

Andrew Kosobutsky's listening room provided the music treats at the summer social event.

Instead of having our July 10th meeting at the church, we went on the road to have our annual summer social event and BBQ at club member and former club president Andrew Kosobutsky's house in Newcastle, WA. Andrew has a wonderful listening room and was spinning vinyl and playing digital from his extensive collection.

Andrew's system features the

Forsell Air Reference turntable with Ortofon Anna cartridge and Manley Steelhead preamp/phono stage, Evolution Acoustics MMThree speakers driven by the DartZeel NHB-108 amp, all wired with premium cables and power conditioning. Andrew's listening room is of modest proportions, yet creates an exceptionally large sound space.

There was no formal program for the event; so members and

guests were encouraged to socialize, eat, and sample the audio treats.

On the culinary menu for the event was grilled burgers and hot dogs. Members were encouraged to contribute side dishes, salads, desserts, and beverages.

This event was one of the most enjoyable events of the year. Thank you Andrew!

IMPORTANT!

PNWAS Change of Venue Announcement

By John Stone

Our landlord, the Congregational Church on Mercer Island, has informed the club that the space that we rent from the church and have used for most of the last 28 years, will be used temporarily, starting in October or November 2014, for another tenant. This other tenant will use the basement of the church for a period of approximately one year. The church has offered us alternate (upstairs) space within the church, on Tuesday nights, but this space has been judged by the Executive Committee to be unacceptable for a variety of reasons ranging from acoustic considerations to lack of useful storage space. Because of this, the Executive Committee is seeking alternate meeting space in the greater Seattle area.

At this time, we have located one viable space in downtown Kirkland. This space is available on Tuesday nights for approximately the same rent as we currently pay the church. This space has some acoustic problems, which can likely be mitigated, but we are still looking for options.

The purpose of this note is threefold. One, it is the Executive Committee's obligation to inform membership of this coming change in venue. Second, the Committee seeks your help with locating potential new meeting spaces. This space should have the following characteristics:

- ◆ Available Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday evenings once each month for five hours each month from 5pm to 10pm. Period of rental – negotiable, but one year preferred.
- ◆ Availability of storage space on the same level as the meeting room. Space should be no less than 60 cu. ft. preferably in a room that can be locked.
- ◆ Space to hold 30-60 people and place our system.
- ◆ Reasonable parking either on-street or in a dedicated free parking lot.
- ◆ Located centrally in the greater Seattle area (Renton, Mercer Island, Bellevue, Seattle, southern Kirkland, western Redmond, western Issaquah).
- ◆ Monthly rent no greater than \$200; preferably less.

Lastly, formal approval is needed to approve the change in venue, potential change in meeting day, and approval of any potential rent increase up to \$200 per month. Discussion of these changes as well as a formal vote will be held at the August 14th meeting. Prior to the meeting, if any of you know of any available rental space that might meet our needs, even if its not perfect, please send an email to Jay Hope jay@audiosociety.org. We are under some time pressure to make a decision relatively soon, so please get back to Jay as soon as possible with any ideas.

On a higher level, within the context of the changes that have been forced upon us, we really need your input on the future of the club. With this important agenda, please make an extra effort to attend the August 14th meeting. We will continue to have meetings in the church through September 2014.



Kirkland Womens Club Entrance



Kirkland Womens Club main room with the club system set up to test the room acoustics by the Executive Committee.

Not Unobtainium by Gary Koh

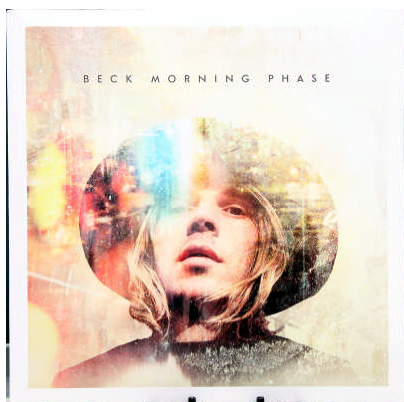
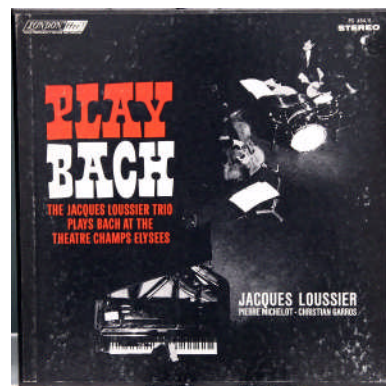


It is finally about to be launched - Winston Ma's legacy for music lovers worldwide - Decca: Supreme Stereophonic Legacy. 350page book with high-definition photographs featuring intimate stories of the Decca artists, producers, engineers and recording venues. 4 CDs with tracks carefully selected by Winston from Decca's 100 years of superlative albums re-mastered by Michael Bishop.

I sat and listened to many rounds of the test pressings in Winston's wonderful listening room over the past 6 months, and have to say that it is superb! Well worth collecting even if you have the first pressings on vinyl. I'd buy it just for the book!!

Johann Sebastian Bach was a German composer of the Baroque era, and was highly respected as an organist but not as a composer until late in the nineteenth century. Now, however, he is regarded as one of the greatest composers of all time.

The Jacques Loussier Trio is a French jazz piano trio and known as "trio le play bach" after the title of their albums. However, despite commercial success, they were generally panned by critics and jazz purist. However, I think that they were brilliant interpreters of Bach - in the style of jazz! This is one of my favorite albums, and I think the best of their albums. Loussier formed a new trio in 1985 with a different bassist and drummer which didn't hang together as well. So, get the recordings from the original trio of Jacques Loussier piano, Pierre Michelot bass and Christian Garros drums.



If you are a fan of alternative soft rock, get this album on vinyl while you can. Beck's first album "Sea Change" is already up to the \$200's on eBay, and even more for the MFSL pink vinyl edition. "Morning Phase" is his companion to "Sea Change" and he says that it "harkens back to the stunning harmonies, song craft and staggering emotional impact of that record, while surging forward with infectious optimism".

The vinyl is far better than the CD. Even the free download of the mp3 "Vinyl Experience" that is included with the LP sounds better than the CD, and it sounds better than the high-rez download!!



Here's an album I wouldn't recommend anywhere else but here. On many systems it just sounds like so much noise. If you have the resolution and power, the music comes through and it is something that will grow on you (well, it grew on me anyway). The first time I played it for the public, it was on a pair of Dragons at a listening party - and got a great reception from quite a varied crowd. Almost everybody came up to me with pen and paper to take down the title of the album.

It is listed as jazz, but I would classify it more as progressive ass-kicking metal fusion. All the tracks were composed by the band - except for one cover - Celestial Terrestrial Commuters by the Mahavishnu Orchestra. Easily available on CD. The vinyl is very rare.

My all-time favorite vocal Jazz album is Ella & Louis. I always cannot help but smile when I hear Ella going "Can't we be friends?" Recorded in the studio in 1956, this album sounds as fresh as the day it was done. Considering that Ella Fitzgerald's career began nearly 15 years after Louis Armstrong's, he was one of her first musical idols. This album features probably the strongest line-up of any album I have:

- Ella Fitzgerald - vocals
- Louis Armstrong - trumpet & vocals
- Oscar Peterson - piano
- Ray Brown - bass
- Herb Ellis - guitar
- Buddy Rich - drums

It's an album I've played so many times over the years that I would have worn the grooves clear through to the other side. Good thing that I have so many copies. The follow-up album, Ella and Louis again was not as successful in my opinion.

An original 1956 Verve mono pressing would probably cost you over \$200, but there have been many re-issues. This one is my favorite on Wax-time. The Speaker's Corner issue is a little bit more audiophile.



Another rare album, I played it just once at a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Pacific Northwest Audio Society, and the prices have shot up through the roof.

This was the first Direct-to-Disc recording done by my Singaporean buddy Ying Tan's Groove Note records. Thousands of great albums have been mastered and cut at Bernie Grundman Mastering studio, but this was the first (and probably the last) time that an album was recorded there direct to the lathe.

It's a fabulous sounding disc with great music and performance.

True story - I was at a concert with my then g/f (now wife) in Singapore to hear Jacintha sing. We walked out at the intermission because of how poor the sound was. But we both liked the accompanist - Bill Cunliffe. They were selling this album in the foyer and I bought it on the way out. We went back to my place, where we play the entire album..... and more.

Introducing the JaguarAudioDesign.com RealTime Operating System for Computer Audio!

By Darin Forkenbrock

In 2008 I purchased a Red Wine Isabella preamp with internal USB DAC, sold my Denon CD player and made a complete break from playing spinning discs. At first I played computer music with my every-day Windows laptop and iTunes (a truly horrendous setup). Like many of you I began experimenting with music servers around 2009, when Gary Koh presented his Genesis Music Server Guide to the club. Following the guide I built my first machine, according to my desired specs.



Shortly after building this machine I ran across the CMP2 online music server project, which gave a wealth of additional approaches to further optimize Windows performance for audio. With this tweaking I discovered a key to sound quality in a music server is lowering the audio latency. The DPC Latency Checker Tool is a free online download and is the simplest, most commonly used method for audiophiles to check a machine's latency. There's a lot of talk in computer audio about "Bit-Perfect" playback, but it's a meaningless term. Changes to one or two BIOS settings can have a drastic effect on a machine's latency readings, as can extensive changes within the OS. Going from a latency reading of let's say 100ns to 50ns will result in an obvious reduction in distortion (on a high-resolution system). By now I've exhausted opportunities I could find to improve Windows sound, which includes exploring every corner of the Windows drivers, services, processes, and registry, and experimenting with things like CPU under-volting and replacing the Windows file manager. My current machine uses an I2S extension to a PCI sound card for use with DACS that have an HDMI input for I2S and with a sound card I'm able to turn off all USB and Windows Audio functionality. That old laptop from 2008 had latency of about 200ns at idle while my current machine measures about 6ns; switching out the motherboard might yield lower latency, but with everything I've tried I've never been able to get it much lower. The biggest remaining limitation with Windows is that it doesn't allow the user to access the OS core, which is where most of the remaining non-audio activity is still going on. Sure, Windows has infinitely more options to tailor the OS for audio than Mac (though Mac sounds better out of the box), but Linux is the only OS that will let you do anything you want with it.

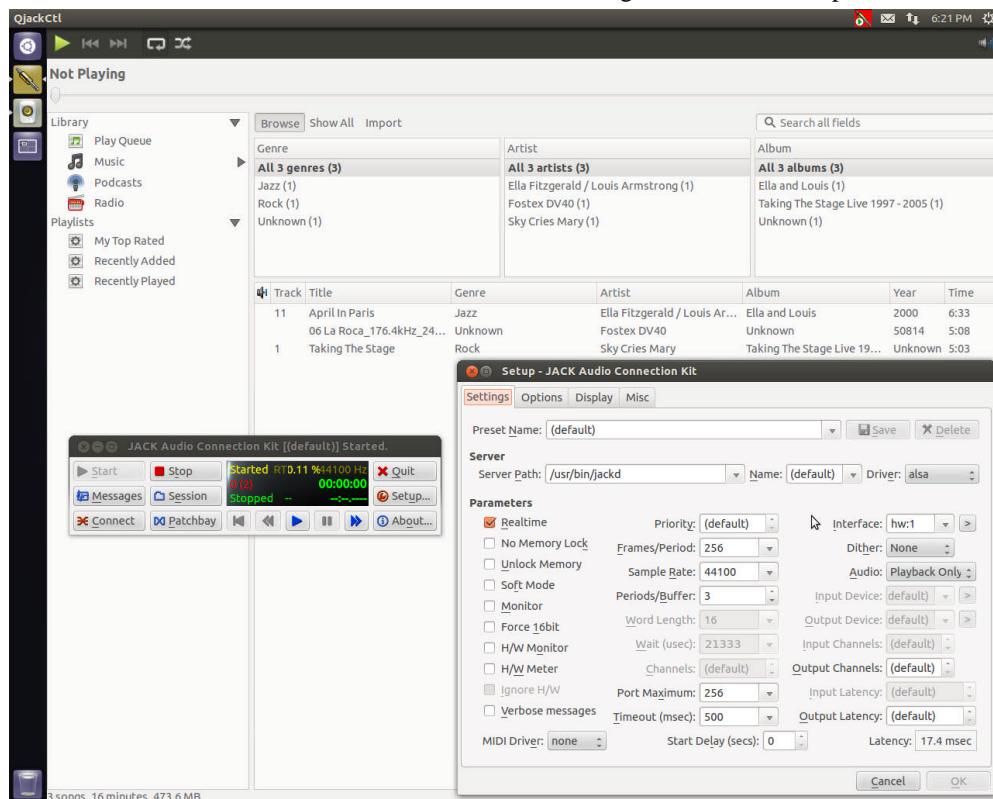
My interest in Linux was peaked when I read about the RealTime kernel for audio. This was created in response to recording studio users for who the generic kernel did not suit their needs. RealTime in this scenario means preempting all but the machine's most basic life support activity in favor of audio data. While RealTime Linux was not created with audiophile listening in mind it occurred to me that preventing interruption of audio data couldn't be a bad thing when it comes to the real time transfer that occurs between the computer and DAC clock.

I started building my first Linux audio OS and soon found that while there was no limit to the possibilities with Linux, it's a beast to work with. Linux was created by nihilists for nihilists and for people who will become nihilists after prolonged exposure to it. There's nothing easy or intuitive, such as clicking on a program icon to install...it's all about typing obscure commands into a terminal panel, then spending night after night with Google searches trying to resolve the error messages that come up during and after the installation. From the time I installed the music player and server programs it took me about 10 full evenings (2am evenings) to get sound. However, as I'll explain now, this won't be a problem for you.

Introducing the JaguarAudioDesign.com RealTime Linux Audio Operating System...this is a fully packaged high-performance audio OS that can be run from a Live DVD or a Live thumb drive or installed permanently to a hard drive, and it's 100% free! Just download the image file and instructions from the Blog page on our website.



The Jaguar Free RTOS comes ready to play your WAV or FLAC files, as seen on the player interface shown in the background of the image below. Just follow the instructions to create a live DVD or thumb drive, locate your music library with the player interface, configure your DAC settings and you're ready to go. The music server program in the foreground allows you to set the audio latency as low as .7ns, depending on what your DAC can handle for stable playback. A lower latency setting does not guarantee better sound. However, in tests with numerous DACs the RTOS was able to achieve latency settings of about 50% lower than with the Generic kernel, indicating substantial interruption with the Generic kernel.



It should be noted there are a number of other factors that affect your sound besides kernel-level interruptions and Realtime is not a silver bullet. Tests with the Playback Designs DAC at Puget Sound Studios with our highly modified Windows 8.1 OS did not show any improvement in sound, likely due to jitter reduction by the reclocker device included with that unit. Also, there's your DAC driver; the driver used with Windows or Mac might sound better (when someone says players sound different, what they really mean is the driver being used by the player, the actual player does nothing more than Select-Start-Stop the music). Some DAC compatibility issues cannot be overcome by Linux; for instance, if your DAC uses a proprietary USB driver from the manufacturer, there may not be a version that will run on Linux. However, if you USB DAC runs without installation of a special driver program or you're using a sound card it should be compatible (Mytek and M2Tech USB drivers are installed in the RTOS and the M2Tech works for many asynchronous USB DACs).

The Jaguar Free RTOS and instruction manual download is available now at the Blog on our website. We hope you enjoy it and please let us know how it works for you.

Coffman Preamp Offer and Vote

By Jay Hope, President

Hi Members, The club has been presented an offer from Damon Coffman from Coffman labs for his G1-A preamp that we heard at the April meeting. He is offering it at a great price for the club and is willing to set it up for the clubs phono cartridge and to change it in the future if we get a new cartridge, for just the cost of shipping. He is also willing to repair the unit, parts and labor if it is ever needed, we just need to pay for shipping. The offer is for \$2000 it retails for \$ 5500 so basically he is offering it at his cost.

This is an offer that is time sensitive we would normally go through testing of various preamps and do A B comparisons that would take about 6 months. Most of us have heard the G1-A It has a nice phono stage and line stage and is also a headphone amp. If we as a club would like to purchase this preamp, we need to make a decision within a month. I will ask Damon if he will hold it for us until we can vote.

Last night at the meeting at Andrews house we took an informal vote and it was 18 to 2 in favor of moving forward with this purchase. It is a low risk purchase for the club, if it doesn't fit our needs we can sell it and make a profit and get something else. It fills two needs for us a phono stage and a preamp. I would like us to vote on this at the August meeting.



At the last meeting of the Executive Committee, member vote was split 50/50 in favor of presenting the offer to the club for a vote. As a result it was agreed the offer should be put to the membership to decide whether or not to accept the offer. Following are arguments for and against the purchase as discussed by the EXCO.

Arguments For Purchase

- ◆ 60% discount from retail price.
- ◆ Free support / repair.
- ◆ Great Sound.
- ◆ Gives the club a separate preamp.
- ◆ Has some resale value.

Arguments Against Purchase

- ◆ The club does not currently have a separate amplifier to use with it.
- ◆ Will require a step-up transformer for MC cartridges (TBD).
- ◆ Not the most versatile for mating with other gear and no balanced input or output.
- ◆ No comparisons were done, according to the EC's typical evaluation process.
- ◆ Discontinued model and resale value is uncertain with a virtually unknown

Coming Up August 14th...

Doc Bottlehead and Clark Blumenstein

By Darin Forkenbrock

On Thursday, August 14th the Audio Society and the Seattle Head-Fi crowd team up to welcome Doc Bottlehead and Clark Blumenstein (of Seattle's Blumenstein Audio). Doc has just released a new DAC kit that sounds amazing and Clark has been working on a new floorstander design. If you love high-sensitivity speakers with tubes or headphones, this promises to be a banner meeting.

This event will start a few hours early (5:30pm) for a mini Head-Fi meet (we'll also have an extended mid-meeting break to explore headphone setups). We expect to have some very advanced headphone setups on hand, so show up early to take advantage of this opportunity to hear them.



<http://bottlehead.com>



<http://www.blumensteinaudio.com>

Visitors Welcome!

Meetings are held on the second Thursday of every month at 7:30pm at 4545 Island Crest Way, Mercer Island, WA 98040.

PNWAS Mission Statement

- ◆ To bring people with a common interest in music reproduced at its best, for their mutual edification and pleasure.
- ◆ To facilitate the exchange and dissemination of accurate data concerning audio equipment and musical recordings.
- ◆ To promote, sponsor, and cultivate the highest quality reproduction of music in the home.
- ◆ To encourage maintenance of high standards in the performance, recording and transmission of music.

PNWAS Objectives

1. Provide a forum for meeting other audiophiles and exchanging information on musical recordings and audio equipment.
2. Demonstrate and compare equipment and recordings.
3. Give members opportunities to become familiar with the techniques of audio manufacturing, testing, repair, recording, broadcasting, etc.
4. Explore related avenues as the member-

ship deems appropriate.

Club Website

www.audiosociety.org

E-mail

info@audiosociety.org

US Mail

Pacific Northwest Audio Society, PO Box 435, Mercer Island, WA 98040

Annual Dues

\$60 due each January. New members pay a prorated \$5 per month for remainder of year.

Elected Officers

President: Jay Hope

jay@audiosociety.org

Vice-President: Jerry Pomeroy

Jerry@audiosociety.org

Secretary/Treasurer: Bruce Brown

bruce@audiosociety.org

Committee Chairs

Editor: Joe Pittman

joe@audiosociety.org

Equipment: Jerry Pomeroy

Music: Gary Koh

Refreshment: Open

Editorial

Editorial submissions are welcome.

Content must be audio-related or of general interest to the club in plain text or Word document format without automation (macros and scripts). We reserve the right to edit for style, content, and length.

Editorial Deadline: three weeks before meeting date.

Publishing any editorial material is contingent upon the approval of the Executive Committee.

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