Subject: meeting write-ups
Posted by Manualblock on Fri, 07 Jan 2005 01:04:31 GMT
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You know; lately whenever there is a write up of a meeting where individuals show their DIY projects they all sound great; or they have very good synergy with the other components; or jaws drop; etc.Everything can't sound great but if it does then why not just build the cheapest equipment mentioned?Personally If I am showing something I built I want an honest appraisal; backslapping doesn't help me learn or improve.One thing I always liked about playing music or sports is if something you did sucked there were many there to inform you of that fact; and thats how you improved your playing, by accepting criticism and adjusting.

Subject: Re: meeting write-ups
Posted by Wayne Parham on Fri, 07 Jan 2005 08:41:46 GMT
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That's true. What I try to do is to mention equipment I like, maybe saying that I prefer one to another. Sometimes stuff really sucks but more often than not, at the level where someone is proud enough to bring something for a "show and tell," it is pretty good. At least, that's what I've found here. So it's less of good verses bad, and more like good, better, best.

Subject: Re: meeting write-ups
Posted by colinhester on Sun, 16 Jan 2005 01:54:15 GMT
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As we all know too well, music reproduction is the one "science" that can be simulated to the nth degree, but the one factor, and the most influential, that cannot be accounted for is emotional attachment. Emotion being in either the piece of music being played or how it is reproduced. I believe this is a truism that cannot be argued. Now the question is: how does one divorce the emotional attachment from the real audible differences? Well, you don't. I believe the phrase goes something like "music soothes the savage beast." Our listening experiences are emotional.You say you want an honest critique and not a slap on the back. Whose standards are you going to trust. To quote another old saying (I'm full of old sayings tonight): one man's trash is another man's treasure. Honestly, who's to say what is the standard by which the sound should be judged. Critiquing your own system or someone else's cannot be quantified like running the 40 yard dash - no stop watch. Moreover, this is not like auditioning for a band - either the notes are played correctly in time or not. There are no hard-fast numbers to report. Even if there are truly audible differences, how does one convey these differences in a meaningful, mutually understandable vernacular?I'm not trying to argue against you, but I am simply posing the question of how this process of "honest evaluation" works. I don't know. Years ago, when I was

less mature, if you said anything negative about my system we would not be on speaking terms. Today if you were to call my DIY baby ugly, it would be taken as a sign of friendship. I would appreciate the honesty. Is this a difference in my maturity level (being able to take the bad review) or is this my maturation in the hobby, for now I know there are lots of different tastes? Again, I don't know. To be quite frank: if I build it, it sounds beautiful. It may have sonic flaws, it might not look pretty, but damnit I built it. Therefore, I automatically have a positive emotional bias to the way it sounds. Don't ever try to take that away.....(Insert virtual slap on back here).....Colin

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Subject: Re: meeting write-ups
Posted by Manualblock on Sun, 16 Jan 2005 17:28:09 GMT
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Logical Fallacy; (ask the better half.) You can't assume because emotion is attached to any endeavor it is deRiguer unapproachable. People have no problem discerning a very good performance of music from a mediocre performance of the same piece in the same hall under the same orchestra; correct? So why is that not possible to do the same with an electronically reproduced performance?I have stated before in this forum; there is a reference standard. A system of components that, when people enter the room they know immediatelly that this sounds good. If that is true and I know we have all experienced that; then take that supposition to the logical conclusion.It may be a question of degree to some extent but you know when you hear a pair of; lets say Klipsch Cornerhorns vs. a pair of Cerwin Vegas that there is a quality difference right?How do you know that?Whatever aspect of mental acuity that allows you to make that determination applies to what I said about a reference standard.I maybe cannot assume what I like is good but I can tell if it sounds like real music. Thats the key; because if it is anything else then we would all have Bose Wave Radios.Addressing the issue of personal response to criticism. Thats up to the individual. If you are secure with your choices then other opinions hold no potential for devalidating your choices. I am more interested in the carefully thought out criticism than I am in the polite exuberance. That to me is worthless and unuseable and serves to accomplish nothing. In fact I know when someone is patronizing my efforts and I resent it. It is like cooking something that tastes like crap and getting the polite nod while they funnell it under the table to the dog.With my DIY efforts believe me you will not have to extend any critical appraisal that will be more severe than the one I grant my own efforts. If my stuff suck's I will be the first to say it. And I hope I can count on the same courtesy from others. What do you think of the new pre-amp direction; C?

Subject: Re: meeting write-ups
Posted by colinhester on Sun, 16 Jan 2005 19:29:52 GMT
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I wish we could get together and talk about this face to face. This is going to a fun discussion. I'm

playing Mr. Mom today, so I'll break my reply up in parts. I realize our view points are different, but we are both talking about the top 90%+ of audio reproduction. I believe it's just a different approach to the last 10%. You wrote: "Logical Fallacy; (ask the better half.) You can't assume because emotion is attached to any endeavor it is deRiguer unapproachable." Taking a loose sociological interpertation of the Heisenberg Uncertainty Principal: once a system is observed, the system is changed. Therefore, I would argue that there will ALWAYS be a bias. There is no way around it.You wrote: "I have stated before in this forum; there is a reference standard. A system of components that, when people enter the room they know immediatelly that this sounds good. If that is true and I know we have all experienced that; then take that supposition to the logical conclusion"I think this is where we differ in our approach. I would say there is no standard refernce system. Have you ever been in a bad mood and put your favorite piece of music on? You know, just to cheer yourself up? Sure, everyone has done this. So now, how do you remove emotion from a critical evaluation? Music stirs the emotions. And I would argue that the converse statement is true as well: Emotions stir the music.Gotta go, the kids are crawling all over me.....Best regards, Colin

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Subject: Re: meeting write-ups
Posted by Wayne Parham on Sun, 16 Jan 2005 19:57:36 GMT
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Music stirs the emotions. And I would argue that the converse statement is true as well: Emotions stir the music. ...Gotta go, the kids are crawling all over meSo maybe now would be a good time to play the Talking Heads, "Burning Down the House?"

Subject: Re: meeting write-ups
Posted by Manualblock on Sun, 16 Jan 2005 20:19:21 GMT
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A bad mood may make you less appreciative of the particular selection you chose; but the recording and the equipment are the same. My perception of the sound of my set-up has been consistant since I assembled it; even if sometimes I don't feel like listening. And this still does not address the issue of why a really good sound is recogniseable immediately.I have not heard anyone complain about listening to a really nice 300b amp through good hornloaded speakers yet. They may choose other components for themselves but still are aware of the quality of the sound they experienced with that system.Even if you have a bad day you know the Audio Note Conquerors through Avant Garde' Uno's sound good.Colin; the Uncertainty Pricipal deals with observation on the Quantum level, I haven't met anyone who has experienced that particular event.I know a Martin 1952 D-28 sounds good w/o any prompting or emotion. How can that be??Try this for the little guys; Scotch and Milk; keeps 'em calm and peacefull. Always worked for my guys. Don't use the single malt, cheap stuff will do.

Subject: Re: meeting write-ups
Posted by colinhester on Sun, 16 Jan 2005 23:06:15 GMT
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I was thinking something by The Doors would be more fitting, like "The End."

Subject: Re: meeting write-ups
Posted by Wayne Parham on Sun, 16 Jan 2005 23:17:19 GMT
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Subject: Re: meeting write-ups
Posted by colinhester on Mon, 17 Jan 2005 02:51:10 GMT
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The ol' brain is kinda fried right now, so I'll try to make sence.I agree that when one hears a good system it's obvious the sound is quality. What makes it so and how does one put a number to it? That's a question that will never be answered, because it can't be. I guess one could also ask: What makes a beautiful woman beautiful? What makes a painting a classic? It's all in the eye (in our case - ear) of the beholderEach culture has an ideal of beauty that is different from others. These ideals are not constant and change as the culture changes. To apply a set "audio reference" is, in my opinion, different for everyone. Audio reproduction would be considered ideal if were able to reproduce live performances. But what if the music being played is purely studio work or even totally electronic. Works such as these will never be heard "live." Or what if one's frame of reference is club music. Does my "reference" system need to produce ONLY volume and lots of bass? The people that have 300B amps with large horns have truely great systems. Out of all the people that have stereos in their homes, what percentage have this kind of setup? 0.0001%? I agree a 300B with horns is about as close to perfections as one can get. There are obviously other ways there, but this is a good route. Now why is this combination that good? It IS that good, or I have been TOLD it is supposed to be that good. I suspect the answer lies somewhere between the two. No one goes to the local audio store and buys a 300B/horn system on the spur of the moment. There was lots of research (reading / listening) done prior to purchase. There was already an expectation of how it was going to sound. I guess that's my point for right now. Before I even hear a system, I have an expectation of how it's going to perform. We all do it. As ojective as we think we are, we are subjective (emotional) creatures. There is no way around that. Earlier you mentioned the Bose Wave Radio. Have you heard one? What did you expect it to sound like? Did it sound like you expected? What about the Klipsch vs. Cerwin Vega sound. Which one do you expect to sound better? Why? On to lighter things:- I hope to get the parts ordered for the pre this week. I'm working on a surprise for everyone who builds, so don't tell - Yes, I know what the Heisenberg Uncertainty Principal is (Thanks Dr.

Bennett.) The idea was, errrrr, adapted by Social Sciences to imply that mearly observing a system changes the system. Really, I am not making this up.....Until next time, Colin

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Subject: Re: meeting write-ups
Posted by Manualblock on Mon, 17 Jan 2005 15:12:26 GMT
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Sounds good to me! This is the most interesting aspect of discussing audio within any venue, what makes good sound. After that it becomes academic. I see your point about Hiesenberg and I regret to admit I mis interpreted you on that one. Simply stated I just believe everyone knows good sound when they hear it; like you say it can't be deconstructed.I am looking forward to the Pre-amp now. Somewhat skepticle for a short while but now the newest posts from Douglas sound like he is really revved on this and working on some interesting ideas. The parts you are ordering; which concept will you be following if I may ask; or is that part of the surprise?

Subject: Re: meeting write-ups
Posted by colinhester on Mon, 17 Jan 2005 17:00:40 GMT
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Oh come on. I expected to be drug over the coals for offering such a non-scientific response to your very valid inquiry. I think your post under General of "Why?" was interesting. Each person enjoys this hobby for different reasons. Either to obtain the best sound for their particual musical taste, or like, me, the love of building and assembling a system - be it DIY or store bought. Many times I have lost sight of what is the most important aspect of this hobby: the music. I have done all the tweeks and upgrades, but for what? All this effort does not change the notes being played. My efforts do not change the valve Miles Davis decided to push or the phrasing of a sonata. Are we trying to listen to the music or understand the music? Is the fact that we are trying to understand the best way to reproduce the music slant our appreciation of the content? Do we look for recordings that will best show off our system and ignore erlier recordings because the fidelidty is not there? Yes, I am guilty as charged.I build so I have a understanding of what the parts are doing. I don't want my system to be a "black box." Many people are happy with this plug-andplay approach (e.g. Bose) but I want more than that. I want to understand, but to what end?????????Colin

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Subject: Re: meeting write-ups
Posted by Manualblock on Mon, 17 Jan 2005 19:06:49 GMT
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O'Kay since you ask; here is my view. I listen to accomplish these goals. Memory/ the remmembrance of events tied to the music. Relaxation/to provoke a mood. To transport my thoughts away from the mundane and status quo. Here are my goals; to establish a retreat within my domain where I can sit quietly and absorb the music. The room/system and choice of music integrating into a harmony with my mood and state of mind. The system must be able to relax and enable me to find that connectedness wherein I am lost in the sound.Wheew! The types of equipment that seem able to best create that environement tend to be tube/vinyl/efficient speakers of high quality. So;When something in the chain doesn't do it; it is noticeable and takes away from the effect. Live music is never boring; even if it is not something I prefer. That is the crux of the thing, bad or mediocre equipment is boring and does not involve one in the music. Hence the Bose quote.Regarding sound absolutes. It is not cultural. Were that true than the sound of a nightingale would not be universally appreciated, but would be a cultural phenomenon indigenous to particular cultures. But that song is considered beautifull every where.An acoustic guitar sounds good to all cultures. The style of music will differ but appreciation for the sound of the instrument remains.That is the basis for my contention that there are absolutes in sound.So when you walk by a room and hear some music played; you know if it sounds good or not. Even if you hate the music.That is why I stopped going to meetings of audiophile clubs; they sit staring at some wall of equipment and no one seems able to admitt what sounds like crap or what sounds great. They make inane comments about soundstage or lower/upper midrange suckout, but cannot tell if it sounds like music or not. Becoming actively involved in the hobby as you are doen't seem to me to be a drawback even if it takes away from time to listen or causes one to become sidetracked away from the music. I see the two aspects as representing totally different endeavors. Building and maintainig equipment is a satisfaction all it's own. The music and sound offers a n entirely seperate reward.Regarding how best to pay homage to Miles; maybe just by providing the most musical setting and letting his legacy speak for itself.Good stuff for a quiet holiday full of snow here!

Subject: Re: meeting write-ups
Posted by colinhester on Mon, 17 Jan 2005 21:40:33 GMT
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Hey, It's Mr. Mom again. I got a pizza in the over for th kids, so I'd thought pen a quick note. Regarding cultural absolutes, I disagree there can be absolutes in beauty or its perseption of it. Beauty is defined by one's culture and background. Let's take an extreme example. I don not like hip-hop or rap. I find no beauty in it. Does this mean someone does not appreciate the artists or sound? Of course not. Would the person that does find beauty in this "music" have the same appreciation for the classics, as I. I don't know. This is an assumption I cannot make.Going one step further, I do not find far-eastern musci all that pleasing. It's based on a different chromatic scale, something I did not experience in my cultural upbringing. The Bose quote was was referring to the plug and play aspect. Even though it's considered mid-fi by most audiophiles, does this keep those from listening to such a system from enjoying the music as much as us? No, it doesn't.Pizza's done. Gotta go.....

Subject: Re: meeting write-ups
Posted by Manualblock on Mon, 17 Jan 2005 22:28:13 GMT
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I hope the Pizza's good! I think we have confused the creation of particular musical artifacts with the concept of the universal ability to know things that sound good. Even though you don't like the music created from the pentatonic scale should not mean you don't like the sound of a musical instrument heard live that might be used to perform in that style.Is Michealangelo's David a universally accepted thing of beauty? Or the Taj Mahal? Would there be many who despised the look of that building?If we agree on that then logically they stand as reference standards.Many people listen to Bose; but how many would prefer that to real stereo providing they were exposed in such a way as to prevent them attaching price or advertising prejudice to either example?Go Eat; mangia', enjoy the Pizza.

Subject: Re: meeting write-ups
Posted by colinhester on Tue, 18 Jan 2005 01:12:03 GMT
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The pizza sucked. There, has that for an objective self critique.It seems our discussion has come full circle. We concur there is not even a universal consensus on what beauty is, much less describing (or even agreeing on) subtle aural particulars of one's system. If there is not even a standard of beauty, then why trust anyone else's opinion for the more mundane? The fun part of this hobby is the journey and discovery, not the end.This is why I would never say a bad thing about someone else's project. If they THINK they have reached audio nirvana, THEN THEY HAVE. It is just my subjective opinion versus theirs. Who am I to tell them differently? I'm just a nobody on the journey as well.Oh yeah, about the group build surprise. I'm going to have name plates madeup with the ART logo, project name and builder's moniker on it. They will be sent to Wayne when done. Don't tell. Don't worry, no one will ever get this far down in this thread .....Colin

Subject: Re: meeting write-ups
Posted by Manualblock on Tue, 18 Jan 2005 12:27:06 GMT
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Excellent;Like the man said I don't care what you say about me as long as you spell my name right.