Subject: Studio Series 2Pi Comparison(long)
Posted by wasteh202 on Sun, 02 Feb 2003 16:58:39 GMT
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Well, I finally got around to doing some A/B comparison of the 2Pi Towers. I don't have alot of good speakers to campare them too. Some cheaper Boston Acoustics, Michaura and some JBL. Given the price of the 2Pi Towers compared to these others the 2Pi's should have won ealsiy as I use the purchase price of the Pi's when comparing speakers as I feel it is only fair to compare DIY to DIY and purchase price to purchase price. so I figure the 2Pi Towers to cost about $900.00 shipped. The compasison I ended up for the real A/B was the Magnepan MMG.For those who are not familiar with the MMG's, they are the entry level speaker in the Magnepan line(as the Studio Series is the entry level in the Pi line) and cost $550.00 shipped(I paid $500.00 a few years ago). The MMG's are a planar speaker, and have a sensitiviey of 86db into 4ohms(and is in fact a 4ohm load which if I am correct translates into 83db into 8ohms). The low end rolls of at about 50hz. I did not use a subwoffer at all for either speaker. Which really speaks well for the MMG's as they are not rated as low on the frequency scale as the 2Pi's. The only real test for the 2Pi Towers as they easily blew away these cheaper speakers was the MMG. This comparison was not a easy comparison to make as the MMG's are a planar speaker where they Pi's are not. Another thing is the sensitivity of the two are so so different, and finally the type of amp(SS vrs. tube) used for this test probably made a big difference in the results. I will try not make this long. I believe the fact that a SS amp was used in the comparison I believe favored the Magnepans and unfortunatly I do not have a good stereo tube amp(yet). I will start out by saying that I really wanted the 2Pi Towers the win this comparison and believed that they would, but they did not.The MMG's won the contest hands down at all sound levels except below 72db where the dynamics of the 2Pi's gave them the edge and above 95db where my SS amp began to strain to drive the MMG's(as my SS amp is not even adaquate to drive the MMG's to thier potential). Even above 95db I prefered the MMG's due to the fact that the 2Pi Towers were just not as listenable(and were actually more harsh) at that sound pressure level even though the distortion in the MMG's(actually the distortion was from the amp) above 95db was becoming obvious.I used a Sansui 9090DB rated conservativly at 125 wpc into 8ohms(not rated into 4ohms but lets assume . I also used two preamps to do the comparison. Doing this had pluses and minuses. The plus was that it allowed me to do imidiate switching between the two speaker models and compare the two side by side. The minus was that it in doing this different DAC's were involved and probably effected the results of the sound due to the different nature of the specific DAC's.To keep this from getting any long, I will just say that the MMG's are much more listenable and I will even say that in my opinion the MMG's are more musical. I will also say that I believe that the 2Pi Towers stand a good chance to win the same contest with a good stereo tube amp and I know that many Pi listeners do use tube amps and will not listen to SS given a choice.I know that this speaker comparison was not a good one in that with these two types I was doing a bit of a apples to oranges comparison and I would not except that I believe that these two speakers represent some of the best values in low end speakers and there seems to be quite and inteset in both lines and both models.Given the fact that the 2Pi Towers can be build DIY for about two to three hundred buck makes them very desirable for many and with the MMG's due to the fact that they can be delevered to your door for a price of $550.00 makes them desirable as well. The MMG's require good amplification where the 2Pi Towers do not will give the Pi speakers and edge for some while those that already own nice tube amps make them desirable for others.The 2Pi is a great speaker for the money and I am still amazed at the quality and quantity of bass that these speakers put out, and also by the sensitivity and revealing manor that the music is reproduced. The 2Pi are a GREAT speaker and I

am NOT putting the down in this A/B comparsion, they just got outclassed in my opinion by the MMG's(which are not for everyone)BTW- one other thing to note here about the Magnepan MMG. This speaker is sold very cheap by the manufacture in hope of hooking the listener on the planar sound and then hoping that the listener/customer will upgrade to the more expensive models, I believe that the speaker is subsidised by the more expensive models and Magnepan probably makes little to nothing on the MMG.