

Contents

Preface	xv
Acknowledgments	xix
CHAPTER 1 An Overview of Vacuum Tube Audio Applications	1
The Evolution of Analog Audio	1
Technology Waves	3
Tube vs. Solid State	6
Engineering Tradeoffs	7
Continuing Development of Vacuum Tubes	9
Standardization	10
Nomenclature	10
Fundamental Electrical Principles Reviewed	11
The Atom	11
Magnetic Effects	11
Conductors and Insulators	12
Direct Current (DC)	12
Alternating Current (AC)	13
Electronic Circuits	14
Static Electricity	16
Magnetism	16
Electromagnetic-Radiation Spectrum	19
Audio Spectrum	20
Decibel Measurement	21
Dimensions of Hearing	22
CHAPTER 2 Passive Circuit Components	25
Resistors	25
Wire-Wound Resistor	27
Metal Film Resistor	27
Carbon Film Resistor	28
Carbon Composition Resistor	28
Control and Limiting Resistors	28

x Contents

Resistor Networks	28
Adjustable Resistors	28
Attenuators	29
Capacitors	30
Polarized Capacitors	31
Nonpolarized Capacitors	32
Polarized Capacitor Types and Construction	33
Identification	35
Inductors and Transformers	36
Losses in Inductors and Transformers	37
Air-Core Inductors	38
Ferromagnetic Cores	38
Shielding	40
Diodes and Rectifiers	40
The pn Junction	40
Zener Diodes and Reverse Breakdown	41
Varistor	41
Indicators	42
Electrical Conductors	43
Effects of Inductance	44
Skin Effect	44
Coaxial Cable	44
Cables for Audio Applications	47
CHAPTER 3 Vacuum Tube Principles	49
Characteristics of Electrons	49
Electron Optics	50
Magnetic Field Effects	51
Thermal Emission from Metals	52
Secondary Emission	53
Types of Vacuum Tubes	54
Diode	55
Triode	57
Tetrode	62
Pentode	65
Beam Power Tube	66
Vacuum Tube Structure	71
Vacuum Tube Design	71
Tube Elements	72
High-Frequency Operating Limits	74
Tube Assembly	74
Neutralization	75
Electron Tube Characteristics	77
Interpretation of Tube Data	80
Tube Pinout	81

CHAPTER 4 Vacuum Tube Circuits	83
Amplifier Types	83
Operating Class	84
Class A Voltage Amplifier	85
Class A Power Amplifier	88
Class AB Power Amplifier	90
Class B Power Amplifier	91
Cathode-Drive Circuits	91
Phase Inverter	93
Inverse Feedback	94
Corrective Filter	97
Tone Control	98
Volume Control	100
Noise in Electronic Devices	101
Thermal Noise	103
Hum	103
Microphonics	104
Shielding	104
High-Voltage Power Supplies	104
Silicon Rectifier	105
Rectifier Tube	105
Power Supply Filter Circuits	108
Grid Voltage	111
Screen Voltage Supply	112
Supply Decoupling	113
Protection Measures	113
CHAPTER 5 Interconnection, Layout, and Operating Environment	115
Wiring Practices	115
Types of Noise	116
Interfaces	116
Physical Layout Considerations	119
Hand-Wired or PWB?	120
Chassis	124
Thermal Properties	124
Reliability Considerations	127
Failure Mechanisms	127
Failure Modes	128
Vacuum Tube Life	129
Fault Protection	130
Thermal Cycling	130
Shipping and Storing Vacuum Tubes	130
CHAPTER 6 Construction Project Considerations	131
Planning the Project	131
Finding the Necessary Parts	132

xii Contents

Sheet Metal Work	133
Printed Wiring Boards	137
Tools	139
Soldering	141
Contact Cleaner/Lubricants	143
Test Equipment and Troubleshooting	147
Digital Multimeter	147
Signal Generator	150
Frequency Counter	150
Signal Tracer	151
Distortion Analyzer	151
Oscilloscope	153
Tube Tester	155
Power Supplies	156
Troubleshooting Guidelines	156
Safety Considerations	157
Electric Shock	157
First Aid Procedures	160
Protective Eyewear	161
Parts List	161
CHAPTER 7 Tube Characteristics	165
5BC3A	165
6EU7	166
6U8A	168
6X4	171
5651A	172
5751	174
5879	175
6080	177
6973	178
7025 (12AX7)	181
7199	182
7868	184
Application Considerations	187
CHAPTER 8 Project 1: Power Supply	189
Circuit Description	189
Parts List	193
Construction Considerations	195
DC Return Path Issue	198
R9 Voltage Adjust Issue	198
Initial Checkout	199
Measured Performance	201
Final Power Supply Design	202
PWB Design	208

CHAPTER 9 Project 2: Audio Preamplifiers	213
Phonograph Preamp	213
Parts List	214
Microphone Preamp	216
Parts List	216
Tone Control Amplifier	217
Parts List	218
Buffer Amplifier	218
Parts List	220
Construction Considerations	221
Initial Checkout	223
Measured Performance	226
RIAA Equalization	229
Final Preamplifier Design	231
PWB Design	235
CHAPTER 10 Project 3: 15 W Audio Power Amplifier	239
Circuit Description	239
Parts List	241
Construction Considerations	244
Initial Checkout	247
Measured Performance	250
Final Power Amplifier Design	256
PWB Design	261
CHAPTER 11 Project 4: 30 W Audio Power Amplifier	265
Circuit Description	265
Parts List	267
Construction Considerations	269
Initial Checkout	271
Measured Performance	274
Circuit Assessment	277
Final Power Amplifier Design	280
PWB Design	283
CHAPTER 12 Putting It All Together	287
The Big Picture	287
Stereo Preamplifier	288
Measured Performance	296
25 W Stereo Amplifier	299
Measured Performance	304
50 W Stereo Power Amplifier	311
Measured Performance	317
About the Specifications	324
Connections	325
Speakers	327

xiv Contents

Duty Cycle	327
Build or Rebuild?	328
CHAPTER 13 Final Thoughts	329
APPENDIX Notes and References	333
Chapter 1	333
Chapter 2	334
Chapter 3	334
Chapter 4	335
Chapter 5	336
Chapter 6	336
Chapter 7	337
Chapter 8	337
Chapter 9	338
Chapter 10	338
Chapter 11	338
Chapter 12	338
Index	339