Subject: Finally... 2 Pi arrived!!!
Posted by Tuan on Thu, 16 Jan 2003 22:18:25 GMT
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After a seemingly long wait, (ordered them 11/02) my factory 2 Pi arrived today. The timing couldn't have been better being the first snow day for Nashvillians. And of course, I just couldn't make it to school with all that snow. LOLMan was I excited. Even offered to help the UPS guy carry stairs them up to my apartment.The speakers were well packed with foam moldings tightly surrounding them. Although, the cabinets are solid and well built, I was a bit disappointed in the fit and finish. The veneer seems to be quite rough and is far from furniture quality. I was also surprised to find a couple of dents on some of the edges along with worn corners. Overall, they simply look very dull and old, nothing like the 2 Pi pictures I've seen. I'm not sure why that is. Maybe I shouldn't have ordered before the holiday season.Needless to say, I was quite disappointed thus far, especially after the long wait. After having them hooked up for a few minutes, placing them on some 7" stands that tilt up a few degrees, I thought they sounded thin and lifeless. The top end along with the upper midbass was a bit hot. I must admit that there are gobs of details and instrument separation was very good with great dynamics, but the sound was just not enjoyable. I wanted something a little fuller. So I tried placing them up against the corners (about 9ft apart from each other with a bit of toe in) and 9ft from my listening position. Well it worked. There's definite change in the sound for the better. Voices are full and crystal clear with a hint of warmth. The bass will go as deep as I can ask for without having to go for my sub. As a matter of fact, I prefer them without a sub. The 2 Pi seems to be quite neutral. It's hard for me to describe really. With my old speakers, it seems as if they will retain a certain sonic character going from one disc to the next. With the 2 Pi, the sound completely changes from one recording to the next. I guess one can say they are more true to the recording. They really do shine with live recordings. One can virtually hear how small or large the room is. The soundstage is perfect, albeit a couple of inches lower (vertically) than I'd like. They do an excellent disappearing act. In the end, the more I listen, the more I like.What more can I say. The 2 Pi sounds clean and clear, with a nice tone and enough of a bottom end to satisfy most music. For those of you who are interested, my room is about 13' x 13'. The 2 Pi's are hooked up to ASL 1005DTI using Valve Art 300B, AES AE-3 with RCA redbase 5692 pre, Sony 555ES and VPI HW19 Jr.So, if someone here can help me get these cabinets to shine a little, I'd be completely happy with these speakers. I believe the cabinets were simply stained (dark walnut) and sealed. Thanks in advance for the suggestions.

Subject: Re: Finally... 2 Pi arrived!!!
Posted by wasteh202 on Thu, 16 Jan 2003 23:52:28 GMT
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I can't help you with the cabinents as I do not know much about veneer. As far as the sound, I would say give them a little more time to break in. My son (his speakers and they are the 2Pi Towers) mentioned to me after about four days "they sound better". I did not know that his hearing was that attune to hearing fine nuances in the music, in fact netheir did he know anything about "break in". Also the 2Pi is not hard to place in a room, but as with any speaker placement can help

or hurt (with some speakers more than others). Keep moving them if you have the ability to work with your room.After you get them placed correctly then if you are still not happy with the sound then I would look into some room treatments, many listeners overlook room treatments and continually change equipement to try to find the ideal component or combination. I would say in many instances that looking at some room treatments is what will be the answer to the problem in the sound.Good luck and enjoy.

Subject: Re: Finally... 2 Pi arrived!!!
Posted by Wayne Parham on Fri, 17 Jan 2003 04:54:16 GMT
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If there are dents and frayed edges on your loudspeaker cabinets, then we need to make a claim for insurance. I sent them out in absolutely perfect condition. I mean perfect. They were stained oak, which is what you asked for. And the veneeer quality and its application were excellent, including the seams. Jason did an excellent job with your speakers, so if they didn't arrive in flawless condition, then we must make a claim.To tell the truth, I am disappointed about it for two reasons. First, they took longer than expected for delivery, which was inconvenient and distressing for both you and I. But the delay was made somewhat bearable in my opinion by the excellent quality workmanship.So if they aren't that way, then the packaging or shipping company is responsible. And that brings me to my second reason to be disappointed - We paid a lot for shiping and handling, which was passed on to you. So really, you paid a lot for shipping and handling. The breakdown of cost is about $65.00 for shipping and about $65.00 for packaging. One or both of these are at fault if the speakers are less than perfect.Were the shipping boxes damaged? Were there signs of hard handling like a ripped open box or smashed corners? If so, then a claim should be placed with UPS. And if not, then a claim must be placed with the packaging company.Please let me know. I would like for this to be looked into. I don't want this to be forgotten about, and I think you should be reimbursed for damages. You might want to take some photos of the damage, in fact, please do and forward them to me. I'd like to show them to the handlers.

Subject: A word about break-in and room treatments
Posted by Jabberwock on Fri, 17 Jan 2003 13:05:08 GMT
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I just want to chime in briefly about break-in and room treatments. My 2-Pi towers have been functional for about six weeks now. Initially I was put off by what struck me as rather forward treble. However, after several weeks of use, the woofers have developed a nice "bloom" and the perceived forward treble has diminished considerably. Must be something about the interplay of the two drivers. Switching to magnet wire for speaker cables also helped give a nice tonal

balance.On room treatments: for well over a year I'd been debating building some of Jon Risch's room treatment panels. I'd already made Jon's quick-and-dirty bass traps (about $30 for traps in two room corners) and really like what they do. But the wall panels daunted me, which was rather silly now that I think about it. For an investment of $30 in materials and a single afternoon's work, I built two panels (48" x 30") and am oh so glad I did. I'm convinced now that without room treatments a person isn't really hearing a system's potential. For apartment dwellers especially they are de riguer.

DIY room treaments by Jon Risch

Subject: Re: Finally... 2 Pi arrived!!!
Posted by Tuan on Fri, 17 Jan 2003 16:54:07 GMT
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I was quite certain my comments about the 2 Pi's sonics were quite positive. I'm pretty sure after a couple of weeks the highs well round off a little and that would fit my taste well. To reiterate, after having listened for over 10 hours, the 2 Pi sound quite nice. The highs can be a bit shouty at times, but the bass is fantastic IMO. I guess I just haven't gotten used to bookshelves with such bass definitions. By the way, I've moved the 2PIs of the mini stand and onto the floor with a DH Sound jumbo cones propping up the front. This added a bit more bass and warmth, which tamed the highs a little.

Subject: Re: some ideas for finishing, if needed
Posted by bmar on Fri, 17 Jan 2003 17:04:51 GMT
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If you have just a stain on the veneer. There are a few things you can do to add a little life to the wood and protect it as well. Stain is just that, a colorant or tint that will change the tone of the wood's color. It offers little or no protection and some "finish" would help you out a lot. Fist, If you have some rough areas or scuffs from shipping. You can lightly sand with 320 or 400 paper. To do this you will have to get the brand name and color of stain that was used. You will likely sand through the stain color and need to apply some new stain. Do this with a rag that is barely damp with the stain. If you flood the area you will have uneven color tones from old to new. After the new sanded areas have dried overnight. I would suggest going over the entire cabinet with a fresh coat to even everything out. All this is only needed if you decide to do some sanding.Now for finish. The most user friendly and easy to apply to a cabinet that you don't need to remove all the components will be tung oil. You can apply 1 or 2 coats a day at first. Apply 1 coat a day after 4 coats so it has ample time to dry and cure before the next coat. 6 or 8 coats of Tung Oil will give you a very nice smooth finish. You can also lightly rub down the cabinet with 0000 steel wool between your last 3 coats of oil. After 4 days pass from your last coat of oil. Rub out lightly with

0000 steel wool and apply 2 very thin coats of paste wax. Some things to be careful of:Veneer is thin and it is easy to sand through to the substrate. Especially on edges and corners. You will not be able to "sand out" a deep scratch or other mark.Tung oil is not a high build finish so and steel wool rubbing should be done just to remove any surface dust or grain that is making your final finish uneven. You could also use a "wipe on" polyurethane or varnish in place of Tung oil. I would suggest the tung oil over a French polish of a Danish rubbing oil. A wiping Varnish would be great but a little more work than an oil. A wiping poly has good protection also but will not pop the grain and reveal the detail the other finishes do.So good luck and have some fun. These are just a few suggestions that may help you out. It sounds like if you ordered the cabinets with just a stain then you had some finishing ideas in mind already.Bill

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Subject: Re: Finally... 2 Pi arrived!!!
Posted by Tuan on Fri, 17 Jan 2003 17:55:25 GMT
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I can live with those minor *imperfections. I'm really enjoying them sonically and have no intention of selling them... ever. So that's not a big deal. I'll definitely try some of that minwax gloss to see if it would make the cabinets a bit more "lush".

Subject: Re: some ideas for finishing, if needed
Posted by Tuan on Fri, 17 Jan 2003 18:30:15 GMT
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Hello Bill,thanks for your suggestions thus far. I'll not try to sand the cabs since I may just screw up. Wayne has informed me that a Minwax clear coat, a single coat, was used to seal.What would you suggest to make the veneer a little more lush/shine? Wonder if I can use some Minwax tung oil over it.Thanks,Tuan

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Subject: Re: some ideas for finishing, if needed
Posted by bmar on Fri, 17 Jan 2003 21:49:39 GMT
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Hi Tuan,It sounds like Wayne has given you a very nice base that you would like to add depth to. No, I'm afraid since it has been sealed already the tung oil would not be able to penetrate the pores in the wood. It would then be a superficial coating that is just problems. There are two

things I can think of that can help you out at this point. You can continue with a few more coats of Minwax, but it would really be best to remove the drivers for this so you dont get a buildup around the drivers. This might be visible much like painting around a door knob.Minwax makes a wipe on poly that goes on in lighter coats. Just follow the directions on the can. I recommend this procedure since you could leave the drivers in the cab. You can still rub out between coats with 0000 steel wool as long as you do not use a water based product. For water based products you have to use a fine paper such as 400 or 600 3M trimite or similar. For added depth and luster to your finish. Use a gloss wipe on poly.rub down between each coat since polyurethanes rely on a mechanical bond and have no burn in. 4 coats should do you, but since I dont use this product you will have to rely on the directions and how it looks as you progress. Now that you have your finish build up with gloss. rub down your last top coat with 400 paper, then lightly steel wool, and paste wax. It's ok to use steel wool after the last coat on water base. You will notice that the final rubbing will bring down the luster a LOT! make sure you judiciously rub with the grain and with even pressure.When you apply the paste wax you will have the most beautiful sheen and luster imaginable. It would be best to stay with the Minwax products since that is your base. A poly, wipe on poly, or wipe on varnish will should have no compatibility problems. A oil modified varnish will age gracefully with an amber tone. solvent based poly will tone out a little with age, while the water based products ad little or no life but offer a very resilient water white clear coat.Bill

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Subject: Re: some ideas for finishing, if needed
Posted by Tuan on Fri, 17 Jan 2003 22:15:55 GMT
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Hello Bill,I'd like to thank you for the advice. I've just ran out a picked up some 400 grit 3M sand paper, super fine steel wool, Minwax wipe on poly clear gloss (as Wayne has suggested), staining cloth and tack cloth. As a non diy type, I'm completely lost and your suggestions are invalueble.Also, what brand of paste wax should I get? As this would make it easier for to stop by Lowe's tomorrow to pick up.Thanks again,Tuan

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Subject: Re: some ideas for finishing, if needed
Posted by bmar on Fri, 17 Jan 2003 22:32:30 GMT
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Ah the paste dilemma. That's a subject only out done in subjectivity by wood finish's and audio components themselves! I currently use Johnson's after all my lacquer jobs and have no complaints. Behlans, Butchers and Minwax are probably good products also. High carnauba professional automotive like Yellow Wax or Mothers is also around.Well then, your off to some fun. keep things clean, take your time and be meticulous. Bill

Subject: Re: some ideas for finishing, if needed
Posted by Tuan on Fri, 17 Jan 2003 23:04:46 GMT
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fantastic Bill.Thank you,Tuan

Subject: Hey Tuan!! Wire is wire, and wax is wax!!
Posted by BillEpstein on Fri, 17 Jan 2003 23:16:55 GMT
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Use Johnson's Paste Wax, it's easier and is great. And if you have any money left over from the speakers, buy stock in S.C. Johnson. You won't believe how many household name products they invented, how many market segments they created and how well everything they make works.

Subject: i'm not going to the home depot seminar tomorrow.....
Posted by replay on Fri, 17 Jan 2003 23:27:03 GMT
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because till & bmar let me do it in the comfort of my home on a friday night? hey pro's, what is your opinion of lemon oil on cabinets? i took a pair of ess amt1's on trade and the walnut veneer was very dry. a couple of coats of lemon oil restored the richness to the wood but 2 months later they are dry again. suggestions?cheers,george

Subject: Re: A word about break-in and room treatments
Posted by BillEpstein on Fri, 17 Jan 2003 23:51:55 GMT
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Thanks for that, JW. Been wanting to hear about the panels. Now I'll have to build them. I have the R-13 rolls in the corner still in their plastic. No WAF, no wife at all!!

Subject: Re: i'm not going to the home depot seminar tomorrow.....
Posted by bmar on Sat, 18 Jan 2003 01:12:12 GMT
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hahaha..... I consider lemon oil and oil soaps to be like glazing compound is for used car guys. you HAVE to sell before the wind blows it away.If its an oil finish. Life is simple. get some Watco or tung and consider it rejuvinated. for a hard finish, I dont know. maybe a wipe on poly but you have to get all the old wax, dirt and oil off.Till, you ever go over anything with wipe on's? I dont use the stuff.

Subject: how about mineral oil?
Posted by replay on Sat, 18 Jan 2003 01:54:02 GMT
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i oil my butcher block cutting board twice a year with it. it holds up well to numerous washings in the sink. i soak the cutting board with oil and overnite the wood absorbs it. lasts about 6 months.i have a teak salad bowl that i never wash, only wipe. all that extra virgin olive oil has developed a nice patina. did you know totem loudspeakers finish the inside of their cabinets? supposed to sound better. the tweaks haven't pitched cabinet material yet, expect to see "monster brand" or "cardas" mdf at home depot soon. shit, audiophile carpet could be next. i'm with till, wire is wire as long as it's thick.george

Subject: Go for it!
Posted by Jabberwock on Sat, 18 Jan 2003 13:38:02 GMT
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Last night I moved the two panels from the side walls to the back wall of my listening room. Wowie! Looks like I'm gonna have to build at least two more. The effect of the panels on the back wall is astounding. The imaging moved back several feet and grew two feet higher, but shrunk width-wise without side panels.