Subject: 3 Pi Theater With 8" Eminence Beta Midrange
Posted by FredT on Sat, 28 Jan 2006 01:19:09 GMT
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I posted this on the High Efficiency Speaker forum, but I thought some Pi speaker owners might be interested too so it's duplicated here. I reconfigured the speakers with the woofer and tweeter in the enclosure just as the plans specify, and the Beta 8 in a separate 0.5 cu ft sealed enclosure atop the main cabinet. In the process I remodeled the enclosures into an "art deco" style. The Delta 12LF is now rolled off with a 6mH 16ga Erse Super Q inductor (0.27 ohms DCR). The woofer low pass filter now controls the midrange driver, with no chages except for the zoebel cap. The sealed enclosure rolls off the bass with a -3dB frequency of about 120hz. The tweeter high pass filter is unchanged. It plays really loud and clear with the 40 watt Audio Mirror SET monoblocks, and the 3 watt Paramours will drive it to room filling volume too.
3 Pi Theater With 8" Eminence Beta Midrange

Subject: Re: 3 Pi Theater With 8" Eminence Beta Midrange
Posted by Matts on Sat, 28 Jan 2006 02:40:44 GMT
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Very nice looking! Bet they sound great, too. Nice to be able to fit that 8" in with such minimal changes to xover circuit.

Subject: Re: 3 Pi Theater With 8" Eminence Beta Midrange
Posted by Stefan on Sat, 28 Jan 2006 10:45:13 GMT
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Excellent job FredT I want to paint my 1 Pi like your Audio Nirvana 8" speakers.Do you tell me what kind of paint you use?

Subject: Paint
Posted by FredT on Sat, 28 Jan 2006 11:27:17 GMT
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This is your lucky day! There are three relatively easy ways to paint a speaker enclosure, and for the AN's I used the easiest: Truck bed liner in a spray can. I used two cans to get three coats on the AN enclosures. The downside is that it remains a bit sticky, it stinks for a while, and it doesn't look very good up close. Be sure to do it outdoors and plan to leave the painted enclosures in the

garage for a few days or your wife may do the "It's me or the speakers" routine. I'm sure you can get some at Pep Boys or the equivalent.The next easiest way is to get a quart of Rustoleum American Accents satin black, plus a small short nap roller from Home Depot and roll the paint on. This looks much better than the truck bed liner. The only downside is that it's a vinyl paint and, while it drys to touch in a few hours, it's damp underneath the dry outer skin for several weeks. So your drivers will stick to the enclosure and if you later remove them the gasket may be torn. Also, don't place anything heavy on top of the speaker for a month or so.The best looking way (other than automotive quality painting) is to use a spray can of Rustoleum American Accents satin black. THe paint in the spray cans is solvent based rather than water based. The downside here is that you need to first apply a good primer or the mdf will suck up the thin, solvent based paint and the finish will not look good. I use two succesive coats of a 50/50 carpenters glue & water mixture with sanding between coats and afterward. Then three coats of the spray paint with no sanding and about 15 minutes between coats. This is what I did with the Pi speakers, and the finish is very nice - comparable to that of black-painted high end speakers.

Subject: The Final Verdict Is...
Posted by FredT on Sun, 29 Jan 2006 22:18:26 GMT
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After listening for a weekend and hearing some discontinuities I didn't like, I finally decided to reverse the changes and restore the 3 Pi's to their original two-way configuration. Looks like Wayne has nailed the crossover for the 3 Pi - the stock two-way version sounds much smoother over the full range than the three driver version. Picture of the final product in the link below.
3 Pi Theater

Subject: Re: The Final Verdict Is...
Posted by j.luis cruz . on Mon, 30 Jan 2006 00:01:49 GMT
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Hy .Fred coul tell me you oppinion of the Pi 3 stock against of the magnepans speakers that look so nice in yours picture..thanks

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Subject: 3 Pi versus Magnepans
Posted by FredT on Mon, 30 Jan 2006 01:16:35 GMT
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The biggest difference is about 12-15dB sensitivity. The 3 Pi will play louder with a 2 watt amp than the Maggies will play with 200 watts. The Magnepan 3.6's are the best sounding speakers I

have owned, but I sold them because they would clip a 110w/ch Sonic Frontiers Power 2 amp, and to my ears the smaller amps, especially SET's, sounded better. So for about $4,500 you can get one of the best speakers in the world, but you will need to spend another $10K minimum to get the amount of tube power needed to drive it. The 3 Pi doesn't have the resolution of the Magnepan, but I prefer to listen to it with my 3 watt Bottlehead Paramours over the Maggies with a monster amp. Other than that it's hard to compare them because two speakers couldn't be more different than the 3 Pi's and the Maggie 3.6's. Try to imagine two women: One is tall & thin, PHD in Economics, high $ net worth, sophisticated, enjoys opera, likes to dine at expensive restaurants, but with a personality that's a bit on the cool side. The other is short & curvey (but not fat), high school diploma, has $500 in her checking account, enjoys C&W music, likes Shiner beer and backyard barbeques, is warm hearted, and cooks the best apple pie in town. Which would you be happier with?

Subject: Re: 3 Pi versus Magnepans
Posted by Manualblock on Mon, 30 Jan 2006 02:23:21 GMT
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Do they shop at Victorias Secret? Do they talk a lot? Do they let the dog sleep in the bed?

Subject: fred thanks but *
Posted by j.luis cruz . on Mon, 30 Jan 2006 04:03:13 GMT
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thanks for you answer but what about of the line array that also look fine it could best compare to the 3 Pi .

Subject: Re: 3 Pi versus Magnepans
Posted by FredT on Mon, 30 Jan 2006 10:23:15 GMT
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The thin one shops at Victorias Secret; the short one prefers Target except for when she's buying you a surprise gift of a 100' roll of Royal speaker cable, for which she shops at Wal Mart. Both talk a lot, but not in bed; there the short one is noisier. The thin one doesn't like dogs; the short one loves them so much she lets them lick her face.

Subject: Re: fred thanks but *
Posted by FredT on Mon, 30 Jan 2006 10:30:28 GMT
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You're comparing a $480 kit to a $3,750 kit. The line array has greater bass impact, especially at high volume levels. The 7" Vifa midwoofers are a bit warmer and have a slightly cleaner midrange than the 12" Eminence woofer. If the Eminence tweeter is an 8, the Fountek ribbons are a 10+. You can hear the difference in any music with soft strikes on a ride cymbal; there's quite a bit more resolution. The image localization is better on the 3 Pi; the soundstage is bigger on the line array.

Subject: And I Forgot to Mention...
Posted by FredT on Mon, 30 Jan 2006 10:48:08 GMT
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The thin one prefers Krell Reference electronics driving Magnepan or Martin Logan speakers. The short one prefers an Abraxas Audio Spud amp driving Pi speakers. Neither talks while you're listening.
Abraxas Audio

Subject: See and Hear at GPAF
Posted by FredT on Mon, 30 Jan 2006 12:50:18 GMT
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The stock 3 Pi Theaters are the speakers I'll be taking to the GPAF for the "Show & Tell" room. If you have a favorite amp and wonder how it would sound with the 3 Pi Theater speakers, bring it, and we'll hook it up and give it a listen.

Subject: Re: And I Forgot to Mention...
Posted by Wayne Parham on Mon, 30 Jan 2006 15:14:51 GMT
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Subject: Re: And I Forgot to Mention...
Posted by Manualblock on Mon, 30 Jan 2006 17:44:25 GMT
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Fred; you have described the all time dream women; so where are they?Are they pigments of your imagination?

Subject: Re:Rent, don't buy
Posted by Bill Epstein on Tue, 31 Jan 2006 02:17:42 GMT
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The thin, sophisticated beauty is a control freak and won't let you be you. The short curvy one, for all her virtues, has a brother she sneaks money to and takes his side whenever you confront him.I've '[been]owned [by]' both.

Subject: Re: And I Forgot to Mention...
Posted by Shane on Tue, 31 Jan 2006 03:56:43 GMT
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Ooo, ooo. I'm got one of Jef's spud amps on the to do list this spring. Since I'm short, fat, and starting to lose hair, get my speaker cable at Walmart, have a set of Pi's, and Maggies or ML's make me feel totally inadequate----I'll take the unsophisticated one. They're more fun!

Subject: The Two Women
Posted by FredT on Tue, 31 Jan 2006 11:19:50 GMT
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The best characteristics from both combine to form a composite of my wife, except she doesn't like opera or C&W, and while she loves Target she believes Wal Mart is evil incarnate and won't set foot in their stores even to buy my beloved Royal speaker cable, and occasionally she talks while I'm listening to my system, but a glare shuts her up immediately. The worst characteristics are from a former girlfriend whom I fortunately didn't marry. I wonder if she's one of Bill's exes.

Subject: Re: And I Forgot to Mention...

Posted by FredT on Tue, 31 Jan 2006 11:41:50 GMT
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You and I have a lot in common except I'm beyond "starting" to lose hair. I hadn't looked at Jeff's web site in a few months, but when I did it occurred to me that the Spud Amp kit is a helluva bargain at $299. If I were getting into tubes on a tight budget this would be a good starting point, and with a pair of One Pi kits for another $150 plus a mass market DVD player for $75 I could build a $700 system that would outperform any $2K system from mainstream high end manufacturers.

Subject: Jef's amps
Posted by Shane on Tue, 31 Jan 2006 14:56:05 GMT
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Jef and I have corresponded some about me building my own Darling amp. He has given me great pointers and insight when I go to build my own. That is one thing that I really admire about Jeff, that he is willing to help and answer the "stupid" questions that we newbs have. The first three amps I'd like to build are the 6EM7/13EM7, 6197 Spud, and a stock Darling. Then on to an EL34 SE to replace the one I got from Wayne that UPS damaged. I've got a tubes for everyting. But, unfortunately, funds are limited, so I'm starting to round up parts here and there with not enough to build anything yet. Soon, soon.

Subject: Re: The Two Women
Posted by Manualblock on Tue, 31 Jan 2006 17:43:25 GMT
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You're a funny guy Fred. Sounds like you picked a winner there.Wal-Mart is evil incarnate... thats a riot! Good taste.