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Subject: Anybody want to hear about Ella?  
Posted by [BillEpstein](#) on Sat, 08 Feb 2003 23:00:35 GMT  
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Subject: Dude!  
Posted by [mikebake](#) on Sun, 09 Feb 2003 00:05:59 GMT  
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If it's Ella F., I do!

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Subject: ella fitzgerald or ella mcpherson?  
Posted by [replay](#) on Sun, 09 Feb 2003 00:10:39 GMT  
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i'd like to hear the former while i look at the latter. is this possible?george

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Subject: Re: ella fitzgerald or ella mcpherson?  
Posted by [mikebake](#) on Sun, 09 Feb 2003 00:18:33 GMT  
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Rodney Dangerfield "My wife and I were making love and neither of us could climax.....I looked at her and said "what's the matter, you couldn't think of anyone else either"?

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Subject: Consonance amp?  
Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Sun, 09 Feb 2003 00:31:40 GMT  
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I think you're talking about Brian Cherry's amp, yes?If so, please do tell!

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Subject: Re: Anybody want to hear about Ella?

Posted by [BillEpstein](#) on Sun, 09 Feb 2003 01:37:09 GMT

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Here she is:I've had Speakerman's very well restored ST-70 playing all the while I was building so I should have been prepared for the EL-34 sound. But this is different.First thing you notice is the front wall of the room becomes a stage with performers. Can horns and 15" direct radiators disappear? Yes!Second is the bass. BOOM! Overdone at times? Yes. but there's a caveat.Low level detail of that bass line is phenomenal. The Schubert ninth SACD Szell/Cleve has really superfluous double bass line in the first movement that you really don't hear in a hall. It's there with Ella. Subtle, but there. And the foot pedal on pedal bass drum. Yes, you can hear the pedal on the Tall Band Jackson Peterson Brown cut 9 drum solo.And PUNCH! Do you remember the first time you heard horns and thought,"this is what live music sounds like"? Hearing Ella is like that. More "live". There's more there, there.Some systems and some ears will probably find Ella "unrefined". The upper mids and treble are as prominent as the rest which makes them a bit shrill or glassy or digital at times. Not all CD's, tho. The ancient audiophile recording "Cantate Domino", track 10 with the ethereal soprano for just 1:10 is just as heavenly as I remember with the Paramours. But the attack and decay of the cymbals on the drum solo "Cafe Blue" track 2 sound a little too hot.Some of this could be the caps I used. "All Clarity Caps All The Time!" But they are also the source of all that inner detail: There's about 10 hours on Ella with 50 suggested for break-in. But I don't buy that extended break-in stuff. Oh, there's more change but the initial impression is probably a lasting one. You can't see them but there are a pair of 6922 driver tubes behind the big toroidal PT that are currently the much maligned Sovteks. Those could be a bit of the upper mid-range glare. I'm waiting for the stock Valve Arts to show up, they were left behind in Hong Kong. And then there's Amperex, tele's CCA's, Siemens etc, etc,.The construction was prtty easy. The instructions were confusing and out of date in some places but Brian Cherry answers questions immediately. And I was forced to learn some things I wouldn't have, otherwise. I bypassed the volume control. The Foreplay is doing a good job. Ella's sensitivity must be about the same as the Paramours. The Goldpoint's gave me about the same gain as with them on the 'Mours.And Ella is really 'built'. Thick steel powder coated plate, roomy circuit boards, quality little parts like good diodes and RCA's, etc. One other thing I didn't like were the output terminals. great huge tunnels of brass to slip 2 little wires into and fill with solder like glue. I prefer the Superior Electric or Cardas type. that's easy to change. Lot's of mods to try down the road.\$600 Airfreighted from Hong Kong. This is a lot of amp for the money.I should probably post this on the DIYHIFISupply Forum but you guys are "family" so you get it first. I think I'll wait for the 50 hours and the Valve Arts before I post over there.

<http://WWW.MerryPranks.com>

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Subject: definitely centerfold material!  
Posted by [replay](#) on Sun, 09 Feb 2003 02:16:27 GMT  
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nice job till! they are gorgeous! cheers,george

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Subject: Re: Anybody want to hear about Ella?  
Posted by [bmar](#) on Sun, 09 Feb 2003 02:58:33 GMT  
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Nice job Till. I was looking at these myself. Sounds like it's a great amp for the bucks. I'd like to see both the 49 hour and 51 hour reports though....Why did you choose the Ella over the Billies?

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Subject: Great write-up, thanks!  
Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Sun, 09 Feb 2003 05:55:28 GMT  
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Thanks for the thoughtfully done review. And thanks for thinking 'bout us and posting here first. That's really cool of you! You know, Stanley Chu was partners with Brian Cherry, and they were early customers of mine. Stanley and I had an ongoing dialog, and I really became quite fond of him. He was the first to point out to me that some high-efficiency speakers were "tube friendly" and others weren't. That was when I began to look for the reason why, and concluded it was impedance swings and the peaks at resonance. Stanley stopped writing a few months before his passing, and I was saddened. But I realized way back then that these guys must be making a good product. They were conscientious and thoughtful, but at the same time they were not the sort of people that made you uncomfortable with aloofness. I really appreciate the folks over at Consonance. One of these times, I really want to get one or two of their products too. But for now, I still need to find the time to assemble my Paramours. Anyway, I appreciate your write-up of the Ella!

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Subject: Re: Anybody want to hear about Ella?  
Posted by [Bob K](#) on Sun, 09 Feb 2003 09:16:35 GMT  
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Thanks for the writeup. It's good to know that someone is making a relatively easy EL34-based kit.

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That's how I got into this madness, with the late lamented Parts Connection Assemblage ST-40 kit, which I built when I didn't know a resistor from a capacitor. Although I listen mostly now to 300Bs, every time I put the ST-40 back in the system I'm amazed at how good it sounds. Although it may be auditory hallucination, I wouldn't bet against the amps breaking in further. I remember that when I first plugged in my ST-40 it sounded like hell. I remember thinking I must have done something wrong, it was so bad. Although it improved after several days, it really took weeks until it got to the "acceptable" level, and it kept getting better from there.

Systems

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Subject: Re: Anybody want to hear about Ella?

Posted by [wasteh202](#) on Sun, 09 Feb 2003 10:31:06 GMT

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Thanks for the write up. I have noticed from scanning the SET & Tube DIY boards that many prefer a powerful EL34 amp to many other tube amps and SET's. I talked with Bruce Edgar last week and he prefers them for his horn speakers systems that range from about 99db to 107db. He will tell you that the extra power will definatly make a difference especially when playing complex pieces of music.

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Subject: Re: Anybody want to hear about Ella?

Posted by [wasteh202](#) on Sun, 09 Feb 2003 10:34:29 GMT

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BTW... do you prefer the Ella to the Paramours? Maybe I missed something but I could not quite tell buy your review, thanks

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Subject: Tube burn in on Ella!

Posted by [spkrman57](#) on Sun, 09 Feb 2003 10:56:32 GMT

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Bill, How's your plumbing holding up??? Anyways, I have to add as additional comment, those "National" brand tubes in my ST-70 are less than 40 hours also, so they are still a little brittle yet, don't have the money for better EL34's yet, just got my Dynaco SCA-35 back from tech(same one who did the ST-70), he is very meticoulus, cleans everything up including the PCB's which almost look new. Guess what, the 35 has much more midrange/high frequency clarity than the 70 does,

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and definitely does not have the bottom end "OOMPH" of its big brother on the cloned 4 pi-pro's. I sent my McIntosh MC-240 to fix up now, that will be the amp for the 4 pi-pro's, nothing like 40 watts of 6L6's pounding the JBL 2226's. Really glad to hear Ella is up and running, you were like an "expectant father to be" during this assembly process, I am really happy for you!!!! Now "Grasshopper", did you get the crossovers put together for your speakers like we discussed, letting the Altec's on 811B horns come through better at 800hz should improve the voicing of your midranges that tubes love. Keep in touch, and by the way, I still believe tubes and speakers properly broke in and aged with care will only get better. I brought out my Adcom 555-II yesterday just to move the 2226's a little bit, my tube amps don't push the JBL's very hard in home use. Regards, Ron (Hey, Where is Marvin the Martian at in the pics?)

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Subject: Re: Anybody want to hear about Ella?  
Posted by [mikebake](#) on Sun, 09 Feb 2003 23:11:09 GMT  
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I still contend that if a given product sounds good on some source CD's and not as good on others, it's still the CD and not the gear. The "shrill/glassy/digital" that isn't there all the time, isn't there all the time because of the recording, not the amp. Or so I believe.

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Subject: Re: Anybody want to hear about Ella?  
Posted by [Crazy Dave](#) on Mon, 10 Feb 2003 14:25:25 GMT  
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"Shrill/glassy/digital" sounds like bad CD (most of them) to me. I do have some good sounding CD's but not that many. I usually evaluate equipment with records where I have many great recordings. By the way, the CD layers of the new Rolling Stones SACD's are very good. You don't have to have a SCAD to enjoy them and I have the original Londons to compare. Dave

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Subject: Chiming in on the digitalitis...  
Posted by [Garland](#) on Mon, 10 Feb 2003 15:52:53 GMT  
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ly live. As the quality of our system improves the quality of the reproduced music often declines!!! I'm often now at the point where I only can listen to a handful of CDs since everything else sounds flawed. But, my god!, how damn good those few do sound!G.

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Subject: Re: Chiming in on the digitalitis...  
Posted by [bmar](#) on Wed, 12 Feb 2003 00:17:35 GMT  
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I agree completely

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Subject: Sorry, just noticed that the bulk of my message was deleted somehow!?  
Posted by [Garland](#) on Wed, 12 Feb 2003 10:01:31 GMT  
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... but the conclusion is all that really matters, I guess. g.

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Subject: Re: Anybody want to hear about Ella?  
Posted by [JLM](#) on Thu, 13 Feb 2003 20:14:21 GMT  
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Please, please keep us informed as she warms up to you. As others here have mentioned, speakers really want to be bullied around (they NEED a big amp) to sound their best IMO. Glad to hear that Wayne likes the people behind the amp. I've been eyeing that amp, but have 9 thumbs and don't want to screw up when the manufacturer is 10,000 miles away. Does anyone offer to assemble Ella's?