



The Golden Ear

Newsletter of the *Chicago Audio Society*

December 2002

Meeting Notice

Sunday, December 15th, 2:00 pm

Brian Bowdle

Venus Hi-Fi



Being the North American importer of **Final Laboratory** products, Brian will likely demonstrate **Final Lab** electronics (battery powered), **Living Voice** Avatar speakers, and an **Audio Note** CD player, as well as cables and isolators. He may also bring along a **Manley** Stingray amp to compare.

Bring some music to play, and invite your friends.

Last Month

Ray Samuels of **Ray Samuels Audio** spoke about and demonstrated his op amp based Emmeline CA-2 line stage and Emmeline XR-2 phono stage as well as his tube based Emmeline RS-1A. A turntable was used for the first part of the program, followed by comparisons of digital playback through the different line stages. Dennis Anderson's Ohm Sound Cylinder 300 speakers were driven by Randy Nuss's PS Audio HCA-2 amp.

Future Meetings

January 19th - **Gregg Straley** will demo a Philips SACD1000 player as modified by Stan Warren. We'll also have reports on the **Consumer Electronics Show**.

The Classical Corner

Len Cronin

Hopefully, I'll get this column to Brian in time for the December newsletter to help out with last minute Christmas shopping. All of the discs I'm recommending are hybrid SACD's which can be played on a standard compact disc player.

The Coronation of King George II - Hyperion SACDA67286 - featuring the Choir of the King's Consort, The King's Consort, Robert King conducting. This album uses Handel's Coronation Anthems and ceremonial music of Purcell, Child, Farmer, Tallis, Blow and Gibbons along with trumpet fanfares, drum processions, shouts of acclamation, pealing bell, and something about the kitchen sink. This is great fun with wonderful sound and with more than a little history.

Channel Classics gives us an early instruments performance of the Mozart Requiem - CCS SA 18102 - The Netherlands Bach Society, Jos van Veldhoven, conductor. This is a pretty straightforward performance that is recorded in great sound.

The next two recordings are from Albany Records and feature music of the 20th century.

George Lloyd's Fourth Symphony - Troy 498 - with the Albany Symphony Orchestra, the composer

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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 (first meeting is free, otherwise \$5 fee or \$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.

conducting, may not be a masterpiece but is certainly a welcome change from the 'core' 150 that we hear so often.

Symphonies by Morton Gould, Symphony No.3, and Roy Harris, Symphony No.2 - Troy 515 - David Alan Miller conducting the Albany Symphony Orchestra, allows us to hear these little known works of two mid century American composers. I really like both of these recordings from Albany but then, I've been accused of favoring oddball music. Give them a chance and they just might grow on you.

Next month, some great new recordings from the American Series from Naxos. Till then, great listening and happy holidays.

Until next month - Good listening.

Brian's Babble

Call this an editorial, a rant, whatever. Call me nuts, wacko, arrogant, hell-bent, borderline, etc.

What's on my mind this month (assuming I'm not out of it)?

The article penned by Leonard Norwitz several years ago, "Are You On The Road To Audio Hell?" is a must read! Leonard kindly gave us permission to post it on our website. It can be found under the Tips & Tweaks page, from the first link near the top of the page, at <http://www.chicagoaudio.org/audiohell.htm> You probably won't agree with it, but read it anyway! And come back to it again and again. You might eventually "get" it. There's a lot of truth there.

Along the same vein as Leonard's insightful article, I have to ask,

The Audiophile Top Ten: What's Wrong With It?

Well after all, you're familiar with certain discs (more often than not at audio club meetings, they're CDs, a format which in yours truly's opinion is compromised) - so why not bring them to meeting after meeting, hoping to use them as a reference? My answer: fuggedaboutit! MUSIC IS ALL THAT MATTERS.

When you were a child, did you worry about whether the recording quality? Or did you just put on a record or tape that you just really enjoyed? You know the answer! Why should today be different? Don't say, "my system is so good, this will sound terrible!" Baloney! Why mess around with a limited number of records or

CDs that are on someone's "list"? Listen to music you enjoy, and if it happens to be a good recording, great! If I really like cello music and see an interesting piece of music featuring that instrument, perhaps performed by someone notable, do I need to look much further before buying it? Of course not - chances are I buy it! And so should it be - if you're only looking at labels, mastering engineers, and especially whether it's on you know who's "list", you're on the road to Audio Hell! (been there, done that!) Expand your horizons, and keep buying music. Play something different for a change. Go back and read Leonard Norwitz's article.



How Do I Find Out About Interesting Music?

There are many ways. Read record reviews in magazines, go to record stores and listen to some CDs (Borders has a new system that will play parts of tracks on any CD, by scanning the bar code and looking it up in a database), by browsing on the Internet and playing available track samples, and so on. Radio programs feature new recordings all the time.

Attend concerts! There's no substitute for the real thing. Become immersed in the performance. In other words, get into it! If when you hear live music you try to associate audiophile terms to the sound (sound-stage, liquidity, etc.), you're 'way "out there" and need to see a shrink.

There are numerous Internet discussion groups dedicated to specific bands, music genres, and so on, if you have the time.



If you're into vinyl, you may be interested in the Phonogram mailing list. To subscribe to the list, send an email to: majordomo@graphics.cornell.edu and in the subject line and in the body of the message, enter

subscribe phonogram-digest

Because of the volume of messages (often several dozen per day), many people find the digest format (several messages joined together as one message, separated within the body of the message) easier to work with than individual messages. If you prefer the

latter, you would enter "subscribe phonogram" instead.



Chicago Audio Society meetings, and tell us about it and why you enjoy it. Many of us have found out about good records and CDs by hearing them at meetings - a strong argument (from me, at least) in favor of not playing music that's been played at past meetings (say, within the past six months to a year, the longer the better). And if you get to know others who share your music interests, invite them over to your home for a listening session.

There's a wealth of knowledge of music in the Society, some of which is unrealized. As 2003 unfolds, I hope to learn about and share more music, and hope you will, too. It's why we're all here in the first place.

Finally, a wonderful way to learn about good music is to share it. Bring something new and different to

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