

# The Golden Ear

Newsletter of the  
Chicago Audio Society  
August 2003

## *Meeting Notice*

Sunday, August 17<sup>th</sup> – 2:00pm to 5:00pm

Paul Lacey – Audio Services Corp.

Paul is a dealer based in Mundelein. Here is a list of what he'll be bringing to demonstrate:

Opera Audio Consonance SACD 1.0 player  
Sophia Electric EL34 integrated amplifier and Baby Amplifier  
Von Schweikert Audio VR-2 Reference Towers  
Audience cabling  
Stillpoints and ERS for tweaking

Some members have good experience with the ERS material for damping, and the VR-2 speakers have been discussed lately on some of the Internet discussion sites. Should be interesting. Please bring some music to play.

### **Last month**

Steve Sammet of SAS Audio Labs demonstrated the following:  
SE7.0DC SET amp  
25DCT triode, 2 stage DC coupled, push-pull monoblocks  
10A Line Preamp  
SAS Audio Labs 1 meter interconnects  
SAS Audio Labs speaker wire  
System Audio 1270 loudspeakers

Kevin Novak kindly brought his Klipsch Heresy speakers as well.

**Next month: (September 14<sup>th</sup> – please note *second Sunday*)**

To be announced.

**The Classical Corner**  
*Len Cronin*

The past couple of weeks have brought me two new SACDs of American music. To fast forward to the chase, let me say that I like both of them and

heartily recommend them.

**Rainbow Body** on Telarc SACD-60596 features the Atlanta Symphony under its new music director Robert Spano playing the music of Barber, Copland, Higdon, and Theofanidis. Two older works flanked by two newer pieces. The first work is Christopher Theofanidis' **Rainbow Body**. Based on a theme of medieval composer Hildegard von Bingen, the main theme is developed from a quiet beginning and into a rousing climax. I really like this music and hope to hear more from this composer in the future.

Next on the menu is **Samuel Barber's First Symphony** and **Aaron Copland's Suite from the Ballet Appalachian Spring**. The symphony is in one movement and about twenty minutes in length. This is a really fine performance. This and the previous piece are worth the price of admission. **Appalachian Spring** is a good but not great performance. Jennifer Higdon's blue cathedral rounds out the disc. I haven't made up my mind about this

music because I have been spending so much time with the Theofandis and the Barber. Sound is first rate.

**Albany Record**, Troy 591, also contains four compositions by American composers. Three of whom the average concert goer probably has never heard of and the fourth is more noted as a music critic than as a composer. The disc opens with Nikolai Lopatnikoff's **Festive Overture**. This is rousing, percussive music. Figures, the music was the automobile industry in America. Next up is Robert Helps' **Second Piano Concerto**. This is the most challenging music on either disc. If you really dislike modern music, this one probably won't change your mind. Luckily it's less than fourteen minutes long. Virgil Thomson, the critic and composer mentioned earlier, wrote his ballet **Filling Station** in 1937. The ballet is based on an American story, with music that can only be described as folksy or down home. The ballet was so popular that it convinced Aaron Copland to write **Billy the Kid** in 1938. If you are not familiar with the music of Virgil Thomson, this is a good place to start. My favorite music on this disc is Robert Kurka's second symphony. Born in 1935 in Cicero, Illinois, Robert Kurka is primarily known for his opera **The Good Soldier Schweik**. We can only speculate on what might have been because he died in 1956. If this symphony is typical of his work, I look forward to the upcoming release on Cedille Records of his orchestral music. The sound is excellent, the playing may not be on a par with the best orchestras in the States but the orchestra plays with an understanding of American music. Good disc.

### For Sale

Mark Levinson ML-3 power amplifier, 200 watts per channel, asking \$1400 or best offer. Call Walt at (312) 316-1998.

### Announcements

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

---

<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
<a href="mailto:bpwalsh@speakeasy.net">bpwalsh@speakeasy.net</a>	<a href="mailto:richsacks@attbi.com">richsacks@attbi.com</a>	<a href="mailto:iguana_love_you@msn.com">iguana_love_you@msn.com</a>	<a href="mailto:spindrif@xnet.com">spindrif@xnet.com</a>

---