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Subject: Altec 511B / 811B users? opinions?

Posted by [Jerrod Harden](#) on Mon, 31 Jan 2005 22:23:35 GMT

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Who's using these antiques in their hifi rigs? When coupled to a current production compression driver such as a JBL 2426 is horn/driver efficiency about the same as with the 2370A? Seems like I remember Wayne recommending a 6db compensation on these with a 1uf cap on the compensation network. Sound about right? How about running these with the midhorn? I love the way they look. Real cool vintage looking appeal, but do they sound as good as they look? Any thoughts? Take care! Jerrod

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Subject: Re: Altec 511B / 811B users? opinions?

Posted by [BillEpstein](#) on Mon, 31 Jan 2005 23:17:59 GMT

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I've had the 811B driven by the 806A for some time. The 811B with the welds cut and fastened to a wooden baffle has a very present and exciting sound. A bit too much so on some CD's. The 811B with the 2618 driver is a little more laid back but the 2618 really is a second line driver and somewhat veiled. I prefer the Martinelli 17" Woodhorn with the 806A.

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Subject: Re: Altec 511B / 811B users? opinions?

Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Tue, 01 Feb 2005 06:12:39 GMT

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You are right that I've said they sound best to me with 6dB compensation. Their collapsing DI provides some EQ, but a little more really helps if using the horn through the top octave.  
Altec 811 posts

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Subject: Re: Altec 511B / 811B users? opinions?

Posted by [ToFo](#) on Tue, 01 Feb 2005 07:11:22 GMT

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Hi jharden, The 2426 rolls off quite a lot in the top 2 octaves for an 811B. Some really like that sound. 811's actually sound better to my ears with a driver that's fairly hot on top. 811's are incredible with the right driver, but they don't have the coverage of a 2370A. The directivity and response of these two is just so different they are hard to compare. As for the efficiency, JBL's are louder near cutoff, but you have to compensate them a lot to even get close to flat, so you lose the

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juice in the L-pad. An 811B is nearly flat with a PSD 2002 and a 6dB comp so it can be louder in a passive system. You can use a smaller capacitor with an 811 to match a quiet woofer, but you can't use a 2370 with a real loud woofer, unless you use active crossover/EQ. They are two different tools for different worlds. Thomas

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Subject: Re: Altec 511B / 811B users? opinions?  
Posted by [Russellc](#) on Tue, 01 Feb 2005 13:16:52 GMT  
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I feel the 2370 jbl is better, in as much as it more acoustically dead. i like my 511 b much better than the 811b in this regard, but my 511bs are a later harder to find model that comes with the vanes already cut and some kind of rubbery stuff in there. The ones with solid welds will ring more, but they can be modded of course. My 811bs ring like a bell. As to the 2526, it does not roll off any sooner than any of the altec drivers, and sound to my ears to have a little more high end, but maybe its just different. I don't find that much difference at all in terms of response between the 811b and the 2370b, but the directivity may differ due to size, the 2370b is more like the 511b in that regard. the 2002 is a nice driver and all, but not in the same class as the altec or JBL units...that being said, I feel safe in saying that it has a little more on the high end than either the 802, 902 altec or 2526 jbl. ( or 2425 for that matter) It's price is dynamite for the performance given. Just my thoughts, nothing more! Russellc

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Subject: Re: Altec 511B / 811B users? opinions?  
Posted by [Jerrod Harden](#) on Wed, 02 Feb 2005 21:14:04 GMT  
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Thanks to those who responded with information. From the sources I've scoured I've found that the 511B is favored over the 811B. It is reported to offer what many call "bigger sound" and "less strain" while performing every bit as well in the top octave. I'm interested. Anybody have a nice pair of 511B's they would like to part with?

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Subject: Re: Altec 511B / 811B users? opinions?  
Posted by [Russellc](#) on Fri, 04 Feb 2005 21:11:11 GMT  
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Whoops i said 2526 but meant 2426 like wayne uses in the Professional series. Sorry Russellc

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Subject: Re: Altec 511B / 811B users? opinions?  
Posted by [ToFo](#) on Sat, 05 Feb 2005 06:56:16 GMT  
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I largely agree. I like these horns a lot, but there have there different personalities depending on application. Smooth response and wide, flat coverage is my bag. The 2370's do have the coverage, but aren't smooth enough with the drivers I prefer. The Altecs do sound a lot like them with the JBL drivers when listening on axis, but exhibit classic collapsing directivity from their curvature. With the PSD 2002 an Altec is flat and smooth, but on the 2370 there is a large dropout at 2.5K and a strong pointy peak at 7K. I now use Theater 4's with Peavey CH-3/PSD 2002. CH-3's aren't gorgeous, and they don't do big midrange, but they are decently flat, smooth and wide with the 2002. Unfortunately not enough top end with the 2426 by comparison. I'm impressed how three horns give such a wide variance of responses with different drivers. It seems the 2426 has great self damping. The 2002 maybe not. It changes personality a lot according to horn. Funny how the 2426 is smooth on all of these horns. Wish I liked the sound balance of this driver without EQ. The Altec horn seems to damp the best, Then the CH-3 has 2370 type coverage with bit of Altec smoothing, Then the 2370A seems totally loose with some drivers. Hmmm. Thomas

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Subject: Re: Altec 511B / 811B users? opinions?  
Posted by [Russellc](#) on Sun, 06 Feb 2005 03:08:04 GMT  
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In large part its personal tastes and the room you're stuck with. If I can ever get someone to build the boxes I have the drivers for the 7 Pi w/ mid horn and all JBL drivers. with a little compenstion the high end is fine for me. Otherwise, I do keep a lookout for JBL "mini" baby cheeks super tweet, 2405 or something like that, or the slots which could be tagged on for such high frequency deficiencies. for lack of anything better at this time I will be using either 811b or the plastic horn intended for the smaller stage 4 pi on a jbl 2425H drivers. I figure as a three way, the passband for the 811 should hopefully be higher than its problem resonant frequencies.Russellc

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Subject: Re: Altec 511B / 811B users? opinions?  
Posted by [ToFo](#) on Sun, 06 Feb 2005 04:22:26 GMT  
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So true. I hate my living room. My bedroom has great acoustics, but... Anyway, it sounds like you've got the makings of a very nice setup. Now that I think about it, all of my trying with the 2370A/2426 were done with my Theater 4 crossover padded down for the efficiency difference. I do not remember adjusting the comp cap to taste. Hmmm, I am glad we got "talking" about this, or I wouldn't have thought about it. It is definitely worth another try. Now I just have to pry the 2426's back from my Brother.Thomas

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Subject: Re: Altec 511B / 811B users? opinions?  
Posted by [Russellc](#) on Mon, 07 Feb 2005 00:14:29 GMT  
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Yes, worth playing around with. Most of these one inch compression drivers tend to peak a little before the top of their response, (altec and JBL anyway) where upon they droop off a little early, (14 - 16 khz). The compensation circuit can be taylored to push this peak down and extend the top of the response at the same time. sort of like when you push down on the peak, it comes out on the high end, extending frequency response, all for only the cost of losing the peak, and a little overall efficiency. (which in the case of the altec or the JBL is ample) For whatever reason, the 2002 seem to have more extension out of the box. I'm used to Altec compression drivers. At times I can see how some might judge them less than stellar high frequency performance at the very top end...They don't seem to call much attention to themselves. Then a really well recorded cymbal crash happens and you realize the high frequencies are being taken care of just fine. This same driver is carrying the entire load above 500 Hz in my set up. I like the performance of the 511B in this combination. Its a different presentation than the ultra high frequency detail of many "high end" audiophile speakers. while "high end" are also technically interesting to listen to, large sound stages with ultra detail sprayed out in liberal doses, really don't sound like "real" live music to me... Like High efficiency done right, to my ears anyway, can. Combined with tubes is a combination I find irresistible! Just plain enjoyable to listen to.Regards, Russellc

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Subject: Re: Altec 511B / 811B users? opinions?  
Posted by [ToFo](#) on Tue, 08 Feb 2005 08:44:08 GMT  
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Cool!Thomas

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