The 1951 Audio Fair in Review

A brief word of what was shown and by whom at the most successful Fair to date. Designed to bring a tinge of regret to those who attended—a touch of regret to those who did not.

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At each Audio Fair passes into history and becomes a chattel of the ages, there appears the traditional triad of second-guessers to sound off and made up their minds about what should be done to improve Fairs of the future. This is exactly as it should be, and engagement of audio enthusiasts in the Audio Engineering Society, have in three and engagement of audio enthusiasts in the Audio Engineering Society, have in three and emphasis the extent to which annual electronic events, the Fair of today exist. So, no matter what you think should be done to improve Fairs of the future. This is exactly as it should be, and engagement of audio enthusiasts in this strictly American art is to be credited for the rapid resolution of the Fair into a scientific forum and trade exhibit of world-wide prominence.

The years of which it coincides, the annual Convention of the Audio Engineering Society, have in three short years brought to fruition an accomplishment without equal in the history of scientific forums. A registered attendance of more than 8000 visitors for 1951, who attended the show through three days of weather that could be called awful, followed only with flattery, solidly entrenched the Fair as one of the country's two largest annual electronic events, the others—being the yearly convention of the I.R.E. with its many years of background.

This reporter brings out these facts principally to drive home to members of the audience the monumental stature which has been achieved by their annual convention and trade show. The story of the Fair would probably carry greater weight if it included a Horatio-Alger-like chapter about a small group of dedicated individuals in whose hearts burned the torch of audio, striving against insurmountable opposition to achieve the impossible. But such just isn't the facts.

If ever there was a monument to industry cooperation and whether or not the Audio Fair deserved it. Only because the original Fair in 1949 received equal recognition and approval—and second-guessing—from manufacturers, dealers, exhibitors, and the press, that the Fair of today exists. So, no matter which category you fall into, stick out your hands in joyful pride; you have helped put over the touchdowns, the homerun, the setpoint, the setpoint in the game of Audio.

Below and beyond we record for posterity the studied reflections of one happy, thoughtfully, observer of the Fair.

Acoustical Manufacturing Co., Ltd., Huntingdon, Huntingdon, England. Acoustical made an auspicious impression in its initial effort to enter the American market with an animated display of the much-discussed corner-type speaker embodying a ribbon-type tweeter with frequency range extending above 80,000 cps, also with a line of high-quality amplifiers and accessories which were entirely unique in appearance and in mechanical design. One of the Fair's more striking demonstrations was the playing of a recording of breaking glass, in which the Acoustical speaker combined to produce an illusion of reality so complete that listeners figuratively searched for Band-Aids to repair split fingers.

Audio Devices Inc., New York City. Although the Audio Devices display of magnetic tape recorders was not the most impressive, the exhibit's chief appeal seemed to lie in the availability of the current issue of The Audio Record, the company's widely-circulated customers' house organ. Because it contains the most complete directory of tape-recorders published to date, the current Audio Record has already achieved a circulation of 50,000 with requests still pouring into the company's offices. At last reports copies were still available and if you haven't had a chance to review it, this is this reporter's suggestion that you get in line. Truly a fine piece of publishing, and furthermore, it's free.

Audio Instrument Co., Inc., New York City. No company in the electronics industry has made a greater advance than Audio Instrument in the two years of its activity, and the reasons for this remarkable achievement have included an impressive display of precision equipment for many types of audio test functions. Particularly attention was directed toward a moderate-priced intermodulation meter and a new ultra-speed level detector.

The Audio Master Company, New York City. Portable transcription-playing equipment was on display here. Two new tape recorders were shown: microphones, recording devices, and a wide variety of miscellaneous audio items for which the company is distributor.

Audio & Video Products Corporation, New York City. The great diversity of high-quality audio equipment assembled in the Audio-Vide exhibit which, incidentally, was expanded to accommodate the firm's subsidiary, A-V Tape Libraries, Inc., made this suite far and away one of the most popular gathering spots. Although such impressive monickers as Ampex, Fairchild, Langen, and the like, were represented by their newest developments in the field of audio, they were pressed to compete for attention with the pre-recorded library of magnetic tape. Also coming in for more than casual interest was a greatly improved version of the Wagner recorder. This device permits 30 minutes of recording on a disc approximately five inches in diameter at a speed of 16 r.p.m. While the frequency response of the Wagner recorder is somewhat restricted when compared with wide-range equipment, it is startling when the size of the disc and the linearity in various mechanical design are considered.

Bell Sound Systems, Inc., Columbus, Ohio, along with Bell's notable advances in remote-control amplifiers, the Model 2145-A, this exhibit was enhanced by the introduction of a new moderately-priced tape recorder. The emphasis on quality—both in construction and performance—was noted. A tape recorder enabling the listener to select a wide range of frequencies by independent tape. The effectiveness with which visitors are impressed is a compensating factor. Even the casual visitor in which the amplifier volume control was turned to zero during the playing of the fortissimo passage on a recording. The resulting silence dramatized the low needle talk of the new Audak Chromatic decorative touch that the Bell recorder is perhaps the most modern.

Berkant Associates, Los Angeles, Calif. Nothing new was offered in this exhibit by the usual line of products which included a new line of clip-on amplifiers. The company also announced that it was working on a new line of recording equipment which would be indirectly transmitted by the step Bell is taking to make excellent audio performance available to prices well in keeping with modest incomes.

Bell & Howell Co., Chicago, Ill. New products—both in construction and performance—were offered here in the high-quality-audio industry was clearly evidenced by all of the equipment on display. Each exhibit was unlike the others, often being impressed by the step Bell is taking to make excellent audio performance available to prices well in keeping with modest incomes.
network model, Concertone more-or-less revealed which of the manufacturers of professional recorders invading the home-recording field. In Concertone's reputation and success, it was no surprise to see a new model, the Model 1401. A new improved version of the original Model 1401 Concertone, which has received a great deal of appreciative observation.

David Bogen Co., Inc., New York City. It was interesting to learn that cabinets some display which was both informative and a source of considerable interest. It goes without saying that the growth which resulted in its occupation from drift, to achieve satisfactory FM reproduction, was the first one to be manufactured. Hartford, Conn. Although Gray is not necessarily entail high cost, the Browning theme was an important one.

British Industries Corp., New York City. Here was one of the most attractive exhibits of the week. The exhibits were designed to Garrard turntable recorders, the Leak "Point One" amplifier, and Wharfedale and N.R.I. speakers. If there was a point of center attraction in the B.I.C. exhibits, it was possibly the new Wharfedale 645 loudspeaker, which received solid approval from engineers and music lovers alike. The entire Vitavox line of equipment earned a place among the first public appearance in the U.S. for Brociner Electronics Laboratory, New York City. An interesting exhibit in which were the results of the pioneering efforts of Brociner to make the American public high-quality-audio conscious. Demonstrated were the Brociner phonograph preamplifier—equalizer which, incidentally, was the first one to be manufactured on a commercial basis, as well as the expanding Brociner line of high-quality speakers. For many was shown a square-wave tester which will have many applications in the field of audio design and development.

Browning Laboratories, Inc., Winchester, Mass. Emphasis in the Browning exhibits was made upon the highest quality. The Browning precision-built tuner, particularly one which offers high sensitivity and freedom from hum is an example. The Collins Audio Products Co., Inc., Westfield, N. J. Collins, identified heretofore with radio, has for some time been making audio products. Collins used its Fair exhibit to introduce a new group of components which combined the beauty of appearance with acoustical correctness. It was interesting to hear that cabinets giving every impression of having been built-to-order are available as stock items, and of comparatively high quality.

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Cook Laboratories, Stamford, Conn. If truly remarkable recordings are your forte, your loss is great indeed if you didn't visit the Cook suite. Adapt as they may be, the visitors appeared to center around a new FM tape recorder of the highest quality. The use of its Fair exhibit to introduce a new group of components which combined the beauty of appearance with acoustical correctness. It was interesting to hear that cabinets giving every impression of having been built-to-order are available as stock items, and of comparatively high quality.
for this effort to orient the buyer-to-be in the home equipment field. Both old and serious hobbyists came in for their share of attention with a working demonstration of the RCA triaxial speaker system housed in an enclosure with Plexiglass front to show construction details. Irrespective of the intensity and audibility of the July 4th weekend, the Jensen exhibit was more than satisfying.

Lafayette Radio (Radio Wire Television). Beginning with the Fair’s opening and continuing through the final moments of its existence there was one exhibit that was probably the most popular, the Lafayette “Golden Ear” contest, beyond doubt one of the event’s greatest attractions. The Lafayette booth was considerably larger than in previous years and was devoted to a display of ultra-high fidelity equipment. "... the Lafayette exhibit should be illuminated with red lights to minimize visibility of red faces." Speaking now from experience rather than prognostication, this reporter’s opinion remains unchanged.

Langevin Manufacturing Corp., New York City. Large, professional in nature, the Langevin display consisted of amplifiers, power supplies, and transformers for a variety of industrial applications. Strong in detail, the Langevin exhibit is a veritable showplace of the highest calibre. Here the quality and reliability of items merchandised under the respected Langevin trade mark.

J. L. Selman, Inc., Los Angeles, Calif. Although the bulk of the Lansing exhibit was devoted to the company’s line of conventional speakers, interest of visitors was centered in the new acoustic lens (see New Audio Engineering, Oct.) which formed a combination of sound waves and a broad portion of the audio spectrum. Virtually a beam of sound, the beam formed at high frequencies establishes the new Lansing lens as a distinct advance in the field of acoustics.

Leonard Radio, Inc., New York City. For the edification of those who may be interested, it is announced officially that 12,943 beans are required to fill a 12-in. fish bowl to capacity. And, accordingly, the particles of dust which gave us the new Pentron tape recorder for the best guess on the Leonard display. All turned out to be correct. One man explained "only to learn how far off they were." Real hit of this exhibit was the new Leonard sound recorder which is receiving great acclaim as an excellent example of what a sound catalog should be.

Magnecord, Inc., Chicago, Ill. Without any fear of exaggerating, it may be affirmed here that the Magnecord introduction of the tape recorder is unequalled in the intensity of interest it generated among engineers and hobbyists alike. It was one of the Fair’s most interesting demonstrations of audio in action. Displayed were precision instruments, professional-type reproducers and arms, tone arms, cartridge holders, and various types of accessories such as preamplifiers, tone arms, cartridges, etc. The Magnecord also employed a new preamplifier which is said to be a feature of the company’s new strain-sensitive pickup. Also on display were many related accessories such as preamplifiers, tone arms, cartridge holders, and various types of stylus. Attractive arrangement of the various items on display, together with carefully planned exhibition, the over-all effect, effectively dramatized the underlying reasons for Magnecord's stately entrance into the field of audio.

Pickering and Company, Inc., Ocean-side, N. Y., developed great interest with their display which included an equalizer-control unit for use with any standard basic amplifier. Distinctive appearance of the exhibit which was an attempt to combine to make this new Pickering product thoroughly outstanding. In addition to the unit’s great beauty and appeal, audio items, there was shown the mechanization of a Seeburg 100-side automatic record player which contains a modified version of the famous Pickering pickup.

Presto Recording Corporation, Hackensack, N. J. Among the recent developments in tape recording equipment is the new Presto Model 1400 automatic record player which embodies the mechanical precision and electrical characteristics usually found only in professional equipment. Today, this new Presto model is certain to achieve great acceptance among broadcast stations and many homes to augment existing custom-built combinations. Presto attendants had an opportunity to intensify this good proving comments of visitors who heard the RC18-14 in action.

RCA Victor Division, Radio Corporation of America, Camden, N. J. The Model 400 16-mm projector, shown here publicly for the first time, made a major impression on engineers and hobbies alike. Designed to produce a strip of oxide to afford magnetic recording and reproduction, the new projector is suitable for use from a standard optical sound track. Moreover, it contains a microphone input and AC power to reproduce recording on magnetic tracks at will. This remarkable RCA projector easily classes as one of the most sequential developments shown at the Fair. RCA also created considerable attention with an exhibit of a home music system which has come up to the value for money at which the company has received many professional awards. In
addition to wide-range distortion-free reproduction, the new Scott amplifiers are exceptionally efficient in the use of equipment they provide for all types of recordings.

Sonorette Corporation, New York City. This Corporation has been making great strides toward achieving leadership in the distribution of sound equipment to educators, colleges, and terminals of the Fair's most inclusive displays of moderate-priced recording equipment. Evidence of the firm's reputation in the educational field was apparent in the large number of representatives from schools and colleges who made the Sonorette suite virtually their Fair headquarters.

Stephens Manufacturing Corporation, Culver City, Calif., attracted a great deal of attention with an introductory showing of a new two-way speaker equipped with 500-o.m. transformers for direct-connection operation. Highly efficient, the new speaker will effect many economies wherever lines are available for carrying power-output levels. Wired-music systems for applauding industrial plants offer but one possible application where savings would be substantial. Also shown effectively were the full line of Stephens high-quality speakers with conventional voice-coil characteristics, and the Stephens miniature microphone.

Sun Radio Corporation, Inc., New York City, once more justified its reputation as one of the country's most aggressive manufacturers of fine radio equipment. Fortunately, Sun's new sound catalog came off the press in time for the Fair and thousands of copies were presented to visitors. The Sun exhibit included representative equipment from practice rooms as well as material on manufacturers in the audio industry.

Tech Laboratories, Inc., Palisades Park, N. J., was the only company that has not been mentioned as making a name for itself in the broadcast field. Last year's Fair it captured attention with the Artificial Reverberation Generator—this year it came up with another synthetic source of sound effects, the Terminal Transformer. The Terminal Transformer is a pioneer that it is in the field of sound, has taken a forward step which will be of value to the entire industry.

The Tetrax Corporation, Yonkers, N. Y. It is a safe bet that thousands of visitors, uniformed upon arrival, left the Tetrax display in an expert knowledge of position, thanks to one of the Fair's truly educational demonstrations. Various types of stylus were placed under binocular microscopes so that effects of wear could easily be observed. Tetrax is to be commended for its thoughtfulness in providing enough of these set-ups for all who were interested to have a careful unhurried examination. Visitors were downright lavish in their praise of the precision by which Tetrax transforms grids to a 1-mil diameter without observable imperfection.

Triad Transformer Mfg. Co., Los Angeles, Calif. The quality inherent in Triad transformers was evidenced with dramatic impact in this exhibit. Upon first entering the Triad suite, visitors were aware of a tastefully-prepared back drop which displayed such respected trademarks as Rosette, McIntosh, Magne- plate, and Presto—all users of Triad transformers. Closer inspection revealed a group of cutaways which displayed the care and precision with which Triad products are manufactured. Triad is an excellent example of the impressive growth of the electronic industry on the Pacific Coast.

University Loudspeakers, Inc., White Plains, N. Y., gave impressive evidence of the reasons underlying the company's phenomenal growth with a showing of some of the many applications for every conceivable type of equipment. Hobbyists displayed particular interest in the 6300 and 6501 series, both of which are employed in driving high-quality audio into homes with modest incomes. Animating the University stand was a tape presentation which explained the facts of life of high-quality audio. Exceedingly well-handled, the recording escaped the pitfalls of academic approach which claims so many ventures of this kind, and presented an adult discussion of interest to both engineers and hobbyists.

United Transformer Company, New York City. If anyone was wondering about the industry importance of the familiar initials UTC, you can be certain it was because the exhibit was removed. Thoroughly impressive was the display of UTC audio transformers built into working demonstrations of a number of high-quality amplifiers. Exceptionally attractive arrangement of the various items on display, together with well-prepared illustrative material stressing the quality and the broad range of UTC products, made this exhibit one of the Fair's most effective.

Waveforms, Inc., New York City, continued its stir with an improved version of the tiny audio oscillator which was first introduced at the 1950 Audio Fair, and which permits dialing of FM stations from a remote point. As improved, the oscillator covers a frequency range of 30 to 300,000 cps. The new remote tuner of the crystal-control type, with a separate crystal for each station's frequency, the switching of fixed-tuned circuits is accomplished by a motor-driven switch.

Weathers Industries, West Collingswood, N. J. Here was one of the Fair's exhibits that can be classed only as revolutionary. Displayed was a new WEATHERIGHT speaker, which was the result of careful engineering. Among the unusual qualities of this new setup are 1-gram stylus pressure wide frequency range, and exceptional freedom from distortion. Keep your eye on this one—you will be hearing a lot more about it as it achieves national distribution.

AES Convention Covered by National Press

The impressive stature which has been achieved in the field of scientific forums by the Audio Engineering Society, was revealed emphatically by the great interest displayed in the 1951 meeting which was held in November coincidental with The Audio Fair. Beginning with the installation of officers on the morning of November 1, continuing through the climactic banquet on the same evening, on through to the final technical session on November 3, the Convention was a constant center of coverage by the trade press, principal newspapers and wire services, and a number of national magazines. All the officers will appear in the months to come.

At the business meeting, which was the Convention's first official function, Alexander Fisher, chairman of the board of tellers, announced results of the 1951 election. He expressed appreciation to the membership for the cooperation accorded him while in office, and tendered the gavel to C. G. McProud, newly-elected president, opened his term by introducing other newly-elected officers.

Presented were: F. Summer Hall, executive vice-president, C. L. LeBel, secretary, and John Colvin, Jerry B. Minter, and W. Oliver Summerlin, members of the Board of Governors, Ralph A. Schlegel was re-elected treasurer. Lloyd C. Win-

gard of Cleveland, and Howard M. Tremaine of Hollywood, Central and Western vice-presidents respectively, were unable to be present.

Highlight of the Convention was the Society's annual banquet, toastingmastered by Arthur W. Schneider, which filled the Ball Room of the Hotel New Yorker to capacity. In keeping with custom, the banquet provided occasion for the annual awards. Recipient of the John H. Potts Memorial Award, granted for "outstanding achievement in the field of audio engineering" was Hermion H. Scott. The Audio Engineering Society Award, given each year for efforts in behalf of the Society, was received by F. Summer Hall. Both presentations were made by Dr. Harry F. Olson in his capacity as chairman of the Awards Committee. Following dinner and presentation of the awards, a vandeville program featuring Carson J. Robison, director of the truly great orchestral music, was presented through courtesy of the National Broadcasting Company.