

Coming June 12th: ...Music, bring out yer music...

Audioletter

A PUBLICATION OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST AUDIO SOCIETY • JUNE 2008



May 8th MEETING RECAP Text and Photos by Bruce Brown

Exemplar Audio was the main attraction at our meeting held on May 8th. John Tucker showed off his latest and greatest creations for all to behold. Now working with The LSA Group, John brought in the Exemplar XP-2 Pre-amp, Exemplar DAC, the LSA Statement Integrated Amp and the LSA2 Statement Tower speaker system. The LSA Statement amp had its pre-amp section bypassed since we were using the Exemplar Pre-amp. John also brought

in a music server but unfortunately Murphy was hard at work with his demons! We brought into service the club's own Sony 777ES SACD player.

John started out with his own company, Exemplar Audio, modifying CD/SACD players, namely the Denon DVD-2900. This sounds like rocket science to me. Speaking of rocket science, John spent 8 years working on aircraft electronics before going to the Johnson Space Center working first on the Shuttle

Program and then on to the Space Station Program. He then got into developing horn speakers with Jeff Markwart under the brand Triode Support Systems. After a brief stint at working on software in Seattle, John began eXemplar Audio as a full time venture in 2001. For the past 3 years, John has been working with The LSA Group.

I first heard about John's designs from my friends Winston and Jerry. I was over at Winston's house

(Continued on page 2)



The eXemplar system

some time ago and listened to some great music playing from Tucker modified DK Designs amps and the eXemplar eXception II pre. We heard some beautiful sounds from those amps and to this day, Winston still has them in his system.

Jerry had brought to the club one of John's modified Denon DVD players a couple of years back. I was pretty impressed by the unit.

The system that John had brought to the club was pretty impressive also. The LSA Group has a number of speakers in its line-up. The LSA1 speakers are stand-mounted monitors featuring the Standard, Signature and Statement with the ribbon tweeter. The LSA2 Towers also feature 3 levels; the Standard, Signature and the Statement, also with the ribbon tweeters and (2) 6.25" mid/bass units that act in a quasi 2 1/2 way configuration.

Not until the Hugh Masekela belted out "Stimela" did I realize what all the fuss was about. Hugh's voice talking about the train mesmerized me. I was fixated on that vision. I could just picture him between the speakers. This is what it's all about folks. Taking you there to a place in time.

Thanks John... a job well done!



LSA 2 Statement speakers with ribbon tweeter.



eXemplar's new XP-2 preamplifier on top shelf and XD-2 DAC on middle shelf (with older cosmetics, new production cosmetics will be similar to the XP-2)



eXemplar's preproduction Music Server unfortunately took a tumble and couldn't be demonstrated. It was a pity as this unit is outstanding. You're all encouraged to go hear this at Tucker's place to discover that servers are producing SOTA sound.

VSAC 2008

Text and Photos by Jerry Pomeroy

The Vancouver Hilton was the site of the Vacuum State of Art Convention. It's been 5 years since the last VSAC show in Silverdale, Washington. The venue was really great to host a small show. The service was good with lots of great food

within walking distance. Breakfasts were provided all three days. Saturday morning's spread was bountiful, the hotel even had good coffee; from someone brewed in Seattle that is a serious compliment.

The Live Music

One of the high-points of the show

for me was the entertainment. I managed to score front row seats at all the concerts. Being up front where you can see the performers expressions adds depth to performance. The line up for live music: Johnny Connolly from Dublin opened on

(Continued on page 7)



Exemplar Audio



Dr Bottlehead, Bottlehead Monoblock amps driving the R/H speaker, Source The Tape Project



Joe Pittman and the Kosmic area of the eXemplar room.



J & J Audio / Eurotubes



Well Tempered Turntable, MSRP \$2300



Modwright modified Transporter network music player



Paul Birkland Machined Face-plates



Bottlehead Cold War amp



Audio Improvements, these guys Tweak



Experience Audio cool Tubes, static display

The Music!



Jacqui Naylor's performance was a knock out!



John Standefer incredible guitar playing!



Traci King and friends



Jacqui Naylor was accompanied by her husband on piano.

Friday evening. Adria Ye; started the show Saturday morning; she is a ten year old concert pianist. She did her first performance at Carnegie Hall three years before; yes, only seven years old. It was amazing to see her fingers move so fast as she stretched to reach the keys and pedals to give an excellent performance. That Evening, one of my favorite guitarist John Standefer ripped up the Frets. John is the winner of the National Finger style Guitar Contest. Traci King and friends performed during Sunday breakfast. Closing the show with a performance to-die-for was Jaqui Naylor. She performed her style of Jazz/blues/pop and rock songs she calls smashed tuned. She will combine popular rock lyrics with classic and jazz standards.

The Equipment

Some of the exhibits at the show featured equipment that was stunningly cool to look at, others demonstrated products high on the functionality scale, some were expensive while others were inexpensive, most were a combination of these characteristics. It's always fun to browse around and check out the new and cool stuff. I won't try to describe all the rooms because I wasn't in all of them. I will mention a few that spoke to me. The *Modwright/Exodus/Cardas* room sounded great, Dan had his Modified Transporter sending the signal into one of his active

speakers were powered by 9 Mono block SETs on each channel.

I based my operations out of the *Exemplar* room where I helped Joe sell *FIM* CDs. It is rare when you can get everything together at a show and it actually sounds good. This was the first time I remember an audio system came together at a show and did big well. The system really sounded great. John had the Server working and it was phenomenal, The speakers and his new amps did big **exceptionally** well, after about 4 hours the CD player warmed up and it almost sounded as good as the Server. Since I got home I have played the *FIM K2 Cantate Domino*, it just isn't the same. It is really hard to get a big presence without a big room, I felt his was the best sounding room at the show.

On Sat Evening after the John Standefer Concert we were treated to a lighting display; it was both Static and active at the same time. This was some of the heaviest rain I have seen in the northwest. I expected to hear about equipment

Pre-amps, it really did sound great. Dan was also showing the *Well Tempered Turntable*. Sporting a MSRP of \$2300 the TT wasn't set up but it is really cool to see this innovative table finally make it to market. The *Bottlehead/Tape Project* room was really good, the

that had been damaged by the storm but never did. I tested my reflexes trying to snap a few pictures, every time I pushed the button to take a picture, the lightning was gone before I heard the (digital) shutter sound. Do you think I should get a faster camera?

It was allot of fun, had several great dinners at local restaurants with lots of people. As usual it is a blast to see club members and friends like Bob Hodas, Paul Stubblebine, Dan Schmale. Shows are allot of fun to attend. Although this wasn't a large show the live entertainment was excellent. The Service at the Hotel was very good and the furnished meals; first class. As far as fun this beat CES any day, I have never been to the Rocky Mountain Audio Fest but hope my schedule allows me to make it early Oct. this year.

Thanks to Carolyn & Michael Kilfoil for organizing the show and making it all happen. You can find more pictures and descriptions at these sites:

<http://www.head-fi.org/forums/f45/vsac-2008-vancouver-wa-portland-meet-328599/index4.html>

<http://www.6moons.com/industryfeatures/vsac20082/vsac.html>

<http://www.head-case.org/meet-impressions/vsac-2008-impressions/>



Motel 6 with flowing river (no additional charge).

Tech Stuff

by Jerry Pomeroy

Neil Young Blu-ray

Sun Microsystems in conjunction with WB/Reprise and Neil Young will offer the *Neil Young Carrier Archive*. The project containing Music and Video will be released on Blu-Ray disc, the audio resolution will be 24/192 PCM and compression formats. The first release will be a 10 BD set from 1963-72. The set will include his music, videos, movies, a timeline for all material and I anticipate concert footage although it is not mentioned in the press release.

To the best of my knowledge this will be the first Blu-ray Disc (BD) to offer content upgradeability (feature of *BD Live*). If archival material is found after the disc were made, you will be able to download the new information onto the hard-drive in your BD Player (BDP), it should seamlessly integrate into the menu and timeline of the material on the disc during playback. Since no one has commercially sold content of this nature; it remains to be seen how well these *BD Live* features will work. In order to utilize all these features your BDP will need to be a BD version 2.0 *BD Live*, the only BD V2.0 player available today is the Sony PS3. Sony and Panasonic have V2.0 BDPs scheduled to release this fall.

Blu-Ray Profiles

Two numbers you should be concerned with regarding BD Players:: HDMI and Profile version. High Definition Multimedia Interface or HDMI as the name suggest this refers is a interface system, not just a cable. The current "state of the art" version for HDMI is 1.3a, it is capable of transmitting 10.3Mbps, available features are Deep Color and Lip Sync this links the audio to the video so it can be re-synchronized after

processing.

Currently you can buy Blu-ray players in profile versions 1.0, 1.1 and 2.0. The only BDP on the market that is 2.0 at the end of May is the PS3 game console.

Most of the BDPs sold today are version 1.1 this include the new Denon and not yet released Marantz. Profile 1.0 known as "grace Period, Profile 1.1 Bonus View and 2.0 known as *BD-Live*. All profile 2.0 players have Ethernet connections allowing internet interaction with hard-drive storage beside just firmware updates.

HDMI connectors have 19 pins per end and are less than 3/4" wide, that is a small area to solder that many connections during manufacturing. In each component there is a HDMI board that contains a small computer to process High Definition Copy Protection or HDCP this prevents copy written signals from being copied, it verifies the connected component in what is called a handshake.

\$300 Blu-Ray player

Wal-Mart will offer a Blu-Ray player for less than \$300 dollars. The profile 1.1 BDP made by Funai will be sold as a Magnavox NB500MG9. Best Buy will market fundamentally the same unit for about \$350 this summer under the *Insignia* name-plate.

Wal-Mart will offer \$100 gift cards with the purchase of any BD player, in stores from June 8-14th. The chain will also be selling select BD movies for \$15 including *3:10 to Yuma*, *The Shooter* and others. This may be a great chance to pick up a PS3 but the press release didn't give specifics.

JVC/Kenwood

The two companies announced a

new company JVC Kenwood Holdings. The two have joined their resources to increase profits in the highly competitive market of home and automotive electronics.

Sony PS3

In May Sony Started marketing shock controllers for the PS3 game console. This feature was on the PS2. Do to a copyright lawsuit against Sony the feature was removed from the new game system. The only noticeable difference in the new wireless controller is the label "DualShock 3". Some games already have "shock " written in the software.

Numbers of game consoles sold in the USA are; Xbox 360 10 million, Nintendo Wii closing at 8.8 million and Sony PS3 trailing at 4.1. Note the Microsoft console has been for sale 1 year longer than the Nintendo or the Sony gaming consoles.

Universal Music

In honor of 60 years of vinyl Universal has announced it will release 19 albums in July, if they sell well more may follow. FYI LPs are starting to show up everywhere, I bought two at Costco in the last week and even saw one at Best Buy.

Harman International/B&W

Bower & Wilkins has formed a global alliance with Harman that appoints H.I. as global representative for future automotive OEM applications, read between the lines.

Fred Meyer

It was an accident that F/M ordered REM LPs instead of CDs. When the stores got boxes of LPs some started selling them. The Vinyl sold so well the Portland based company has ordered turntables to sell as well.

TITLE TRACK

By Jerry Pomeroy

Calendar

June 12th, Club meeting: Bring some of your favorite music on CD/SACD or Vinyl to play for other members. This is always fun, there is great pride in turning on the entire club to a great new disc and having them all rush home and order it. This will be the first meeting of the new officers so you will want to be in attendance.

June 12th, 7PM, Resolution Audio: Richard Vandersteen will be at the Ballard store just off Market Street. 206-784-4442 or <http://www.resolutionaudiovideoseattle.com/index.html>

June 18&19th, Home Theater Experience 16: The Bellevue Definitive Audio parking lot will be full as will be the showroom. This is one of the really cool events in Seattle, lots of cutting edge video stuff and there are usually some great tunes as well. This year Pioneer will demo the Kuro 9th generation Plasma display and a new Projector. Meridian will show their 10 Meg pixel projector. Runco is bringing a 103" plasma display; you will also be able to see the new Levinson 502 A/V processor. Doors open at 5PM, it takes till closing to make it through all the rooms. <http://www.definitive.com/>

July 10 meeting: Bruce Brown will talk about and demo DSD/DXD recording. This is closer to the original recording than *The Tape Project*, demo we had last month. In fact it is the original.

July 12th, Vintage Audio and Record Swap Meet: 10AM-4PM. The event is at Innovative Audio in Delta B.C. The web site claims nothing like this has been done before and the pictures of equipment are impressive. <http://www.iavscanada.com/home.htm>

August 14th meeting: Gary Koh will be sharing with us the "Absolute Fidelity" CD. This is certain to spawn some intriguing discussions. Who knows what he has for us this time.

Sept 6th; The club will be hosting *The Puget Sound*; our bi-annual DIY speaker contest. This contest is always fun. Winners of past events have been mind-boggling and several of them were rather small in size but big in sound. If you are working on a pair hurry up and get them finished and burned in. There will be a small fee for entries but the event is free to onlookers, more details forth coming.

Sept. 11th meeting: Andrew will show us some tweaks that work. Tweaks are always a fun topic, it's great to speculate why they work or don't. Remember some snake oil is really good lube.

October 9th meeting: A famous Guest speaker will brave the wilds of the Pacific Northwest Audio Society. As Bullwinkle would say "stay Tuned"

October 10-12: Rocky Mountain Audio Fest in Denver. <http://audiofest.net/2008/index.php>

November 13th meeting: Now that Blu-ray has won the High Def disc war; movie and concert disc are starting to appear. At this time there is only one 24/192 uncompressed PCM audio Blu-ray disc available. Hopefully by November there will be so much material we can't get thru it all.

Jan 8-11th 2009: Consumer Electronics Show, Las Vegas

Message from the new President Elect

Dear comrades-audiophiles: I would like to thank all of you for such an honorable opportunity to lead the Audio Society. It was absolutely unexpected for me; I am with honor accepting that responsibility and will do my best.

My experience with the PNAS began in December 2006. Just a year and half, many members have joined recently. The club membership has doubled in the a little more than a year, this is very good, lets keep it this way!

Since I joined the Club my knowledge of music, recordings and hi-end equipment has dramatically improved. I don't have enough words to thank those members, now they are my friends. They helped me to choose the right direction in developing my audio system. Without help and contacts from the club, I would never have had such good results, never! Now it's my turn to give something back!

On behalf of all members I would like to say a big **THANK YOU** to Jerry

Pomeroy for being the President six years! He put a tremendous amount of time and efforts to keep every meeting interesting and enjoyable. I definitely wouldn't compete with his talent of speech and writing articles in the newsletters. By the way, he promised to keep writing for the club. Jerry, best of luck to you in remodeling the house!

Thank you all for the confidence in the new elected club officers; Gary Koh as the Treasurer. Gary's fresh ideas and great knowledge of hi-end equipment are great benefits to our club. My regards to Bruce Brown our Vice President! He is the longest standing member that is an officer. He was president before Jerry. Special thanks to Joe Pittman; the newsletter editor, all Audioletters are incredibly well done and have become a real asset to PNWAS! Per Joe's request we have to find a new editor.

As you all know in a last year the Equipment committee was very busy. We also initiated the Music Committee.

Thanks Dick Mueller and Renan Jeffereis. Let's keep up with that initiative and create

more committees! It definitely helps to energize more club members to participate in club activities. Our club should not be a "one actor theater"- let's work together!

Please try to come for our meeting in June. We are planning an introduction of new officers and will decide about the committees. We will talk about our ideas and strategy in order to keep our club attractive to new members. Hope you agree; our number one goal is to keep our club fun as it has been. We need more people to become members of the Society, I am sure the Seattle, Bellevue, Redmond and Issaquah areas have huge potential.

And of course, we would enjoy listening to the music you bring!

Sincerely,
Andrew Kosobutsky

Coming Attractions

June 12th, 2008

PNWAS Meeting

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June 12th, 2008

Resolution Audio

7PM, Richard Vandersteen will be at the Ballard store just off Market Street. 206-784-4442

June 18-19, 2008

Home Theater Experience 16

Definitive Audio's annual home theater event at their Bellevue showroom Wednesday and Thursday June 18 & 19 from 5:00—10:00pm.

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December 11th, 2008

PNWAS Meeting

Our annual Christmas party.

Jan 8-11th, 2009

CES 2009

Consumer Electronics Show, Las Vegas.

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.

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Echo Buster's Room Treatment

1 pr. Absorption Panels 18x48 List \$390, Sell \$185

1 pr. Absorption Panels 24x48 List \$470, Sell \$225

1 pr. Diffusion Panels 18x48 List \$530, Sell \$250

All in excellent condition. No other improvement compares with the bargain of treating your room.

Buy these and I'll help you plan it out.

Dick Mueller - dickm@HomeloanNW.com

425-450-4070

Club Discounts

Northwest Sinfonietta

The Northwest Sinfonietta (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 Pacific Northwest Audio Society. Information and order forms are also available at their website: www.nwsinfonietta.org.

First Impression Music

www.firstimpression.com
order through club president Jerry Pomeroy.

KOSMIC

www.kosmic.us
Contact Joe Pittman
206-878-3833

Pro Sound and Vision

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

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 hearing 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 such 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

E-mail

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 253-350-3916

Vice-President: Bruce Brown

Treasurer: Andrew Kosobutsky

Editor: Joe Pittman

Equipment Committee Chair: Dick Mueller

Music Committee Chair: Renan Jeffereis

Volunteer: Leo Hrechanyk

Editorial

Editorial submissions are welcome.

Content must be audio-related or of general interest to the club. 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.

Editor: Joe Pittman 206-878-3833
email: joe@audiosociety.org

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**Pacific Northwest
Audio Society**

Bringing Audio Enthusiasts Together Since 1978

P.O. Box 435 Mercer Island, WA 98040