



**SLA - 50**

**OPERATING MANUAL**

**NOTE:**

Before installing your new SLA -50, please read this manual carefully as it will inform you of the SLA - 50's specifications, proper installation procedures and operation procedures. Also included in this manual are guidelines on how to properly service and care for your new SLA - 50.

## SLA - 50

### STEREO AMPLIFIER

Congratulations! You have purchased one of the most exotic stereo audio amplifiers available. Within its power range, the SLA - 50 displays the operating characteristics of a true "high-end" amplifier. Careful design, parts selection and proper circuit topologies contribute to incredible reliability and enjoyment.

For the technically minded, a review of the circuit is in order. Your new SLA - 50 operates in a class A mode utilizing (auto bias) cathode self-biasing on the EL-34 (6CA7) output tubes. The EL-34 output tubes are operating in a push-pull configuration utilizing the simple but effective system of a penthode screen DC voltage circuit. This conventional penthode output configuration provides greater sensitivity, extremely low distortion and improved transient response. The output transformers in your SLA-50 is the most important component in the amplifier and has been specifically designed by Cary Audio for use in the SLA-50. Negative feedback is derived from a separate winding on the output transformer. This feedback winding and circuitry is used to reduce the noise floor and improve the speaker damping characteristics. Only 4 dB of feedback is utilized. The phase inverter is a self-balancing split load configuration utilizing the 6SN7 octal base dual triode. The preamplifier circuit is a resistive coupled class A triode voltage amplification stage. The power supply in the SLA-50 features a 200% duty cycle EI laminate power transformer. The high voltage section features full wave vacuum tube (CV-729/5U4) rectification (not cheap voltage doublers used in many amplifiers) to a PI-L capacitive network. To avoid AC hum, the input 12AU7 tubes and the 6SN7 phase inverter have DC filament voltage. This will prevent AC ripple in the gain stages. The input signal from the volume control is direct coupled (DC) to the first grid of the 12AU7. There are no coupling capacitors in line with the input signal on the SLA-50.

A great deal of attention during design of your new SLA-50 was concentrated on the "overload recovery" ability of the amplifier. The ability of an amplifier to instantly recover from clipping is much more important than is commonly believed. In the power war of amplifier manufactures the mentality is focused on high and then even higher power output to solve the clipping problem.

When in reality the most critical aspect is how fast a recovery an amplifier can achieve after overload. With the incredible dynamic range of live and in turn recorded music even 2000 watts of power is not enough power. Most of the music being listened to in an average listening room is only requiring about 3 watts of power. It is on the transients of loud low frequency program material that tremendous signal voltages will appear at the input of the amplifier. It is in this situation that the overload recovery ability of an amplifier is of critical concern. The SLA-50 will overload symmetrically at any frequency in the audio band-pass. The SLA-50 will also yield faithful reproduction of extremely low frequencies at full output levels. Power transformer, power supply regulation and output transformer design and careful shaping of the overall frequency response curve all play a very important part in the ability of the SLA-50 to recover quickly when overloaded. The high voltage rail will fluctuate no more than a volt between soft and loud passages.

Another technical feature of your new SLA-50, aside from how compact and gorgeous it looks, is the delightful, sensual beauty of the music it recreates. The first thing that will strike you about your new SLA-50 amplifier is the incredible transparency and resolution of detail in the music. The SLA-50's sensual nature is best revealed in the sense of life it displays in female vocalists.

Your new Cary SLA - 50 presents music with such presence and directness, you'll be drawn into the music hour after musically satisfying hour. This is the result of circuit techniques, which eliminate any discernible crossover notch at low levels, and also contributes to the freedom from listening fatigue. The SLA-50 will draw you in even further as you realize how lucid and utterly uncolored neutrality reveals delicate nuances in the sound stage.

Enjoy the music and of course please read this complete manual for a complete understanding of trouble free operation.

## SPECIFICATIONS

Operating the SLA - 50 stereo amplifier is a simple procedure, since each unit is designed for long term stability in virtually any home operating situation. Therefore, if the unit is operated outside the parameters outlined in this owner's manual, damage may result. Please read this manual carefully before putting your new Cary Audio Design SLA - 50 in operation. The following definitions are applicable to this manual. These definitions must be followed explicitly.

**WARNING**  
**HAZARD PRESENTS PERSONAL INJURY OR DEATH**

**Caution**  
EQUIPMENT DAMAGE MAY OCCUR BUT NOT PERSONAL INJURY

**Note**  
Proper performance of the amplifier cannot be ensured  
if disregarded

### **1.2 Specifications**

The following section describes the SLA - 50 basic specifications. Specs are subject to change without notice or obligation.

DIMENSIONS: 7"H x 17"W x 16"D

WEIGHT: 42 lb..

CIRCUIT TYPE: Push-Pull Ultralinear Amplification in Pure Class A

POWER OUTPUT: 30 Watts

INPUT SENSITIVITY: .45 volts for full output

INPUT IMPEDANCE: 100,000 ohms

NOISE AND HUM: 82db below rated output

FREQUENCY RESPONSE (at full power output): 19Hz to 23Khz +/- .5db

TUBES: 2- 12AU7 Input Buffer Preamp  
2- 6SN7 Pre-Driver/Phase Inverter  
4- E34L Output tubes  
2- CV729/SU4 Rectifiers

POWER TRANSFORMERS: 1- EI laminated, 200% duty cycle

OUTPUT TRANSFORMERS: 2-EI laminated, Silicon Impregnated

RESISTORS: 1% metal film

CAPACITORS: polypropylene

POWER SUPPLY CAPACITORS: 2 - 1200 MFD @ 450 volts  
6 - 10 MFD @ 450 volts film & foil

AC CORD: 3 conductor shielded detachable

AC POWER REQUIREMENTS: 117/234 volts AC 50/60Hz

POWER CONSUMPTION: 166 watts operate  
83 watts in stand-by

WARM-UP TIME: 3 minutes

BREAK-IN PERIOD: 100 hours of music playing time

FINISH: Chrome plated Stainless Steel Chassis

FRONT PANEL: Machined, Black Anodized aluminum

### **1.3 Front Panel Features**

**OFF/ON SWITCH:** Rotary switch turns on AC mains.

**STANDBY/OPERATE SWITCH:** Rotary switch turns high voltage on in "operate" position.

**LED:** Indicates high voltage on.

## 1.4 Rear Apron Features

**INPUTS:** Signal input connection via shielded interconnect cable.

**SPEAKER OUTPUT:** 5-way binding posts provide the output to the speaker system. Red = +, Black = -

**AC:** 3- conductor shielded power detachable cord to AC power mains.

**CAUTION**  
EQUIPMENT DAMAGE MAY OCCUR WITH IMPROPER FUSES

**AC FUSE:** This is an overcurrent protection fuse for the SLA-50.  
Never replace with any other fuse than 3 AMP SLOW BLOW!  
250 VOLT! (2 AMP SLOW BLOW ON 220 VAC OPERATION)

**TUBE FUSE:** This is a protection fuse for the output tubes. Never replace with any other fuse than a .5 amp fast blow! 250 volt.

**CAUTION**  
NEVER REMOVE / INSERT AC LINE CORD WHEN THE UNIT IS ON

## INSTALLATION

This section describes the unpacking and installation procedures for the SLA-50 amplifier.

**WARNING**  
**MAKE NO ATTEMPT TO PUT THE SLA - 50 AMPLIFIER IN**  
**SERVICE WITHOUT THE BOTTOM PLATE ATTACHED - CONTACT WITH**  
**VOLTAGE**  
**IN THE SLA - 50 CAN BE FATAL!!!!**

## 2.1 Unpacking

All shipping containers have been specifically designed to protect their contents and special care has been taken to prevent damage under normal shipping conditions. Mishandling should be evident upon inspection of the shipping container. If damage is found after visual inspection, take care not to destroy the evidence. If necessary, document the damage with photographs and contact the transport carrier immediately.

Carefully remove your new SLA - 50 stereo amplifier from its packing carton, and examine it closely for signs of shipping damage. It is recommended to save all original packing cartons to protect your amplifier from damage should you wish to store it or ship it for after-sales service.

## 2.2 Warranty Card

Fill out the enclosed warranty registration card and return it to Cary Audio Design, Inc. within 10 days of original purchase. Keep your original sales slip with the packing cartons should you ever need it for reference. **Failure to register warranty will limit the warranty to one year.**

## 2.3 Amplifier Placement

In general, the location of your new SLA - 50 is not critical. Certain precautions must be taken to ensure optimum performance. Avoid extremely hot locations such as near radiators or other heating units. Keep the top of the SLA - 50 clear of books, paper or other equipment to protect against overheating!! DO NOT place your SLA - 50 in a closed book case - overheating will damage the amplifier! Allow 8 to 10 inches above the unit for proper ventilation.

## 2.4 Power Requirements

The SLA - 50 is designed to operate from house current mains. The design voltage is 117 VAC at 50/60Hz. (Foreign units 234 VAC at 50/60Hz.)

## 2.5 Cables

The speaker cables from the output posts of the SLA - 50 to the speaker system can be any convenient length your set-up requires. Select speaker cables of sufficient size to preserve the outstanding performance capabilities of your SLA - 50. Heavy gauge #16 wire is suitable for distances up to 10 feet; #12 for 25 feet. Most audio dealers will have proper speaker cable in stock for this purpose.

## **OPERATION**

Signal input connection is made via the input jacks on the rear of the SLA - 50 located on the rear panel. The interconnect cables from the output of the pre-amplifier can be any convenient length your set-up requires. The choice of a high quality interconnect cable is important. Once again, your audio dealer will have the proper cables in stock for this purpose.

### **3.1 Operation**

Your new SLA - 50 is ready for operation after the speaker and interconnect cables have been installed.

### **3.2 Power Switch**

Simply turn the rotary switch to the "on" position. Observe that all 10 tubes are lit (filaments). Waiting 1 to 2 minutes before switching to "operate" is not absolutely necessary, but warming up the filaments before applying high voltage will extend the life of your tubes.

### **3.3 Stand By/Operate Switch**

This is a most convenient feature on the SLA - 50 amplifier. In the "operate" position, the amplifier is ready to operate. In the "stand by" position, only the tube filaments are operating. You may wish to leave your SLA - 50 amp turned on in the "stand by" mode 24 hours a day. When you wish to listen to music simply turn the stand by switch to the operate position. Under these conditions the SLA - 50 is always warmed up and ready for peak performance.



### **3.4 Break-In Period**

The tubes, capacitors and output transformers take approximately 100 hours of music playing to fully settle in for peak performance. The SLA - 50 will seem sterile or thin sounding right out of the box. After the first couple of hours you will notice increased depth and tighter bass. This break-in period defies all engineering theory, but is true with most audio amplifiers.

**WARNING**  
**MAKE SURE AMPLIFIER IS UNPLUGGED FROM AC MAINS BEFORE**  
**SERVICING**

### **SERVICE AND CARE**

#### **4.1 SLA - 50 Care and Cleaning**

The case and front of the SLA - 50 may be cleaned with a soft cloth and Windex or a window cleaner. The frequency of cleaning will be governed by how many hours the SLA - 50 is operated and by operating environment cleanliness. A very mild chrome polish may be used on the chrome chassis to remove what the window cleaner does not. **CAUTION!** Gently apply the polish to the chrome, otherwise you may scratch the chassis.

#### **4.2 Tube Replacement**

If it becomes necessary to replace the tubes in the SLI -50 amplifier, a matched quartet set of output tubes of the same brand should be used. A new tube kit is available from Cary Audio Design, Inc. You should get a few years or more from the output tubes with everyday usage and many, many years of use from the 12AU7 & 6SN7 input tubes.

#### **4.3 FACTORY SERVICE**

Careful consideration has been given to the design of your SLA - 50 amplifier to keep maintenance problems to a minimum. However, it is possible that some problems may arise which cannot be cured by tube substitution. At this point we suggest you contact our Customer Service Department phone number (919)481-4494 to describe your problem in detail. **DO NOT** return the SLA - 50 to the factory without a return authorization number from the Customer Service Department.

Cary Audio Design, Inc. will assume no responsibility if the transportation company refuses to pay a damage claim due to your improper packing or lack of insurance should the unit be lost or damaged in shipment.

#### **WARNINGS**

**MAKE NO ATTEMPT TO PUT THE SLA - 50 IN SERVICE WITH THE BOTTOM PLATE REMOVED. CONTACT WITH HIGH VOLTAGES FOUND IN THE UNIT CAN BE FATAL!! COMPLETELY REMOVE AC POWER PLUG FROM THE WALL AND ALLOW 30 MINUTES FOR THE HIGH VOLTAGE CAPACITORS TO DISCHARGE THROUGH BLEEDER RESISTORS BEFORE ATTEMPTING TO CHANGE TUBES OR CLEAN THE INSIDE OF THE AMPLIFIER**

#### **CAUTIONS**

**NEVER REMOVE / INSERT AC PLUG WHEN THE UNIT IS ON OR THE AC POWER SWITCH IS IN THE ON POSITION. OBSTRUCTION OF THE TOP PORTION OF THE SLA - 50 WILL RESULT IN TUBES OVERHEATING AND DAMAGE TO THE AMPLIFIER.**

**!!OBSERVE DIRECTIONS IN THIS MANUAL!!**

## SLA - 50 TROUBLESHOOTING GUIDE

SYMPTOM	CAUSE	REMEDY
Hum or "Buzzing" through speakers	-Ground Loop	-Install 2-pin adaptor on A.C. cord to float the ground.
	-Intermittant or poor connection of interconnect ground	-Replace interconnect.
"Popping or Spitting" noise through the speaker	-Noisy tube	-If noise is in one channel, swap one section of tubes at a time until the noise swaps channels. Replace noisy tube.
		-Check bias of output tubes. If high or fluctuating rapidly, replace output tube. (See bias instruction sheet)
AC fuse blows	-Line voltage surge	-Replace fuse.
	-CV729 shorted.	-Replace CV729
Tube fuse blows	-Shorted EL34	-Replace tube.

