

The Audio Critic

The Audio Critic, Inc.
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Important Announcement

Dear Subscriber:

This is to inform you that The Audio Critic is returning to its original magazine-like format, beginning with the very next issue, which will be called #10 (it would have been Vol. 2, No. 4 under the old nomenclature).

The three newsletter-size Bulletins already published will not be counted toward the fulfillment of your subscription. Please accept them as a free bonus. Thus you will still be getting a total of six old-style issues for your \$30 domestic or \$36 overseas subscription, and at this point we owe you six of these minus whatever number of them you had already received before we switched to the new format. (Those who started with Bulletin 1 have six magazine-size issues still coming to them.)

In other words, you have lost absolutely nothing and have even received some free updates between regular issues. Furthermore, all reviews and other material of permanent interest published in Bulletins 1, 2 and 3 will be reprinted in a special section of #10 in order to maintain continuity in the original format.

As for The Audio Critic Handbook, we still intend to publish it in a somewhat different and more expanded form than originally envisioned, but it will be marketed and sold separately, not in fulfillment of one third of your subscription. All of your subscription will now go into regular issues.

What made us come to this decision? Two things.

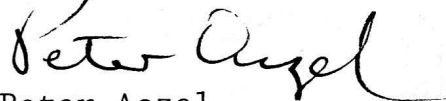
One is an absolutely unexpected and flagrant discrimination by the United States Postal Service against second-class material that does not have the image or outside appearance of newspapers, magazines and other paid-for periodicals. This is hard to believe and of course officially denied, but the fact is that post office employees do not process second-class material in the order received but according to their personal judgment of priorities. Our folded and stencil-addressed Bulletins were treated like junk mail and processed last; some of them took four to six weeks to reach their destination

instead of arriving just a couple of days later than first-class mail, as officially intended and claimed. We've had private don't-quote-me admissions by insiders that this is the basic reality of the second-class situation. Such delays may be tolerable in the case of a quarterly publication but totally unacceptable in a biweekly. First-class mail, on the other hand, would have been prohibitive under the new rates. We found ourselves checkmated.

The second reason was that the majority of our subscribers appeared to prefer the original format, even though they had expressed considerable enthusiasm for the idea of the biweekly Bulletins. In actual practice, however, they wanted to hold something weightier and more promising in their hand, with hours of leisurely reading waiting for them between the covers--in other words, The Audio Critic they had become used to over the years, delays and all. The concept of a swift and pithy newsletter is seemingly more appealing to the financial, legal and other specialized professional markets than to the audiophile community. Live and learn. Obviously, we had to do our learning quickly; if we were going to return to the old format at all, the decision had to be made before too many Bulletins were published. So we made the decision.

We shall make every attempt to come out with #10 as soon as possible; we're aiming for June 30th. It will contain a number of surprises, specifically in power amplifiers, MC transformers, phono cartridges and tonearms. Until then, we trust you will forgive us our miscalculation--as long as we're the ones who are paying for it.

Sincerely,



Peter Aczel
Editor and Publisher