

# The Golden Ear

Newsletter of the  
Chicago Audio Society  
December 2003

## *Meeting Notice*

Sunday, December 14<sup>th</sup> – 2:00pm to 5:00pm

Music Listening and Christmas Party

*Please note! We meet a week earlier this month.*

This month will feature music of the holiday season as well as anything else people bring. We hope to have both CD and LP playback available. An assortment of tasty refreshments and beverages will add to the festivities.

### Society Business

We'll discuss upcoming meetings and activities—suggestions are invited. Reed Rehorst will give a brief treasurer's report, and we'll discuss and vote on a change in membership dues structure proposed by the Executive Committee (ask any of the officers for a list of members of the Committee, if you're curious). We will also have nominations for officers of the Society for 2004, to be officially voted on at the January meeting.

### Last month

Gregg Straley demonstrated a chip based amplifier he purchased from Stan Warren, rated at 60 watts per channel. A Njoe Tjoeb CD player was used as source, and the satellite/subwoofer speaker system by G&D Transforms used in October was used. Cabling was a combination of Gregg's and TG Audio Lab.

Reed Rehorst gave an enjoyable report and slide presentation on the Vacuum State of the Art Conference held in early October in the Seattle area, along with photos of his visit to the home of Mike Lavigne, a local enthusiast with a fairly serious audio system.

### Next month

January 18, 2004 -- CES and THE Show reports, and more to be announced.

## **The Classical Corner**

*Len Cronin*

### **Prokofiev - *Peter and the Wolf*, Beintus - *Wolf Tracks***

Kent Nagano, conductor; Russia Nat'l Orchestra; Sophia Loren, Bill Clinton,

and Mikhail Gorbachev, narrators  
 Pentatone 518012  
 This recording is a real mixed bag. On the one hand the recorded orchestral music sounds fine but the narration of *Peter and the Wolf* is very difficult to understand. So much so that it spoiled an otherwise fine performance of Prokofiev's little gem. Jean-Pascal Beintus' *Wolf Tracks* is appropriately narrated by Bill Clinton. In this setting the grandson of the above mentioned Peter tells his grand father that he would like to hunt a wolf. This in turn leads the young Peter to learn many ecological lessons along the way. Some folks may like it, but I thought it was rather sappy. Sorry but I can't recommend this disc.

**Epics**

Erich Kunzel, Conductor;  
 Cincinnati Pops Orchestra  
 Telarc SACD-60600  
 I'm having a hard time with this album, not because the music is bad, rather, I don't like the format or concept of the album. There is music from fourteen different

films and only one composer, John Williams, represented more than once. For me this becomes a rather choppy program that in effect keeps starting and stopping. Individually the different selections are pretty good, although I could have done without the opening fanfare from *Zarathustra*. Of special note is Tan Dun's music from *Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon* -- use this cut to show off your system, and Howard Shore's *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* is top notch. Telarc was in top form when they made this recording. If the format of this recording doesn't bother you, then by all means give it a try.

**Prokofiev - Romeo And Juliet - Complete Suites from the Ballet**

Paavo Jarvi, conductor; Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra  
 Telarc SACD-60597

Many consider this score to be the quintessential music of the 20th century, and I won't disagree. This is music that contains beautiful melodies, drama, and enough edginess that one could ever mistake it for a romantic score. In other words its what music of the last century and for that matter this century should strive to be. Well, you probably want to know how good is the sound. This is one of the best recording of an orchestra that I have heard in the past several years. I've listened to both the CD and stereo SACD layers and they both are good. You don't want to miss some of the most natural bass that gives flesh and weight to the orchestral sound. Your perspective is about three quarters back in the hall. What can I say--great music, good performance and outstanding sound, an easy recommendation.

**Call for Articles**

Want to be famous? Send us articles, news, comments, gripes, and other items of interest to members for publication. Tell us about some music or a component you're enjoying. Photos and artwork are welcome. E-mail to [bpwalsh@speakeasy.net](mailto:bpwalsh@speakeasy.net)

**Holiday System Crawl**

If you're like many of us, you have some time off during the holidays. Talk with people at this month's meeting and plan to join others for a chance to hear a few systems and share music. Proposed dates: How about Saturday, Dec. 27 and/or Saturday, Jan. 3? We'll pass around sign-up sheets at the meeting.

---

<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@comcast.net">richsacks@comcast.net</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>

---