LIVE MUSIC

Back in 1940 when I started working seriously with loudspeakers, my aim was to approach reproduction of original sound as closely as possible.

In 1946, when I produced the first components for the KLIPSCHORN® loudspeaker, that was still my aim.

REproduction with accuracy has been my aim ever since. To that end, I “recalibrate my ears” frequently at live concerts, and I urge our clients, factory workers, salespeople, and engineers to do the same. Many of our employees own speakers which they have probably built themselves as authentic KLIPSCH® models.

A notorious magazine ostensibly “devoted to high fidelity audio”* recommends comparing speakers to each other, not to original sound! “Educate your ears” but “listening to live performances is not effective”! How ridiculous can they get? Comparing speaker A with speaker B, then with speakers C, D — etc., can only measure speaker A with a rubber yardstick! Really, now, isn’t it pretty clear that the valid yardstick must be live sound?

Yet, I recall a hi-fi addict who liked his BLASTOPHONIC 88 speakers with loudness presence, absence etc. controls better than live music. That is his privilege; he paid for what he got.

But back to the objective; accuracy of REproduction. Once accuracy has been approached to a reasonable degree, one can always enhance, compress, expand, and alter tonal response. But if such traits are built into the speaker system, can it be restored to accuracy? Probably not. Each increment of “signal processing” adds its contribution of distortion, and restoration would be like trying to “restore” an out-of-focus photograph.

Somewhere in the magazine article the suggestion was to lay yourself in the hands of an “expert”, and they even named one! That party happens to deny the existence of modulation distortion and claims even if it did exist, it would be inaudible.

So, go to live concerts and get your ears calibrated, and then listen to speaker A versus B, A versus C, etc., and if one of those happens to be one of ours, your calibrated ears will recognise the cleanliness (freedom from distortion) of ours. You may notice also the dynamic range which does not need “enhancement”, the genuineness of tone (no need for “tone controls”), and perhaps most of all, the freedom from “listener fatigue”.

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* I’ll not dignify the magazine by name.