Subject: Amps
Posted by Manualblock on Sat, 26 Feb 2005 15:17:48 GMT
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As a newcomer and novice; I see many amplifier ideas bandied about amongst you guys. How do you know which one you want to use? What distinction occurs to make you say ahhh! thats the one.

Subject: Re: Amps
Posted by cheetah on Sat, 26 Feb 2005 16:01:43 GMT
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Manualblock,It all comes down to taste, taste, and errr taste. Different tubes have different strengths and weaknesses. Ditto for topologies. THERE IS NO BEST! Except that which excites each of us, and of course someone else will have their "best."Painting with broad strokes here. SE and PP each have different characteristics. SE will give you a midrange, vocals, that are to die for. Getting the frequency extremes right requires more attention to detail. 2nd harmonics dominate and this is very pleasing to the ear.With PP the 3rd harmonic dominates, and the human ear tends to not like it, so care must be taken to minimize distortion. It is easier to control the sound at frequency extremes, especially the bottom end.But let me say that each can be very satisfying to the builder if done right, and both can be disappointing if done improperly.Then there is the character of the tubes to consider. Triodes will sound different from pentodes and beam power tubes. Directly heated and indirectly heated will infulence this difference further. Pick your poison.So a good place to start is with your current system. Do you have a set of speakers, or another component that you will not part with for any reason? Design your system around that. Its about sysergy. The same piece of equipement will sound sublety, but noticably differnt in different systems and rooms. If you are starting from scratch, then you are free to go which ever direction you fancy. If you have say a quality set of speakers that are low in efficiency, the a low and mid power amp ain't going to cut it. If they are higher in efficiency, mid 90's and higher, a lower wattage amp can be very satisfying.So, my advice (opinion really), is to ask questions. Visit various web sites and see what people there have done. Participate in group discussions like we have going here. Look at where you're at and where you think you might like to go, and take the plunge. Mistakes will happen. that's part of the frustrationm and fun. But you'll never know for sure until you make a choice.Joe

Subject: generalizations
Posted by PakProtector on Sat, 26 Feb 2005 16:39:56 GMT
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I must say that I feel this is one generalization too far:"Painting with broad strokes here. SE and

PP each have different characteristics. SE will give you a midrange, vocals, that are to die for. Getting the frequency extremes right requires more attention to detail. 2nd harmonics dominate and this is very pleasing to the ear." Or from a more personal standpoint, I have built PP which meets the description you apply to SE. PP built with the same level of care and attention to detail which got SE the reputation just ascribed to it is a step above anything else I have *EVER* heard.I have heard just as much 2nd-rate SE as PP. I don't think anybody is interested in creating 2nd-rate *ANYTHING*. Since I have a few amps built with a general topology with similar results, I can with reasonable confidence sugest a general recipe. I am also around to support this suggestion, in small detail.I do not disagree that SE has sounded different from PP. I do feel that this is likely from some contribution as outlined by our fast Cat...that it is only part of the story is also one of my conclusions. there are evidently folks who wnat what ever it is that SE adds. That is OK with me. I am not in the business of telling folks what to listen to(or for, or indeed even is a business).remember, until it can be ascertained what the difference is, most of this is speculation anyway. Finding a reasonable explanation for one's own personal preference is what this journey is about for me.regards,Douglas

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Subject: Re: generalizations
Posted by cheetah on Sat, 26 Feb 2005 17:00:58 GMT
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Douglas,I did point out that I was painting with a broad brush. And yes I agree that when both topologies are implemented well and tweaked to the nth degree, that both can be magical and charming. I for one do not feel that one is inherently superior to the other. when the system as a whole is tuned and each piece complements the rest, well I could be happy with either.For me at this point in time, I feel that PP can get me further down the road I want to go than SE. Hence my interest in the Poinz. But that is not to say that I might not want to see what I can do with SE one day.There are seasons for everything in this life.Joe

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Subject: Re: generalizations
Posted by Manualblock on Sat, 26 Feb 2005 18:33:43 GMT
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Actually the PP SE debate wasn't what I had in mind. There are great versions of both. The question is(and the reply you gave that you should build around your favorite speakers came closest) is this. Obviously there is always another step on the ladder; but after all this is about music and sound. What I am interested in knowing is which amp caused you to sit up and say thats it! And if that never occurred then I would imagine then this is about the search for that. So; is it an endless quest; or does there exist a mark to hit.Should you hit that mark; do you stop?If you were to find a build that sounded exactly how you wanted; what would be next?Or is it building for the sake of creating with no agenda other than the search for what works and the personal urge to explore and finding how close to the performance edge you can get.

Subject: Re: generalizations
Posted by PakProtector on Sat, 26 Feb 2005 19:10:20 GMT
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Well, pursuing this one: building for the sake of creating with no agenda other than the search for what works and the personal urge to explore and finding how close to the performance edge you can getone can never quite be sure that the mark has been hit. Each revision/exploration leaves new stuff to explore.I suppose the one which got my attention was the 1619 version of the stereo amp. So-so OPTx's and moderattely overbuilt PS. I knew I was on to something. So sure that I made the investment in the better ooutput Iron for that amp. then it's on to a rev. here and a tweak there...it's not perfect, but it will keep me happy until I figure a way to get a more powerful version of it toghther.As to power, I figure that ~200-250W is a reasonable liimit. Stuff gets too big and parasitics start being more and more troublesome. There is a limit to what can actually be put through a given x-section of Iron (W/in^2 has a Hi-Fi limit).And with efficient speakers, I ought to be able to live with something like a hundred W.regards,Douglas

Subject: I think you answered your own question...Or
Posted by Forty2wo on Sat, 26 Feb 2005 19:18:09 GMT
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NO MY AMP IS BEST!!! NONE COULD POSSABLELY BE BETTER!!!(queue miniacal laughter)ANYONE WHO DISAGREES WITH ME IS WRONG!You get the idea...John (more miniacal laughter)

Subject: No my amp is better.....
Posted by colinhester on Sat, 26 Feb 2005 19:27:17 GMT
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"....'cause I built it." Right manulablock?.....Colin

Subject: Re: I think you answered your own question...Or
Posted by Manualblock on Sat, 26 Feb 2005 20:39:15 GMT
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Absolutetly; who am I to disagree? I am but a traveler on the road to audio peace.

Subject: Re: generalizations
Posted by Manualblock on Sat, 26 Feb 2005 20:41:38 GMT
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T; 100 watts and efficient speakers? That ought to light up the block.Really; why shouldn't your neighbors enjoy the music as well.

Subject: Re: I think you answered your own question...Or
Posted by Wayne Parham on Sat, 26 Feb 2005 21:04:58 GMT
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Peace man.

Subject: Re: No my amp is better.....
Posted by Wayne Parham on Sat, 26 Feb 2005 21:05:26 GMT
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You guys are busting me up.

Subject: Re: I think you answered your own question...Or
Posted by Wayne Parham on Sat, 26 Feb 2005 21:06:44 GMT
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Yikes! You must be right 'cause you said it with such passion and conviction!