Subject: Is Pi for me
Posted by Chad I. on Tue, 17 Aug 2004 03:50:04 GMT
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I have become very interested in diy speakers as of late and I have been searching high and low for a kit that actually looks right for me. My last set of store bought speakers were Klipsch and I loved them but due to finances, or lack there of, I had to part with them.First and foremost I love music, all kinds. I want to be able to relax with some John Hiatt or Mark Knoppler or just rock out with old school Metallica. Then there is my wife who loves country and hip hop...is there such a speaker? I am also very passionate about home theater usage but I want to build a music system first. I plan to use 3 of the same speakers accross the front but would like somthing smaller for the rear 4 speakers..can this be done. I hate to give a budget at this point as regardless of what I get, I have to save for and will have to buy in portions.

Subject: Re: Is Pi for me
Posted by gumby1 on Tue, 17 Aug 2004 06:19:02 GMT
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I've been extremely happy with the Two Pi Tower speakers that I built. I fine tuned my HF driver with a capacitor recommended by Wayne and they sound great. An outstanding product with outstanding service from Wayne.

Subject: Re: Is Pi for me
Posted by Oscarl on Tue, 17 Aug 2004 11:20:45 GMT
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What was the capacitor recommended by Wayne?

Subject: Re: Is Pi for me
Posted by James W. Johnson on Tue, 17 Aug 2004 14:07:18 GMT
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I am a a previous Klipsch owner turned Pi owner myself. If you enjoyed the qualities of Klipsch horn speakers then its likely you will also like Pi speakers.I built the Stage 4 Pis and love them...there is no comparsion between these and my old Klipsch Reference Series speakers.I am building some One Pis for surround duty and will eventually build another Stages Series speaker for center channel duty.If you want the smallest Pi speaker with the most output and probably the

biggest bang for the buck then the Stage Series is an excellent choice.If you have more money and want a small high output speaker then the Pro Series 4 Pi is the one to go with.If you have space for a larger speaker and want to spend abit less then the Theater Series 4 Pis is a popular one.Lots and lots of choices!

Subject: Re: Is Pi for me
Posted by Manualblock on Tue, 17 Aug 2004 15:16:28 GMT
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Hi Chad; As a former owner of Klipsch Cornwalls I see many have chosen this path. I traded them and built a pair of Pi Theater 4's. The beauty of these speakers is this; when I finished assembling them I put them downstairs to break-in. We have a high power solid state system down there and let me tell you they do rock. From Los Lobos to Oasis to Van Halen they lit up the room with sound. I must admitt at the time I wasn't sure of their ability to resolve the finer nuances of Jazz and Classical. About three months ago I moved them upstairs to the listening room. I used a single ended tube amp with a Linn TT and Seduction phono stage. Not only do they resolve, they brought life and breadth to the sound. Dave Alvin to John Prine; Allison Krause and Nanci Griffith, they all sounded real and immediate; like they are in the room. Lush and full; female voices sound true to life, not like the etched glassy sound you get from a lot of the high end stuff. The cabinets are easy to build and the choice of finish is your's. I believe for the price they are the best deal out there. J.R.

Subject: Re: Is Pi for me
Posted by Chad I. on Tue, 17 Aug 2004 17:14:27 GMT
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Thanks manualblock, I love to listen to Natalie Merchant, but also hate to as I have only heard a few speakers that she sounds good on and I simply cannot afford any of those at this time. I have seen her live and that just spoiled any trying to really listen to her at home.I have been doing some heavy research and am starting to narrow down some selections, the hard part will be convincing my wife to let theese monsterous speakers in the house although if done right they would become possibly a phone stand on one side a lamp stand on the other and mabey a t.v stand for the center...who knows.

Subject: Re: Is Pi for me
Posted by Manualblock on Tue, 17 Aug 2004 18:51:07 GMT
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Funny you should mention. I inset the edges of my cabinets and let her pick out nice oak moulding. Then I gave her carte blanche to decorate the tops; now there are picture frames covering the cabinets, and every time I listen I have to look at her family, at least I am allowed to have them in the living room.

Subject: Re: Is Pi for me
Posted by pokey1 on Tue, 17 Aug 2004 21:38:52 GMT
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Please see my message to you in SET.
http://www.audioroundtable.com/SET/messages/210.html

Subject: Re: Is Pi for me
Posted by GarMan on Tue, 17 Aug 2004 22:51:37 GMT
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James,Keep us up to date on the One Pi's. As I've mentioned in previous posts, I'm a big fan of these. Gar.

Subject: Re: Is Pi for me
Posted by gumby1 on Wed, 18 Aug 2004 01:17:09 GMT
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Wayne sent me a list of capacitors to try. I ended up using a 0.1uF 630 volt capacitor in series with the HF driver. It gave me the sound I was looking for. Before I put the capacitor in, the HF driver was too "bright". The capacitor tamed it down enough to make me happy.

Subject: Re: 4 pi stage
Posted by Bill Martinelli on Wed, 18 Aug 2004 02:29:16 GMT
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Of course, Pi speakers are for anyone who loves music and likes to build things themselves.The 4pi stage is the most versatile of the line up in my book. The size is manageable and the sound is big. It's capable of being explicatory and pictorial With a large soundstage and the dynamics that

only a horn tweeter and low distortion cone drivers can offer you.I suggest the 4 pi stage angled back if on the floor, or better yet placed on a small stand of 10"-14"Cant beat the component cost with the kits and there are endless possibilities to build them in just the fashion your looking for.Bill

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Subject: Re: Is Pi for me
Posted by gumby1 on Wed, 18 Aug 2004 03:35:04 GMT
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Pokey1, I answered your query in the SET thread you referenced.

Subject: Re: Is Pi for me
Posted by Oscarl on Wed, 18 Aug 2004 08:02:16 GMT
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Thanks, I will give it a try

Subject: Re: Is Pi for me
Posted by James W. Johnson on Wed, 18 Aug 2004 16:48:49 GMT
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Will do.they are going to be basic, I am going to paint them the same grey as the walls or just plain black. The goal with these is to blend them in as much as possible because I may build two more and run 2 per side.

Subject: 4 Pi Theater vs Stage vs Premium vs Thermionic
Posted by Tightwad on Wed, 18 Aug 2004 18:20:36 GMT
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Setting aside the issue of cabinet size for the moment . . . .The theater 4 pi (and thermionic) has significantly more bass extension, at least according to Wayne's specs.Am curious if the theater (or thermionic) series might be preferable for relatively low-level domestic use, because of this extra extension, or am I missing something?Consider also that I currently use a gainclone, might be moving to SET in the future.

Subject: Re: 4 Pi Theater vs Stage vs Premium vs Thermionic
Posted by elektratig on Wed, 18 Aug 2004 20:16:09 GMT
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Tightwad,I know that Wayne has repeatedly advised that the Theater 4 is the best match for low-power amps and SETs in particular. I suspect that's one reason why the Theater 4s are so popular -- many are using that combination.It works for me!
 Theater 4s + Welborne Laurels

Subject: Re: 4 Pi Theater vs Stage vs Premium vs Thermionic
Posted by James W. Johnson on Wed, 18 Aug 2004 20:21:47 GMT
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Id imagine that alot of things can factor into what speakers might work best for each person.The Stage Series 4 Pi have plenty of bass in my room enough that they can handle music by themselves.My room is small the the speakers are only a foot out from the wall so bass gain is huge, the Stages are nearly perfect for me in every way.

Subject: Re: 4 Pi Theater vs Stage vs Premium vs Thermionic
Posted by Bill Martinelli on Wed, 18 Aug 2004 21:14:06 GMT
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Having heard and listened to all the models in question with both solid state amps and tube amps. I maintain the following opinion.You get what you pay for.I'm not going to say that the Thermionic or Theatre series is bad in any respect. I'm simply saying the more expensive drivers sound more controlled and cleaner to the ears than the less expensive drivers.You cant always pay attention to the specifications. There are lots of speakers around the world that have the same specs (of 40hz-16k for example). Each and every one sounds different even though the spec is the same. Along the same line as that thought comes my next opine, that even though the Theatre series shows a lower bass response, I'm saying the the bass response from a Stage series is "better bass"I've never had any difficulties playing any of these models with smaller amps. Even though the Zmax reaches to just over a hundred on the Stage and Premium stage (pro for that matter too) The amp is less able to control the driver, but the driver is less boomy and more controlled already. So is the control factor a wash? I doubt it and I'm not going to do the math to figure it out. But, They all sound great and since I dont try and play a "concert level" with a SET amp. I don't have any problems and I have always felt the better sounds came from the better drivers such as the Premium Stage, and the Stage.Lots of guys have built different kits and packages and are quite happy with what they have. And they should be, they all sound great.If you want to run a 2A3 or a 45. It is going to sound fine. You just have less headroom and with a 45 and total output will be as such. From building and listening to each and every one of these models. My top picks are the 4 Pi, Premium stage or Stage.Ciao,

Subject: Re: Is Pi for me
Posted by gumby1 on Wed, 18 Aug 2004 21:42:19 GMT
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Oscar, Ask Wayne for the list of capacitors he recommends. You may find one other than the one that I used to meet your needs.

Subject: Re: 4 Pi Theater vs Stage vs Premium vs Thermionic
Posted by Tightwad on Wed, 18 Aug 2004 22:05:54 GMT
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Thanks for your honest (and detailed) response. I appreciate it.

Subject: Re: 4 Pi Theater vs Stage vs Premium vs Thermionic
Posted by Manualblock on Thu, 19 Aug 2004 00:35:34 GMT
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Hi Bill; When you compare the various models, and I know you have different types of amplifiers so it's a good all around exposure; the stage and premium, the premium uses the top end Eminence I believe.On the bottom end sound, can you describe a little what you hear if you don't mind. See I would like to start another project but I cannot determine which driver of the smaller cabinet sizes to use. It seems to me w/o having heard them that the JBL would most likely return the most bang for the buck in terms of resolution, sounding musical and reproducing low piano notes accurately as well as acoustic bass. I also wonder at the differences between the higher end Eminence drivers. I realise that it's hard to describe sound but you seem to have a good way with description so I think it would be helpful, if you don't mind. I am convinced I understand what you mean by better bass I am just curious if there is a sonic signature from the different drivers. Thanks Much;J.R.(The Stage Three with the twelve inch driver; is that a little faster and will it push the bass notes well?)

Subject: Re: Is Pi for me
Posted by Wayne Parham on Thu, 19 Aug 2004 03:14:52 GMT
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Here's the list of capacitors showing the amount of attenuation each provides.

Subject: Re: 4 Pi Theater vs Stage vs Premium vs Thermionic
Posted by Bill Martinelli on Thu, 19 Aug 2004 03:44:17 GMT
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Hi JR.The difference between the JBL and the Kilomax is a tough choice. Blind test, money no object. JBL will come out on top. Wayne has chosen well to make the JBL driver his top dog in the Pro series. It's an awe sum driver and very well respected, (and envied!)As far as bang for the buck goes, I would have to toss my hat into the Kilomax ring. It is more bang for the buck. When you get into the 300+ per driver range. Getting what you pay for begins to have diminishing returns. I personally run JBL drivers. I like them. I pay almost retail for them too! I just dont use enough to be a contender in the pricing structure. (I get TAD at better costing than JBL !) T^he Kilomax is a real tough driver to beat for the money. It sounds clean and deep with punctuality.I have not used any Eminence Magnum drivers yet. These were made with many similar characteristics to other top low distortion drivers and I understand they sound great. I'm considering them for an upcoming project in fact. Also into the ring are older JBL drivers. I have heard some but with only limited use compared to some of the experts who have been in this circle for many more years than I. I hear tell the 2205 and 2225 have a softer suspension and are actually better for home use than the 2226. If you can find these at a good price I suggest a prompt purchase.For the 3Pi which uses the 12" Delta LF. I have not used this driver in a 3Pi. I favor this drive very much and have used it quite often in my own designs. I like it better than it's 15" big brother Delta 15. The Omega 15 will outperform the delta 12 in my book and the Kilomax still on the top of the pile. Two delta 12LF or a pair of magnum 12's might be something out of this world.If you have a budget to stay in. The Kilomax will absolutely not let you down. It's just tremendous. If you can pony up for a JBL, They have the Name, the Performance, the Sound, the Quality and, the, Resale value.I just want to say one more thing in this long winded..... Get what your comfortable buying. They all sound great. There isn't any point in overextending yourself to reach the next level. Get a kit. Work out a design. Have some fun building a project and save a few bucks doing it. Sit back and relax while you listen to things you never heard in music before. It's all about the speaker....Bill

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Subject: Re: Is Pi for me
Posted by Oscarl on Thu, 19 Aug 2004 07:19:02 GMT
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Thanks Wayne,I will be testing the speakers soon, so I hope I don't need to change it.

Subject: Re: 4 Pi Theater vs Stage vs Premium vs Thermionic
Posted by James W. Johnson on Thu, 19 Aug 2004 13:37:11 GMT
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I am not sure about the 12"ers but on paper the Omegapro 15" driver has a considerably flatter

response to 1000Hz than the Kilomax 15" driver. The Kilomax has a pretty nasty dip that starts at 500Hz.I love the Stage 4 Pis , no puny 6" midrange speaker could ever hope to deliver what these speakers bring to my ears.I recently picked up a Parasound HCA-2003 to power them and the combination is unreal. The speakers have litterally brought tears to my eyes with their lovely sound.
http://editweb.iglou.com/eminence/eminence/media/speakpro02/graphs/om15.gifhttp://editweb.iglou.com/eminence/eminence/media/speakpro02/graphs/k15.gif

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Subject: Re: 4 Pi Theater vs Stage vs Premium vs Thermionic
Posted by Manualblock on Thu, 19 Aug 2004 15:33:24 GMT
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Thanks Bill, that was an excellent post and very helpful. In response I will say only that I love my Pi 4's and the reason I am looking is I would like to build something and smaller box seems a good idea. The Kilomax looks to be the right choice only because I have to continue to save for those Martinelli special horns. J.R.

Subject: Re: Is Pi for me
Posted by LAL on Thu, 19 Aug 2004 16:13:29 GMT
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Chad,For my music only system I have VMPS RM40's. These are an absolute top of the line floor standing speaker . For my home theater system I have bookshelf speakers from GR Research. Very nice speakers also. I just completed the Stage 4 Pi's about a month ago. These were my first venture into high efficiency horn speakers. I have to say that I am impressed. No, they are not in the same league with the much more expensive RM40's and they may lack the smoothness of the GR Reseach speakers but they are nonetheless a heck of alot of fun to listen to. They have a great dynamic range and room filling sound that is reminiscent of the real thing. They would be very hard to beat for the price as a combination music/home theater speaker. There is really no comparison between one of these as a center channel speaker and a small bookshelf type. Three of the Stage 4 Pi's across the front would be a truly awesome sound. You might even get by with two of these and no center channel speaker. I am considering something like this myself now(the ones I built are now in my basement rec room). I sincerely doubt you will be sorry if you chose to build the Stage 4 Pi's.

Subject: Re: Is Pi for me
Posted by Wayne Parham on Thu, 19 Aug 2004 23:00:07 GMT
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I don't think you'll need attenuation for the tweeter. If a person wants to attenuate a KSN1038 tweeter for whatever reason, the chart tells you what capacitor values to use for various amounts

Subject: Re: 4 Pi Theater vs Stage vs Premium vs Thermionic
Posted by Crazy Dave on Mon, 23 Aug 2004 14:52:08 GMT
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Hi Bill,Any thoughts on the Eminence Deltalite drivers? They certainly look good on paper!With regard to the 2226. How does it do when playing at low volumes?Dave

Subject: Re: 4 Pi Theater vs Stage vs Premium vs Thermionic
Posted by Bill Martinelli on Mon, 23 Aug 2004 21:09:38 GMT
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Hi Dave,I agree that the Deltalites look very good. I have been told that the Magnum series could sound better in reality though. I haven't done anything with the Deltalites yet, though I would like to because I'm a big fan of all the neo magnet drivers and I especially like the lighter weight. A 12" Deltalites weighs 1/3 the 12" Magnum.The 2226 is a tight driver but personally I have no issue with it at low volumes. Maybe one of the 22xx with a softer suspension would be ideal or optimum. The 2226 is a great all around piece for me. There's lots of good used 22xx drivers out there and I'm always happy to own or build with any of them.I run 2226G which is the 4 ohm model. I like the 4 ohm cone driver with 8ohm compression drivers for keeping the total sensitivity higher. Bill

Subject: Re: 4 Pi Theater vs Stage vs Premium vs Thermionic
Posted by Crazy Dave on Tue, 24 Aug 2004 14:16:52 GMT
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Hi Bill, Thanks for the info! With regard to the Detalites, I was thinking about doing something with a 10" Detalite and a BMS HD540ND, crossed over at 2.2KHz. I think it might make a nice managable sized speaker. My tinking is that the 10" should not be beaming too much at 2.2KHz and that would be a good crossover for the BMS. The only downside I see is that I would have to pad the BMS down alot. If I wanted to do your 4 ohm thing, I could do an MTM (really a WTW) and that would save me 3db on the pad. I never thought that there might be a benefit to running a 4 ohm woofer with an 8 ohm compression driver but I did know that JBL used to run 16 ohm compression drivers with 8 ohm woofers. Do tube amps like this kind of load? I use both tube

and transistor, being a vintage collector. I asked about the JBL because, even though it is a big driver it works in a small cabinet. There are also a lot of them out there, so I might be able to get a pair cheep.Dave

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Subject: Re: 4 Pi Theater vs Stage vs Premium vs Thermionic
Posted by Bill Martinelli on Wed, 25 Aug 2004 01:48:46 GMT
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Hi Dave,If you can snatch up a 2226 for good price, you'll fall in love with it. low, med, or high volume. It's just a great all around driver and it's clean and pure.The Deltalite should be a great driver for your arrangment. I am wanting to do the same thing when time permits. The 4540nd crossed over at 2.2 is perfect. I have been more partial to an MMT instead of the MTM. Either way should be good. You'll need a pair of the 10" because the sensetivity on the 10 is less than you would like. I would wire them in parallel so you have a 4ohm woofer. Tubes? hard for me to say. in most cases a true 8ohm load might be better for 'most' amps, as a generalized statement. Using a 4ohm load for a woofer with a passive crossover and an 8ohm load for the tweeter is not as harsh a scenario as a true 4ohm designed speaker.Bill

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Subject: Re: 4 Pi Theater vs Stage vs Premium vs Thermionic
Posted by Crazy Dave on Wed, 25 Aug 2004 14:28:39 GMT
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Hi Bill,Thanks for the advice! MMT looks better and allows more flexibility with floor loading.Dave

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