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Subject: Re: Build Thread: 2Pi Towers, 6Pi Corner horns (and possibly a sub and center)

Posted by [joshua43214](#) on Mon, 11 Jun 2018 01:16:11 GMT

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So, how do they sound? Good.

How good? Very.

They sound so good that I felt compelled to take a break from working on the 6Pi's so I could deal with acoustic treatments. Flaws in my listening room suddenly became intolerable.

They sound so good I found myself using mostly well engineered music for critical listening (the audiophile rabbit hole).

My first thought when I hooked them up was "wow, that is big sound." Very reminiscent of the big speakers that were so popular in the '70s, the kind of speaker you want to play blues, rock, or soul through. Not to say they do not work just as well with orchestral music. Piano and cello are reproduced with amazing accuracy. Most impressive to me is how well they handle percussion though. They handle percussion almost as well as acoustic suspension speakers (which is even more impressive considering these do not have a Zobel circuit).

So far they have been put through three critical listening sessions with my son (who is musician of some skill and an audiophile), and we shared a relaxed listening session last week. For reference, I relied on 4 songs:

Tori Amos Pretty Good Year. This song is a good test because it has a fairly wide range of octaves, and it is difficult to produce the low piano notes, Tori's husky voice, and the backup vocals simultaneously. It also was very useful for speaker placement - the song will bring out room issues very quickly. The CD is very well produced, and has very good sound. The majority of the signal is inside the 2Pi Towers "sweet spot" and they effortlessly push the music into the room. A sub would be needed to fill out the bottom fully, but the Towers never sound like they are straining on this track.

Massive Attack Group Four. This song will test any speaker. The nice thing about Massive attack is that every bit of sound in the track is put there by hand, and it is clear when something is out of place. The music itself also hints at what is missing if your system is not able to reproduce it. The Towers idle right through the first section of the song which is a whimsical Trip Hop duet, and hammers out the second section which has a goth grunge sound to it without a sweat. It almost reproduces the transition between the sections flawlessly, but to be fair, very few systems can.

Yes Mood For a Day and Led Zeppelin Braun-Y-Aur. I chose these both because they are filled with rich harmonies, and because I had mastered both songs in my 20's so I know exactly how they should sound and feel. I also included Ana Vidovic's rendition of La Catedral.

The 2Pi Towers put the music right where it should be and fill them room with little effort. They do have all the limits that a 2-way speaker has, but the worst issues of bass-reflex are nicely minimized or absent. The most notable thing they are missing to my ear is that extra punch that sticks make when a drummer puts all their weight into the toms. Regular hard drumming and the kick drum come through just fine. I am a huge fan of all things percussion, so I am probably more sensitive to this than most people, my son certainly did not notice til I pointed it out. This is one of those things that only horn loaded drivers are really able to reproduce, and is always a weak point

with bass-reflex speakers.

The question I keep asking myself is "are they good enough?" In other words, if I was not building a set of 6Pi Cornerhorns, would I bother to upgrade them. I honestly don't know. I am hip deep in projects, and there are other things I would much rather be doing than working with MDF. On the other hand, they sound so good, they are dragging me slowly but surely down the audiophile rabbit hole of endlessly seeking improvements. If these had to be my primary speakers, I would definitely add subwoofers and high-pass them a bit. I would probably also opt for something smaller than the 3Pi Sub since space in my room is at a premium - the Towers do not need much help at the bottom end.

I have also been using them as the mains for movie watching, and they do a very impressive job at this as well. My Athena Audio sub died right about the time I ordered the 6Pi kits, so the Towers are being used also for theater. Suffice it to say that the Towers were able to turn Blade Runner 2049 into a truly immersive experience even without a sub for LFE. I do have a sub on order, and we plan to re-watch Blade Runner, and watch Baby Driver when the 6Pi's are up and running.

I do have to withhold full judgment for the moment though. I am 95% certain the two issues I am having are my room and not the speakers. I suspect the port might be tuned too high, but it is pumping right into a corner node. I placed a piece of Rockwool Safe and Sound in the corner behind the speaker (partially blocking the bookshelves), and it helped immensely. The tweeter also seems to be a tad bit loud, but once again, room treatment helped this problem as well. I know I am still having room issues because I can improve the sound by equalization. I will try to get around to building a tester for measuring the speaker tuning sometime this week (yet another project...). I did try laying the Towers on their back over a pair of chairs, and observing the excursion at different frequencies, but it was not conclusive.

Once the Cornerhorns are completed. I can move the Towers into a better position in the room and give them another critical listen. Whether I will or not is a different question. Their primary duty will be for surrounds in my theater, and for this they are already excellent. I will also want to be listening to my 6Pi's, not moving furniture around.

One other issue, the Pi logo decals are black... sure would be nice to have them in gold (hint hint).

Up Next: The 6Pi Cornerhorn build