



Dan Schmalke played some awesome tapes from the Tape Project on his Nagra T real-to-real tape machine.

## May 12th Meeting Recap by Joe Pittman

Dan Schmalke and his wife Eileen trekked from their facility on Bainbridge Island to demonstrate their Bottlehead products. Dan, also known as “Doc B” is world famous for his Tape Project real-to-real tapes and tube electronics.

The Tape Project tapes are available by subscription and are ultra high quality 1/4”-15ips tapes which are copied directly one-to-one from the original master (running masters direct from session tapes or mix tapes). So these second generation tapes are as good as it gets, just short of master tapes. Many consider them the best source available today regardless of format.

The system demonstrated consisted of a Nagra T reel-to-reel tape machine source, Bottlehead tube preamp and mono amps driving discontinued Bottlehead high efficiency speakers. Dan played six different cuts from the Tape Project’s Series 2 and 3 including some cuts not yet released.

Highlight for me included Nojima Plays Lizst (TP-019), Nat Adderly: Work Song and a big band piece with an afro-jazz beat, the name I did not write down as I was too engrossed to take notes. The tapes were fabulous.

After the break, Dan had several of his tube headphone amps set-up so

members could listen to the Tape Project tapes and his kit amps.

Dan mentioned that headphone listening is growing in popularity and is an excellent way for younger people with limited funds to experience high quality music and a great way to introduce the younger generation to the high end. I totally agree.

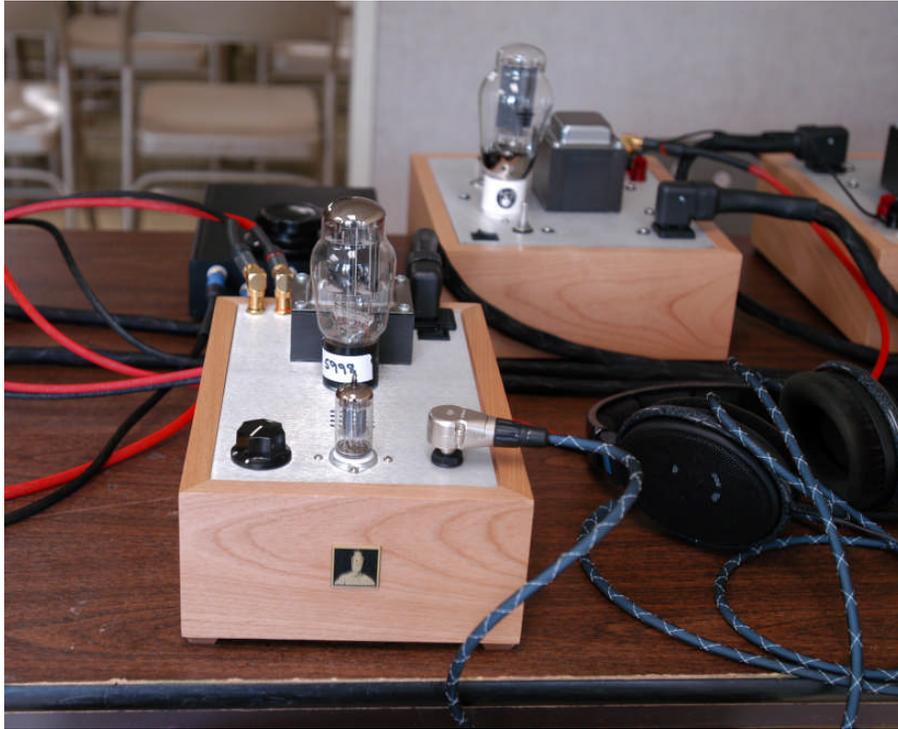
We had a great time listening the music and fine tube electronics. Thanks Dan!

Dan invited everyone to visit his shop in Bainbridge Island where he has a much larger speaker system. For more info see [www.bottlehead.com](http://www.bottlehead.com) And [www.tapeproject.com](http://www.tapeproject.com)



The system consisted of a Nagra T real-to-real tape machine feeding a prototype low impedance line stage and a pair of 8WPC Paramount single ended amps using 300B tubes and the discontinued 96dB sensitive Straight 8 loudspeakers.

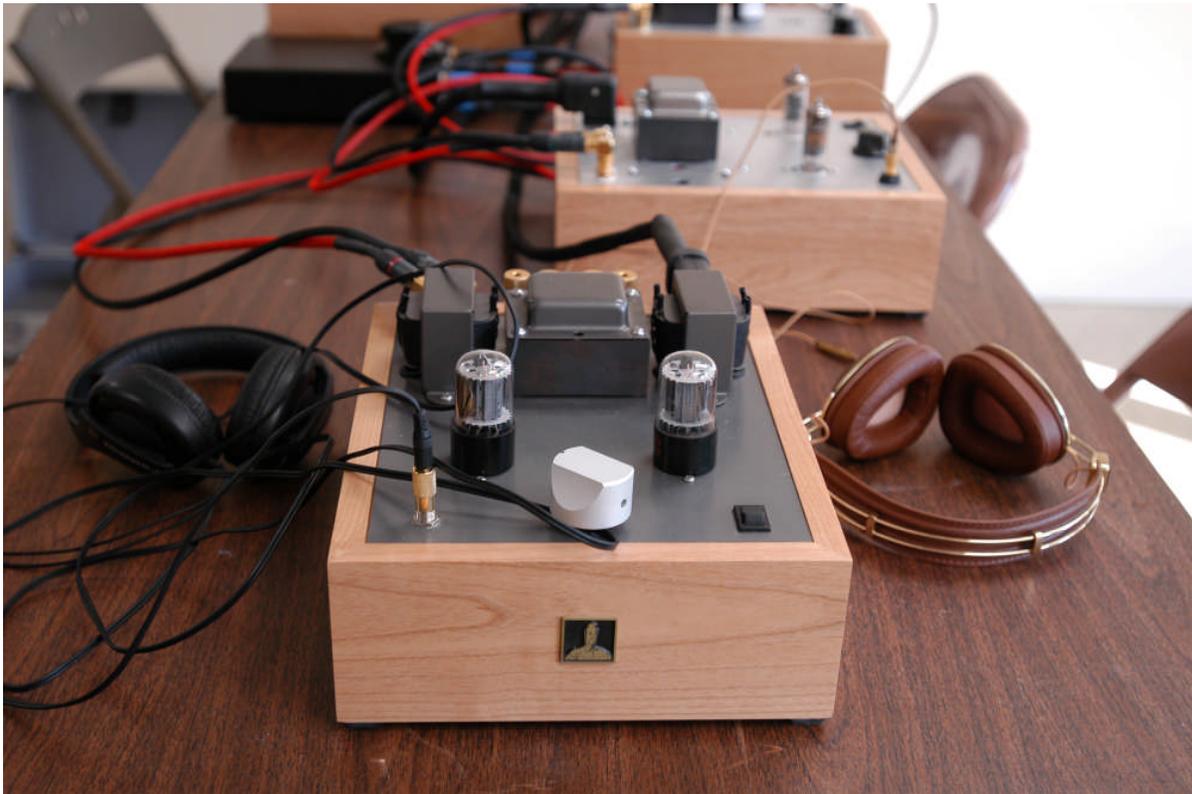
A plethora of headphone listening stations provided individual demonstration after the break. All were driven by the Nagra tape deck using the same Tape Project tracks used for the previous demonstrations.



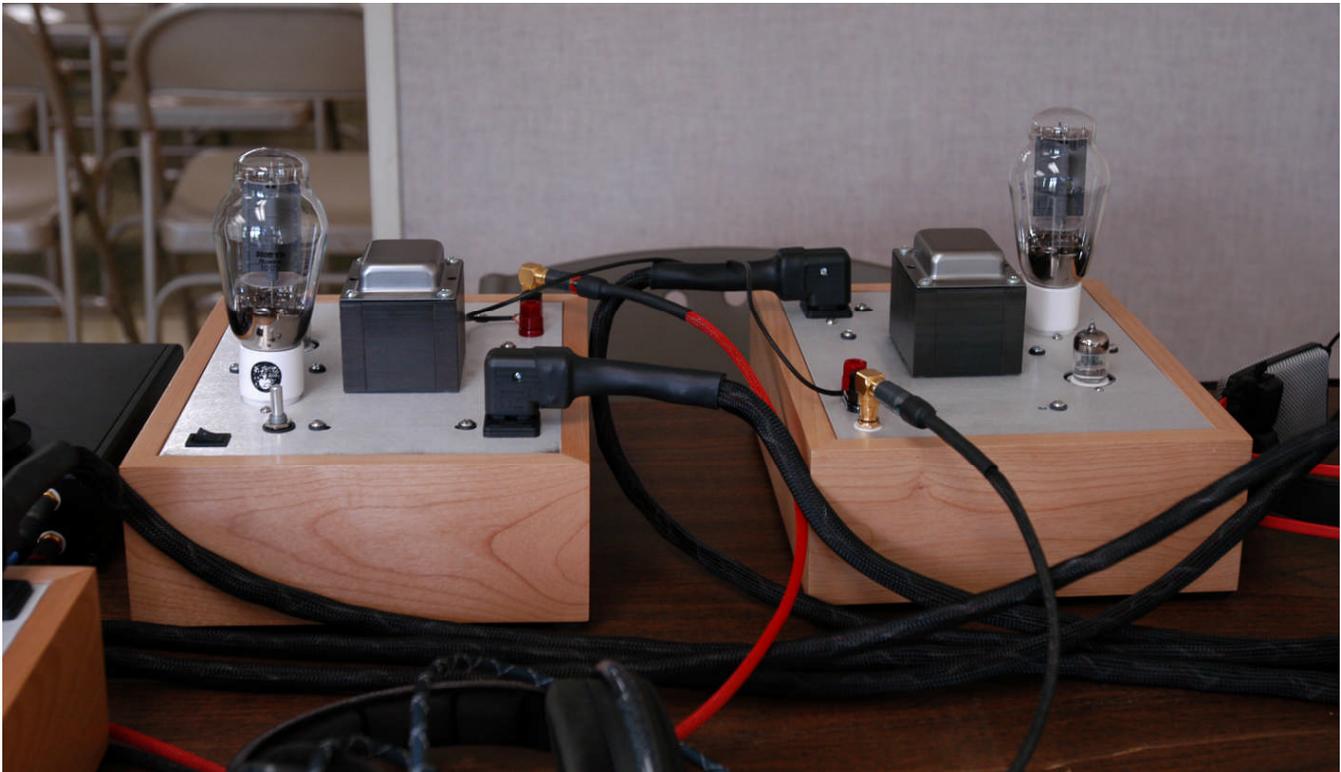
CRACK OTL amp driving Sennheiser HD600 headphones. This amazingly affordable amp costs only \$219.00 in kit form!

The soon-to-be-released SMACK transformer output headphone amp. The kit price TBD





S.E.X. amp (Single Ended eXperimenter's) kit 2.1 for headphones and high efficiency speakers sells for \$499 in kit form.



A pair of the 8WPC Paramount single ended mono amps using 300B tubes driving the discontinued AKG K1000 headphones. The pair in kit for sells for only \$1,549, the ultra-high-end for a pittance.

## President's Message by John Stone

After enjoying an evening at the Seattle Opera last month (Mozart's *Magic Flute*), the thought occurred to me that our musical standards may change based on our listening environment. Our seats in McCaw Hall were not the best for acoustics, as we were in an upper section and off to one side. Nonetheless, the performance by the young cast was enjoyable on several levels. Yes, live music is wonderful, and this fact is hardly news, but what I suspect contributes to our enjoyment of live music, is that in addition to the music, there is the visual connection to how the music is generated. We see the bow dragged across the strings of a violin and hear the result a few milliseconds later. The singers sing and emote, leaving the audience satisfied that we "know how they feel." We know its all just acting, but we don't care.

While this is happening, the audience, even the audiophiles in the audience, are not thinking about imaging, frequency response, total harmonic distortion, or any of the other things that occupy the attention of audiophiles. As a result of our rather distant perspective,

the instruments in the orchestra pit sounded muffled at times and yes, I did want more volume in places. Well duh, they are in a pit after all. And the singers sometimes were singing facing away from me – how rude. Yet despite these handicaps, there were no complaints. But why aren't we as critical in the concert hall as we are in our own listening rooms? Or maybe I should say, why are we so critical of our own listening rooms? For a live performance, there is no question about the music sounding real because it is real. Of course, even most live performances could be improved upon by being in a better seat, having better singers, or perhaps a different conductor. It just seems that we have a different standard for a live performance.

There is a certain honesty with live music that results from our knowing that we are getting all that there is to get from these performers, in this room, on this day. Furthermore, there will never be another performance exactly like this *ever again*. Could it be that we always suspect our systems, including our listening room, of NOT being all that they

could be? Is this inherent suspicion a source of constant discontent? The rationale goes something like this, I "know" that this CD sounds better when played on my buddy's sound system, so, even though my system is better than 99.9% of the audio systems on the planet, I'm still dissatisfied, merely because I know that it could be better. Going further, I *know* that my own system sounded better last night than it does this afternoon because the power is cleaner late at night (or was it really that third glass of Cabernet?).

Similarly, our standards, at least my own, seem to change if I'm watching a concert video. Thinking back to last November's hi-def concert video meeting, is it the stunning video images that distract us from paying attention to musical imaging? Does seeing a gorgeous woman (or man) mouthing the words we're hearing emanate from our speakers inherently make the music better? If any of you closet psycho-acousticians out there care to comment, feel free to submit your own ramblings for next month's newsletter.

## June 9 Meeting Notice

Guest speaker Bud Purvine

will demonstrate "Enhanced Acoustic Boundary Layer" technology.

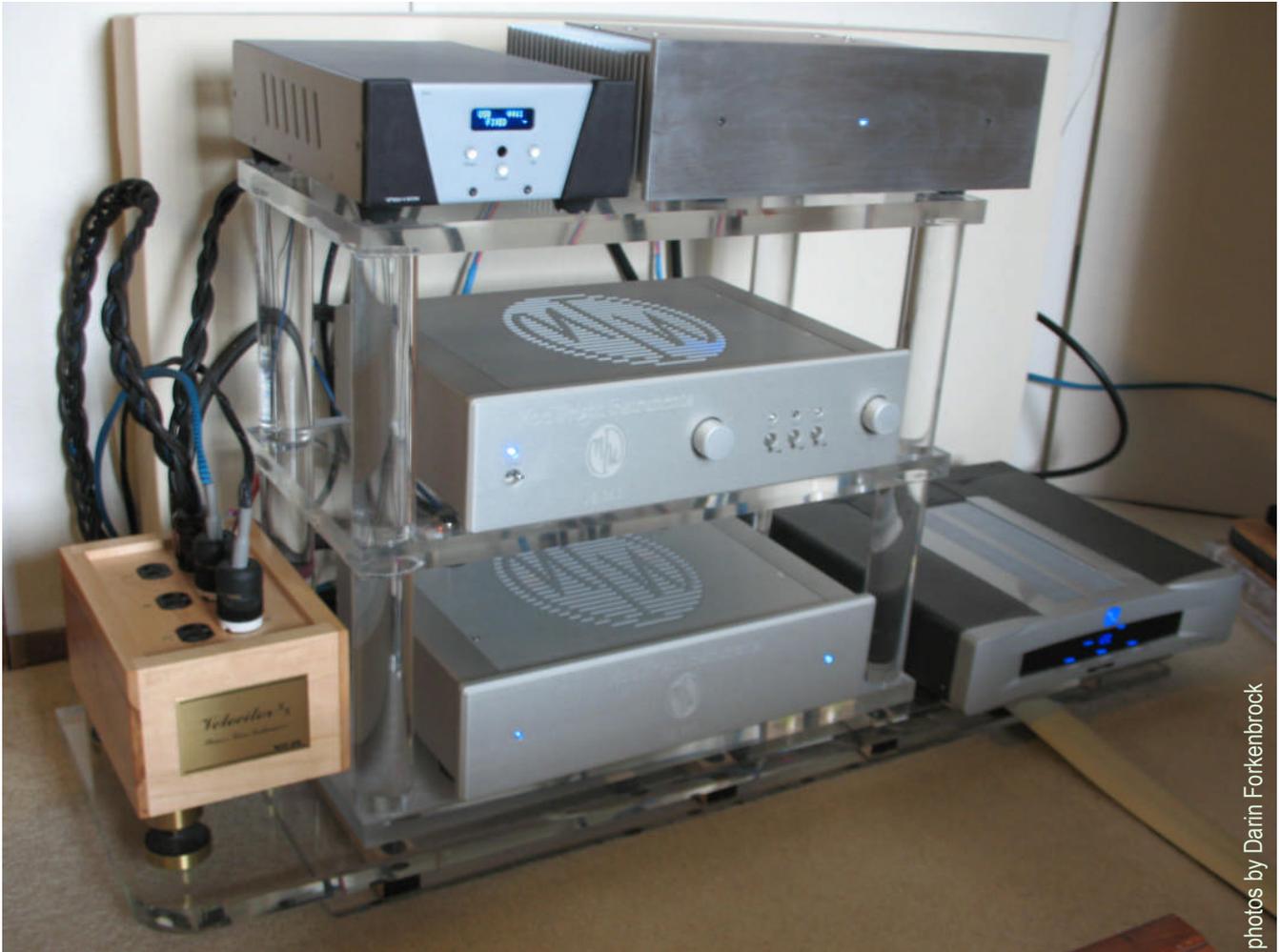
by Terry Olson

Bud Purvine will be demonstrating and discussing his patented "enAble" speaker treatment using two pairs of treated and untreated speakers in Fonken enclosures. He will also have his Planet10/ Woden Design Subwoofers for the bass duties. I gather that several people here are not familiar with Bud, so let me state that he is perhaps "the" (or one of the) World's Top Transformer designers. His products are often used in SOTA amplifiers and I'm sure that he could also discuss many of the more esoteric attributes of musical reproduction. I might add that Bud has, IMHO, extraordinary hearing and taste in music. He is an interesting person, with very unusual ideas and can usually be found well outside of any box. If he runs out of things to talk about, of which I have some doubt, I have prepared a presentation of the more mundane aspects of speaker driver modifications that should dovetail with, and compliment, Bud's main topic.

For further information on Bud's patented process see: <http://www.positive-feedback.com/Issue21/standingwaves.htm>

# You Can Build a High-Performance Audio Shelf (for \$300)

by Darin Forkenbrock



photos by Darin Forkenbrock

3-tier shelf, with 1" acrylic underneath, to support power components.

**F**ive years ago my audio components sat stacked on top of a JBL speaker. Later I moved them onto a 3/4" MDF shelf, hung on heavy-duty brackets, above my large projection screen TV. As my system progressed further, so did my need for space...my current preamp

has a separate power supply and I added a 2<sup>nd</sup> power conditioning component, while the other power conditioner is pretty big. I had invested too much in my system to go back to using things like milk crates, cinder blocks and MDF and stacking components was out altogether. The time had come for a real audio shelf, but my budget was only in

the range of repurposed Ikea furniture.

I first learned about acrylic as an audio material when Gary Koh brought his Genesis audio shelves to a club meeting. Gary explained that acrylic has a very low resonance point, which makes it an excellent material for a high-performance audio shelf. After some Internet research about acrylic, I decided this would be the best performing option in my budget range, and decided to build one.

Getting the materials you need is the first step. I purchased three sheets of 1" clear acrylic, measuring 12x24" and eight 9" tall acrylic rods, 1.75" in diameter. Make sure to use cast acrylic, rather than extruded. With 24" sheets you'll have about 20" of space on the lower shelves, which I find adequate for most gear. Were I to build another shelf, I might use 14" deep sheets and have the corners rounded off. I chose clear acrylic, but black was available and other options, such as smoked clear, are available, at a premium.

I purchased my materials from Commercial Plastics, in South Seattle; I mention their name, because I called nearly every plastics company I could locate, between Seattle and Tacoma, and found that they had the best prices (by as much as 50% in some cases) and the owner, Greg, was very much focused on customer service. The material cost was about \$300 with tax. Had I wanted the shelf to be completely finished and assembled, it probably would have only cost me another \$300, but if you're like me, you'll want to save that money, so you can spend it on another part of your system.

Before finishing, the sides of the sheets will be white and translucent. Finishing the sides of the sheets is purely for looks. It's a lot of hard work, but finishing will bring out the crystal prism look. Do the finish work before assembly, while the sheets are easier to work with. Acrylic scratches very easily, so keep the protective paper on the sheets, until you're ready to glue them up (or flame-polish them). You'll want to start with 350 grit wet sandpaper and move up to higher grits, then buff with a buffing wheel on a heavy duty drill (if you don't have a specialized buffer). At least this is how I did my finish work and it was tiring. However, there's a faster, easier way...smooth the saw-cut ridges with the 350 grit sanding, then hit the surface with a MAPP torch to bring out the shine. There are videos on YouTube that instruct on flame polishing acrylic.

Now you're ready to start the assembly. Before picking up the materials, I suggest asking your supplier to quickly hit the ends of the rods with a buffer, to give you a flat surface for a solid bond (they didn't charge me for doing this). First, build a template to position the rods on the sheet. I took two pieces of 1/4" thick, 2" wide wood strips and fastened them in a 90 degree angle, then I glued two pieces, 1/4" thick, 1" wide strips on the inside, creating a stepped template that lays on the corner of the sheet, which will position the rod 1/4" away from each side of the corner.

Your acrylic supplier will sell you a small can of liquid adhesive to glue the rods. Assembly must be done in a well ventilated area. The glue will melt the acrylic pieces and bond them into one. I threw out the little applicator bottle they gave me. With the applicator it's difficult to apply the correct amount and keep the liquid from dripping on the surface. Instead, I used a small syringe (like an insulin syringe). Position the rod on the sheet, then put something under, such as a very thin gauge sewing needle, to create a small crack between. Squeeze the liquid glue into the crack with the syringe and it'll wick toward the back. Don't fill the gap completely, because when you remove the needle, it will spill out. If you don't use enough glue, the bond won't be complete and there will be air bubbles in the space between. Have tissues on hand to soak up any excess glue. Let the rods sit for at least 40 minutes, before you add the next layer or move the shelf. YouTube also has some simple videos on how to glue acrylic.

As a final touch and to get to the next level of performance, add some resonance control devices or damping material under the shelf. Stillpoints, Sorbothane, isolation platforms or butcher block are just a few options, depending on the remainder in your budget. Keep in mind that the ability of any audio shelf to improve your sound

is entirely dependent on the extent to which everything else in your system will let it. If you require world-class performance and can afford it, you're going to be better off going with something like the Genesis-designed shelf, from KOSMIC. That said, if you're willing to put some time and effort into it, a nice audio shelf is only \$300 away.

## Local Music



**Tuesday June 14th 2011 7:30pm**

We are excited to be featuring for the first time at the Eastside Jazz Club **Jim Kerl's SWING SESSION BIG BAND**. "Swing Session is a swinging, exciting musical experience. The music of Swing Session mirrors the philosophy of its bandleader, Jim Kerl; accessible melodies that swing hard and leave the audience and band wanting more. To paraphrase the great Count Basie, "It don't mean a thing if you can't pat your foot to it." More details next month but meanwhile go to their website <http://www.rainiermusic.com/swingsession.html> and listen to Mack the Knife.

Venue for our concerts Sherman Clay 1000 Bellevue Way. Tickets \$13 Adults, Students 18 and under \$8.

Bring your CD's for exchange, or buy from the box @\$5.

**Enquiries: 425-828-9104 or 425-454-0633.**

Tickets: \$13 Adults, Students 18 and under \$8.

Everyone is welcome. Please join us.

Best regards,

Cooksie Kramer

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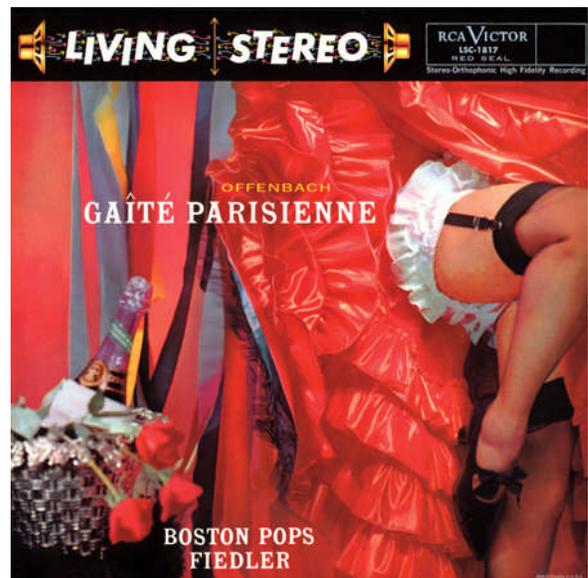


## Shaded Dogs by Joe Pittman

While surfing the internet, I stumbled on this interesting website which many of you rabid record collectors may be interested in. It's called Shaded Dog ([www.shadeddog.com](http://www.shadeddog.com)). and as the name suggests, it is "Your Guide to RCA Living Stereo Classical Records" also-known-as "shaded dogs" by us record collectors. The site includes high quality photos of every original LSC that Mark Wieman, the site owner, has been able to find.

Collecting some of this rare vinyl has become a competitive audiophile sport, so its neat to have a definitive list. Start your search engines, and let the games begin!

If you have records that are missing from the site and you're willing to let Mark photograph them, please send him a note at [mark@shadeddog.com](mailto:mark@shadeddog.com). Mark also lives in Seattle so the logistics should be painless. Or contact Mark Wieman, Shaded Dog, PO Box 14060, Seattle, WA, 98114, phone 206-734-5846



Several of the most famous titles such as Gaité Parisien conducted by Arthur Fiedler and performed by the Boston Pops (LSC-1817) are available as vinyl re-issues and highly recommended for their performance and sound quality.

## Coming Attractions

### June 9 PNWAS Meeting

Bud Purvine with Enabl will demonstrate "Enhanced Acoustic Boundary Layer" technology.



### June 22-23 Experience 19

Definitive Audio will have their 19th annual presentation of the latest audio and video at the Bellevue store. See [www.definitive.com](http://www.definitive.com) for more information.

### July 14 PNWAS Meeting

The Equipment Committee report and High Efficiency Loudspeakers.

### August 11 PNWAS Meeting

Road Trip to Mike Lavigne's.

### August 27 DIY MEET

Our semi-annual DIY meet on Saturday. Everyone is welcome!

### September 8 PNWAS Meeting

Music only. Everybody bring their own music and say a few words about it.

### October 13 PNWAS Meeting

TBD



### October 14-16 RMAF 2011

Hi Ho Hi Ho it's off to Denver we go!

### November 10 PNWAS Meeting

It's dark outside, time for Jerry's annual HD Concert Video Fest.

### December 15 PNWAS Meeting

Annual Christmas music competition.

## Classified Ads

Used **Accuphase E-213** Integrated amplifier \$2400 (New price \$7000).

This is a superb integrated amplifier in very good condition (like new). It is rated at 90 watts per channel into 8 ohms and is built to last as are all Accuphase products. The reviews of this amplifier have been excellent and they are right, it sounds and looks very good. The amplifier includes a remote, original manual, and box. I will also include a pair of Accuphase balanced interconnects.

Specifications:

Input: Single ended or Balanced

Output: 90w per channel into 8 ohms, 115w per channel into 4 ohms

Speaker outputs: 2 pairs of speaker outputs

Can be used as a Power amplifier driven by a pre-amp

User Manual and detailed specs: [http://www.accuphase.com/cat/e-213\\_e.pdf](http://www.accuphase.com/cat/e-213_e.pdf)

Price: \$2400 (OBO).

Shipping weight: 50 lbs.

Contact Renan Jeffereis

Email: [renanj@jeffereis.org](mailto:renanj@jeffereis.org)



### 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 audio-philes 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](http://www.audiosociety.org)

### E-mail

[info@audiosociety.org](mailto: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.

### Executive Committee

President: John Stone

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Vice-President: Darin Forkenbrock

[forkenbrock@gmail.com](mailto:forkenbrock@gmail.com)

Secretary/Treasurer: Willy Chang

[chang98@comcast.net](mailto:chang98@comcast.net)

Editor: Joe Pittman

[joe@kosmic.us](mailto:joe@kosmic.us)

### Committee Chairs

Equipment: Terry Olson

[CornyGuy@aol.com](mailto:CornyGuy@aol.com)

Music: 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 and 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.

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