
Subject: Line Array versus Point Source Kits

Posted by [FredT](#) on Fri, 30 Jun 2006 18:34:23 GMT

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Manualblock asked me this question on another forum, but I decided to answer it here because the topic is line arrays:Q. In simple terms the Selah that you like and use as your reference are 4K\$ in kit form. To a guy looking to spend 4K\$; there are vast possibilities of some great speakers. The comparisons you made were with much less expensive offerings. Out of curiosity I just wondered whether you had any thoughts about comparing examples of kits in that same price range and how they stacked up in terms of sound quality. I like the array presentation; but in the 4K\$ range it would be a difficult decision for me. I wondered how you felt about that.A. You pay a substantial premium for a line array because the number of drivers is a large multiple of the number in a comparable quality two or three way point source speaker. Here's an example of two speakers that use the same quality drivers: The \$515 Selah Audio SA-1, a two-way using the Viva XT woofer and a Fountek ribbon tweeter, versus the \$3,650 XT-8, using eight Vifa XT woofers and eight Fountek ribbon tweeters (the XT-8 uses the larger \$118 tweeter versus the smaller \$88 tweeter used in the SA-1, but they're the same quality). I was willing to pay the line array premium because I like the sound and sensitivity of line arrays and happen to have an understanding and indulgent wife. Johnathan Valine described another array, the Epiphany 12/12 in TAS this way: "At their best, the Epiphanies make most other speakers sound the way the world looks through one eye---relatively flat and dimensionless. They are the aural equivalents of binocular vision". I agree - line arrays are in a different league from point source speakers.Your question asked about my impressions of point source speakers kits in the same price range as the XT-8. I can't respond because I don't know of any three- or even four-way point source kits in that price range. If, like most people, I had a smaller budget for buying a speaker kit, I could have gotten a world class quality speaker for quite a bit less. For example, the \$2,450 Selah RC-4 four-way uses some of the best drivers available (Seas Excel) woofers and midrange plus your choice of a Fountek ribbon or a Hyquphon dome tweeter) and includes an integral powered subwoofer. It's comparable to the \$20K Joseph Audio Pearl, except the Pearl doesn't include a powered sub. The bottom line is if you buy a kit, line array or point source, and build the enclosures yourself you get a speaker for a small fraction of the equivalent cost of a brand name mainstream retail speaker. Even if you buy the non mainstream speaker completely assembled, finished, and shipped to your door you still pay less than half of the equivalent mainstream speaker.I used Selah Audio examples because that's what I have and am most familiar with, but there are several other manufacturers of kits who offer comparable value for the money. For example, GR Research plans to introduce a nine woofer seven foot line array kit that will sell in the low \$2K's. This speaker will also be offered by AV123 completed for \$4K. WOW! RAW Acoustics, Pi Speakers, plus some others I'm not familiar with also offer very good value in their kits.Here are some links:<http://www.selahaudio.com/http://www.gr-research.com/http://www.rawacoustics.com/http://www.pispeakers.com/>
