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Subject: 300b vs. Zen amp

Posted by [Peter](#) on Wed, 26 May 2004 12:48:41 GMT

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Like many others, I am very interested in Decwares Zen amp. I currently own a (swedish) Edison 300b amp with wonderful sound quality, lots of air in the mids and highs I can assure you! But maybe, just maybe I am missing out on something. Surely someone has auditioned 300b's as well as a zen. Sadly, my speakers are not all that efficient, around 93db. What do you guys think I'm missing without the zen? It would be wonderful to be able to audition a zen to find out, unfortunately I haven't heard of anyone in Sweden getting one. My biggest fear really is that I'd have to get two of them to get enough power. And then the price gets a bit out of my league. Cheers, Peter

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Subject: Re: 300b vs. Zen amp

Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Wed, 26 May 2004 16:15:35 GMT

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The Zen is a nice little amp. Not too expensive either. What configuration is your Edison amp circuit? Transformer coupled? Parallel feed? Constant Current? I ask because I think this has a lot to do with it too. For example, I expect that proper tuning of the capacitance and inductance in a parafeed circuit really brings up the bass, so circuit type may be more significant than the active elements used in some respects.

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Subject: Re: 300b vs. Zen amp

Posted by [akhilesh](#) on Wed, 26 May 2004 17:37:20 GMT

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Hi Peter, I have owned the zen amp for more than a year now. It is very good. The midrange is a bit pronounced. You need at least 95 db + speakers. Yours may be too low in sensitivity. Recently I purchased another similar amp from antique sound USA. This amp has MIT multicap coupling caps, fast diodes, and solen caps in the power. This amp has a little bit of negative feedback, gives out 4 watts! Tubes are kind of similar to zen. If I had to sell one of these 2 amps today, I would sell the zen. In short, the zen is a great beginner amp, or is you want a small setup with a pair of simple single drivers. If you have a decent 300B amp, you are probably ahead of the curve ( I say this without ever having heard a 300b!). Also, for your speakers, the zen is probably not going to be suitable...too little power. If I were you, I'd focus on upgrading your 300B amp, maybe tubes, or parts. That will probably get you much better sound in your current setup. hope this helps!-akhilesh

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Subject: Re: 300b vs. Zen amp  
Posted by [Peter](#) on Thu, 27 May 2004 06:47:27 GMT  
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Hi and thank you for your reply! I really have no idea how my amp is configured. My best guess is that it's pretty much standard. This amplifier was sold as a "kit", but the manufacturer also pre-built them for people who didn't like the diy stuff. My amp was pre-built. I bought it used from the constructor himself, (the well known Erik Andersson who has constructed products under the names Audio Innovation, Edison, Andersson and Audion). My amp was a trade-in. Maybe I can ask him how it is coupled. Still, I find no reason to modify it, it sounds really good. Just curious about the zen... :-)

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Subject: Re: 300b vs. Zen amp  
Posted by [Peter](#) on Thu, 27 May 2004 07:04:12 GMT  
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(image of an Edison Triode 300B) Thank you for your honest reply. The low power is a problem. Or, maybe I should say put it another way, If i get a zen amp, my speakers would be a problem! I would really like an amp without any feedback. I might buy a zen if i find one used at a reasonable price. Would be nice to have a tube amp and a pair of bookshelf speakers in the bedroom./Peter

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Subject: Re: 300b vs. Zen amp  
Posted by [abajaj11](#) on Thu, 27 May 2004 10:55:05 GMT  
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I prefer my asusa amp, which has a little feedback. This is because the feedback gives it more slam, and the upgraded parts give it greater transparency. One thing you can try is to see if someone will modify your amp to remove feedback, and upgrade the parts as well. You might be able to do that for less than the price of the zen, and end up without having to change your speakers. That, said, i think having more sensitive speakers is better anyway! -akhilesh

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Subject: Negative feedback also gives less distortion  
Posted by [akhilesh](#) on Thu, 27 May 2004 15:03:38 GMT  
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and i tried experimenting with the zen versus the asusa. i don;t think a little negative feedback

sounds harsh to my ears at all. -akhilesh

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Subject: Re: 300b vs. Zen amp  
Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Thu, 27 May 2004 15:54:53 GMT  
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Yeah, I was just curious too. I might try to find out, 'cause that sure is one beautiful amplifier! Edison 300B Ampl have a Paramour amplifier that uses a 2A3 in a parafeed circuit. It is capable of significantly more bass than the Zen, and it is a lot less sensitive to the loudspeaker load than the Zen. The Paramour amp provides flat response and reasonable power for a 2A3 SET, definitely more output than the Zen. That said, the Zen sounds really good, particularly in the midrange. It's a great value too, in my opinion.

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Subject: Re: 300b vs. Zen amp  
Posted by [DRCope](#) on Wed, 02 Jun 2004 17:37:52 GMT  
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Having heard a couple Zens and a heap of 300B amps, I'd say giving up your 300B amp to move to a Zen would be a large step backwards.

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Subject: Re: 300b vs. Zen amp  
Posted by [Mark Williams](#) on Sun, 26 Sep 2004 20:54:02 GMT  
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Peter, I wholly agree with Wayne's comments about the Zen vs. the Paramours. I own both right now and I can tell you the Zen is a really good amp, but not as good as the Paramours and it is more tricky to match with a speaker system. Less output for one thing. 1.5 watts/ch. vs. 3 or so for the Paramours. I think they only saving grace for the Zen in my system was the matching of it with the Bottlehead Foreplay preamp which has a lot of gain. Keep what you have! Nothing wrong with a good 300B amp. And, yours is particularly beautiful. Mark

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