

ABSOLUTE FIDELITY

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Editor's Say

We are too poor to buy cheap things. That was something my maternal grandfather taught me when I was just a child.

Sounds counter intuitive, but his reasoning was simple, when you are poor, you cannot afford to keep on replacing, or upgrading your stuff. Paying a little more for a good pair of shoes meant that you could use them for years. Whereas a cheap pair would probably fall apart just when you can least afford to have them replaced.

The Genesis loudspeakers are not cheap, but they will also last you a long time without the need for replacement. In this issue, we feature an article on taking care of your speakers, and an update and enhancement you can make to some models.

I asked the owner of a 10-year old pair of G300's why he had not changed his speakers, despite an upgrade bug that had him changing cables, amps and source components almost every year.

His response? "Well..... I'm kinda used to their sound, and they still kick the butt of all my friend's latest speakers. They were the best hifi investment I ever made, so it's also sentimental. Now, if I can stop upgrading my electronics for a couple of years, I might be able to afford a new pair of G1.1's."

Remember, the value of quality is remembered long after the price is forgotten!

Cheers!
Gary

Sightings

By Carolyn Koh



The Genesis 7.1c was conceived from wishing to have the Genesis sound in a smaller form factor. Years ago, my brother Gary and I scoured the entire city where I lived for my Christmas present (he asked!) – speakers for a bedroom system – small enough to sit on a shelf, yet able to resolve the intricacies of a period baroque orchestra, and still play some U2 when I was in the mood for it.

I also wanted to run my PC soundcard through it – yes, I wanted to hear those sword clashes and laser explosions of my favorite computer games on something better than the computer speakers available at the time. Test CD in hand, we listened to black box after black box.

Fast forward 15 years and my question to him when he revived the Genesis brand was "Do I get great sounding AND beautiful bookshelf speakers now?" The answer today is a resounding "Yes!" The Genesis 7.1 *convertible*.

The G7.1c was reviewed by Steven Stone over at the online magazine, UltimateAV:

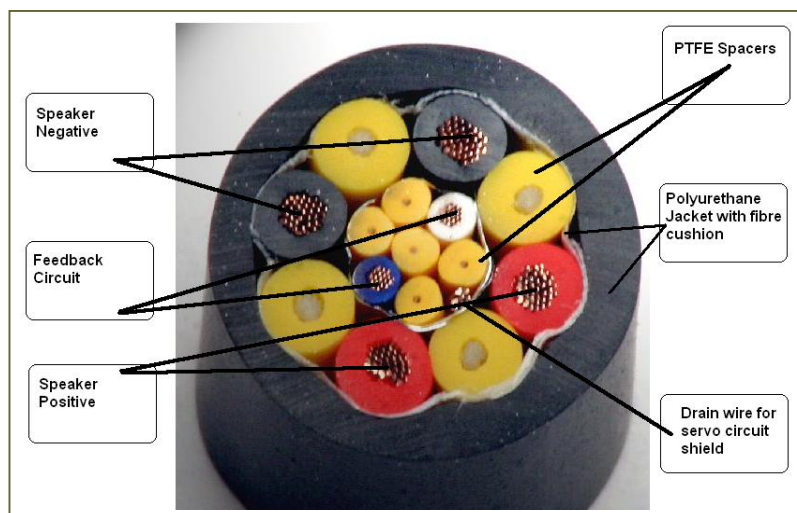
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Must Have!

By Gary Leonard Koh

One of the biggest improvements we made to the system of the owner of the G300 mentioned in my editorial was to upgrade the servo-bass cable. What amazed him was that the improvement in the bass could be heard all the way up to the midrange. Well, one thing we always say in Genesis – bass is the foundation of all music!

In the large Genesis systems with an external amplifier(G1, G2, G300, G350, G-V, etc.), the servo-bass cable is an integral part of the feedback system with the sensor in the woofer, and the measurement circuitry at the other end in the amplifier. Thus, there are two signal paths necessary – the high-level woofer signal, and a low-level feedback return. The old servo-bass cable was built as a four-conductor speaker cable. This resulted in the feedback signal also being sent through speaker wire. As all audiophiles know, using a speaker cable as a low-level interconnect will result in slow, muddy, bass.



Well, the feedback signal return should be sent through an interconnect... and that is exactly what has been engineered into the new servo-bass cable.

So, if you have a pair of Genesis loudspeakers with an external servo-bass amplifier, the servo-bass cable upgrade is a must have – resulting in tighter, more dynamic, and faster bass.

FAQ: Care and Cleaning of Loudspeaker Cabinets

Genesis loudspeaker cabinets are finished in high quality natural wood veneers, high-gloss painted, an acrylic composite material and piano lacquer finishes. With proper care, they will give you decades of pleasure. Like a piece of fine furniture, or an exotic car, you will need to maintain it using the proper tools and materials.

The best maintenance of your loudspeaker cabinet is by simply keeping it clean. Dust is abrasive (really!!) so to avoid scratches, dust lightly with a real feather (not plastic) or real wool duster. You can also wipe softly with a damp, soft cloth to pick up dust and dirt. "Damp" means a wet cloth wrung out thoroughly so that it leaves no visible moisture on the surface as you wipe. Use

soft cotton flannel, or micro-fiber polishing cloths, avoiding coarse or synthetic fibers.



Murphy's Oil Soap or Howard's Paste Wax – use as directed on natural wood veneer finishes

Genesis loudspeakers come in 4 families of finishes, and each is handled differently. Do not get any of these polishing and cleaning materials on the drivers. They should be applied using a soft cloth, and not sprayed.

1. **Natural Wood Veneers.** Genesis makes all the veneered products from natural wood veneers, not “real wood” veneers made from reconstituted wood fibers. These veneers are uniquely beautiful natural wood grain.

Maintain these models as you would a piece of fine furniture. Keep it clean, and give it a wax and polish periodically. Any high quality furniture polish can be used to prevent drying and cracking, and at the same time enhance the natural beauty and depth of the wood grain. Examples of easily available products include Murphy's Oil Soap, or Howard Premium Natural Paste Wax. Lemon Pledge can also be used, but be careful where you spray!

2. **High Gloss Automotive Finish.** These are painted just like high quality cars made by Porsche, Mercedes Benz, etc. Thus, the finish should be cared for like with any fine car. However, since the speaker is made of mdf and not metal, please do not wet them!

For normal cleaning, use a damp soft cloth, and follow with a dry soft cloth. Wipe the speaker in long straight strokes to avoid unsightly swirl marks. Any high quality, automotive paste wax may be used to keep the finish quality up. One such example is 3M's Perfect-It™ Paste Wax. Do not use abrasive waxes such as buffing compounds, cutting wax, etc. as these will remove the top coat!

3. **Acrylic Composite.** Some of Genesis's top models come in a high-end acrylic

composite sandwich. Again, just keep it clean. Dust the speaker often with a soft feather duster. If the finish deteriorates with fine scratches, haziness and abrasion marks, Meguiar's makes a range of cleaners and polishes that work will restore the original deep glossy mirror-like finish.

4. **Piano Black Lacquer.** The Genesis speakers in high gloss piano black are traditional hand-rubbed piano lacquer finishes. Maintain these speakers as you would a high quality grand piano – Cory makes a good range of piano polishes. These wax finishes are quite soft, and a light hand is needed. Always wipe in long, straight strokes to avoid unsightly swirl marks in case your cloth is slightly abrasive.

Some of our loudspeakers feature a Corian™ platform for the midrange and tweeters. This is a grey, hard stone-like material, and should be cleaned simply with a damp cloth.

In the next issue – maintaining your speakers for years of trouble-free service.



Paste wax for automotive finishes...

plastic polish for acrylic composite...



... and piano polish for piano lacquer.

Sightings from page 1

<http://www.ultimateavmag.com/platinum/1005genesis/index.html> where it made the Platinum List for 2005. He was provided with five of them plus two G928's, an S4/8 and two S2/12t's to set up a 5.5-channel surround system.

From his comments, I think he liked them well enough and **recognized** what we set out to create – uncompromised, absolute fidelity in a smaller form factor. We did not use cheaper components on this speaker. In fact, in order to obtain the same quality sound as the G6-series, a new solid titanium cone mid-woofer was developed for it.

“Unless you mate the G7.1c with top-shelf electronics you're never going to know how good these speakers really are. Just like driving a BMW M5 at less than 75 MPH, mating the Genesis 7.1c system to only mid-level electronics is a waste.”

The latest review of the G7.1c was done by John Potis of Sixmoons.com and he says they are “quite possibly the best monitor I've ever heard”.

He also warns, “If you're considering a pair of G7.1c SEs, you had better *like* your electronics -- or be ready to replace them -- because these Genesis speakers are going to tell you exactly what they sound like.”

Since John had received the SE or Special Edition version with upgraded wiring (Cardas Cable), electronic components and hardware (such as Cardas Premium Binding Posts) he asked for a regular pair for comparison.

It's good to know that someone else besides me thinks the speakers are beautiful, “The SE version was beautiful but the Olive Burl was simply *gorgeous*.” As for the comparison, click on over to <http://www.sixmoons.com/audioreviews/genesis2/subsat.html>. It's a well-written article that also reviews the S4/8 sub-woofer.

Finishing Note

Speaking of beautiful speakers... we have a few pairs with special finishes that we are offering for sale through our dealers. They are one-of-a-kind pairs and likely never to be repeated. Here's a peek at them!



from left to right:

*Standard Finishes: Corian and Gloss Black (Special Edition), Slate Grey and Arctic Silver (Standard Automotive),
Special Finishes: Metallic Black and Gloss White, Corian and Maple, Pomele Sapele and Maple. Eucalyptus and Maple,
Standard Finishes: Olive Burl and Maple, Rosewood and Maple*

Latest on the Black CD Saga

By Gary Leonard Koh

The latest step on my 4-year long Black CD saga was a fairly natural progression. My roots are in the computer industry, and I applied a lot of that knowledge to developing the process for producing Black CDs.

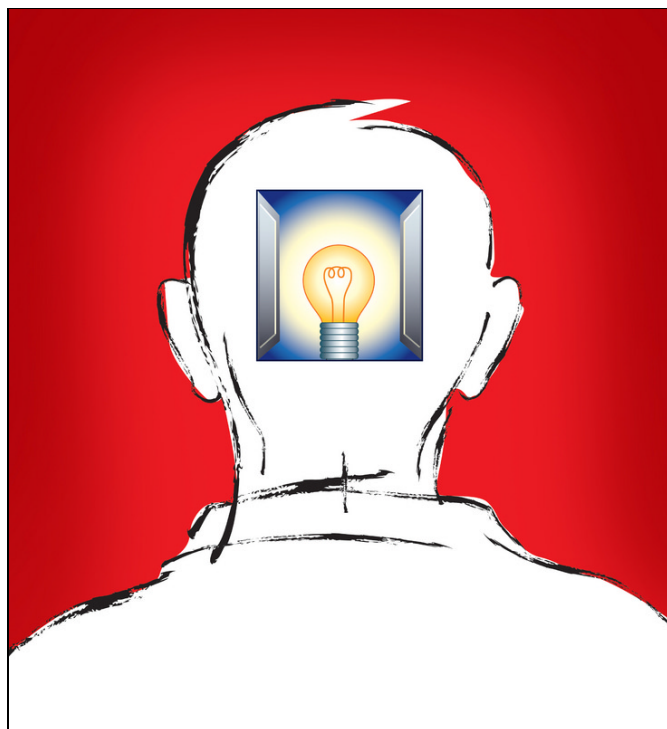
It was still quite a struggle to make CDs work properly – ExactAudioCopy (EAC) to take the best copy of the music from the CD, better burners, better CDRs, etc... Unfortunately, the good black CDRs were getting hard and harder to come by. There were still so many flaws in the process that I thought there MUST be a better way to do this.

So, here's an idea. Since the physical medium was where the problem lay, get rid of the physical CD! Play the music using the digital file that makes the CD.

In fact, this has topic has been mentioned in Stereophile as far back as 1996 during Robert Harley's review of the Genesis Digital Lens. In his opening paragraph, Mr. Harley postulated that if he played a CD on a poor quality CD transport and stored the digital audio data on a computer, and then did the same using the finest CD transport available, the two sets of data would sound the same played into a DAC. The computer would "strip" the sonic signatures of the CD transports.

The editor, John Atkinson, made a comment that he did an experiment that was very similar. Using presumably the same transport, he stored the data-streams from two different-sounding but otherwise identical CDs on a computer. When the two sets of data were played back from the hard drive, they sounded the same.

What was NOT mentioned was any comparison between the computer and the expensive transport! Did the data played back from the



hard drive sound better than from a poor quality CD transport? Given that the transport they mentioned – the Mark Levinson No. 31 – was \$8,500 new, and a computer these days will cost less than \$500 new, this was definitely something to try.

The idea of direct playback of the digital file was nothing new, but it presented a whole new set of questions to answer. How do we get the files out of the computer and into a hifi system? Are different computers going to sound as different as different CD transports? After some online research, I bought the first piece of this puzzle and assembled the first "hifi" computer-based playback system for CD's. It cost me \$30!!

The first time I hit play, WOW my jaw dropped! The improvement OVER the Black CD was on the scale of going from the old store-bought CD to the best of the Black CD.

Where did that improvement come from? We eliminated two sources of timing errors in the CD playback. Playing directly from the digital file eliminated medium- and transport-induced

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jitter and errors.

So, this was my first digital playback system:

- 1) a laptop computer hard-drive replacing the CD as the medium on which to store the digital music file; and
- 2) a Turtle Beach MicroAdvantage USB to S/PDIF optical interface replacing the CD transport.

Downstream, the system remained the same – no change in the DAC, preamp, power amp and loudspeakers. The computer replaced the Sony SCD-777ES as a transport, and the Black CD source.

I thought that the two DACs used contribute greatly to the success of what I was doing. It was obvious that the little USB dongle would not have a great precision clock. However, both the Classe DAC-1 and the Benchmark DAC1 were designed to reduce timing errors

Latest..... on Black CD burners

As promised in the last issue, I did some critical comparison between the discontinued Yamaha CRW-F1, and the Plextor PX-716UF DVDR/CDR burner... and it's better!!

The Plextor includes PlexTools Pro with Gigarec, which allows burning at 0.8x and 0.7x density. This is effectively similar to Audio Master Mode on the Yamaha. It reduces the amount of music (and data) you can put on the disc by spacing out the pits and lands, and so reduces errors and jitter.

Identical CDRs burned on the Plextor and the Yamaha show that the Plextor produces discs with less total, average and maximum C1 errors, and lower jitter. I have to strain to hear a musical difference, but I would give the sonic lead marginally to the Plextor... and it's easily available!



The Turtle Beach MicroAdvantage plugged into the USB port of a notebook computer - note the AAA battery next to it for scale!

on the input. We know that the data stream is inherently accurate. Hence, the only digital error that could affect the sound was timing. As I always say, the right note at the wrong time is the wrong note.

Given the very low cost of the Turtle Beach USB interface, I was VERY surprised by the musicality of playback when used driving both the Classe and the Benchmark. It shows that these two DACs are doing something right – isolating the incoming timing clock from the digital conversion clock.

This is still work in progress, but what it does show is that 16bit digital recording at 44.1 kHz sampling rate is way better than what we thought it could ever be.

However, what was puzzling is that while Benchmark claims that their Ultralock™ technology totally eliminates incoming-jitter induced performance problems, we can hear so much of a difference between playing a CD in a transport, and through the computer with a USB interface, there must be something more to this than just jitter..... the mystery continues. Stay tuned!

The Featured System

.... from our dealers, customers, or even ourselves

The featured system this month is the flagship system of our dealer in Colorado – **Audio Limits**; with the father and son team of Gene and Darrin O'Neill at the helm.

As their flagship system, this is a no holds barred reference built around a pair of G201's in the new acrylic composite cabinet in High Gloss Black.

1. The front-end is the new Blue Note Stibbert tube CD player. This is a fabulously analog-sounding CD player from the Italian maker of record players.
2. Reference tube amplification is provided by the Genesis M60 monoblock tube amplifier. What was funny was that the system was initially driven by a very highly regarded megabuck integrated amplifier. But it sounded sad and dead – the M60's brought the system back to life.

3. Solid state reference electronics for this system is all FM Acoustics with the FM245 preamp, and the FM611 power amp.
4. Interconnects and cables are by Pure Silver Connection. Incidentally, Audio Limits are the importers and distributors for these wonderful sounding cables in the USA.

In addition to the reference system, Audio Limits have three more Genesis demos!

The older Genesis 5.2 is matched with the Blue Note Koala CD player and Genesis I60 amplifier; a Genesis 6-series family entertainment system with SimAudio electronics; and a Genesis 7-series theater with Parasound Halo electronics. Interestingly, both theater systems also feature the Xbox 360 gaming console. Darrin tells us that playing games is “scary good” on both the G6- and G7-series based systems!

So, if you are ever in the vicinity of Colorado Springs, Audio Limits is a must-visit.





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The Final Cut

If your CD collection is full of superb recordings of mediocre music, you must check out this web site: www.pandora.com. Ever since I started “fooling” with digital playback, I have been discovering and listening to more music that I ever have. Pandora is part of the “Music Genome Project”, and they create personalized radio stations to introduce you to new music based on artists and songs that you already love. A personal DJ to help you explore your favorite part of the music universe! What could be more cool?

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