Brines Acoustics Room

If you've never heard a single driver speaker, then this room would have spoiled you. If you have, then this room might have surprised you. Single driver speakers have often been touted for their coherence and imaging. But the tradeoff usually means limited bass and reduced volume, sometimes some coloration.

Brines' speakers don't have these tradeoffs. You get the single driver magic and the bass. Even from Lowthers. That's right, I said Lowthers. I'm the guy across the atrium running the huge 15" 600 watt woofers in horns and I'm telling you these speakers made some serious bass.

Brines FB-16, FT-1600 and LT-2000 loudspeakers
FT-1600
FB-16
LT-2000Deep bass wasn't the only thing that impressed me about these speakers. The overall presentation was good, and tonal balance was right. Bob Brines choses components that have controlled cones so midrange is nice and treble is extended without being shrill. He also uses a compensation network to ensure that the response is just right.

Bob Brines

In the photo below, you see Bob Brines' SP-10 subwoofer, which uses a Peerless 850146 in a 2.0ft3 cabinet tuned to 30Hz. It sounds good with the small FB-16 speakers, but isn't required with the larger ones. They go to 40Hz. On the other hand, crossing over to the mains at 100Hz reduces IMD by reducing bandwidth, so it is an option to consider with any of the models. But the bottom line is that the larger speakers don't need a sub.

Jim Rivers showing his appreciation of Brines' speakers

You'll notice that Bob brought a portable CD player and a Tripath amp, both sitting on top of the sub in the picture above. These are small enough to carry in your shirt pocket, and make plenty of sound. But Bob also connected three nice tube amps, just so we could all hear several system combinations.

The AudioTropic Musical Machine, Nelson Audio Image SE8 and Heart Audio Stoetkit Jr. MkII were played in the Brines room at one point or another. The Musical Machine sounded very nice, and is really a great match for single driver speakers. It's a beautiful amp with lovely sound, but it didn't have quite the power output Bob wanted. I suspect the Walkman didn't drive it to its full level. The Image SE8 is a wonderful little amp, but it didn't do it for Bob, so it was used elsewhere. But the Stoetkit struck a chord.

Heart Stoetkit Jr. MkII sitting on Brines SP-10 sub

Bob seemed to like the Stoetkit, and I understand because I was smitten by that little amp too. Frank Stuppel provided those to AudioRoundTable.com participants as a group buy last summer, and I fell in love with it right away. You can find more information about the Stoetkit in the FSAudio forum. Here's a closeup view:

Heart Audio Stoetkit Jr. MkII

So there were lots of things to see and hear in the Brines Acoustics room. If you're interested in single driver speakers and you didn't get a chance to hear them, make every effort to audition a pair sometime.