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Subject: New speakers with review!

Posted by [hurdy\\_gurdyman](#) on Fri, 13 Jan 2006 21:14:19 GMT

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I can't restrain myself any

longer.[http://pg.photos.yahoo.com/ph/the\\_hurdy\\_gurdyman/album?.dir=c24c&.src=ph&.store=&.prodid=&.done=http%3a//pg.photos.yahoo.com/ph/the\\_hurdy\\_gurdyman/my\\_photos](http://pg.photos.yahoo.com/ph/the_hurdy_gurdyman/album?.dir=c24c&.src=ph&.store=&.prodid=&.done=http%3a//pg.photos.yahoo.com/ph/the_hurdy_gurdyman/my_photos)I received my new Hawthorne Audio Silver Iris speakers Tuesday evening. Wednesday morning I headed for the woodshop (had to sweep away a few cobwebs). Had a piece of MDF big enough for most of the new open baffles. Had to make a trip to the lumber yard for the pine board I'm using for the top and bottom. I consider the entire project a "throw together" until spring when I'm planning on building a better pair. I still need to make a padded grill cloth to cover the beast. Now that I've had them up and running for a few hours I'll give my initial impressions. First off is a small caution. With my old Scott amp there was a problem. With recordings that have lots of bass, the speaker gyrated in and out uncontrollably, causing everything up through the mids to sound garbled a bit. This didn't surprise me much, as the Scott has shown itself to be poorly damped on a few other speakers. The Scott is a classic push-pull full bore pentode amp. These typically have poor bass damping. It hadn't been a problem with my EV's and Heresy's because they both didn't produce any deep bass. The Silver Iris has a lower fs than my EV's and has no box for damping like my Heresy's had (Heresy's have a low 0.35 Qts driver and don't need any amp help). The Silver Iris has a high Qts of 0.9 plus a crossover inductor between them and the amp. I'd guess this is a bit much for many classic pp amps. It shouldn't be a problem with decent triode or ultra-linear amps. My solution was to put my Sansui receiver (used as a preamp) back into service and hook up my harman-kardon citation 16. This 70 pound monster is a dual mono solid state beast putting out 150 watts per channel and has damping out the wazooie. No compatibility problem now. ;D Now to the sound. These things are AWESOME! Period. They are about the same sensitivity as my EV LS-12's (maybe a decibel or so more) The rating of 95 dB sounds right. Bass is deeper and cleaner than my EV's, although the EV's did a good job with the old Scott as well as the harman-kardon. The EV's had a bit of a "bump" in the 80Hz range. I haven't measured the Silver Iris's yet, but I suspect they don't have this. They extend deeper noticeably, but I haven't measured this yet, either. I'm too busy listening to do any measuring yet. ;D Mids are more open sounding than my EV's. The difference is very noticeable, but not huge. Detail and transparency are better than the EV's, but again, not by gigantic margins. They do sound like they are in a league with many other speakers I've heard the last few years that need fancy boxes to get any real bass. These do it in simple OB's. I'm guessing I'm getting around 50 or so Hz in my OB's, and at clean high volume levels. This is very good for a modest sized OB. If I run my Cerwin-Vega home-made sub, it being on barely makes a difference on the rock and folk I've listened to. I suspect a lot of movies will benefit from a sub of some sort. Treble is very clean. Very airy (at least as high as my poor worn out ears can hear). Cymbals are very clean sounding. As far as clean sounding goes, everything seems to have a very clean and open sound. Very natural. And it's getting better. Over the last few hours I can hear things opening up even more. I bet in a week or two things will get even better (they're pretty darn good as is). And, don't forget, this is all being done with open baffle's wonderful soundstage, big and open! This is the number one reason to get an open baffle. This is, by far, the best sounding open baffle system I've heard yet. I'd love to hear the 15 inch bass driver that is available to go with this in the same baffle. You'd never need a sub at all with that. Maybe I'll have to save my pennies up for a pair of those...Looks like I can pack away my EV's for good. Won't be needing them anymore. Dave

New speakers

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Subject: Re: New speakers with review!

Posted by [Manualblock](#) on Sat, 14 Jan 2006 15:07:59 GMT

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Nice work Dave. OB's are really musical and it shows in the type of music you like. Personally I can do without tons of faux bass pouring out of some sub-sonic industrial hole puncher. What decided you on these speaks initially? Did you hear them or did you fly blind?

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Subject: Re: New speakers with review!

Posted by [hurdy\\_gurdyman](#) on Sat, 14 Jan 2006 20:10:29 GMT

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I heard the prototypes last year, which were a slightly modded Eminence Alpha 12 and a bullet tweeter mounted coaxially. They sounded impressively good. These new drivers are better all around, with a very clean sounding coaxial horn crossed at 3.5 kHz. The designer, Darrel Hawthorne, had these made to spec just for OB use. I might modestly add that my EV open baffles may have triggered the spark of interest in getting Darrel interested in OB's. He heard them last year at a little mini audio fest at another friends house just South of Lansing. I think he was rather blown away by the OB sound. These new drivers outperform my old EV LS-12's in every way. I'm amazed at the articulation and smoothness coming out of a 15 inch driver. I don't think I could recommend a better sounding woof/tweet combo for anywhere near the price that would work well in an OB. It's going to be a long time before I switch drivers again. Dave

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Subject: Re: New speakers with review!

Posted by [Manualblock](#) on Sun, 15 Jan 2006 01:36:45 GMT

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Thats A good one; let me see Heresy's/ EV 12's, it sounds like when you find a speaker you like you tend to stick with it for a while. I built a pair of Wharfedale 12's and a KLH paper cone tweeter once on a baffleboard at the suggestion of a friend many years ago. That was still one of the most enjoyable speakers I can remember. Do you think they need to break in at all?

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Subject: Re: New speakers with review!

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Posted by [hurdy\\_gurdyman](#) on Sun, 15 Jan 2006 03:11:10 GMT

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>Do you think they need to break in at all?

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Subject: Re: New speakers with review!

Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Mon, 16 Jan 2006 14:41:39 GMT

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You've seen me running around plugging GPAF. Can you come? Plane or bus fare, both are inexpensive to Tulsa. And the rooms don't cost much here either. The Embassy Suites are a tad pricey at a hundred bucks a pop, but that's not much for what they are. There are other rooms in Tulsa that are a third of that and less, and those for decent places like Motel 8 and other chains like that. Whatdya say?

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Subject: Re: New speakers with review!

Posted by [akhilesh](#) on Wed, 18 Jan 2006 21:53:43 GMT

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HI Dave,Have you heard the orions?If you have, I was wondering if you could compare. -akhilesh

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Subject: Re: New speakers with review!

Posted by [hurdy\\_gurdyman](#) on Thu, 19 Jan 2006 00:33:22 GMT

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akhilesh,Haven't had the privilege of hearing the Orions yet. I'd like to, though.Dave

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Subject: Re: New speakers with review!

Posted by [hurdy\\_gurdyman](#) on Sat, 04 Feb 2006 00:26:29 GMT

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I posted a follow up to this by mistake in the General  
forum.<http://audioroundtable.com/General/messages/2837.html>  
Tweek

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