

A Revelation from Furniture?

By: Jon Spelt

If I told you Merle Haggard's bass player is suddenly so powerful he sounds as though he studied with Charles Mingus, or that I cracked open the Haydn Creation today (that arrived from the record club six months ago because I forgot to send the card in) and sat there in awe until the first disc was over and UPS was knocking at the door, or that as soon as the show on PBS about the fury of weather and the sea ended I rushed into the listening room to play the Koss recording of Vaughan Williams "Sinfonia Antarctica" and had more visual imagery from the CD than a TV show you'd have to think either they're putting hallucinogens in the Wauwatosa water or that the latest breakthrough hi-fi component arrived today. I can only assume the former is not the case because my neighbors appear unfazed.

That leaves the latter as the reason for my listening addiction on a perfect summer day when I should be out enjoying the weather. And what is this breakthrough component? Does it contain vacuum tubes or transistors? Is it analog or digital? Music lover or home theater enthusiast oriented? Happily, it is none of the above, but applies across the board. You see, a truck pulled up today and delivered our demo shipment from Zoethecus Audio.

Monica, initially dismayed at the size of the cartons, soon took over the set up job, delighted to be working with beautiful pieces of wood (!) furniture in the Ultra Fidelis listening room. The end result was an amplifier base and a five shelf maple equipment, um, "rack." No, that's not fair. If I feel funny calling the Target pieces "racks" then this is ludicrous. The Zoethecus pieces are indeed furniture. In fact their "Spouse Acceptance Factor" is so high it becomes "Spouse Demand Factor."

The great thing about the Zoethecus component furniture is that you can buy it if you care only about sound (and picture quality, I suspect) because it will create an improvement more than commensurate with its price and you can buy it if you care only about how good your equipment and your room look because hoo doggies it sure works aesthetically. And if you care about both, well your ship just came in.

Sure, it costs "good money." But let me tell you without running down a laundry list of components in use that today the "rack" (see?) and amp base accounted for ten percent of a \$15,000 system and yet they made me forget about all the components standing by which I could have pressed into service which I know sound better and cost more than what I had hooked up. The furniture made the system sound so good, I just sat there and got lost in the music.

So the bottom line is it's time to start thinking very seriously about what your equipment is sitting on if you care about the results. Hey, the bright side is it has the potential to have as significant an impact on your listening and viewing pleasure as all the cabling and power line conditioning in your entire system and I have to tell you I get a hell of a lot more pride of ownership looking at a beautiful piece of furniture that I know is making the system work a lot, lot better than it did before. At that point, it's even kind of a bargain.