



CORRECTION

In the "\$450 Triode/Ultralinear" article in Sept. '08, the parts list for the chassis box is in error. The chassis boxes are 13.5 × 5 × 2" and not 17 × 10 × 3". The correct part number is P-H1444-18.

*Joseph Norwood Still
Towson, Md.*

1958 MEMORIES

A hearty "thanks" and round of applause for Barry Fox's *Touring Recording's Memory Lane: 1958*, which should be required reading by anyone with access to the August issue.

It was the philosopher George Santayana who said, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." Sure enough, those of us who grew up during the time that great strides were made in audio reproduction technology do remember (and appreciate!) all the fits, starts, and (thankfully) progress in this field. But even in this age of off-the-shelf, all-done-for-us, increasingly-digital audio reproduction solutions, the current generation cannot help but profit from a study and understanding of the roots and foundation of our interest, hobby, or livelihood. . . the science (and sometimes black magic!) of audio.

Thank you, *audioXpress*, for including Barry's piece in your August issue. I hope to see more articles with reference to historical significance in the future. We owe so much to our audio pioneers, and can learn so much from their legacy.

*Jim Wood
INOVONICS, INC.
jim@inovon.com*

I enjoyed reading the Barry Fox reprint in *audioXpress* because I don't seem to be receiving *Hi-Fi News* anymore. I had a beef with some of the facts in the previous reprint and expressed them in

an editorial (www.audaud.com/article.php?ArticleID=4141).

I also must disagree with a couple things in his column in the July/August *MMM* issue. The Bert Whyte tape recordings were not stereo—they were all binaural. So the "stereo image" is not really correct for speaker reproduction because they were created for headphone playback only. I had tried to get Bert Whyte and Les Paul together since Whyte no longer had a staggered head deck and Paul did; but I was unsuccessful.

In writing about the "pre-RIAA stereo" from the three-track optical recorders in Hollywood, Fox doesn't seem to be aware of the fascinating series of CDs issued in 1997 by Rhino Movie Music, which were taken from various music tracks recorded for MGM movies now owned by Turner Classic Movies. One was titled "Alive and Kickin': Big Band Sounds at MGM." About half the tracks are in excellent stereo from 1943-44. There is also a 1945 Beethoven piano concerto recorded by the Germans in stereo; it was reissued on a Varese-Sarabande CD. I was surprised no mention was made of the two 8-minute 1932 Ellington stereo medleys made for RCA's ill-fated long play record project of the time. These discoveries by Brad Kay were issued on CD some years ago, and even with the losses in the poor transfer they sound very impressive.

Finally, the question of "Is it really stereo?" on these so-called early "accidental stereos" wouldn't even be suggested, as Fox does, if one simply listens to the results and compares it to mono. Executives at both EMI and RCA suggested the whole thing was a hoax (and still do) without ever hearing the examples! Kay believes there are many more such backup masters in the vaults which were made with a second mike at a different location, for even such performers as Toscanini!

*John Sunier
Portland, Oreg.
info@audaud.com*

Barry Fox responds:

It is increasingly difficult to get hard facts from people with first-hand knowledge so I—and I am sure readers—will be very grateful for this extra information. I have an LP of the Brad Kay work, and wrote and broadcast with enthusiasm about it in the UK many years ago. For my pains I was pilloried and ridiculed by "experts" at EMI in London.

I lost touch with Brad Kay but was reminded of him recently when I read the recent book about the late singer Susannah McCorkle which talks about his friendship with what I assume to be the same Brad Kay.

I never knew the Ellington material was available on CD. I would love to get hold of a copy. At the moment I am looking into some similar work done on Stokowski recordings and hope to be writing about it later this year.

ONLINE AUCTIONS

The article on buying and selling on the web by Bruce Brown (Aug. '08, p. 6) was well written and very enjoyable. May I please add the following: Rather than use eSnipe, you can use eBay's "Bid Assistant," which lets you place a single bid for multiple similar items (Check eBay for details). If you want to sell, first check the eBay listing and see how your particular item is selling. If you see 12 listings with an occasional bid, then leave it in a box in the attic! A pristine piece of equipment should sell, but keep the starting bid price reasonable (you could lower it if no bids).

*Vincent Mogavero
VMogavero@aol.com*

First, I want to thank Bruce Brown for a very useful and comprehensive article about online auctions. It is long overdue. There are one or two things that I would like to add (I can never resist).

1. eBay has now changed their policy so that sellers can no longer submit feedback about buyers. They claim this prevents sellers from doing the "feedback ransom" thing. Sellers can

still file complaints against delinquent buyers, but not ordinary feedback. The system is the same as before for buyers submitting feedback for sellers.

2. eSnipe has another interesting feature worth mentioning: an option to bid on “groups” of items. This allows you to set a price and bid limits on multiple similar items—so, if several of the items you want are being auctioned, you can instruct them to bid to a certain amount on each until you win *one* of them—then stop bidding so you get only one. This can be handy if there are multiples of the item you want, but all of them are closing between 4 AM and 5 AM. (If you were to place separate bids on multiple items, you might win more than one.) New merchandise often appears in such groups. I should also mention that eSnipe is a pay service—so you pay them a separate (reasonable) fee to bid for you.

3. eBay also now offers a service similar to the one I described for eSnipe (the one for bidding on items in groups). Theirs is free and is called, “Bid Assistant.”

4. eBay uses a system for most auctions called a “proxy bid.” Many people seem somewhat confused by the way this works. You enter the *maximum* amount that you are willing to bid for an item. eBay will then increase your bid *up to* that amount if necessary so that you are the high bidder. This means that you will not end up paying more than your proxy bid, but you might well pay less. It also makes the bids appear to jump oddly at times.

And, yes, you are “trusting” eBay not to show the seller or other bidders what your maximum proxy bid is. (This works exactly as though you were participating in a “real” auction and had authorized someone at the auction house to proxy on your behalf because you couldn’t be there or on the phone.) The way to avoid “getting sniped” is to place a proxy bid that is really as high as you are willing to pay for the item—no fast reflexes will allow anyone (or anything) to win an item away from you for less than the highest proxy bid you have entered.

5. I was unaware of the “dislike” of shippers for reused packing—in terms of

insurance—and that is very good to know. From my experience, oddly, it is much easier to get a shipper to “total out” an item and pay off the entire value than it is to get them to pay for partial damage. For partial damage they will often ask you to provide an estimate for the repair, and ship the item to them for inspection—which is problematic if the item is so badly damaged that re-shipping it will render it irreparable. Oddly, however, I’ve had several items entirely paid off as “destroyed,” and was never asked to provide the item for inspection (they did ask for pictures). In fact, they allowed me to keep the items (so, at least, they served for parts).

As an idea of what is expected from packing, UPS used to suggest that an item should be packed such that it would survive three drops of 2 or 3’ onto concrete, with any side up, to be considered “well packed.” Also remember that some items, notably speakers, can be damaged by acceleration—so the packing must be able to absorb impact (which is why bubble

wrap or foam is good). You could pack an item tightly in very strong cardboard, for example, but with too little padding, and still have internal parts wrenched loose if it were dropped. I received a pair of speakers packed this way once—the box was perfect, as was the interior packing, but all of the drivers and the crossover panels had been ripped off the front panels due to the box being dropped quite hard, and the drivers were beat up beyond repair.

6. Last but not least, PayPal now offers a hardware security token for accessing your account. This small plastic item looks like a small pocketwatch. When you press the button it returns a six-digit number—which changes every minute or two. You log in by entering your password and the current six-digit number—so someone with your password but not the token cannot access your account.

The token costs \$5 (including shipping) and is free thereafter to use. This is the way security *should* be done, and is a very good idea—

1nV Low Noise Dual JFET



The image shows a cylindrical dual JFET component labeled LSK389 with four gold wire bonds. To its right is a graph of Noise - En (nV/√Hz) versus Frequency (Hz) on a log scale from 10Hz to 100kHz. Three curves are shown for bias currents of 1mA (blue), 2mA (purple), and 3mA (yellow). All curves show a decrease in noise as frequency increases. The 1mA curve is the highest, followed by 2mA, then 3mA. The graph is labeled 'LSK 389 Series' and 'LINEAR SYSTEMS'.

Low Noise < 1nV
Monolithic Dual
Tighter Idss Matching
Narrow Idss Grades
Low Capacitance: 20pf
Functional Replacement for 2SK389

www.linearsystems.com 800-359-4023

CONTRIBUTORS

Edward T. Dell, Jr. (Editorial, "Open Sourcing," p. 6) is editor/publisher of *audioXpress*, *Voice Coil*, and *Multi Media Manufacturer* magazines.

George Danavaras ("The Lamda Loudspeaker," p. 7) graduated from National Technical University of Athens, Greece in 1986 with a degree in Electronic Engineering. He currently works in the R & D division for a Greek telecommunications company. His hobbies include design and manufacturing of audio crossovers, amplifiers, and loudspeakers.

Scott Reynolds ("LED Bias Monitor for Tube Amps," p. 18) works for a communications company in New York.

Bruce Brown ("Class D Amplifiers," p. 22) is a registered pharmacist who works in the medical research area for a major pharmaceutical company. He has been experimenting with electronics for over 35 years, remaining actively interested in electronics, building kits, and "home brew" audio. Online auctions have stimulated new interests. He currently uses many restored and homebuilt audio amplifiers and welcomes communication about vintage equipment and restorations. He can be reached at Tuninfo@eol.com.

Ed Simon ("250W of Clean AC Power, Pt. 4")

received his B.S.E.E. at Carnegie-Mellon University. He has installed over 500 sound systems at venues including Jacob's Field, Cleveland, Ohio; MCI Center, Washington D.C.; Museum of Modern Art Restaurants, New York; The Coliseum, Nashville, Tenn.; The Forum, Los Angeles; Fisher Cats Stadium, Manchester, N.H.

G.R. Koonce (Product Review: Dayton Audio WT3 Woofer Tester, p. 32) is an electrical engineer who has enjoyed the hobby of designing and building audio equipment, test gear, and speaker systems. Professionally, he worked for over 30 years producing audio frequency equipment for military use. He is a member of AES and has been a contributing writer to *Speaker Builder* since 1981.

Robert O. Wright, Jr. (Product Review: Dayton Audio WT3 Woofer Tester, p. 32) is a graduate of the University of Tennessee. He is a retired mechanical engineer from the Tennessee Valley Authority and is now the owner of a custom design-engineering firm in Knoxville, Tenn. It specializes in machine design, pollution control equipment design, sound design, and speaker design. He is also a member of the AES.

John Sunier ("Super Fidelity," p. 46) is a CD reviewer for *Australian HiFi and Home Theatre Technology*. His website is www.audaud.com.

because it prevents anyone who steals your password from using it, and the current number won't work for them two minutes from now even if they see it. Nothing else changes in your account except the need to append the six-digit token code to your password.

You can get more details by typing "security key" at the search prompt on the PayPal site. (They promoted it for a while then stopped talking about it—now you must look to find it.) The token is similar to the SecurID token. . . for those who are familiar with security. You *can* still log in without the key, which weakens it a bit, but it requires more information than just the password. At a minimum, it is far more secure than only a password.

Keith Levkoff
kLevkoff@panix.com

Thanks to both Bruce Brown and reader Keith Levkoff for their helpful thoughts on eBay. The company now has new management, which I hope will fix its problems. The cancellation of complaints about vendors is unfortunate, but it has been largely ineffective, in any case. Several articles which I bought are still not delivered, and the complaint process is medieval and more complicated than dealing with Internal Revenue. —ETD.

AURORA

I built Patrick J. Amer's Aurora preamp (3/87 *TAA*) back in 1989 and use it on Westrex power amplifiers and the Western Electric 91 power amplifier. I have used many brands of loudspeakers on the Westrex amps and I use Lowther on the Western Electric 91. The Aurora sounds great on both amps and speakers. I have also A-B tested with other preamps, and my friends and I prefer the Aurora. The Aurora has given me years of music pleasure, and I would like to thank the author for sharing his circuits.

Peter Hawthorne
United Kingdom

AD CLAIMS

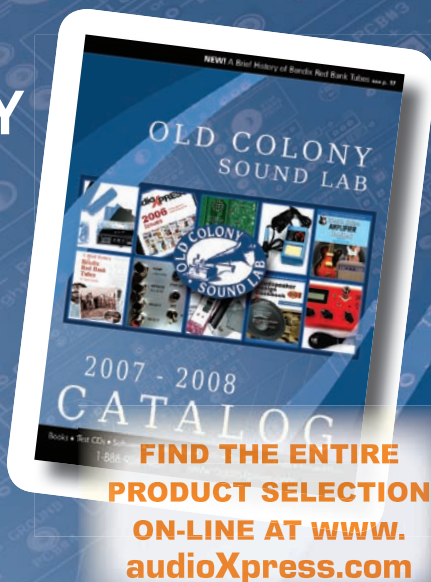
I read Ed Dell's response to the letter from Mr. Richard Campbell in the July issue and believe that I must add my comments to the discussion. Accord-

NOW AVAILABLE!

The NEW OLD COLONY SOUND LAB CATALOG

You'll find:

- Over 150 books and CDs on audio technology
- New test CDs
- Software for design and measurement
- Sound Strobe and more test equipment



Old Colony Sound Laboratory, PO Box 876, Peterborough, NH 03458-0876 USA
Toll-free: 888-924-9465 Phone: 603-924-9464 Fax: 603-924-9467

E-mail: custserv@audioXpress.com www.audioXpress.com

**FIND THE ENTIRE PRODUCT SELECTION ON-LINE AT
www.audioXpress.com**

ing to Webster, hyperbole is defined as “exaggeration for effect, not meant to be taken literally.” It appears that you are confusing hyperbole with actual claims.

If an ad mentions that RFI is reduced and distortion lowered, that is different than saying that you will feel better about owning the product. Those are claims that can be verified as compared to the creation of a feeling of pride of ownership. There is no doubt that having a product with excellent form and workmanship can result in higher total satisfaction than a product that may perform equally as well but look and feel clunky. However, that higher level of craftsmanship should not be presented as providing higher technical competence, unless that is actually true.

Your statement about ads that center on how you feel when driving an expensive car does not relate to an ad that would state that the car gives you better mileage or has faster acceleration. The former might be hyperbole, but the latter would be a misstatement of facts unless true. The problem with many claims

in audio is that the advertisers do, in fact, wish you to take them literally and buy the product based on their claims. It is also interesting that the degree of this “exaggeration,” especially with claims for cable performance, is much worse in the audio industry than many other consumer businesses. Even if the problem were simply a matter of the use of hyperbole in advertising, just because other people are doing it still does not make it desirable.

The danger in this excessive use of “hyperbole” is that consumers often discover the truth and then feel “ripped off.” This is bad for long-term prospects for the industry. I admit that I am personally disturbed with the excessive claims of many, if not most, of the cable ads, which tend to displace the resources of the consumers to areas that at best might have a minor effect on sound compared to major players such as speakers and room treatments. I’m not talking about ads that claim that gold-plated #10 gauge wire will be more impressive to your girlfriend, but rather those that claim this wire will eliminate

distortion, provide fantastic transient response, and so on.

I believe it is important for you, as a publisher, to maintain balance in the presentation of ideas, but I also believe that passing off performance claims as hyperbole does not fall into that category. I am strongly in the camp of Mr. Campbell in his assessment of what I believe is a significant problem in the industry.

Tom Perazella

tom.perazella@verizon.net

ATTRIBUTION

Jim Dungan’s “HD-2: A Single-Ended Class-A Headphone Amp” in the June issue is a rip-off of Scott Dorsey’s “Kludge 4 Single-Ended OTL Headphone Amp Project,” which appeared in *Vacuum Tube Valley* # 11, Spring 1999. Give credit where it’s due.

Tom Tutay

Transition Audio Design

Fort Walton Beach, Fla.

aX

D4-1, D3-1 available
Distributor Wanted

DIY Kits

Back-horn series

tb speaker

Web: www.tb-speaker.com
E-mail: info@tb-speaker.com