

On Sunday, July 3, 2011, the "June" monthly meeting of the Audio-Video Club of Atlanta was held at the home of Darren Censullo in Fayetteville, Georgia. There were about 25 members and guests in attendance to first enjoy a BBQ lunch provided by our hosts, and then to hear equipment that Darren is the US distributor for. The meeting started an hour early (at 1 PM) so everyone could enjoy lunch before we started listening to the equipment.

Because of the more relaxed environment of this meeting, there were no formal announcements. After lunch was completed, John Morrison, president, introduced our hosts for the day, Darren and his wife Bonnie. Darren's company, Avatar Acoustics, is the US distributor of several lines of equipment made mostly in Europe. Also introduced was Vincent Luke, one of the principles of AMR (Abbingdon Music Research) company from the UK, who worked long hours with Darren to prepare the systems we were about to listen to. AMR produces electronics including integrated amplifiers and CD players of the highest quality. Other companies imported by Avatar Acoustics include Acoustics Systems International, Dr. Feikert Analog, Monk Audio, and Rosso Fiorentino speakers.

Darren briefly explained the equipment in the four systems located in three separate rooms in the basement of his home. The systems were marked system 1, 2, 3, and 4, from the least expensive to the most expensive. The group split up and rotated between the four systems for extensive listening, with either Darren or Vincent showing us the equipment in each room. Each system had a sign showing the equipment being used, including interconnects, speaker wire, and speaker stands (if needed). All of the rooms had sound treatments, including extensive treatments in the "most expensive" room.

The electronics used in the demos were the AMR equipment, in several configurations. The amplifiers are designed to be used as one unit (as an integrated amplifier), or in one of two mono-block combinations using two units. One combination uses two integrated amplifiers, and in the other the units work as two mono-blocks, with the preamp functions turned off. When used as two integrated amps, one unit becomes parent (using its preamp) and one unit the slave. Coupling of the two preamps is accomplished through a special cable. Both mono-block configurations are managed with toggle switches at the back of the units.

The speakers used were several models of the Rosso Fiorentino speaker line, including the Fiesole, Siena, and Volterra models.

After the listening sessions, some members sat down with Vincent to hear about the latest views and trends in the computer music arena.

The club thanks our hosts for a great afternoon of food, listening, and camaraderie. A formal thank you letter was sent by our president to the hosts.

Thomas Horner
Secretary, A-V Club of Atlanta