Subject: Re: audio crafters guild at RMAF
Posted by Greggo on Tue, 31 Oct 2006 01:14:57 GMT
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I had not heard of them before walking in the room RMAF, they were working with Facet Audio Labs. Audio Crafters Guild was showing the new 1000 series electronics which consisted of a pre, stereo power, and monoblocks (the latter not hooked up), along with a mention that a direct/integrated amp was on the way. I have checked their website and found no mention of what I saw/heard at RMAF for some strange reason.Anyways, I thought these guys were making very good sound together. It is always hard to tell with just one system and variables to move in and out of, but I really got the sense that their was some good synergy in the way the Facet Audio Labs Banshee speakers ($4600/pr) were designed/voiced and the way the Audio Crafters Guild amps were voiced (of course, they may not appreciate the term "voiced", but lets just say everything has a personality, intended or not...). The former were all focal drivers (tweet and dual 6.5 midbass in a straight 2-way config) and a large 4" flared reflex port, the latter included an additional chassis that was the "energy pack" that adds, among other things perhaps, a bank of capacitors to improve the reserve energy potential of the amplification system, supposedly to improve dynamic range and other things... I say supposedly not because I have any doubts about the technology/application but only because I am no electronics expert. I am confident in my ears however, and I would put their room in my top ten list. The overall sound first struck me as very articulate and perhaps a bit on the lean side, but things were very smooth and very clean sounding, and even though the tonal balance seemed a bit lean to me, there was still some richness to be found in the lower octaves and the system threw a very nice soundstage.I can't remember the guys name from Audio Crafters Guild, but both he and the gentlement from Facet Audio Labs struck me as decent guys and displayed a bit of modesty while still providing what seemed to me like very straight talk about why they designed their products and what they thought their strengths were. The Stereo amp I heard, and I believe all other power amps in the 1000 series line, are based on the ICE power modules, with re-worked power supplies and some other unique mods. I would certainly like to hear more about there design and have another chance to listen to them again some day soon.Hard to say which components of this system were doing things in a way that really appealed to me, but I think it is safe to say that everything had to be at least very competent or better for the overall system to have such a musical voice. I like the build quality on the Audio Crafters Guild stuff very much, and liked the styling as much of the sound. Everything seemed to range from 995 to 1995 and I thought that, especially in that price range, that these electronics deserve thorough consideration by any serious shopper. Nothing really jumped out at me in this room, and the speakers were spread out much further than other rooms, across a vertical plane that couldn't have been much more than 6 feet back from the vertical plane formed by the single row of listening chairs. I would guess that the speakers were about 12 feet appart. Very much reminded me of the way many AudioPhysic dealers like to demo their speakers (I own AudioPhysic Tempo IIs that I bought back in 1999 and drive with class A solid state). I thought the system bested my own on most points and would gladly take the whole package if I was ready to upgrade. Of course, there were a handfull of other contenders at those price points that I would investigate further before pulling the trigger, but I would definitely call both the amps and the speakers solid contenders.Regards,Greg Jensen