
Subject: 8Pi assembly and initial listening impressions
Posted by [owen kellog](#) on Tue, 26 Aug 2014 21:13:24 GMT
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Although the cabinets still need final prepwork and finish, they are otherwise complete and making music! The removable back panels were made from pieces of salvaged 1960's vintage 3/4" plywood- very heavy, very dense.

48 hours in, I can tell you that they have horn virtues in abundance- lightning dynamics, immediacy, and excellent resolution of detail. They start and stop very quickly, resolve individual voices in choruses well, and have that quality of 'aliveness' and 'snap' that high efficiency designs accomplish so effortlessly. The 8's are open and clear, with no honky coloration coming from either horn. My respect and thanks to Wayne for not only a fine acoustical design, but for coming up with a passive crossover that works so well to integrate the drivers and not impose itself on the presentation in an obvious way. The speakers are still breaking-in, but they compare very favorably to our prime in-house references, a large, home-made open baffle design (below, out in the room), and the 'Mikasa's', a single driver full-range double-mouth horn-loaded tower (below, in the room's corners). The full-rangers' use the Fostex Fe126 EN-Squared drivers, while the OB's each use a trio of Eminence Big Ben bass guitar speakers per side, crossed to 'Econowave' horn lenses coupled to B&C DE-250's. The bottom end of any of these setups is handled by 4 cylindrical subwoofers (two of which are in the photos), driven by Crown pro-sound amps. Also in the line-up are a pair of bi-polar 'Metronomes', and a couple of pairs of Magnepans. The Mets' and Maggies are fun in their own ways, but honestly don't compare to any of the horn designs (the 8Pi's, OB's, or Mikasa's) in terms of listener involvement and enjoyment. Not pictured but dragged out on occasion are a pair of Quad ESL-57's.

My brother and I mess around with a lot of speakers, and the 8's, even at this early point in their break-in, are clearly keepers.
The Mikasa's and OB's will now be moved aside for the '8's. Photos below:

File Attachments

- 1) [0824140922-00.jpg](#), downloaded 5618 times
 - 2) [0824140928-00.jpg](#), downloaded 5504 times
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 - 5) [0824141036-00.jpg](#), downloaded 5604 times
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Subject: Re: 8Pi assembly and initial listening impressions
Posted by [owen kellog](#) on Tue, 26 Aug 2014 21:23:39 GMT
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8Pi's in the room's corners, making music:

Thanks for your support and interest, everyone. This has been an enjoyable project, and the speakers sound terrific. More to follow as they break in or I experiment with 'em.

File Attachments

- 1) [0824141717-00.jpg](#), downloaded 4815 times
 - 2) [0825140658-00.jpg](#), downloaded 4780 times
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Subject: Re: 8Pi assembly and initial listening impressions
Posted by [tomlang](#) on Wed, 27 Aug 2014 11:28:55 GMT
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Fabulous build and report! Can you shed some details on the stands, I like them!

Subject: Re: 8Pi assembly and initial listening impressions
Posted by [owen kellog](#) on Wed, 27 Aug 2014 13:31:26 GMT
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The stands are a little undersized for the 8Pi's (they were made for a different pair of speakers), but we like the look, too. These were constructed by vertically laminating pieces of hard maple into a slab, then rounding-off the edges and finishing. These are 3" thick, and beneath them are 2 1/4" high x 2" diameter solid brass footers. With the footers screwed into the bottom, they're heavy foundations. My brother gets around to it, we'll make a pair that matches the footprint of the speakers, and I'm thinking to make them 4", for a little extra mass.

Subject: Re: 8Pi assembly and initial listening impressions
Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Wed, 27 Aug 2014 23:54:16 GMT
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Thanks for the build pics and write-up. Good going!

Subject: Re: 8Pi assembly and initial listening impressions

Posted by [tubemax](#) on Thu, 28 Aug 2014 11:55:14 GMT

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Hi Owen,

Great build!

Just one question - how is the low-end with these horns?

Does it need to be placed in corner to get flat response or are they capable of linear response all the way down without corner placement?

Subject: Re: 8Pi assembly and initial listening impressions

Posted by [owen kellog](#) on Fri, 29 Aug 2014 03:47:15 GMT

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Tubemax / Owen,

Thanks yours. As for their bass capability, they make a surprising amount of well-integrated, tuneful bass for a 10" driver with little more than 4mm of X-max. The bass frequencies are generated courtesy of the vented volume that the Alpha 10's backwave loads, so the midhorn itself has little to do with bass reproduction (Wayne can weigh-in if my explanation of how the speaker works misses the mark). As for moving them out into the room, the bass quality remains, but there is some loss of quantity that corner-loading yields. Still a good result, but it's hard to deny the benefits of corner loading.

The speaker's imaging when placed in the room's corners as pictured is as Wayne's white papers describe- there's good center-fill and depth to the soundstage, and listening from off-axis positions still gives good placement of performers: these aren't 'head-in-a-vise' loudspeakers when placed in the room's corners.

Having said all of the above, I'm now running the speakers with a 24 dB / octave electronic crossover that high-passes the 8Pi's at 106 Hz, with frequencies below that being handled by 4 subwoofers spread around the room. I may experiment and lower that frequency a little, but integration between the 8's and the subs is excellent, and the 8's pick up some dynamic reserves by being relieved of bass duties.
