
Subject: 2Pi Towers First Listen
Posted by [Bill Epstein](#) on Fri, 22 Feb 2013 04:46:25 GMT
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Living Room is looking a lot like Stonehenge!

After a 4 hour wiring session this morning I shlepped these monsters downstairs and hooked'm up to my 6 watt 6550 single-ended.

I've wanted to build a pair ever since discovering the SB Acoustics SB-29 tweeter a few years ago. I had made Towers with the Vifa Tweeter for Speakerman and used that tweeter in a pair of sealed "bookshelf" speakers and had never warmed to it. I hoped the SB-29, which I used previously in another project, would improve the clarity of the 2Pi mids and treble.

My reasoning behind the modest expense of the upgrade is simple: Wayne's cabinet and crossover makes the humble Alpha 10 sound at least as good in the three octaves of bass as the \$1200 apiece GPA?Altec 604.

I've only played 6 album sides but all the drivers had been previously used, albeit not for some time, so break-in shouldn't be an issue, and they sounded damn fine. Sophisticated, even. And really nearfield because of the forest of speakers in my little room.

As you can see in the pic, they back right up to my 4Pis so there has to be some passive woofing going on but when Bonnie Raitts bassist, on Takin' My Time, rolls (is that a glissando?) up to the next note on the string, you can hear the finger move on the neck like never before.

The Chesky re-issue of Scheherazade let's the imaging come through with distinct first and second violins as well as pinpoint position of the brass deep into the rear of the stage and definitely above the strings and woodwinds on their lower risers.

I think these are the perfect Condo-Dwellers speakers. The bass is "apparently" deeper than the 4Pis which eliminates the need for sub-woofers and Nightsticks knocking on the door. They're also nearly as sensitive, moreso than the driver specs would indicate. My volume control is maybe one click higher than with the 4s.

After a month into the project and a back-breaking morning, you'll forgive me for setting them up and writing about them prior to building the grills which are the reason for the recessed, flat black baffles you see here:

One word describes the veneer: MEH! I could tell it wasn't going to be museum quality early on, far from it, so I kinda backed off from the full treatment I had planned. Still, classic varnish

wet-rubbed with 400, and then 600 Wet N Dry and completed with 0000 steel wool done soapy wet came out well ahead of your typical speakers oiled or Goopethane finish.

Now that I know how well they perform, I'll take out the subwoofers and move the 4Pis to the sides and let the Towers have their own space. Then we'll really see what they can do.

File Attachments

- 1) [IMG_2914_1.JPG](#), downloaded 10387 times
 - 2) [IMG_2912_1.JPG](#), downloaded 10396 times
 - 3) [IMG_2917_1.jpg](#), downloaded 10421 times
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Subject: Re: 2Pi Towers First Listen
Posted by [skywave-rider](#) on Fri, 22 Feb 2013 08:10:06 GMT
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Will look forward to that. IMHOP the veneer looks excellent and I love the design.

Subject: Re: 2Pi Towers First Listen
Posted by [SteveBrown](#) on Fri, 22 Feb 2013 13:44:39 GMT
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They look great, Bill! Congratulations! What's under the veneer? MDF?

Subject: Re: 2Pi Towers First Listen
Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Fri, 22 Feb 2013 16:16:05 GMT
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Man, Bill, I just love the look of those speakers. I wish I could drop by and have a listen. If they weren't so big, I'd ask you to bring 'em with you to LSAF (if you are coming). But that's a lot to ask.

Anyway, I'm diggin' those cabinets!

Subject: Re: 2Pi Towers First Listen
Posted by [Bill Epstein](#) on Fri, 22 Feb 2013 16:55:32 GMT
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Wayne Parham wrote on Fri, 22 February 2013 11:16

Man, Bill, I just love the look of those speakers. I wish I could drop by and have a listen.

Wayne, for a change, HAS MAIL!

Wellll, actually it's a box on a Brown Truck.

You supply your cabinet and Alpha 10.

You've given to me for years, 'bout time I gave you something.

Subject: Re: 2Pi Towers First Listen

Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Fri, 22 Feb 2013 17:08:40 GMT

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and give 'em a listen.

Subject: Re: 2Pi Towers First Listen

Posted by [petew](#) on Fri, 22 Feb 2013 18:56:34 GMT

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Those 2pi towers look great.

Is there any difference in the crossover between the regular 2pi and the tower?

Where is the port located on the back of the tower (high, middle, low)?

The reason I ask about the port location, I'm considering towers for my four surrounds, concealed in tapering columns. I'd like to tilt the entire cabinet forward to allow the port some breathing room through the sides of the columns.

I've got a big room and I like overkill!

Subject: Re: 2Pi Towers First Listen

Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Fri, 22 Feb 2013 19:39:55 GMT

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the two is response below 100Hz.

The port is large and low, on the rear panel. Specifically, it's 4.5" diameter, centered 7" up from the bottom of the cabinet. This position is very important, as is the location of the midwoofer on the front baffle. It was chosen specifically to minimize the influence of low-midrange internal standing waves on the response curve.

Cabinet design, port placement and internal standing waves

Subject: Re: 2Pi Towers First Listen

Posted by [tubemax](#) on Sat, 11 Oct 2014 08:17:49 GMT

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Hi Bill,

I've been looking at your version of 2-Pi towers and wonder if they would be good enough as a permanent speaker for long time use and possibly for all musical styles (mostly rock, blues and jazz) - instead of going to build much more expensive 3 or 4 Pi for which really I don't have the money (even in the stock form).

So... the question is...

Is there any chance for an in-depth review of your 2-Pi Towers since you are apparently the only one with upgraded SB-29 tweeters?

Regards,
Max

Subject: Re: 2Pi Towers First Listen

Posted by [themilford](#) on Fri, 19 Dec 2014 15:51:25 GMT

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I'm interested in an in-depth, comparative review as well... also, now that Wayne has a pair of SB-29, I wonder if they'll make the cut and we'll see an upgrade option for the little PIs soon.

Subject: Re: 2Pi Towers First Listen

Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Fri, 19 Dec 2014 21:01:31 GMT

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I'm glad you posted on this thread, because I installed the tweeters, made a few measurements and spent some time listening. Then things got crazy and I forgot to comment about it.

I have moved since then - and am still unpacking and setting up shop so I cannot access my measurement files to post here - but I can tell you that the SB-29 tweeter performs very well as a drop-in replacement for the DX-25. No crossover changes are necessary.

Subjectively, I'd say the SB-29 is maybe a little more "delicate" sounding. By that, what I mean is it sounds detailed without being shrill. It doesn't have any more or less output, and so it isn't a spectral balance thing. But it did sound like it had a little more sparkle to my ears.

It's a very pleasant sounding tweeter. I'm not sure I'd call it an upgrade, though it's definitely not a downgrade either. I'd say it's worth giving it a try, sort of like tube-rolling for the tube-amp guys.

Subject: Re: 2Pi Towers First Listen
Posted by [themilford](#) on Sat, 20 Dec 2014 17:45:14 GMT
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Thanks for the quick thoughts wayne.

So if I'm reading the data sheets correctly it looks like they are physically different... so if you have already countersunk the baffle for the Vifa then you would have to make some sort of adapter to fit the smaller SB driver?

Subject: Re: 2Pi Towers First Listen
Posted by [themilford](#) on Mon, 22 Dec 2014 02:33:20 GMT
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Just to clarify... there seem to be two versions of this driver

SB29RDC and SB29RDCN

They seem to have different specs. the Neo version is a different physical size and seems to have 1db more sensitivity and a different rising response...

Subject: Re: 2Pi Towers First Listen
Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Mon, 22 Dec 2014 16:58:06 GMT
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About mounting, you're right, the SB-29 mod requires some alteration to fit physically. Not so much if the tweeters are surface mounted but even then, the mounting holes are different.

As to the differences between the RDC and RDNC, I haven't even tried the RDBC. It's quite different actually, both physically and electro-mechanically. We're only talking about the RDC version of the SB-29 here.
