Subject: Should I build Pi's?
Posted by swett on Mon, 30 May 2005 01:21:33 GMT
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I've been lurking here for a long time and its finally time to build a new pair of speakers. The question is whether to go with something conventional, like the Ellis Audio 1801, or horns like the Pi's?I know these are two entirely different approaches, since the 1801's are extremely insensitive speakers and the Pi's are extremely sensitive. One constraint is that the speaker can't be more than 44" tall, because of where I'm going to place them, so the standard method of building the 7Pi's is out, even though I do have a corner available, so I guess I could make a 2-way version of the 7Pi's. I want to spend around $750 ideally, but I'm willing to go up to $1k. If I did go with the Pi's, there is also the question of active versus passive. I could buy the Behringer digital crossover, which would have a lot of nice features, like the ability to eq for my room, but would require a bit more setup. What would you do in my situation? Also, if I did go with the 1801's or the Pis now, I may still build the other farther in the future, since I have some NHT 1.5's I could upgrade with the 1801's. Thanks, Ian

Subject: Re: Yes.
Posted by Matts_ on Mon, 30 May 2005 03:38:03 GMT
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This is preference on my part, but I'd pick the Pi's or another high-eff speaker over something like these any day of the week. In making the low-eff speakers, the boxes are small, and the "woofer" is not really a woofer- the low efficiency comes from suppressing everything else in a major way to get to it even with the tiny amount of lower frequencies. Why get a good amp if you're going to do that to it? IMHO, you lose all most of the dynamics and quick response you get with something like Pi's. If it's all youv'e ever heard, though, you may like it better. Best thing would be to find someone in your area with some and check 'em out, if you can.

Subject: Re: Yes, I'd love to hear some
Posted by swett on Mon, 30 May 2005 04:15:22 GMT
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When I was at the Mastering Lab in Hollywood I heard Doug Sax's horns, which are either 3 or 4 way, and they were spectacular. Some of the best speakers I've ever heard. I believe they were all vintage Altec horns and they were built into the walls. He said any speaker needed to be able to hit 120dB transient with reasonably low distortion in order to accurately reproduce live music. But I don't have any idea how close a Pi speaker would sound to that. But if someone in the Pasadena/LA area has Pi's, I would love to hear them I know what the standard box speaker is like, and I'm a bit tired of it, but I know the 1801 is at least a bit better than the average speaker. I

was looking at Adrian's site and his horn setup looked very nice. I'm curious what the tradeoffs are of the 10" mid in the 7Pi versus the 6" Adrian uses? If I could fit a smaller mid horn under my 44" height limit, that would be great, or if I could mount the tweeter and mid coincidentally. Alternately, maybe I could build the mid into the woofer corner horn cabinet and that would save me some height? -Ian

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Subject: Re: Yes, I'd love to hear some
Posted by BillEpstein on Mon, 30 May 2005 08:29:22 GMT
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With your budget and size constraints build the 4Pi Pro with JBL woofers and Eminence PSD-2002 horns. Just let the horns sit on top oif the cabinet. That way you have the flexibility to add the mid-horn down the road.Don't worry about the mid-horns. The first time you listen to the 4Pros with a good SET amp you will be blown away!

Subject: Re: Yes, I'd love to hear some
Posted by Matts_ on Mon, 30 May 2005 15:36:17 GMT
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Sounds like you've answered your own question....do what Bill Epstein sez below (or just build the horn in), and you'll have a first cousin of what you heard in the studio....Check out the specs. If the $$ a little tight, get Stage or Premium Fours...you'll be well within your budget and size requirements.

Subject: Used JBL 2425's at Bill's, any used 2226's?
Posted by swett on Mon, 30 May 2005 16:34:40 GMT
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There are a pair of used JBL 2425's(which he says are the same as the 2426's) for $200 on Bill Martinelli's website. Would it be worth buying these instead of the Eminence drivers, or are the Eminence drivers just about as good anyway?Also, does anyone have any used JBL 2226's? My only concern about not building the midhorn into the cabinet is that I'd have to completely rebuild the cabinet later to add the 10", due to my height constraint.

Subject: Re: Should I build Pi's?

Posted by LAL on Mon, 30 May 2005 17:01:18 GMT
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Ian,I suspect a lot depends on your room size,your listening habits and preferences. If you like to listen critically and place your greatest value on such audiophile traits as depth of soundstage, imaging, smoothness and detail the 1801's may be your best choice. On the other hand if you prefer to listen less critically and value dynamic range and sonic impact that will make you tap your toes the Pi's will suit you better. The 1801's are more likely to make you feel the performers are in the room with you, the Pi's are more likely to make you feel that you are in the venue with the performers. I am now experimenting using a Stage 4Pi setting on top of an Adire Rava subwoofer as a center channel for home theater and as a center speaker in a 3 speaker "stereo" played through my AV receiver. I have to say that this combination is pretty impressive. I think the Stage 4 Pi sounds better off the floor a bit. Using a subwoofer and crossing it over at 60 or 80hz makes a really dynamic full range speaker and is great fun to listen to. If I were going to make a stereo pair of floor standing speakers and had the room size and suitable location I would make a pair Pro 4Pi's with JBL drivers and a subwoofer such as the Adire Rava or Tempest, the Vmps, GR Research or PartExpress Titanic in one large cabinet with separate chambers, or two cabinets with matching veneer. The whole cabinet could be less than 44" tall. By putting the sub with the Pi's you get the Pi's off the ground about the right height, you can cross them over above 60hz if you want without worrying about being able to identify the bass as a distinct sound a part from the rest of the speakers, phase issues also don't exist. Using two subs may give you smoother bass and will certainly give you more of it to help the subs keep up with the dynamic range of the Pi's.Larry

Subject: any used 2226's?
Posted by spkrman57 on Tue, 31 May 2005 09:56:49 GMT
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I have a pair of 2226G's (4 ohm), my 8 ohm are gone already and I have (4) of the 2226J's which are in my 4648 cabinets.Just use a .35 mh coil and take 3db off the attenuation off the horn circuit.Don't know if this helps at all.Ron

Subject: Re: Used JBL 2425's at Bill's, any used 2226's?
Posted by Russellc on Tue, 31 May 2005 23:56:23 GMT
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For the price, I'd grab the jbl. I bought a pair of these off Bill M. also.As for your height limit, not only could you do your 2 way 7Pi, but also could do the non mid horn 3 way. It uses the same midrange driver for the mid, its just set in the front of the cabinet, below the tweeter.Russellc

Subject: Wayne, can I have the 4Pi Pro and old 7Pi Pro plans?
Posted by swett on Wed, 01 Jun 2005 04:08:53 GMT
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Also, if I buy the JBL compression driver, what horn would you recommend, and would I need an adapter for those compression drivers?Thanks, Ian

Subject: You've got mail!
Posted by Wayne Parham on Wed, 01 Jun 2005 14:59:15 GMT
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Subject: Re: Should I build Pi's?
Posted by swett on Wed, 01 Jun 2005 15:52:21 GMT
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I really like this statement "The 1801's are more likely to make you feel the performers are in the room with you, the Pi's are more likely to make you feel that you are in the venue with the performers."I think that is a nice summary of the comparison between good horns and good conventional setups. Thanks, Ian

Subject: Re: I'm building them... Midrange options
Posted by swett on Wed, 01 Jun 2005 17:10:22 GMT
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As you can guess, I've decided to go ahead with some Pi's. I'm hoping to buy the JBL compression drivers and 2226's used, which will keep the price reasonable.I'm going to stick with a passive crossover, at least for now, mostly due to simplicity and cost. Wayne highly recommends his 10" midrange, and its affordable, but what would my cabinet options be to keep a horn midrange, but make the cabinet shorter(44")? Could I try to build the midrange into the cornerhorn cabinet to reduce the height? As long as I keep the box volume constant and don't change the rear chamber size, I should be Ok, correct? -Ian

Subject: Re: Wayne, can I have the 4Pi Pro and old 7Pi Pro plans?
Posted by Russellc on Wed, 01 Jun 2005 23:19:23 GMT
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It depends. If you are getting the same drivers I did, they were OEM Jbl 2425h, so are plain fronts with a screw on mount only, no nose piece. for all but screw on horns, you would need the adapter. I got mine from Bill when I ordered the drivers. I think parts express also has these cheap. I bought the basic plastic eminence horn that wayne sells for most of the kits, and it is a fine piece, but must be crossed over much higher than the 511b or 811b altec horns, for example. Of course to be fair, not only are most of the Pi speakers crossed over this high by design, but it is physically much smaller and compact compared to the mentioned altecs.Russellc

Subject: Re: Wayne, can I have the 4Pi Pro and old 7Pi Pro plans?
Posted by swett on Wed, 01 Jun 2005 23:44:09 GMT
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Bill is selling me a pair of Peavey CH-3 horns with the jbl's, which screw right on, but thanks for the reply. As a small perk, they're 1.5" shorter, so I just gained that extra little bit of cabinet height -Ian

Subject: Re: Wayne, can I have the 4Pi Pro and old 7Pi Pro plans?
Posted by Russellc on Thu, 02 Jun 2005 23:53:49 GMT
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Great, you will love the drivers. i have only used them on my A7s, both with their 511b horn (and 500 hz crossover, which is probably a little low for best results) as well as the H290 I believe it is that is used on the 4Pi. Ask wayne for the plans to the 7Pi that is 3 way, but doesnot use the mid horn, but mounts it on the front baffel. It would be the same height as the 2 way version.Enjoy,Russellc