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Subject: "A Taste of Tubes"

Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Tue, 19 Oct 2004 04:16:06 GMT

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I understand your reservations. Semiconductors do have a lot of advantages, including reliability, longevity, size and power. On the other hand, there are some applications where tubes are more robust, so they aren't always made obsolete by solid state devices. Many people prefer tubes for audio circuits. Guitarists have long championed tube amps and shunned transistors. I can remember thinking they were crazy when I was young. I thought they were simply contrarians, just enjoying being rebels. But it seems like the very high end audiophiles have embraced vacuum tubes again, and the guys that hung on for so long can say "I told you so." I must tell you that I've heard some really nice tube amps. Like Manualblock said, it's like trying to describe the taste of chocolate. One thing to consider while you're thinking about it is to drop your reservations about what amp is more accurate. That was always my thing, and you can get into a big mental debate about it. There are plenty of guys here that will enter into a debate with you as well. Here's something to consider. No amp is accurate. Some amps might be said to be "more accurate" than others, but then that means all amps are inaccurate. The best one can achieve is to create a convincing illusion. That is something Siegfried Linkwitz says that stuck in my mind. When I came to that realization, I was more willing to investigate alternatives. I don't say that to minimize engineering efforts at all. I'm still more the slide rule kind of guy than the cognac and cables type. I'm more comfortable with machines having well-defined properties than cutting and trying, hoping to find "something special." But that said, there are some real benefits and interesting properties of tubes, so be sure to investigate them when you can.

A Taste of Tubes

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