Subject: Pi speakers are not just "fun" speakers
Posted by James W. Johnson on Wed, 25 Aug 2004 18:25:00 GMT
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I have heard this more than once and in my opinion it should be that the Pi speaker is the reference and that bookshelf X and floorstander Y are the "fun" speakers.I think one possible answer is that maybe the average consumer is just used to the thinner, weaker , less full sound that comes from the small speakers that most home speaker manufacturers sell. As one guy put it, we as people might percieve change as badregardless of what direction the change is. Since the Pi speaker sounds different then the run of the mill speaker it may register as sounding worse when in reality its actually the more accurate speaker. Ive spent alot of time with my Pis and have tried carefully considered their sound and tried as best I could to be open minded about it, my conclusion is that these are some of the most accurate speakers I have ever heard.Discuss amongst yourselves.

Subject: Definition of "Accurate"
Posted by GarMan on Wed, 25 Aug 2004 20:20:48 GMT
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James,I've lived with a PI Speaker in one form or another for almost a year, and one of the things I've learned during that time is that there are many ways to define "accurate". Like the people you talked about, I was initially taken back by how different the PI Two Towers sounded, compared to something like my Polk Audios. The Polks (and its generic sound) were what I was used to and I didn't know what to make of this 10" paper cone driver.To me, the 2PI Towers has a colour to its tone and in that respect, is not accurate. HOWEVER 1) its tonal "inaccuracy" is non-offensive and I quickly adjusted to it as the new "normal", and 2) it was more accurate sounding than the Polks because of its better dynamics.You know what my big lesson with the PI's are? Dynamics is more important in creating an accurate presentation of live music than a ruler flat response. If a speaker too hot, too warm, or too midrangy, the ear can adjust for that. But if it compresses, it will always sound dead and inaccurate, regardless of how flat the response is.Gar.

Subject: Re: Definition of "Accurate"
Posted by Manualblock on Wed, 25 Aug 2004 23:12:07 GMT
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Hi Garman; I too have Polk RT 25i's and the 450 sub. They are nice for what they are but all these two way sub. combo's start to sound the same flat; lacking prescence and unmusical. Ten yrs. ago I would have never touched horn speakers and big woofers. Ten yrs before that it was what we listened to, horns and big woofers. I know now that much of the music from 1980 -1990 was mixed for the smaller speakers and that is why it sounds good on them.Going back to the

rock/jazz/pop of my youth sounds great on the PI's and now the current crop of mixmasters seem to be utilizing similar systems of old. I think that is part of it.The ear does not perceive a flat frequency response; it has anamolies of it's own as well as effects from trauma(Loud Rock or Jackhammers) medications, environmental issues etc. So who can say what things should sound like through an electronic system.Thats why I will describe the sounds I like but I never call them accurate. I agree that dynamics are the foundation of a good speaker.Thanks for Listening J.R.

Subject: Re: Definition of "Accurate"
Posted by steve f on Thu, 26 Aug 2004 02:22:56 GMT
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Hi Guys,I too vote for "dynamic" as more important than "flat" frequency response. Live music is dynamic. Most loudspeakers can't reproduce that quality. I always feel that something is missing. Therefore I choose Pi.Steve

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Subject: Forgot to mention detail and nuance
Posted by GarMan on Thu, 26 Aug 2004 19:28:06 GMT
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Gave this some more thought last night and it would be a sin to not metion how my PI's are able to present details and nuances that my Polks never could. Aside from dynamic range, the ability to resolve low level details contributes to accuracy.Through my PI's, I was able to hear:- smack of the lip in vocals- rush of air through the singer's nose- sound of turbulance from trumpet solos- the click of the hammer in a piano- sound of a mallet hitting the surface of a tom-drum before the sound explodesNone of this were available from the "generic" speakers I was used to. But with the PI's you get that "live in your room" sound.Gar.

Subject: Re: Forgot to mention detail and nuance
Posted by Manualblock on Thu, 26 Aug 2004 21:18:16 GMT
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I agree with your observations and I believe this is a very worthwhile discussion, especially considering the reasonable manner in which it is conducted. I too have thought carefully on these aspects of sound. The ability to resolve low level details has meaning for me in the way the Pi's will allow small sounds to be heard in tangent with loud and complicated passages in the music.I notice this Particularlly on recordings of Jazz where there may be a hornsection chorus while the bass notes of the Keyboard tracks the acoustic bass in the background at very low volume, the tones of the string bass are clearly defined alongside the bass notes on the Piano. Another pet

peeve with many current speakers is the impression of various instruments changing as they alter key or scale. In other words, I hear brass appear to become larger or smaller as they ascend the scale; same with vocals, the singers head gets larger depending on the notes or key they sing in. I am sure this is some frequency dependent anamolie but I don't hear it with the Pi's.On many speakers certain sounds,tones and instruments seem out of place whereas on the Pi's everything appears in it's natural state, what you hear at a concert; I guess that equates to That Live Sound!

Subject: impressions from my bro and I
Posted by ToFo on Fri, 27 Aug 2004 00:18:18 GMT
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I agree so far with the thread and I want to tell you about my Brother the musician. My brother has never had a "Hi-Fi". He has been playing forever and heard a lot of nice gear at various friends/bandmates houses as well as my stuff, but never been moved to replace his awful gig PA he used as stereo. One day while we listened to my Theater 4's. we played some disks that he knew well. At one point he stood up and said "holy crap! Thats it. Thats really what it sounds like." He usually talks through a CD, but now he was attending to it and hearing things he had never heard. I knew I had to build him some. I gave him Theater 3's for Christmas and now I get a call every few weeks where he tells me how amazing it is to hear yet another (his music collection is enormous) classic as it was meant to be heard. He has since invested in decent electronics and collects music even more avidly than before. As for his appreciation for the nuances, it comes out differently from an audiophobe. He can now clearly hear if the lead vocal is double tracked or which guitar/amp is being used (and where the pickup switch is set for that matter)and it is fun to see him hear a part way back in the mix that he never heard before. I have had many speakers that do these things and some better, but have never gotten his reaction before. I am convinced that it is the Pi's "total package" quality that does it. I still have a great soundstage and detailing, but I have clean, loud power, with dynamics and a smooth presentation that I never got from the small cone and dome stuff. I think that some of my old speakers were amazing, but the problem is they sound bad with close miked and compressed material. in other words almost anything recorded in a studio or since the 60's. I like a lot of classical, Jazz and what I call salesmans cd's, but dammit, sometimes I want to listen to a label other than Chesky or Deutche Grammaphon (nothing against them, but you know what I mean). I have had only one speaker to clearly beat the Pi's at something. For microdynamics and quiet listening my Acoustats have never been beat, but they are tedious to listen to otherwise. They take a 20 foot room to sound good, "sweet spot" the size of a nickle and they don't go anywhere near loud, yes they are in the storage room and I do love my Pi's.Thomas

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