Subject: The Hardest Thing To Learn
Posted by Manualblock on Fri, 25 Aug 2006 14:03:04 GMT
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is that in the act of playing recorded music; whatever you decide to play it on if it is enjoyable then that is as good as it gets. Chasing some phanthom of perfect sound reproduction is actually in Reductio Ad Absurdum; it is a spiral that has no point. There is no perfect reproduction and the closer you get; the further away you are.There is never-ending debates about what makes recorded music sound better; but the times you listen and are emotionally transported are so few and far between that in the end; a simple tube amp and speakers do that for you as many times as the mega-buck or endlessly tweaked system does. Probably an AM radio would also.Tweaking and debating and designing are ends in themselves; listening is something entirely different.We came a long way to see the wizard. "The wizard will see no one!"

Subject: Re: The Hardest Thing To Learn
Posted by Shane on Fri, 25 Aug 2006 15:03:03 GMT
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Yep.See my wimpy little post below.
http://audioroundtable.com/General/messages/3704.html

Subject: The part I can never understand...
Posted by wunhuanglo on Sat, 26 Aug 2006 08:28:16 GMT
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is that the implicit assumption that the recording actually contains that "perfect" source material to be reproduced.Seen a modern recording and production facility lately? Most of the time the people on the recording were never even co-located in space and time, but people go on and on about how one brand of tube brings out the ambience of the recording space and the interplay between instruments so much better than another.The perfect capacitor in the speaker crossover is essential. Meanwhile the signal from microphone to pits or grooves has passed through such an array of direct boxes, mic preamps, mixers, compressors, expanders, effects processors, A/D and D/A converters it's literally mind boggling. But dammit, that one perfect cap will put the artist in your living room.

Subject: Re: The part I can never understand...
Posted by Manualblock on Sat, 26 Aug 2006 11:18:39 GMT

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Yep; I would hazard to say if a person were really serious about all this he would have to collect mono recordings from the fifties since they seem to be the best recorded and least desecrated.I like to fool with this stuff but I try not to have any illusions. It just dawned on me while listening to the computor that I hadn't turned the system on for a couple days yet music played constantly through the streaming radio on the PC.

Subject: Re: The part I can never understand...
Posted by Shane on Sat, 26 Aug 2006 13:11:43 GMT
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Agreed. All I ever hear about is to build a DIY amp with either a 2A3 or 300B. Those seem to be the only tubes you can use and possibly make a righteous amp out of. I've heard them both and I still like the somewhat shunned EL34 as much, for instance.What about recordings that garage bands make. We did some 5-6 years ago where we mic'd everything or ran direct to the board, which had a built in hard drive. No effects, just bypassed everything. You could definitely hear the "room ambience". LOL!! They sounded decent and listenable and I wish I had just one recording of the stuff we did for posterity.Interplay between instruments. That's a good one. Unless it was recorded at a live show, all the people I know record one instrument at a time. Got that damn click track and a faint POS dirty recording of the song in the headphones to listen to. I hated that when we tried it.By the way -- what is the perfect cap now?

Subject: Re: The Hardest Thing To Learn
Posted by Norris Wilson on Sat, 26 Aug 2006 13:24:49 GMT
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I have been chasing my tail since 1988. In this time I have had better systems evolve out of my neurosis.But, it is what you say, up to the individual perseption of what you think you hear, self satisfaction. When I was in my teens, I enjoyed a cheap console stereo without any question of sound quality. Unless you take in the fact that it had to play loud and have plenty of bass frequencies.In the past 8 years or so. I have considered this more of a hobby and have persued the DIY route. During this time, I have had more fun, and met more interesting people who make this hobby more enjoyable.To me, this hobby is as much about fellowship, sharing and learning. Than it is an obsession for the cleanest and most spirtual out of body aural experience via my stereo's ability to reproduce the perfect sounds. Nothing is perfect, especially the recordings.My father use to ask me what my obsession was about with the desire to hear every mouse fart on a recording?????Have fun!Norris

Subject: Re: The part I can never understand...
Posted by Manualblock on Sat, 26 Aug 2006 14:33:00 GMT
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Yeah; I don't see how anyone can play to those damned click tracks. To me that is one of the distinguishing factors that make the older recordings sound more musical; no clicktrack.

Subject: Re: The Hardest Thing To Learn
Posted by Wayne Parham on Sat, 26 Aug 2006 15:09:50 GMT
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Go into any retail store and buy their best stereo, you get say 25% - 50% of the quality you could have had if you studied a little bit and made more informed choices, maybe built speakers for yourself. I think that you can get 90% of the way there by understanding technical issues and applying them to make a better system. Towards that aim, I think these discussions are helpful. But I also think you're right that discussions about that last 10% tend to get pretty pointless, mostly minutia and unsubstantiated opinions.

Subject: Re: The Hardest Thing To Learn
Posted by Manualblock on Sat, 26 Aug 2006 16:00:19 GMT
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Yes; thats true. I mean't to address something a little different here and without getting long-winded about it. So let me give a short anecdote. Two times I remmember recorded music to be very emotionally involving. On the AM radio on a summer day at the beach hearing Stevie Wonder singing " My Cherie Amour" on hundreds of AM radios tuned to the same station. The Star Spangled Banner played at Yankee Stadium during the game after 9/11 over the crappy PA.Thats as important and as good as music can ever get. It has no relation to price/value ratios or sweat-equity; or recording quality or room-placement. Thats what interests me about this thread. It just never can get better than that no matter what it is played on. Does this mean anything or inform our hobby?

Subject: Re: What's a Clicktrack?
Posted by Bill Epstein on Sat, 26 Aug 2006 21:20:49 GMT
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Don't know that one.What you fella's say is obviously true only for the type of music that is laid up

in tracks.I do wonder how many comments by tweakers on capacitors and such, as you say, are made in the context of this "created" music where there is no ambience. No venue, e-vunn.(As Snagglepuss A. Lion would say)Is the day already here when Hilary Hahn plays in a booth and her track mixed with the Deutsche Samplofon Orchestra.

Subject: Re: What's a Clicktrack?
Posted by Shane on Sat, 26 Aug 2006 23:20:24 GMT
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I'd venture to say almost all music is recorded without natural "ambience" anymore. Most are direct to the board, or the speaker cabs are mic'd close enough you don't get a lot of the room in the recording anyway. I'm sure many would disagree with me, but most recordings anymore are processed and compressed to within an inch of their life.
Click Track

Subject: You gotta' figure....
Posted by wunhuanglo on Sun, 27 Aug 2006 01:08:46 GMT
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that the best you're gonna' do is a direct-to-disk recording - so at the absolute minimum you have 1 mike (that can't possibly capture a symphony) the mike amp, and the cutter head amp. So now you have the "perfect recording" except that every mike sounds different and so does every mike amp.But you can't have that recording, you get the one made from a stamper in some sort of material (like vinyl) that won't take the exact shape of the stamper, and in any case doesn't have anything like the dynamic range necessary. Then you run a needle through it that (to a very high degree of probability) isn't half as precise as the cutter, run up a millivolt or two through at least one equalizer (RIAA) and three stages of amplification (mV, line level, and amplifier). That signal travels through a couple of hundered discrete components (if you're lucky) of some clutch of ASICs to become a useful voltage signal.Only now does the sound (really some simulation of the sound) in front of that unknown mike make it to the mike's analogue, the speaker. But the speaker isn't really the mike's analogue because instead of a single capsule it has at least (to a very high degree of probability) two drivers on each of two sides so the corespondence is one mike capsule = 4 dynamic drivers (and another bunch of signal transformng LCR components at a minimum or a bunch of A/D - processing - D/A ASICs again.OOOOhhh how I love those Black Gate capacitors - they really let you hear how weathered and dry the the poor piccolo player's hands were last winter.

Subject: Re: You gotta' figure....

Posted by Manualblock on Sun, 27 Aug 2006 13:01:13 GMT
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After reading this I have to question exactly how does this whole stereo thing make any difference after all? Is it like some quantum expression of uncertainty? Funny how these threads morph into things entirely of their own volition. Thats why I like them.

Subject: And you really need to use time-aligned speakers too
Posted by Wayne Parham on Sun, 27 Aug 2006 16:28:50 GMT
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Subject: Re: And you really need to use time-aligned speakers too
Posted by FredT on Sun, 27 Aug 2006 16:51:00 GMT
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Time alignment is essential in speakers for accurate sound. I can achieve this with Pi speakers by tilting my head back at a 60 degree angle when I listen.

Subject: Re: You're gonna wind up like the deranged physicist
Posted by Bill Epstein on Sun, 27 Aug 2006 18:20:20 GMT
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catatonic in the corner 'cause he feared falling through the spaces between atomic particles.I have my Reference Recordings of Scheherezade and Harry James, several RCA Shaded Dogs produced by Wilkerson, some Mercury's like the Rach 3 and especially Columbia's and telarcs of the Cleveland where I know the sound of the hall in which they were recorded..These are all I refer to when listening really critically for the effects of hardware on the music. No worries about studios.All we can ask of "pop" recordings is hearing the bass line or whether the lyrics are obscured in the playback or swallowed whole by the singer.I'm knocked out by listening to the 3 way line-up I have right now of Marantz 2215B, the pair of Dignity Audio 300B's and the Jolida 202A that are stacked on top and next to each other so I just switch a few wires and there you are.Plus I can go back and forth between ultra-complex 4-way monster speakers and little sealed 2-way with first order crossovers.Hey, It's FUN!

Subject: Re: You're gonna wind up like the deranged physicist
Posted by Manualblock on Mon, 28 Aug 2006 01:26:32 GMT
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Thats all we can ask of life; to have a little fun. I find it funny when people take themselves too seriously; like the majority of people in the audio trade.The Harry James is recorded too hot; but don't take me seriously on that. The classical stuff I refer to your judgement. And the studious attention to detail in detecting differences I refer to Charlies post.It's all a lark; wot?

Subject: Digital recordings, perfect sound forever????
Posted by Norris Wilson on Mon, 28 Aug 2006 02:14:23 GMT
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Nothing is perfect, so here I am still chasing my tail.But, as long as I am having fun, what can it hurt.

Subject: Re: Digital recordings, perfect sound forever????
Posted by Manualblock on Mon, 28 Aug 2006 11:17:24 GMT
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As long as we don't leave a trail of neglected children and angry wives full of bitterness and regret; I'd say it's o'kay. Unlike Golf as a hobby. Or deep sea fishing."Mom who's that strange guy in the house?"

Subject: Re: And you really need to use time-aligned speakers too
Posted by Wayne Parham on Mon, 28 Aug 2006 14:39:31 GMT
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Subject: Re: The Hardest Thing To Learn
Posted by Bill Martinelli on Tue, 29 Aug 2006 03:27:34 GMT
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Doesn't everyone listen to the perfect reproduction? I agree with Charlie that the perfect cap in the xo is nirvana. You need the good wires, the right room treatment, better have some good power conditioning too. Does all this make for the perfect reproduction? I see it as yes and no. First off. Unless you sat in on the studio session, listened to it, and then listened to the fabrication of what went on the disk,,, and had a perfect memory to recall what you heard years later. Who's really to say if its the perfect reproduction? Do the artist know? So does it matter? I don't think so. All jokes and cartoons aside. The folks looking or the perfect reproduction are looking for what they hear the perfect reproduction to be. Good for you if you need super cables, power cords and wires. Great for the guys who like single driver speakers, horns, planers and direct radiators. Do you like vinyl? CD? tube or solid state. It all makes the perfect reproduction. If you like what you hear then the system you have is making the perfect reproduction of that particular cut/track/song. Keep going and keep searching. Your musical taste will change; so will your perception of what you hear. In fact, the band that recorded your perfect track hardly play it live the way as it was recorded. Since music is an improvisation of the brains perception of how the body should play a musical instrument. Can one system be the best sounding to everyone? Keep upgrading, consolidating and revising. All the good people making amps, decks and speakers are willing to help everyone look for the perfection.

Subject: Re: And you really need to use time-aligned speakers too
Posted by GarMan on Tue, 29 Aug 2006 14:25:44 GMT
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In what direction? Front, back, left, right? I want to try too.
