

Some Thoughts Tonian TL-D1 MKII Speakers



I love these speakers. I have been listening to music and equipment for many years. I just wanted to share my thoughts on these speakers because I think there are probably a lot of listeners out there who would really enjoy these in their system. Tony deserves credit for making such a fine speaker available, hopefully others may be inclined to give them a listen. I truly don't believe I could get a similar degree of musical satisfaction elsewhere for anywhere near the same price.

Briefly, just for context, I started listening to music seriously years ago with large multi driver speakers and big push pull tube amps. I have never moved away from tubes, but other things have changed. I gradually moved to single ended 300B amps, a very expensive pair of monitor speakers and a powered subwoofer. In my mind this was an improvement, but still somewhat boring. After muddling in musical enjoyment mediocrity for awhile, I went out on a limb and bought a much less expensive, mass loaded transmission line single driver speaker. Now this was more like it! I felt like I gained everything, and lost nothing, a fine degree of sonic continuum in the all important midrange as if cut from the same cloth, and improved extension into a very tuneful bass region and generally just more exciting. I kept the sub in circuit but it was really only for the added sense of air and ambience it lent to the presentation. Now that I had more efficient speakers I started trying other low powered amps and finally settled on a very nice WE 91-A type 2A3 amp. Yes! At this point I now knew that I was a true dyed-in-the-wool SET, and single driver speaker adherent, and would probably stay that way. Time passed, audio nervosa set in and I felt I needed to try something new, so I started reading up on speakers. I came across Tonian speakers, and found nothing but high praise from everyone that had commented on these. It's not really a single driver speaker. Dare I make the switch? Well I did, and not only are they better than my beloved single drivers, they are substantially better. They really have no shortcomings that I can hear as far as speakers go. I didn't think my old speakers could be improved upon in the detail department, but the Tonians provided a whole new level in the form of harmonic overtones and ambient cues I didn't even know I had been missing, and in a very musically satisfying way. Tony modifies both drivers and they integrate absolutely seamlessly. It sounds to me as if the mods obviate the need for a crossover and the drivers integrate naturally in acoustic space. This is just my guess, but that is how it sounds to me. Frequency response sounds to be extremely flat and smooth with nothing in the spectrum being thrust forward or receding, there is no perceived trade off between drivers. The same goes for tonality, very homogeneous. The bass in my fairly large and open listening area is more than just adequate, it is very good unless you pay way more, and maybe at the expense of the rest of the frequency range. Only my opinion. The bass is full, tuneful, detailed, and tight, all at the same time. In fact multiple different percussion instruments playing at the same time are tracked very nicely. Try some Poncho Sanchez. You can also adjust bass output using different size opening covers on the back of the speakers. I have a pretty nice REL Stadium III sub that I am just not using with these speakers.

When listening to your favorite music and just waiting for that part to come along where to music

congeals, it is unlikely to happen with these speakers, dynamics and speed are first rate. Sound stage width, depth, and placement are all exceptional in my experience, due in some part I would think to the unique cabinet.

These speakers are not just another box with drivers stuck into it. I've had some of those. Tony has engineered these speakers and cabinets into a very compelling musical instrument and at 95dB they will let your low powered amp sing. I just can't imagine a better choice for a flea powered amp and possibly more powerful amps as well. With just my mighty 3.5 watts the presentation is very unstrained and powerful sounding at any volume I care to listen. I couldn't be happier. Also, the cabinet joinery detail goes a long way toward making these very ascetically pleasing. If you get yours you will see what I mean. Also, these speakers do benefit from a period of burn-in so be patient.

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