be its biggest claim to fame. This is repertoire that has been recorded countless times, and the performances are good but not great. Kind of a ho-hum release.

### **SACD-5186 002 Mozart symphonies Nos. 5 & 29; Serenta Notturna**

**& Eine  
Kleine Nachtmusik**

**SACD-5186 009  
Tchaikovsky  
Souvenir de Florence  
& Serenade for  
Strings**

I like both of these recordings. The sonics are very good, as well they might be, considering yhat thatner electronics were used to make these SACDs. This is light music, well recorded and lovingly played. Again, not exactly under recorded repertoire but recommended just the same.

**SACD-5186 003  
Toccara 200 years of  
German Organ Music  
- Bram Beekman**

I'll keep it short. If you are looking for a recording of an organ that will crack the foundation in your house, this isn't it. The recording sounds good but it lacks impact. Otherwise a good recording.

**SACD-5186 004  
Mahler Symphony  
No. 5 Hartmut  
Haenchen & The  
Netherlands  
Philharmonic  
Orchestra.**

Not my favorite Mahler symphony, but I like this disc. Is it good enough to displace Solti or Bernstein, probably not, but both the sonics and performance are very good. If you want a recording of the Mahler Fifth in modern, put this on your short list. By the way the multi channel mix is supposed to be very good.

All in all, kind of a mixed bag. Usually small record labels are a little more adventuresome in the repertoire they select for recording. PentaTone should follow that example.

*Note: The second part of Brian Richardson's 'Go For Baroque' notes was going to appear this month, but problems with the computer file prevent this. Assistance is requested to take Brian's file and send it to me in pieces, otherwise it isn't going to happen. --Brian Walsh*

**For Sale**

William Stonich has a Conrad-Johnson Premier 11 amplifier with a full set of extra tubes available. (708) 352-6457

**Announcements**

Saturday Audio Exchange is sponsoring a Musical Fidelity/Monitor Audio discussion/demonstration evening on Wednesday, July 30. Jim Spainhour, national sales manager will be presenting at both 5:30 and 8pm in our Chicago store at 1021 W Belmont. All products will be covered, including the well reviewed TriVista series. Refreshments, prizes, etc. Admission is free, but you do need to reserve a space by emailing to [andy@saturdayaudio.com](mailto:andy@saturdayaudio.com) or calling (773) 935-4434.

*Dealers sponsoring manufacturer seminars may send us announcements to include in our newsletters. E-mail only to [bpwalsh@speakeasy.net](mailto:bpwalsh@speakeasy.net)*

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