

Tony:

After listening to your Classic 12.1 speakers for a while now in my system I wanted to pass along some observations that may benefit potential customers.

I had heard of Tonian Labs and both PHY/AER by reputation thru the Audio press and various message boards. However, I never had a chance to hear the speakers in person until the California Audio Show this past July. I visited about 25 rooms over two days and the Tonian Labs room was one of the two best rooms I heard (the other being a ridiculously priced field coil speaker that cost more than my first house). I fell for your speakers hard and fast. In a show with many big brand names, the Tonians stood out. Simply speaking, your speakers do tonal accuracy, pacing and coherency as well or better than any other speaker I have heard. As a music lover, I go to a lot of symphony and chamber concerts. Your speakers absolutely nail the sound of unamplified instrumental music. I was suprised, in comparison, how many other speakers have a hard time with this. The PHY and AER are the most musical and non-fatiguing wide banders I've yet listened to. I should also point out that your modified ribbon supertweeters blend in seamlessly with the drivers. The top end has all the sparkle and extension one could wish for. On the other extreme, the bass is nice and tight and should be more than sufficient for the majority of music lovers save those with specialized interests (organ music etc.) I was so impressed with the Tonians at the show that I placed an order for the Classic 12's within the week.

I took possession of the speakers in October and have been listening to them on almost a daily basis for two months. For the most part, there have been no suprises. The same great sound I heard at the the Audio show is now in my listening room. I will say that of all the speakers I have had in my room over the years, the Tonians are the most revealing of upstream equipment. As such, It has taken a bit of time to find the equipment with the best system synergy. Your advice on the cabling and interconnects was spot on. Fancy, expensive cabling and IC's that look like garden hoses don't seem to work very well, mostly adding some unwanted sonic colorations. Your thin as a wisp cabling does a far better job of "getting out of the way" of the music. On the amp side I have found a great match with the Atma-sphere S30 OTL. The speaker also works well with a variety of SET amps (45,2A3,300B, GM-70) but the OTL pairing seems to me to have just that little extra bit of clarity and immediacy. While I am a tube guy at heart, I have also heard that the Tonians work very well with simple, class A Solid State amps like First Watt.

Overall, I am extremely pleased with my purchase and would strongly recommend that audiophiles put the Tonians on their speaker short list. You make a wonderful speaker that deserves a much wider audience.

All the best,

Scott Mathews