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Subject: Re: Studio Series 2Pi Comparison(long)

Posted by [Mike Borzcik](#) on Mon, 03 Feb 2003 01:06:54 GMT

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I used Magnepan MMG's before I built my Thermionic Series 4 Pi's. Even before I built the new speakers I had kind of a love-hate relationship with the "planar sound". I loved their ability to completely disappear--I could put my ear literally 6 inches from the tweeter ribbon and it would still sound as if the music were coming from 10 feet behind the speaker. And they were very detailed and smooth, too. The thing I didn't like was that they just didn't seem to have the dynamics to make music sound real. They could go plenty loud, even with my triode-modified Jolida 302a tube amp, but even at high volumes they seemed lacking. I even tried them with some higher-powered solid state amps, and they still didn't do it for me. When I built the 4 Pi's I was relieved to find that I wasn't giving up many of the things I liked about the MMG's. The detail is there, and the imaging is about the same too. They don't do quite the disappearing act that the MMG's do--some sounds that are panned all the way to the left or right seem to be coming directly out of the horn, but even that depends on the listening room, the recording, and the equipment I'm using with them. What I gained was dynamics. I don't even have to crank them up loud in order to get a nice, full, realistic sound. The Pi's let me listen to the music instead of a couple neat tricks that my speakers can do. Listening to the 4 Pi's is overall just a more satisfying experience. These speakers are at completely opposite ends of the spectrum in terms of their goals and their characteristics, and I must say that I still like them both. But if I had to choose only one pair to keep, I'd keep the Pi's.

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