Subject: As the Elder Statesman of the group, it 'hooves me on this 'spicious 'casion..
Posted by BillEpstein on Mon, 29 Jul 2002 23:06:48 GMT
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to relate that I have owned, in chronological order, KLH 17's, ADS whatsis's, Bose 901's, YES, Bose 901's, Rogers Ls5a's, the very first mini-monitors, those shiny black things, Paladins???, Acoustat 1+1's, NHT 2's, Meadowlark Kestrels and now Theatre 4 Pi's.The KLH and ADS were in a dorm and a cottage and I was in a hallucigenic state so they don't count. But the Firesign Theatre sounded really good. With marriage and respectability the Bose graced the L.R. Say what you want, when I auditioned them against the newly arrived Floyd O'Toole speakers from Canada using the voice of Joan Sutherland as a measure, they sounded more musical. The Rogers were on loan and a fad. Like looking down E.Schwarzkopf's throat. The shiny black jobs were also on loan and were the first speaks where image came into play. But nothing below 80 Hz. The Acoustats were the first I truly loved and paired with similar quality components (analog). Flat but accurate side to side image, tonal purity and razor sharp attacks and transients. Delicate when necessary, brassy too. The post divorce NHT's were ultra sonic nightmares! The Kestrels seemed to combine the best qualities of everything, strong bass, really great Schwarzkopf and Sutherland mid-range, delicate highs, probably the very best John Williams guitar speaker ever. Yeah, this is long but on point. keep reading!My musical perspective is conditioned by sitting in the back row of many orchestras and bands from grade school thru Interlochen to major university, pit orchestras, big band "combo-orks" etc etc. I've been conducted by and accompanied with Glenn Gould, Frederick Fennell,William Krafft, Eunice Podis, and Van Cliburn. Oh yeah, I was sawing away on a Trombone. Studied with a Cleveland orchestra member and attended countless Thurs dress rehearsals. So Classical is my bag and I like to be immersed in the music. I also want to hear it if the percussionist forgets to release the snares on the field drum and the entrance of the Tuba excites them. I know what "distortion" occurs when a soprano or tenor overloads a hall and I want to hear that. There has to be instant recognition of Oboe from English Horn from Bassoon, not always easy. Kestrel sucked at that. So did the Bose. So all the dynamic speakers with the exception of the Rogers and NHT's rolled off the details and they were wierd. The Acoustats were magical but had little weight (Dynamics and bass). You think the Kestrels are better than they are but they're not. Although good.Now we listen to the Pi's for the first time. First, the faults: the upper reaches of the Delta woofer from 800 to 1600 Hz where the woodwinds and brass live don't have the resolving power to be dead on the timbre and tone of the instrument. But close. That's why I'll ultimately be building Pro's. Now the strengths: The most amazing you-are-there presentation of every recording venue from nightclubs to Severance Hall to the Plains above the Hudson River (Mercury 1812, bigod!). Weight you can wear about your shoulders and feel in your knees. Listen to the trombone fugue in the third movement of Brahm's First Symphony, it's so right. Or the entrance of the tutti brass in the later part of P.I.'s "Romeo and Juliet". Or the bass drum in the last movement of Part's Third symphony. Growling string bass or fender bass. It's all there. Ohmigod imaging with the speakers in the corner of the room where audiophools say they don't belong. Tympani out in the driveway. And female voices whether Emma Kirkby or Joni Mitchell or Sinead O'Connor, wow! Chestiness, horn shout? WTF? it isn't there.I was at the Horn Fest and heard the Valencias, nice, the Magnetar set-up, the Classic T-1 and 3, loved the T-1 and of course, Bruce Edgars salad bowls. Magnetar couldn't stay in his chair for a minute without tweaking something so I left and Dr. Bruce was playing scratchy 78's and I left. I came home that night, schlepped the Pi's inside, hooked'em up and the music was back. And they cost under a grand built, under $600 if you DIY. What was the question again?