

Fascination of audio components recommended by Masanori Hayashi

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The basic of audio reproduction is to enjoy your favorite music in good sound. Since it varies from person to person, the selection of components should be devised by taking restrictions of budget or width of the room etc. into consideration. As guidance, I will mention "themed" selection. Rather than struggling with budget allotment aimlessly, it is better to choose components by your feelings such as "I want to listen to Namie Amuro with a powerful loudspeaker", or "I am profoundly interested in a recently popular British brand". This is because the directivity of target is thus clarified. The British brands, such as the Cambridge Audio and ROKSAN, appear also into this choice. For the person who is madly in love with PIEGA aluminum enclosure, "Premium series" has been timely put on the market. You may feel the new wave from "made in Switzerland".

Also, I would say, "Audio component should be unique in its own way!" The Audience 1+1 V2 loudspeaker introduced in selection 1, for example, employs the world's most highly efficient driver in its ultra-mini size enclosure, inviting us to the "spicy" high-end world. Since a huge amplifier for a small loudspeaker is non-well-matched, the slim and stylish NuPrime would be a good combination. This selection is also quite natural, and you can enjoy the different national backgrounds appeared in sound and design.

Moreover, analog and high-resolution component offers important topics in audio. Analog reminds me of my favorite vacuum tube amplifier. So I tried the system combination with my favorite Macintosh. Nothing is so pleasant than to listen to "Waltz for Debby" feeling the delicate warmth and calm rotation of turntable. As for high-resolution reproduction I attach my mind to "team Japan", because I want to immerse myself in the pure and straight expression of audio performance itself, and not the taste or individuality as is often the case with overseas products. I do hope my selections will serve as a reference.

Let's enjoy compact high-end world!

The size is small, so small as is, but the sound is 100 percent high-end. That's the Audience 1+1 V2 loudspeaker from the United States. The price 320,000 yen per pair is slightly expensive, but it's the noted loudspeaker that became the center of attention also at overseas show. The 1+1 V2 is nicely finished in wood that is also loved by pro, and it would be perfect for those who want to enjoy stylish audio in small space.

The size is width 15cm x height 20cm x depth 25cm, and the weight is 3.2kg. The world's best high-performance 7.6cm full-range drivers are mounted on the solid cabinet. The dual bi-pole structure stored in jewelry-like enclosure is unique enough, and the drivers are arranged in cross-like figure when seen from top. This enables you to obtain rich low-frequency sound and vast sound stage.

To be combined with this charming loudspeaker, an exaggerated component will not match well. The NuPrime of the same U.S. brand will fit to this loudspeaker. Both the CD player and the amplifier have a slim size of 23.5cm width, and also have a very tasteful atmosphere. The CDP-9 is a compact DAC/CD/preamplifier, and since it is equipped with 99-step volume control, it can be directly connected to power amplifier. The built-in DAC is excellent. You can enjoy up-sampled sound while listening to CD (PCM 44.1kHz -768kHz, DAS also convertible). The tone is like high-resolution, and the atmosphere is very best.

The STA-9 is a stereo power amplifier with simple face. It works on class-D operation of original circuit system, and is capable easily to drive also a large-sized floor-standing type loudspeaker.

Good sound, good design & balance - this is a nice matching. The freshness of class-D operation and warm feeling of vacuum tube is good match for the 1+1 V2 sound, enabling near-field listening like a precision miniature garden. I would like to give full space and to be immersed in Stacey Kent vocal singing with back string and in the real feeling of three-dimensional live concert hall.