Locus Design and CryoParts Room

I really dug this room, one of the coolest in the show. All the exhibitors at GPAF were cool but not like the Cryo guys...

OK, sorry. Admitedly a weak play on words. My bad.

When I first started talking with Lee online a couple months back - see the thread here - it was like any first meeting. You don't know the person, so you're not going to be quite as open as after you've known each other a while. So here's Lee, a nice and level headed guy, but selling cryogenically treated components, wires, connectors and what not. His commments kind of reminded me of the hair club for men commercial, sort of like "Yeah, I was skeptical at first but then I tried the product and now I'm the owner." So I asked a few questions and tried hard to keep the Herbert Spencer quote in mind:

"There is a principle which is a bar against all information, which is proof against all arguments and which cannot fail to keep a man in everlasting ignorance - that principle is contempt prior to investigation."

But I've always had my sensors kind of high on the snake oil stuff. There's so much voodoo audio, you know. So when the time came to actually meet Lee at GPAF, I expected him to be wearing a stuffy labcoat with a pocket protector and holding beakers full of liquids wafting vapors out of them, something like that. I must admit to being a little apprehensive.

Now let me tell you what - I sized that up all wrong. Lee Weiland and Brian Row of Locus Design and CryoParts were a lot of fun and just about the most laid back people you could ever want to meet. And their room was absolutely cool, but now that I think about it, we've established that already.

Lee Weiland and Brian Row

They brought a ton of really great gear, but we'll get to that in a minute. I want to focus on this cryo thing for a minute more. Another assumption I had made was that they would want a ton of money for crygenically treated parts. I expected five thousand dollar flux capacitors, you know, that sort of thing.

So I asked how much to treat a power cord, and he told me "about twenty bucks." I just about fell over; Boy, was I wrong. At that price, it sure doesn't cost much to try. Then you can say you have cryogenically treated parts in your stereo and wow your friends, or freak them out, whichever the case may be.

I guess I should have taken the time to glance through the prices in the CryoParts shopping cart.

It's not that expensive to do. Most of the expensive stuff is expensive because of the cost of the item treated, not the cryo process itself. So that set my mind to rest. It isn't an expensive treatment process, not even as much as electroplating or powder coating.

Price a ceramic coating for a car part sometime; I could cryo treat my whole house wiring for what it cost to ceramic coat my exhaust headers. Twenty years ago I would have thought it crazy to put "dishware" on my exhaust manifold, but now I'll happily pay a thousand dollars for this treatment. That's another story altogether, but you see what I mean.

Beyond that, there's Locus Design, which makes accessories like record clamps and what-not. And Lee brought a ton of really great equipment too.

Dig this gear:

Eastern Electric amp and CD player with Eminent Technology LFT-16 speakers

Those little speakers were really impressive, as was the rest of the gear. I've always liked the sound of ribbon tweeters, and this system sounded great. The woofer was small, but matched well with the ribbons. Mini-monitors usually sound way too compressed for my taste, but these did not. They sounded very nice.

The turntable is hard to see in the photo, but it is a SOTA Satellite, which is a great table. This, of course, was assisted by the Locus Design damp clamp and was run through the Eastern Electric phono stage.

And look at that rack! I can't believe I just wrote that; Now I know why Lee brought it, so people would talk about his rack. That's just plain wrong. But really, the Dynamics Contrasts "Just a rack" audio rack looked great. This room looked great and sounded great too.

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