



Newsletter

March 2026

In this issue:

- President's Message - John Harvell
- March Meeting Notice - A New Dimension in Listening: Experience the Trinaural Processor - Dave Snyder
- Election results - by Jim Welby
- Streaming Consulting - David Snyder
- Review of AAVC February Event - David Das
- Dave's Record Review: Marshall Crenshaw (self-titled)
- Review of club member Joe Roberts' system - David Das
- Paul Johnson's playlist
- Wasting Time On The Internet (recurring feature) - By Jim Welby
- Jerry Garcia studio albums and HDCD format - Jim Welby
- LMC Momentum Z Debut Event - David Das

President's Message

By John Harvell

For most of my audiophile history, I have lusted after new equipment that was well outside what my financial resources would tolerate. During my journey, I have compared countless speakers and evaluated or admired amplifiers, preamplifiers, and, more recently, streamers.

During the last few years in our club, I've taken advantage of our unique ability to listen to the many systems club members have graciously shared. As a result, I've experienced a wide range of system components and layouts, and I've become progressively aware that I've failed, over the years, to place the proper

amount of emphasis and effort on addressing certain factors that have a substantial impact on the quality of the music I hear from my own system.

Sure, I made the standard excuses: *"I need the TV to be in the center of the soundstage because it shares a role in home entertainment,"* or *"I haven't implemented room treatment because I would need more absorbers, bass traps, and diffusers than I wanted to build or buy for the room."* For a long time, I dismissed those options because they seemed hard to address.

In the last few years, with the help of club members prodding and educating me, I decided to actually see how much change moving the TV would make. I moved it from center stage to the back of the soundstage (against the wall). **Wow.** I was shocked by how much influence this had on the music's dimensionality and soundstage. (Cost: Zero so far—though the wife might want a bigger TV now!)

Additionally, through the help of club members like David Snyder and David Das, we were able to carry out room and speaker measurements to create high-quality equalization filters. These profoundly improved the quality of the music I hear every day.

So, why tell this story? Well, these changes made as big an impact on my system as the much larger investments I've made in new and used components, yet they cost less than a thousand dollars in total. Looking back, I feel a bit foolish; I could have harvested those improvements a long time ago if I had been more active with club members and spent time trying simple things which I suspected would make a difference, but dismissed because they required a bit of extra effort.

To that end, there is a revolution going on in the audio industry. There is a lot of new, inexpensive equipment reducing the performance gap between premium gear and entry-level products. An example opportunity for those with digital streaming systems is the newly developed **Diretta** communication protocol. With the help of David Snyder, I have implemented a premium version of Diretta at a cost of approximately \$1,000 for my Auralic Vega G1 streaming DAC. I find it changes the system performance from an acceptable level at the \$4,000 price point to that of a streamer performing in the \$10,000–\$15,000 range.

These types of changes are available to you as club members. As noted later in this newsletter, you will find that folks like David Snyder and David Das are willing to help educate and steer you through the hurdles of implementing changes like these in your own system.

So: reach out, get involved, and harvest these improvements for your own system!

Club Election Results

By Jim Welby

Last month we conducted our annual election for club officers. We also voted on an updates to the clubs bylaws. Twenty members voted in the election (out for forty two ballots sent out to the paid members at the time of the election). All officers were unanimously voted for (there were no write-ins). In addition the club bylaws were also unalmously approved.

A New Dimension in Listening: Experience the Trinaural Processor

By David Snyder

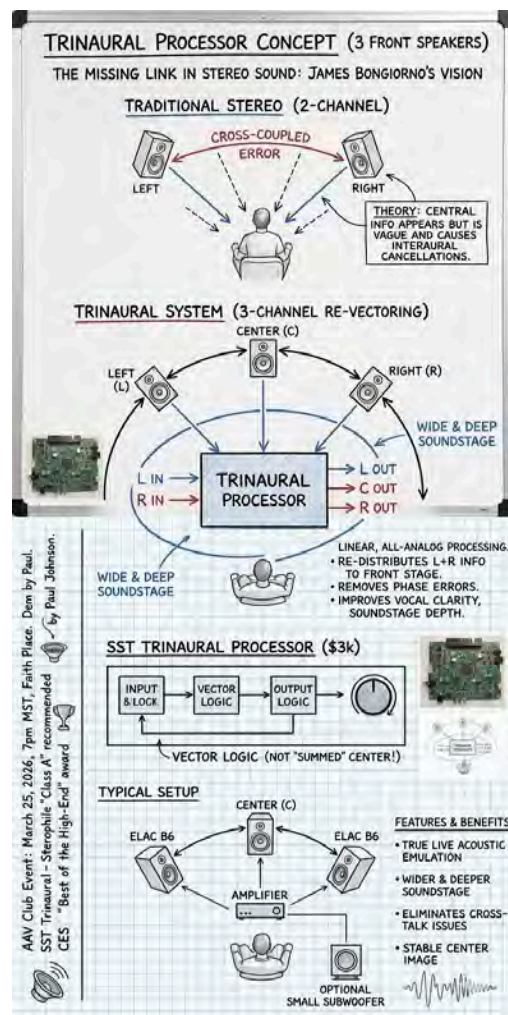
Date: Wednesday, March 25, 2026 **Time:** 7:00 PM MST

Location: Faith Place (adjacent to Faith Lutheran Church offices)

Join us for the March meeting of the Arizona Audio Video Club as we explore a rare and revolutionary approach to high-fidelity audio: **The Trinaural Processor**.

Why Trinaural?

Invented by the legendary James Bongiorno, the Trinaural Processor addresses a fundamental limitation in traditional stereo. Bongiorno's research suggested that because real-world sounds rarely come from absolute left or right positions, a



three-channel front stage is essential for true "live" acoustic sound reproduction.

Unlike simple "summed" center channels, this linear, completely analog device **re-vectorizes** stereo information for three channels. The result is a dramatically wider soundstage with enhanced depth, clarity, and a level of realism that traditional two-channel systems simply cannot match.

The Demonstration

This evening's session features a live demonstration of a **\$3,000 SST Trinaural Processor** system.

- **Electronics:** Provided by Paul Johnson.
- **Speakers:** A matched trio of ELAC B6 standmount speakers, provided by Jeffrey Behr.
- **Subwoofer:** A compact unit provided by David Snyder to complement the front stage.

What to Expect

- **A Unique Presentation:** Paul Johnson will lead a discussion on the technology, features, and benefits of the Trinaural approach.
- **Award-Winning Performance:** Discover why this processor earned a **Stereophile Magazine "Class A"** recommendation and a **CES "Best of the High-End"** award.
- **Critical Listening:** Hear how this analog-only processor virtually eliminates the cross-coupled error information found in standard stereo setups.

Whether you are a seasoned audiophile or curious about the state-of-the-art in analog processing, don't miss this opportunity to reconnect with the magic of your favorite recordings through a whole new lens.

Elevate Your Listening: State-of-the-Art Streaming

By David Snder

Exclusive Service for Arizona Audio/Video Club Members

Many audiophiles feel that streaming is a compromise—a trade-off of sound quality for convenience. If you have hesitated to add streaming to your system because it just doesn't sound as good as CD or SACD, you aren't alone. However, in 2026, the technology has finally reached a point where digital files and streams can match—and often exceed—the performance of physical media.

I am offering a **complimentary, end-to-end setup service** to help you achieve "State-of-the-Art" digital playback without the five-figure price tag.

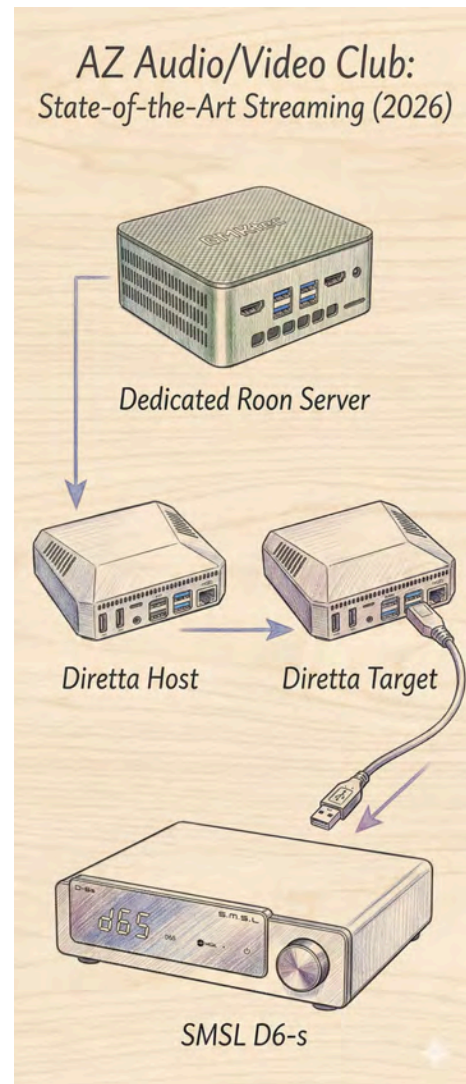
The Vision: Physical Quality, Digital Convenience

My goal is to integrate a solution into your home that offers the depth, timing, and clarity of high-end physical transports, wrapped in a family-friendly interface.

- **Bit-Perfect Audio:** Lossless high-resolution playback via Roon and Qobuz or TIDAL.
- **Low-Noise Architecture:** Utilizing the Direccion protocol for ultra-stable, high-fidelity data transport.
- **A "Living" Library:** Access millions of albums with a metadata-rich experience that rivals reading physical liner notes.

The "State-of-the-Art" Component List

I provide a customized Bill of Materials based on your needs. A typical hardware investment starts at **\$750**.



- **Dedicated Roon Server:** An optimized GMKtec mini-PC hub running Roon OS.
 - **Diretta Host + Target:** Specialized audio transport for superior timing and a reduced noise floor.
 - **The Interface:** Control your music from any smartphone or a dedicated device like the Google Pixel Tablet.
 - **Performance DAC:** If you don't already have a USB-capable DAC, I recommend the SMSL D6-s as a high-performance starting point (\$199).
-

How the Service Works

I provide the technical expertise; you simply cover the cost of the hardware and subscriptions (Roon is \$149.88/year and Qobuz or TIDAL start at \$11/month).

1. **Consultation:** We'll discuss your current system and home network. If your network needs optimization to handle high-resolution audio traffic, I'll provide the roadmap to get it "streaming-ready."
2. **Assembly & Calibration:** Once your components arrive, I will come to your home to assemble, configure, and calibrate the system for your specific environment.
3. **Hands-on Training:** I'll ensure you (and your family) are comfortable navigating the Roon interface and managing your new library.

Try Before You Buy: Unsure if the jump is worth it? I can provide a "**Starter Kit**" **loaner** for you to evaluate in your own system for up to one week. Experience the difference in your own room, on your own speakers, before committing to the project.

Ready to modernize your listening experience? I am not charging club members for my time to get you set up—I only ask that if the system works for you, you help me spread the word.

David Snyder, dsnyder0cnn@gmail.com, 678-231-0568

February AAVC Event Review: Member Music Night

By David Das

I had the pleasure of attending the **Member Music Night** Event on Wednesday, February 25, 2026, at Faith Lutheran Church.

The equipment used was identical to the **Music & Social** Event held at the Faith Lutheran Church, January 23, 2006, except for two differences:

1. The Member Music Night Event was held at the **Faith Place**, a smaller hall measuring 32' x 42' next to the Church Office.
2. Club Secretary **David Snyder** deployed his latest iteration of the Diretta Protocol (Version 148) to enhance the sound quality of streaming tracks from Qobuz and TIDAL (see David Snyder's consulting offer above).

Although not the event's main focus, this presented an opportunity to compare SACD and CD playback against Qobuz streaming through the Oppo BDP-205's internal DAC. To me, the difference was night and day. The Diretta Protocol added a layer of refinement and relaxation to the system that was missing in the January Event held at the **Parish Hall**. Diretta added more definition, instrument separation, and emotional engagement to the streaming tracks. For under \$750, you can elevate your streaming experience to world-class. The Diretta protocol serves as a sophisticated bridge to high-end audio, rivaling commercial solutions costing upwards of \$10,000. Best of all, you do not need to be a programmer or waste any time tinkering with a DIY Kit. David Snyder provides a pre-programmed plug-and-play working solution complete with a remote. David is also happy to build the kit if you buy the parts and either send them to him or bring them to his home, where he can help you assemble them while he explains what, how, and why. Club Member **Paul Zidel** took this route with great results.

After listening to the difference in sound quality between the January and February Events using the same equipment, I would wholeheartedly recommend the Diretta upgrade. If you are curious about the Diretta upgrade, please read my [55-page review](#) of the event **Beyond the Bits: Taming Your Network for Superior Sound** held on August 28, 2025.

Steering Committee Member **Jeffrey Behr** was kind enough to loan his [Eminent Technology LFT-8C Hybrid Dynamic Planar speakers](#).



Jeffrey also provided a pair of [PS Audio Stellar M1200](#) Monoblocks rated at 1200W into a 4 ohm load. Since the Eminent Technology LFT-8C speakers have an 8 ohm nominal impedance, these Monoblocks delivered 600W, ensuring the planar speakers never ran out of juice.



Everything was set up by 7 pm.



Each member was given the opportunity to select a favorite track and say a few words about their choice.

Jeffrey delighted attendees with a selection of orchestral music from his SACD collection, including works by John Williams, Igor Stravinsky, Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, and others.

Here is a list of the 16 tracks streamed over 2 hours.

Album Artist	Album	Disc #	Track #	Title
Miles Davis	Kind of Blue	1	1	So What
Various Artists	Tutti!: Orchestral Sampler	1	1	The Snow Maiden: Dance of the Tumblers
Atlanta Symphony Orchestra & Chorus, Robert Shaw	Stravinsky: The Firebird Suite (1919 Version) - Borodin: Overture & Polovetsian Dances from Prince Igor	1	4	The Firebird Suite: IV. Infernal Dance of King Kastchei (1919 Version)
Till Brönner & Dieter Ilg	Nightfall	1	1	A Thousand Kisses Deep
Father John Misty	I Love You, Honeybear	1	2	Chateau Lobby #4 (in C for Two Virgins)
Lou Reed	Transformer	1	3	Perfect Day
Friend 'n Fellow	Discovered	1	2	Clocks
Anne-Sophie Mutter, Recording Arts Orchestra of Los Angeles & John Williams	Across The Stars	1	9	The Duel (From "The Adventures Of Tintin")
Laufey	Promise	1	1	Promise
The Tibbs	Takin' Over	1	9	The Story Goes
Simon and Garfunkel	Parsley, Sage, Rosemary And Thyme	1	10	For Emily, Whenever I May Find Her
Lucy Thomas	Portrait	1	1	Woman in Love
Natalie Merchant	Leave Your Sleep	1	12	The Peppery Man
Nils Lofgren	Nils Lofgren Band Live	2	9	Bass & Drum Intro
O-Zone Percussion Group	O-Zone Percussion Group: Bamba (La)	1	10	Jazz Variants
Erich Kunzel	Tchaikovsky: 1812; Gershwin: Rhapsody in Blue; An American in Paris	1	1	1812 -- Festival Overture, for orchestra in E flat major, Op. 49

Please read my [21-page review](#) to see which tracks stood out, and to explore the full capabilities of this system using the Diretta Protocol, along with my closing thoughts. It has a link to my speaker cable building guide.

Dave's Record Reviews

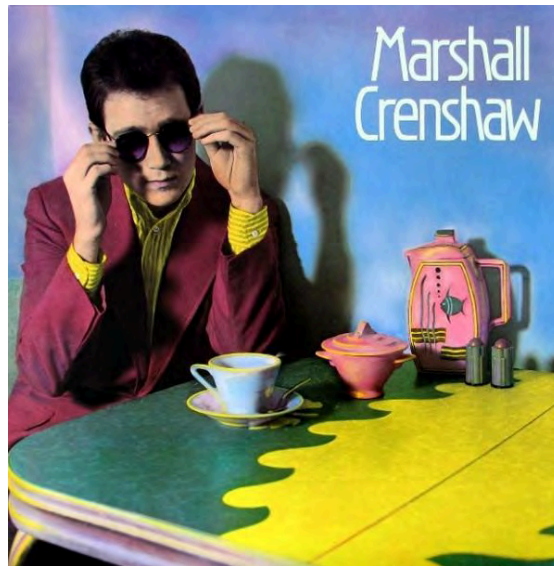
Championing worthy albums from the past that should not be forgotten...

For the AZ Audio Club ~ March 2026

#37

Marshall Crenshaw

(LP & CD, Warner Brothers, 1982)



I'll never forget the first time I heard this album – or more specifically, my reaction the first time I heard it: “OMG! Buddy Holly lives!” That reaction has been replicated, though perhaps with a lesser degree of astonishment, every time I listen to it. If you are – ahem – of a certain age, perhaps you too recall this album from when it was released 44 years ago – or if not the album, you may recall one or two of its songs from radio airplay.

Crenshaw began playing guitar at age ten and immersed himself in pop and rock music. He led a band after high school, went on to perform and play in the musical **Beatlemania**, then started a band in New York City in 1980 with his brother, Robert, as the drummer and Chris Donato on bass. The trio worked great together, and honed their musical chops – and Crenshaw's songs – playing in clubs all over New York. He signed with Warner Brothers Records in 1981 and, the year after, released this triumph of a pop-rock album.

The comparisons between Crenshaw and Buddy Holly were inevitable. It's not that Crenshaw sought to *duplicate* Holly's 1950's sound, but that he reflected the energy, simplicity, and joyful approach to the musical presentation that Holly

had conveyed. That said, he did cite Holly, along with the Beatles, Squeeze, and (another of my favorites) Rockpile as influences.

Crenshaw originally thought that he would produce the album, but as the recording progressed, it became obvious that his production skills did not measure up to his talents as a songwriter and musician. Warner Brothers brought in experienced producer Richard Gottehrer, and Crenshaw was given a co-producer credit. He and his two mates – the trio – form the core of the sounds here, with some support from others on bass and percussion.

Crenshaw wrote all but two of the twelve songs on the album, and oh, those songs! The album leads with the comparatively easy rockin' "*There She Goes Again*," then things really take off with the rocker "*Someday, Someway*." One of the songs released as a single from the album is an infectious tune that is decidedly earworm stuff.

*"I can't stand to see you sad, I can't bear to hear you cry
If you can't tell me what you need, all I can do is wonder why
Someday, someday, Maybe I'll understand you."*

Almost every song is a winner here. To mention just a few others, "Rockin' Around N.Y.C." is an upbeat, catchy number about exactly what the title suggests. "Girls..." is an almost-but-not-quite mournful paean to the opposite sex and the youthful singer's yearning and admiration for them. "There She Goes Again" is another gently rocking song, about a lost love who goes by again with another guy.

My favorite cut is another released as a single from the album, the memorable "*Cynical Girl*."

*"Well I'm goin' out, I'm goin' out lookin' for a cynical girl
Who's got no use for the real world... Well I'll know right away by the look
in her eye. She harbors no illusions and she's worldly-wise."*

What we have here is a bright, upbeat album of well-written and well-performed songs, and I will assert that its sound has aged quite well. If you have a copy in your music library that you haven't listened to for a while, by all means pull it out and reacquaint yourself with it. (Or stream it, if you limit yourself to that.)

When it was released, the album was met with great reviews, and it spent over six months on the Billboard chart. **Rolling Stone** magazine loved it, calling it "gorgeous" and (later) including it in its list of the "100 Best Albums of the Eighties." So – an amazingly successful album? Well, not exactly. Despite its

longevity on the charts, it peaked at only #50, and total sales (at least in its initial release) didn't quite reach 400,000 – not enough to attain gold record status, much less the platinum status that Crenshaw had hoped for. The singles from the album didn't fare particularly well either, with none of them cracking the top 10. All that said, the album is fondly regarded by thousands of pop-rock buffs and is most decidedly a worthy album from the past that should not be forgotten.

As befits its pseudo-classic status, a number of versions of this album have come out. I own two of them: the first release on CD in 1990, and an unfortunate Mobile Fidelity LP that was unleashed in 2009. That latter is probably the best example I've ever heard of how remastering can gut the soul out of music in the name of "improving" the sound quality – it renders a bit more detail, but sounds so antiseptic that it could be played in bathrooms to kill bacteria. I regret having wasted money on it. Yep Roc, ordinarily a reasonable producer of vinyl, put out a version in 2023 that I have not heard but has been panned in online reviews. And there are others. If you might be interested, my best recommendation is to find one of the original WB LPs online or used in stores.

Many artists reach their greatest success only after two, three or more albums. Others seem to hit it big with their debut and never seem to quite manage it again. Crenshaw continued to make records, his catalog currently listing some 15 "regular" albums, depending on how you count them, plus a few compilations and odds and ends. Though his successive albums contain good material here and there, I regretfully suggest that Crenshaw falls into the latter category.

Review of AAVC Member Joe Robert's Audio System

By David Das

I had the pleasure of auditioning **Joe Roberts'** Audio System on Monday, March 2, 2026, at his new home in Mesa, Arizona.

Club President **John Harvell** arrived at 1 pm, and Joe began his demo after a brief tour of his expansive desert-themed landscaped property, which made me feel as if I were at a vacation getaway.

Joe and his lovely wife, **Laura**, were extremely fortunate to find this exquisite and peaceful hideaway that blended and flowed seamlessly into the surroundings. This certainly qualifies as an oasis in the desert. This is a place for meditation, relaxation, and certainly for enjoying audiophile music in its highest fidelity with no neighbors to bother you.

Joe's audio system is built around a pair of [GR-Research NX-Treme](#) 7' towers, each featuring a [GR Neo 3](#) Planar Magnetic Tweeter, two [M165NQ](#) mid-range drivers, and eight [M165](#) woofers arranged vertically in a perfectly symmetrical [D'Appolito line array](#).



These towers dominate Joe's 17' wide living room and dwarf the LG 83" OLED TV pushed against the front wall. It is a sight to behold the moment you walk in. These tall majestic towers are a fully open baffle design from top to bottom, just wide enough to accommodate the 7.25" outer diameter of the woofer units. They have a high sensitivity of 94.5dB and a nominal impedance of 8 ohms, making them easy to drive.

This flagship model by **Danny Richie** of GR Research was featured at the [2019 Lone Star Audio Fest](#). The towers by themselves play flat from 20Hz to 20kHz. Many audiophiles feel the NX-Tremes are the [holy grail of speakers](#).

Flanking the NX-Treme towers are a pair of [GR-Research Triple Threat Subwoofers](#).

Each open baffle enclosure measuring 17"x17"x22" (13"x13"x15" the opening of the "cell" for each servo) houses three open baffle [SW-12-16FR Servo Sub Woofers](#) units.

They reproduce clean bass down to 20Hz and help to relieve the load off the main towers.



Joe noticed an immediate improvement in the perceived depth of the sound field when he pushed the 83” flat screen LG OLED TV against the wall. John Harvell experienced the exact same effect when he moved his 82” Samsung TV a few feet behind the speaker plane.



Generally speaking, it is a cardinal sin to place any flat reflecting surface along the plane of the speakers. It kills the depth perception. The sound stage becomes flat. Now we have two case studies to prove this.

If you cannot reposition your flat screen TV, just throw a heavy blanket over it when you are ready to listen to music. It would make a positive difference.

Joe's Equipment List

Main Speakers: <https://gr-research.com/product/nx-treme/>

Subwoofers: [GR-Research Triple Threat](#) x2

DAC/Streamer/Preamp: [Linn Selekt Organik DAC](#)

Stereo Power Amp: [Burmester 911 MK3](#)

Speaker Cables: [GR-Research 24-Strand Speaker Cables](#)
Streaming Service: [Qobuz](#)

The audio demo

Joe played through his set of demo tracks while John and I traded the sweet spot between songs.

I immediately heard the punch, power, and impact of the bass drums and the transient attacks of the bass guitar strings when Joe cued up "*Bass & Drum Intro*" by Nils Lofgren. I can see why this is Joe's favorite track for demonstrating the extreme dynamics of his audio system!



Nils Lofgren Band Live
Nils Lofgren Band

Released by **VISION MUSIC** on January 26, 2009
Rock • 23 Tracks • 02h 07m 10s

Available in
16-Bit CD Quality
44.1 kHz - Stereo

This is a torture test track for any speaker. If your system can realistically reproduce the whack of the bass drums at moderately high listening levels while articulating the quick transient notes from the plucked guitar strings, you are golden. Joe's system passed this test in spades.

"*Hoist the Colors*" by The Wellermen was another demo track selected by Joe. The NX-Treme towers reproduced the low registers of the male voices with authority, texture, and definition.



I requested to listen to “*Woman In Love*” by Lucy Thomas. This is one of my favorite tracks to evaluate the clarity and smoothness of a female vocal performance.

Next, I asked Joe to play me “*Can You Feel The Love Tonight*” by Lucy and Martha Thomas. I was interested in hearing the complex layers of harmony between Lucy and her younger sister.

Joe played “*Fields of Gold*” by Eva Cassidy, one of our club favorites. This was a good test track for me since I had heard this on John Harvell’s modified audio system, which I claimed reproduced Eva’s voice with the ultimate delicacy and sweetness, regardless of price, rivaling any system at LMC Scottsdale.

Joe played “*Goodbye Yellow Brick Road*” by Sara Bareilles, another well-recorded live track. I was interested in hearing the texture of her voice and the impact of the piano chords.

We played one song after another till 4:30 pm.

There was one thing that all 3 of us unanimously agreed on. The full potential of Joe’s audio system was being held back by the lack of room treatment in his expansive listening space, which flowed into the cavernous living, dining, and kitchen space with high ceilings.

This room needs to be dampened. Even John’s normal speaking voice sounded resonant. It was not the ideal environment to demonstrate an audio system of this caliber.

Please read my full [17-page review](#) to learn about the room treatment tips & tricks suggested by Club President **John Harvell** on elevating the performance of this system to the next level.

What is Paul listening to?

By Paul Johnson

Noir Jazz Cats | Black Cats Sax & Deep Bass Show | Black Cats by the Bonfire:
Deep Bass Jazz for Calm & Creative Work

John Vanore & Abstract Truth | Diverge | Easter Island Suite

Peter Gabriel | In the Big Room

The Nude Party | Look Who's Back

Zach Bryan | With Heaven On Top

Iron & Wine | Hen's Teeth

Blitzen Trapper | Holy Smokes Future Jokes | 100's of 1000's, Millions of Billions

Fountains Of Wayne | Sky Full of Holes | Welcome Interstate Managers |
Out-Of-State Plates

Jeff Pevar | From the Core | Modern Americana & Neofolk

Anjimile | You're Free to Go | Giver Taker

Richard Hawley | Coles Corner (20th Anniversary Deluxe Edition) | In This City
They Call You Love

Cindy Cashdollar | Slide Show | Waltz For Abilene

Danny Gatton and Funhouse | Live at the Holiday Inn 1987

The James Oliver Band | Frantic | Twang | More Is Less

The Third Mind | Spellbinder!

Pharaoh Sanders | Elevation

Richard Shindell | Not Far Now | Careless

Johnny Hiland | Johnny Hiland | Standing Strong | Loud and Proud

Daniel Donato | A Young Man's Country | Horizons | Reflector

Eddie 9V | Saratoga | Way Down the Alley (Live at Blind Willie's)

Ora Cogan | Hard Hearted Woman

Rosie Flores | Impossible Frontiers | Simple Case of the Blues |

Esperanza Spalding | Chamber Music Society | Radio Music Society (Deluxe Edition) | 12 Little Spells (Deluxe Edition)

Johnny Blue Skies & The Dark Clouds (aka Sturgill Simpson) | Mutiny After Midnight

Gordon Goodwin's Big Phat Band | Swingin' For The Fences | Act Your Age

The War on Drugs | Lost in the Dream | Live Drugs

Nils Frahm | All Melody | Spaces | Paris

Robin Trower | Twice Removed From Yesterday | Bridge of Sighs | For Earth Below | Live | 50th Anniversary Editions

WASTING TIME ON THE INTERNET

By Jim Welby

Here is another retro-futuristic hi-fi system I discovered on the [Vinyl Fatory website](#): the Electrohome from 1975:



It was designed to be a “communications nerve centre for the future.” As well as the massive circular pod, the system was hooked up to a wall-screen TV and cockpit armchair with control buttons in the armrests and speakers in the wings.



All Good Things: Jerry Garcia Studio Sessions and HDCD (High Definition Compatible Digital) CDs

By Jim Welby



I recently returned to Minneapolis for a quick trip and gathered a bunch of HDCD CDs for the Desert 🌵 Sessions (my nickname for our snowbird second home in Phoenix - our hometown and summer home is in Minneapolis) to play on my [Oppo](#) 105 that I recently shipped from Minneapolis to Phoenix, which has an HDCD decoder. The discs I picked up are limited to two artists: Joni Mitchell and Jerry Garcia.

HDCD CDs are specially encoded CDs with a higher dynamic range and lower distortion than standard CDs (essentially 20-bit quality from 16-bit media). Developed by Pacific Microsonics and now owned by Microsoft, it offers improved dynamic range, better 3D sound staging, and a more natural timbre. However, your CD player needs an HDCD decoder to experience the benefits of the format. Per club member David Snyder, you can use dBpoweramp to rip HDCD discs. Although the HDCD encoding is 20-bit, the software rips HDCD discs to 24-bit, 44.1 kHz FLAC files for compatibility. Microsoft purchased the HDCD technology from Pacific Microsonics in September 2000. So, when dBpoweramp runs on Windows, you can enable an HDCD decoder as a filter

I find the format sounds better than CDs and comparable to SACDs, but that is purely subjective, as I have not A/B'd any titles. The soundstage is the most notable feature. I had a conversation on a Facebook SCAD group, and the other members confirmed that the HDCD format rocks; however, not many CD players can decode it, so most people are just playing the Redbook layer of the disk. Fortunately, the Oppo can play any shiny object, including quarters 😊 and HDCD CDs.

One of the titles I brought to the Desert 🌵 Sessions is ***All Good Things: Jerry Garcia Studio Sessions***, a 2004 reissue box set of Garcia's five solo studio albums (including the only Jerry Garcia Band studio release), plus an additional disc of previously unreleased studio recordings in HDCD format. The albums are remastered and include bonus tracks such as alternate versions and outtakes from the album recording sessions.

I am not familiar with the vinyl originals or the standard CDs, but these HDCD versions sound fantastic. On [Jambands.com](#), John Patrick Gatta said:

*“These revamped recordings shine like the first sunny day after a long hard winter. I tested my copy of **Run for the Roses** with the new version and there's a world of difference. The volume on the remixed and*

remastered HDCD disc brings the instruments up in order to add stronger support. At times, the clarity is amazing.”

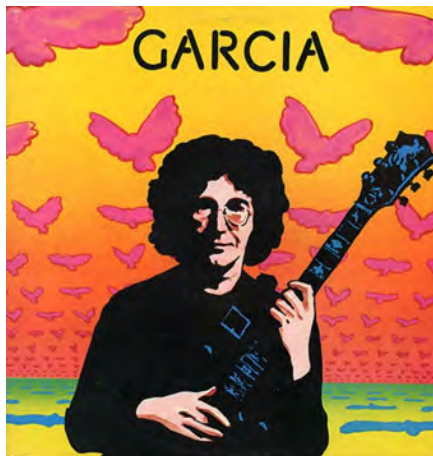
I will take Mr. Gatta’s word on this, as the album sounds great to my ears.

I have said many times that I am not a Deadhead, but a Jerry Garcia fan. I was first introduced to Garcia via his [1991 live album, Jerry Garcia Band](#). I have collected an extensive collection of Garcia's solo work and projects outside of the Dead. Most of those titles are live albums. The solo studio albums feel a bit underrated in the Deadhead universe, and even for me, I have spent more time with the live Garcia stuff. But I am in a receptive state of mind to listen to these albums in this [latest iteration of the Desert 🌵 Sessions](#).

In the liner notes, Robert Hunter (one of Garcia’s and the Dead’s lyricist) says of Garcia: *“He had more talent for more things in his missing finger than most have in ten.”* Hunter goes on to say: *“Jerry did three things well in music, stamping them fully with the strength of his extreme individuality: he composed, sang, and played brilliantly.”* Indeed!



Garcia is Jerry’s first solo album and was released in January 1972. Garcia recorded the album almost entirely by himself, with only Grateful Dead drummer Bill Kreutzmann assisting him. It is an eclectic mixture of Grateful Dead-style country music (transcendent) and atmospheric electronic pieces (weird). All songs were written by Garcia/Kreutzmann (weird), Hunter/Garcia (brilliant), and Hunter/Garcia/Kreutzmann (“The Wheel”). It does have some Garcia/Dead classics: *“Deal,” “Sugaree,” “The Wheel,”* and *“Loser.”* I have to admit, you need to be in an adventurous mood for the weird stuff, but it’s cool.



Garcia, also known as **Compliments**, is Jerry's second solo album from 1974. It mostly covers, with elaborate band arrangements featuring horns and strings. The best feature of the album is that Jerry sounds like he is having a blast - his vocals are joyful. Covers like these would become an essential element of Jerry's live shows.



Reflections, from 1976, is my favorite album in the box set. Per Wikipedia regarding **Reflections**:

“Partway through production, Garcia stopped recording with his solo band and brought in the members of the Grateful Dead, who performed on four songs, plus a bonus jam from the box set version of the release we have been talking about. Three of the four Grateful Dead-performed songs had earlier live debuts: "Comes a Time" (1971),

"*They Love Each Other*" (1973) and "*It Must Have Been the Roses*" (1974); "*Might as Well*" entered their rotation in 1976, and "*Mission in the Rain*" received a select few performances that same year. Most of the songs [including covers and bonus material] entered the live rotation of the new Jerry Garcia Band as well."

The album (with reissue bonus tracks) is about half Garcia/Hunter songs and half inspired covers. Garcia's vocals are incredible - top of his game. I never really listened to this album. What a treasure to discover at this late date. Garcia can be a very soulful singer, and he is all in here. I know many of these songs from the live albums. Jerry plays some great guitar, too. The piano by Nicky Hopkins is so good! Highlights:

- Rock 'n Roll Jerry on "*Might As Well*."
- A cover of Allen Toussaint's "*I'll Take a Melody*" is absolutely gorgeous. Jerry croons.
- "*Mission In The Rain*" would be an amazing Elton John song
- "*It Must Have Been the Roses*," a country weeper. Bob and Donna's harmonies are the best.
- More Rock 'n Roll Jerry on "*Tore Up Over You*."
- "*Catfish John*" - again, Bob and Donna's harmonies!
- "*Mystery Train*" - Jerry's take on Elvis - truly unique.
- "*Orpheus*" is an instrumental Grateful Dead jam featuring Garcia, Bob Weir, Keith Godchaux, Phil Lesh, Bill Kreutzmann, and Mickey Hart.



Cats Under the Stars is the only studio album by the Jerry Garcia Band (JGB). There are numerous live JGB albums. **Cats Under the Stars** was a commercial flop, but it is beloved by Deadheads, and Jerry often cited it as his favorite solo album. However, this is my least favorite album in the collection, but it has the best cover art!

The original album was all original material by Hunter/Garcia, Hunter/Kahn, Hunter/Garcia/Kahn, Donna Jean Godchaux, and Kahn. The bonus material on the reissue is mostly covers. The album has a Grateful Dead vibe - what we would now call Americana.



The final CD in the set is **Outtakes, Jams & Alternates**. The first half of this album consists of alternative versions of songs from the four albums. The second half is songs that never made it onto the four albums. The alternate versions are different enough from the album cuts to be interesting. The CD is a nice bonus to the collection. Highlights:

- A more spirited take on “Deal” from the **Garcia** sessions
- A moodier take on “I’ll Take A Melody” from the **Reflections** sessions
- A gorgeous studio version of the JGB live staple (they performed it over 200 times), “My Sisters And Brothers,” with Keith and Donna Jean Godchaux (who also were part of the Dead during this era) from a November 1976 session
- “Iko Iko” - a studio jam of the Nola standard from **Cats Under The Stars** Session

- "Accidentally Like A Martyr" - a cover of the Warren Zevon classic with a rare performance of Garcia on piano from 1977

The box includes a nice booklet featuring essays by Robert Hunter (Garcia's chief lyricist) and others, photos, and notes on the recordings.

Overall, I really enjoyed digging into the Garcia solo albums. Garcia had a rich (I would argue richer) musical life outside of the Grateful Dead.

I believe HDCD is an underrated format, but because it requires a special CD player to decode, most listeners will never get a chance to appreciate it. I feel lucky to have my Oppo to play them on. This has been a fun rabbit hole! The combination of Jerry and HDCD is audiophile heaven.

With the exception of ***Outtakes, Jams & Alternates***, the reissued expanded albums are available on streaming services in Redbook CD quality. The box set is not on streaming services.

LMC Momentum Z Debut Event

Review by David Das

Club President **John Harvell** and members **Joe Roberts** and I had the pleasure of attending the Momentum Z Debut Event at the [LMC Scottsdale](#) showroom on Thursday, March 5, 2026.





The [Momentum Z Monoblock Amplifier](#) is Dan D'Agostino's latest incarnation of the [Momentum series](#) of products, a step below the flagship [Relentless series](#).

The Momentum Z outputs 500W into 8 ohms. It doubles the output to 1,000W at 4 ohms, then doubles again to 2,000W at 2 ohms.

It packs all this power into a relatively small aluminum and copper enclosure measuring 13.5" wide by 5" high by 20.5" deep that can easily be placed inside any equipment rack. This device weighs a hefty 100 lbs. due to the massive solid copper heat sinks on the sides.

This is a monster that delivers twice the current of its predecessor, the M400 MxV.

The Momentum Z marks the 15th anniversary of Dan D'Agostino Master Audio Systems and retails for \$125,000 a pair.



Presentation by Dan D'Agostino

About 70 audiophiles attended this event. We were seated for the first demo session, which started at 5:30pm.

Mike Ware, founder and owner of LMC Home Entertainment, introduced **Dan D'Agostino**, founder and president of D'Agostino Master Audio Systems.



A pair of [Wilson Audio ALEXX V](#) speakers was used to showcase the Momentum Z Monoblock Amplifiers' extreme dynamics, power, resolution, and delicacy.

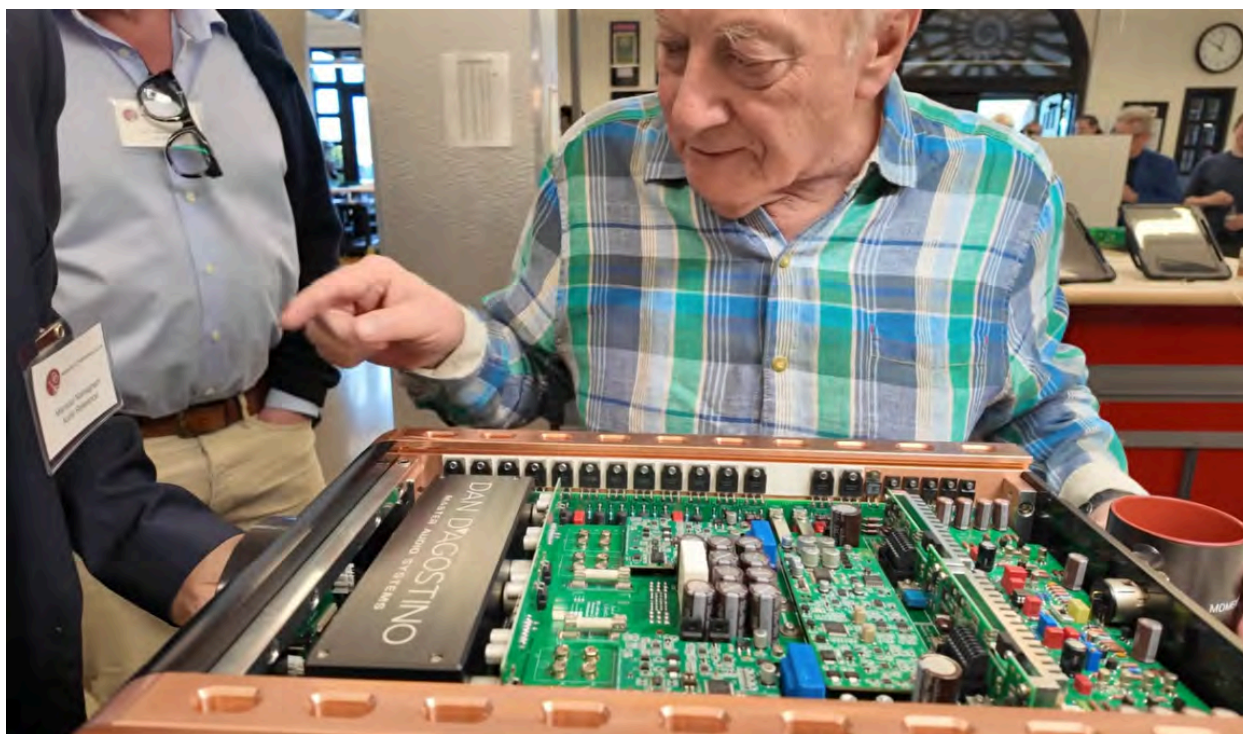


On top, you see the [dCS Rossini APEX DAC](#) and [Master Clock](#), followed by the [Momentum C2 Preamplifier](#) and a pair of [Momentum Z Monoblock Amplifiers](#) in the bottom two spaces.



All the equipment appeared stunning in a silver finish and blended in perfectly with the Harmonic Resolution Systems [Audio Stand](#). 15 years after the launch of the original Momentum Mono Amp in 2011, Dan has unveiled his latest creation, the Momentum Z. This is a significant step forward in design, architecture, and performance over its predecessor, the Momentum M400MxV. To learn what specific changes were made, listen to Dan's short presentation.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CrPMmhuqxW8>



Read my full [69-page review](#) to see the list of audiophile test tracks that were played, a tour of the LMC Scottsdale showroom, and my closing thoughts on this newest product from Dan.

We all had a terrific evening.

Dealers Corner

As always, we want to recognize and thank the local retailers who graciously support our club.

Equipment Dealers:

Acoustic Designs Group <https://www.adgroupaz.com/>

Arizona HiFi <http://tubeaudio.com/>

Audio Video Excellence <https://www.audiovideoexcellence.com/index.html>

Cinematic Home AV <https://www.cinematichomeav.com/>

Dedicated Audio <https://www.dedicatedaudio.com/>

LMC Entertainment <https://www.lmche.com/>

Woolson Audio <https://www.woolsonaudio.com/>

USA Tube Audio <https://www.usatubeaudio.com/>

Mythic Home Theater <https://mythicsls.com/>

Vinyl/CDs:

In-Groove Records <https://www.theingroove.com/>
They also sell audio equipment per the store's website.

Zia Records <https://www.ziarecords.com/> Zia has several stores throughout The Valley.

Stinkweeds <https://www.stinkweeds.com/>

Vinyl Record Dude <https://vinylrecorddude.com/>

Repair Work: The editor recently contacted these repair providers to confirm they are still in business. As of the newsletter's publication, he has not heard back from all the companies.

James Koch - confirmed James is still in business
james@highendrepair.com
480-398-7362

Audio Doctor - active website

<http://www.audiodoctor.biz/>

602-741-0730

Turntable Set-up and record cleaning:

Richard Jensen confirmed still in business

[602 717 2399](tel:6027172399) | worksbau@gmail.com

Scott Cohen- Geared more towards vintage gear, email VintageAudioReview@proton.me with device info and problem(s), and I will let you know if it is something that I think I can help you with. Located in Tucson. Your device might even be featured in a YouTube video. Confirmed in business.

Jeff's Professional Audio Repair [602-274-0794](tel:6022740794) - Also, Car Stereo work was emailed on 9/9/24 to confirm if still in business - did not hear back jparepair@yahoo.com

Re-foaming Speaker Surround Service:

Michael Mitchell 480-749-7003

mmiller43228@yahoo.com emailed on 9/9/24 to confirm if still in business - did not hear back