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T.H.E. Show 2018: The Beatnik's Bongo Awards, Part 1

June 11, 2018 Jack Leave a comment



I'm going to start the Bongo Awards for T.H.E. Show with two systems that differ in price by over \$700,000 and they both made beautiful music in a hotel room, which was no small task!

Best Room Price No Object: High Fidelity Cables



I don't know where to start with this incredible sounding **High Fidelity Cables** room put together by Rick Schultz (pictured), and when I say put together, I don't mean an assembly of brands that sound great. Every component in the system had Rick's magnets in them from the custom-modded electronics to the speakers. It was my first chance to hear Rick's new speakers, and just let me tell you, they are incredible. The sound of this system was warm and alive, as well as detailed and silky smooth. It was a system that was very hard to fault on any genre of music. [Read more](#) about the sound in my post from Day 3.

The Bongo Beat Newsletter – Spring 2018

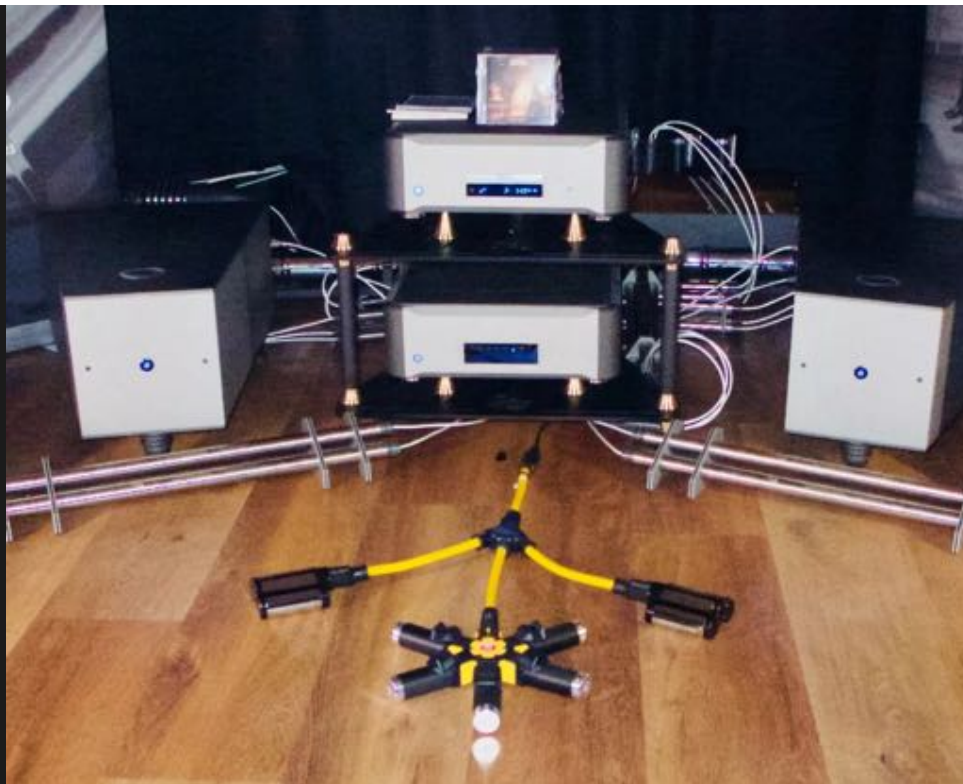


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This system had a two-fold purpose, first to make beautiful music, and second was to demonstrate the power of Rick's magnetic cables and power conditioning. In the picture above, you see four of his **MC-0.5 Magnetic Wave Guides** in the front that sell for about \$300 each and two of the **MC-1 Professional Power Conditioner** that sell for \$1,600 each. Rick demoed of the system with and without these items, and it was really impressive. In fact, I came home with two of the MC-0.5s to play with. The great news is you can easily spend five figures on his cables, but you can also start with interconnects that sell for only \$700.

The speakers in this system are going to sell for around \$89,000, and compared to what many six-figure speakers sound like, they will be a bargain. It would be nice though if Rick could make a slightly smaller version of the open baffle design.

I asked Rick for an estimated cost for the entire system, and he said around \$750,000. I know it's way out of my price range, and I expect out of range for most people, but it does show what is possible. If you get a chance, you need to hear this system.

Best Room at Real World Prices: Ryan Speakers



The **Ryan Speakers** room at T.H.E. Show featured their new **S610** that sells for \$3,995. I understand this speaker debuted at AXPONA, but as large as AXPONA was this year, I never got back to their room for a second listen. It turns out that this was my loss. By the way, that's also one of the best things about smaller shows; you have time to really listen, choose some music you know, hear some new music and visit.

The rest of the system in the Ryan room was a **Pass Labs INT-250** integrated amplifier at \$12,000, and the **Cardas Audio Clear Reflection cables**. The source was a **Small Green Computer SonicTransporter** for \$1,250 and a **PS Audio Directstream DAC** at \$6,000. The power conditioner was an **AudioQuest Nagara 5000**. If you look at the show report I did on these speakers, I [wrote more](#) about their wonderful sound in an earlier show report. This was one of the best systems at T.H.E. Show for any price.

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