



## November Video Meeting

By Jerry Pomeroy

After welcoming visitors, the meeting started off with a description of the system used that evening. The system utilized three channel audio and two Blu-ray disc players to minimize down time between tracks. All material was sourced from Blu-ray disc. Both the Blu-ray disc players were the \$500 *Oppo BDP83* models. Digital Analog Conversion and video switching was done using Joe's *Levinson #40* with *Vizionware* HDMI cables. The video is sent to the 1080P projector via a 10 meter *Vizionware* HDMI cable. Genesis provided the GR360 stereo

amplifier and a *Statement* monoblock for the center channel. The left and right channel speakers were the clubs *Genesis 7.1f* and the center was the clubs old *7.1c* with a prototype subwoofer, so all three speakers would be full range. Gary loaned us *Genesis* speaker cable and long *Nordost Valhalla* balanced interconnects. A.C. conditioning was *Isotek Sigma*, *Sirius* and a *Mira* for the projector. Joe from *Kosmic* provided miscellaneous power cords. Gary provided two *Acrylic* equipment racks. The projector sat atop a *Belden* camera tripod with a custom

built top to contain the projector, so the ceiling mount could remain attached to the projector.

The equipment was all top-notch. One of the issues in getting the best sound out of a Blu-ray disc is choosing the best sounding audio format. Blu-ray disc usually offers a combination of different audio formats. Stereo and multi-channel PCM is usually 24/48 but can be up to 24/192. The lossless audio compression formats are *DTS-Master* and *Dolby TrueHD*. Consistently the

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worst audio is the old compression formats *Dolby Digital* and *DTS*.

One disc may have a good *DTS Master* but bad PCM audio, while another disc will be the opposite. The only way to know is by trying each on the audio system you are using. Since we didn't have the system running much prior to 7:15 we didn't get a chance to choose the best sounding software. We made a few adjustments during the meeting because we just didn't have time to set up and check the system properly. We had everything up and running, so the show must go on.

The clip getting the most laughs was Grover and Elmo from Sesame Street doing *The 59<sup>th</sup> St. Bridge Song* off the Paul Simon disc. One of the best sounding BDs in my opinion is the *Dave Mathews/Tim Reynolds Live at Radio City Music Hall*. We played the 24/96 two channel audio track.

We officially closed the meeting about 10 minutes late. There was enough interest that the DJ played the opening track from *Shakira, Oral Fixation Tour*. All had a good time. This statement validated by toe tapping and head bopping during the meeting.

A few odds and ends to wrap this article up:

The small goose neck LED book lamp used by the computer was purchased at *Boarders Books* about 1 year ago. You can get a dual LED version from *Musicians Friend* on line. The discs played are readily available on Blu-ray, though they may not be available on DVD. I did my best to put everything on the playlist in the order it was presented. I made a few changes on the fly and may have some out of order, but these were the songs played and equipment used.

#### Music Blu-ray Disc Play List:

Paul Simon & Friends, Library of Congress  
59<sup>th</sup> st song Grover & Elmo (Sesame Street)  
Loves Me Like a Rock: PS, Stevie Wonder & Dixie Humming Birds  
Me & Julio PS, Stevie Wonder  
David Foster, The Hit Man  
The Prayer Andrea Brocelli & Kathrine McPhea  
Dave Mathews & Tim Reynolds, Live at radio City Music Hall  
Gravedigger  
The Maker  
Chris Botti in Boston:  
Indian Summer  
Got You Under my Skin  
Diana Krall, Live in Rio  
Frim Fram Sauce  
Sheryl Crow Live  
If it makes you Happy  
Michael Buble, Caught in the Act  
Fever  
Save the Last Dance  
Blue Man Group, How to be a Megastar  
Moe Makes a Plea (comedy in TVs)  
Baba O'Riley (Who song)  
Stanley Jordan, Paris Concert  
Return Expedition-  
Shakira, Oral Fixation  
Estoy Aqui

#### Equipment-list used at for the meeting:

Oppo BDP83- Jerry  
Oppo BDP83- Joe  
Levinson #40- Joe  
Genesis GR360 amp (L&R)- Gary  
Genesis Statement amp (Center) Gary  
Viewsonic Precision Projector Pro8100- Jerry  
Visionware HDMI cables 3.4Ghz, 2M, 5M & 10M- Jerry  
Nordost Valhalla Balanced interconnect cables - Gary  
Isotek AC line conditioning: Mira-Jerry, Sigmas & Sirius- Club's  
Power cords - Joe  
Tripod stand & Platform for projector- Jerry

Steve McCormack came as a special guest speaker for the October 8<sup>th</sup> meeting. He is most noted from his recent ventures of his namesake, such as *McCormack Audio* and *SMC Audio*. His most recent project has been designing the active *Genesis* Pre-amp that debuted at the Rocky Mountain Audio Fest on October 2<sup>nd</sup>. Steve brought his *SMC VRE-1* Pre-amp by the club for a listen and pretty much blew everyone away.

Like many audio-philosophers, Steve desired to be a recording engineer, but wound up selling audio equipment in a Connecticut audio store. He then moved to California and sold high-end gear for Jonas Miller Sound. Through contacts at JMS he wound up working with Ken Kreisel of *M&K Real Time Records*. His dream came true and as assistant recording engineer he was able to work on some of the most sought after Direct Disc LPs ever made. These LPs include *Flamenco Fever*, *Yeti Chaser* and *For Duke*.

One of the things denoting the great Direct Disc cut by *Sheffield* or *Real Time* is the quality of the audio actually making it to the cutting head. Steve shared with us, some of the things that were done to improve the sonic performance of the equipment, including removing the limiter circuits from the *Neumann* cutting lathe. From Sunny California, he moved north into Canada to work for *Oracle* Turntable, then back to California to start *Mod Squad* in 1982. The next year he invented *Tiptoes*. The audio community has since embraced the use of aluminum cones under equipment. There are many companies selling products of this nature made from all

sorts of material. The company was founded on the concept of improving what was available by offering upgrades of products such as *Linn* tone-



arm wires. The *Line Drive* Passive Pre and *Phono Drive* moved the emphasis away from modifying and into design/manufacturing.

*McCormack Audio* designed amplifiers, pre-amps and CD players. The company was sold to Conrad Johnson in 1997. Steve's love for Audio continues under his new company,

SMC audio. He offers what has been reviewed as one of the best sounding active pre-amps made, the *SMC VRE-1*.

Since the club's I-60 integrated amplifier doesn't have an amplifier input to bypass the pre-amp, *Genesis* provided a *GR-360* amplifier and a set of balanced interconnects. We used the club's *SCD-777ES* as the source and it never sounded better. Seems like everyone was taken aback by the detail and musicality of the system. This is the best I had ever heard the *Genesis 7.1f* speakers sound at the club or anywhere else that I recall.

I have been a proponent of passive pre-amplifiers for several years and I still believe that with the current crop of transistor based amplifiers, a passive pre can still be functional. It can send a lot of the sound through quite well for a relatively low cost. I remember Winston Ma once told me that you just can't get a natural dynamic sound from a passive. Until this meeting, I remained skeptical. I have heard people say that amplifiers will sound best in conjunction with the pre-amp they were designed for. The *Genesis GR* amplifiers were designed using the *VRE-1* pre. The system was nothing short of magic. It is hard to believe that CDs could sound this good, especially on the club's stock 777.

There was a stir that evening about the club purchasing one of these. Unfortunately the treasury just isn't deep enough to allow such a purchase. We will continue to improve the system based around the club's re-tubed *Genesis I-60*.

It is hard to believe it is December already and I just started playing my Christmas music collection. I love Christmas music. All the different renditions of classics like *Silent Night* and *We Three Kings* done by different artist from Manheim Steamroller, Dean Martin, Billie Holiday, Stan Boreson and the Jingle Cats. At the December 10<sup>th</sup> meeting you will have a chance to show off some of your Seasonal favorites in our annual Christmas music contest. There are two categories, best sounding/audiophile track and funniest track. About the only limitations on the track selections are: 1) they are seasonal, 2) they are family friendly. That eliminates Snoop Dog's Christmas CD and 3) the selections will be limited to 5 minutes each. We will play it on the club's *Rega P5* TT (it's had a few mods since the last meeting) or the *SCD777ES* SACD/CD player. We can't play DVD based audio.

The annual raffle will take place in the second half. The raffle is simple, you buy a ticket for \$3 each or trade your CDs, LPs or whatever prized audio possession you have for tickets. Please don't wrap them. There are usually some cables, "T" shirts, speakers, accessories and a few mysterious boxes. There are certain to be some really good things and a few items returning for the second or third year. This event is great fun. You can trade some of those CDs that just weren't to your liking and try someone else's. If the draw comes out and you don't want to get your own stuff back, you can pass and several have traded after the raffle

I will bring refreshments for the meeting. I hope to have some treats for all to try. If you have something you would like to share with us, please bring it. This is always a fun meeting and lots of music gets played. This is a good time to bring a friend and introduce them to the club. It has been great to look out at

the beginning of meetings and have several visitors each month. Continue to invite people you meet to join the club, Members are the best PR tool we have and there's lots of room to grow.

This is the last month of the year. Now is a good time to grab your checkbook, an envelope and send a \$60 check to our PO Box for annual dues. Our PO Box address is listed in the back of the newsletter. You can also pay at the meeting. The only way the club gets money to pay rent, sponsor things like the speaker contest and upgrade equipment is through dues, the raffle and donations.

If I don't see you at the meeting I wish you all a merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

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## **Classified Ads**

Ads are free to members and will run for three consecutive issues unless renewed. Please limit ads to make, model, short description, condition, MSRP, asking price, contact information.

Lynx Studio Two-B PCI Soundcard, 2 in—6 out, Great for HTPC or Music server. Pulled from working PC from our studio. AD/DA up to 200kHz! Includes box and cables. Read more about it here: [http://www.lynxstudio.com/product\\_detail.asp?i=12#](http://www.lynxstudio.com/product_detail.asp?i=12#)

Asking \$450

Please contact Bruce @425-369-1392

## **Club discounts**

### **Northwest Sinfonietta**

The Northwest Sinfonietta (a classical chamber orchestra) provides discounts to members of our club for performances of the 2007-2008 season. The regular single ticket price of \$38 will be only \$20 per person per performance at the door (or by phone or mail). Just tell them or note on your order that you are a member of the PNWAS. Information and order forms are also available at their website: [www.nwsinfonietta.org](http://www.nwsinfonietta.org).

### **Kosmic**

[www.kosmic.us](http://www.kosmic.us)  
Contact Joe Pittman  
206-878-3833

### **Pro Sound and Vision**

Contact George H. Pro  
425-889-9499, 425-445-3308 (cell)

### **Revolution Power**

[www.revolutionpower.com](http://www.revolutionpower.com)  
Contact: Ken Garza

### **Visitors Welcome!**

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

### **PNWAS Mission Statement**

- ◆ To bring together 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 membership deems appropriate.

### **Club website**

[www.audiosociety.org](http://www.audiosociety.org)

### **E-mail**

[info@audiosociety.org](mailto:info@audiosociety.org)

### **U.S. Mail**

Pacific Northwest Audio Society, P.O. Box 435, Mercer Island, WA 98040

### **Annual dues**

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

### **Executive Committee**

President: Jerry Pomeroy  
[Jerry@audiosociety.org](mailto:Jerry@audiosociety.org)

Vice-President: John Stone  
[John.W.Stone4@boeing.com](mailto:John.W.Stone4@boeing.com)

Treasurer: Willy Chang  
[chang98@comcast.net](mailto:chang98@comcast.net)

Editor: Bruce Brown  
[BruceB@audiosociety.org](mailto:BruceB@audiosociety.org)

### **Action Committee Chairs:**

Equipment: Vacant—Volunteers?

Refreshment: Vacant—Volunteers?

### **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 or scripts). We reserve the right to edit for style, content, and length.

Editorial deadline: two weeks before meeting date.

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

### **Disclaimer**

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