

# DECWARE™

## AUDIO FORUMS

05/19/18 at 11:01pm

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Members viewing this topic (2): **Greg12, Steve Deckert.**

### 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier (Read 36119 times)

**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
☆☆☆☆☆

**25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
11/16/17 at 8:53pm

- [Modify](#)
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OK, I have an update.

Back Story: The Zen in Decware is like surfing a wave where the wave is in charge, not the surfer.

I have decided that this years Christmas design fest where I unplug for a couple weeks and dive back into new Decware amp designs, is going to be something different than intended.

I have decided to go with something other than the 6C33 mono's. As great as they are, even in a simple chassis they are going to be expensive, similar to the TORII MONO's and while a hand full of us would love them, the majority of people would just be bummed due to the price.

Instead I am going to come out with our 25th Anniversary Zen amp. *(Keep in mind that the Zen Amp pre-dates Decware's going on line by several years.)*

So far the prototype of this amp concept is owned by Lonely Raven. This is hopefully going to smoke that. Achievements are seldom higher than the goal, so set the goals high.

If it works, it will be so good as to be a game changer.

There is also going to be some new offerings in 2018 in the ZKIT department we're looking forward to that everyone will love!

So those holding out for the 6C33 mono's can have another year to save up for them, you would have needed it anyway.

Happy Holidays!

Steve



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

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173.17.209.237 50.80.57.123

**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆☆

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #1 - 11/17/17 at 6:42am

- [Modify](#)
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Wow, Eric has gushed about the sound of his Zen amp "all revved up" and I know the 25th anniversary amp will really be something! I know I'm not alone in wanting to see this product appear and in details along the way.

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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184.56.37.219

**Palomino**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆☆

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #2 - 11/17/17 at 9:31am

- [Modify](#)
- [Split](#)
- [Delete](#)

I very much like Eric's amp.

Maybe this is the reason I just couldn't pull the trigger on a Zen amp purchase despite wanting one for several years. I didn't know it but I was waiting for the Zen wave to arrive. The cosmos are tricky.

Posts: 1565

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**stone\_of\_tone**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆☆

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #3 - 11/17/17 at 7:07pm   

My ZMA and the 25th Anniversary Zen Amplifier, will be all I ever need.

Steve, I'm excited to read about it as you take what you developed in Eric's.....to new heights!

.....consider my order placed.....I like serial #0001 (just like it's listed under my Zen Mystery Amplifier). 8-)

Thirteen (13) years of beautiful music produced with my Zen Select #76.....driven by my voltage adjustable output AA Gear... . Yes, I have been adjusting voltage output into Amps since 1994..... And came the SE84CS into .... My Listening Room (May/2001).....the rest is history....as I scrapped my jaw off the floor....albeit moderate to loud listening levels....but you get the picture.

Time to Coda back....and with a ZBIT (no longer use the AA) if necessary. All in good time of discovery. I look forward to this.

Steve QUESTION: Will you be sticking with the 6922 tube variant for input or switching to the 12AU7, for the Anniversary Edition?

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference I2S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

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**busterfree**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆☆

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #4 - 11/18/17 at 11:49am   

Not that you are taking suggestions, but I would like to see meters and tube regulation in stereo 2W Zen if it works out. This would be unique to the 25th Anniversary amp. How about Cardas copper speaker binding posts and better RCA inputs in an effort to further differentiate this amp?

Regardless, I look forward to hearing about it.

Posts: 289

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**stone\_of\_tone**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆☆


**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #5 - 11/18/17 at 6:50pm   

Yeah, I was thinking those things too buster.....SuperZen UFO2 ....all that and the upgrades .... EricLR prototype + more

.....there lies the intrigue of speculation.

.....now I'm also thinking ....why not mirror along side the Anniversary development ....Rachel? ....now I know the special magic of the SE84CS (13 years)...but to hedge for more headroom.....maybe I want/need for Steve's topology mojo upgrades in the Rachel UFO.....

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Audio Magic Mystic Reference I2S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
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**stone\_of\_tone**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆☆

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #6 - 11/18/17 at 7:07pm   

.....and to the Lurkers/Learners out there about these great Amps....don't be bashful....sign up and ask questions please! .... Great people here.

.....www's too. ....so, not to lose site of all this .... Why would I want the Anniversary Amp, when I have a Decware Zen Mystery Amplifier? Are you kidding!? .....Steve's topology Pentode's run in Triode genius .... And his next incarnation of this.....yeah, I'm in.....

.....and NO....my ZMA is not ever for sale. I just need Decware/Triode, when I want it. My well deserving Stanford grad son.....gets my ZMA if my Stent and my favorite craft beers get the better of me :D

PR for the Marathon is 2:40:41. Hereditary factors for the Heart are a cruel mistress. My son was an All Conference champion in Cross Country.

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**stone\_of\_tone**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆☆

Listen Often/Listen Deep

Posts: 2901

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**busterfree**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆☆



Posts: 289

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**stone\_of\_tone**  
Seasoned Member  
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Listen Often/Listen Deep

Posts: 2901

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**stone\_of\_tone**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆☆

Listen Often/Listen Deep

Posts: 2901

Sony as Transport  
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Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats



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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #7 - 11/18/17 at 9:44pm



**Quote:**

Steve QUESTION: Will you be sticking with the 6922 tube variant for input or switching to the 12AU7, for the Anniversary Edition?

It wouldn't be a Zen Triode Amplifier if not for the original tube compliment, so the tubes will not change.

If the 1st watt  
sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

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173.17.209.237

**beowulf**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #8 - 11/18/17 at 11:35pm



I'm sure it will be great, but a fourth iteration of the "2 watt zen amp" in the lineup? Why not trick out a Rachel or even better, create a non-bridged pair of 12 watt Rachel mono blocks (SET + watts for a little more headroom)? The whole reason I was interested in the 6c33c monos was because it was SET and headroom.

Posts: 1350

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107.77.245.10

**stone\_of\_tone**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #9 - 11/18/17 at 11:39pm



.....as I asked/stated in my Reply #361...Beowulf....good reiteration...asking? ....will see what Steve says.....

Listen Often/Listen  
Deep

.....thanks Steve about my question.....makes sense....and I love my 6922 tube variants/bought and paid for....to apply.

Posts: 2901

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference I2S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
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**jorgen**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #10 - 11/19/17 at 5:21am



What can be done in the Zen triode amp that isn't already implemented in the mono version available? I asked if possible to add meters in my pair, but because of design Steve could not fix that at the time. Some talk about V-caps that isn't on the option list, but is an upgrade, may be an option here? Two inputs maybe? But keep the pass-thru option as well. Of course, one chassis... I was under the impression that the mono is pretty much maxed out

Posts: 209

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79.161.29.24

**busterfree**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #11 - 11/19/17 at 5:53am



**Quote:**

What can be done in the Zen triode amp that isn't already implemented in the mono version available?

This is the interesting part of the process by stepping back from a particular design and trying again without any assumptions. I envision a lot of trial and error.

Is there a better cap or a boutique resistor at 2x price that sound better?

Posts: 289

Will a small OC2 fit in the UFO2 chassis in place of XLR?

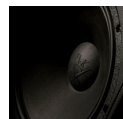
A second chassis for power supply, large ZMA cap, or dual rectifiers?

A Zen without a tube rectifier?

How about a slightly larger chassis footprint with wood base and optional retro tube cage with Decware logo?

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**busterfree**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★



Posts: 289

Email PM 184.59.83.96

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #12 - 11/19/17 at 6:06am

Modify Split Delete

Quote:

I'm sure it will be great, but a fourth iteration of the "2 watt zen amp" in the lineup? Why not trick out a Rachel or even better, create a non-bridged pair of 12 watt Rachel mono blocks (SET + watts for a little more headroom)? The whole reason I was interested in the 6c33c monos was because it was SET and headroom.

I would like to see an improved Rachael. A single chassis 12 watt SET would be nice. I often wonder what could be done with this amp if there were biasing options like the ZMA or if it could use the KT120 or K150 tubes.

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**stone\_of\_tone**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Listen Often/Listen Deep

Posts: 2901

Email PM 184.59.83.96

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #13 - 11/19/17 at 7:51am

Modify Split Delete

Yeah, I have to admit my interest in the 6C33C's was the more headroom in triode output. I would want the Rachel or Rachel's at 12 watts per channel, with the Upgrades.

.....and yes, the biasing and don't forget the balancing option I have with my ZMA. I'm spoiled by this.

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Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

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**beowulf**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★



Posts: 1350

Email PM 75.168.103.112

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #14 - 11/19/17 at 2:31pm

Modify Split Delete

@ stone - agree, I was not really interested in the 6c33c mono's for the tube compliment, but rather the wattage/headroom and SET circuit.

Living here in the dry hot San Diego climate, I don't think I would ever be interested in the 6c33c mono's anyways due to the heat of that tube. it's already mid November and we just turned our A/C off last week and opened our windows ... but a couple of days ago it got so hot I was almost tempted to turn it back on. I live in a place where we keep our windows open pretty much all winter then close them back up late June to early July and run the A/C pretty much until late October all the way up to mid November when we can open the windows back up again. I've read those 6c33c tubes are like mini space heaters and don't think they would bode well for my area.

@ busterfree and stone - a hot rod'ed 10-12 watt Rachel (in either single or mono chassis) that could come in between the price of a Torii Jr and Torii would really fit the bill for me. Not only would that be my dream amp, but it would fill a gap in the lineup as far as wattage goes as well.

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**Lonely Raven**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Jack of all Trades,  
Master of None

Posts: 3100

Email PM 72.220.1.25

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #15 - 11/21/17 at 10:33am

Modify Split Delete

Quote:

So far the prototype of this amp concept is owned by Lonely Raven. This is hopefully going to smoke that. Achievements are seldom higher than the goal, so set the goals high.

Quote:

Wow, Eric has gushed about the sound of his Zen amp "all revved up" and I know the 25th anniversary amp will really be something! I know I'm not alone in wanting to see this product appear and in details along the way.

When I brought my little Zen amp to Steve, it was kind of tough for me to do because it's an early serial number, and completely unmolested. He genuinely gave me grief about it, pointing out that of the early Zen amps, not a single one has come back for mod or repairs; they they were overbuilt in order for him to have that lifetime warranty that his amps are known for.

But Steve also taught me to trust my gut; if something doesn't sound right, or feel right, or just off and/or I think it can sound better, do something or say something about it! And I really felt that my old Zen amp didn't keep up with the newer zen amps - it still had the transparency it's known for, and still does it better than the ZMA...but I felt like all the newer Decware amps were making the little Zen amp feel slow and old. So I pressed on and told Steve I wanted the UFO mod that he kept suggesting was absolutely worth the cost "and whatever else you think it needs - I think you know what I like in an amp"

That last part turned into a \$700 ouch! Remind me not to tell Steve to do whatever again unless I win the lottery! ;D

So when I showed up to pick up the amp, Steve had this mischievous grin from ear to ear - I like when I see that, it means the audio gods have whispered something to him and something clicked. And Steve started in with his you'll be blown away, it will melt your brain (etc) and I'm like yeah, yeah, I've heard this before and I'm a picky bastard so to me it's rare something is as good as someone thinks it is. Well I'll be damned, this amp just blew me away!

I've heard the UFO Zens and tweaked out Selects and whatnot and ProgRobs always stood out as being pretty amazing to me - and I honestly felt this surpassed that one. My little Zen had the transparency and honesty it's known for, but it's faster and slicker and appeared to sound at least twice as loud! I easily fill my 25' x 15' x8' home theater with the little Zen and my MG-944 or my Omega SuperHemps. For about a two months after getting the little Zen back I honestly had zero interest in listening to the ZMA - and that's saying a lot because that's like saying I didn't need to eat or drink two months, LOL.

Can I run it out of Steam? Yeah, that's really the limitation of the little amp - there are times I miss the grunt and horsepower of the ZMA, but the little Zen now feels like it does so much more that the ZMA hints at but can't do. Steve mentioned some of his tweaks to me, and I won't steal his thunder, but it boils down to being able to voice not only the tone of the amp, but the speed and honesty. Add to that he's got some great build quality tweaks to eek out a little bit more, so I'm expecting the 25th Anniversary Zen to surpass mine (and be totally worth it).

I'm bummed about the 6c33c amps - not that I could afford them, but to me, they were probably the only thing that could bridge that gap between the honesty of the Zen and the Horsepower of the ZMA. But if it's a \$10k amp, 99% of us will want to hear it at DecFest and otherwise just shrug it off...like seeing a \$100,000 supercar roll by; yeah it's great, but if I have to choose between a house and a supercar, well... Even if the 6c33c monos can be brought down to the \$6000 range it would be out of reach for most of us, but that's getting it closer to the ZMA territory which even I was able to afford (after selling a car and a rare guitar! LOL)

I wonder if there is space in the lineup for a 6c33c Zen amp. I know a few of you guys that posted don't seem to care about the tube, but more about the headroom, and I get that (seeing as how I run my little Zen out of steam, I do get that!). But like how Steve pioneered the SV83 tube because there is something special about it, I think the 6c33c tube has something special about it as well, even given it's quirks and expense - there is something there. I think I could get by with a 6c33c 25th anniversary Zen amp! LOL

Sorry for the Will level of long post, but it's rare that something exceeds my expectations, and this refreshing of the Zen amp is one of those times. For those of you in the market for this kind of flea watt purity, I wholeheartedly say go for it!

P.S. I like to think me trusting my gut is one of those ways that the audio gods nudge Steve. ;)

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**stone\_of\_tone**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆☆  
 **Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #16** - 11/22/17 at 9:15am   

Yeah, I'm out of the running for the 6C33C's. As you stated LR, I too, am fortunate to have afforded my ZMA at the time and Cabling (+ my Adagio's). .....NOS Tubes too.....

Far as the 2 and 6 watt Zen's go? I have faced the facts.....I'm addicted to my ZMA.....right through its Cabling to my modified Adagio's. I can't go back.

DECWARE BLACK FRIDAY!  
My Christmas and Birthday present to me? I am ordering the ZROCK2, Friday 11/24. A good 20% of my Redbook collection (read/Rock)....should benefit from this beauty.

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference I2S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

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**ginny**  
Verified Member  
☆☆☆  
 **Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #17** - 11/22/17 at 12:22pm   

Is there a Black Friday special???

If so, what is it?

Posts: 37

Oppo UDP-203 transport / Oppo Sonica / Neotech (AC) / Torii MKIV with type II beeswax caps and Tungsol 6L6 / Brickwall power isolation / Analysis Plus black oval 9, solo crystal oval, digital crystal / Tekton Pendragon

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**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆☆  
 **Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #18** - 11/22/17 at 12:27pm   

Received in an email:

Nov 20 at 6:23 PM  
To  
Lon Armstrong  
Message body

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

On Anything Decware Makes with at least one tube or speaker in it!  
24 HOUR SALE starts on 11/24/2017  
Save \$50 on any tube gear Decware makes

Valid on 11/24/2017

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Save \$100 on any Decware Brand loudspeakers

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 184.56.37.219

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**beowulf**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★



Posts: 1350

 **Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #19** - 11/22/17 at 3:37pm

@ LR - cool story dude and I'm sure its a fine amp!

Pardon my being underwhelmed with this latest amp in development ... it's just that I already have a Zen Select and I'll go out on a limb and say that a majority of Decware owners already have and/or have had an iteration of this 2 watt amp in their kits at one point. There's already 3 iterations of this amp in the lineup as well, so I just don't see any reason for a fourth one when there's other areas of untapped potential that people have been waiting for ... i.e. a SET with a little more headroom.

If the 6c33c's are going to be too expensive I understand that Steve may not want to continue with the development of them, but putting the breaks on the development of the 6c33c's to make yet another iteration of the Zen Triode 2 watt amp when people were hoping for a SET amp that had the potential of 18 watts is kind of a let down (for me at least).

Anyways, no offense Steve I'm sure it will be a fine amp for whomever may want to purchase it.

p.s. Happy Thanksgiving to all ... heading to Vegas to spend the holiday with mom, big sis and family!!!

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★




If the 1st watt

sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

 72.220.1.25

 **Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #20** - 11/22/17 at 4:04pm

**Quote:**

Pardon my being underwhelmed with this latest amp in development ... it's just that I already have a Zen Select and I'll go out on a limb and say that a majority of Decware owners already have and/or have had an iteration of this 2 watt amp in their kits at one point. There's already 3 iterations of this amp in the lineup as well, so I just don't see any reason for a fourth one when there's other areas of untapped potential that people have been waiting for ... i.e. a SET with a little more headroom.

You make a fantastic argument, and don't worry I plan to continue with the 6C33 amps, just not right now, because as I said, the ROI will be too slow at least for this year.

As for a fourth iteration of the Zen amp, the 2 watt Zen Triode is the legacy of Decware and I can make it appreciably better than anyone has ever heard one, so I have to do it.

For those wanting more SET power than the 6 watts, firstly understand that the 6C33 amps are all about the tube and I would pusue them even if they only made 2 watts.

If you want a 12 watt SET amp, you simply bridge a pair of SE341.5's. There is no way to get to 12 watts any cheaper and maintain the Decware sound. People don't realize that SET costs a LOT more to build than push pull. The power supplies have to be twice as big, and if you use directly heated triodes to keep the hum down the power supply becomes twice as complicated.

To that point, the 6C33 mono's that I prototyped are in fact the 2 watt Zen Triode Amp built with 6C33 tube as cost effectively as possible. The result is at least 6 or 7 times the price and the weight and the heat.

Beer is here - more later.

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**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

"Love without  
guts is  
worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

 173.17.209.237

 **Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #21** - 11/22/17 at 4:48pm

What I think will be interesting with this Anniversary amp will be the sound and signature of a mono'd pair. They would probably have grunt and sparkle and be all many systems would need.

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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184.56.37.219

Steve Deckert Administrator  
★★★★★

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #22 - 11/22/17 at 8:14pm



Many people don't realize that a Decware SET amp is fundamentally different when bridged than I would say probably most if not all retail tube gear. That difference is in the output stage where in a Decware amp it floats. Specifically there is no connection from the negative speaker binding post to ground like there is in virtually everything else.

Because the outputs float, and the transformers run a non-standard ratio they function rather well in series as opposed to in parallel into most speaker loads. Being in series means that the two tubes are in series as well. When the transformers and or tubes are in series, they become one. They do not have to match. Their differences compliment the whole. In contrast when output stages or tubes are in parallel, the differences fight each other causing an audible smear or veil over the music.

This is why you can bridge a Decware SET amp into mono without any obvious penalty. The 12 watts you're all wanting is a pair of SE34I.5 for around \$3K. I can not build a 12 watt stereo SET that sounds better for less than that or even for 50% more than that. Sure I could set up a KT120 or KT150 and advertise it as wonderful, but so far I fail to be impressed. I have listened to both single ended and they don't have it. Not surprising, but had to try it.

If 12 watts won't do it, then you need to move into the push pulls. Your speakers aren't fast enough to discern the difference when you compare the two in the Decware line. Other companies, yes, the difference is painfully obvious even on your inefficient speakers. Not so here.

It's been my opinion since the beginning that people should put there money into the speakers and run a 2 watt Zen amp (The super serious ones anyway). It's a big commitment to run large speakers that are around 100dB with response down in the low 20's in a room that can support it and it's not cheap. Instead everyone goes the other direction, bigger amps, smaller or inefficient speakers.

I've done the best I can within the window of opportunity, which is to say the window that defines the fidelity vs. power curve (2w ~ 40W) since anything outside that window can not compete.

Precious few people have actually followed this advise and own a pair of SE34I.5 strapped into mono, so consequently it remains a well kept secret.

As for making the SE34I.5 better with tube regulation, I might do that, it just depends. Voltage regulator tubes are not in current production anywhere, and are not all that easy to find in any real quantity, so I have to plan wisely what amps would use them, and that is done with price.

So that's where I'm coming from. That said, as mentioned I have every intension on building myself a pair of 6C33 mono's that look good. Likely in the original sketches I submitted that match the ZTPRE. Once I have done that, it really won't be a problem to make more, since I can buy 1 pair of chassis for 90% the cost of 10 pair of chassis, I will own 10 pair of chassis just to build my own pair. I'm going to go to the trouble because the tube has something special that I appreciate and is non-user friendly which also appeals to me on a personal level. 😊

Happy Thanksgiving!

Steve

If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304



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173.17.209.237

Steve Deckert Administrator  
★★★★★

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #23 - 11/22/17 at 8:26pm



It's true what Lon says, as everything I just talked about applies to the 2 watt Zen's as well. In fact it is only a 3dB difference in level between the 6 watts of a bridged 2 watt ZEN and the 12 watts of a bridged 6 watt Zen so by far the biggest bang for the buck is a pair of SE84UFO or UFO2 bridged into mono.

Many have discovered that 6 watts is enough in large spaces with speaks that are 94dB or higher. The assumption is of course that there will be no bass compared to say a 60 watt amp. False. Same bass., Usually better. Why? Because a 60 watt amp is paired with 86 dB speakers that have a moving mass of 80 grams and the 6 watt amp is paired with a speaker that has a moving mass of 20~40 grams making the later two to four times faster. Faster bass is always better bass. How low it goes is only a function of the cabinet size and tuning, not the amplifier.

If my true interest was in profit, I would present you all with a nice 300B amp for the same price as a TORII, but it wouldn't sound as good. You would never know that because you would never own both.

Steve

If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304



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173.17.209.237

stone\_of\_tone Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #24 - 11/23/17 at 9:27pm



Well, as I stated, I'm firmly in what Steve mentioned of his fidelity vs. power curve/window. I'm a firm believer. You will not find me running a Class A/B Amp (in my Listening Room).

I'm at the higher watt rate of 38 and peak power (AB1) of 114 per channel when I push my ZMA.....which is often.....with my higher moving mass of x grams modified Speakers.....that absolutely has crushed all contenders that have entered.

Listen Often/Listen Deep

Posts: 2901

.....I will leave it here. 8-)

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference 12S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

75.168.103.112

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #25 - 11/28/17 at 5:25am

**Quote:**

It's been my opinion since the beginning that people should put there money into the speakers and run a 2 watt Zen amp (The super serious ones anyway). It's a big commitment to run large speakers that are around 100dB with response down in the low 20's in a room that can support it and it's not cheap. Instead everyone goes the other direction, bigger amps, smaller or inefficient speakers.

What speakers would make the short list?

74.83.81.140

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #26 - 11/28/17 at 7:20pm

Actually it can be done with 94dB or higher. The trick is the cabinets bass response and extension. I have had a pair of Imperial Horn cabinets at 28 cubic feet per side that were never less than 100dB regardless of the numerous combinations I played with, and a 2 watt Zen amp would just crush you. While the 94dB won't crush you, they are more than enough for musical satisfaction. I find the trick is when you find yourself listening to a 2 watt zen amp and you forget your not listening to a 40 watt amp because the bass and punch is the same. Then you know you have a great speaker. The speaker's sensitivity is such that with either amplifier, your listening level is easily reached with one watt. In that world, the smaller amp can often have the advantage and come out victorious in a head to head shoot out.

Back in the 1970's radio shack designed a nice poly woofer sold for the diy crowd to "improve bass response". It was a high Q driver with an fs of 33Hz or so, and could be in either an infinite baffle or a 5.29 cubic foot ported box. By infinite baffle, they meant a wall in your house. Cut a hole in the wall and install the driver. It was only 89dB. It marked a point in the audio timeline where efficiency was no longer a big priority because solid state was the new thing and power was cheap but still we were all used to large boxes. It took several more years for speaker box sizes to shrink.

Today, if you put a single 8 inch driver in a nearly 6 cubic foot cabinet you'd be laughed out of the room. Most manufactures can cram at least 5 drivers or more in that amount of space 😊

I have found over the years that the biggest reason not to have too big a speaker in a small room is imaging. Typically the large speakers are hard to make disappear. The Zen amp is however so good at making giant speakers invisible that it works more often than not.

In our line, the HDT and the DM947 are best we offer pre-built that are efficient enough and have the bandwidth to sound like a big amp is driving them with only 2 watts. We do have plans for the Imperials online and also our corner horns as well as our Imperial SO (Sub only) which can be used horizontally across the front of a room and paired with smaller open baffles to create a completely realistic experience on 2 watts.

Horn speakers, good ones, sound heavenly on single ended triodes. The two go well together. Use anything else and you will not like the horn for very long.

Back in the 50's it wasn't that uncommon to find stereo systems built into the house. High Fidelity was a novelty and celebrated. Today it is taken for granted, and compressed and downsized to fit in you pocket. How special. It's up to you and me to save it!!!

173.17.209.237

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #27 - 11/29/17 at 4:43am

I have to be careful about what I say in response to the comments regarding a 25th Aniversary Zen Amp because I'm afraid that after experiencing the 2 watt based system that I have I may not be able to be all that objective. You see I've become a Zen Snob and make no apologies for it.

I have followed followed the "philosophy" and continued to work with it in order to achieve it's full potential. The results have led me to the conclusion that a lot more is possible with with a 2 watt Zen Amp. That the fidelity that is possible is completely disproportionate to the power.

Yes, I understand that certain speakers require more power, but IMO, that does not mean that it will result in higher fidelity, just in the ability to drive speakers of lower efficiency. The two are not necessarily related.

At one time I would excuse the prescence of "ungainly" components as being a necessary evil, not so anymore. In fact I now acknowledge that such components have become repulsive to me. No offence intended here, just a statement of how I feel, after all beauty is in the eye of the beholder and there's no accounting for taste, including mine.

So, in conclusion; A 25th anniversary Zen Amp? - It's about time to ramp it up to the next level!

50.101.47.56

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**

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**Dave1210**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Posts: 951

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

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**JOMAN**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Posts: 192

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**Lon**



Seasoned Member



"Love without guts is worthless!" Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

Reply #28 - 11/29/17 at 7:22am

JOMAN wrote on 11/29/17 at 4:43am:

So, in conclusion; A 25th anniversary Zen Amp? - It's about time to ramp it up to the next level!

Agreed! I think a bridged pair of these upcoming amps may be the ultimate amplification for my audio/visual system, and I will definitely consider that in the future.

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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184.56.37.219

ginny

Verified Member



Posts: 37

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments? Reply #29 - 11/29/17 at 9:01am



I have read a recent post by Steve regarding a pair of 2 watt Zen Amps..."by far the biggest bang for the buck is a pair of SE84UFO or UFO2 bridged into mono."

Please pardon me if i missed it, but when is the release date of the 25th Anniversary Zen Amp? I am considering the possibility of buying 2 of these to drive a pair of 95db Tekton Pendragons in a 2.0 ch music/HT system.

Which amp to buy has been the hardest decision to make. Having read alot about the SET made me consider the Zen & Rachael, then worrying that there would not be enough power, the Torii Jr and MKIV became likely candidates and preferably the MKIV because of it's bass and treble adjustments.

I just can't get my mind off of the SET amps, and now hearing about the upcoming Zen amp mod, AND Steve's mention about a pair of 2 watt Zens is series: "Many have discovered that 6 watts is enough in large spaces with speaks that are 94dB or higher."

Using an iphone db meter app (and i know it's probably not the most accurate), i have determined that we listen to music at an average of 85db and a peak of 98db at 6'. If a pair of 2 watt Zens would accommodate those levels with music and also provide enough power for DVD...consider me in! Source will be an Oppo Sonica and Oppo UDP-203 for DVD transport.

An intervention from the audiophile gods on amp and interconnect cables would certainly be welcome because i'm banging my head against the wall here.

I also want to say "Thank You" to Lon, Will & Lin for previous advice.

FWIW, Christmas present to self will be seeing my name on the Decware Amplifier waiting list.

Oppo UDP-203 transport / Oppo Sonica / Neotech (AC) / Torii MKIV with type II beeswax caps and Tungsol 6L6 / Brickwall power isolation / Analysis Plus black oval 9, solo crystal oval, digital crystal / Tekton Pendragon

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108.171.134.189

Lon

Seasoned Member



"Love without guts is worthless!" Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments? Reply #30 - 11/29/17 at 9:41am



Ginny, at the present the 25th Anniversary Zen Amp is something that Steve will work on with the idea of possibly debuting it next October at the 2018 DecFest. So. . . some time to go before it's a new model on the website if it becomes so, maybe a year.

The truth is that matched with an appropriate speaker any of the Decware amps will give amazing music. I've gone through quite a few and have some gathering dust because it's so hard to part with them! So you can't go wrong. . . and it's a hard decision to make.

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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184.56.37.219

alper\_yilmaz

Seasoned Member



Posts: 204

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments? Reply #31 - 11/29/17 at 2:43pm



Hi Ginny,

I would definitely start with one, rather than two SE84UFOs. Your speakers are efficient enough to be driven by one amp. I would invest in a high-output buffer/preamp, though, in order to run the SE84 to its limits. That is what I do and I have been very happy with the results even though I am using much less efficient speakers than yours (91dB, 2.5-way speakers with relatively more complex crossovers).

In a later stage, you can still invest in a second one, if the first does not satisfy you volume-wise.

Best,

Alper

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199.52.13.132

beowulf

Seasoned Member



Posts: 1250

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments? Reply #32 - 11/29/17 at 4:24pm



I've read some comments in more than one thread on this forum that running bridged pairs always take away some of the magic. Hence my not ever wanting to buy a second Zen amp and run them bridged. I would also assume that this would not effect the Zen mono's.

Knowing that I have heard about the reduced magic (when bridging them) a few times on this forum was why I was suggesting Steve to build a pair of non bridged Rachels, but after hearing his explanation on why he doesn't want to I understand that it is too costly ~ so it doesn't make sense as very few could afford them.

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**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

Email PM 72.220.3.94

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #33 - 11/29/17 at 4:50pm

Modify Split Delete

Wouldn't affect the Monos as they aren't bridged, but one chassis per channel.

I'm sure there's a *little* loss in bridging but there's also a gain. Life is full of losses and gains and balance. . . .

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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**beowulf**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★



Posts: 1350

Email PM 184.56.37.219

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #34 - 11/29/17 at 9:06pm

Modify Split Delete

Lon wrote on 11/29/17 at 4:50pm:

Wouldn't affect the Monos as they aren't bridged, but one chassis per channel.

I'm sure there's a *little* loss in bridging but there's also a gain. Life is full of losses and gains and balance. . . .

Yes, but the question should be ... Is *any* loss in fidelity more important than 3dB or so louder volume?

Maybe it's just splitting hairs as I've never heard them in such a configuration, but I've talked with enough people that it would have me believe that it does make a difference in sound quality and to me the loss doesn't seem worth 3dB gain in volume. IMO it would be better to have a real set of mono blocks in the wattage you need to drive your speakers with the authority that you want.

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**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

Email PM 72.220.3.94

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #35 - 11/30/17 at 6:01am

Modify Split Delete

Without experiencing it ourselves it's hard to tell either way. To be honest I react from reading the opposite, that the extra gain made the amps more appealing with someone's loved speakers with a tiny loss of magic. No use having a bit more magic if you really can't hear it at the right volumes. To me it really does boil down to the magic of the amps suiting the speakers. I've fallen in love with speakers that have more magic than others for me, and 3 more DB may keep that magic even if the amp loses a touch of its magic.

Jeez, we're talking about magic! I think I'd welcome an opinion from Steve about this. I think in my case, in love with my HR-1s and used to the different magic of the Toriis I might well be able to enjoy the Zen amp magic with a bridge pair, especially of what I imagine a bridged pair of Anniversaries would deliver. Steve is the best judge, and we have time to find out.

There are many ways to skin a cat, and the interesting part of my experience of the last few years is that my "purist" ideas are turning if not on their head, on their side. With my there Z Amigos (ZTPRE, ZBIT, and ZROCK2) everything gets better. . .with three additional components, three more interconnects and two more power cords. You'd think there's magic lost. . . but there's so much that has been gained.

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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**JOMAN**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Posts: 192

Email PM 184.56.37.219

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #36 - 11/30/17 at 6:22am

Modify Split Delete

I think that the answer is in what Lon concluded with... Balance.

If we were to state that no loss is acceptable then that would apply to the entire system from the electrical plug in the wall to the room. Sometimes we can demand the ultimate in one component and get it only to find that it makes matters worse because it shows where the imbalance is.

My system delivers what I want in fidelity and I continue to try to wring out more, only to find out that some very poor recordings sound much worse and better recordings sound much better. For me that's OK, that's what I want.

I believe that there always will be some compromise and that at some point we will go round and round until reality forces us to accept some sort of compromise. A compromise that is acceptable to each one of us individually and what that compromise will be will vary from individual to individual.

Perhaps then, for some monos will be it, but for others bridged amps will be more than sufficient. It depends on the whole system right down to the room.

I don't know if there is one clear cut answer for anything in this hobby, that's what makes it both interesting 😊 and at the same time frustrating 😞.

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**JOMAN**

Email PM 50.101.47.56

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**

Modify Split Delete

Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Posts: 192

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Lon  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

"Love without  
guts is  
worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

Reply #37 - 11/30/17 at 6:37am

Actually Lon, I found that the same has happened with my "purist" ideas (damn it!). Now I get to rethink everything and reorganize everything (damn it!). But I like the result and so I keep at it (DAMN IT!) 😊

Email PM

50.101.47.56

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #38 - 11/30/17 at 6:40am

Modify Split Delete

Yes, DAMNIT. 😊

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

Email PM

184.56.37.219

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #39 - 11/30/17 at 10:33am

Modify Split Delete

For me, it is difficult to figure out if there is a significant sonic difference between one amp versus two amps bridged in themselves. One of the reasons is the difference in volume. Without volume matching, one should not get into comparing the two systems.

Back in the day, when I was having difficulty with driving my speakers with one SE84 (I think it was the C+ version), I went for the second one and used the two bridged for a few years. It definitely reduced the clipping issue and I do not remember noticing a significant sonic difference. However, even with the bridged amps, the system was struggling with operatic voice or forte piano passages. So, when we switched to a TORII mkII, it was like a difference between day and night.

So, again, I would start with only one SE84UFO. Please note that the most recent version of the SE84 is a total beast in comparison to the earlier versions. Because of all the changes in the design over years (Hazen Grid mod, UFO outputs, etc.), the amp has reached another level and with the same set of speakers, I am much happier with it.

If you are looking for crazy volume levels, I would rather go for a TORII or ZMA, but they are different beasts. With the Pendragons, I have a feeling that one SE84 would suffice, if it is fed with a high-output source...

Email PM

199.52.13.130

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #40 - 11/30/17 at 10:51am

Modify Split Delete

I think Alper is spot on (for what it's worth)

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JOMAN  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Posts: 192

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Lon  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

"Love without  
guts is  
worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

Email PM

66.212.174.202

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #41 - 12/02/17 at 9:51am

Modify Split Delete

When it comes to the UFO version of the SE84, (which will be true for the Anniversary edition as well--I'm sure they will have UFO transformers) Steve has in fact weighed in on the matter on the Zen SE84UFO page:

**Worried about 2 huger than life SET watts not being enough power?**

**The SE84UFO employs a unique floating output transformer scheme where the negative speaker wire is not tied to chassis ground. That means when the amp is bridged, both channels may either be series or parallel wired. In series, both channels work as one and transparency is preserved.**

**So with no sonic drawbacks to running the amps in mono, you can expect 6 dB of additional power rather than the expected 3dB. This is thanks to the power increase the amp has when it sees half the speaker load from being series bridged.**

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

Email PM

184.56.37.219

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #42 - 12/06/17 at 8:48pm

Modify Split Delete

**A note about the purist approach:**

It's easy to think of transparency as the result of fewer parts, but the reality is transparency is about the transparency of the parts.

Think of transparency as crystal clear water, and a lack of transparency as cloudy water. If you start with somewhat cloudy water in a cup it may be hard to tell it is cloudy because there is so little water in the cup. It's not until you add more cloudy water that you begin to notice it's losing clarity.



if the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

If you start with water that is crystal clear in your cup, you can add many layers of water on top of that until the cup is full and it can still be clear.

The reason this has caught many of you by surprise is because most audio gear is not this transparent. There is precious little hand made point to point tube gear available with this price/performance ratio.

Steve

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Email WWW

173.17.209.237

**Martindfletcher**  
Senior Member  
☆☆☆☆

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #43 - 12/06/17 at 9:27pm

Modify Split Delete

I can say I have no issues with transparency (my perspective at least) with bridged ufo2's. With zu druid v's spec'd at 16 ohms and if you look at the curve they are closer to 19 in good portion of the spectrum. I needed the extra power as steve advised. FYI I start getting distortion around ~95db/meter. Somewhat dependent on source. They are spec'd at 101, most reviews question that number. Normally listen at 70-80. So it's enough. I doubt with those speakers a single se84 with my room size and an ideal acoustic environment would have been enough in my case, but it sounds magical.

Chain in order: TD124 mki, Denon 103R, Ortofon RS-309D, zu silver phono cable, ZMC1, Audio Art RCA, ZP3, vintage RCA 5U4G Rectifier, Gold lion signal tubes, DW silver reference, Xhadow, Bridged UFO2's, gold lion 6922, mapleshade double helix plus, zu Druid v's

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Email PM

99.178.132.32

**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
☆☆☆☆

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #44 - 12/06/17 at 9:44pm

Modify Split Delete

ANNIVERSARY 2 WATT ZEN AMP will HAPPEN!

Well, something wonderful is happening here behind the scenes with the Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier development not to mention something completely unique! Even better it is something that is only possible in a 2 watt Zen Triode Amplifier - which is to say that it can't be duplicated in any other amplifier. It is something I have been wanting to do for years on any amplifier and for some reason a dead pocket of brain cells was brought back to life recently and I realized I could have done it all along... go figure.

This is just a teaser, so I'm not going to tell you what I did, or anything else at this point except to say a working prototype exists and things are going better than well.

Stone cold off the bench in it's first breath it is already more liquid and more dimensional than anything I've ever heard. Yup, this is going to be some good stuff. It's so extreme and so good, I don't know if I should be happy or disappointed that it took me 20 years to figure this out.

Hehe.. maybe I'll call it the SE84UFOHC for "Holy Crap".

Save your questions, I'll tease you with it more as it develops.

BTW, I know... overly exuberant statements that seem hard to believe and thus diminish everything else I've said over the years, but take it seriously because I have always been able to put my money where my mouth is and if I say no one has ever heard a Zen this good you can be completely certain of it.

-Steve

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Email WWW

173.17.209.237

**Martindfletcher**  
Senior Member  
☆☆☆☆

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #45 - 12/06/17 at 9:59pm

Modify Split Delete

Nice tease, hope I can upgrade the UFO2's!

Chain in order: TD124 mki, Denon 103R, Ortofon RS-309D, zu silver phono cable, ZMC1, Audio Art RCA, ZP3, vintage RCA 5U4G Rectifier, Gold lion signal tubes, DW silver reference, Xhadow, Bridged UFO2's, gold lion 6922, mapleshade double helix plus, zu Druid v's

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Email PM

99.178.132.32

**Martindfletcher**  
Senior Member  
☆☆☆☆

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #46 - 12/06/17 at 10:19pm

Modify Split Delete

Steve,

Alpine brewery out here in San Diego named their epiphany beer HFS.

Chain in order: TD124 mki, Denon 103R, Ortofon RS-309D, zu silver phono cable, ZMC1, Audio Art RCA, ZP3, vintage RCA 5U4G Rectifier, Gold lion signal tubes, DW silver reference, Xhadow, Bridged UFO2's, gold lion 6922, mapleshade double helix plus, zu Druid v's

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Email PM

99.178.132.32

**Brian**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #47 - 12/08/17 at 9:06pm

Modify Split Delete

The most exciting write-up since Torri Jr. I am eager.

Posts: 419

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Email PM

97.125.103.174

**Lonely Raven**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #48 - 12/08/17 at 10:41pm

**Quote:**

ANNIVERSARY 2 WATT ZEN AMP will HAPPEN!

Well, something wonderful is happening here behind the scenes with the Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier development not to mention something completely unique! Even better it is something that is only possible in a 2 watt Zen Triode Amplifier - which is to say that it can't be duplicated in any other amplifier. It is something I have been wanting to do for years on any amplifier and for some reason a dead pocket of brain cells was brought back to life recently and I realized I could have done it all along... go figure.

This is just a teaser, so I'm not going to tell you what I did, or anything else at this point except to say a working prototype exists and things are going better than well.

Stone cold off the bench in it's first breath it is already more liquid and more dimensional than anything I've ever heard. Yup, this is going to be some good stuff. It's so extreme and so good, I don't know if I should be happy or disappointed that it took me 20 years to figure this out.

Hehe.. maybe I'll call it the SE84UFOHC for "Holy Crap".

So...Steve, does this mean I should bring mine back for whatever this magic update is? I'm in town again on Monday.

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73.75.83.94

**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #49 - 12/09/17 at 12:29pm

Sorry, this new Zen requires a scratch built chassis and as a result it will be impossible to upgrade any prior amps.

Steve



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

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173.17.209.237

**alper\_yilmaz**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #50 - 12/09/17 at 12:38pm

So, when is the expected release date, Steve? I cannot believe there can and will be anything better than the SE84UFO in the price range (plus, say, 50%); but I will take your word for it! :)

And of course, looking forward...

Cheers,

Alper

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67.86.128.222

**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #51 - 12/09/17 at 1:13pm

Oh boy, this is going to be A HELLUVAN amp.

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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184.56.37.219

**alper\_yilmaz**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #52 - 12/09/17 at 2:02pm

So, maybe it should be named HELLUVAN84 then!

Posts: 204

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67.86.128.222

**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #53 - 12/09/17 at 2:04pm

Next Page

res: LOL.

I'm going to try to save up for a bridged pair, and hopefully Steve can leave space in there for a treble cut circuit. . . .

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UF03-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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184.56.37.219

**HockessinKid**  
Senior Member  
☆☆☆☆

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #54 - 12/09/17 at 3:48pm



25th Anniversary Amp  
Of course you have to get one.

Posts: 99

HK

Lonely Raven Windows PC (or) TEAC PD-600H>TWL USB/coax cables>ZDAC2 (or) Nottingham Interspace TT w/ heavy platter + Dynavector 20X2LO + P75 MKII phono pre>iFi micro iTube>CSP3+ preamp>Zen Mystery amp>Omega SAHO XRS speakers> ZenWave Audio IC's & PC's.

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108.36.96.199

**Jeff of Arabica**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #55 - 12/09/17 at 3:55pm



Just one? ;)



Name the greatest of all inventors... Accident.

Posts: 535

ZMA//Zen Ultra//Rachel//ZDSD//Super Zen//Taboo MKIII//PS Audio DirectStream DAC + Memory Player + P10//Muse Phono Stage//London Decca Reference//Dynavector DV-507 MKII//Zen Head//Sonorus Reel-to-Reel w/ tube playback pre-amp//Omega SAHOs//DM946

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172.1.34.66

**Donnie**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #56 - 12/09/17 at 4:34pm



The word on the street around here is that Steve is working on some 1500 watt solid state monoblock amps and some really cool 80 Db efficient speakers.

The street around here is usually right.... 😊



Why does it hurt when I pee?

Posts: 1161

Owner of the infamous RED TORII

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98.223.205.186

**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
☆☆☆☆

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #57 - 12/10/17 at 10:28pm



Well the Audio Gods have blessed the new Anniversary Zen amplifier design... which is important.

This time the sine they left was and is simply unmistakable. The amp has been on for days continuously playing music and the power transformer is just warm (110 degrees F). The normal temperature of every Zen ever built since 1996 ranges between 129 ~ 139 degrees F. I am using the same power transformer and the current draw is exactly the same as it's always been.

I am wrestling my way through the burn-in process of VCAPS which I have chosen for this amp to raise both the gain and the dynamics. As always with any cap, there is a window of 30 minutes to a few hours during the initial *cold off the bench* listening test where you can hear exactly what the cap will sound like once it is burned it. Then it goes away not to return for several hundred hours.

Another note regarding burning in stubborn caps that I've learned since 1996... what you play when you burn in the cap is important. I learned early burn in is about memory. The cap is learning.

Sine waves, Pink Noise, warble tones, and all the other electronic crap found on Burn-In CD's makes the cap really good at reproducing those noises and as a consequence music reproduction also improves a tiny bit. However, let the cap learn good music, real music, and it will be far better at playing it while as a consequence it will also be better at reproducing the noise of a Burn-in CD.

I say real music meaning non-electronic, non-processed recordings of real instruments that are properly tuned to themselves - is the ideal thing to use when training the caps. Things with complex harmonics are best, such as you will find in classical music. I have found that the most complex harmonics I have found seems to come from 18th century Tibetan Singing Bowls which is an ideal thing to use when training the caps so long as the recordings contain many different bowls.



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

if you're going to try Singing bowl recordings to burn in new caps, you will also need well recorded music to alternate it with. That said the bowls will cut the burn in time in half.

Anyway back to the temperature thing. There is no SPICE models I am aware of that could predict this sudden temperature reduction, or explain it. The cool thing (excuse the pun) is that everyone who owns one of these will be able to experience for themselves *the sign* every time they feel the disarmingly cool power transformer.

As a final unrelated thought, I spent most of the week exploring the voicing and trying to wrap my head around how the most subtle things can simply discombobulate the sound. It's like painting a portrait in Oils and you had the face nearly perfect but you just had to see what would happen if you add a little paint here and take a little away from there and presto... it's all F'd up! Now you spend the next couple days working backwards to fix it. In this case what I am referring to is the voicing the power supplies and getting them to the correct speed so that the timbre is correct and the dimensionality doesn't compress. All of this can come from seeming nothing and just as easily return to nothing because just using the wrong brand of bypass cap or the wrong value or both anywhere in the entire amp can wreck it.

The Voicing of my amps, especially this one, is sacred. It's a real bitch to get it there and it comes from unexpected places, so assuming a particular brand or type of cap can be replaced with something that cost more money and positive results will come is foolish. Your job is what's on the outside of the amp, i.e. the tubes, cables and power cords, speakers, room, sources. I juggle all of these during the voicing process to keep from getting an amp that only sounds good in one system.

So that's my update, and truly of the hundreds of sines I've gotten over 25 years, this one is hallmark. I'll probably spend the next 25 years trying to figure out how it is happening ; )

Steve

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173.17.209.237

**Lonely Raven**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #58 - 12/10/17 at 11:47pm



(Eric is frantically going through music library to see if there is any Tibetan Singing Bowl music - oddly, find 3 albums)

Jack of all Trades,  
Master of None

Posts: 3100

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73.75.83.94

**Jeff of Arabica**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #59 - 12/11/17 at 12:18am



Since it's running so cool, does that mean you could bore it out, port and polish the heads, throw a high lift cam in it and get it to 10 WPC without it over-heating?



Name the greatest of  
all inventors...  
Accident.

Posts: 535

ZMA//Zen Ultra//Rachel//ZDSD//Super Zen//Taboo MKIII//PS Audio DirectStream DAC + Memory Player + P10//Muse Phono Stage//London Decca Reference//Dynavector DV-507 MKII//Zen Head//Sonorus Reel-to-Reel w/ tube playback pre-amp//Omega SAHOs//DM946

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172.1.34.66

**HockessinKid**  
Senior Member  
★★★☆☆

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #60 - 12/11/17 at 5:28am



Maybe Singing bowls with Ohm speakers? Ohmmmmm.

Posts: 99

HK

Lonely Raven Windows PC (or) TEAC PD-600H>TWL USB/coax cables>ZDAC2 (or) Nottingham Interspace TT w/ heavy platter + Dynavector 20X2LO + P75 MKII phono pre>iFi micro iTube>CSP3+ preamp>Zen Mystery amp>Omega SAHO XRS speakers> ZenWave Audio IC's & PC's.

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108.36.96.199

**stone\_of\_tone**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #61 - 12/11/17 at 10:54am



Steve, thanks for your comprehensive last post, to remind me of what you do to make music so convincing and enjoyable in my Listening Room.

You stated (among everything you said and I appreciate):

"Your job is what's on the outside of the amp, i.e. the tubes, cables and power cords, speakers, room, sources. I juggle all of these during the voicing process to keep from getting an amp that only sounds good in one system."

....not an easy task

Furthermore/you're:

".....wrestling my way through the burn-in process of VCAPS which I have chosen for this amp to raise both the gain and the dynamics."

and with the noise in gain and dynamic range providing a robust

.....and with the raise in gain and dynamics you're providing.....on year.

I'm back in. My modified Adagio's Tweeter's and Driver's, I can't be without...can be driven by the Anniversary Amp. My SE84CS, really had no problem. With the VCAPS, the living hell, as described to burn them in.....will be worth it, to BE BACK IN THE COMPANY OF YOUR PENTODES RUN IN TRIODE ~ 2ND TO NONE.

I look forward to reading more.

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference I2S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

75.168.72.65

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**stone\_of\_tone**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Listen Often/Listen Deep

Posts: 2901

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #62 - 12/11/17 at 11:12am**

"If you start with water that is crystal clear in your cup, you can add many layers of water on top of that until the cup is full and it can still be clear."

Lower temp on the power transformer, due to what you stated in your post/reply #398?

....can the new layer of the right clear parts affect this lower temp back?

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference I2S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

75.168.72.65

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**Palomino**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Posts: 1565

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #63 - 01/03/18 at 8:28am**

OK, here is my summary of what makes the 25AZPT special. It's really in the attack of the notes. So notes have an attack, a body and a decay. The 25AZPT is especially fast and really lends great definition to the attack part of the note. That draws you into the music more, keeps the music moving and involves you.

Not that the body or decay is lacking. Quite the opposite, but its the attack that makes this the most engaging Decware amp I have listened to. I put it in and it didn't come out until the CDaPS meeting because I just didn't want to. I put the Rachael back in because I wanted everyone to hear the difference when the Zen went back in.

In contrast, I find that the ZMA gets the body of the note really well and squeezes out the definition. Its no slouch of course on the other aspects, but it is not as fast as the 25AZPT.

Soundstage on this Zen and imaging are also first class, but again its the attack that I think really separates it from other Decware amps.

I did have to make an adjustment to my bass amps for the Zen and turn them up a few clicks to keep the bass at the same level as Rachael, but otherwise if Steve can keep the attack going in the production model, this will be a really great amp.

i7 Mac Mini with LPSU/SSD running Audirvana 3, Uptone Audio Regen on LPSU, TEAC UD503, DIY Belden ICs, Torii MKIII, SE34I.32, PS Audio P5 Power Supply, PS Audio Power Cords, Vintage Western Electric 16g Speaker wires, DIY OB Speakers w/Tang Band/Augies

38.140.29.194

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #64 - 01/03/18 at 7:32pm**

Regarding the temperature, the amp has been on 24/7 since I first mentioned it and the temp simply won't rise. Consider this, it is the same 170mA transformer we have always used in most of our amplifiers. The Zens only draw around 50 mA on average from that 170mA power supply. Some are built with a resistor, some are built with chokes, and none have run this cool. In fact the original zen ran hot.

The only explanation I can offer is that both the resistor(s) and or the choke reflect something backwards back into the transformer through the bridge rectifier which causes friction/heat that isn't necessarily tied to load.

In any case with it running so cool I have no qualms about leaving it on 24 hours a day and it makes sense that without the chaos of this friction, the sound would have insane liquidity - almost disarming.

The reason there is none of this is because I have eliminated the resistors and the choke and am using the vacuum gap of the



OA3 tube in place of it to feed high voltage to the plate of each output tube. This has never been done before, only the grids of the output tubes, or the high voltage for the input tubes has ever been done in the past. In this amp all the high voltage for everything is resistor-less and has no chokes, just the vacuum gaps of three separate vacuum regulator tubes, one for each output tube and one for the input tube.

Of course this can not be done with any other amplifier because all other amplifiers use larger output tubes, and we're at the limit of the current capacity of the Voltage Regulator tube with the Zen's 6P15P-EB / EL84 output tube. So something this graceful can only be done on a 2 watt Zen Triode Amplifier.

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173.17.209.237

**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #65 - 01/03/18 at 7:49pm



Wow, that's an amazing design. Can't wait to see more of this amp!

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UF03-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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184.56.37.219

**Jeff of Arabica**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #66 - 01/03/18 at 9:02pm



Steve, your thoughts on bridging a pair of these into mono?



Name the greatest of all inventors...  
Accident.

Posts: 535

ZMA//Zen Ultra//Rachel//ZDSD//Super Zen//Taboo MKIII//PS Audio DirectStream DAC + Memory Player + P10//Muse Phono Stage//London Decca Reference//Dynavector DV-507 MKII//Zen Head//Sonorus Reel-to-Reel w/ tube playback pre-amp//Omega SAHOs//DM946

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172.1.34.66

**Lonely Raven**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #67 - 01/04/18 at 12:12pm



To clarify Palomino's post (quoted here); I loaned him my little Zen amp that is the prototype for the 25th Anniversary amp, and he had about two weeks of playtime with it. He said he wasn't giving it back. I agree with his assessment - the speed and honesty of this amp is very engaging - we just kept running out of steam when we wanted a little grunt, or with quiet recordings.

**Quote:**

OK, here is my summary of what makes the 25AZPT special. It's really in the attack of the notes. So notes have an attack, a body and a decay. The 25AZPT is especially fast and really lends great definition to the attack part of the note. That draws you into the music more, keeps the music moving and involves you.

Not that the body or decay is lacking. Quite the opposite, but its the attack that makes this the most engaging Decware amp I have listened to. I put it in and it didn't come out until the CDAPS meeting because I just didn't want to. I put the Rachael back in because I wanted everyone to hear the difference when the Zen went back in.

In contrast, I find that he ZMA gets the body of the note really well and squeezes out the definition. Its no slouch of course on the other aspects, but it is not as fast as the 25AZPT.

Soundstage on this Zen and imaging are also first class, but again its the attack that I think really separates it from other Decware amps.

I did have to make an adjustment to my bass amps for the Zen and turn them up a few clicks to keep the bass at the same level as Rachael, but otherwise if Steve can keep the attack going in the production model, this will be a really great amp.

Oddly enough Steve, using the regulator tubes on the Zen amp is exactly what I imagined you were doing - somehow I just \*knew\* that was the next step in purity for the little Zen. With all the other details you're putting into it, I'm seriously thinking I may have to have a 25th Anniversary Zen myself!!

**Quote:**

Regarding the temperature, the amp has been on 24/7 since I first mentioned it and the temp simply won't rise. Consider this, it is the same 170mA transformer we have always used in most of our amplifiers. The Zens only draw around 50 mA on average from that 170mA power supply. Some are built with a resistor, some are built with chokes, and none have run this cool. In fact the original zen ran hot.

The only explanation I can offer is that both the resistor(s) and or the choke reflect something backwards back into the transformer through the bridge rectifier which causes friction/heat that isn't necessarily tied to load.

In any case with it running so cool I have no qualms about leaving it on 24 hours a day and it makes sense that without the chaos of this friction, the sound would have insane liquidity - almost disarming.

The reason there is none of this is because I have eliminated the resistors and the choke and am using the vacuum gap of the OA3 tube in place of it to feed high voltage to the plate of each output tube. This has never been done before, only the grids of the output tubes, or the high voltage for the input tubes has ever been done in the past. In this amp all the high voltage for everything is resistor-less and has no chokes, just the vacuum gaps of three separate vacuum regulator tubes, one for each output tube and one for the input tube.

Of course this can not be done with any other amplifier because all other amplifiers use larger output tubes, and we're at the limit of the current capacity of the Voltage Regulator tube with the Zen's 6P15P-EB / EL84 output tube. So something this graceful can only be done on a 2 watt Zen Triode Amplifier.

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50.203.193.140

**Brian**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #68 - 01/04/18 at 7:30pm



"In this amp all the high voltage for everything is resistor-less and has no chokes, just the vacuum gaps of three separate vacuum regulator tubes, one for each output tube and one for the input tube." - Steve

Posts: 419

This sounds so exciting! I hope I get to hear one of these. Of all your amps, I think this is the one I would like best.  
Brian

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184.100.6.174

**Lonely Raven**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #69 - 01/05/18 at 8:22am



It also makes me wonder if maybe there is some obscure regulator tube out there that might be able to handle bigger output tubes...

  
Jack of all Trades,  
Master of None

It would be fun if there was a big stash of some unwanted Russian submarine tubes that Steve could use to develop bigger amps with this. ;)

Posts: 3100

Just daydreaming.

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208.87.237.180

**stone\_of\_tone**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #70 - 01/05/18 at 9:14am



Yup, I try to walk away....and then get sucked right back in with your answer to my temp inquiry....and pull me back in with tube regulation.  


Listen Often/Listen  
Deep

Posts: 2901

Okay, hook or crook.....I'm buying one in Oct/November.

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference I2S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

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75.168.72.65

**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #71 - 01/06/18 at 11:19pm



It comes at a price, adding the OA3 regulation for each output tube that is... Rather than the two capacitors used in the power supplies of the SE84UFO and SE84UFO2, this uses a few more. The first cap comes off the rectifier tube just like the other amps but then the power supply is split into three separate filters, one for each tube. This adds 7 additional caps and nine additional poly film bypass caps. There was no option other than to spit it into three separate supplies due to the 30mA limit of the OA3 tube. And because the large gap beautifully slows things down, all of the caps have to be carefully bypassed to speed things back up. This stretch between speeds expands the transient playground to a very large window giving a more immersive sense of depth and complexity. The slow side of it's personality creates unbelievable liquidity. The fast side of it's personality reveals stuff you had no idea was there, and that Zen duality creates an infinitely variable speed power supply that fills in the middle.

  
If the 1st watt  
sucks why continue?

It's not real practical, but it is something you do when you're trying to not be practical, and voyage well beyond that point of diminishing returns, through the neutral zone and into heavy waves of total realism... something I think the little Zen deserves after being such a trooper for so many years!!

Posts: 3304

Who would have thought 25 years ago when Eric Barbor of Svetlana contacted me to see if I had any interest in an EL84 substitute called the SV83, such incredible effort would have ended up going into the amps for it. 25 Years ago it was a \$4.00 tube. Who would have thought a \$4.00 tube would justify a \$2500 wholesale price pair of amps (and counting). The bizarreness of it from this perspective just makes it even more desirable to do, just to see how much further can we push the resolution of this amazing output tube, which is actually a Russian 6P15P-EB.

We've always known that EL84's are faster than virtually all 8 pin output tubes, be it pentode or triode wired, but the 6P15P-EB was nearly twice the bandwidth and subsequent speed and as a result nearly perfectly neutral. So there is no reason not to see how fast the tube actually is... just know it's expensive aka painful, but worth it. I predict it's going to hurt fairly bad until the moment it arrives. Most of the pain will go away in the first hour. I would say 90% of it. By the third week you will begin to understand that the amp is easily worth twice what you paid for it, and it's limited production ensures that it will always hold it's value and you will then become forever pain free.

Steve



Here's a picture of the prototype... don't worry I was just having some fun with the finish. The actual model will be done in a beautiful textured powder coat resembling a green patina with silver jacks, and white silkscreening for a really vintage upscale look and backlit meters.

The current tube compliment is presently a globe 80 rectifier tube with adapter, a pair of OA3's for the output tubes, an OD3a for the input tube which is a 7DJ8. So far the input stage is working out as a wonderful opportunity to voice your own amplifier. With 3 voltage regulator tubes ranging from VR75 to VR150, you can make any input tube sound three different ways. Powerful tool. The input tubes used and liked are 6N1P-EB, 6N23P, 6N11, 6922, 6DJ8, 7DJ8, 6N5P. I'm presently torn between the 7DJ8 and the 6N5P with the OD3A on both as to which should be the stock tube compliment... but that could change with more time.

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173.17.209.237

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #72 - 01/07/18 at 12:07am



I am sure this question is looming in the minds of many, but thus far with this amp as you have described, how would you summarize the strengths and weaknesses in comparison to a Torii MKIV or a ZMA.

I am very intrigued by the notion of running a pair of these bridged mono. My Omega's are 97db efficient and I am running everything through my Ultra preamp.

What do you think?

**Jeff of Arabica**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★



Name the greatest of all inventors... Accident.

Posts: 535

ZMA//Zen Ultra//Rachel//ZDSD//Super Zen//Taboo MKIII//PS Audio DirectStream DAC + Memory Player + P10//Muse Phono Stage//London Decca Reference//Dynavector DV-507 MKII//Zen Head//SonoruS Reel-to-Reel w/ tube playback pre-amp//Omega SAHOs//DM946



172.1.34.66

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #73 - 01/07/18 at 12:29am



On second thought... I don't care. Just know I'll be the first to order a pair of these when they come out.

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**Jeff of Arabica**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★



Name the greatest of all inventors... Accident.

Posts: 535

ZMA//Zen Ultra//Rachel//ZDSD//Super Zen//Taboo MKIII//PS Audio DirectStream DAC + Memory Player + P10//Muse Phono Stage//London Decca Reference//Dynavector DV-507 MKII//Zen Head//SonoruS Reel-to-Reel w/ tube playback pre-amp//Omega SAHOs//DM946

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172.1.34.66

**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #74 - 01/07/18 at 12:36am



Speed.



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

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173.17.209.237

**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #75 - 01/07/18 at 12:45am



Submarine tubes,... that does sound exciting. How about if we take my tired Carbon Dioxide Laser tube and use it to superheat a titanium diaphragm while simultaneously cooling the other size with liquified gas. That should get down to at least a few hundred hertz. *Stereo systems always sound better when they could accidentally kill you.*



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

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173.17.209.237

**busterfree**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

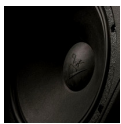
**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #76 - 01/07/18 at 1:01am



What type of change (not sound characteristics) if any can be expected when compared to a SuperZen.

- Still two watts?
- Still stable to 1 ohm?
- Noise level?
- Bias switch?
- Dual volume controls only?
- One input only?
- How limited is production if decided (100, 1000, etc)?
- Pushing output tube harder?

Not that the answers will change anything. I like your 2 watt amps.



Posts: 289

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184.59.81.144

**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #77 - 01/07/18 at 1:07am



Whatever you do, don't listen to Takla Makan at 1:00 in the morning on this thing! You won't be the same.

Based on what I'm hearing this means the middle of the night bloom is not all about power, as expected. This proves it's the suns effect on the Ether and much as the state of the power grid. It's also almost disturbing that I'm listening to digital... seems impossible to sound like this.



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

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173.17.209.237

**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #78 - 01/07/18 at 1:13am





If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

**Quote:**

Still two watts?  
Still stable to 1 ohm?  
Noise level?  
Bias switch?  
Dual volume controls only?  
One input only?  
How limited is production if decided (100, 1000, etc)?  
Pushing output tube harder?

Not that the answers will change anything. I like your 2 watt amps.

Yes, same, same, yes, yes, don't know, no, the audio circuit remains identical. It's just that a well kept secret in audio design is that the power supply has more effect on the sound than the audio circuit itself... and is by far the most expensive part. The Zen has for 25 years used a 170ma power supply for a circuit that draws less than 50ma., so at the price points we're at getting more extreme than that is well past the point of diminishing returns.

Steve

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173.17.209.237

**Jeff of Arabica**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #79 - 01/07/18 at 1:17am



Steve Deckert wrote on 01/07/18 at 1:07am:

It's also almost disturbing that I'm listening to digital... seems impossible to sound like this.

ZROCK2 in the chain? If not, say it isn't so!

Name the greatest of all inventors...  
Accident.

Posts: 535

ZMA//Zen Ultra//Rachel//ZDSD//Super Zen//Taboo MKIII//PS Audio DirectStream DAC + Memory Player + P10//Muse Phono Stage//London Decca Reference//Dynavector DV-507 MKII//Zen Head//Sonorus Reel-to-Reel w/ tube playback pre-amp//Omega SAHOs//DM946

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172.1.34.66

**stone\_of\_tone**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #80 - 01/07/18 at 9:21am



Oh my! That is beautiful. I like the red. I'm sure the green patina with silver jacks, and white silkscreening for a really vintage upscale look and backlit meters....will be just as stunning.

Oh, I'm trying to hear it in my head....ZROCK2 in play. Not, all about power as you stated and any of us that have owned your 2 watts knows.

Listen Often/Listen Deep

Posts: 2901

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference 12S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

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75.168.72.65

**Acetone**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #81 - 01/07/18 at 9:36am



Nice!! Question is! Do I build 2nd system around it, or sell my SE84CKC to finance this?



4 years with my Decware and Loving it!!!

Posts: 587

SE84-CKC, ZP3, Zstage, ZRock2, ZSB, DM947-(946)Monoliths, VPI-Traveler-2M black. Philips CDR-880. Audio Envy/RAC-PC's & IC's, Mapleshade Dbl Helix+ Spkr wire & jumpers, Blue Circle PLC FX2X0e. Herbies tube damps, tenderfoots, GIK, PI Audio, DIY room treatments

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172.248.144.108

**Steve Deckert Administrator**  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #82 - 01/07/18 at 11:27am



Was listening to Borris Blank Tidal Masters on the ZDAC2 feeding the ZTPRE... no ZROCK this time.





If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

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**Donnie**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★



Why does it hurt when I pee?

Posts: 1161

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

173.17.209.237

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #83** - 01/07/18 at 12:22pm

I just want to say that **RED** amplifiers always sound better. It is a scientifically proven fact. I learned that in my advanced studies at MIT. (Mississippi Institute of Truckin')

Owner of the infamous RED TORII

98.223.205.186

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #84** - 01/07/18 at 10:23pm

I have settled on the stock tube compliment. OD3a with a N.O.S. 7DJ8.

I say this because this weekend I put all the exotic bypass caps in the power supply, 9 in total, and up until now, the amp was slower than the Lonely Raven Prototype. More musical possibly but lacked the surprise factor that makes music sound real. I had to see where the amplifier landed without the full bypass, which has taken all this time.

Now with the bypass in place the OA3 and OD3 work as intended and HOLY CRAP is the amp fast. I just heard it do things tonight that I have never experienced before. It is like a black hole. And it's going to get better still as the bypass caps break in.

Literally tonight I listened to something extremely well engineered and recorded, digitally, and walked out of the listening room shaking my head in complete disbelief because honestly, I have never heard anything sound that good. It was the whole package, weight, power, scale, dynamics, insane, repeat insane imaging, and absolute liquidity with spooky presence. The sound stage was a 270 degree arc and about 50 feet wide, 20 feet tall and 70 feet deep and you could hear around each image. This is personally thrilling to me because I thought I've had better rooms in the past 20 years, but now I know that isn't probably as true as I thought. The thing is, the amplifier was able to literally say -censored- the room, and just force it's will to happen regardless. Talk about making speakers disappear... it's just sick.- I thought the speakers were really pretty good, but I just heard what they can really do... it's bitter sweet of course because only Decware customers have any idea what I'm talking about.

Happy listening... it's only 9:45 P.M. and it already sounds like 1:30 A.M... some of you know what I'm talking about. Imagine if this damn thing can actually stretch the golden hours of which there are never more than 3 into a number more like 6 or even 9.

My only advise is don't handicap this amplifier with anything less than an honest 94dB 1/w 1/m because it deserves at least that. Also, the bigger the speakers the better. It will make anything disappear, so don't be afraid of larger full range speakers, the amp will love you for it. At 94dB I can reach the same density and pressure that I do with the larger amplifiers using the same speakers... so I catch myself forgetting I'm not listening to the larger amplifiers, but tonight I have to say that letting the speed out of the box has made it pretty easy to hear your not listening to the larger amps... which makes sense, but look, this is what it actually took... a zen amp that might well be the same price as the TORII MKIV.. I'm not counting at this stage, just excavating for that treasure that will pay for all the excavation. ; )

It's just counterintuitive because I always use digital for amplifier design since that is what the world listens to, and it's a worse case scenario in many instances as a source. This is making digital sound better than I've ever heard it. My only theory is it must be the "stretch" between slow and fast that we talked about with the power supply design. The amp is slowing it down and speeding it up to the point where 88kHz up sampled is sounding better than native DSD used to. I may have stumbled into something here. It just sounds so real. Definitely have some new respect for ZDAC2. I can now hear it is better than my favorite, the ZDSD, for streaming from the computer. It gets along well with TIDAL when set to use the DAC directly as the only output device, ignoring the computer's operating system.

I can already say it was the right decision to postpone the 6C33C's because the original prototypes were not this good. I realize that it is now 10:20 and I still haven't hit the save button. I have never heard an amplifier this good before. I'm sorry, but it's true.

Anyway, I don't have time to post, because the black hole effect is sucking my ass to the sweet spot.

Steve

173.17.209.237

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #85** - 01/07/18 at 10:29pm

I can say that before the evening really gets going, I have been completely humiliated by my own amplifier. I literally thought I knew what was possible and built products to take us all there, and I did. Tonight I hear that I didn't know shit.



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**Jeff of Arabica**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #86 - 01/07/18 at 11:07pm



Name the greatest of all inventors... Accident.

Well, it sounds like my 97db Omega SAHO's are a perfect match. I had a feeling the ZMA was an overkill in a sense for such high efficiency speakers when I purchased them. But after my ZMA went back to the mothership for meter repair and upgrades, when I put my 2 watt SuperZen into duty powering the SAHOs, it became obvious that these particular speakers didn't "need" the ZMA. I must clarify, need. My ZMA crushes it with these speakers and of the all the Decware amps I have in my possession (Super Zen, Torii MKIV, Rachel, ZMA), the ZMA would be the last amp standing.

However, since I do have such an ideal foundation to create the magic with these 25th Anniversary amps, I cannot NOT get them. Yes, them. Price of a Torii MKIV, or not, put me down for a pair to run as mono blocks.

Steve, how does serial #1 and #2 sound? 😊

ZMA//Zen Ultra//Rachel//ZDSD//Super Zen//Taboo MKIII//PS Audio DirectStream DAC + Memory Player + P10//Muse Phono Stage//London Decca Reference//Dynavector DV-507 MKII//Zen Head//Sonorus Reel-to-Reel w/ tube playback pre-amp//Omega SAHOs//DM946

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #87 - 01/07/18 at 11:19pm



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

So a little more real time documentation.

I'm still listening of course and all I can say is it's just SICK. I almost can't understand how it can take control like that. Believe you me, it's in charge, and it's conscious. It's freaking me out... the audio gods have spoken and if I make it through the night without pissing my pants I'll be really impressed.

I've just never heard anything do this before!!!! This is probably going to really be bad for business... or change everything.

This is proof that if you're a slow learner but have the staying power to spend 80,000 hours chasing audio nirvana some higher vibrational being will eventually feel sorry for you and toss you a bone. This one is hard to comprehend... I guess be careful what you ask for because I'm just getting shredded here... it's so humbling it's embarrassing.

Haha... I get it... game of the weakest link that I've been preaching for 20 years just.... and ironically, or paradoxically right when I didn't think the Decware line had any weak links worth exploiting.

The sound is so different. It's real. It's having it's way with physics that defy logic. It's having it's way with the speakers and the room and me all at the same time and the more I notice it, the more it does it, proving consciousness.

I recognize this kind of power... it used to manifest when we jammed in the studio in Peoria. The music would become conscious and take over your body and make you play well outside your abilities. It's happening now with this amplifier. The music has taken over the amplifier. It seems to be playing WAY OUTSIDE it's capabilities... Not missing the bigger amps ? ! ? No, because the presentation has the same forcefulness with higher resolution.

OK, I get it again... I am just now hearing the UFO output transformers... what they are actually capable of. Solid state amplifiers sound like turds compared to this. Even the chip amps which are artificially fast are slow.

See this is what happens when you find the weak link in your system, you get to hear everything for the first time and it greatly exceeds what you thought was possible. See it still happens even to me, so it will happen to you as well!

It is literally a black hole. So captivating that it is impossible to sit on the side lines and enjoy from afar. It's conscious and you don't want to insult it. Unbelievable... I'm actually scared to listen to my Vinyl Rig, and then some master tapes. There's is no way I would try that tonight,,,, I'm on the edge of my sanity now.

Thank GOD I haven't hooked up the EGGS because this is making tower speakers image better than the EGGS did, which we all know is impossible. When things sound like this, the last thing you want to do is start screwing with it. It's just too good to touch.

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**Jeff of Arabica**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #88 - 01/07/18 at 11:31pm



Name the greatest of all inventors... Accident.

Well Steve, we "don't know what we don't know." So, to read of this audio epiphany is not surprising to me. The difference between those who wallow in content to the point of complacency and guys like you, is unwavering curiosity fueled by a "no compromise mindset." It is inevitable that progress and innovation will ensue, even if it takes 25 years! Hey, if all of this stuff was quick and easy, everyone would be doing it and you know what, it would be boring as hell! It is the pursuit of perfection where the thrills lay. You never want to get there, because then the chase is over.

I am already anticipating the Decware 35th Anniversary amplifier and all of the incredible mysteries it will possess. I know you have a few more tricks up your sleeve, even if you have no idea what they are at this moment in time.

ZMA//Zen Ultra//Rachel//ZDSD//Super Zen//Taboo MKIII//PS Audio DirectStream DAC + Memory Player + P10//Muse Phono Stage//London Decca Reference//Dynavector DV-507 MKII//Zen Head//Sonorus Reel-to-Reel w/ tube playback pre-amp//Omega SAHOs//DM946

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #89 - 01/08/18 at 12:08am

I have to continue documenting this because sadly I'm getting that age where by the time I recall it to write it down to make some point, well you know.

I am experiencing sound right now in a new way. It feels like water. I can feel it. I can swim in it. I can touch it. I can taste it. I can become it. It is so completely immerse and 3D that it reaches from 30 feet behind the speakers right up to your chest and you swim in it. It has so much mass it feels like water.

Things like distortion, fatigue, flatness, boredom, or being teased are alien concepts in this reality. The music is in charge and it literally feels like the stereo system / by the fact that it hits a certain harmonic purity / becomes an antenna for consciousness and then you suddenly have a one million dollar stereo because nothing on earth could sound better than this, even the artist has only heard this in his or her minds eye, never from speakers... this is surreal.

What I am hearing I would have thought was impossible until tonight. Wow did I under estimate speed. I knew our amps were so firkin fast already that I best protect us all... obviously a big mistake or else the universe is just using me for a practical joke and none of this is happening.

Nice try... it's happening.

Holy Crap, the textures are so complex it just stops time. That would actually explain some of the sensation I'm having. If you haven't read my recent article about "what is sound" I beg of you to do it now, because what I am hearing is directly linked to what's in that article. <http://www.decware.com/newsite/DECWARESOUND.pdf>

I feel like I'm hearing music in an alternate universe where the sound is so lucid that you swim in it, and so complex that the species never wasted their time with speech because it was just too slow to communicate complex ideas.

The fact that this is happening with only 2 watts, is the thing that is really freaking me out. It sounds like 40 watts, which I know and love in the ZMA. It's just projecting so much energy into the space and everything in it that the sweet spot is levitating.

I'm going to have to make some videos of this, because the energy will come through the video and let you hear this happening. I feel like I have to ask it permission first...

This is so humbling... I just listen to what's coming out of my speakers and it's like the first time I've ever heard hi-end audio. Had it the whole time and didn't know it. It just goes to show that the magic in technology is knowing exactly how to do something. There can be no guessing and no chance. It only works like this and I was so close I drove the audio gods mad to the point where they just knocked me up with it pushing my ability to comprehend it.

Thank God I'm a good listener because I heard the little voices that said "Do this" and "Do this" and I did it. I can't wait for this to be heard by others! I guarantee you'll either jump out of the listening chair 25 times and pace around in circles, or you'll turn to stone in the listening chair.

173.17.209.237

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #90 - 01/08/18 at 12:18am

Yea, I've never heard an amplifier this good. I'm not even sure I've heard anything even close. I'm really not. I have to think about that for awhile. I'm going to pull the plug now before get sucked into an all nighter. Lots to think about, be hard enough so sleep after having my ass handed to me like this. Tomorrow is a new universe of what is possible with the Zen Triode.

Steve

173.17.209.237

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**will**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #91 - 01/08/18 at 12:55am

So nice! Thanks.

PSA P5/modified Brickwall/Shunyata Defender+more; MacMini/Audirvana>Jitterbug/Regen> modified Gustard x20pro DAC; DIY + Pi Audio PCs; DIY ICs + USB; Decware-Jupiter CSP3, Torii MKIV, HR1-all modified; DIY Speaker Cables; feet-Madscientist, Archie's, isocups, DIY

174.237.9.2

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**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #92 - 01/08/18 at 7:34am

Very exciting news. I think with this news this should not be a "limited edition!"

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2



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Email PM

104.30.37.217

**HockessinKid**  
Senior Member  
☆☆☆☆

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #93 - 01/08/18 at 7:45am

Modify Split Delete

There is nothing quite like an excited Steve Deckert. Looking forward to the new 25th Anniversary "Mighty Zen" amplifier.

HK

Posts: 99

Lonely Raven Windows PC (or) TEAC PD-600H>TWL USB/coax cables>ZDAC2 (or) Nottingham Interspace TT w/ heavy platter + Dynavector 20X2LO + P75 MKII phono pre>iFi micro iTube>CSP3+ preamp>Zen Mystery amp>Omega SAHO XRS speakers> ZenWave Audio IC's & PC's.

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Email PM

108.36.96.199

**lazb**  
Verified Member  
☆☆

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #94 - 01/08/18 at 8:43am

Modify Split Delete

Steve, reading your reactions certainly makes one wish to participate! Which of your speakers are you using for these sensations?

Joe

Posts: 39

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Email PM

162.237.14.147

**Lonely Raven**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #95 - 01/08/18 at 11:38am

Modify Split Delete

Steve,

You're probably pretty bushed after last nights session - but I'm in town today and can swing by if the magic is still in the air?

Posts: 3100

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Email PM WWW MSN

12.16.221.4

**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
☆☆☆☆

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #96 - 01/08/18 at 11:59am

Modify Split Delete

Sorry, too busy today, didn't sleep much last night and got lots to do.



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

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Email WWW

173.17.209.237

**Jeff of Arabica**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #97 - 01/08/18 at 12:39pm

Modify Split Delete

Steve,

Considering the current state of the prototype, and your feelings toward it, do you have a new time estimate - ballpark even - as to when you hope to get this amp to market?



Name the greatest of all inventors... Accident.

Posts: 535

ZMA//Zen Ultra//Rachel//ZDSD//Super Zen//Taboo MKIII//PS Audio DirectStream DAC + Memory Player + P10//Muse Phono Stage//London Decca Reference//Dynavector DV-507 MKII//Zen Head//Sonorus Reel-to-Reel w/ tube playback pre-amp//Omega SAHOs//DM946

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Email PM

172.1.34.66

**stone\_of\_tone**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #98 - 01/08/18 at 4:31pm

Modify Split Delete

I'm in the 91, 92 or maybe they are 93 now with single caps @ 1w/1meter camp. Before my single cap mod, my Adagio's were 91 @ 1w/1meter...with all the kludgy x-over in them. I might still have a shot at driving them with the Anniversary Amp? If not I will have to muddle on with my ZMA an ZR2. 8-)

Listen Often/Listen Deep

Posts: 2901

Good question Jeff on window of release and I agree Lon ...this certainly should not be an limited release.

Sony as Transport

Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference I2S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats



75.168.72.65

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**metropolis7**

Senior Member  
☆☆☆☆

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #99** - 01/08/18 at 5:19pm



This is very exciting news. Time to start saving up duckets.

Posts: 81



99.62.233.159

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**Brian**

Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #100** - 01/08/18 at 8:03pm



After reading those descriptions, I don't have anything useful to say!  
But I wanted to say thank you for designing this amp. And congratulations on the accomplishment!

Posts: 419



184.100.6.174

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**metropolis7**

Senior Member  
☆☆☆☆

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #101** - 01/08/18 at 8:05pm



So this new Zen will be happy with some 94db 2 ohm speakers with no crossover?

Posts: 81



99.62.233.159

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**Steve Deckert**

Administrator  
☆☆☆☆


**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #102** - 01/08/18 at 8:19pm



Happy with 94dB speakers between 2 and 16 ohms.

Will not be a limited build, other than by what we can hand produce.

Should be ready by this summer.

  
If the 1st watt  
sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304



173.17.209.237

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**stone\_of\_tone**

Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #103** - 01/08/18 at 9:18pm



Steve, your enthusiasm for this Amp is infectious. I'm glad I waited to add/get back to your Triode design. I'm working for one come Christmas. If I can't run my mod Adagio's to my satisfaction(?) I will need to revisit a little higher sensitivity.

My ZMA System is a lock and goes nowhere. It is just time to climb back into your Triode, in addition.

Listen Often/Listen  
Deep

Posts: 2901

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference I2S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats



75.168.72.65

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**stone\_of\_tone**

Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #104** - 01/09/18 at 2:31pm



Reading again your last half dozen posts.....absolutely exciting! Spot on ballpark \$ of the Torii MkIV...makes total sense to me. I know I should run it with an honest 94db sensitivity.....but, I'm still going to give it a shot first.....because I have a shot with my love for my mod' Adagio's.

Listen Often/Listen  
Deep

Posts: 2901

I can't wait to read more development finalization, as you come to your potential release this summer.

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference I2S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

 [Email](#)  [PM](#)

 75.168.140.112

 **Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #105** - 01/09/18 at 10:04pm

 [Modify](#)  [Split](#)  [Delete](#) 

Still digesting this new sound... the speed of this amp changes perceived physics. It makes the amp sound like it has a lot more power. The music in fact sounds louder. You can feel it in the concrete floor where you stand, in fact everything is energized. This is fascinating to me since it's actually no louder and has no more measured power.

I have a visualization that will help to explain the ideal power supply filter.

First for reference picture an 8000 gallon above-ground swimming pool, and that will be our capacitor. It's an endless supply of current but sadly it's a slow process to get that current where it needs to go.

Where does it need to go? Each note in music has a frequency, or speed and will draw energy from the power supply the correlates with that frequency. For example, let's say there were only 88 notes in music that would ever be played because the only instrument on the entire planet was the piano. The ideal capacitor would be 88 smaller barrels instead of the large pool.

The total volume of water of the pool is divided into 88 parts, one for each musical note. The lower notes would draw from larger barrels and the higher notes would draw off smaller barrels. Each barrel is exactly the amount of water the note needs to play at full power. It's not more water so that we need to figure out what to do with the extra, and it's not less water so that we have to compromise the power of the note. This allows each note to play with perfect speed, i.e. no lag and at full power.

Trying to suck water from the large pool for each note is by comparison a complete cluster -censored- that prevents each note from playing at it's full power and thereby cuts the power of the amplifier as a whole. Of course power is your least concern because the resolution that comes from having the correct size barrels to draw from is the real prize here.

Now this is nothing new, we've been doing power supplies like this for many many years, but on Zen Amplifiers where the transparency is so high, if it's not done right it will make the amplifier sound way worse. Also, it takes a LOT more room inside the amp, and a LOT more money, and because of the resolution I always feared people would shoot the messenger. Decware amps were already faster than just about everything and pushing the envelope for detail about as far as I was comfortable with, but now after hearing this I have to accept that digital has come a long way on the playback side and has never been a problem on the recording side of things.

What is ODD is that with this amplifier, the bypass is not making power supply grain part of the experience like it would in any other amplifier. (Remember this amp filters the DC between a cathode and an anode for every tube.) Therefore it must have been the grain being featured over the top of the recording that made me think so many recordings weren't good. I am now finding that the things I dislike about digital when it isn't sounding perfect are actually less on this ultra resolution amplifier, not more. This is the very reason why I would not have bothered to go here on my own. It was my desire for a 25th anniversary Zen Amp to be better than anything ever done here before that got the Audio Gods involved to make this happen because if I had any intention on making a Zen amp faster, I would have by now.

The power supply temperature was the first sine they were heavily involved (Thank God) and the fact that I liked it better than anything else while it was still technically broken gave me the time and the space to listen to the amplifier and finish the voicing of the power supply. All of the bypass caps were chosen based on their sound as coupling caps in the signal path. I think I used 4 different types which I am certain has a great deal to do with the synergy that is taking place. A) it only took 24 hours to go from questionable to incredible and most power supply mods like that would take a week or more. B) the way it is sculpting out space from nothing is like the expanding universe. There is a tonality to the signature that reminds me of playing mismatched but like minded speakers together and hearing what happens to resulting frequency balance. (Always way better). I recognize that in the sound and I know it's from the cap recipe.

I'm a little disappointed I didn't explore this, (*as in I had to be lead by the hand to the answer like a completely lost cause*) sooner and on my own. As I nurse my ego back to health which isn't ever going to happen because it's impossible while I listen to the amp, and I can't stop listening to the amp. I have an entire music library to revisit, and a dozen pair of speakers to hear for the first time, so I've got no chance of a recovery.

Interestingly I am working on two things simultaneously... one is this 25th anniversary Zen, and the other is a prototype for a lower price zen that maintains the same price/performance ratio to get more people hooked into this side of the wonderful hobby we call audio. As a result of this experience with power supply design, I am already clear on what to do and how on the other prototype. I'll give up more on that later, but I want an entry level amp that is below the price point of our current SE84UFO amplifier.

Back to the amplifier sound... one thing I noticed since my last ramblings is that I caught it sounding like an amplifier usually does after 10:00 p.m. at 1:30 in the afternoon which really just never happens.

Right now I'm listening to bells, triangles, chimes, and things that always have been hard to get right in a digital system, and are so easy in an analogue rig. Tonight on this amp they sound right, at least 97% what I would consider perfect. Keep in mind I haven't listened to analog on this amp yet, because I'm a little scared of it ; ) But I will.

Steve

 [Email](#)  [WWW](#)

 173.17.209.237 50.80.57.123

 **Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #106** - 01/09/18 at 10:48pm

 [Modify](#)  [Split](#)  [Delete](#) 

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator

★★★★★



If the 1st watt  
sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

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**flargosa**  
Senior Member

★★★★★



Will the RCA input location of the final product be the same as the current prototype? Towards the front of the amp?

Posts: 60

Sources: 2Qute, Hugo, Rega P5, Marantz SACD 8005.  
Amps: Decware SE84UFO2, Nelson Pass Aleph  
Speakers: Klipsch Palladiums, Golden Ear Triton Two, Focal Elear.

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72.239.59.91

**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
☆☆☆☆☆

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #107 - 01/09/18 at 11:41pm



Some observations from tonight:

I am noticing a different curve that plots the difference between good recordings and great ones. Before the a great recording was about twice as good as a good recording suggesting a somewhat linear curve. Now bouncing between all these same recordings the difference is so far up to between 3 and 4 times better suggesting an exponential curve.

I feel like my ears and hearing in general feel 30 years younger.

I just can get over the tone. The tonal colors are so overwhelming your mind spills the excess off to your sense of smell and taste. You can taste the sound.

Dynamics are non-existent as a topic or descriptor. The music just is. There is no dragging it down or hyping it up. When I say it just is, I should specify that it sounds and feels real. You sit there and marvel at it like a kid who just saw Santa Clause for the first time!

*Bass & Drum Intro Niles Lofgren Band:* Drum and Bass solos are spellbinding and absolutely huge. This is the part that would completely short out someone who has never heard what genetically evolved two watt amplifier can do.

*Saitensprung Friedemann:* The music has such density and is so tangible that I feel like I could walk on it. Again it just sounds completely real. This exceeds my reference (Acoustat monitor 4 with servo charge tube amps) and it's on cone speakers.

*The Bridge Boris Blank:* Ha! Surround sound has got nothing on this. Literally. It's just about hard to believe. Also if it wasn't this good, it would be easy to drive by without every pulling over. Glad I stopped.

*Tears Run Dry Malia, Boris Blank:* An example of a perfect recording in every way. It's a 12 out of 10. Sounds completely real now.

*Yesterdays (Rudy Van... Paul Chambers:* Just the most fulfilling stand up bass you've ever heard. This is a timbre and texture and tone demonstration as well as being completely 3D and there in front of you. The definition of the bow and strings is too real to have your eyes open because your brain starts to short out when you see nothing there. It's like your sensitivity is increased massively as I would imagine happens to a blind man. I still feel like my ears are getting fresher with every hour I log on this amp.

*Have You Heard (feat... King Curtis, Nat Adderly, Wynto...:* It just sounds completely real. Big band music, exquisitely recorded in a big and old music hall. This is one of those 70 feet wide stages that is 20 feet away from you and 30 feet deep. Horns sound delightful and the cymbals on the drum kit just sound real.

Holy Crap!... I just had a thought. I hope I'm not dead!! That would explain why everything sounds so bleeping good!

I can imagine the sound I'm hearing is very similar to what you might hear with a 4 chassis fully battery operated directly heated triode amplifier designed by someone who knew what they were doing. It exists, just not for people with more brains than money.

*Afro Dite Friedemann:* This lights up your soundstage like a Christmas tree, and then like an entire forest.

*Midnight Procession Borris Blank:* A great piece for late night listening. So real, so Big, so layered, just as always really impressive engineering on these recordings. If all recordings were done so well we would all be addicted to our stereos and unable to go to work!

Of course once you go here, it's time to have a beer and and just visit for awhile. *30,000 Days Yello*

Yea, the whole album is good.

I noticed that a couple times when the music put on the breaks, I slid forward off the couch and almost face planted on the floor. This is the kind of realism I'm talking about... seems to mess with all your other senses. Your level of tactical involvement with the music is super peaked.

The more I listen to this amplifier the more clarity everything I know seems to have. It's like reading from the book of knowledge as you start to connect the dots. A deeper understanding of music's ability to use man's simple oscillator as a carrier to modulate its will.

Certainly there is a greater understanding for the recording process since you can now hear 4 times deeper into the mix.

Another interesting observation is that all those nagging room acoustic issues that you would like to get to are suddenly some distorted rubbish of your own imagination because clearly when you hear this amp's sound, there is no need for improvement. It's like the room just fixed itself. Or like the music just phased your room into another dimension where it would have no effect on the music.

Going to man up and try some analog here in a minute. Been nice chatting with ya.

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173.17.209.237 50.80.57.123

**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
☆☆☆☆☆

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #108 - 01/09/18 at 11:57pm



Imagine the shock you would feel if you realized that the music you hear is actually conscious and when given the right vibration it will manifest in your space. It's not just air molecules colliding into repeating patterns of frequency generated by your speaker cone like we're all comfortable thinking, in fact the stereo steps back out of the way when the music takes over.

Again, I've experienced this when playing live music on those rare occasions when everyone was in the same mindset and it started sounding WAY TO GOOD!!! But, I've never experienced it with electronic gear such as an amplifier. Somewhat humbling, because it means the music doesn't give a crap weather it's you sitting on the drum kit playing live, or a recording of someone



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304





If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

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**Jeff of Arabica**  
Seasoned Member



Name the greatest of all inventors...  
Accident.

Posts: 535

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

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**Jeff of Arabica**  
Seasoned Member



who knows how to play from 20 years ago coming out of your stereo, once it starts to sound that good, it just simply manifests. Where music exists there is no such thing as time yet time is what makes music possible. It's a paradox.

On that note, have a great night and don't worry some of this technology will find it's way into all Decware amplifiers in do time. Even yours.

Steve

Email WWW 173.17.209.237

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #109 - 01/10/18 at 12:18am

Modify Split Delete

Cat's are great listening buddies as many audiophiles know. A cats ears never lie. You can learn a lot about your room and speakers by watching the cats ears triangulate the sound sources.

Tonight the cat is hearing things behind the speakers that aren't really there from the speakers, but as I pointed out earlier, are actually there. I hear it, the cat hears it.

Going to finish off the night with Live in Berlin, Yello. I chickened out on the analog. Even though I have a lot of Yello on LP until the DAC quits amazing me like it is, I just have to put off analog. This is the first time in my life that I have ever loved digital. Why ruin it right?

I'll let myself continue for another day without spoiling it.

Email WWW 173.17.209.237

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #110 - 01/10/18 at 12:32am

Modify Split Delete

Steve Deckert wrote on 01/09/18 at 10:04pm:

Interestingly I am working on two things simultaneously... one is this 25th anniversary Zen, and the other is a **prototype for a lower price zen that maintains the same price/performance ratio to get more people hooked into this side of the wonderful hobby we call audio.**

Bravo!!! And lets face it, the largest consumer base in America are the Millennials. Like it or not. As was the case with all other preceding generations, age and money directly correlate. Think back to our 20's. Most would not have been in position to purchase the equipment we all own. But if this industry is to succeed and stand the test of time, it must have a greater reach and price is a major factor. But it's not the only factor. There is plenty of low price gear marketed/hyped as quality. We can all see through B.S. based on our experience. That is not true for those who have not travelled the roads we all have. Making this hobby

more approachable will have a broad reaching benefit to us all, regardless of age or income level. The future of quality-based audio (notice I didn't use the term "high end audio") will rely on designers and manufacturers realizing the importance of being inclusive, rather than elitist.

Creating such a "gateway" amplifier for those who are curious/interested, for the greater good, is one of the most refreshing, forward thinking ideas to come from Steve, in my opinion.

ZMA//Zen Ultra//Rachel//ZDSD//Super Zen//Taboo MKIII//PS Audio DirectStream DAC + Memory Player + P10//Muse Phono Stage//London Decca Reference//Dynavector DV-507 MKII//Zen Head//Sonorus Reel-to-Reel w/ tube playback pre-amp//Omega SAHos//DM946

Email PM 172.1.34.66

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #111 - 01/10/18 at 12:38am

Modify Split Delete

Something pretty amazing is happening... a few beers into the wind now. Some of you are familiar with the 1dB per beer rule. We're three beers in, thus 3dB louder than when we started. I'm listening to Live in Berlin by Yello on tidal, the Master series version of the album. I shit you not, I am attending a live Boris Blank concert in Berlin in my listening room on a 2 watt amp.

It's impossible with 94dB speakers. A 104 dB speaker, perhaps... Yet it's happening. I don't want to hear it any louder or any softer. It's at the magic level... the ZMA level even though we know that's impossible. So this is the power of micro speed in an amplifier. Simply insane to be pulling this off on a 2 watt amplifier and having it sound so real, so big, so deep, so dense, like a live concert sounds?!

It's got me completely involved in the concert and experiencing it live. Boy you could really mess with someone's mind if you blindfolded them and turned this on. See what happens when they discover there are only two speakers in the room.

Music like this pushes the performance boundaries of the amplifier which is always of great interest to the designer, and it's so different it's just a nice escape.

Jeff, kind words for sure, but yes, been wanting to do it for a long time, and then decided I am going to do it because I'm tired of wanting to do it. Also going to be adding some more DIY amplifier kits here very soon, and we all know that how many of us got hooked into the hobby.

Steve

Email WWW 173.17.209.237

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #112 - 01/10/18 at 12:51am

Modify Split Delete

Ha! Ive been having a blast just following your playlist from these last posts tonight. Been a big fan of Boris Blank and you are spot on with those track disruptions. The other stuff was also fun to explore on the ZMA and Hegeman combination.



Name the greatest of all inventors... Accident.

Posts: 535

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

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**Jeff of Arabica**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★



Name the greatest of all inventors... Accident.

Posts: 535

THANKS for the interesting, provocative, and entertaining posts these past couple nights. I'm a night owl so it has certainly provided for some great reading & listening.

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Email PM

172.1.34.66

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #113 - 01/10/18 at 12:55am

Modify Split Delete

Yea, I can relate to the night owl... that's when things get clear and accomplished.

Email WWW

173.17.209.237

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #114 - 01/10/18 at 12:59am

Modify Split Delete

This amplifier is healing my ears.

Email WWW

173.17.209.237

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #115 - 01/10/18 at 1:08am

Modify Split Delete

The concert is over and this is a trip... the clapping and cheering at the end was the best part!!! So real. SO REAL.

Email WWW

173.17.209.237

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #116 - 01/10/18 at 1:38am

Modify Split Delete

Quote:

Afro Dite Friedemann: This lights up your soundstage like a Christmas tree, and then like an entire forest.

Not a 25th Anniversary, just a ZMA, but criminy!!

ZMA//Zen Ultra//Rachel//ZDSD//Super Zen//Taboo MKIII//PS Audio DirectStream DAC + Memory Player + P10//Muse Phono Stage//London Decca Reference//Dynavector DV-507 MKII//Zen Head//Sonorus Reel-to-Reel w/ tube playback pre-amp//Omega SAHos//DM946

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172.1.34.66

**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #117** - 01/10/18 at 7:21am



Fascinating reports Steve. I'm not familiar with the music you are listening to, nor am I a beer or alcohol drinker, but know that the sound must be delicious. I know there are many who have their appetite to experience sound like this thoroughly whetted now!

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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184.56.37.219

**stone\_of\_tone**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #118** - 01/10/18 at 9:13am



I am so enjoying this Steve. Settling in with your ZR2 creation and then this Amp, is more than I could have hoped for in 2018/Audio!

Listen Often/Listen Deep

The first paragraph in reply#461 .....has me secure, for my Speaker's...1 5/8" round ribbon; Midrange/Woofer 2, 6.5" underhung voice coil drivers, 4.5 cross...single capped.

Posts: 2901

Yes Jeff, Steve's decision to make one more affordable was not lost on me. My son of 22, would be hooked.....

Funny, the db increase/beer effect! I love when that happens!

Surprised Lon, you mentioned you're not familiar with the music? Paul Chamber's started playing in my head....soon as I read Paul & Rudy (Van Gelder)....Steve mentioned....it does not need to be an specific one of Paul's. Furthermore, as I have stated before....alcohol not needed too.....love my listening sessions with coffee as well.....but love my beer!

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference I2S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

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75.168.140.112

**Lonely Raven**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #119** - 01/10/18 at 9:49am



Well I hope I can come hear this amp soon!

Jack of all Trades,  
Master of None

Posts: 3100

12.49.106.98



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**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #120** - 01/10/18 at 9:59am



Oh I knew the Paul Chambers piece and the piece with King Curtis but not the other pieces, which is okay. Steve's description gave me an idea of how glorious the sound is.

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

For those who love alcohol fine. I've seen it ruin the lives of too many friends and coworkers and members of my first wife's family. . . I don't enjoy it or being around it. That's just me.

Posts: 14002

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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184.56.37.219

**Palomino**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #121** - 01/10/18 at 10:04am



I checked out some of Steve's tracks on Tidal. Nice recordings. May not be everyone's cup of beer, but I really like the Yello Live in Berlin.

Posts: 1565

I may have missed this in an earlier post, but Stone mentioned this amp being in the price range of a Mk IV. Is that the current estimate?

I'd have to sell more stuff. I appreciate some of the technology trickling down to lower price amps, but I'd like to figure out a way to buy this amp.

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38.140.29.194

stone\_of\_tone

Seasoned Member



Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #122 - 01/10/18 at 10:10am



Nope LR. You are not allowed to hear it!

Listen Often/Listen Deep

Posts: 2901

.....I'm just jealous, you travel with work through the area and get to stop in. :D

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference I2S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

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75.168.140.112

Lon

Seasoned Member



Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #123 - 01/10/18 at 10:17am



I hear ya. I'd like to buy two of them! (I'd need to mono block them). I'd need to sell a lot too. I just might.

"Love without

guts is  
worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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184.56.37.219

stone\_of\_tone

Seasoned Member



Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #124 - 01/10/18 at 10:19am



Alcohol:  
".....and maybe, too, as a new study suggests, a more creative one."

<http://abcnews.go.com/Business/drinking-alcohol-wine-booze-beer-work/story?id=16...>

Listen Often/Listen Deep

Posts: 2901

....and not to be insensitive to your mention of its destruction Lon. I respect that. I don't want you to think I ignored what you stated and is so true, by posting this. I just know from my own experience, the creative standpoint to be true at times under the influence and as we all know alcohol is a double edged sword.

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
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Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

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75.168.140.112

stone\_of\_tone

Seasoned Member



Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #125 - 01/10/18 at 10:27am



Palomino, Steve stated in reply#440:

Listen Often/Listen Deep

Posts: 2901

"a zen amp that might well be the same price as the TORII MKIV... I'm not counting at this stage, just excavating for that treasure that will pay for all the excavation. ; )"

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference I2S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

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75.168.140.112

Jeff of Arabica

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?





Seasoned Member



Name the greatest of all inventors... Accident.

Posts: 535

Reply #126 - 01/10/18 at 10:29am

Modify Split Delete

Quote:

I hear ya. I'd like to buy two of them! (I'd need to mono block them). I'd need to sell a lot too. I just might.

I right there with you Lon. That is my plan to run a pair to my Omegas. I have an extra Torii MKIV and non-UFO Rachel I will be listing in the near future.

I will keep my ZMA to power the Hegemans and alternate between my fully restored HK Citation II. No way I am parting with my ZMA in its current state.

ZMA//Zen Ultra//Rachel//ZDSD//Super Zen//Taboo MKIII//PS Audio DirectStream DAC + Memory Player + P10//Muse Phono Stage//London Decca Reference//Dynavector DV-507 MKII//Zen Head//Sonorus Reel-to-Reel w/ tube playback pre-amp//Omega SAHos//DM946

Email PM

172.1.34.66

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Lon

Seasoned Member



"Love without guts is worthless!" Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments? Reply #127 - 01/10/18 at 10:35am

Modify Split Delete

Studies, shmudies. I have seen what I have seen with my own eyes, and I've had my own experiences, and I don't at this point in my life like to drink nor be around those who do. Which is neither here nor there. It's not required to enjoy music, and in fact in my days of making music it got in the way of good music more often than not.

I only mentioned it in this thread in that the "third beer" rule of things getting higher in volume and somehow "deeper in listening" (a fallacy) is not in my repertoire

Enjoy what you enjoy. I'm drinking sparkling mineral water, milk and coffee as my staples. I'm not judging, just saying how it is with me.

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

Email PM

184.56.37.219

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stone\_of\_tone

Seasoned Member



Listen Often/Listen Deep

Posts: 2901

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments? Reply #128 - 01/10/18 at 10:35am

Modify Split Delete

It's only 429 miles/6.5 hours drive from Oakdale to E. Peoria. By appt. come Spring~Road Trip!

Holy shaaaat! It has been 10 years. I was at Decfest 2005 & 2008.

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference 12S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

Email PM

75.168.140.112

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Jeff of Arabica

Seasoned Member



Name the greatest of all inventors... Accident.

Posts: 535

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments? Reply #129 - 01/10/18 at 10:36am

Modify Split Delete

Ha! Just a hop skip Stone! ;)

ZMA//Zen Ultra//Rachel//ZDSD//Super Zen//Taboo MKIII//PS Audio DirectStream DAC + Memory Player + P10//Muse Phono Stage//London Decca Reference//Dynavector DV-507 MKII//Zen Head//Sonorus Reel-to-Reel w/ tube playback pre-amp//Omega SAHos//DM946

Email PM

172.1.34.66

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deucekazoo

Seasoned Member



Posts: 335

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments? Reply #130 - 01/10/18 at 10:39am

Modify Split Delete

"Well I hope I can come hear this amp soon!"

Me too! My ears are not as finely tuned as LR's and Steve's but I would love to hear this amp. I have been running my CS amp this hole time so would love to hear the difference between them and this new one.

172.15.3.120

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**stone\_of\_tone**

Seasoned Member



Listen Often/Listen Deep

Posts: 2901

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #131** - 01/10/18 at 10:40am



No doubt Jeff! If I was in 3 hour range...I would become the unwelcome house guest. ;D

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference I2S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

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75.168.140.112

**Palomino**

Seasoned Member



Posts: 1565

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #132** - 01/10/18 at 10:53am



Thanks Stone. From what I have heard of Eric's amp and now recognizing this is a completely different (and better) beast I think its a strong value proposition, to be sure.

Jeff, it may be a good time for others to upgrade/join the legion of Decware owners soon. That's how I bought my Torii - when the ZMA came out.

I have two amps, two different power plants and a spare DAC or two that could be on the block. I'd hate to see any of them go, but you gotta do what you gotta do.

i7 Mac Mini with LPSU/SSD running Audirvana 3, Uptone Audio Regen on LPSU, TEAC UD503, DIY Belden ICs, Torii MKIII, SE341.32, PS Audio P5 Power Supply, PS Audio Power Cords, Vintage Western Electric 16g Speaker wires, DIY OB Speakers w/Tang Band/Augies

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38.140.29.194

**Lonely Raven**

Seasoned Member



Jack of all Trades,  
Master of None

Posts: 3100

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #133** - 01/10/18 at 11:11am



**Quote:**

Nope LR. You are not allowed to hear it!

.....I'm just jealous, you travel with work through the area and get to stop in. :D

I wouldn't be surprised if Steve kept me at bay for a bit...the past two visits when checking out something Steve was excited about I was like:



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12.49.106.98

**stone\_of\_tone**

Seasoned Member



Listen Often/Listen Deep

Posts: 2901

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #134** - 01/10/18 at 11:19am



Pal, what you reported on of Eric's Amp...will be interesting if the "entry level amp that is below the price point of our current SE84UFO amplifier." .....Steve stated (possibly) he wants to come in at \$....matches Eric's?

As Steve states below....I can imagine these two Amps on the bench side by side as he manages to work on the slow down and speed up he describes with the power supply, caps and regulator tubes, et al, ....beyond my laymen brain. Fascinating ART!

Furthermore, the entry level not to cannibalize the Annv. Zen Amp.

"Interestingly I am working on two things simultaneously... one is this 25th anniversary Zen, and the other is a prototype for a lower price zen that maintains the same price/performance ratio to get more people hooked into this side of the wonderful hobby we call audio. As a result of this experience with power supply design, I am already clear on what to do and how on the other prototype. I'll give up more on that later, but I want an entry level amp that is below the price point of our current SE84UFO amplifier."

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference I2S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

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75.168.140.112

**stone\_of\_tone**

Seasoned Member



**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #135** - 01/10/18 at 11:20am



Listen Often/Listen Deep

Posts: 2901

HA! Ken & Stumpy:

Yes, understandable, Steve is not ready to have anyone in yet.

Not that he is worried whether you Like or not.

He, is just not ready to have anyone in-at this development spot/position in time-common sense to me.

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference 12S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

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**Archie**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

Posts: 926

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #136 - 01/10/18 at 11:33am

I'd like to throw a bit of water on the fire. I believe every word Steve wrote about his listening experiences. That said, I remember (pushing 40 years now!) the first time I got stoned and listened to music. My stereo was nothing to brag about but I was inside the music and it was a three dimensional space that I could touch.

Conditions of the mind, accessible through concentration, drugs, suggestion, or whatever, are powerful and "real." I'm only mentioning this because no matter how good Steve's amps are, I know that I will NEVER hear them the way Steve does (or some, but by no means all, listeners). Steve's listening abilities are developed to a super-human extent, as they need to be to do what he does.

The reason I bring this up is that I've been an observer to a few of Steve's newer amp design threads and the buzz always makes me want to sell everything I own and buy his latest creation. This isn't "sour grapes," just my attempt at keeping perspective.



71.211.151.244

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**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #137 - 01/10/18 at 1:24pm

Archie, understood and well-expressed. I do know that my "listening" has really improved over the last two decades, especially the last, but none of us can hear into these amps the way Steve, creator and student/master of the electrical interface with music can and does.

I listen to my system and am very happy. But I do know that Steve creates improvements by "blood, sweat and beers" as Richard Rawlins says, and they ARE exciting to hear. And it's hard not to want that improvement, even as we listen in contentment to the blessings he has helped us attain in the past. But it's wise to keep things in perspective. Wise, and a struggle to do so.

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

184.56.37.219

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**Palomino**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

Posts: 1565

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #138 - 01/10/18 at 1:26pm

Valid point Archie, but having listened to what Steve came up with for Raven I tend to buy into his enthusiasm here.

Even though I still have it, I won't put it back into my system because my Rachael pales in comparison. I don't want to be spoiled and then have it taken away.

And here is how Steve described the latest iteration to me in a separate email back in mid-December:

*Imagine Eric's amp running on pure DC battery power and that's pretty much what it sounds like. Sorry the PS Audio power plant does not compare.*

Raven's amp is like #100 or something and it still has the same transformer and permanent power chord. The RCAs are upgraded and I think maybe the speaker taps, but I kept thinking "what if I could get an old Zen and have Steve work this magic but upgrade some more of the hardware??"

He's done that and added the power mods with this new amp. This is going to be a good. After I first heard it months ago, I told people to just buy it. It can only be better in the latest iteration.

i7 Mac Mini with LPSU/SSD running Audirvana 3, Uptone Audio Regen on LPSU, TEAC UD503, DIY Belden ICs, Torii MKIII, SE34I.32, PS Audio P5 Power Supply, PS Audio Power Cords, Vintage Western Electric 16g Speaker wires, DIY OB Speakers w/Tang Band/Augies

38.140.29.194

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**Lonely Raven**

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**

Seasoned Member  
★★★★★



Jack of all Trades,  
Master of None

Posts: 3100

[Reply #139](#) - 01/10/18 at 1:28pm

I totally get that, I'm a skeptic at heart; when I go in, I go in with as neutral of a mindset as I can, or an "OK, Impress Me" attitude like a producer seeing yet another startlet that wants to make it big.

It's rare that something really Wows me fully. DirectStream did (and has with \*most\* of the OS updates), ZMA did right off the bat. Steve's old listening room in the early days of the Zen amp definitely did. And the prototype for the 25th that Palomino is borrowing. Not really much else has.

[Email](#) [PM](#) [WWW](#) [MSN](#)

12.49.106.98

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**Palomino**

Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

[Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?](#)  
[Reply #140](#) - 01/10/18 at 1:31pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

And when Raven told me he was listening to the Zen instead of his ZMA, that was additional confirmation for me.

Bring on the hype. Bring on the amp.

i7 Mac Mini with LPSU/SSD running Audirvana 3, Uptone Audio Regen on LPSU, TEAC UD503, DIY Belden ICs, Torii MKIII, SE34I.32, PS Audio P5 Power Supply, PS Audio Power Cords, Vintage Western Electric 16g Speaker wires, DIY OB Speakers w/Tang Band/Augies

[Email](#) [PM](#)

38.140.29.194

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**Lonely Raven**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

[Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?](#)  
[Reply #141](#) - 01/10/18 at 1:32pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

**Quote:**

Raven's amp is like #100 or something and it still has the same transformer and permanent power chord. The RCAs are upgraded and I think maybe the speaker taps, but I kept thinking "what if I could get an old Zen and have Steve work this magic but upgrade some more of the hardware??"

Damnit, if you aren't listening to it I'll just come and get it then!

I think it's serial # 47 or 49

I'll let Jeff get serial #1 and #2 of the 25th anniversary, and I bet Stone will get #3, then change his mind, then change his mind again, then change it back. 😊 I'd be in line for the 25th, but I don't see me being able to afford it anytime soon. Maybe if Steve kept it under \$1500.

[Email](#) [PM](#) [WWW](#) [MSN](#)

12.49.106.98

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**Palomino**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

[Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?](#)  
[Reply #142](#) - 01/10/18 at 1:34pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

All this talk has me reconsidering that decision to keep it out of my system 😊

I may seek out your services to help sell some of my equipment. You know how to move the merch

i7 Mac Mini with LPSU/SSD running Audirvana 3, Uptone Audio Regen on LPSU, TEAC UD503, DIY Belden ICs, Torii MKIII, SE34I.32, PS Audio P5 Power Supply, PS Audio Power Cords, Vintage Western Electric 16g Speaker wires, DIY OB Speakers w/Tang Band/Augies

[Email](#) [PM](#)

38.140.29.194

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**Lonely Raven**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

[Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?](#)  
[Reply #143](#) - 01/10/18 at 1:36pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

Bugger - I'm going to do donuts in your lawn with my truck. :P



Jack of all Trades,  
Master of None

Posts: 3100

[Email](#) [PM](#) [WWW](#) [MSN](#)

12.49.106.98

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**stone\_of\_tone**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

[Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?](#)  
[Reply #144](#) - 01/10/18 at 2:03pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

To funny LR!

I will be in the 10+ serial number range.  
I can't do the summer release initial order/launch.  
It will be Oct/November for me.

I am so glad it won't be a limited release.

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference I2S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033

Listen Often/Listen  
Deep

Posts: 2901

Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

75.168.140.112

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #145** - 01/10/18 at 2:13pm

It will be interesting (as I mentioned in my reply#490):

Entry level Zen (like Eric's little Zen hot rod/presumably or better)

vs.

Anniversary Zen (whole other league).

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference I2S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

75.168.140.112

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #146** - 01/10/18 at 2:21pm

I have my ZROCK2 coming to keep me busy + my NOS Input Tube collection growth/addiction....continues.

Decware 2018.....swееееееееееееееееее!

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference I2S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

75.168.140.112

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #147** - 01/10/18 at 2:24pm

The mods to Eric's amp were \*not\* inexpensive.

If Steve can bring some of this to a Zen and keep it in the ballpark of a Rachael, that would be great. Using the same caps I don't know how he would do it, but he is Steve and I am, well, not Steve 😊

i7 Mac Mini with LPSU/SSD running Audirvana 3, Uptone Audio Regen on LPSU, TEAC UD503, DIY Belden ICs, Torii MKIII, SE34I.32, PS Audio P5 Power Supply, PS Audio Power Cords, Vintage Western Electric 16g Speaker wires, DIY OB Speakers w/Tang Band/Augies

38.140.29.194

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #148** - 01/10/18 at 2:59pm

I believe that the planets are aligning in my favor. Been deliberating over a SE84UFO for a while and I suppose my reticence paid off. Ready to dive in headfirst when this beast is brought to market!

98.102.94.67

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #149** - 01/10/18 at 3:26pm

[quoteValid point Archie, but having listened to what Steve came up with for Raven I tend to buy into his enthusiasm here.

Even though I still have it, I won't put it back into my system because my Rachael pales in comparison. I don't want to be spoiled and then have it taken away.] [/quote]

This, and what follows in other posts is NOT helping me keep perspective!!!! 😊

71.211.151.244

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #150** - 01/10/18 at 3:30pm

Give up Archie. The cosmos are aligning and Steve is channeling their power.

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**stone\_of\_tone**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Listen Often/Listen Deep

Posts: 2901

Back to top

**stone\_of\_tone**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Listen Often/Listen Deep

Posts: 2901

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**Palomino**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Posts: 1565

Back to top

**metropolis7**  
Senior Member  
★★★★★

Posts: 81

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**Archie**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Posts: 926

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**Palomino**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Posts: 1565

i7 Mac Mini with LPSU/SSD running Audirvana 3, Uptone Audio Regen on LPSU, TEAC UD503, DIY Belden ICs, Torii MKIII, SE341.32, PS Audio P5 Power Supply, PS Audio Power Cords, Vintage Western Electric 16g Speaker wires, DIY OB Speakers w/Tang Band/Augies

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38.140.29.194

**stone\_of\_tone**

Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #151 - 01/10/18 at 4:13pm



ZROCK2 is packed and ready to ship. I will have to call Sarah tomorrow and pay for it. Oops, wrong Thread. 😊

Listen Often/Listen Deep

Posts: 2901

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference I2S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

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75.168.140.112

**Tommy Freefall**

Senior Member  
☆☆☆☆

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #152 - 01/10/18 at 5:40pm



Beer is of course an excellent accompaniment, but Tequila is an awesome pairing with Steve's amps!  
(just make sure it's 100% blue agave)

Posts: 94

Torii Jr., ERRx, ZBIT, Zenhead, Grado 325e

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4.14.204.34

**JD**

Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #153 - 01/10/18 at 7:12pm



I just think it's damn cool that a designer and a great one at that lets people in on the process.

JD

Posts: 473

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76.19.198.65

**stone\_of\_tone**

Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #154 - 01/10/18 at 8:32pm



No doubt JD. I still marvel at my ZMA and enjoyed the process thread back in 2013. I good read to revisit or for others whom have never read it.

Listen Often/Listen Deep

Posts: 2901

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference I2S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

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75.168.140.112

**beowulf**

Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #155 - 01/10/18 at 8:42pm



**Lonely Raven wrote on 01/10/18 at 1:32pm:**

I'd be in line for the 25th, but I don't see me being able to afford it anytime soon. Maybe if Steve kept it under \$1500.



Posts: 1350

Yeah I doubt I could swing a pair of mono's (I don't feel one would be enough for my setup) as I thought he mentioned they will come in at the price of a Torii MK IV. That would make a pair of mono's close to \$7,000.00. Making them the most expensive amp (per watt) in his lineup ... \$1750 per watt! 😊

That makes the 60 watt Torii Mono's, which in comparison @ \$93.26 per watt, sound like the deal of the century! 😊

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**Lonely Raven**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

  
Jack of all Trades,  
Master of None

Posts: 3100

 72.220.3.94

 **Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #156** - 01/10/18 at 10:49pm

**Quote:**

That makes the 60 watt Torii Mono's, which in comparison @ \$93.26 per watt, sound like the deal of the century!  
Grin

Ha, that made me laugh.

**Quote:**

The mods to Eric's amp were *\*not\** inexpensive.

Um yeah, the mod to my old Zen A was \$700 by itself!

Steve would have to go back to a simple box, stripped down design, same power transformer, but do the caps like mine to get the speed right. If he could bring it back down to the original \$499 price that my Zen was back in '98....now that would be something!

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**Palomino**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Posts: 1565

 73.75.83.94

 **Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #157** - 01/11/18 at 9:15am

At the risk of being labeled a passenger who is spending a little too much time on the SS Fanboy, I'll write one more post on this amp.

Given that Raven *\*will\** someday take his amp back, I decided to do an A/B last night - Rachael vs Zen -- using Steve's Tidal playlist. I went into it knowing which I would like better, but I thought I might be able to jot down some differences that others may find useful. Both amps were run plugged into my PS Audio P5 with PS Audio AC10 Power Cord to the wall, Cryo'd Hubbel outlets and dedicated 15A circuit.

Steve has selected a nice playlist here and that was clear with Rachael. My notes include nice big soundstage, interesting positioning of instruments, nice ambient content by Boris Blank, maybe a little sibilance on the female vocal on Tears Run Dry.

Some of the tracks were a little in my face but I was able to back the volume off a bit and they were fine. Nils Lofgren sounded like it always does. On several of them I thought these are neat, creative artists and I like their music. Overall clear and accurate picture with a fair level of engagement.

I put in the Zen and let it warm up. I find that it takes about twice as long for the Zen to get to its happy place than it does Rachael.

Then I sat down determined to analyze the differences.

You've heard this one before, but I ended up pretty much just sitting there, feeling immersed in the music. I listened to the playlist, then I listened to it again, then I went out on Tidal to listen to more tracks by the same artists, then I listened to the playlist again. Nearly three hours. Poof. Up in smoke. No notes. I felt that satisfaction you get after watching a really emotionally engaging movie.

This morning I got up early and went down for another listen with the intent of jotting down at least some notes and managed to do so. In addition to what I have said in earlier posts about this amp being quick and getting the attack right (which engages you), it also draws you in with how lush the soundstage is. Its enveloping to a higher degree than Rachael and its cozier there.

As mentioned before, I do have to turn up the Crowns a bit to get the bass to the right level, but I love the timbre of the bass from this amp. That alone makes this a more enjoyable amp. It has rich timbre on other instruments as well, but I am a sucker for good bass.

The most immersive songs were Tears Run Dry and The Bridge and I can relate to some of Steve's comments although I don't think I am getting the full experience he is.

I had to keep reminding myself that I am getting this level of engagement out of a little gray box with red and black plastic speaker taps and a power cord thinner than the one that came with my kid's new computer.

I get the \$\$ per watt analysis. But in fairness to the big picture, try doing that analysis with one of those tube amps vendors that show up at the audio shows.

So, I would put a different spin on the analysis. \$\$ per level of engagement. Hard to measure and relay to others, but I think we are all looking for that value.

If the production model (or its shared DNA siblings) are anything like this amp, I think Steve will deliver a very high \$\$ per level of engagement.

i7 Mac Mini with LPSU/SSD running Audirvana 3, Uptone Audio Regen on LPSU, TEAC UD503, DIY Belden ICs, Torii MKIII, SE34I.32, PS Audio P5 Power Supply, PS Audio Power Cords, Vintage Western Electric 16g Speaker wires, DIY OB Speakers w/Tang Band/Augies

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**stone\_of\_tone**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Listen Often/Listen Deep

Posts: 2901

 38.140.29.194

 **Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #158** - 01/11/18 at 10:50am

\$700 upgrade ~ is inexpensive in the scheme of things.

Here is how it lays down:

Steve stated he wants to bring the Entry Level Amp in under the 995.00/UFO ZEN. I think it can be done....if it goes a little over (2, 300 or to \$1495)/no one would fault him....It will be, LR/Eric's equivalent Zen or better.

Then we have the 25th Anniversary Amp...with Tube Reg' + all the other Steve's/expertise (please read his last dozen posts).....and a whole other ball game.....and will justify its ticket for entry.

Hope this helped.

NUMBER ONE FAN BOY HERE! 😄😄😄😄  
.....AND WHY I CREATED THIS THREAD: 08/22/14 at 17:45:10. 8-)

Hey, I did not cancel my ZROCK2! (tool(s)) 😞  
Oh, when I have canceled...I've order an other product...for example; my PAC-S's.....and I've OWNED/PURCHASED NEW:  
SE84CS, Torii III, SuperZen, CSPreamplifier3/with Jupiter Caps & Styx Speaker Cable.

Love my ZDSD & ZMA.....more purchased by me from Decware, than the Tool types..... .


I look forward to J of A getting his hands on a pair....and reviewing come late summer!

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference I2S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

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**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #159** - 01/11/18 at 11:34am   

I may have misread Steve's post about the "entry Zen," but I thought he wanted to get something for sale at a more attractive price point for newbies and not necessarily something up to the modified Zen level. 1K for his lowest price amp is shocking when you come in cold. It needs to be a "gateway" amp that leads to the harder stuff! 😄

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**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #160** - 01/11/18 at 11:40am   

PS Audio did this with the Sprout. Not sure how well that product has done for them. But I see the wisdom in it.

i7 Mac Mini with LPSU/SSD running Audirvana 3, Uptone Audio Regen on LPSU, TEAC UD503, DIY Belden ICs, Torii MKIII, SE341.32, PS Audio P5 Power Supply, PS Audio Power Cords, Vintage Western Electric 16g Speaker wires, DIY OB Speakers w/Tang Band/Augies

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**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #161** - 01/11/18 at 11:53am   

**Quote:**

I may have misread Steve's post about the "entry Zen," but I thought he wanted to get something for sale at a more attractive price point for newbies and not necessarily something up to the modified Zen level. 1K for his lowest price amp is shocking when you come in cold. It needs to be a "gateway" amp that leads to the harder stuff!

That's how I saw it as well. That's why I mentioned it would be amazing if he could do my Zen for that classic \$499 price. The V-Caps would immediately put it out of that price range, but if he could keep the power supply speed, UFO transformers, classic power supply at that \$499 or thereabouts. Wow. Maybe to get it into that range, base model (classic power supply transformer with my PS caps), at \$499, then do a \$200 UFO option, and \$200 VCAP option. The key would be to have it at that price to pull people away from the \$300 Chinese tube amps that people think are actual tube amps. ;D But then give them an option for the real Zen magic.

**Quote:**

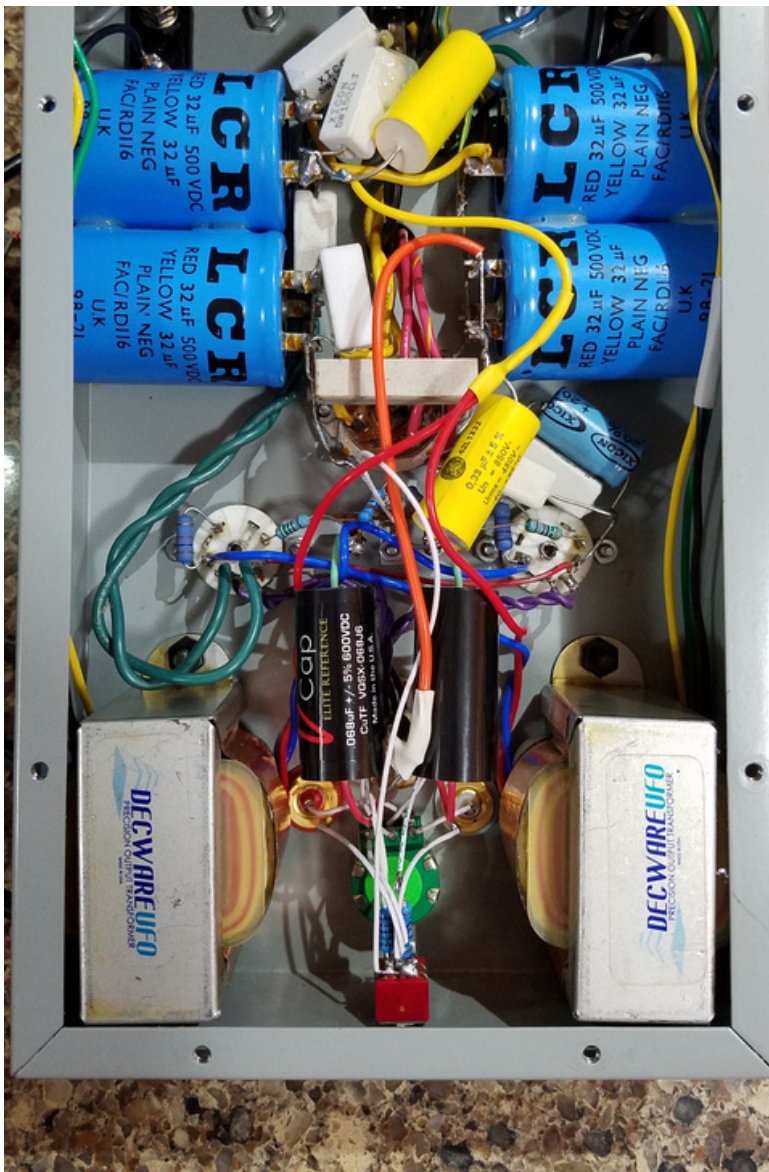
So, I would put a different spin on the analysis. \$\$ per level of engagement. Hard to measure and relay to others, but I think we are all looking for that value.

If the production model (or its shared DNA siblings) are anything like this amp, I think Steve will deliver a very high \$\$ per level of engagement.

I agree with this wholeheartedly. That's part of what made the ZMA a Duh! purchase for me. Horsepower and engagement. The little Zen certainly is a whole nother level of engagement.







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12.235.113.146

**stone\_of\_tone**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #162 - 01/11/18 at 12:57pm



Obviously, it is speculation on my part....I'm a good speculator.

Listen Often/Listen Deep

I think it can be done (match LR prototype) under or at \$995 Archie, as I mentioned.

Posts: 2901

However, working on them side by side on the bench (25th Ann)...if the temptation to add a little more to the Entry Level.....?....could justify bringing up the EL a notch/\$ (or, have option upgrades for the Entry Level). Still, very approachable in price.

Fun, to speculate! Intrigue!

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference 12S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

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75.168.140.112

**Palomino**

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**



Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Posts: 1565

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**Lonely Raven**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Jack of all Trades,  
Master of None

Posts: 3100

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**stone\_of\_tone**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Listen Often/Listen  
Deep

Posts: 2901

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**Syd**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Posts: 1450

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**tybee**  
Verified Member  
★★★



Posts: 30

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**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

"Love without

**Reply #163** - 01/11/18 at 1:25pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

I don't think you will ever see a Zen amp for \$500.

I priced out a build a couple years ago with basic components the circuit board and it was more than \$350. Add in skilled labor, etc. and you are over \$500 easy. Granted Steve gets better pricing on components, but I don't see any positive margin there even with lower prices on materials.

Loss leader is probably not a strategy that is often employed by small businesses.

i7 Mac Mini with LPSU/SSD running Audirvana 3, Uptone Audio Regen on LPSU, TEAC UD503, DIY Belden ICs, Torii MKIII, SE34I.32, PS Audio P5 Power Supply, PS Audio Power Cords, Vintage Western Electric 16g Speaker wires, DIY OB Speakers w/Tang Band/Augies

[Email](#) [PM](#)

38.140.29.194

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #164** - 01/11/18 at 2:11pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

That's exactly what I was thinking as well - back when Steve was hand building these himself, he didn't have the overhead he has now with a proper shop. Loss leader doesn't make sense as well.

Granted, he could always hire me to sling solder for him - I'm cheap, and good at following ready made examples. 😊

Have solder, will work for watts.

[Email](#) [PM](#) [WWW](#) [MSN](#)

12.235.113.146

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #165** - 01/11/18 at 3:21pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

Certainly no loss leader need be done. But, as I said, their might be a reading comprehension problem here....but, here it goes.... As I said, with the base entry model....option upgrades/offered at the time of entry level amp purchase....or later send it back for upgrade. ....Steve making them side by side on the bench right now like I said, you need to wrap your brain around that.....

Side by side = Annv Amp and Entry Level Amp.

Enough on this matter....probably will be lost in translation again.

Heck, my ZROCK2 is coming and with my ZDSD, ZMA, Kabling and Speakers....I might have to poke out climbing back into Steve's Anv Triode until Fall of 2019. 8-)

That is Twen-ty Nine-teen. ....F A L L

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference I2S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

[Email](#) [PM](#)

75.168.140.112

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #166** - 01/11/18 at 3:46pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

Bring on the vinyl review....hope Steves anchored down.

Decware: Rachael's x 2 bridged, C. SP2+, ZP3, ZMC1, DSC i/c's, DHC-1 pw/cbl's Michell Orbe + SME V + M.Benz LP s , Nakamichi LX5,  
Lowther acoustas DX2's, WE 16g sp/cbl's, Isotek mains sub

[Email](#) [PM](#)

94.8.199.193

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #167** - 01/11/18 at 4:43pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

I have been watching this thread with great interest, but can anyone share what speaker Steve is using for his tests?

[Email](#) [PM](#)

68.32.96.74

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #168** - 01/11/18 at 4:57pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

Good question! Steve will hopefully let us know.

guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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184.56.37.219

hifiguy

Verified Member  
☆☆

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #169 - 01/11/18 at 6:30pm



Hi Everyone... I too have started saving-up for a Zen Anniversary. Very exciting. How much fun is doing high-end audio with 2 watts?! I'm going to be using a floor-standing version of the Omega CAM.

Posts: 2

Also, I was wondering what the Zen Anniversary would sound like on a high-end headphone? Any chance of a headphone-output option on the new Zen amplifier(s)... please!

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104.129.196.125

Jeff of Arabica

Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #170 - 01/11/18 at 8:11pm



Quote:

I have been watching this thread with great interest, but can anyone share what speaker Steve is using for his tests?

I was about to ask the same question. If I was to guess, the Monoliths!

Name the greatest of all inventors...  
Accident.

Posts: 535

ZMA//Zen Ultra//Rachel//ZDSD//Super Zen//Taboo MKIII//PS Audio DirectStream DAC + Memory Player + P10//Muse Phono Stage//London Decca Reference//Dynavector DV-507 MKII//Zen Head//SonoruS Reel-to-Reel w/ tube playback pre-amp//Omega SAHOs//DM946

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172.1.34.66

DB2

Senior Member  
☆☆☆☆

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #171 - 01/11/18 at 8:26pm



"You've heard this one before, but I ended up pretty much just sitting there, feeling immersed in the music. I listened to the playlist, then I listened to it again, then I went out on Tidal to listen to more tracks by the same artists, then I listened to the playlist again. Nearly three hours. Poof. Up in smoke."

Posts: 65

Not at all. It was three hours immersed in the here and now.

Be here now!

Be here now!

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184.55.36.75

Steve Deckert

Administrator  
☆☆☆☆☆

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #172 - 01/11/18 at 8:40pm



Hifiguy - welcome to the forum!

Any Zen Triode amplifier can be used to drive headphones including planar headphones by using a remote headphone jack that is wired to the speaker binding posts. The sensitivity of the headphones when exceptionally high will reveal the noise floor of the amplifier in which case a series resistor is used to drop the output below the noise floor. We can make these jacks for you and tune them to your specific headphone for about \$200.

If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

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50.80.58.186

Steve Deckert

Administrator  
☆☆☆☆☆

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #173 - 01/11/18 at 9:01pm



Actually, I have used the Monoliths (DM947's) but most of the time I have been using a new DNA horn we're experimenting with. It is simply a scaled up version of the current DNA horn on the site. Rather than using a 5 inch driver it uses an 8 inch driver. In fact it uses the same driver compliment as the DM946/DM947 which is the 8 inch crossover less silver flute wool cone driver and the isodynamic planar ribbon tweeter. The signature of the speaker is very similar to the DM947.Monoliths but better. The cabinet is an inch and a half thick composite co-mass layer damped DNA horn that gives higher efficiency, tighter more articulate sound with more slam and because you can hear a couple dB increase in efficiency over the Monoliths it gets louder on the 2 watt Zen. This somewhat small difference is just enough to feel like I'm listening to the DM947's on the ZMA which is a favorite pairing of mine. The density and size are about the same, the ZMA having slightly better control and the new Zen having more resolution.

If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

The speakers are proving to be something special with the 2 watt Zen, and being able to get this efficiency across such a wide bandwidth really makes you forget you're only using 2 watts, so that is a small part of my raving about this amplifier and since I really like what I'm hearing right now I don't want to scramble my brain with a bunch of new variables (like speakers) at this stage.

This weekend I'll either sabotage by new found fondness for digital by listening to analog, or who knows... anything can happen. I just know I don't want to have to work the following day ; )

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50.80.58.186

**Jeff of Arabica**

Seasoned Member



Name the greatest of all inventors... Accident.

Posts: 535

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #174** - 01/12/18 at 12:03am



Stone,

It sounds like this new DNA may be the perfect (higher sensitivity) compliment to your modified Adagio's allowing you to exploit the 25th Anniversary for all its got.

Like you, I will not sell my ZMA. Just too good and has its strengths. It can power speakers the 25th Anniversary cannot. I don't want to lose that capability. So, it will power my vintage/restored Hegeman Model 1a's which are about 92db efficient, similar to your Adagio's. In the same room, I will create another amplifier/speaker compliment using a pair of 25th Anniversary amps with my 97db Omega SAHOs. Best of both worlds. Can I do it with one amp? Yes, I can. I had great results with a single Super Zen powering these Omega SAHOs (with my Ultra pre-amp). That being said, this new amp will be better enabled to drive like speakers than the standard 2-watt Zen amp, based on what Steve is reporting.

ZMA//Zen Ultra//Rachel//ZDSD//Super Zen//Taboo MKIII//PS Audio DirectStream DAC + Memory Player + P10//Muse Phono Stage//London Decca Reference//Dynavector DV-507 MKII//Zen Head//Sonorus Reel-to-Reel w/ tube playback pre-amp//Omega SAHOs//DM946

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172.1.34.66

**Dave1210**

Seasoned Member



Posts: 951

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #175** - 01/12/18 at 5:07am



Definitely has been a fun read and I know this amp is going to be really special.

The below also caught my attention...

**Quote:**

...some of this technology will find it's way into all Decware amplifiers in do time. Even yours.

Steve...which amps could be upgraded and when do you think that might be possible?

Nothing like pestering the developer about his innovation pipeline before the initial innovation even launches.

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74.83.81.140

**Palomino**

Seasoned Member



Posts: 1565

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #176** - 01/12/18 at 8:04am



FWIW, the speakers I am listening to with the Zen have the Silver Flute driver. Steve does some modifications and has his own waveguide but the sound is similar.

Using the TEAC 503 as my DAC/pre it is big and produces more volume than I need. My room is on the small side 16.5 X 12.5. YMMV

i7 Mac Mini with LPSU/SSD running Audirvana 3, Uptone Audio Regen on LPSU, TEAC UD503, DIY Belden ICs, Torii MKIII, SE34I.32, PS Audio P5 Power Supply, PS Audio Power Cords, Vintage Western Electric 16g Speaker wires, DIY OB Speakers w/Tang Band/Augies

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99.203.143.207

**stone\_of\_tone**

Seasoned Member



Listen Often/Listen

Deep

Posts: 2901

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #177** - 01/12/18 at 9:24am



Oh yes J of A, the scaled up version of the current DNA horn-I took notice.

It has been 10 years since I have seen Steve and DeVon. I plan, by appt., to stop in....if they are willing to put up with me for a few hours.

I plan to do this before I take off to TX, ....tend to my Folks and their Roses and Pineapple Palms.

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference I2S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

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75.168.140.112

**Lonely Raven**

Seasoned Member



Jack of all Trades,  
Master of None

Posts: 3100

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #178** - 01/12/18 at 11:18am



Sounds like Palomino and I might have a new speaker build to do soon! LOL

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12.235.113.146

**lazb**  
Verified Member  
☆☆☆

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #179 - 01/12/18 at 11:58am



Sounds to me like if Steve and Ziggy do not put it into production you may have more than two of them to build!

Posts: 39

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162.237.14.147

**Palomino**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #180 - 01/12/18 at 1:06pm



I hope to do a comparison of the Dayton Audio AMT to the ribbon tweeter this weekend. Just for fun.

While the Silver Flute was never intended to be in an open baffle, I find it to be very good. The wool cone has a nice organic sound to it. I will also put the Tang Bands back in this weekend just to see which I like better.

I have built a DNA and my own version of the monoliths. Raven and I later built the El Camino horns, but it was a flat pack from Zygi. Night and day difference with the flat pack.

Believe me, this type of build is best left in the hands of professionals.

Anyhow, I can really imagine the sound Steve is getting and think a commercial version of the 947 DNA is a great idea.

i7 Mac Mini with LPSU/SSD running Audirvana 3, Uptone Audio Regen on LPSU, TEAC UD503, DIY Belden ICs, Torii MKIII, SE34I.32, PS Audio P5 Power Supply, PS Audio Power Cords, Vintage Western Electric 16g Speaker wires, DIY OB Speakers w/Tang Band/Augies

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38.140.29.194

**Lonely Raven**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #181 - 01/12/18 at 1:48pm



**Quote:**

Raven and I later built the El Camino horns, but it was a flat pack from Zygi. Night and day difference with the flat pack.

Jack of all Trades,  
Master of None

Posts: 3100

Seriously - seeing the precision of Bob's work is very humbling. Yeah, if I had to choose between making one from scratch, or paying extra for a flat-pack from him, I would absolutely get the flat-pack!

That said, I do have a really, really nice table saw now. 😊

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
☆☆☆☆

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #182 - 01/12/18 at 7:34pm



**Quote:**

Steve...which amps could be upgraded and when do you think that might be possible?

So far the only candidate is the SE84UFO3 monos because that is the only other 2 watt Zen amp with a tube voltage regulator. I have just completed the upgrade to a pair today in fact and will be evaluating the results shortly.

As those with the monos know, there is only one OA3 tube in the design so the natural question is will we put a second one in and the answer is no. The monos only use one half of the input tube which does not draw enough current to fire a voltage regulator tube and keep it lit. At the same time since there is only one output tube instead of two the power supply generates a higher working voltage. This means we can drive both the input tube and the output tube with the same OA3 regulator. Presently the SE84UFO3 uses the OA3 to drive the input stage and shunts a bunch of current to ground to keep it lit. By removing the shunt and combining both stages we can actually benefit from a higher working voltage than before. The upgrade took 11 additional caps per amp, and a couple resistor changes and some basic rewiring.

Now completed I'm expecting similar results to those I've been writing about with the stereo amp. Also this particular pair were optioned out with type II beeswax caps and I left those installed rather than changing them to VCAP's and then updated the recipe accordingly by using more beeswax caps for some of the bypass work. This should be a very interesting comparison. VCAPs are more percussive while BEESWAX are more organic. The higher voltage on the SE84UFO3 will naturally make the signature more percussive anyway, so in those amps it is possible VCAPS might be a bit much and the Beeswax will actually make the amp sound more like the stereo version... which would be ideal.

In testing on the bench today I did notice the clipping character of the amps was improved and the distortion dropped a bit indicating they can be pushed a bit harder than before. We'll see.

As for the other amplifiers in the Decware line I will be experimenting with various bypass recipes to see what improvements can be made and if their cost is justified.

Steve

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50.80.58.186

**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #183 - 01/12/18 at 8:46pm



That's really interesting Steve. Those monos are beautiful. . . and if they have the potential to be as wonderful with the new tech. . . wow. And with Jupiter caps too.

"Love without



If the 1st watt  
sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

guts is worthless!" Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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184.56.37.219

Lon Seasoned Member ★★★★★

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments? Reply #184 - 01/13/18 at 10:11am



Eager to hear more about an "Anniversaried" pair of Zen Monoblocks. I have always sort of wished I had a pair of Monoblocks and I'd be tempted to get a pair of these if all the mojo of the 25th Anniversary Zen were there. And their 2.7 watts may just be enough for my audio and video needs with the ZTPRE as a pump to feed them. . . .

Exciting times for the Decware world.

"Love without guts is worthless!" Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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184.56.37.219

Steve Deckert Administrator ★★★★★

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments? Reply #185 - 01/14/18 at 11:30am



Sadly I found one of the tube sockets is chipped on one of the amps meaning it was built that way. On tuesday the builder will replace input stage and socket. I'm not going to listen to these amps until that has happened, but have great expectations and will report back when I know something.

Steve



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304



50.80.58.186

Lon Seasoned Member ★★★★★

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments? Reply #186 - 01/14/18 at 11:49am



Thanks Steve. Looking forward to your impressions.

"Love without guts is worthless!" Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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184.56.37.219

stone\_of\_tone Seasoned Member ★★★★★

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments? Reply #187 - 01/14/18 at 1:22pm



Nice to read about the SE84UFO3 monos with the Jupiter's instead of VCaps, as candidates. The different topology derived you mention, very nice as well...to achieve your goal of putting the 3 on par with the AN25th.....at the 3.5k ballpark for either, or

What I would like to see...is a remote volume added to the ZSTAGE preamp? Looks like their is room to put it in. Bring that to us at \$1295 (you won't be able to make them fast enough/here/on Facebook and get/purchase the mailing lists of the Hi-Fi mags...we/you know the ones-direct mail subscribers-about your ZSTAGE WITH remote), per my calculations with Jupiter caps. Then I'm set running ZSTAGE to ZROCK2 to ZMA and UFO3 mono's or AN25th. (Obviously, single input & output at \$1295....additional cost for more inputs and another output).

I want the simplicity/transparency (as you wrote) found in the ZR2 of the single tube WITH that simplicity/transparency of the single tube in my remote volume ZSTAGE preamplifier.

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference 12S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

Listen Often/Listen Deep

Posts: 2901

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75.168.140.112

**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

"Love without  
guts is  
worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #188** - 01/14/18 at 3:08pm

That would be cool if the ZSTAGE could be fitted with a remote volume control. . . I personally doubt that it's feasible.

I don't know Larry, I've had the ZSTAGE and I've had and have CSP2+ and I've the ZTPRE. I really preferred the CSP2+ to the ZSTAGE, so I think you may be better suited with your AR preamp if you prefer that to the CSP3 you used to use. Me, I'm good forever with the ZTPRE, I've never heard anything better and don't plan to stray. What I'd love to see is a ZROCK2 with either dual volume or another way to adjust balance. . . in my second system a ZROCK2 will be the icing on the cake, but because of room/positioning issues a little bit of balance control would be excellent and I don't have it in any of the other components. I don't want to run a CSP2+ AND a ZROCK2 in that system . . . the only real complaint I have with the Peachtree Audio Grand Integrated Z1 I'm using there is that there's no balance control. . . otherwise it's working great as a pre, DAC, amp and headphone amp. And the ZROCK2 would allow me just that little bit of tailoring I sometimes want.

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

184.56.37.219

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**stone\_of\_tone**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Listen Often/Listen  
Deep

Posts: 2901

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #189** - 01/14/18 at 3:48pm

It would be cool and I think it can be fitted. Steve was working on a switch box with remote volume he spoke of.

I'm not totally sure.... But I think Steve put the ZSTAGE up to 0 to 15 volts output and as you know the ZROCK2 handles larger input now. Your ZSTAGE might have been the 0 to 5 volts output.

Love my Audio Research single tube FET Hybrid Line Stage.... But would like to go all Decware. Probably keep my AR too.

Off topic, ....my girlfriend went to the Vikngs game with my ticket. I need to play it cool for my stress test tomorrow. :( she is a bigger fan than me .... And I made sure she went.

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference I2S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

75.168.140.112

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**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

"Love without  
guts is  
worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #190** - 01/14/18 at 5:34pm

Okay. I still suspect you'd be disappointed with the ZSTAGE but the proof is in the pudding. I'd also still be surprised if Steve could put a remote volume control within it.

Hope your test goes well, best of luck.

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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**stone\_of\_tone**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Listen Often/Listen  
Deep

Posts: 2901

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #191** - 01/14/18 at 11:04pm

I prefer the ZMA direct from my ZDSD. I look forward to only adding the ZR2. Their is a purity of tone from the ZMA I like.

However, I do like this particular Audio Research Line Stage signature pushing through the ZMA.....turns it into a beast of weight and definition.

Just curious about an enhanced ZSTAGE?

Thanks on the test....should go well.

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference I2S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

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**Jeff of Arabica**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★



**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #192** - 01/14/18 at 11:40pm

Wishing you the best Stone! I'm sure it will all go well.

And very cool gesture to "bunt" on the tickets and allow your girlfriend to have the experience of her life. Well done amigo!



Name the greatest of all inventors...  
Accident.

Posts: 535

All of this is so very exciting. You and me have some pretty killer gear. Yet, we are at a point in time where we are presented with some very exciting/interesting information to chew on that may, or may not, catalyze some unexpected buying decisions. But whether we pull the trigger or not, is immaterial. We have subscribed to a philosophy in Decware that continues year in, and year out, to peak our interest and provoke thought. Regardless of how we slice it, it is a win!

ZMA//Zen Ultra//Rachel//ZDSD//Super Zen//Taboo MKIII//PS Audio DirectStream DAC + Memory Player + P10//Muse Phono Stage//London Decca Reference//Dynavector DV-507 MKII//Zen Head//Sonorus Reel-to-Reel w/ tube playback pre-amp//Omega SAHos//DM946



172.1.34.66

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**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #193** - 01/15/18 at 11:17am



stone\_of\_tone wrote on 01/14/18 at 11:04pm:

I prefer the ZMA direct from my ZDSD. I look forward to only adding the ZR2. Their is a purity of tone from the ZMA I like.

I preferred my source directly (through the ZBIT to get that extra voltage) as well. Until the ZTPRE came along. Blew that satisfaction away. . . now I can't imagine life without the ZTPRE. Didn't feel that way with the CSP preamps.

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2



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**stone\_of\_tone**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #194** - 01/15/18 at 11:19am



Thanks Jeff....I think it will go well.

Sue, enjoyed the history making win last night, ....is an understatement.

Speaking of catalyzing (so true...what you just said above).....which are the inputs vs. outputs in the ZROCK2?

I assume nothing .....if they are not marked.....I am not hooking them up!!!!

Soooo, I'm sitting here with my Zrock.....wondering! 😊😊😊😊

Nothing in the Manual....and nothing in the copy/website? Unless, I missed it.

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference I2S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

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75.168.140.112

**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #195** - 01/15/18 at 11:23am



The outputs are those furthest from the IEC inlet, the inputs those closest to the IEC inlet.

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2



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**stone\_of\_tone**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #196** - 01/15/18 at 11:28am



Thanks Lon!

I had a 50/50 shot at it. I'm left handed....so most things in life are difficult for me.

Listen Often/Listen Deep

Posts: 2901

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference I2S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030



Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

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75.168.140.112

**Archie**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #197** - 01/15/18 at 11:29am



Since Steve says that the ZTPRE is a pair of CSP3s in one chassis, is the difference due to the balanced in/out you think?

Ha ha, I asked that same question about the RCA position a couple weeks ago. 😊

Posts: 926

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71.211.151.244

**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #198** - 01/15/18 at 11:42am



For me. . . I think yes, it's the balanced in and out and also the increased range of gain that is output. Even when using a lower gain setting the sound seems to benefit. And it is dead silent in a way that no CSP preamp I've had ever has been. (Steve has a "no hum" circuit built in and you get NO HUM out of it, and the differential circuitry eliminates a lot of single-ended noise). This has four toroidal transformers as well, and I think this is a factor, as is the fact that solid state fixed rectification is used (the electrical setting is well-chosen and there's no sag or degradation of a tube).

So a number of reasons potentially. And there's the remote control. . . which I didn't think I'd use much but I use all the time.

I didn't really "believe the hype" but I find it to be as Steve notes: a preamp that is not there but makes everything sound better. Even single-ended sources plugged in using a quality adaptor sound better than they do through a CSP preamp.

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #199** - 01/15/18 at 11:44am



stone\_of\_tone wrote on 01/15/18 at 11:28am:

Thanks Lon!

I had a 50/50 shot at it. I'm left handed....so most things in life are difficult for me.

You're welcome. I think Steve has been consistent with this configuration with the products in these chassis. And it makes sense when I think "Inputs are furthest in, outputs are on the outer edge."

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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184.56.37.219

**Lonely Raven**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #200** - 01/16/18 at 12:42am



So here's a thought - ZTPRE with regulator tubes?

 Jack of all Trades,  
Master of None

Posts: 3100

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73.75.83.94

**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #201** - 01/16/18 at 5:53am



Hmmm. . . not sure where they would fit in the chassis design. . . and not sure they are needed. (I think the ZTPRE sounds phenomenal as is and doesn't need that line of regulation, but I am using a P10 with it as well). (I love my ZTPRE, it has really taken my system up another level).

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #202** - 01/16/18 at 9:36pm



Time for an update on the Anniversary Zen Triode amplifier... I was fortunate enough to have my good friend Randy of Caintuck Audio over yesterday, who's ears I completely trust, for some conformation.

The sound of this amplifier seems too good to be true and since I found out I'm not dead and it's still happening I better be sure I





If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

haven't just simply lost it.

The good news is that I haven't lost it. We sat down to listen to it around 5:00 P.M. and before we even realized what happened it was 2:00 A.M. and then I decided to do the unthinkable, I put on some analogue tape.

Couple things happened... we both found out at the same time, despite my doing it for years, what tape actually sounds like. It ruined us both.

Also after spinning a few tapes my cat tried his hand at operating the tape machine which didn't go well for the tape. And interestingly I could have cared less that an expensive tape was nearly destroyed because the high you get from this kind of sound is so strong that it takes a lot more than that to kill your buzz.

This morning after a nice breakfast, we sat down to listen for a bit and next thing you know it's around 3:00 P.M. So clearly I think this illustrates that time travel is possible.

I'll also make the following observation: At 10:00 A.M. when we sat down to listen the sound quality was virtually indistinguishable from the sound we got during the middle of the night. And I've been noticing this happen for the last week now.

On a personal level, this is the biggest breakthrough I've had since I built my first tube amp and discovered the middle of the night bloom of which I've written some articles on. I say that because I've always dreamed of and tried to figure out a way to get THAT middle of the night sound during the daytime. In the 1990's, I listened only at night, and because of those middle of the night experiences I have never until today been able to do any serious listening during the day... This is going to be a serious game changer for me. Not only does this somehow recreate the middle of the night bloom, but it does it with easily more than twice the un-hyped up detail that I've ever heard.

Despite my earlier efforts and I think Randy will agree, there are not words to accurately describe what we heard, nor will there ever be. It's something you have to hear for yourself to believe it. Randy and I go all the way back to the first Zen Triodes and have been listening to them for all these years and this thing simply went were no amp has gone before.

I believe the amp had its way with Randy, just as it did with me last week when I posted about it... so now I feel like it's a real thing and not some weird spell I cast on myself that makes me hear things that aren't really there.

Steve

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**Jeff of Arabica**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★



Name the greatest of all inventors... Accident.

Posts: 535

50.80.57.123

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #203 - 01/17/18 at 12:44am

Great update Steve! And I have been around Randy long enough, and it only takes a New York Minute, to realize his ears are to be trusted.

Keep the updates flowing.... I am sure there are many who are chomping at the bit over this amp.

The only question is, who is getting serial #3? 😊

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**will**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Posts: 1884

ZMA//Zen Ultra//Rachel//ZDSD//Super Zen//Taboo MKIII//PS Audio DirectStream DAC + Memory Player + P10//Muse Phono Stage//London Decca Reference//Dynavector DV-507 MKII//Zen Head//Sonorus Reel-to-Reel w/ tube playback pre-amp//Omega SAHOs//DM946

172.1.34.66

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #204 - 01/17/18 at 1:35am

Exiting! I think I can imagine what you are hearing!

Since I started playing with bypasses on the power supplies of my Torii and CSP3, after eliminating caps I had that were not ideal for all types of music and tones, and finding ones that worked nicely together, I came to a combination that has remained pretty solid in the Torii. Though I still play around a little, I keep coming back to a similar place...six or seven pairs of bypasses (1 or 2, depending on the arrangement, bypassing bypasses), the combination of different synergistic cap values and types adding complexity that is really beautiful.

With connectors and the volume pot upgraded also, what you describe sounds similar to what I am hearing....lucid, fast, easier flow, deep, fine detail complexity in deeper space bringing out definition, textures, enhanced ambient and harmonic complexity, bass solidity, natural timbre, improved soundstage saturation and separation....

When I imagine VRs for each tube's power, UFOs, a super simple circuit, and quality bypasses on a more discrete power supply...it must be magnificent!

PSA P5/modified Brickwall/Shunyata Defender+more; MacMini/Audirvana>Jitterbug/Regen> modified Gustard x20pro DAC; DIY + Pi Audio PCs; DIY ICs + USB; Decware-Jupiter CSP3, Torii MKIV, HR1-all modified; DIY Speaker Cables; feet-Madscientist, Archie's, isocups, DIY

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**jorgen**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Posts: 209

174.237.1.50 174.237.128.198

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #205 - 01/17/18 at 8:36am

Great read in this thread. Got an extra smile on my face when i read about a possibility for an update on the mono amps- even if i dont exactly find them to come short in any way. Mine are fitted with upgraded caps already. Looking forward to read the test With these updates, and curious to when it can be done and to what cost

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91.186.70.12

lazb  
Verified Member  
☆☆

 **Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #206** - 01/17/18 at 9:52am

Were the euphoric listening sessions using the "new" 8" speaker horns or a combination of several speakers?

Posts: 39

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 162.237.14.147

**Randy in Caintuck**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

 **Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #207** - 01/17/18 at 8:59pm

Greetings all,

After my return trip to Caintuck from East Peoria (fighting the winter weather) I had to catch up on some errands this afternoon ..... but wanted to share a few thoughts about the new amplifier.

First, all of our listening that was done Monday evening was done using the new DNA horn with the 8" driver. Without any doubt, this is one fine sounding speaker. In times past, my favorite Decware speaker was the ZOB which shouldn't be much of a surprise since I spend most of my time listening to open baffles and have become very sensitive to "box colorations" in most conventional speakers.

Of course, it's possible that whatever the amplifier was doing made the DNA horns sound spectacular ..... but I don't think so. Whatever the case, the Anniversary amp / 8" DNA combo produced music that made me lose all track of time.

The following thoughts concerning the new amplifier were validated by a second listening session on Tuesday using a pair of my Betsy & Buck baffles which I am VERY familiar with.

I currently have in my home stable of amplifiers an SE84UFO, a pentode Spud and a custom built 300B. All of these amps are excellent sounding in their own way. Many of the readers of this forum are familiar with the SE84UFO, the Spud has only a single gain stage and when used with speakers efficient enough to let it strut its stuff is a revelation and the 300B sounds nothing at all like many "typical" syrupy sounding 300B amps ..... it's more like a 45 or 2A3 on steroids with all of the beauty of a directly heated SET without the negatives.

Having these amplifiers as my references made me curious as to just how good the Anniversary amp could be. I was not prepared for what I heard ..... period.

Anyone who has attended a Decware Zen Fest and has heard Steve's reel to reel front end is aware of the amazing realism that it produces.

After hearing it the past two years, I have done my best to forget about it and convince myself that I'm too old to get involved in a new music format ..... but if you ever hear it, you will be ruined for life. Take my word for it.

Thankfully, in addition to being ruined once again by the reel to reel front end, we also played some familiar CDs that I brought with me and streamed tunes from Steve's computer ..... so I was able to hear the amplifier on a level playing field.

To the point ..... when this amplifier goes in the Decware online store, I will be buying one.

What does it sound like ? The answer is simply "music". Everything is just right. Steve told me that it's a combination of things including the power supply, capacitors, voltage regulation, etc. that combine to make it sound as good as it does.

The attack of notes, the decay, the space and air between instruments and vocals, the tonality are all excellent ..... but what amazed me the most was the depth and focus of the sound stage. I'm accustomed to a deep sound stage, but the amplifier created an image deeper than any I have heard in Steve's room in the past (with both pairs of speakers) and the focus and density of the image at the back of the sound stage was so real that I felt like I was able to reach in and put my hands on the instruments and voices.

To make sure that the listening session was not "chemically enhanced", I limited myself to one beer over the several hour "concert".

I'm sure that most of the readers of this forum are familiar with and probably bored to tears with all of the "audio jargon superlatives", but this amplifier really is that good.

On Tuesday morning, I had every intention of hearing the new amp with the Betsy baffles I brought with me and spend about an hour with that combo. I finally forced myself out of the listening seat and headed home at 3:00 PM .....

I went back and re-read everything that Steve shared concerning his listening sessions with this amplifier and could not find a single thing I could disagree with.

Thanks for indulging my long winded rant ..... but anyone who is considering the purchase of their "last amplifier" and has a pair of speakers efficient enough to let this amp sing should give it a serious look .... and a listen.

Happy listening,  
Randy

CEC TL5N belt drive CD transport  
Camelot Uther / Anagram DAC  
U-Turn Audio Orbit Plus turntable  
AudioQuest DragonFly Red USB DAC / tablet  
Decware Model SE84UFO amplifier  
Caintuck Audio Betsy Open Baffles and Alpha bass baffles

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 208.102.1.127

**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
☆☆☆☆

 **Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #208** - 01/17/18 at 9:48pm

Tonight I am listening to the SE84UFO3 with the anniversary update. Since it is just starting the burn-in it of course has me thinking about burn-in and I realized something important. Capacitors have memory that occurs in the specifics of how the dielectric and the foil seat together. Temperature cycles and signal passing through the can creates a physical change in the can





If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

that you can hear.

It's been my experience as I've mentioned in the past that if you want your caps to sound good on music, use music to train them during the break-in process. Use music that is well recorded only. Use music that you like. Do not use burn-in discs as that will train your cap in many cases to play test tones and then when you switch to music it has to be re-trained to sound good with music. Can it ever be completely retrained is the question.

It is very apparent even in the first hours of listening to these monos that like the stereo unit, there is simply no grain in the high voltage power supply so even unburned in the amp has over the top liquidity. That means that the coupling caps are never going to see or experience grain ever in their service lifetime so I think this is having a profound effect on the sound of the cap as a result of how it is burning in.

The immediate difference I hear between the two at this awakening state is that the mono's have more power and more headroom. I'll keep you posted as things develop.

To comment on Randy's post, I felt like the speakers on Tuesday were simply extraordinary and still just as hard to believe as ever! In fact I heard more similarities between the two speakers than differences until you look at size price and weight and then there is no competition for Randy's baffles.

Here is how good they actually are - if I had to give a demo of this new amplifier in front of the worlds audio critics with Randy's baffles, especially these new ones, I wouldn't even hesitate. Besides meeting my criteria for a speaker able to clearly demo what the amp is all about, it would just make the amp more impressive since people would have such a hard time rationalizing what they hear from such a simple and smaller speaker they would give the amp more credit.

One thing I learned as a result of the things we did during Randy's visit is that at this level it is an exquisite balance between speakers and amplifier and room to get the kind of sound stage depth we were getting. During one test with crossover points on the Baffles changing it by a few percent made the back of the sound stage somewhat disappear. This is because the midrange got

about 1/2dB louder and the phase angle no doubt changed from the change in inductor size. I know that this would have been easy to miss with any other amplifier because no amplifier I've heard has the same focus for ever layer all the way to the very back of the sound stage.

If sound were light and ears were eyes, even with 20/20 vision depth of field is less focused than what's up front and since audio amplifiers always seemed to achieve a similar result it is easy to assume that it is the same for sound. It's actually not. The focus doesn't change regardless of how far away the sound is, unless something alters it. So it's quite alarming to hear such 4K focus so far back in the stage and realize that's how it really actually is.

Steve

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Email WWW

50.80.57.123

**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #209 - 01/18/18 at 7:01am

Modify Split Delete

Steve, I'm certainly not surprised at how well the new anniversary design shines in the SE84UFO3 as these amps always seemed to me to be capable of fantastic sound, though I've never heard them. I'm interested in a pair . . . I'll see what I can do when the new version is made available.

Randy, how awesome that you got to hear what the 25th Anniversary Zen can do with both the new DNA Horns AND the Betsy Open Baffles! With both you AND Steve over the moon with the sound. . . we who have learned to trust both pairs of ears know that there's real magic in the new design!

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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Email PM

184.56.37.219

**Martindfletcher**  
Senior Member  
★★★★★

Posts: 53

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #210 - 01/18/18 at 6:29pm

Modify Split Delete

Last year I purchased 2 ufo2's steve wired them for mono to cope with my 16-19 ohm druids, and I was debating if I should get the 25th anniversary amps, I thought nah... then I looked at what I spend on cartridges. *Then thought I am in!*

Chain in order: TD124 mki, Denon 103R, Ortofon RS-309D, zu silver phono cable, ZMC1, Audio Art RCA, ZP3, vintage RCA 5U4G Rectifier, Gold lion signal tubes, DW silver reference, Xhadow, Bridged UFO2's, gold lion 6922, mapleshade double helix plus, zu Druid v's

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Email PM

99.178.132.32

**jorgen**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Posts: 209

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #211 - 01/19/18 at 7:35pm

Modify Split Delete

For those of you more capable; ELI5 what is done with the ufo3 mono amps when upgraded.

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Email PM

79.161.29.24

**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★



Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #212 - 01/19/18 at 9:58pm

Modify Split Delete

I'm still listening to the monos and the thoughts that come to mind tonight is that I am reminded why I like the Beeswax caps as the burn in is so much less traumatic and quite a bit faster. Already the amps are sounding so good that I know I'll be on the



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

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**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

fence as to which one is actually better. The slightly higher voltage of the monos and power that comes with it brings an endearing sense of honesty to the playback, but other than that it's hard to tell what the differences are without a lot of tube rolling. It's very captivating so far.

Steve



50.80.57.123

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #213 - 01/20/18 at 12:12pm



Gosh Steve, you have me hoping that 2.7 watts would work for me for both audio and video needs. Or if I could get a transparent switcher that would allow me to switch between two amps and one single set of speakers!

Three things about the 25th Anniversary design and implementation:

1) SILVER. The 25th anniversary of a wedding is a "silver anniversary." It might be cool to visually add "silver" to the cosmetic palette of the amp(s) . . . top plate in a silver paint, "Decware" in silver on a face plate, something visual like that. Might even add a degree of "spousal approval."

2) BRIDGED AMPS: It seems that with the new UFO transformers sonic degradation from bridging a Zen amp properly is diminished or not existent. There are many who would find that a pair of bridged 25th Anniversary amps would be great to power speakers like the HR-1 and ERRx etc. We love these speakers, and we'd love to have the "magic" of these new amps. Would you consider a "pair of bridged amps in one chassis" as a future model? Seems it would cut the cost of a pair of bridged amps and save on power cables, etc. seikosha was wondering why one was not offered in another thread, and it's an interesting question.

3} The TABOO: would the Taboo as a power amp be compatible with/considered for the 25th anniversary redesign in the future? That would be about 4 to 5 watts I think that could meet the needs of someone considering a pair of bridged Zen amps in one or two chassises. . . .

Thanks!

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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**beowulf**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★



Posts: 1350



184.56.37.219

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #214 - 01/20/18 at 5:21pm



Good questions and suggestions Lon and seikosha. I do think he mentioned something about an upgraded green colored chassis a couple pages back ... trying to imagine what that would look like? Perhaps the green color of some old school Altec Lansing drivers. I also like your idea of a silver Decware 25th Anniversary badge/moniker like the Decware/Icon with 3D plate.

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304



72.220.3.94

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #215 - 01/23/18 at 10:33pm



I can tell the majority of the break-in is completed and while there are some differences between these monos and the stereo model, they have basically arrived at the same address. I could easily forget which ones I was listening to and at this point it wouldn't be difficult to accidentally fool myself as I switch back and forth.

My observation or takeaway tonight is that the success I'm having with these anniversary amps is largely effected by tube rolling. The input tube and the rectifier tube are the major players with these anniversary amps just as it is on any Zen Triode amp. Since the resolution of these amps is so extreme, differences in tubes are magnified. Where you would normally hear a very noticeable difference between two different input tubes, it is now like hearing completely different amplifiers.

I'm also going to predict that the lower voltage stereo model is going to have a more dreamy sound while the higher voltage monos will have more headroom. To try to figure out which is actually better is going to be a waste of time because we're into the subtleties of voicing.

My strong advise is to stick with the regular Zens on speakers less than 94dB 1w/1m (unless you listen near field) because if you make this about power it's possible to miss the boat. The efficiency, which is a result of less moving mass in the speaker, is a requirement to track the speed of the amplifiers and without it some of the magic and the value of the amplifier would be diminished. Which is to say the difference between the SE84UFO2 and these would be smaller.

In fact it would be my preference that the speakers be placed well away from the wall because again the difference between the two amplifiers would be lessened. Will it sound better than a SE84UFO2 in any situation... yes. However it designed for serious aka hardcore audiophile use because that is where the design can shine and reveal it's magic.

Do you need a perfect room, no. You just have to have a decent room and put some effort into speaker placement and type. Each year I have done things to improve the acoustics of my room and while the improvements have been very noticeable I felt like I could take it further and probably should. These amps have achieved the sound stage I was looking for and it either means the room was better than I thought, or the amps are magic. Either way I just saved a bunch of time and money on trying to make the room better.

Steve



50.80.57.123

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**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #216** - 01/24/18 at 12:41am

Interesting results. Sound like amazing amplifiers, both versions, and we're excited. I'm a bit confused. . . stick to the Zen if with speakers 94 or below, and the Monos above 94?

I'm really enjoying the Taboo Mk IV with the ZROCK2 and ZTPRE and even have headroom with the HR-1s. The only real "wish list" for this set up would be a Treble Cut Circuit as well. Perhaps I should just stay with this set up if I want to continue to use the HR-1s, especially as I have to have the speakers closer to the front wall than I'd like. Any chance the Taboo Mk IV could (in time) take advantage of this "Anniversary" re-design? Perhaps only possible with a "power amp only" version?

Lots to think about, and exciting times in Decwarelandia.

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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**beowulf**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆



Posts: 1350

184.56.37.219

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #217** - 01/24/18 at 1:17am

Confused a little as well ... go with a pair of bridged Zen Anniversary stereo amps if under 94dB or Zen Anniversary mono amps if above 94dB?

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**Jeff of Arabica**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆



Name the greatest of all inventors...  
Accident.

Posts: 535

72.220.3.94

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #218** - 01/24/18 at 2:14am

**Quote:**

My strong advise is to stick with the regular Zens on speakers less than 94dB 1w/1m (unless you listen near field) because if you make this about power it's possible to miss the boat.

If I am not mistaken, I believe what Steve is saying is, if you don't have speakers with at least an efficiency of 94dB, you should not go with the 25th Anniversary amplifiers (monos included) and instead utilize the standard 2-watt Zen amps - or other Decware amps in the current line up.

The magic of these 25th Anniversary amps will not be realized with less efficient speakers (less than 94dB).

ZMA//Zen Ultra//Rachel//ZDSD//Super Zen//Taboo MKIII//PS Audio DirectStream DAC + Memory Player + P10//Muse Phono Stage//London Decca Reference//Dynavector DV-507 MKII//Zen Head//SonoruS Reel-to-Reel w/ tube playback pre-amp//Omega SAHOs//DM946

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**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

172.1.34.66

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #219** - 01/24/18 at 5:15am

That's a good interpretation Jeff, thanks. My HR-1s don't quite make it . . . not quite 94db efficient. I may be SOL as far as these new amps go. . . . I need the omnidirectional aspect of the HR-1 in my room setup, and buying an amp AND speakers would be prohibitive!

Lots to think about, but still, Monos as good as yet different as the Zen in these new versions, great news. Options are good, two different routes to sonic splendor.

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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**Martindfletcher**  
Senior Member  
☆☆☆☆

Posts: 53

184.56.37.219

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #220** - 01/24/18 at 7:40am

I would think 2 bridged stereo amps would have enough power, in terms of magic and transparency, that's a steve question.

Chain in order: TD124 mki, Denon 103R, Ortofon RS-309D, zu silver phono cable, ZMC1, Audio Art RCA, ZP3, vintage RCA 5U4G Rectifier, Gold lion signal tubes, DW silver reference, Xhadow, Bridged UFO2's, gold lion 6922, mapleshade double helix plus, zu Druid v's

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**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

"Love without guts is worthless!"

I'm obsessing over this a bit but this is an exciting move forward for Decware, and the excitement so far from Steve is

99.178.132.32

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #221** - 01/24/18 at 7:47am

Yes, that's an option I have considered. And a considerable expense. . . . Personally I believe that with the UFO transformers and the available capacitors that the "magic" would be there, but yes, that's best to be heard from from Steve!

Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

encouraging, and there's a lot of interest from Decware owners and potential Decware owners. (I've gotten a few messages from Facebook readers expressing interest and wanting to continue to see developments.)

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments? Reply #222 - 01/24/18 at 6:12pm



@ J of A ... I agree with Lon ... your interpretation seems to be about the best of the bunch. I'm sure it's going to be a great amp regardless, but it seems as if the Zen Ann's improvements are going to be much more noticeable with high efficiency speakers above 94dB and greater.

Lon, sorry to hear that these might not work out for you as you are one of the most vocal supporters of them ... hopefully Steve will chime in about going bridged (though that's going to be expensive).

Although from Steve's enthusiasm the Zen Ann's are blowing away the 6c33c mono's at this point ... my initial disappointment with hearing that another 2 watt iteration was coming forward was its limited ability of play back with speakers that are less than what I would consider high efficient seems to be coming into reality again and I'm not sure if these are for me either.

I know that even my single driver 95.5dB Omega's are super easy to drive with the Taboo MK II, but I still sometimes wish for a little more headroom when watching movies (not with music as I am completely covered there, but during quiet dialog passages I always find myself reaching for the remote to turn up the volume in some cases to the absolute max). Perhaps one day he'll get around to making another SET with more power and headroom.

Well Lon, you could always go Omega (jk 😊 ... I know you love your HR-1s!)

Posts: 1350

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72.220.3.94

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments? Reply #223 - 01/24/18 at 6:24pm



Quote:

If I am not mistaken, I believe what Steve is saying is, if you don't have speakers with at least an efficiency of 94dB, you should not go with the 25th Anniversary amplifiers (monos included) and instead utilize the standard 2-watt Zen amps - or other Decware amps in the current line up.

The magic of these 25th Anniversary amps will not be realized with less efficient speakers (less than 94dB).

Correct. Now, it's not a rule by any means, just a natural desire from the creator of the amplifier for people to hear it, and a knowledge that lower efficiency speakers will somewhat diminish it's potential. I knew when I wrote it that it would cost sales, but it's the truth.

That said, anyone wanting to experience these amps who doesn't have appropriate speakers can contact Randy of Caintuck Audio for an open baffle speaker. The ones on our site for \$450. a pair will do it., but he has new ones with two drivers that are so good, I would have to listen to them again to determine which is better, the new DNA horns or Randy's new baffles. Anyone not having heard these speakers will just have to trust me on this one.

If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

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50.80.57.123

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments? Reply #224 - 01/24/18 at 6:50pm



Another Update of the SE84UFO3's with the mod... funny how this hobby works - today I listened to the monos again and gave them my blessing comparing them to the un-modded mono's even my cat could hear they were better. So I decided to put the poor guy who ordered them out of his misery and get the amps in the shipping room today.

I turned them off and hooked up the stereo unit which has been unplugged for a few days and turned it on to let it warm up. Curious how it would compare now that the monos are burned in and I'm happy with the results, I turned up the volume and prepared to un-pause the source which had been playing on the monos when I turned them off. Same song, right in the middle.

Now if you read yesterdays post, you know I was pretty convinced these mono amps sounded almost the same as the stereo amp. Then I hit the play button and in under 3 seconds the stereo amp had basically laid the monos to rest. I suppose the look on my face would have been priceless.

So, all day I spent making the mono amps as close to the stereo as possible. This involved installing the additional VR tube and then setting up an independent filter supply for it. I put an OC3 on the inside of the amp since it's likely to last for many years. Eight hours later the monos are almost a carbon copy except for two resistor values that were raised slightly to deal with the higher voltage. The fear of failure made me smarter as it usually does, and I was able to overcome how to get the second VR tube to work.

So having just put them back on line and un-pausing the source, it took again about 3 seconds to recognize the sound. It's now JUICY like the stereo model and can be billed as a mono version of the same amp with the same sound.

This was important because there are likely to be SE84UFO3 owners who after following this development thread will want to hear this anniversary amp and if their amps can be upgraded to the same sound and performance they will be thrilled. You can imagine however if a SE84UFO3 owner gets the mod, loves it, decides some day to get the stereo anniversary model and compares the two and they don't sound the same...

So one more evening with the monos, I'll let you know what happens.

Steve

If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304



50.80.57.123

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Steve Deckert  
Administrator  
★★★★★

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #225 - 01/24/18 at 6:55pm



In the first section of Elenor Rigby by Duofel, I just got goosebumps from my ankles all the way to the back of my neck. I think that's a new record on the goose bump meter and I haven't even started yet. Time to eat something and prepare my brain for what's about to happen!

Steve



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

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50.80.57.123

Lon  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #226 - 01/24/18 at 7:43pm



beowulf wrote on 01/24/18 at 6:12pm:

Well Lon, you could always go Omega (jk 😊 ... I know you love your HR-1s!)

Well, I know those are great speakers. But. . . I won't be able to afford speakers and amp. And. . . I have a unique situation. I'm using half of a big room in our house (that started out as a cabin. . . one big room that is living room, dining room, den. . . One half of it (with an irregular, sloping ceiling) is the living room and my system is in this half. The HR-1s have a magic that allows one speaker to be near a corner and the other to be without a side wall. I put two chairs along that side and I get left and right with nearly identical frequency balances and a strong center image. . . it's all almost as if this was a complete room, not half a room. I've had other speakers in this room. . . and boy that does NOT happen. So not only do I love the HR-1s, and somehow afforded them and paid for them, but I'm loathe to change speakers as I can't change where the system is set up, this is the only possibility even IF I had free reign to set up the system anywhere.

I think I can live with the Monoblocks, I'll put that to the test soon. As I have a lot of gain from the P10, the DS DASC and the ZBIT And ZTPRE the HR-1s are surprisingly nimble with lower powered amps in this room, and I have a Zen C that was modified by Eddie Vaughn to be a power amp that I can hook up and run through its paces with both audio and video aspects of the system. If the C cuts the mustard the Monos will, and I'm pretty sure with my system I won't be wasting money on the sound quality. And if I someday get higher efficiency speakers that work in this room, or another room, I'll have the amp to use. And there's still possibilities of birding two, or that there may be another option on the horizon. Hope is still alive!

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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184.56.37.219

Lon  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #227 - 01/24/18 at 7:49pm



Rocking good news Steve! The monos would be my top choice if they could cope well enough with my HR-1s. Beautiful amps and I love the idea of mirror image amps side by side.

Question: do you think the Taboo might be a candidate in time for the 25th Anniversary treatment? Might be a great fit for some of our speakers and systems. I could send you a Mk III if you wanted one to play around with. 😊

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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184.56.37.219

Steve Deckert  
Administrator  
★★★★★

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #228 - 01/24/18 at 10:15pm



TONIGHTS NOTES:

Bass & Drum Intro - Niles Lofgren Band Live: Just sounds and feels completely real. My thought is that this will short people out because it's too good. They won't believe it, and they'll think either they've lost it, or some kind of trickery is involved. They'll talk themselves down from it to keep their sanity.

Tarova - Snark Puppy: Sounds like I am standing there live in so much as it sounds real. But I'm listening to a solid state P.A. system of average to above average quality. This explains why I've always had some issue with this one.

Midnight Procession - Boris Blank: The master of texture, soundstage and dynamics. The music feels so real and so much more real than normal that I feel like I'm doing something forbidden like looking at porn.

Ein Samen Kauboj - Friedemann: The vividness of some of the instruments, like the wood block. The complexity and texture in that simple wood block strike even though it's only 1 second long is like purchasing a book and when you got home the covers and pages were glued shut. Tonight it opened and there are 632 pages in that one second strike.

Afro Dite - Friedemann: The slide up the guitar string has enough data in it and hangs time long enough that any good guitar player would know what brand strings they are and how long they've been on the guitar. Most audiophiles are thrilled to hear the finger sounds on the strings, which is like 4 pages of a book several hundred pages long. Even live you don't get this much detail from the strings a lot of the time because the noise floor in the room is higher, your setting farther away, or the same distance but speakers are focused at your head, the real guitar is an omni directional instrument that to sound like this has to be close miked.



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304



that means the sound I am hearing is the same level of detail and complexity I would hear if I were playing the guitar myself.

That could be the magic of these amps, perhaps somehow they actually create dream time, like drummers get, where time slows down in so much as the notes get farther apart and you have like 5 seconds or more to think about them and plan your next bar even though to everyone else your playing at 120 bpm! Perhaps that's why you hear the notes hang in the air I would say 300%

longer with these amps.

The problem then becomes trying to figure out how so much data was actually captured on the CD/Stream? It just seems completely impossible to me.

Trackless Deep - Yello: When you first dreamed about hi-end audio looking at a glowing amplifier in the magazine that costs more than your car, and you fantasied about what it might sound like. This is what it sounds like.

Waving His Hello - Anna Ternheim: This song is like standing on the edge of the grand canyon listening to angles. The choir is usually what cracks up when this song is played back and with these amps you can hear it's not distortion in the recording, just an artifact of the compression that the engineers were likely unable to hear.

Partido Alto - Dominic Miller: Exciting presence with forward and intimate dynamics, it just sounds completely real. Crazy real.

Observation - I spend 50% of my time in the sweet spot and 50% just outside the listening zone where I hear the room and not the speakers. When the music sounds too good outside the listening zone that I have to go set in the sweet spot to see what's happening I notice a difference in the sound quality between the spots... obviously, but each has it's merits. What I notice or realize tonight is that when I walk into the sweet spot now the difference is three times larger than expected. This is solid science because I go between these two spots every day, seven days a week and on average 8 hours a day or more. It's what I do. So I am used to the difference in sound I am going to hear from my outside the listening zone location and my in the sweet spot location. Very used to it. To be completely stunned each time I do it now, is just nuts.

If you analyze what I wrote the last couple days about these monos and compare that to what I'm writing now you can clearly see the state of mind is different. Tonight I am not alone because the music is here and it's now conscious, completely tangible and real. Before this last go around I would say it was so good I couldn't find anything wrong with it, seriously, but it wasn't alive and it wasn't conscious. You can sense consciousness when it is in the same room with you.

Saitensprung - Friedemann: Just such a great execution. So 3D, expansive and intimate with such exquisite textures. Listening to this when it's over I find myself thinking if this much detail can be found in a 16 bit format which is what's left of a 20 bit master with the least significant bits erased (4 bits) compared to other amps I must have only been perceiving about 10 bits. I realize I am up sampling with the ZDAC2 everything to DSD but no algorithm can write this much correct information between the dots. So since there is no logical explanation we go back to the spiritual explanations where the music manifests through the amplifier and has it's way with the room and speakers because it's not bound by physics.

Witching Hour - Jesse Cook: I can see a stand up bass that like a Disney animation, has arms and legs and it's playing itself with a somewhat indescribable expression on its face. Sounds completely real, but that part is a little surreal. Like every cut I've played you are feeling the music and it feels like you experience the music and it experiences you.

Takla Makan - Yello, Dorothee Oberlinger: OK, it's so real, I moved my head out of the way as if a baseball was coming at me so I wouldn't get hit in the face with one of the notes in the music.

Another observation: Couple days ago I kicked things up a notch in the monos when I put some NOS Amprex 6DJ8's in the amps similar to the 7DJ8 I have in the stereo model. I took out the 6N5P, which is just beautiful but I was craving more detail if you can imagine... tonight I have the 6N5P in the amps and have not even heard the 6DJ8's, nor do I have any plan to this evening. I'm afraid to. We're out in the neutral zone here and this is no time to be "censored" with the ship.

And make no mistake about it, these are space ships that can travel both through space and through time. There is no drug that can compare to music that sounds this good.

I Tried to Tell You - Smooth Jazz Lounge Nights: Sounds like a very nice dinner club with a front and center table, the building is solid and old, you can feel it in the sound. No drywall or steel studs here. The drum kit has an energy in the high hats that you would only experience if it were real and you were standing 8 feet in front of the kit.

Oppression - Ben Harper: The bass drum feels like it's 5' in diameter about 20 feet back stage left. It's moving a lot of air in a round pattern coming directly at me. The separation and tonality, every audiophile adjective (EAA) it contains. Simply real sounding.

Yesterdays (Rudy Van Gelder Edition) (2007 Digital Remaster): The mesmerizing bow on this bass and the bass itself and Mr. Chambers are just so incredible. This recording would sound good even on mid fi gear, ..... on this however, holy crap, how many times can I say real in a single post.

There's no sense on going on because everything sounds and feels real. It shouldn't be happening but it is, and it's doing it on 16 bit digital source files.

Lets just sum it up by saying the UFO3's can be made into UFO325's and at this point the only thing I've learned is that these monos might be better than the stereo model by the mere fact that they are one amp per channel. That is the impression I am getting using tubes that aren't even as good so it's a pretty good sign.

Just for kicks I gots Lon's CD today in the mail with largest existing Tannenberg pipe Organ (1728~1804). Astounding sound not to mention the human pumping bellows to create the air!

I don't know how these amps are doing it, but like all the music these spaceships just make pit stops in different space times and the experience is completely real. Now that I've started listening to this unprocessed organ music well recorded in a large space I'll have to remain here for the rest of the evening. No coming back from this. In fact I'm going to see what kind of organ music I can find on Tidal to amuse myself after this is done. Boy the sound of this particular organ is taking me back to the organ I grew up with as a boy... uncanny resemblance, the room the organ is in sounds familiar, much like the space I remember.

The music on this CD is so good. It completely took me back to 1969 in my dads church.... what a complete trip to go back after more than 40 years. The experience is vivid. Ever have a dream that was completely real? Becoming conscious that you are dreaming in a dream is called lucid dreaming. What is it called when you are awake and become conscious that you are in a dream?

This reminds me, because organ music will bring many systems to their knees, that despite the 2.7 watts I wouldn't want to turn the volume up any louder. It is at the actual level it would be in the church, which is plenty loud believe me. How is it doing it... Well it's at the magic live volume or damn near it where even 1dB quieter would take it just outside of real and 2dB would bring it from real back down to real good and there is a large difference between real good and real. I wouldn't want to loose even 1 dB under any circumstances so the speakers must be a solid 94dB from top to bottom and have some bottom.

BTW, I could be getting 98% of everything I'm hearing now from Randy's Baffles believe it or not... as the low slung driver that close to the floor generates real bass and it's large. So yea, even this CD could be easily appreciated on these amps with Randy's humble speakers.

I'm going to spend the rest of the evening listening to organ pipes resonate through my castle.... it will likely end as it usually does with the IMPERIAL SO's handling the bottom end... and we have all the power need somehow!

Steve

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50.80.57.123

**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #229 - 01/24/18 at 11:10pm



So now I'm listening to a large organ and a full orchestra which would clip most amps and by some miracle it is not clipping, and it's just impossible. So then I decided to do the unthinkable, put on Tocatta and Fugue in D Minor, BWV 565 and it did it with ease! WHAT! OK, so now lets just see what these amps would do on a pair of HR-1's...

If there was more than 1dB of difference when I hooked them up I must have missed it. I'm listening to Tocatta on the HR-1's and it's the same... just as good, just as loud some how...

Boy that was a reminder of how low and powerful the HR-1 bass is!

These damn amps are making a fool out me, writing in circles. Boy when the Audio Gods decide to teach you a lesson they really have calculated just how far they can bend the stick before it snaps. Unbelievable.

So I guess you could use a pair of HR-1's with these amps and get better results than I thought. The bass is so good and so low and tight you wouldn't think it was possible from such a small footprint as the HR-1 and certainly not driven by a 2 watt amplifier!

This is why you don't publish live journals ; )

Steve

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50.80.57.123

**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #230 - 01/24/18 at 11:44pm



Using the HR-1's I notice that on Takla Makan for example, you can tell we're right on the edge of the amps clipping so to correct for it, we drop the volume by another dB or two which combined with the 1 dB lower efficiency is just enough to make a difference. Boy what a tease. A pair of the stereo amps bridged would just sale right through it as if you were listening to the larger DNA horns with possibly a touch more headroom. A room that was smaller or more live would also do it so a bridged pair may not be needed for some people.

Meanwhile it has me wondering what the HDT would sound like and many of the other speakers so the rest of winter will be more than bearable as I find out!

Steve

Posts: 3304

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50.80.57.123

**will**  
Seasoned Member

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #231 - 01/25/18 at 12:46am



**Quote:**

Do you need a perfect room, no. You just have to have a decent room and put some effort into speaker placement and type. Each year I have done things to improve the acoustics of my room and while the improvements have been very noticeable I felt like I could take it further and probably should.

In my room, I experience notably improved soundstage when power supply bypasses in the Torii MKIV, and CSP3 are well balanced. I like milder bypass iterations quite a lot....illuminating. But finding the boundary of getting the most from them, when everything is totally awake and balanced, but before things get too big and hyper articulate ....amazing....but in that area especially, it appears there are as many ways to throw the balance as create it!

Either way, the caps used, values, and how they compliment each other have been really big deals for me. When it works, it is something like those unusually great listening sessions when the magic happens with captivating wonder. But once the power refinement is sweet, it is less of a passing thing...it sticks.... disappearing into beauty becoming more normal.

It makes sense, the power supply effecting everything, making transformers, tubes, resistors, caps, wires, connectors.... reflect their truer potential. I have not heard anything close here, dense tonal resolution in spaciousness that does not feel affected. And I love it when it comes with speed, but also with a beautiful ease that increased resolution from emptier space creates. Deep and musical bass with natural feeling definition (for the most part!@#\$\$%^) and refined timbre...beautiful speed, everything complex while also being discretely defined, *and integrating musically*...captivating drum and cymbal hits.....piano hammers shifting reality....richness that can bring tears.

It sounds to me like less noise; effortless immediacy and *greater signal integrity and resolution* helping solve congestion on complicated parts; more complete fine detail, bringing out more tonal layers and smoother and more natural edge creation and transitions.... definition that sounds real....harmonic complexity...ambient completeness, layers, and transitions that help define a player in space.....and all made clearer coming out of deeper and more empty space.

As I interpret it, for cleaner and musically tuned power and signal...different caps, like different tubes, offer loads of subtle ways to bring out beauty that in combination can be pretty far from subtle.....

Back to soundstage....enhanced speed, resolution, and space, enhance soundstage saturation and spacial information, making it

Posts: 1884

digger, more enguing and real reeling, tinnally enhancing now I interact in it. Seems increase in perceived volume comes along with this. Not using a meter, I am pretty sure my volume actually goes higher before distortion.

**Quote:**

My strong advise is to stick with the regular Zens on speakers less than 94dB 1w/1m (unless you listen near field) because if you make this about power it's possible to miss the boat. The efficiency, which is a result of less moving mass in the speaker, is a requirement to track the speed of the amplifiers and without it some of the magic and the value of the amplifier would be diminished.

Though this Anniversary amp sounds like it breaks even the Decware mold of power as it relates to how it pushes speakers, here, I have not been able to *fully enjoy* anything with less power than a Blue Torii with my HR-1s, though the 944s did pretty well with a SE34. The Rachel and Taboo I auditioned in more recent years sounded really good, but something really important to me happens with more driver push/extension and headroom. For my tastes, and bigish rooms, I need the drivers to move more for deeper emersion. After Toriis for years, in this setting, I would have had to get more efficient speakers in order to really get what the Rachel and Taboo had to offer.

*From your listening with the Anniversary Zen on the HR-1s, even if on an edge, to get that far into them with 2 watts seems to illustrate just how far the mold you have made of excellence from the first watts has come! Congratulations.....Very exciting!*

PSA P5/modified Brickwall/Shunyata Defender+more; MacMini/Audirvana>Jitterbug/Regen> modified Gustard x20pro DAC; DIY + Pi Audio PCs; DIY ICs + USB; Decware-Jupiter CSP3, Torii MKIV, HR1-all modified; DIY Speaker Cables; feet-Madscientist, Archie's, isocups, DIY

   174.237.133.204 174.237.131.86  
174.237.137.119 174.237.8.135

 **Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #232** - 01/25/18 at 3:19am

Hey Steve, will the 25th Ann mono blocks also come in the green patina chassis that you mentioned the stereo version will come in?

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**beowulf**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆



Posts: 1350

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**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

   72.220.3.94



 **Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #233** - 01/25/18 at 5:52am

Wow! I'm glad you listened to the cd of a performance on the organ my great great great great great grandfather built! It's a very good cd and I knew you would enjoy it. And thank you for listening to the HR-1s with the Monos. I suspected the HR-1s would perform well and it appears that they may just do the ticket here for me. But it also appears as if a bridged pair of the 25th anniversary Zens would do better.

This is exciting, YOUR excitement comes through. It's great to be a music lover, and it's a great time to be one.

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

   184.56.37.219


 **Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #234** - 01/25/18 at 9:57am

Lon, is that CD available for sale?

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**Lonely Raven**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

  
Jack of all Trades,  
Master of None

Posts: 3100

     12.235.113.146

 **Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #235** - 01/25/18 at 10:24am

Yes Eric, it's here:

[https://ravencd.com/merchantmanager/product\\_info.php?products\\_id=133](https://ravencd.com/merchantmanager/product_info.php?products_id=133)

And it's on amazon and cheaper there from market place sellers.

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**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002





HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UF03-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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184.56.37.219

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #236** - 01/25/18 at 11:03am

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

OK Lon, once you reminded me about the CDs I decided to open the box and check them out today...the Tyner in now...I think it will take a couple listens before I settle into it. The Blue Mitchell looks like quite the line up. I'm not used to hearing him in such a large group...that one later.

Just to get the interconnects settled and warmed, I put them in the second system between the ZROCK and Monoblocks...so far so good.



"The man that hath no music in himself, nor is not moved with the concord of sweet sounds, is fit for treasons, deceptions, and spoils; The motions of his spirit are dull as night and his affections dark as Hell. Let no such man be trusted." William Shakespeare

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47.182.60.199

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #237** - 01/25/18 at 11:34am

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

Yeah, there's not that much difference between the Ultilinear and the Stradivarius to me, just a little more of the good body and detail in the Stradivarius, and when you have an all Stradivarius setup the goodnesses are all cumulatively enhanced. I hope you enjoy them, they've given me really good sound. I moved some equipment around and it turned out I was only using those in my second system. . .and I can put those you sent to me in there as I have a balanced source and a ZBIT.

The Tyner is not really one of my favorites of his or Blue Note in general but I have warmed to it over the years. At least now you can hear what the latest Japanese mastering on SHM-CD (or not, some have been reissued not on SHM-CD) sounds like. I think you'll like the Mitchell.

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UF03-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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**mark58**  
 Seasoned Member  
 ★★★★★

Posts: 5069

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**Lon**  
 Seasoned Member  
 ★★★★★

"Love without

guts is  
 worthless!"  
 Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

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**Lon** **Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

Seasoned Member



"Love without guts is worthless!" Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?

Reply #238 - 01/25/18 at 3:31pm

Modify Split Delete

Well, I did a quick test. I took the Taboo Mk IV out of my system and put in its place the Zen C amp I have that I bought four years ago (it's one modded by Eddie Vaughn to be a power amp only, and I'm not sure what other modifications were made!)

I didn't listen long. Did it sound anything like the Taboo? It had a family sound. Did it sound better than the Taboo? No. It sure needed time to warm up and come out of its dormant stage from not being used in a few months. And I didn't give it that time. I wanted to go back to pleasure listening.

But I did play music through it from the PS Audio Duo, listened to some TV broadcast via both DVR and the Blu-ray and ran a bit of an episode of the X-Files from the Blu-ray set I've been going through, Season 6.

I was surprised that everything was loud enough. Music, definitely. The video sound. . . yeah my wife might have wanted to turn it up a bit more, she doesn't hear as well as me and likes compressed sound, but man, it was loud enough. Bodes well for me and any of the 25th Anniversary models to come.

I let out a short and subdued "Yee Ha" (what can I say, I spent more than three decades in Texas) and put the Taboo back in. Now I can stop obsessing. (Yeah, right).

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

Email PM

184.56.37.219

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Chris K

Seasoned Member



Posts: 288

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments? Reply #239 - 01/25/18 at 4:22pm

Modify Split Delete

Hi Steve Randy and others!

Sorry once again no Fest for Chris. Missed you guys.

Just started following the last page of this thread. Steve are you aware the years those cuts on the Paul Chambers recoding were done? That makes it even more amazing!!!!

I simply love the great recording that was done in the mid 50's to early 60's in the jazz world. Stunning accuracy and ambience. Live stuff at the Village Vanguard and other NYC clubs is so REAL!

In the "TONIGHTS NOTES" long post listing a bunch of tunes you listened to I wondered what speaker you listened to? More the bigger DNA horn mostly?

Demo'd lots of the cuts you played and all of it is super detailed.

Hi-Fi Gear: More than I need! Not as much as I want!

Email PM

99.3.30.38

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Randy in Caintuck

Seasoned Member



Tube be ... or not tube be ... it's a no-brainer.

Posts: 615

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments? Reply #240 - 01/25/18 at 6:41pm

Modify Split Delete

Hi Chris,

Man ..... we really missed you as well.

The Zen Fest is just not quite the same without you being there ..... ☹️

On the night that Steve and I enjoyed our extended listening session, we were using the "big DNA horns" exclusively. While quite a bit of the music was played from Steve's collection and was new to me, I did bring a few CDs that I am very familiar with.

The Anniversary amplifier brought out some things and presented them in a way I had not heard before. This amplifier is the real deal.

The next morning, I was able to hear the same CDs through my Betsy & Buck speakers, so I had a "double reference" for comparison.

The amp was mind blowing with both pairs of speakers.

Looking forward to having this puppy in production, as well as the upgrades that will be available for existing Decware amplifiers.

Hoping to see you at Decware Fest 2018 .....

Best wishes,  
Randy

CEC TL5N belt drive CD transport  
Camelot Uther / Anagram DAC  
U-Turn Audio Orbit Plus turntable  
AudioQuest DragonFly Red USB DAC / tablet  
Decware Model SE84UFO amplifier  
Caintuck Audio Betsy Open Baffles and Alpha bass baffles

Email PM WWW

208.102.1.127

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Chris K

Seasoned Member



Posts: 288

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments? Reply #241 - 01/26/18 at 9:10am

Modify Split Delete

Thanks Randy for the kind words. Good to be missed. So you and Steve listened to the BIG DNA exclusively the night and Caintuck speakers the next day. Now what I want to understand from Steve's later post after you left that he did indeed put HR-1 in and maybe even some other speakers. I'm curious as to his long post referencing several cuts he played through with color commentary just what the bulk of the listening was done on. Comparing speakers.

Steve you seemed that evening to switch out speakers at points checking not only compatibility with the monos regarding power ability with each but that the amps characteristics crossed over to other speakers. Just curious if the large horn was the main speaker used.

Hi-Fi Gear: More than I need! Not as much as I want!



99.3.30.38

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #242 - 01/28/18 at 9:03pm



Hi Chris,

Great to hear for you, and yes you are missed!

During the voicing and subsequent evaluation of an amplifier, it helps to keep variables down to a minimum so I lock into one speaker for the majority of comparisons. I usually pick something pretty fast like the HDT's, but this large DNA horn, which is what I've locked into for the majority of the development, is in the same league and I've been enjoying them since the fest.

For example, as I type this I am back to listening to the stereo model and I can feel the music in the keys of my keyboard while I type this. Never noticed this before with all the thousands of hours of setting here listening to music... It's no louder than normal, just highly energized.

Such an amazing combination. For my ears it gets everything right from top to bottom, front to back, left to right, floor to ceiling, and does it with a perfect frequency balance in my room.

Because this particular combination makes great recordings sound real, we should describe the control: ZDAC2's high output transformer coupled RCA jacks feeding the ZTPRE's transformer coupled RCA inputs. The output of the ZTPRE running balanced 22 feet to the ZBIT feeding the SE84UFO25 which is paired with the (let's call them) DNA2's speakers.

I would say the amp and preamp and source are the main gig here, and you could get this magic on any number of different speakers so long as you keep it at 94dB or higher and make sure the speaker has great bass.

Steve



50.80.57.123

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #243 - 01/28/18 at 10:20pm



This weekend I took a couple nights off with no music to just let the sound of both amps replay in my head. Trying to figure out what the differences are, and which one is better IF one is actually better.

The mono's have been packed and probably shipped by now, and I feel a bit of a loss. I believe they were actually better, and on certain levels they should of course be since it is dual mono. If they didn't do things better than the stereo model there would be no reason to have them. That said the question obviously becomes how much better and what if anything can the stereo model do better than monos?

After listening to the stereo amp tonight I realize what the difference actually is. The difference is that the stereo amp is female and the mono amps are male. Both and sister I would say, of some genetically advanced race ; )

Being mostly male ourselves we are conditioned to think stronger or bigger is always better. As I listen to the stereo amp tonight, this is what I see it's capabilities are: (see image below)

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
☆☆☆☆☆



If the 1st watt  
sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
☆☆☆☆☆



If the 1st watt  
sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304





Anyone who thinks this female has less power than her male counterparts is a fool, in fact this particular one could easily take out an army of men by distracting them in front of oncoming traffic, so on this point I will suggest the stereo model and mono's are equal but different just as male and female.

I swear every time I set in the listening chair in front of this amplifier I feel like I've went to heaven. The sound is unearthly good.

Steve

---

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**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?** [Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)   
**Reply #244** - 01/28/18 at 11:08pm

Steve,

The Monos you just shipped were standard or modified? You lost me in your last post as to what you are missing.

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**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?** [Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)   
**Reply #245** - 01/30/18 at 3:47pm

The monos I just shipped were SE84UFO3's with the 25th Anniversary Updates.



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

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**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?** [Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)   
**Reply #246** - 01/30/18 at 3:59pm

Cool. I hope they went to someone who will report about them here.

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

[Email](#) [PM](#)

184.56.37.219

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**Archie**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #247 - 01/30/18 at 4:13pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

Can you give a price including the upgrades? I'd like to see if this is something I can aspire to!

Posts: 926

[Email](#) [PM](#)

63.225.245.155

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #248 - 01/31/18 at 10:01pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

The Anniversary Mods for the SE84UFO3 are \$680 per amp.



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

[Email](#) [WWW](#)

50.80.57.123

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**joraliu**  
Verified Member  
★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #249 - 01/31/18 at 10:30pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

Will the anniversary mod work with a Mini Torii?

Posts: 8

[Email](#) [PM](#)

67.42.236.234

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #250 - 01/31/18 at 11:05pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

Now that the dust has settled from the UFO325 development and I am able to just focus back on enjoying the SE84UFO25, I thought I would post another short update.

For about the past week I have shifted from digital to tape. I am using two machines. One machine is feeding the ZTPRE just like the ZDAC2 so I can get comparisons between the two sources without changing any other variables. The other machine is feeding the amp direct.

My cat has adopted the role of tape inspector and he now sits on the tape machine and watches the tape go round and round. He takes his job very seriously, which is somewhat amusing as he becomes transfixed by the rotating reels just like I do. You have to realize that for a creature that can sit motionless for hours waiting for a mouse, this is like a day at the races!

Anyway before I got sidetracked on that, the Anniversary Zen is just a complete joy to listen to. I have been going through my tape library and literally hearing all my tapes for the first time. Even better it's resolution has helped me to diagnose and solve problems with certain tapes easily, issues that I have been distracted by for years. So what I am saying is that for years each of my tape machines have had certain issues, like the operator not adjusting things right, that are now easily detected. Another issue is that many tapes are not labeled as to what EQ they use, IEC or NAB and while you can usually tell by ear, there are some tapes that fall into the neutral zone and you waste a lot of time listening to them both ways. Now, the EQ settings are obvious within seconds.

Back to the cat... "Fine, if I can't touch the tape I'm just going to play with the knobs." as he systematically discovers what each one does...

Since making this amp, I feel like my hearing has gotten 100% better because I can hear so clearly and so deliciously deep into the music and of course my hearing has not changed, it is the amplifier. What has changed besides the amplifier, is my music library has finally unmasked itself.

You would think the balance of recordings you wish were better and recordings you love would change as the dramatic increase in resolution would make the lesser recordings unlistenable. Just the opposite has actually happened with many of the recordings that fell into the category of "why isn't this better?". Recordings that dwell heavily into compression that sound more like noise than music, yea, they still suck.

Anyway, it has been a real pleasure to find out that virtually all of my tapes sound twice as good as they did a few months ago!

My favorite set up the past few days has been my Otari tape machine plugged directly into the Anniversary Zen's input jacks. Can't get much simpler than that, and at 10.75 volts into a ZBIT transformer a preamp really isn't needed.

Also, with this direct from the master tape to the amplifier with nothing else, more variables are eliminated so I can wrap my head around the sound of just the amplifier even better than before.

So the takeaway I get from tonight is that the amplifier is so good, it has caused me to re-listen to tapes I had on the sell pile and caused me to put many of them back in the keep pile. Imagine that!

I suspect that between the digital recordings, LP's and tapes, this amp will pay for itself in new music that I own but never thought I liked.

Steve



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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

Email WWW

50.80.57.123

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #251 - 01/31/18 at 11:11pm

Modify Split Delete

**Quote:**

Will the anniversary mod work with a Mini Torii?

That's a good question. Two thoughts come to mind. Not sure there would be room for all the additional caps even it is was possible, and not sure if the original 6V6 bias point would pull to much current or not. Many of the alternate tubs that can be used with the amp would likely no longer be usable.

Nevertheless it is something that will need to be explored in the coming months.

Steve

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**alper\_yilmaz**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Posts: 204

Email WWW

50.80.57.123

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #252 - 02/01/18 at 12:09am

Modify Split Delete

Steve,

Do you have a price in mind for the upgrade for SE84UFO? Or a price for the brand new version of it? Also, when should we expect the release?

Best,

Alper

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**stone\_of\_tone**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Listen Often/Listen Deep

Posts: 2901

Email PM

67.86.128.222

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #253 - 02/01/18 at 10:45am

Modify Split Delete

Steve,

plans for going under the hood of Rachael with the 25th mods?

.....NOS tube rolling never gets old....to hear my favorite Input Tubes, using both halves of the triode driving a EL34, KT88 in your Triode or 6L6G/6PS3-E's.....in Triode is an exciting thought.

.....and the obvious parallel's of running for example/from my matched quads....KT88's & 6PS3-E's in both my ZMA and Rach'. 5.8/channel headroom too (for my Speaker's).

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference 12S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

Email PM

75.168.66.43

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?  
Reply #254 - 02/02/18 at 7:54pm

Modify Split Delete

Some of the technology (for lack of a better term) will find it's way into every applicable opportunity over time, no doubt.

Right now, based on what I know about VR tubes, the only amplifier that qualifies for the full benefit of this technology are amps that use the EL84/SV83/6P15P output tubes. The reason is that these tubes bias at only 25 mA which is the happy zone for a VR tube. EL34's and everything else we use bias between 40~60 mA. Even if it were possible by overheating the VR tube, there would be sag.

Remember, running the entire amplifier from the VR tube slowed the amplifier down which is in part what polishes the liquidity. The bypass caps that were always optional from a design aspect are now required to restore the speed.

Think of it as a car going down the highway. It's speed can vary from 40 to 80 mph. Adding the VR tube in the fuel line changed the speed from 10 to 60 mph. The torque nearly doubled however, so the ride became smoother and more exciting at the same time. To get the top end back the bypass caps are placed all along the fuel path. The final result is that you have a car going down the highway with twice it's normal torque and a speed range from 10 to 160 mph with the most insane throttle response you've ever experienced. It is so sensitive that if an ant crawled across the accelerator pedal you would feel it.

So only the original Zen Triode 2 watt Amplifiers will ever have this technology until I get a lot smarter.

-Steve

P.S.

Been listening to my radio station reel to reel tapes again and they range from 1950-1989 and are primarily but not all, soft rock and country. The reason I went with these formats is because they never use a compressor. As a result of not using a compressor and being recorded on tape originally, the sound quality is at worse equal to a 45 RPM record but most of them were taken directly from tape.

These recordings as it turns out are virtually 90% audiophile grade sound. Most of the classic rock and country we grew up with is this way. I have very little hard rock and metal because those formats could not exist without a compressor. Compressors are what kills sound quality.

Anyway, the point was to say that most of the classic rock we grew up with was actually recorded with audiophile standards and plays back with the same quality as many great jazz or classical recordings. I couldn't commit 100% to this statement until I started using this amplifier...

### SE84UF025 - Operating at a higher state of consciousness for the sonically aware.

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50.80.57.123

**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #255 - 02/02/18 at 8:47pm



Listening to a 1991 tape from the tale end of analog radio. NSC 101, 1991, Week 17

Rodney Crowell - Things I wish I'd Said

Simply stunning as is pretty much the entire tape. I can't believe how many of these I sold thinking they weren't very good. Mistake.

What a game changer!

This amplifier is magic.

If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

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50.80.57.123

**stone\_of\_tone**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #256 - 02/03/18 at 1:39am



Got it. I'm good, .... can't go back to lower power. Take care. ~ S

Listen Often/Listen Deep

Posts: 2901

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference I2S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

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75.168.66.43

**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #257 - 02/03/18 at 7:51am



I can. I'm actually really enjoying lower power again. I'm going to get one of these new amps one of these days.

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UF03-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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184.56.37.219

**Palomino**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #258 - 02/03/18 at 8:57am



I can as well. I've lived with Rachael the last year or so. Even thinking of selling my Torii which I never thought would happen. If I can part with enough gear I may buy a 25th.

Posts: 1565

i7 Mac Mini with LPSU/SSD running Audirvana 3, Uptone Audio Regen on LPSU, TEAC UD503, DIY Belden ICs, Torii MKIII, SE34I.32, PS Audio P5 Power Supply, PS Audio Power Cords, Vintage Western Electric 16g Speaker wires, DIY OB Speakers w/Tang Band/Augies

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67.184.120.28

**stone\_of\_tone**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #259** - 02/03/18 at 9:28am



You know I'm kidding!

Thanks Steve, for putting the EL34 VR in perspective and how the new Amps run.

Lon, as we discussed, I think either/or, will power your HR-1's @ their 92.5 @ 1watt/1 meter.

Me personally, I want UFO3/25 Mono's. I read you Palomino, what can I sell..... . Not my ZMA.....just want Steve's Pentode's in triode again.....and of course his new cap topology going on here. Never should have sold my SE84CS!

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference I2S  
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Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

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75.168.66.43

**Palomino**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #260** - 02/03/18 at 9:42am



Sorry Stone. Tuned in late so I missed the humor.

I found Eric's amp plenty loud and nearly comparable to Rachael with my 94 db OBs. My room is smaller though.

Just reading about the DNA II led to tossing the silver flutes back in last night. With my adjustment rings I can quickly change drivers now. Lots to like about the silver flute sound.

i7 Mac Mini with LPSU/SSD running Audirvana 3, Uptone Audio Regen on LPSU, TEAC UD503, DIY Belden ICs, Torii MKIII, SE34I.32, PS Audio P5 Power Supply, PS Audio Power Cords, Vintage Western Electric 16g Speaker wires, DIY OB Speakers w/Tang Band/Augies

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67.184.120.28

**joralieu**  
Verified Member  
★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #261** - 02/07/18 at 9:09pm



Will the 25 anniversary amp have an XLR input option?

Posts: 8

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65.102.4.171

**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #262** - 02/08/18 at 7:33pm



There will be no XLR input option on the amplifier itself because there is not enough internal space to accommodate the required transformers. We will recommend the ZBIT for those running balanced sources or preamps.

Steve



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

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50.80.57.123

**darrwood**  
Senior Member  
★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #263** - 02/08/18 at 7:58pm



I'm excited to keep up with the 25th Anniversary will it be the same foot print as my UFO select and will there be a mod for it? I also like the idea of a more affordable amp for entry level the Kids need a new toy too!

Posts: 63

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67.171.41.141

**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #264** - 02/08/18 at 8:32pm

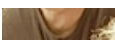


It is the same footprint yes. As far as mods for any of the other amplifiers it is way to early to know. We will be exploring things over the next year or two to see what can be done. It will never be possible to change any existing Zens into a full anniversary model except for the SE84UFO3's.

We will be in production with the new Anniversary amp sometime this summer and be able to price it then.

The budget zen is going to be an interesting project. I'm working through several ideas and will be doing some prototypes this



  
If the 1st watt  
sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

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**Jeff of Arabica**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★



Name the greatest of  
all inventors...  
Accident.

Posts: 535

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**Martindfletcher**  
Senior Member  
★★★★★

Posts: 53

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**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

"Love without  
guts is  
worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

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**Jeff of Arabica**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★



Name the greatest of  
all inventors...  
Accident.

Posts: 535

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**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

"Love without  
guts is  
worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

summer as well.

Steve

 [Email](#)  [WWW](#)

 50.80.57.123

 **Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #265** - 02/08/18 at 11:53pm

Steve,

I assume you only have one 25th Anniversary Zen built. I'm curious as to the sound of this amp bridged. I have to believe others are equally curious.

Do you foresee an opportunity to have a pair of these on hand to bridge and evaluate the sound product?

The big question for many will be ... anniversary upgraded Zen monoblocks? Or a bridged pair of 25th Anniversary amps for the extra output? This is assuming high efficiency speakers as a constant.

With my 97dB Omegas, I can do either. But if the sound is comparable, I will bridge the stereo amps for the extra output and headroom.

ZMA//Zen Ultra//Rachel//ZDSD//Super Zen//Taboo MKIII//PS Audio DirectStream DAC + Memory Player + P10//Muse Phono Stage//London Decca Reference//Dynavector DV-507 MKII//Zen Head//SonoruS Reel-to-Reel w/ tube playback pre-amp//Omega SAHos//DM946

 [Email](#)  [PM](#)

 172.1.34.66

 **Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #266** - 02/09/18 at 4:50am


  

I am with Jeff on that one. Unless there can be 16 ohm taps on the 25th monos or even single amp.

Chain in order: TD124 mki, Denon 103R, Ortofon RS-309D, zu silver phono cable, ZMC1, Audio Art RCA, ZP3, vintage RCA 5U4G Rectifier, Gold lion signal tubes, DW silver reference, Xhadow, Bridged UFO2's, gold lion 6922, mapleshade double helix plus, zu Druid v's

 [Email](#)  [PM](#)

 99.178.132.32

 **Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #267** - 02/09/18 at 10:03am


  

Well, I was curious about a bridged pair too, but decided that the Monoblocks would suit my needs and ordered a pair today. What the heck. I was obsessing over the choices and decided to go with the SE84UFO3 . . . I'm hoping that a treble cut circuit can be added and I want Type II Jupiter caps.

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

 [Email](#)  [PM](#)

 184.56.37.219

 **Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #268** - 02/09/18 at 11:05am

Awesome Lon! Exciting stuff. Ill definitely be anticipating their arrival and am eager to hear how they perform with your HR-1's. I almost pulled the trigger on a set of those mono's a couple days ago, but with the "bridged" question still lingering, I decided to pull back the reins.

I am in no real hurry and while the bridged stereo amps will set me back quite a bit more than the monoblocks, I am looking at these to be the end all. ...at least until the next greatest thing comes along ;)

There is no doubt that those monoblocks will sound amazing!

ZMA//Zen Ultra//Rachel//ZDSD//Super Zen//Taboo MKIII//PS Audio DirectStream DAC + Memory Player + P10//Muse Phono Stage//London Decca Reference//Dynavector DV-507 MKII//Zen Head//SonoruS Reel-to-Reel w/ tube playback pre-amp//Omega SAHos//DM946

 [Email](#)  [PM](#)

 172.1.34.66

 **Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #269** - 02/09/18 at 11:14am

Yeah Jeff, you know that I won't be quiet about it when it arrives months from now. I think they will work well with the HR-1s. . . they're not that much lower powered than my Taboo Mk IV which works very very well for music with headroom with the HR-1s.

And in the meantime maybe I'll sell a few amps and preamps . . . hope so.



184.56.37.219

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #270** - 02/09/18 at 3:08pm



Very nice Lon. I too, look forward to your impressions come late summer or Fall most likely.

The UFO3's 25th juiced, are my choice as well. However, with two graduations this year and moving.....my budget does not include the Mono's in 2018.

.....look out 2019, it's happening! ZMA & these Mono's will be a good problem to have for the rest of my days.

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference I2S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats



75.168.123.206

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #271** - 02/12/18 at 10:17am



".....bridged stereo amps will set me back quite a bit more than the monoblocks."

Jeff, ...but as you said above...if this is going to be your end all. Why not?

To steep for me.....however, the Juicy Mono's....and I deleted a post earlier....I am considering the entry level one too. Knowing, it would drive me crazy....wanting to hear the Mono's....I might buy both and after 6 months to a year....I:

- 1) can't part with either
- 2) sell one or the other.

NOTE: ZMA not for sale....I would bury it some where out along the interstate in its Pelican Case/well wrapped further an preserved.....before I would part with it. 😊

Like you said, no hurry and not in the cards for me in 2018.....alas till 2019....when I settle in to TX and my dedicated Electric Line too. Yeah, I will goofy ground it outside also...drinkin' the Kool-aid! 😊

Anyway, ....look forward to more from Steve in due time...about your bridging the Stereo Pair/question....more comparisons of the Mono's and the Stereo unit/single.....and of course the Entry Level killer diller.

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference I2S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
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Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats



75.168.123.206

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #272** - 02/12/18 at 11:31am



Let me rephrase my more comparison's.....thought.

Steve clearly states in reply #571:  
"I'm also going to predict that the lower voltage stereo model is going to have a more dreamy sound while the higher voltage monos will have more headroom.

To try to figure out which is actually better is going to be a waste of time because we're into the subtleties of voicing.

My strong advise is to stick with the regular Zens on speakers less than 94dB 1w/1m (unless you listen near field)....."

I listen near field and always have with my Decware in an dedicated Room with Treatment (or as I call it/I'm-just outside near field).

I'm flat out buying the Mono's (UFO325)....and not looking back.  
"....which is better, will be a waste of time as Steve mentioned."

Pick:

UFO325  
or  
SE84UFO25  
or....potentially bridged Stereo x 2 (\$\$)  
or  
Budaet Zen

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**stone\_of\_tone**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Listen Often/Listen Deep

Posts: 2901

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**stone\_of\_tone**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Listen Often/Listen Deep

Posts: 2901

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**stone\_of\_tone**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Listen Often/Listen Deep

Posts: 2901

with some of the 25th magic.

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference I2S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

75.168.123.206

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #273** - 02/12/18 at 12:05pm

I'm looking forward to impressions on the new 25th Anniversary Amps but even more, I'll be watching for some UFO Monos on the used market... 😊

"The man that hath no music in himself, nor is not moved with the concord of sweet sounds, is fit for treasons, deceptions, and spoils; The motions of his spirit are dull as night and his affections dark as Hell. Let no such man be trusted." William Shakespeare

47.182.87.70

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #274** - 02/12/18 at 12:09pm

That makes sense to me. . . .You know how good the previous Monos (that you have) are and I know how good the UFO transformers are. . . worth going for.

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

184.56.37.219

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #275** - 02/12/18 at 12:18pm

I always buy new to support Decware....then have sold.

Mark? You can buy my Mono's! 😊

UFO325 purchased new by me, Jan/Feb/2019.....you never know....late 2019 will come soon enough.... .

Yes, look forward to further words from Steve through this summer and reading others whom have purchased.  
.....Lurkinnnng..... .

Sony as Transport  
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Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
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Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

75.168.123.206

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #276** - 02/12/18 at 12:35pm

Hey Stone, I don't care who's UFO Monos I buy as long as I get my Price... 😊

All my Decware gear in the Cave...Torii MK IV, CSP3, ZP3 and HR Ones were purchased new...

All Decware gear in the second system was purchased used except the ZROCK... Zen Signature Monobocks (2008), ZP3 and CSP3. I just added some used Trapeziums for a future desktop system.

PS...Oops...forgot the Taboo MK III purchased New

"The man that hath no music in himself, nor is not moved with the concord of sweet sounds, is fit for treasons, deceptions, and spoils; The motions of his spirit are dull as night and his affections dark as Hell. Let no such man be trusted." William Shakespeare

47.182.87.70

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #277** - 02/12/18 at 1:02pm

Good to read Mark. ....and you paid a fair price for the Tubes....or I would not have sold them to you.

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**mark58**

Seasoned Member

☆☆☆☆

Posts: 5069

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**Lon**

Seasoned Member

☆☆☆☆

"Love without  
guts is  
worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

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**stone\_of\_tone**

Seasoned Member

☆☆☆☆

Listen Often/Listen  
Deep

Posts: 2901

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**mark58**

Seasoned Member

☆☆☆☆

Posts: 5069

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**stone\_of\_tone**

Seasoned Member

☆☆☆☆

Me too/New:  
SE84CS, Torii III, SuperZen CKC, CSP3 with Jupiter Caps, Decware PAC-S(ilver) & Zen Styx.  
.....and of course New, ZMA & Decware ZDSD DAC / Recorder.

+, had in for audition EL34 Mono-blocks, ZR2 & one of Steve's earliest Buffers (and took the re-stock fee/shipping to and from hits). Also, purchased a nice wood case piece from Ziggi, for my SE84CS.  
.....Monoliths.....were the only used item, for me.

.....here is my order of Listening (keeping each scenario in one to two weeks at a time):

ZMA direct from ZDSD with Platinum Mullard pair (Cryo'd) 7308/E188CC ....as inputs/ZMA

ZMA direct from ZDSD with Platinum Ediswan pair (Cryo'd) CV2492/6922 ....as inputs/ZMA

Audio Research LS-2B/single Plat' Mullard 7308/E188CC (Cryo'd) to Plat' Tungstram pair PCC88/7DJ8 ...inputs/ZMA.

ZMA, updated with robust Western Electric Bias/Balance Meter's and new Resistor's ~ Feb/17

Listening Room:

Room Treatments from Michael Green & my Home Brew

Sony as Transport (DVP-NS57P)  
Illuminati D-60 Digital Coax IC ~.5 meter

Shunyata Research Zitron Alpha Digital Power Cord to ZDSD {Significant}

Decware ZDSD DAC / Recorder  
\*\*\*\*\*  
W/Steve's Output Transformer's/kicking to the curb quite a few superb DAC'S  
\*\*\*\*\*  
(@ -20 Ref Level, 0.0 Input volume and @ 16/192)

WBT RCA Kimber Select KS1030 ~.5 meter

Audio Research Stereo Line Stage Amplifier w/remote volume & mute LS-2B MkII  
NOS Platinum/Mullard 7308/E188CC / Cryogenic

WBT-0102Ag RCA Kimber Select KS1030 ~.75 meter

Decware Zen Mystery Amplifier  
~BIASED at \*56\* mA~  
NOS/Platinum/Mullard E188CC/7308's in my A12 an B12 Input positions Cryogenic~NOS/Platinum/Telefunken 6922/E88CC for Inverter Tubes~NOS RCA 0A3's & matched Quad/Tung-Sol KT66's & 6PS3-E's

ZMA adjusted at 60-80% Gain ~ when ARC Line Stage is in, running via Remote Control

\*\*\*\*\*  
Kimber Select KS6063 Speaker Cable 8ft WBT-0681-Ag Spades  
\*\*\*\*\*  
Kimber 8TC new/white & clear jacket/to remind me of how fluid/timbre correct and good the KS6063 are  
Also Read.....the lowest noise floor you will ever witness....that a \$5180 pair of speaker cables should have....and they do....(I was fortunate to get them for \$2680/Demo pair/mint, from the CableCo....worth every penny/extraordinary realism.....)

Acoustic Zen Adagio - Black Pearl (Modified)  
.....enjoying from 8 ohm ZMA Taps  
.....purchased New/and throttled the Monoliths...and sent them away...

Caintuck Audio Eminence Alpha 15" OB BASS Unit  
at 53Hz, with my Velodyne CHT 130 watt plate amp and 0 degree phase.....at 1/6 volume on plate  
Plate Amp....regen'd clean ~ plugged into P3  
Auralex Subdude (a must)  
(NOTE: Only needed when the recording calls for...Open Baffle Bass has been the best integration I have witnessed when needed and called on)

Acoustic Zen Adagio's x-over's Modified/Full Range with Mundorf MCap Supremes-single Cap to each Tweeter/4.5k cross (Gutted: 3kHz/18dB/Octave, Linkwitz/Riley Crossovers....with all crappy parts = gone)

XLO Pro Power Cord to ZMA  
PS Audio P3 Power Plant / Pangea AC-9SE from wall to P3  
(Transport, ARC Line Stage and ZDSD, Regenerated/\*120\*~ Multiwave off...ZMA on High Current Output).

~NOS Platinum Tubes from Upscale Audio/Kevin:

(Great Britain) Mullard 7308/E188CC ~ 2 pair (both pair Cryogenic)  
(Germany) Telefunken 6922/E88CC ~ 1 pair (painfully expensive/worth it)  
(US/Great Britain) Ediswan CV2492/6922 ~ 2 pair (one pair Cryogenic)  
(Hungary) Tungstram 6922/E88CC ~ 1 pair  
(Hungary) Tungstram PCC88/7DJ8 ~ 1 pair.

From Cryoset:  
(Russia) 6N23N/P-EB ~ 2 pair

(Russia) 6N23P's ~ 2 pair/came with ZMA.

Sony as Transport  
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Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

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75.168.123.206

**stone\_of\_tone**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

Listen Often/Listen Deep  
Posts: 2901

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #278 - 02/12/18 at 3:47pm



UFO325/2019 or Bust!

....till then....hey, it is CARNIVAL'!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

FAT TUESDAY TOMORROW.

Okay, my LYFT app is working...goooooood to go!

CHEERS!

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference 12S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
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75.168.123.206

**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
☆☆☆☆



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?  
Posts: 3304

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #279 - 02/12/18 at 7:57pm



I've been reading various comments about 16 ohm speakers and thought I would mention that when we went to the UFO output transformers, we set them up with a switch to select between LO and HI impedance speakers. LO = 2~6 ohms HI = 6~16 ohms.

As for running the SE84UFO25 in mono, I will have a pair of working amps this summer if someone needs to hear them bridged.

-Steve

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50.80.57.123

**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
☆☆☆☆



If the 1st watt

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #280 - 02/12/18 at 8:24pm

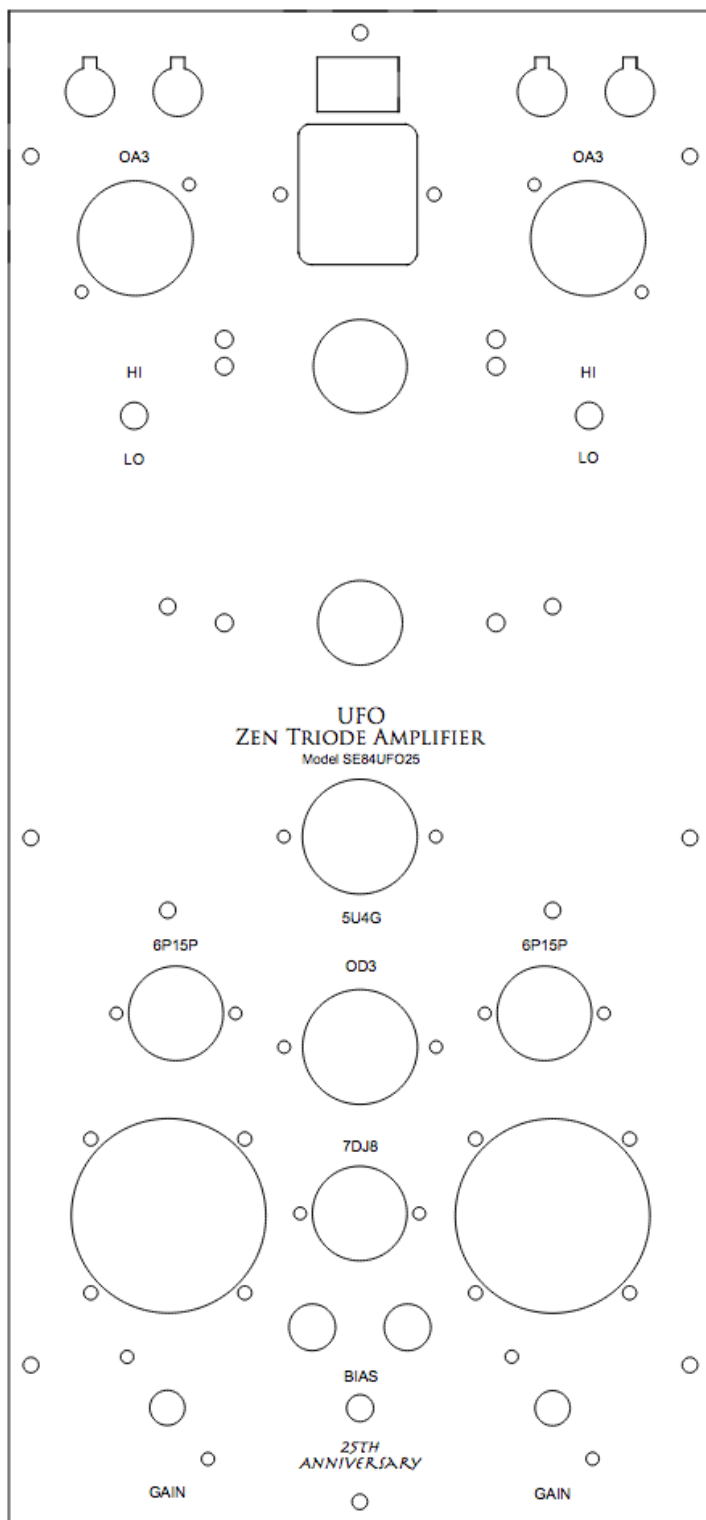


SE84UFO25 UPDATE

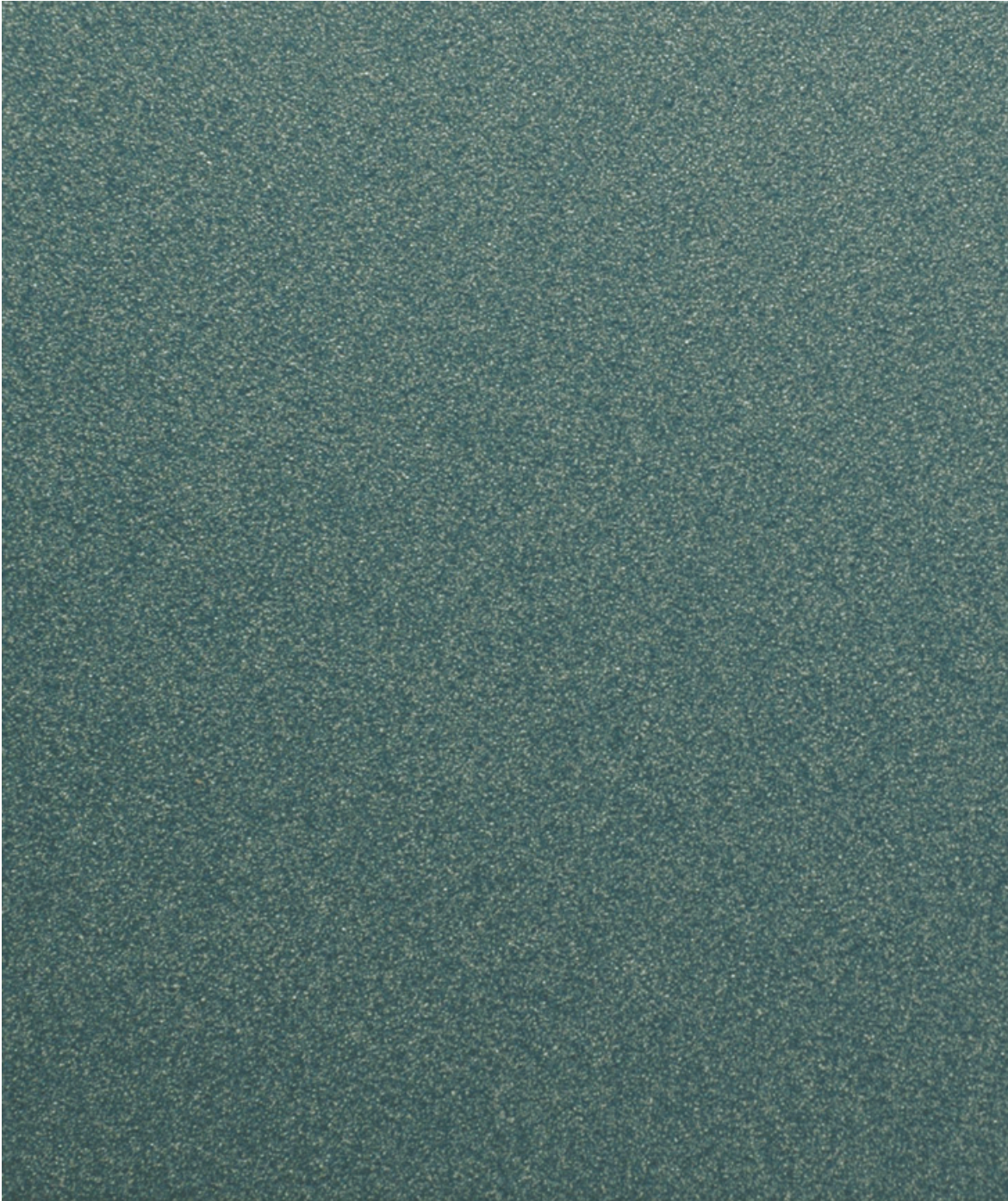
This is truly the hardest amplifier to quit listening to I have ever experienced. I am rotating between digital and analog and enjoying either with the same fascination. I actually wake up looking forward to hearing it. These are signs that everything I've stated about the amp are not only true but going to remain that way forever. This is not an amplifier you are going to get tired of unless you pair it with the wrong speakers.

So while we wait for the chassis to be completed here is what the layout and silk screen will look like:

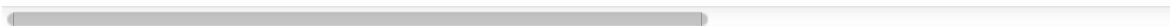




It will be powder coated with this green patina and the silk screen will be white. Jacks will be silver, meters will be backlit.



Steve



50.80.57.123

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #281** - 02/12/18 at 8:30pm




Steve, thanks for the great blogging on the 25th anniversary Zens. It's been a fun read and is definitely wetting my appetite. Can you clarify if the 25th anniversary tech will make its way into some of the other models? I thought I read up-thread that it would only work in the little Zens, but then it looked like you mentioned you would experiment with it in the higher-tier models as well.

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**AlexR**  
Verified Member  
☆☆

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The reason I ask is, I'm close to pulling the trigger on an a Torii Jr., but wonder if I should wait for an upgraded model to come out, if that would happen in the next year or so. I'll also mention that I definitely plan on getting a 25th anniversary Zen regardless of whether I get the Torri Jr. now or wait for a potential upgraded model to be released.

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**busterfree**  
Seasoned Member



Posts: 289

 **Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #282** - 02/12/18 at 9:38pm

Why not black top plate instead of green and no silk screening as an option?

Any plans for revised top plate for SE84UFO325 instead of "hiding" the glow below the plate?

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**busterfree**  
Seasoned Member



Posts: 289

 **Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #283** - 02/12/18 at 9:44pm

Input is in the front between bias and 7DJ8? Stepped or smooth volume controls?

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**Jeff of Arabica**  
Seasoned Member



Name the greatest of all inventors...  
Accident.

Posts: 535

 **Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #284** - 02/13/18 at 10:47am

Is there room to fit another diminutive silver switch above (or beside) the bias switch? I would be ecstatic over the option to flip that "Stereo/Mono" switch to change the wiring of the to RCA inputs to MONO.

The one thing that continues to irk me is the need to use Y adapter if running them mono. I know, I know.... one will argue a quality Y-adapter won't diminish. But when you have made a significant investment in your 2 meter interconnects (4-figure price tag), like I certainly have, the idea of adding in 6"-12" of an inferior connection cable with a different design and different metallurgy (even if both silver, or both gold, or whatever else, it won't have the same properties), doesn't leave me feeling warm and fuzzy inside.

Or, let me pay an option to have just the RCAs wired internally for MONO out of the factory - even if the amp still requires bridging. The amp layout could remain the same for ease of manufacturing.

ZMA//Zen Ultra//Rachel//ZDSD//Super Zen//Taboo MKIII//PS Audio DirectStream DAC + Memory Player + P10//Muse Phono Stage//London Decca Reference//Dynavector DV-507 MKII//Zen Head//SonoruS Reel-to-Reel w/ tube playback pre-amp//Omega SAHOs//DM946

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**Lonely Raven**  
Seasoned Member



Jack of all Trades,  
Master of None

Posts: 3100

 **Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #285** - 02/16/18 at 10:21am

Steve, I'm sorry if this has been brought up already, as i've not had time to be on the forums much and only skimmed the last page.

Is it possible for the VR tubes to share the workload? Instead of one VR tube handling that 25ma, can you parallel them to get 50ma for an EL34 setup?

I know that would be a crapload of tubes on the plate, but if it would make this technology stretch into the EL34 range it might be used in the Rachels and maybe the bigger amps?

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**stone\_of\_tone**  
Seasoned Member



Listen Often/Listen  
Deep

Posts: 2901

 **Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #286** - 02/16/18 at 12:45pm

Bingo....give this tech with 5.8 subjectively+/ch triode EL34.....

Ohhhh, how sweet thy Rachael will be.

To get rid of the sag....more bypass caps in the fuel line/path?

PS ~ just chillin with a couple BAD WEATHER HOPCROMANCER IPA's. Listening to Dish Network SiriusXM Radio with Decware PAC-S in play....all so good in fleshing it out.....through my Polk SRS SDA 1.2's.

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference I2S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

75.168.123.206

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #287** - 02/16/18 at 5:10pm

So, I fired off a message to Mark Markel, owner of Analysis Plus. After discussing my desire to bridge a pair of stereo amps into mono (25th Anniversary stereo), he came up with a solution I am happy with. I use their Silver Oval-In interconnect cables throughout my system. Not wanting to disturb their greatness in any way, he is going to custom build me two Silver Oval-In "Y-cables" to split the R & L interconnects to each pair of stereo input RCAs on the 25th Anniversary amps. Same material, same construction, just split into two leads at the amp end of the cable.

This I can live with. Ok, brring 'em on!

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**Jeff of Arabica**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆☆



Name the greatest of all inventors... Accident.

Posts: 535

ZMA//Zen Ultra//Rachel//ZDSD//Super Zen//Taboo MKIII//PS Audio DirectStream DAC + Memory Player + P10//Muse Phono Stage//London Decca Reference//Dynavector DV-507 MKII//Zen Head//Sonorus Reel-to-Reel w/ tube playback pre-amp//Omega SAHOs//DM946

172.1.34.66

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #288** - 02/16/18 at 6:20pm

There you go, that was a great solution!

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**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆☆

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

184.56.37.219

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #289** - 02/16/18 at 7:22pm

Sorry guys, it's way to early in the process to even attempt to accurately answer any of these questions beyond what I've already stated in previous posts.

Steve

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**Steve Deckert Administrator**  
☆☆☆☆☆



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

50.80.57.123

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #290** - 02/16/18 at 7:38pm

I will comment that the ZMA because of its giant caps already has a similar liquidity so I plan to re-examine the bypass caps in it and see if additional speed is desirable.

The TORII JR, is already faster than the ZMA and uses UFO transformers so I'm thinking it should be left alone or at least wait until last to be explored.

Even if they could be used in parallel, you have to realize these tubes are not even being made anywhere on the planet, and designing more amplifiers that use them beyond this would be foolish. Perhaps along the journey I'll find similar tubes that can be used, but again, it's best to stay focused on the prize. The prize is the speed of the high efficiency speaker coupled with a 2 watt amplifier.

Steve

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**Steve Deckert Administrator**  
☆☆☆☆☆



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

50.80.57.123

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**JOMAN**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #291** - 02/17/18 at 2:58pm

THANK YOU STEVE!!.. for staying focused and keeping an eye on the prize - high efficiency speakers with a 2 watt amp.

The hardest thing to do is to maintain objectivity when considering high efficiency/low power. I couldn't for the longest time. Even when my system presented undeniable proof of the possibilities of such a system I had the hardest time accepting what I was hearing. At times I would walk away... and try to reconcile what I was hearing against my established conclusions, I had lost OBJECTIVITY!

I could'nt take the grills off of my Omega S3HOXRS for that reason. Now, finally, I can and do without giving it a second thought. I've regained my objectivity. Which means that I can understand and accept both sides of the matter.. High efficiency/low power and low efficiency/high power.

The thing for me is that I have tried both and have had to spend time and effort with both to achieve my goals and I've gotten a lot closer to my goals with high efficiency/low power than with the other. So I'm not pitting one against the other in an effort to prove anything, but very few have taken the time and effort to work with high efficiency/low power and have spent far more time with the other, why?, Because they came to a conclusion regarding high efficiency/low power and lost objectivity.

There's room for both. There are reasons for both. It's great that your spending time to bring the 2 watt ZEN to the next level.

69.156.216.246

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #292** - 02/17/18 at 5:35pm

JOMAN - Nicely put.

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

50.80.57.123

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #293** - 02/18/18 at 3:48pm

Greetings All You music lovers this is my first post. I have been lurking in the background since I bought my zen select kit in 2002.

I am the poor guy that Steve mentions in page 12 of post 580, well I was finally able to pry myself out of this black hole called a listener's seat and I am moved to speak up.

Well just when you think things can't get any better Steve does it again! This time he hit this one out of the planet!! These amps are simply wonderful. I heartily agree with all his impressions of this amplifier. First thing I have a confession to make I am a polygamist I just cannot seem to be married to one amplifier they all have their different flavors. but these amps may change all that, my other amps in comparison are slow and unfocused although they may give a pleasant illusion. with the 325 Manos and good recording it is spooky real!! You're as close to real as I've ever heard it it's like your ears are hearing exactly what the microphones here you can easily hear if the balance is off either left or right with near field listening. Clarity Focus speed it's all there! Hey they even make digital sound fantastic, and analog especially 50s and 60s tube recordings you know before transistor will take you to a higher level they can sound glorious. I can't imagine anything better!

Okay you can change the flavor by playing with wires or tubes but right now I have no desire to, I am enjoying Steve recipe. I'd like to also mention like Steve that these amps sound more powerful than what they are in my room 10 and 1/2 by 19 ft set up on the diagonal. I get all the volume I need and M amazed at how they don't seem to clip I think my room overloads before these amp show any sign of distress amazing! And the base I get is all I need it is hard to believe all this is coming out of those tiny output Transformers. Thanks again Steve you are a Master Chef and I know you love your hobby as much as we do and want to share it with us and as a bonus you're able to make a good living doing it.

Where else can you get this quality.! American-made point-to-point wiring and no circuit boards and a lifetime warranty Steve we all enjoy your Explorations and thinking outside the box going where no one has gone before.

Well I got to go that black hole is starting to pull on me again! 😊

158.222.237.37

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #294** - 02/18/18 at 4:17pm

Thanks for weighing in, I was hoping you would! This makes me feel really good as I have a pair of the Monoblocks on order and can't wait to hear them!

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**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

184.56.37.219

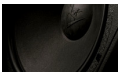
**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #295** - 02/18/18 at 4:31pm

Thanks Poor guy!

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**busterfree**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★





Posts: 289

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**Poor guy**  
Verified Member  
☆☆☆

[Email](#) [PM](#)

184.59.81.144

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #296 - 02/18/18 at 5:52pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

With the right speakers there's no need to look any further if you don't need the power

Posts: 5

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**busterfree**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

[Email](#) [PM](#)

158.222.237.37

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #297 - 02/18/18 at 6:48pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

Hi Steve,  
I assume you will let us know when we can order the SE84UFO25. Timing still looks like Summer? What color do you use for backlit meters?



Posts: 289

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
☆☆☆☆☆

[Email](#) [PM](#)

184.59.81.144

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #298 - 02/19/18 at 11:24am

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

The backlit meters are incandescent... I don't do LED's.



If the 1st watt  
sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

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**beowulf**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

[Email](#) [WWW](#)

50.80.57.123

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #299 - 02/21/18 at 4:48pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

How about this for a new chassis design Steve? Just having fun and sketched these out.

I got the basic idea from a pair of old Siemens 6S ELA 2427 tube amps which were kind of a narrow shoe box shaped chassis and then removed the tubes from the inside and mounted them on the top of the chassis so everyone can bask in the Decware Zen tube glow.



New interpretation:



I think you could basically use this design for almost all of your amps just needing to adjust them for size. I can picture a set of 25 Anni mono blocks and a ZP3 all in the same style chassis taking up only one shelf on a hi-fi rack. 😊

Posts: 1350

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
☆☆☆☆☆

[Email](#) [PM](#)

72.220.3.94

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #300 - 02/22/18 at 9:20pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

Nice chassis designs!



If the 1st watt  
sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304



50.80.57.123

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #301** - 02/22/18 at 10:09pm



ANNIVERSARY UPDATE

Well, it has finally happened... I was forced to put a different amplifier in for the first time since building the anniversary prototype.

It is a moment I've been putting off for good reasons. One of which is that I've been enjoying it too much to want to change anything. But the real reason was fear.

Once I actually do start comparing the amps I think I already know what would happen, but no matter what actually happens I'm screwed.

Scenario A: I put in another Decware amplifier which I have always loved and it fails to impress by comparison thus sounding bad to me for the first time ever. That's of course going to be stressful.

Scenario B: I put in another Decware amplifier which I have always loved and it sounds better than the Anniversary amp. That's of course going to be even more stressful.

As predicted it was scenario A. It wasn't pretty. Then to add insult to injury later in the same evening I decided to put the corner horns on and similarly to the amp comparison, they now sounded broken compared to the DNA2's. I have never heard them sound bad before.

Sound Quality is a journey of context. The best thing you can do to ensure what you have sounds it's best is to be sure not to listen to anything better.

So it is a bittersweet experience that will no doubt repeat itself several more times before it's over.

Also I have to say, that the DNA2's have been extraordinary on every level to the point where you believe they could never sound bad. When the amplifiers were changed, the speakers dropped from a 10+++ to about a 6. As a speaker designer I have to tell you that this is a highly disturbing thing to witness.

I think this amplifier and speaker combination is so outrageous that to me it's in the same league for Decware as putting a car in space was to Elon Musks' Space Ex. Hey, you don't see any other cars in space do you?

For years I've been wanting to shoot a Zen Amp out of a cannon right through a concrete block wall and then re-tube it, plug it in and listen to it to demonstrate just one reason why an amplifier without circuit boards is better.



Now I'm thinking we need a Zen Triode Amplifier, 25th edition in space.... Actually in orbit. We already have amps in space thanks to the abductions over the years... see video: <https://decware.wistia.com/medias/roqnquwf13>

Steve

P.S. If you enjoyed the video, here is part II. <https://decware.wistia.com/medias/puv6rk8rue>

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**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002



50.80.57.123

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #302** - 02/23/18 at 4:22am



I would have predicted that there would be a let down. But the earlier amps are still great, it's just Zen marches your designs forward and this is an age of progress in some wonderful things.

Better get that newly sized DNA Horn marching towards production!

Yes, a Zen Amp in Space. . for the "Year of the UFO." Seems appropriate! LOL

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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**lazb**  
Verified Member  
★★★

Posts: 39



184.56.37.219

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #303** - 02/23/18 at 8:30am



I must concur with Steve! He seemed, even visually, a bit shaken at the amp switching scenario! "There is just not as much there!" was the comment.

And Lon, nice turn of phrase!!

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**JOMAN**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Posts: 192



162.237.14.147

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #304** - 02/23/18 at 11:22am



OK, time for a little objectivity here...

Is the Anniversary Amp THE PERFECT AMP? I'm going to say that as good as it promises to be... NO! Does that mean that it should not be released until the PERFECT AMP is available for fear that it will be so bad in comparison to THE PERFECT amp when it is available??

Do that and I will visit you with ill intent.

The not so perfect UFO2 has been a great experience and if it wasn't do you think that I'd buy the Aniversary Amp? It was perfect for what it was intended to do.

So don't look back with regret, it will prevent you from keeping focus on the objective.

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69.156.216.246

**Poor guy**  
Verified Member  
☆☆

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #305 - 02/23/18 at 4:39pm



UFO 325 versus Tori MK 3

Okay I had to do it my Mark 3 amp is running New Old Stock Golden Lion kt77 tubes unfortunately I do not have the UFO output Transformers yet but I had to do a comparison the Tori Push Pull amp has the hit that Steve talks about it also has more power of course I noticed that the instruments are in place in the sound field separated from themselves which sounds really good but with the Manos the soundstage is continuous there is more information between the instruments especially with recordings that are naturally miked mixed recordings may be less noticeable but still sound very good the Tories have a richest sound more harmonics more distortions but even order distortions can sound really good hey when you split the signal and put it back together it can't be as pure as single ended the Manos are simply seamless there is just more information and they show no signs of stress with the right speakers I'm running open baffles homemade with vintage drivers I would say approximately 95 + efficiency show my impressions are that the Tory 3 is very enjoyable maybe especially on rock music but the Manos blow them away I kind of like both of them they both have different flavors but with the mono's and good recordings you are just about there in the dark both amps look really cool especially when lit up together I don't want to part with either I guess I'm still a polygamist either amp can take you away from reality into a world of sound

Posts: 5

Greado epoch Sota star audio quest pt9 zmc1 zp3 cp2 audio quest quartz  
Se84 UFO 325 Dnc1 Zstysg

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**Poor guy**  
Verified Member  
☆☆

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #306 - 02/23/18 at 4:49pm



PS these Manos are simply compelling they draw you into the music you really can't say enough about them thanks again Steve

Posts: 5

Cd-200i c-dac 1 Zbox Z stage cp2

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**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #307 - 02/23/18 at 6:17pm



Interesting comparisons Poor Guy. Yes, I too have a Torii Mk III and love it, but there is something about the Taboo Mk IV that for my needs now (and with the killer gain I can drop into it from ZTPRE, ZBOX and ZROCK2) is just more satisfying. Similar to the Monos you have there's more information in the soundstage and it's enveloping and the sound is great for jazz and classical and even rock and video material. I can't wait to hear the 25th Anniversary Monoblocks, I think I'll have the next pair after yours.

"Love without  
guts is  
worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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184.56.37.219

**Poor guy**  
Verified Member  
☆☆

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #308 - 02/23/18 at 6:52pm



Hello I o n just finished listening to a mono Lionel Hampton recording good mono can sound almost like stereo a good string quartet can sound really good either mono or stereo anyway now that I have my monoblocks I'm thinking about the ZT pre I'm thinking that it may be nice to run balanced to these amps whenever this poor guy gets some extra cash anyway you made a good decision you're really going to enjoy these monoblocks I favor them over the Tory 3 it's hard to take them out of the system looking forward to others impressions when they get theirs it should be really interesting

Posts: 5

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158.222.237.37

**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #309 - 02/23/18 at 7:42pm



I love good mono as well. A lot of the music I love to listen to was recorded before stereo, what you gonna do? I find when I have the system tailored to mono--strong center image, frequency balance even across both channels, etc.--stereo sounds phenomenal.

"Love without  
guts is  
worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

I'll definitely share my impressions of the Monoblocks when I get them!

Posts: 14002

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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Justin Tice  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments:  
Reply #310 - 02/24/18 at 11:23am

Modify Split Delete

How do the anniversary amps do with average or bad recordings?



Posts: 289

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Email PM

184.59.81.144

Steve Deckert  
Administrator  
★★★★★

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments:  
Reply #311 - 02/24/18 at 11:34am

Modify Split Delete

Still trying to wrap my head around that one... it is handling that differently as well. Bad sounding recordings now have a complexity that would have Spock from StarTrek doing the one eyebrow thing.

Steve



If the 1st watt  
sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

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Email WWW

50.80.57.123

stone\_of\_tone  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments:  
Reply #312 - 02/25/18 at 11:31am

Modify Split Delete

Steve, you mentioned earlier:

"I will comment that the ZMA because of its giant caps already has a similar liquidity so I plan to re-examine the bypass caps in it and see if additional speed is desirable.

The TORII JR, is already faster than the ZMA and uses UFO transformers....."

....can you give us a timeline of your re-examination with by-pass caps & approximate cost (x 2) both channels?  
....I believe it was \$680 per mono UFO3 upgrade.

I have no problem with \$1360 + shipping to and from Decware for my ZMA enhancement. If, you deem this to be a damn good enhancement for my ZMA.

I find Jeff's experiment with the Power Caps alone first; very interesting and I commented so.....

Jeff is experimenting with the ZMA Power Caps.....alone/no by-pass initially.....  
Exercise in SPEED (found in the ZMA Forum):

"There is an additional (identical) 47uF cap between the voltage regulator (OA3) and the two input tubes on each channel.

So, I am going to replace this pair of electrolytic caps as well with the Mundorf TubeCaps. So this will raise the TubeCap count to (6), plus the (2) huge MLYtic HP+ caps (replacing the Mallory's). The overall parts cost is now \$680 (+labor)."

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference I2S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

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Email PM

75.168.123.206

Steve Deckert  
Administrator  
★★★★★

Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments:  
Reply #313 - 02/25/18 at 4:59pm

Modify Split Delete

In keeping with the question about how the anniversary amp does with average or bad recordings I decided to listen to my dry Sansui FM tuner on today's syndicated classic MP3 rock music because that is truly the worst source/recordings I know.

The result is that I've lasted just past an hour and have only thought about putting it out of its misery a couple times a minute for the last 1/2 hour. So for what it's worth, the anniversary amp will help with bad recordings on a good source, but not with MP3 recordings on a bad source.



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

I have used this tuner in the past to test the ZROCK2 and I found that pretty much fixed it for what it's worth.

Steve

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

[Email](#) [WWW](#)

50.80.57.123

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #314** - 02/25/18 at 6:24pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

**Quote:**

...can you give us a timeline of your re-examination with by-pass caps & approximate cost (x 2) both channels?

I really can't. I haven't even compared the ZMA to the UFO25. Not sure when I will, and have no idea what the outcome would be or what I would be inclined to do as a result of that outcome, if anything.

As I alluded to earlier in this thread, I imagine this will motivate some updates elsewhere in the Decware line in the coming years and after having heard how it rates against a stock Zen amp I can pretty much bank on it. Rushing to get it done on the other hand would be assuming too much too soon and isn't my style anyway.

Not to crush the spirit of this but using the ZMA as an example, if I do develop an anniversary mod for it and people send their amps in for the mod, anything that has been changed in the amp will be removed and returned to stock prior to the mod and added to the cost of the mod so you might want to keep that in mind.

While I'm sure the tube cap has some merit, I predict depending on the circuit location using them in place of our electrolytics would be a trade-off when compared to a high quality electrolytic with the proper bypassing. Good electrolytics have a desirable depth of tone and decay and are slower than film caps. It is the contrast between slow and fast that create the window of a good bypass. Speed is relative. If you make it only fast, you loose the contrast by which you perceive the speed. However if the slower you make it at the same time you are making it faster the greater the sense of speed.

I ignored my own advise when developing one of the original Zen Triode Monoblock prototypes by building the entire power supply from polyurethane film and foil Teflon caps and it sounded worse than a stock Zen amp. While it was no doubt much faster, it didn't sound any faster and resulted in a somewhat flat, less animated, clinical signature.

Also there is a place in every circuit for a particular type of cap based on the current, voltage and speed demands put on it. There is no formula for bypass that works for everything despite what some people teach.

Steve

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**Archie**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Posts: 926

[Email](#) [WWW](#)

50.80.57.123

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #315** - 02/25/18 at 7:29pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

Trust the Master! 😊

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**stone\_of\_tone**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Listen Often/Listen Deep

Posts: 2901

[Email](#) [PM](#)

97.122.69.207

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #316** - 02/25/18 at 7:52pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

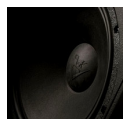
Well understood Steve. I appreciate your ZMA so very much for my enjoyment. I will wait for when and if you decide it receives an enhancement involving the depth of tone and decay and the contrast of speed as you can only do it.

Much respect to you Steve and thanks for your candid response.

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference I2S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

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**busterfree**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★



Posts: 289

[Email](#) [PM](#)

75.168.123.206

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
**Reply #317** - 02/28/18 at 4:52am

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

RE: Anniversary amps

Will an even larger power transformer make a positive difference? Have you tried a boutique IEC fused inlet from Furutech or an upgraded fuse?

Any new news?

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184.59.81.144

**Jeff of Arabica**

Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆☆

**Re: Steve/Decware & Company.....Developments?**  
Reply #318 - 03/02/18 at 9:03am



Steve,

What is the status of those model specific component platforms you had on display at Decfest last Fall?



Name the greatest of all inventors... Accident.

Posts: 535

ZMA//Zen Ultra//Rachel//ZDSD//Super Zen//Taboo MKIII//PS Audio DirectStream DAC + Memory Player + P10//Muse Phono Stage//London Decca Reference//Dynavector DV-507 MKII//Zen Head//SonoruS Reel-to-Reel w/ tube playback pre-amp//Omega SAHOs//DM946



172.1.34.66

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**Steve Deckert**

Administrator  
☆☆☆☆☆

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #319 - 03/16/18 at 8:54pm



Hi Jeff,

They are going to be vibration canceling platforms designed for specific Decware amplifiers which is to say each platform will be tuned to the mass of and size of amplifier. My plan is to release the first model for the smaller amps (like the SE84UFO25 for example) this summer.

Steve



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304



50.80.57.123

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**Steve Deckert**

Administrator  
☆☆☆☆☆

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #320 - 03/16/18 at 10:16pm



Another UPDATE:

More signs from the Audio Gods of their influence over this project... The steel plates arrived and the thickness has been increased to 1/8 inch even though I did not change the spec and no one seems to know what happened. (I wish I would of thought of it because it's almost a 50% increase in mass further reducing the effects of vibration and micro phonics)



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304





It makes sense when you think about it... the original Zen Triode Amplifier was an inspiration from the Audio Gods so this 25th anniversary edition is personal to them. I mean it's obvious right? Because I didn't think of it or see it when the clues were given, they just took matters into their own hands ; )

Right now we're working out the sockets. Apparently they liked my first choice because the alternates should have been here two weeks ago and haven't showed up. Supplier shows the order waiting for payment, Paypal shows order was paid three weeks ago.

I'll keep you updated. Hope to have a ballpark on the price by May 2018.

Steve



[Email](#) [WWW](#)

50.80.57.123

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #321 - 03/17/18 at 12:34am

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

That looks nice, Steve!

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**Lonely Raven**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Jack of all Trades,  
Master of None

Posts: 3100

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73.75.83.94

**Deowuit**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #322 - 03/17/18 at 2:01am

Those sure look beefy and are certainly at the level of the ZTPRE ~ which (in IMO of course) the ZTPRE sets the standard that most other Decware pieces do not measure up to when it comes to style and looks. I love the tube designations/markings as well very professional looking!



Posts: 1350

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72.220.3.94

**lazb**  
Verified Member  
☆☆

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #323 - 03/17/18 at 8:12am

I agree with you, L R! I can almost see that in my rack!

Posts: 39

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162.237.14.147

**stone\_of\_tone**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #324 - 03/17/18 at 8:58am

I do like the Green patina. Happy St. Patrick's Day!

Listen Often/Listen Deep

I'm French Canadian Montreal thru Quebec & the wine region of France/Origins.....Languedoc-Roussillon region....yeah, thus, I like the good stuff.....as I do in Decware AMPS! ....and front end/Source.

Posts: 2901

I do.....love green though!

Cool, on the 1/8 inch plate scene.....

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference I2S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

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75.168.123.206

**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #325 - 03/17/18 at 9:00am

**lazb wrote on 03/17/18 at 8:12am:**

I agree with you, L R! I can almost see that in my rack!

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

One day you WILL see that in your rack!

Posts: 14002

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UF03-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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184.56.37.219

**stone\_of\_tone**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #326 - 03/17/18 at 9:12am

I know I will! Oh, wait

Listen Often/Listen Deep

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference I2S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

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75.168.123.206

**DB2**  
Senior Member  
☆☆☆☆

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #327 - 03/17/18 at 10:22am

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

"I do like the Green patina."

I seem to remember a ZMA review that said if Decware were painted green (a la Shindo) there could easily be another zero in the price tag. I hope that's not the case here....

Posts: 65

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99.115.147.177

**Archie**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #328 - 03/17/18 at 12:15pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

I'm glad to hear Steve is getting serious about vibration control. The thicker plate may just change the frequency and not necessarily help any underlying problem though. I've posted several times before that when I first played my ZMA, with it sitting directly on my very solid support, I got constructive feedback that would have made it impossible to play at more than half volume. I built a "tuned" isolation platform for it to sit on that completely eliminated the problem. I have them under every piece of equipment, including speakers. I'm very interested to see what Steve comes up with along these lines.

Posts: 926

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71.211.152.221

**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #329 - 03/17/18 at 12:21pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

I too have isolation under everything, and what a difference it can make. Jeff, what did those look like when you were at Decfest? Will be interesting to see Decware's product in this field.

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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184.56.37.219

**Donnie**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #330 - 03/17/18 at 2:41pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

I saw the new vibration isolation platforms at the 'Fest. They appeared to be solid Maple and had, if I remember correctly, a ball in cup arrangement. Steve told me that it really works well. He said that most other types don't work, but his did. Sorry, it has been 5 months, I forgot the details.



Why does it hurt when I pee?

Posts: 1161

Owner of the infamous RED TORII

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98.223.205.186

**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #331 - 03/17/18 at 3:18pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

Thanks for the report Donnie. I guess that the prototype SE84UFO25 that is pictured with the red tinted top may be sitting on one of the isolation pieces then. . . .

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

26815213\_397600073994726\_4504576957471168897\_n.jpg





HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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184.56.37.219

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #332 - 03/19/18 at 3:36pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

My 25th Anniversary SE84UFO3 Monoblocks went onto the bench today! 😊

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**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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184.56.37.219

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #333 - 03/19/18 at 6:12pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

The wait is going to be pretty tough I imagine! Are the monos going to have the same top plates as the stereo version or is he sticking with the same mono plates that he uses currently?

Edit : whoa wait ... that was actually pretty fast wasn't it?

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**beowulf**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★



Posts: 1350

[Email](#) [PM](#)

72.220.3.94

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #334 - 03/19/18 at 6:27pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

Well, I ordered them February 9, so . . .five and a half weeks or so to "On the Bench" is quick, not terribly fast. It's been an additional three weeks or so to shipping from this point my last two orders or so. . . so I expect about three weeks to go.

I honestly don't know what the top plate will be like on these! There will be two more tubes on it but I am not sure that there will be extra silk-screening or a different color top plate. . . I actually hope NOT, i love the simple black top plate look of the SE84UFO3.

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**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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184.56.37.219

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #335 - 03/20/18 at 12:24am

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Lon,

I am SOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO looking forward to your impressions of the new monoblocks. I could see those happily existing with my Linear Tube Audio OTL preamp. And I couldn't agree with you more about the black top plate. I like simple, understated, classic.

Keep us up to date, please.

Randy

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**Bottlehead**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Posts: 265

[Email](#) [PM](#)

73.221.26.210

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #336 - 03/20/18 at 1:14am

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

I actually think the new top plate looks much better, the tube markings/designations give it a very industrial cool factor as well IMO.

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**beowulf**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★



Posts: 1350

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72.220.3.94

**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #337 - 03/20/18 at 5:51am



Yeah, we're all different. .. I'll take what he gives me and like it, but the more they look like a regular pair of SE84UFO3 the better for me. I just love that simple unlettered look.

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #338 - 03/20/18 at 7:41am



**Bottlehead wrote on 03/20/18 at 12:24am:**

Lon,

I am SOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO looking forward to your impressions of the new monoblocks. I could see those happily existing with my Linear Tube Audio OTL preamp. And I couldn't agree with you more about the black top plate. I like simple, understated, classic.

Keep us up to date, please.

Randy

Hi Randy! Hope you are doing well. Of course, I'll be sharing with you likely both here and off the board.

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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**Bottlehead**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #339 - 03/21/18 at 1:08am



Beo,

I will agree with you on one aspect of the new tops: the thickness. I love that beefy, substantial look.

Randy

Posts: 265

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73.221.26.210

**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #340 - 03/21/18 at 7:31pm



And today they are in "Testing." My last two items were in "Testing" a long time, which is great, they get broken in that way, and I welcome Steve having more time with a pair to assess and evaluate.

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #341 - 03/21/18 at 9:00pm



UPDATE: Chassis hardware selection for the SE84UFO25...

I was originally intending on using silver wherever possible especially since that would theme it nicely being a 25th anniversary product. After thinking about it for some time I realized this isn't a firkin wedding cake and the "theme crap" is getting in the way of what I'm being drawn to do which in this case is gold.

After dozens of combinations of different types of sockets and connectors this is where it's at so far. The only thing left is the binding posts. I have tested many boutique posts against our standard post shown in the picture and while several are prettier, none are actually better and several were not as good.

I have another round of binding posts on the way to evaluate. Stuff like the 245.00 a channel FURUTECH FT-806(G) High End Performance Carbon Fiber Binding Posts and all their other models as well. Don't panic, I haven't lost my mind! I went directly to the manufacture of the FT-806 post in China and have it made without the FURUTECH name for less than \$30.00 a channel!

So with that, the binding posts in the picture are subject to change. If I keep these, they will be 24K gold plated to match the rest of the hardware.

BTW, waiting for all these damn parts to arrive is getting suspenseful. The chassis itself is starting to create a vacuum because it



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304



wants to be built in the worst way! If I wait much longer its just going to built itself!





-Steve



[Email](#) [www](#)

50.80.57.123

Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier  
Reply #342 - 03/21/18 at 9:29pm

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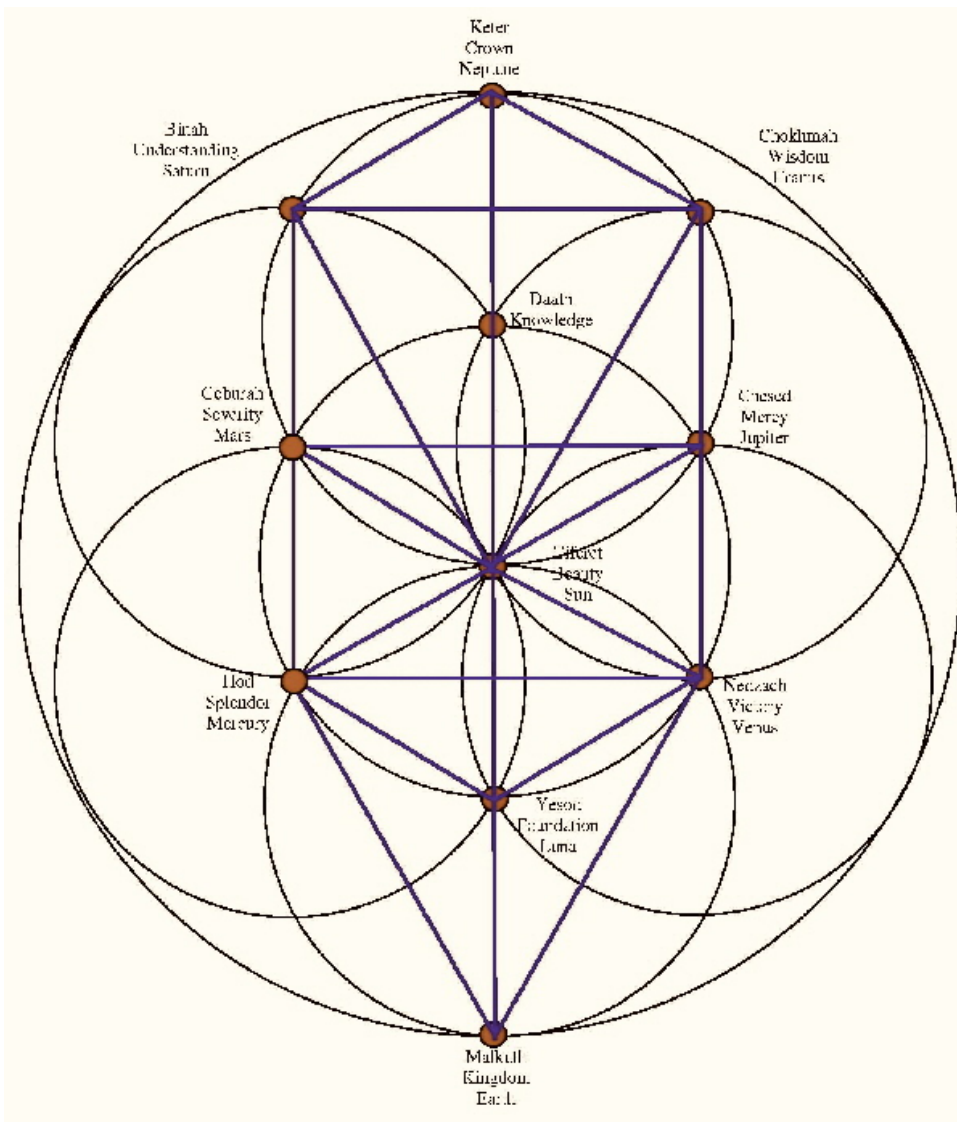
INTERESTINGLY...

While looking at the picture here in the post (and listening to the amp at the same time) I had another serendipitous sign from the Audio Gods! I realized the placement of things on this amplifier chassis closely resembles the flower of life which might be why I've been having a hard time not staring at it the last couple nights!



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304



Clearly, I'm having way too much fun.

Steve

[Email](#) [www](#)

50.80.57.123

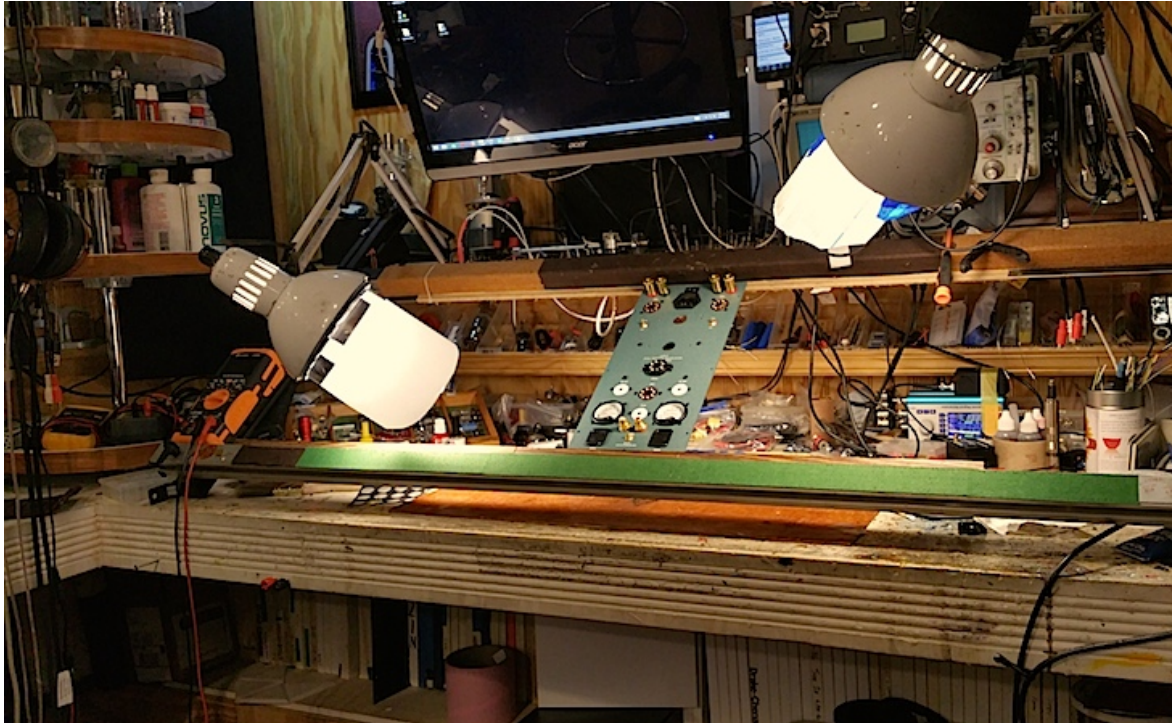
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If the 1st watt  
sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

Here are more pics



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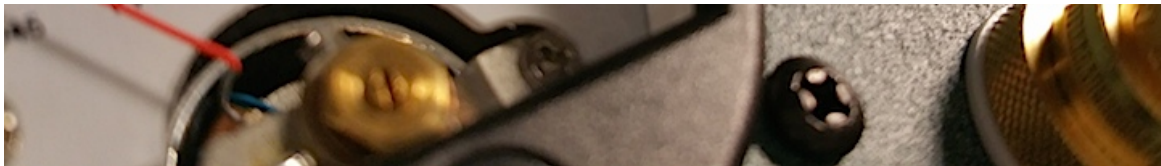
50.80.57.123



If the 1st watt  
sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304





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50.80.57.123

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #345 - 03/21/18 at 9:48pm

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★



If the 1st watt  
sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304



[Email](#) [www](#)

50.80.57.123

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #346 - 03/21/18 at 9:53pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★



If the 1st watt  
sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304





Have a great night...

Steve



[Email](#) [www](#)

50.80.57.123

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**Steve Deckert**

Administrator



**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #347 - 03/21/18 at 10:37pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)



If the 1st watt  
sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304



See... it needs parts... wires... wisdom! Can you feel the vacuum?.

This is how it happens... Basically you have a schematic, a box of parts of various sizes and this. All you have to do is figure out the best way to connect it all and lay it out with the least number of solder nodes, the shortest amounts of wire, and spread it all out in such a way as to have the least amount of field interaction and everything has to take repeated 100 G impacts in the order of hundreds of times so lead length vs. lead diameter vs. part mass will make it difficult to lay things out the way you want to.

Build it like it needs to survive a war and it will. (on that note, my soldering gurus wire wrap the entire amp together so that it will work perfectly well before it's even soldered. It's an awesome approach until you want to change something or take it apart.

Thankfully I've already done it once, so now I will have the massive advantage of seeing how it did it and copying what I like and changing what I don't like.

This is my gold watch for 25 years of loyal service coming to fruition. OMG it's another sign! I spelled a word right!

Happy listening 😊

Steve



[Email](#) [www](#)

50.80.57.123

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**Steve Deckert**

Administrator



**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #348 - 03/21/18 at 11:16pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)



If the 1st watt  
sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

Tonight I'm listening to FRIEDEMANN / THE CONCERT which I consider a A+ recording on every level. The sound with this amp is just stunning. Again when I hear myself saying "it sounds real..." it plays against how it feels which is real. Let me rephrase that... it sounds so real it feels real. You can actually feel it, at any volume from low to high.

If we could just pass a law where the entire world had to use one of these amps to master all recordings it would push our ascension as a species to a higher consciousness.

Stick your IPODs and earbuds up your ass, we're taking our planet back!

-Steve

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50.80.57.123

**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #349 - 03/21/18 at 11:38pm



OK,

Once again I had no intension on posting anything more tonight but I made the mistake of listening to the amplifier. It has me. I'm sorry. I am listening to Crash Dance, Yello, Oliver Lieb and it's just so damn sick I can't handle it! I had to leap out of the room in amazement because about half way through the track there was a sound featured well behind my right shoulder, I would have had to twist my neck around to look at it. It felt so real and how I can I express this... Picture an IMAX theater with 360 degree Omnivision only unlike that visual spectacular, the sound bleeds over into the visual and you not only see it but feel it. If I had a guest here tonight and told them it was only two speakers they would have known I was full of crap and left.

Perhaps the amp is activating the 3rd eye...? it just doesn't seem possible to have this experience with only two ears. It just doesn't.

Also as incredible as the sound I'm hearing is, ever since Randy left with his Betsy baffles that have the dual drivers, I have been waiting for the rear of the sound stage to map out in a perfect square like it did that night when he was here and it hasn't yet. I'm just saying. There is a sick irony in the fact that a 3K\$ 2W amplifier and a \$500 or so pair of speakers would set such a benchmark, when 20 years ago it was a \$500 amplifier and a 30K pair of speakers that nearly accomplished the same thing. Hmmm.

-Steve

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50.80.57.123

**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #350 - 03/21/18 at 11:55pm



Try some Flash In The Pan, by Friedemann for a similar experience with just mind-bending imaging and density.

This amplifier has turned my listening room into a swimming pool where you swim in the music. Before this amplifier I did not realize such a thing was possible. It's a dimensional shift in fidelity which deserves the best execution possible. If a typical audiophile who had spent 50 grand on his stereo would have instead purchased this amp and speakers and another 10K on a building in the back yard or dedicated listening room in the basement, the end result would have been a space ship that can time travel... which is priceless.

If I could win the lotto (*which I don't play*), so that I no longer had to work, I would hire lots of people and disappear in the listening room for months on end... actually for eternity if possible.

Posts: 3304

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50.80.57.123

**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #351 - 03/22/18 at 12:25am



Look at the time stamp of this message and the last message... 30 minutes have passed and only less than 2 minutes of the song I'm listening to have passed. Explain this.

Steve

If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

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50.80.57.123

**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #352 - 03/22/18 at 5:47am



Going to be a great looking amp! Thanks for keeping us posted. . . the pics are excellent.

Really looking forward to the Monoblocks!

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

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184.56.37.219

**deucekazoo**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #353 - 03/22/18 at 8:33am



Steve, the amp is looking real nice. Looking at the color of the top plate I was trying to figure out what wooden base would look good with it. I am not a fan of painted wood but I am thinking Madagascar ebony might look real nice with that top plate. Can't wait to see it all together and some wiring pics.

Posts: 335



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173.15.2.129

**maddog07**

Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆☆

seeker of truth

Posts: 484

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #354 - 03/22/18 at 12:25pm



Steve,

what speakers are you using - *primarily* - when listening to the 25th anniversary amp?

*\* forgive me if this is already noted somewhere and I missed it*

Decware Torii MK3, Wyred4Sound DAC2, Theta Digital Miles, Emotiva XMC-1, Emotiva XPA-5, Aesthetix Calypso, Wyred STP-SE, Martin Logan Vista, Audio Nirvana 12" Alnico's, PS Audio PW P5, Goertz, Kimber, Nordost and DIY wires, PSA pwr cords, Cary SLI-80, DM945's.....

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199.169.204.154

**beowulf**

Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆☆



Posts: 1350

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #355 - 03/22/18 at 4:03pm



**maddog07 wrote on 03/22/18 at 12:25pm:**

Steve,

what speakers are you using - *primarily* - when listening to the 25th anniversary amp?

*\* forgive me if this is already noted somewhere and I missed it*

I believe he is/was primarily using a new version of the DNA Horns that are not available yet. Also had great results with Randy's open baffles.

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72.220.3.94

**Donnie**

Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆☆



Why does it hurt when I pee?

Posts: 1161

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #356 - 03/22/18 at 4:44pm



Steve's current reference speakers are a pair of 1966 RCA speakers that came with a turntable. 3" driver with genuine pressed wood construction.



Owner of the infamous RED TORII

[Email](#) [PM](#)

98.223.205.186

[Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier](#)  
Reply #357 - 03/22/18 at 8:11pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

So the benefits of the 25th anniversary design will only be experienced in a properly treated dedicated listening room? Wife and 2 year old over here make that a no-go....

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**metropolis7**  
Senior Member  
☆☆☆

Posts: 81

[Email](#) [PM](#)

99.62.233.159

[Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier](#)  
Reply #358 - 03/23/18 at 6:18am

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

I really doubt the benefits can only be heard in a treated room.

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**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

"Love without  
guts is  
worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

[Email](#) [PM](#)

184.56.37.219

[Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier](#)

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

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**akmike**

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2



verified member  
☆☆

— reply #359 - 03/23/18 at 11:10am

How would this amp work with Martin-Logan CLX's. I have been using a Sophia Baby with acceptable results.

Posts: 7

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208.87.239.180

**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #360 - 03/23/18 at 11:28am



Don't have any experience with these but looking at the specs and the fact that ML recommends 20 amps per channel minimum I'd say the Zen would not drive them to loud levels. . .

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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184.56.37.219

**Archie**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #361 - 03/23/18 at 12:37pm



Quote:

So the benefits of the 25th anniversary design will only be experienced in a properly treated dedicated listening room? Wife and 2 year old over here make that a no-go.....

Posts: 926

I was wondering the same thing -- at least as far as a serious upgrade to other Decware amps. In the "EGG" thread Steve seemed to indicate the same thing with respect to a treated room. I don't doubt that the 25th anniversary amp will be special but I try to read between the lines and keep some perspective. Steve's enthusiasm can outrun my aural discrimination and my listening environment. 😊

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71.211.134.14

**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #362 - 03/23/18 at 1:02pm



Agree. . . but. . . we have Joe and Randy and Eric who have reported hearing them with great reports and Joe was "SHOCKED." I'm expecting great sound.

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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184.56.37.219

**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
☆☆☆☆

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #363 - 03/23/18 at 7:05pm



In my world the sound of amplifiers are judged on two things: How they sound and how they image.

The later is largely overlooked by most audiophiles because they do not have the luxury of pulling their speakers out away from the walls and creating a room where the stereo is the focus of the room ~ not an accessory in the room.

I blame this two things: Overtaxation and ignorance. The first is self explanatory, the second simply comes from not realizing what is truly possible with respect to imaging and sound stage. You have to experience it first to really know.

I do not consider great left to right placement imaging. A TV set can do that. Imaging is the perception of sounds in a 3D space defined by it's width, height and depth.

Now even against a wall a pair of speakers on a good amp will have a certain degree of imaging, but it's really no different than video in so much as it's mostly 2D.

I have made certainly one of the world's very best 3D amplifiers and most people will experience it in 2D. For this reason some of magic of this amp will never be appreciated or experienced which led me to conclude that because of the price increase over a SE84UFO2 it may not make a lot of sense for those who can't match it with appropriate speakers or a room where you can pull the speakers out away from the wall by several feet.

We have a solution for those of you who are bumming because your room doesn't "qualify". It's called the Betsy Baffle and it can be pulled out and placed well into ANY room because they are small and light weight with handles. THEY will create the sound stage and 3D experience I am talking about but sadly those who have never experienced them find it too big a leap of faith to try them, which is why they didn't bother to watch the video on that page. I would however recommend Randy's new baffles with the dual drivers or have him set you up with a passive subwoofers that the Zen can also drive.

<http://www.decware.com/newsite/Caintuck.html>

Steve



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

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50.80.57.123

**Archie**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #364 - 03/23/18 at 7:24pm



Quote:

Overtaxation

Posts: 926

Huh? 🤔

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71.211.134.14

**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #365 - 03/23/18 at 8:02pm



Overtaxation - if we all had more money we'd probably have more options in the way of a listening room or at least bigger rooms!



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

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50.80.57.123

**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #366 - 03/23/18 at 10:25pm



By my last posts you can see I'm applying some pressure to optimize the room and speakers because I can promise you the amp deserves it and anyone who overcomes that obstacle will be greatly rewarded by experiencing the exact sound I described in my posts and find out those posts were not only enthusiastic but completely factual.

Hopefully this will nudge those who can. For those who can't I am completely at peace with it if you want to purchase the amp because while imaging ability can distinguish the best from a group of great amplifiers, the actual sound of the amplifier is at least four times more important. In this particular amplifier I suspect what separates it from the pack will be clearly heard in almost any space IF it's fed with a good recording from a good source component and interconnect cable.

Steve

Posts: 3304

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50.80.57.123

**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #367 - 03/24/18 at 8:42am



Steve: overtaxation, ignorance and a third thing: family/spousal concerns. I have had a rooms where the stereo was the focus, and then I got married. . . this happened to me twice. Sure, I guess if I could make more money or keep all my money and not pay taxes I could have a dedicated listening room again but to be honest music is a part of my life and not a separate thing--I love music in my living area and to live with music, a separate room was never quite right for me.

I know I'm not alone in being challenged this way. I do get some 3D effects from these amps . . . I know that I could get more with a better setup but I'm not likely ever to have a better set up and the SOUND of these amps and what imaging I get are so spectacular that I have to experience this new "version" . . . and I will.

I think we should get together a little fund to help Juan/busterfree get a pair of the 25th Anniversary Monoblocks as he has one of the last pair PRE the Anniversary option. He could then make a DIRECT comparison between the two. Steve can and he could. . . .

I don't personally think a treated dedicated room is a prerequisite to enjoy the wonderful nature of this 25th Anniversary series. I'll find out soon.

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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184.56.37.219

**Archie**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #368 - 03/24/18 at 12:01pm



Over taxation ... well yeah, I didn't think you were stating such an obvious! But living in the world as I find it, including my living room, I'm down with everything Lon said in his last post. However, should I scratch my itch for a Zen amp, I'd definitely get the anniversary model. The future is never known and a dedicated listening space is always a possibility. In the meantime, sound is King!

Posts: 926

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71.211.134.14

**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #369 - 03/24/18 at 12:43pm



I am currently waiting for another round of binding posts to show up so I can make a final choice and I am waiting for another gold plating set up to arrive so I can make sure all the gold matches.





If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

Will be doing the anniversary mod on four more SE84UFO3's next week so hopefully after that we can complete the build on the new Anniversary amp!



Today for my first official weekend of Spring I am enjoying a snow blizzard which has forced me to stay inside and listen to the amplifier all day. I know I've mentioned it in the past, but the sound I'm getting right now is 98% as good as what I get around midnight! It is so wonderful to be able to get this sound during the day. It teaches me two things. First that my theory that part of the problem was radiation from the sun and the other part is dirty power was wrong. Second, that the Zen's new power supply is getting superior results compared to a stock Zen plugged into a 5K power regenerator.

As solely the result of this amplifier, my *serious* listening time will at least double and no longer at the expense of sleep. This drops the price of the ownership in half since I'll be listening to it twice as much. (Cost of Amp divided by hours used).

Steve

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50.80.57.123

**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #370 - 03/24/18 at 12:48pm



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

While there was never any question that dirty power effects sound quality, I always thought that surely part of the magic must also be having the entire planet between you and the sun. What I'm hearing now would suggest the sun's radiation has little or nothing to do with it.

Sun = Nature. Dirty Power = Man. Should have seen that one coming!

Steve

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50.80.57.123

**Archie**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #371 - 03/24/18 at 12:56pm



Posts: 926

**Quote:**

This drops the price of the ownership in half since I'll be listening to it twice as much. (Cost of Amp divided by hours used).

Remember to add back in the cost of the extra electricity and tubes to run the amp twice as long! Also the loss of income! 😊

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71.211.134.14

**Dave1210**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #372 - 03/24/18 at 1:26pm



I'm curious how the 25th plays with the ERRx's, which could help some if the room is < ideal.

I have a nice synergy with the SuperZen and ERRx speakers that I stumbled upon recently (older Oppo source w/Decware & Audience cables). I'm actually afraid to change anything it sounds so good...

Posts: 951

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74.83.81.140

**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #373 - 03/24/18 at 1:30pm



Dave, if the SuperZen and the ERRx are coupling well, I can imagine the SE84UFO2-25 would be as good a fit. . . . Don't see why they wouldn't be dissimilar in power output/speaker driving.

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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184.56.37.219

**Dave1210**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #374 - 03/24/18 at 2:58pm



Lon...the surprising thing, assuming my ears aren't deceiving me, is that the upside potential seems large. For example, I have beautiful sound right now, in the middle of the day, using the stock power cord to the amp, and no PSA power regeneration.

Posts: 951

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74.83.81.140

**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #375 - 03/24/18 at 3:35pm



Cool. There are so many ways to skin an audio system. And so much is subjective. Enjoy.

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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184.56.37.219

**busterfree**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #376 - 03/24/18 at 6:31pm



**Quote:**

I think we should get together a little fund to help Juan/busterfree get a pair of the 25th Anniversary Monoblocks as he has one of the last pair PRE the Anniversary option. He could then make a DIRECT comparison between the two. Steve can and he could. . .

Posts: 289

My SE84UFO3 went back to their birthplace for an upgrade. I could not justify a second set of monos, but I thought about it. I only have one "music room". The TV system does not count and is well served by the CSP3 & SE84UFO2.

I got over my fears of shipping the amps back in part by using the original shipping materials. If the carrier played kickball with my boxes, at least they would arrive at a place to get right.

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184.59.81.144

**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #377 - 03/24/18 at 6:47pm



**Quote:**

Remember to add back in the cost of the extra electricity and tubes to run the amp twice as long! Also the loss of income! Grin

If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Should be easily offset by needing less pharmaceuticals : )

Steve

Posts: 3304

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50.80.57.123

**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #378 - 03/24/18 at 8:37pm



Great Juan! Now we know where two of the four amps Steve was talking about are going! I'm eager to hear comparisons, though probably not quite as eager as you are!

"Love without guts is worthless!"

Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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184.56.37.219

**Archie**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #379 - 03/25/18 at 12:30pm



Quote:

Should be easily offset by needing less pharmaceuticals : )

Posts: 926

Touche! 😊

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71.211.134.14

**lazb**  
Verified Member  
★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #380 - 03/25/18 at 1:02pm



Lately, I have been thinking that pharmaceuticals might be a necessity rather than an option while anticipating the arrival of new Decware pieces!!!! 8-)

Posts: 39

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162.237.14.147

**alper\_yilmaz**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #381 - 03/26/18 at 10:42am



I sure don't remember if I asked this already or if I even read a response, but is there the option of an upgrade of SE84UFO to the 25th Year Anniversary model, or is the upgrade possible only for the monoblocks? If the former, what would be the cost around?

Posts: 204

Thanks,

Alper

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199.52.13.133

**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #382 - 03/26/18 at 11:15am



Alper, so far it appears that Steve is working on production models and the pricing of a 25th Anniversary edition of the SE84UFO2. . .and has completed and priced the SE84UFO3 Monoblocks which can be ordered and built now. But so far there is no news of a 25th Anniversary **SE84UFO**.

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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184.56.37.219

**alper\_yilmaz**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #383 - 03/26/18 at 11:22am



Thanks Lon...

Posts: 204

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199.52.13.133

**jorgen**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #384 - 03/27/18 at 2:44am



Only the Monoblocks can be upgraded. The one-chassis Zen can't fit the upgrades. I have the Monoblocks but I'm on the fence about upgrading. As an additional cost I have to pay for shipping from Norway.

Posts: 209

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79.161.29.24

**Lonely Raven**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #385 - 03/27/18 at 12:05pm



So, I've been busy with work, life, health issues...fun stuff. But I never really got a chance to post about my visit to Decware a few weeks ago, and listening to the 25th Anniversary prototype.

Jack of all Trades,  
Master of None

First off, for those that don't know (long story short), I have an original Zen amp from 1998, I think I'm serial number 47 or something. I wasn't fully happy with it and brought it to Steve to "do whatever he wanted" since he knows me well enough what

I like. It seemed a serendipitous nudge, as my early Zen Amp reminded Steve of how things started, and he was able to meld 25 years of knowledge into my old amp and bring it up to date. After the sticker shock of the upgrade (I did tell him to do whatever) I settled down to listen to the amp and it is really something special. I'm currently listening on a pair of 91db "El Camino" speakers, and I also have a pair of MG-944 speakers that I haven't used for a few months.

So I stopped into Decware to return the Tape Tour kit since the VHS deck died, and I said to Steve...so...can I hear it?? (nodding towards the listening room and the 25th Anniversary prototype).



Now, my past few visits to check something out Steve was working on...well, I didn't like what I heard and I said something. Steve's always told me to trust my gut, and if I hear something that sounds off, say something.

So Steve warmed up the amp, and I sat down for a listen. It immediately sounded like my amp...like \*just\* like my amp, but I wasn't as drawn in as I am with my little Zen. I thought it was the music so I hopped on his computer and dialed up a couple tunes. Nope still the same. It was driving me nuts, it was so close, but not quite right. So I spent like 5 minutes rambling in circles trying to describe what I was hearing and explain to Steve in hopes he would figure it out. As I'm rambling he casually in his slow and thoughtful way starts walking around the shop, moving stuff around picking up tubes, putting them down again and nodding on occasion. Finally he finds what he's looking for, walks over to the prototype and swaps a regulator tube.





I resume my position on the comfy couch, cuddling with the cat, and the music starts. Then holy hell, it was like my amp, plus, plus, plus. It was so fast/sharp that it felt like I went from a half-step removed from the music to pressed right up against the squeaky clean glass. By comparison it was maybe too much, too fast, too....I kind of likened it to when you have a transistor amp that measures .000001% perfect in everything - it's amazing, but sharp to the point of being lifeless.

It was a weird experience - Steve explained it that when you change the regulator tube, it changes the voltage, and we went from dreamy soft/slow to max voltage hardness/speed. He seemed to like the really dreamy sound, but to me while it did make things comfey and smooth out rough edges, I felt it was not as engaging as my amp. Then the other end of the spectrum was like having the speaker wires connected directly to my brain...it was just a bit too much. We kind of laughed at this and decided a regulator tube in the middle of the two would probably be perfect for my listening style.

So now, not only can we voice the amp with the tubes, but with the regulator tube we can voice the \*speed\* of the amp! This is just flat out amazing to me, and not subtle mind you.

Now, this is completely my speculation/opinion after spending many, many hours with my modded pre-prototype Zen, then spending maybe an hour with the prototype Anniversary Zen (I hear in my head calling it Anni); I believe that 90% of the sound is the voicing Steve has done with the UFO transformers and speed adjustment by reworking the power supply, as well as the kick ass caps in the amp. I felt that the prototype has the same sound-DNA as mine, which pleases me greatly as I truly believe it's the pinnacle of this amps voicing. That last 10% is what the regulator tubes bring in cleaning the power and making the amp sound more DC battery like vs 120v hash. Add to that you can dial in the speed of the Anniversary amp and maybe it's an 80%/20% thing - but still, I didn't feel like my amp was lacking and I needed to sell everything to get the 25th Zen. To me, that means he's got it right!

Thinking a little more about this as I'm typing it all out - it reminds me of when I first got the PS Audio P-10 Power plant. When I put my Mystery Amp on it, I was like...meh, maybe I hear a 2-3% improvement...maybe. But then I put my little Zen amp on it and I'm like damn! That's quite an improvement! So maybe my P-10 is helping me bridge the gap between mine and the 25th and the regulator tubes. But you all don't have to spend an \*Extra\* \$5500 and get even more filtering and versatility baked into the amp!!

So yeah, I'm very pleased with what I heard. It sounds like my amp and then some. If you are considering purchasing the 25th and it fits what you need - I wholeheartedly say go for it, you will be very pleased.

~Eric~  
AKA  
The Lonely Raven

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12.16.221.4

**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #386 - 03/27/18 at 12:28pm



Thanks for the report Eric. Don't you find that changing the rectifier tube in your revamped amp accomplishes the same thing? In my Taboo Mk IV (UFO transformers) I accomplish very similar "presentations" just rolling the rectifier. I'm probably more like Steve, into the dreamy sound, and am looking forward to hearing my 25th Anniversary SE84UFO3s that have been built. I'm being patient and getting ready. . . .

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184.56.37.219

**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★



**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #387 - 03/27/18 at 11:12pm



Another update in this ongoing diary of the Zen Triode amplifier..

I just finished the anniversary mod on a set of SE84UFO3 amplifiers and am listening to them as I write this. All I can say is that



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

tonight's realization is that the shock of what you hear is never going to wear off. It's the first time you've heard the amp each time you listen to it. It's a clunky way of saying that you will never get used to it. Spoiled by it...yes... used to it no.

With this being *I think* the 3rd set of these I've done and spent time with I have to say I'm getting inspired. Maybe someday we can have a pair of 25th anniversary monos in a designed from scratch chassis like the SE84UFO25.

Waiting for damn parts is maddening. Especially when they are a week late and then you find out the order was stalled out in cyberspace. It's probably another signal. The mass sampling of binding posts I'm accumulating just aren't bringing anything to the table that is making me want to change from what we've always used with the exception of the gold plating. The nice thing about doing your own plating is that you can make the plating so thick that it would well surpass anything that is being mass produced. The difference in a dipping time of 30 seconds and 33 seconds over the cost of a run to a large company is hugely significant. Getting equipment that can regulate the time tightly is essential for production. In my shop, I can dip the damn part for 5 minutes if I feel like it. This way I can use 24K gold instead of alloys.

Trying to type this post while the amps are playing is just about as difficult as standing upright in a hurricane. The depth is intoxicating. I keep getting sucked to the sweet spot. BTW, I am using a pair of 6N5P input tubes to test these mono's which I frequently do. Fact is, I think unless you go NOS 7DJ8, a good testing 6N5P is going to be hard to beat. It sounds like a 6N1P with twice the resolution. ZERO edge or dryness or strain. Neutral texture. Dimensionality is probably better. It's a great tube.

Tomorrow I will be taking Lon's freshly built SE84UFO3's and doing the same mod on them as was done on these I'm listening to tonight. On those I have to figure out a way to install a treble control without choking the chicken... I've never put a treble control on one of our SET amplifiers before, only the pentode designs, so it will be an interesting journey through the hyper-belt while trying not to get smashed by a meteor. Don't worry I'm a skilled pilot but the ship may need paint work before we get to goal.

The music from these amplifiers is so compelling. I'm pretty sure that if you want to reproduce it exactly, the main ingredients are going to be A) a good DAC with balanced XLR outputs. B) a ZBIT balanced XLR to RCA transformer to go between the amplifier and DAC. This will insure the imaging and the animation which is so essential. C) a pair of 94dB or higher speakers that have a full sounding bass which is to say no active subwoofers. Passive subs are welcome because they are driven by the same amplifier.

That brings me to a point about this amplifier. There is nothing the amp would like better than to drive a pair of 15 or 18 inch low frequency drivers in parallel with a nice set of full range crossoverless speakers that don't have an abundance of base on their own. You would think .... OHHH GOD, the amp will die trying to drive a pair or even four 18 inch subs at the same time as the main speakers... it will be a disaster. The reality is that because the 4 18 inch drivers cover the bottom octave from 20 Hz to 40 Hz that the full range speaker does not, the music (energy) has a place to go, and it does. Without those 18 inch base drivers that energy reflects back to the amplifier because it had now where to manifest. This blocks power.

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50.80.57.123

**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #388 - 03/28/18 at 7:14am



Thanks for more information and impressions Steve. Hope my request for a Treble Cut Circuit doesn't create too much of a hassle for you! I love that Circuit and know it will be very useful for me. The only thing that my Taboo Mk IV lacks is this circuit, I am enjoying it without it but if it had it I would have another layer of "tailoring" to explore.

Due to your mention (and others' mentions) of the 6N5P tubes I bought 8 of them and for the first time today I have replaced the 6 6N1P in the ZTPRE with 6 6N5P. So far they sound quite nice, a lot like the Phillips ECC189 I used for a while but with a bit more lower punch. Which is a compliment! I think I'll enjoy these. (I'm using a GE 6DJ8 very successfully in the Taboo, one of these that has a black coating inside the glass).

Edit to add: I replaced the RCA coke bottle type Type 80 rectifier with the Arcturus (Sylvania?) Type 80 rectifier and wow more low-end heft. . . Nice!

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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184.56.37.219

**Lonely Raven**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Jack of all Trades,  
Master of None

Posts: 3100

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #389 - 03/28/18 at 9:04am



Funny you mentioned the Arcturus, Lon. As I was going through my photos of my Decware visit (above), I remembered Steve mentioned the Type 80 tube, and scanned eBay to see what was available, and ordered an Arcturus last night...along with the appropriate adapter of course.

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50.203.193.140

**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #390 - 03/28/18 at 9:26am



Very cool Eric! I find the Type 80 a very nice fit for these amps, but then again I always liked the 5Y3 type that it became in these amps. The Arcturus has a nice warm signature and interesting "texture."

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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184.56.37.219

**Lonely Raven**

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**





Seasoned Member



Jack of all Trades,  
Master of None

Posts: 3100

Reply #391 - 03/28/18 at 10:36am

Modify Split Delete

I don't really hear big differences in rectifier tubes on my Zen amp. But then I haven't really played the tube swap game on the little Zen since getting the upgrade - it's just been so tasty since Steve worked on it that I don't want to muck with it!

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Email PM WWW MSN

50.203.193.140

Lon

Seasoned Member



"Love without  
guts is  
worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier  
Reply #392 - 03/28/18 at 11:18am

Modify Split Delete

Interesting as I hear distinct differences rolling rectifiers in all my Decware components.

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Email PM

184.56.37.219

Tripwr1964

Seasoned Member



Posts: 372

Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier  
Reply #393 - 03/28/18 at 3:01pm

Modify Split Delete

lon, ditto. usually the first tube i roll on my decware gear.

CSP3, CAD 120s MKII, UFO2, Sota Star Sapphire, SME309, Hana SL, JC3+, Schiit bifrost multibit, CXC, MG1.6QR w/ ext xo & mye stands/betsys/Augies/Alpha15. herbies iso, VH audio flavor diy pwr cords, Beden 8402 IC,

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Email PM

50.80.80.106

jorgen

Seasoned Member



Posts: 209

Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier  
Reply #394 - 03/29/18 at 6:07am

Modify Split Delete

So many opportunities, and so many questions... Steve's last has a comment on adding a 15 or 18" base drivers connected in parallel to main speakers. Does this mean still no crossover? What would the result be if these were OB? My mains are HO Omega Alnico drivers. Now maybe down to the 40-45hz area, since close to no help from back wall, placement 120 cm out in the room. Is this a better solution than connecting active subs from the pass through out on the amp? And the third option would be passive subs in a closed box (or maybe even vented box) but the size of an box would maybe be deakiller in my living room.

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Email PM

79.161.29.24

TheTakeOut

Verified Member



Posts: 7

Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier  
Reply #395 - 03/29/18 at 9:39am

Modify Split Delete

Help!

Noob follow up question to Steve's recent post. I have been a bit nervous about buying a low powered amp because I was a bit worried about a lack of bass when I am listening to 70's rock etc. Steve's post seemed to address this. Passive subs. I have never set up a sub in a two channel system before. How do you wire in the subs? I was assuming these amps had two binding posts for the speakers. Is there a way to wire a sub and a speaker to each binding post? Please throw a noob a bone on this one. It may help push me over the hump t actually dive in a get my first decware SET!

Love the forum. Thanks all!

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Email PM

129.107.80.102

Tripwr1964

Seasoned Member



Posts: 372

Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier  
Reply #396 - 03/29/18 at 11:12am

Modify Split Delete

here is one way to do it (pics of dougs setup at bottom)... full range wired in series.. no problem driving them with a 2 watt.

<http://www.decware.com/cgi-bin/yabb22/YaBB.pl?num=1484158418>

i was there... it works very well!

CSP3, CAD 120s MKII, UFO2, Sota Star Sapphire, SME309, Hana SL, JC3+, Schiit bifrost multibit, CXC, MG1.6QR w/ ext xo & mye stands/betsys/Augies/Alpha15. herbies iso, VH audio flavor diy pwr cords, Beden 8402 IC,

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Email PM

192.189.128.14

TheTakeOut

Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier  
Reply #397 - 03/29/18 at 11:00am

Modify Split Delete

verified member  
☆☆

Reply #397 - 03/29/18 at 1:00pm

Ok. Am I seeing it correctly. Two sets of binding posts on the decware speakers. One set of wires going from the sub to the decware speakers. Another set of wires going from the decware speakers to the amp?

Posts: 7

Am I seeing that correctly.

Thanks for the link!

Email PM

172.58.105.122

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**Lonely Raven**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier  
Reply #398 - 03/29/18 at 3:54pm

Modify Split Delete

Don't count on there being two sets of binding posts on anything. Plan on figuring out a way to connect two sets of speaker wires to whatever you have.

What Trips pictures illustrate, is simply that you can run the speaker wires from the amp to the speakers, then bounce off the speakers to your subs.

Don't overthink it - even using budget wire just to test it out and get your system dialed in...then figuring out a more "audiophile" solution if you really think you need it.

Jack of all Trades,  
Master of None

Posts: 3100

Email PM WWW MSN

12.235.113.146

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**Ellsworth**  
Senior Member  
☆☆☆☆

Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier  
Reply #399 - 03/29/18 at 8:35pm

Modify Split Delete

I have one active sub hooked up to my Zen amp. The speaker wires to my main speakers are connected with spades and run full range. The sub is connected to the same amp binding posts using banana plugs.

Posts: 52

Email PM

108.35.215.126

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
☆☆☆☆☆

Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier  
Reply #400 - 03/29/18 at 9:32pm

Modify Split Delete

As I finish up another pair of Anniversary Mods to the SE84UFO3's today I thought I would post a picture. Since this mod is not on the web site this would be the only place for information about it.

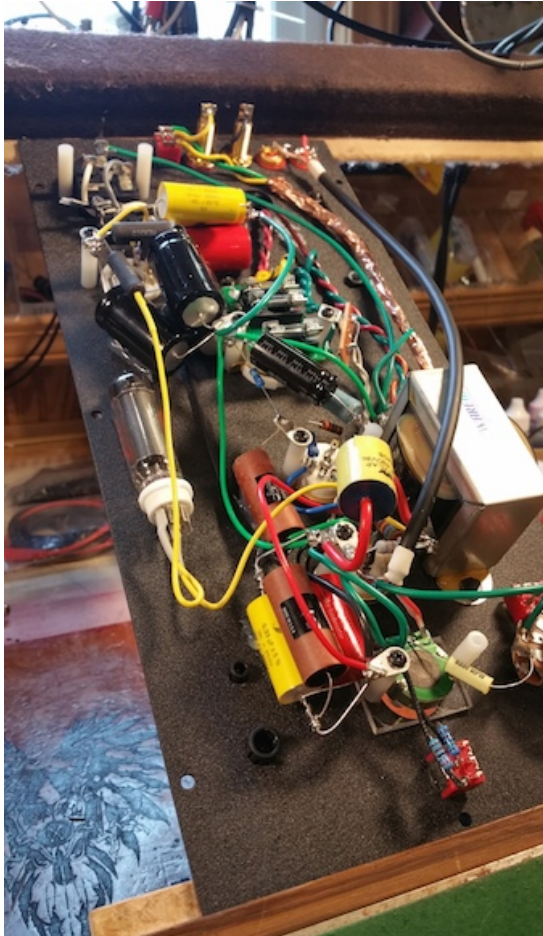
Externally there are no changes made to the amplifier. The mod is noted on the sticker otherwise the only way to tell is to look inside. Here is a picture of the inside after mods.

You may remember in my earlier posts I first thought I wouldn't need an extra regulator tube but later realized it needed it, so we designed the circuit around the OC2 and placed it on the inside of the amp. We can do this because it generates no heat and they don't wear out. The only way it would fail is if an input tube shorted in which case the OC2 would become a fuse saving the amplifier from any damage. We used a socket so that if it ever needs replaced there would be no soldering required.



If the 1st watt  
sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304



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50.80.57.123

**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
☆☆☆☆☆

Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier  
Reply #401 - 03/29/18 at 10:17pm



If the 1st watt  
sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

As suspected, the posts we currently use are the winners now that they have been re-plated with 24K Gold. Same with the IEC and fuse holder.





[Email](#) [www](#)

50.80.57.123

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #402 - 03/29/18 at 10:19pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

Here's a picture of volume knobs installed on the amp.



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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
☆☆☆☆☆



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

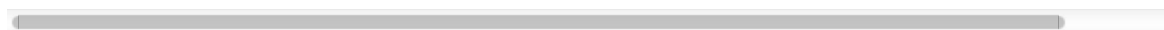


We will be offering this amp with or without volume controls. The beauty of this arrangement with the black base is that if you order the amp without volume controls it won't look like something is missing or has been left out because the black base remains.

Also for those who might be shocked that I would offer it without volume controls I have a simple way to do it without compromising your ability to "ride the gain" as many like to call it. That is when you turn the volume on the amp down a bit and the volume on the preamp up a bit to create more hit and overall density/weight in the music without playing it at a louder volume.

Anyway if someone wanted the amp without volume controls, they have a preamp so we will simply wire the amp with an input sensitivity that matches having the volume control set at 75%. This way you don't lose the advantage you would normally get from leaving the volume control in and adjusting it back from full.

Steve



[Email](#) [WWW](#)

50.80.57.123

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #403 - 03/29/18 at 10:19pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

see - i didn't know you could hook up more than one speaker to a post. thanks for the tip.

Posts: 7

[Email](#) [PM](#)

12.219.105.2

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #404 - 03/30/18 at 4:35am

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

Steve Deckert wrote on 03/29/18 at 9:32pm:

As I finish up another pair of Anniversary Mods to the SE84UFO3's today I thought I would post a picture.  
<http://www.decware.com/newsite/images/ufo3mod.jpg>

What a great set up Steve. And it will keep me from rolling the OC2! Which is probably a good thing! Thanks for sharing the photo, been eager to see one.

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

[Email](#) [PM](#)

184.56.37.219

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

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**TheTakeOut**  
Verified Member  
☆☆☆

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**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

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**Tripwr1964**

Seasoned Member  
★★★★★



Posts: 372

Reply #405 - 03/30/18 at 10:36am

thats looking yummy!

have we discussed target pricing and timing for this baby?

advance orders?

CSP3, CAD 120s MKII, UFO2, Sota Star Sapphire, SME309, Hana SL, JC3+, Schiit bifrost multibit, CXC, MG1.6QR w/ ext xo & mye stands/betsys/Augies/Alpha15. herbies iso, VH audio flavor diy pwr cords, Beden 8402 IC,

Email PM

50.80.80.106

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Lon  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

"Love without  
guts is  
worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier  
Reply #406 - 03/30/18 at 2:23pm

Modify Split Delete

In an earlier post Steve called this a "3K" amplifier. . . so I figure that's about the ballpark price.

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

Email PM

184.56.37.219

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Archie  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Posts: 926

Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier  
Reply #407 - 03/30/18 at 2:32pm

Modify Split Delete

When I mentioned it as a \$3500 amp, Steve didn't balk. Compare the inside and outside with the various Decware amps and you can make a good estimate. Parts and labor.

Email PM

71.211.134.14

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Jeff of Arabica  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★



Name the greatest of  
all inventors...  
Accident.

Posts: 535

Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier  
Reply #408 - 03/30/18 at 7:49pm

Modify Split Delete

Early on in the thread Steve alluded to the possibility of it costing as much as the Torii, i.e. \$3500.

ZMA//Zen Ultra//Rachel//ZDSD//Super Zen//Taboo MKIII//PS Audio DirectStream DAC + Memory Player + P10//Muse Phono Stage//London Decca Reference//Dynavector DV-507 MKII//Zen Head//Sonorus Reel-to-Reel w/ tube playback pre-amp//Omega SAHOs//DM946

Email PM

174.213.12.234

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Steve Deckert  
Administrator  
★★★★★



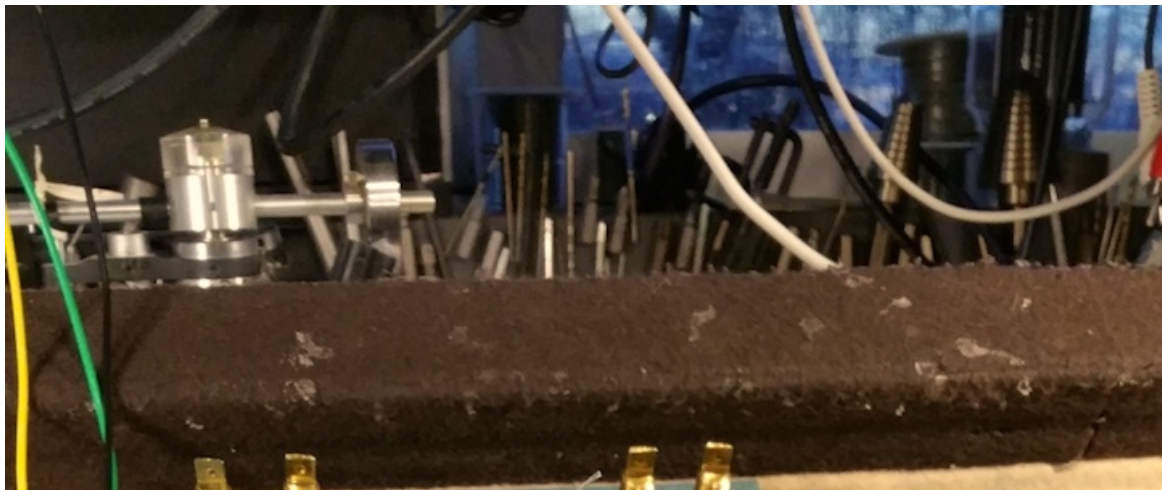
If the 1st watt  
sucks why continue?

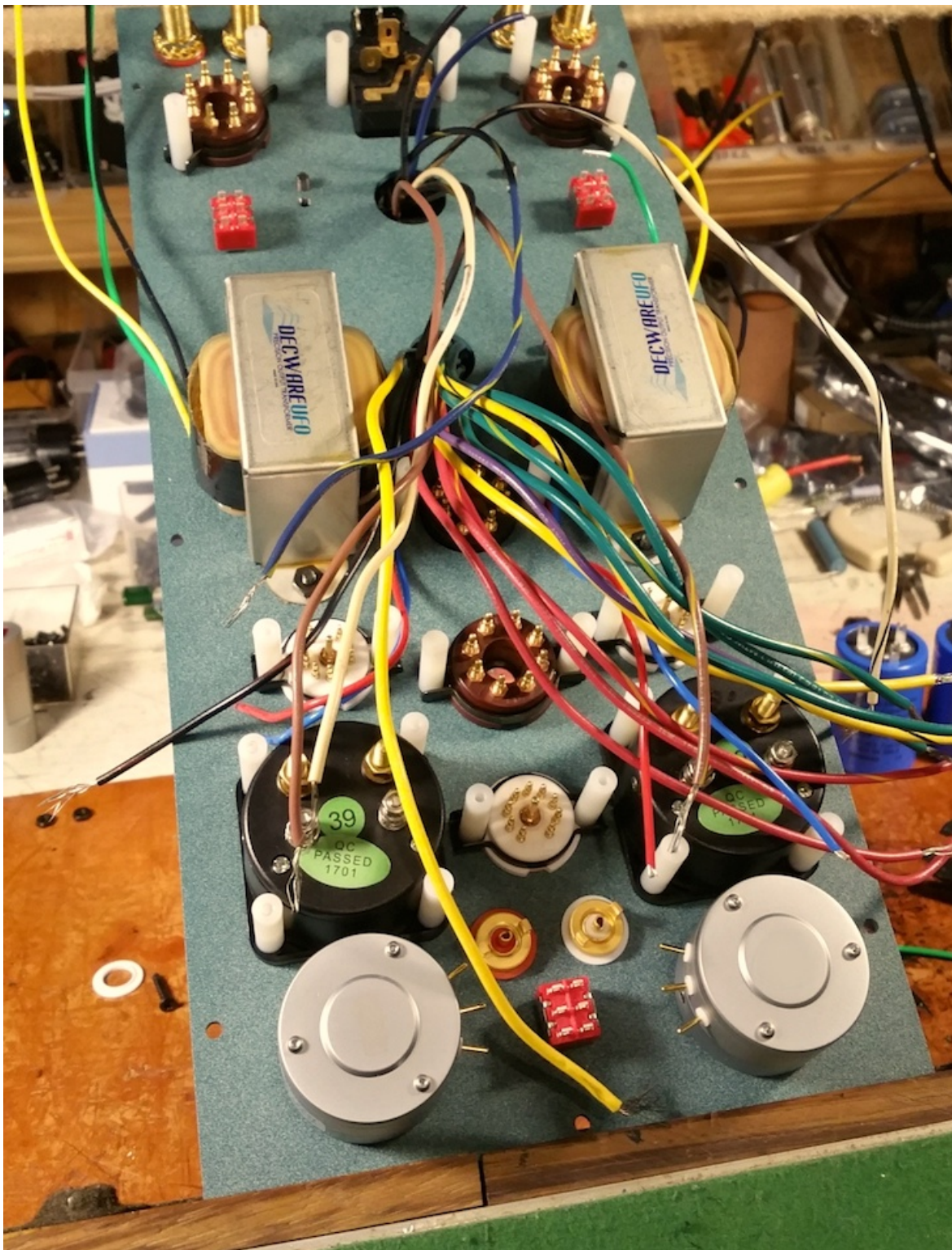
Posts: 3304

Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier  
Reply #409 - 03/31/18 at 10:14pm

Modify Split Delete

Here's a few build photos of the SE84UFO25 production sample. This is the amplifier that will be used to make copies. I guess you could say it's the master tape.





This is where it all starts!



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50.80.57.123

**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
☆☆☆☆☆

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #410 - 03/31/18 at 10:20pm

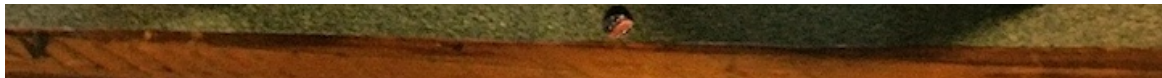


If the 1st watt  
sucks why continue?

The transformers are now wired as are the heaters which not only power the tubes but also the lights on the meters.







The trick is how to make lots of parts and wires look like less parts and wires... it's really a never ending challenge with any layout.



[Email](#) [www](#)

50.80.57.123

[Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier](#)  
Reply #411 - 03/31/18 at 10:29pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

Here is the completed audio section of the amplifier.

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
☆☆☆☆☆



If the 1st watt  
sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304





Next will come the grounds.



[Email](#) [WWW](#)

50.80.57.123

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #412 - 03/31/18 at 10:34pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

The grounds are being installed

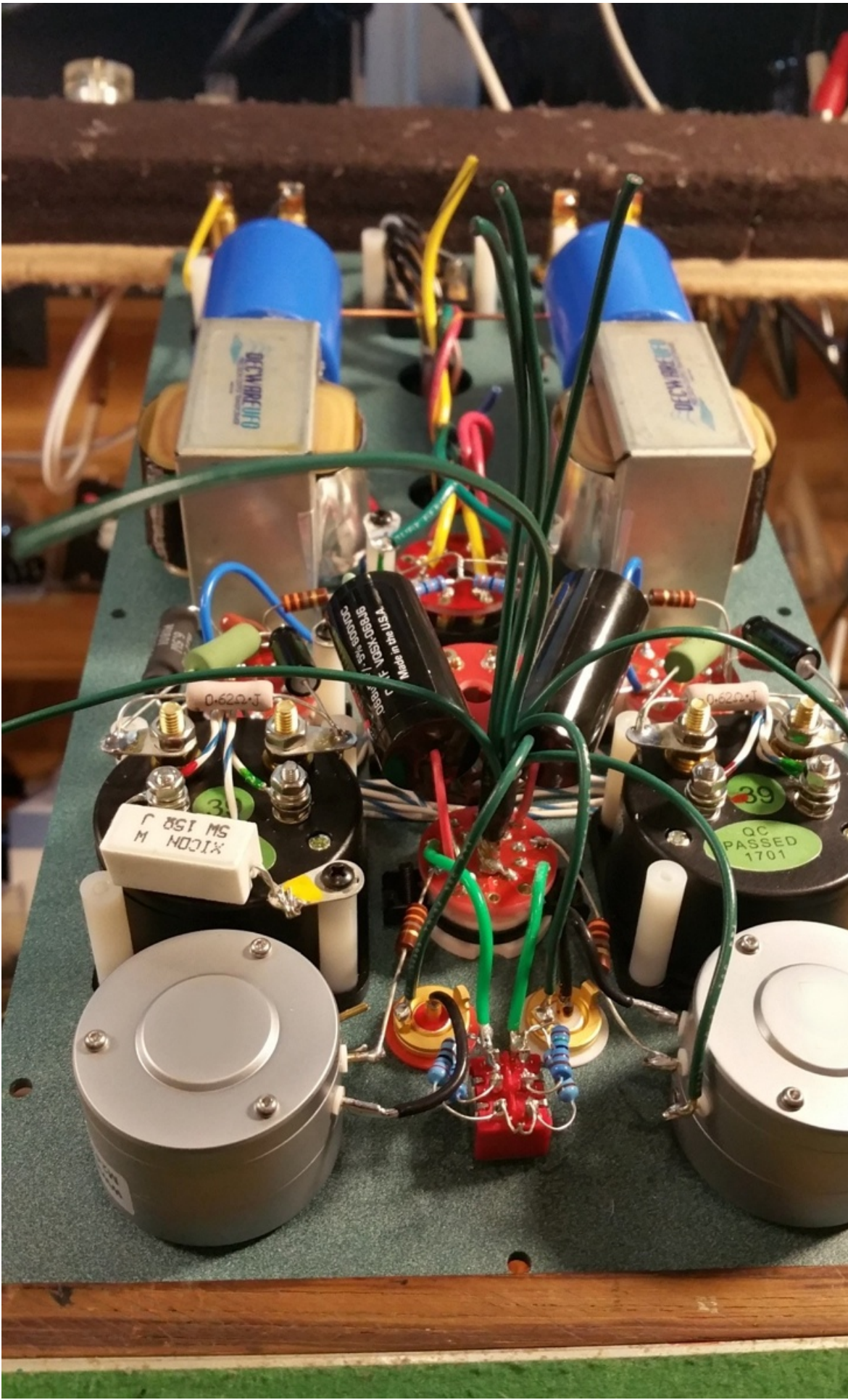
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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
☆☆☆☆☆



If the 1st watt  
sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304



Steve

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50.80.57.123

**Jeff of Arabica**

Seasoned Member



Name the greatest of all inventors... Accident.

Posts: 535

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #413 - 03/31/18 at 10:39pm



Wow Steve! A force to be reckoned with for sure. Such an array of top notch parts. Coupled with your design, this amplifier looks to be playing out every bit as awesome as we have been reading/imagining. Keep on keeping on!

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172.1.34.66

**Acetone**

Seasoned Member



4 years with my Decware and Loving it!!!

Posts: 587

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #414 - 04/01/18 at 10:51am



Steve, you must have the hands of a child to get into those tight spots and put it all together. It's awesome seeing it built in stages like this!

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172.248.144.108

**Archie**

Seasoned Member



Posts: 926

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #415 - 04/01/18 at 12:33pm



Does this get a pair of OC2s inside? Where will they fit?

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71.211.134.14

**Lon**

Seasoned Member



"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #416 - 04/01/18 at 1:00pm



I think the OC2s inside the chassis are only a feature of the 25th Anniversary SE84UFO3 Monoblocks.

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184.56.37.219

**Lon**

Seasoned Member



"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #417 - 04/01/18 at 1:03pm



I think the OC2s inside the chassis are only a feature of the 25th Anniversary SE84UFO3 Monoblocks. The Monoblocks seem to have an OA3 on the top and an OC2 inside. (But we have not yet really seen a top plate, I am guessing it resembles the SE84UFO3 "regular" version).

For the single amp SE84UFO2 version it seems all the tubes are on the top and it does not use an OC2. Seems the regulation tubes are two OA3 at the rear by the IEC inlet and an OD3 in front of the rectifier. To me that makes sense considering the amount of power tubes in each configuration.

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184.56.37.219

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

Just want to confirm Steve's comment about 6n5p tube instead of 6n1p. I've tried it in my se84ckc amp and I am very glad I did it. Even my wife realized that something went completely different (in a positive way) even without entering the listening room. The bass is definitely better and naturalness of the sound also. But the main positive outcome is absence of listening fatigue now. With 6n1p I was very tired after the listening - something forced me to switch the tracks very fast because it was difficult to listen for a long time. I thought that the problem is in my speakers (Omega Super 3 XRS HO) but now I understand that it is not true. I have tried the rare version of this tube (with black box anode) - this is an old design tube from fifties or sixties - more recent versions has very similar to 6n1p construction. There was a discussion in another threads about mislabeling but as far as I understood it is not mislabeling (i've searched the discussions on russian forums). Pictures show how it looks like. Definitely it worth a try - it is inexpensive upgrade.

IMG\_20180401\_103425\_resize.jpg



Email PM

93.74.199.119

Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier  
Reply #419 - 04/01/18 at 6:11pm

Modify Split Delete

Lon, I think you're right. I see the OD3 on top. I guess Steve is doing the monos without changing the top plate.

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Archie  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

Posts: 926

Email PM

71.211.134.14

Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier  
Reply #420 - 04/01/18 at 7:55pm

Modify Split Delete

Correct, the SE84UFO3 monos are being modified internally with the anniversary circuit as an option.

Depending on the success level of the SE84UFO25 soon to be released, we might design a new chassis for the SE84UFO3 to match the new SE84UFO25.

Steve

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Steve Deckert  
Administrator  
☆☆☆☆☆



If the 1st watt  
sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

Email WWW

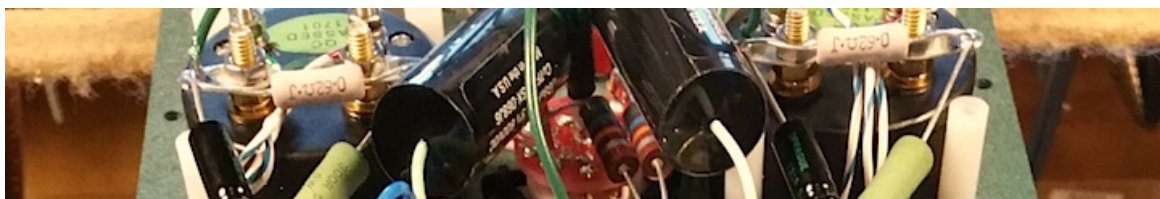
50.80.57.123

Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier  
Reply #421 - 04/01/18 at 8:20pm

Modify Split Delete

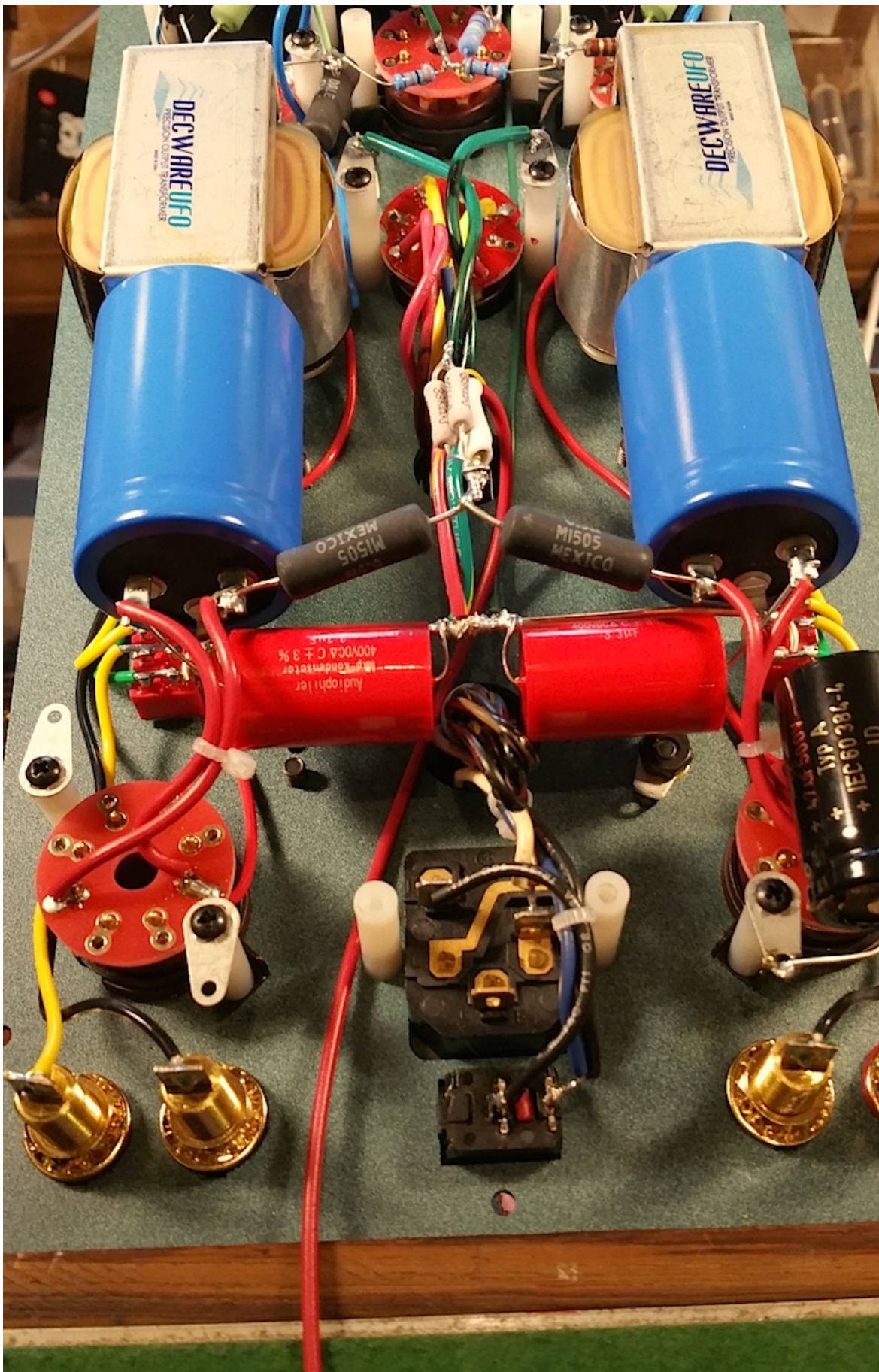
Happy Easter and may it be filled with music! Since it is also April 1st, it is most appropriate that it's snowing outside here at Decware, but no worries it makes for a nice relaxing evening of soldering!

Here are some more pictures of the SE84UFO25 being built.



If the 1st watt  
sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304



Working on the power supply filter and bypass caps tonight... basically the back end of the amplifier.

Steve

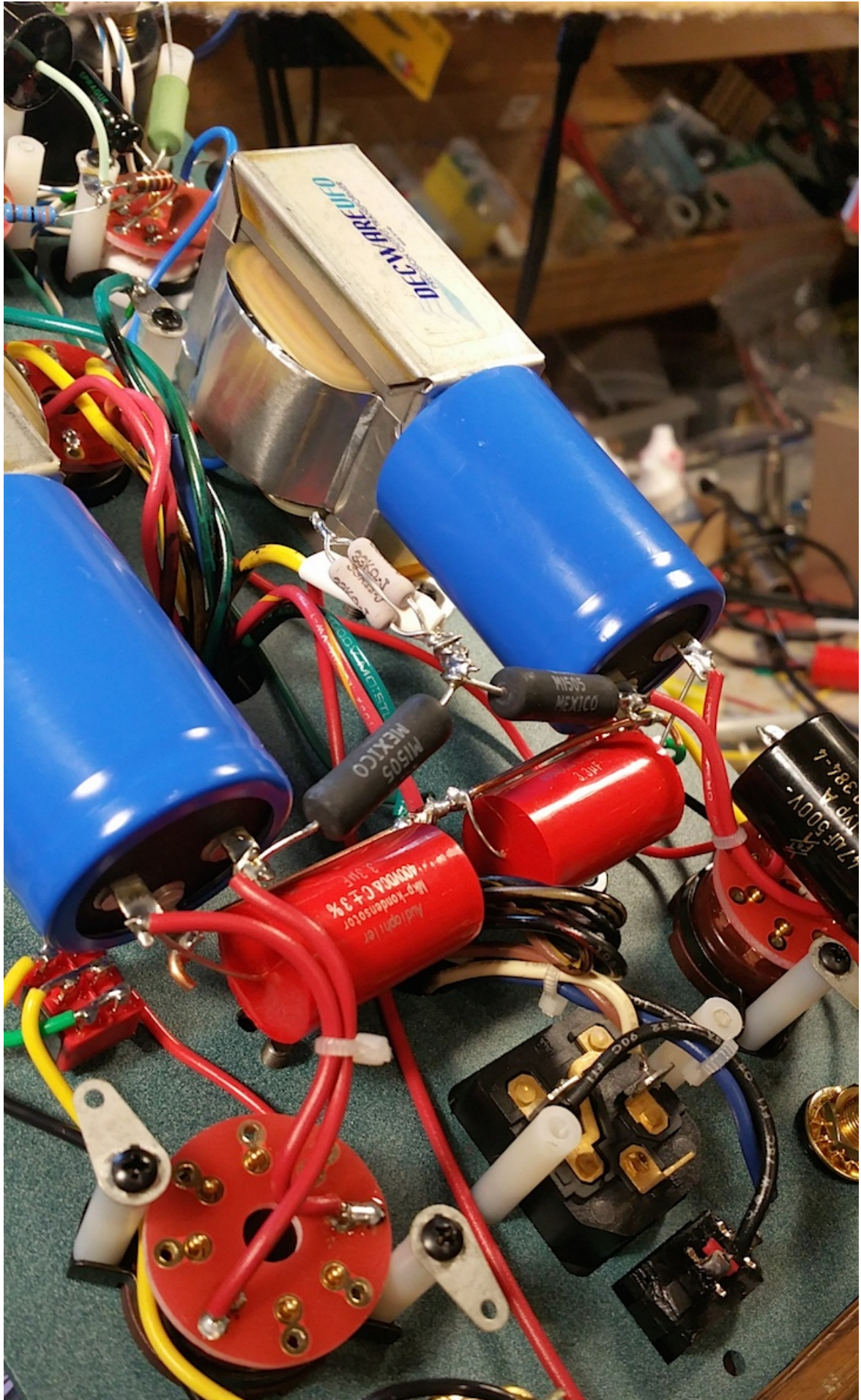


Same step, different angle...



If the 1st watt  
sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304





The blue caps are F&T 500 VDC from Germany. Each one is being fed from a 150 ohm 6W wire wound DALE/VISHAY resistor (the ones marked MEXICO).

The two 33K DALE 2 watt emanating from this same central node feed the OD3 serving the input stage. So the high voltage DC from the rectifier tube (yellow wire) is spilt three-ways at this node to feed each of the three audio tubes.



[Email](#) [WWW](#)

50.80.57.123

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #423 - 04/01/18 at 8:36pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

Some great photos Steve! I get what you did with the monos, and it makes sense!

~Eric~

[Email](#) [PM](#) [WWW](#) [MSN](#)

73.75.83.94

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #424 - 04/01/18 at 8:37pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

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**Lonely Raven**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★



Jack of all Trades,  
Master of None

Posts: 3100

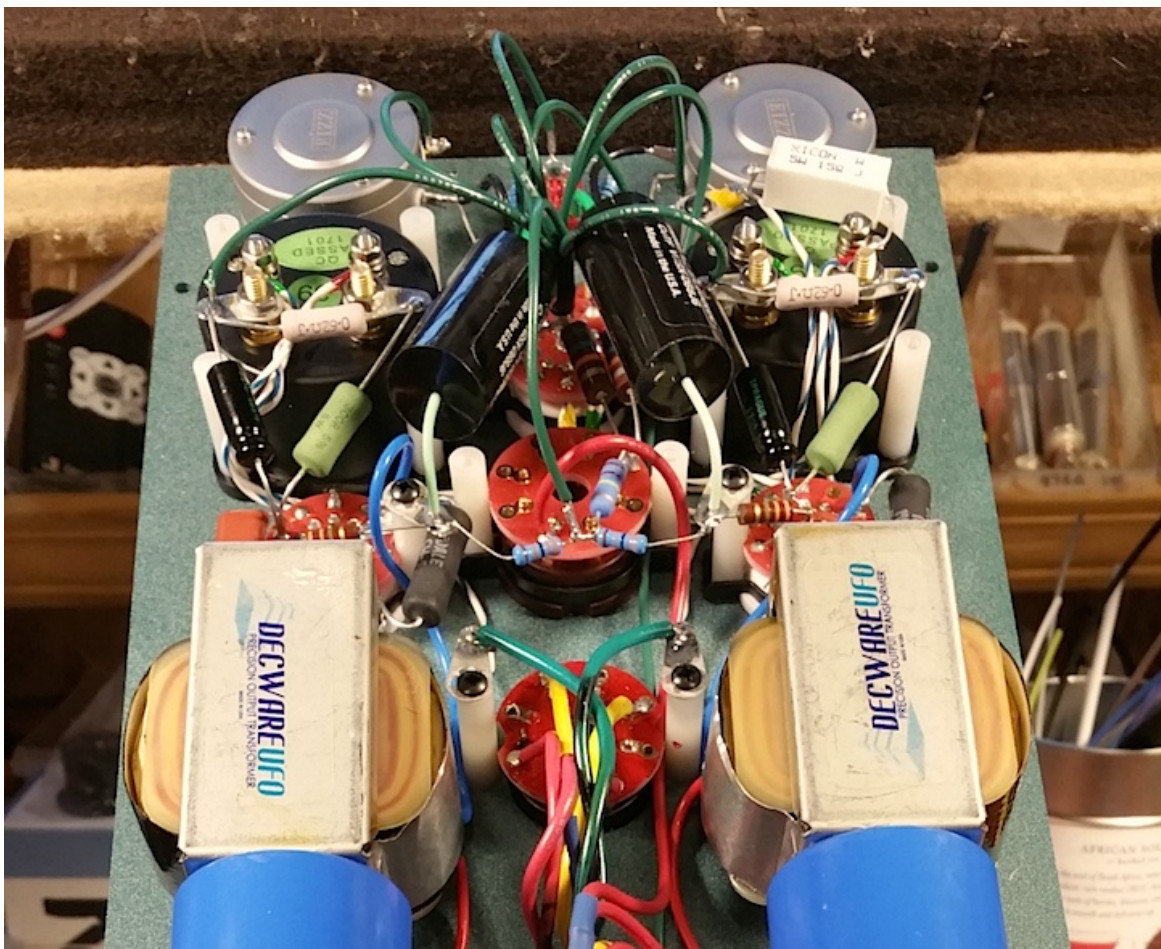
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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★

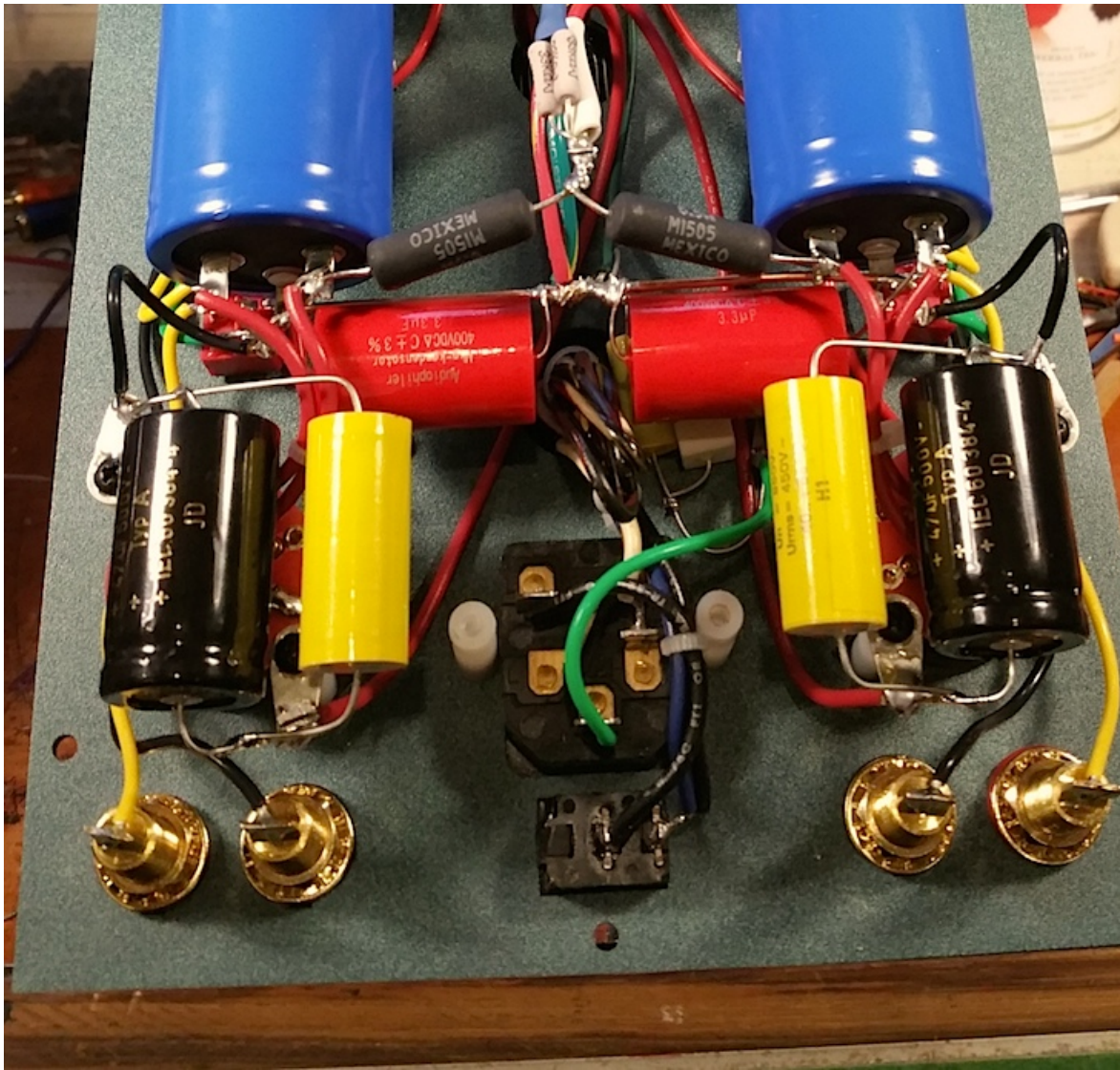


If the 1st watt  
sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304







Wouldn't it be great if we could just quit here? I mean we have 10 caps (the blue ones have two sections in each cap) already and the standard zen only has 2.



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50.80.57.123

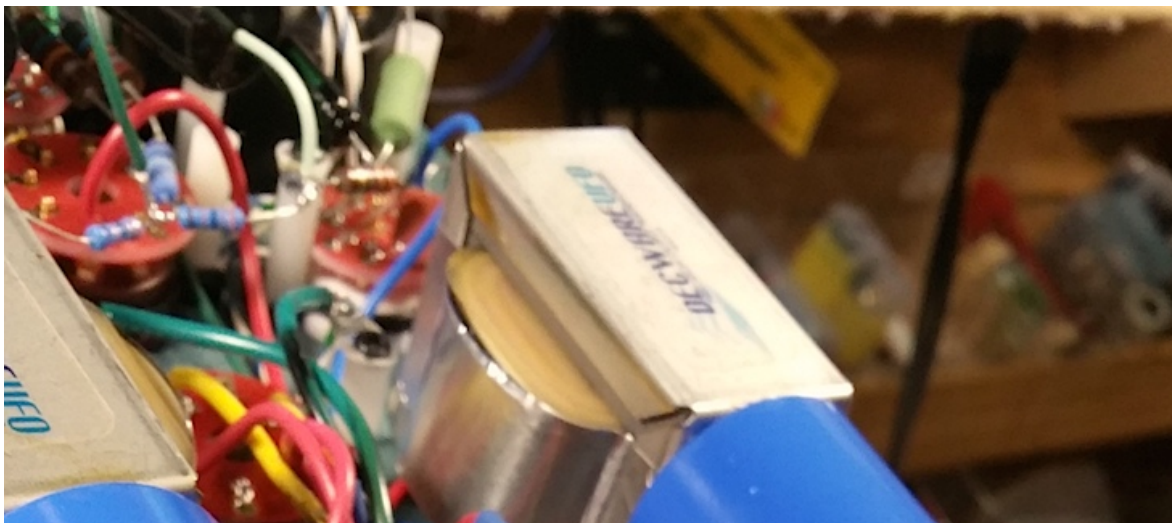
**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
☆☆☆☆☆

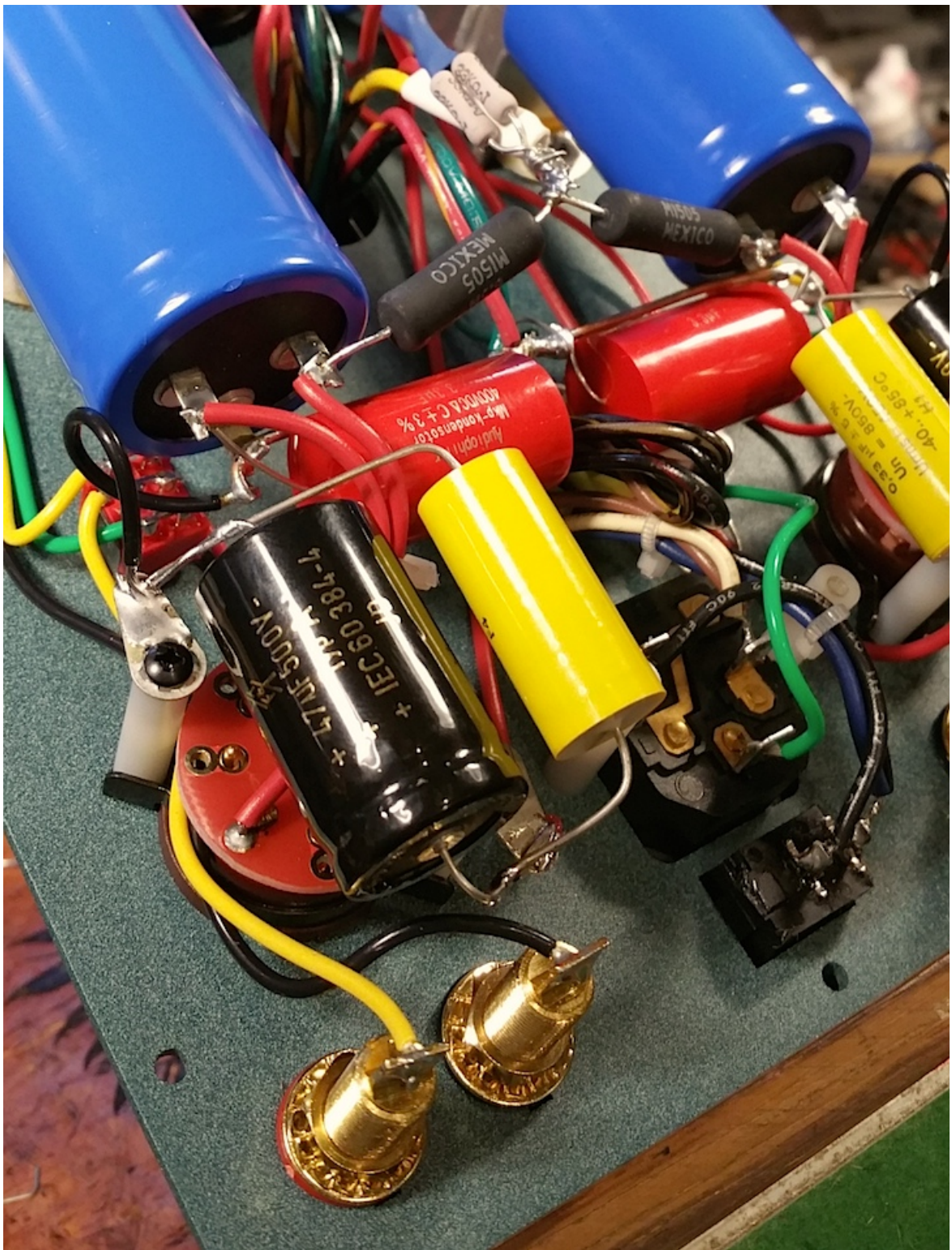
Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier  
Reply #425 - 04/01/18 at 8:40pm



If the 1st watt  
sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304





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Email [www](#)

50.80.57.123

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #426 - 04/01/18 at 8:58pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

"Love without  
guts is  
worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

Artem, the 6N5P is a really really nice tube. I've done a lot of tube rolling lately and what works best for my system is 6 of the 6N5P in the ZTPRE, and a 6N1P in the Taboo Mk IV. That is the tube complement that is making it sing for me right now. We'll see what happens with the Monoblocks coming soon! I plan on leaving the ZTPRE as is and rolling tubes later in the Monoblocks' input spot.

[Email](#) [PM](#)

184.56.37.219

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**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆☆

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #427 - 04/01/18 at 9:03pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

Steve Deckert wrote on 04/01/18 at 7:55pm:

Correct, the SE84UFO3 monos are being modified internally with the anniversary circuit as an option.

Steve

Thanks for clarifying/verifying that Steve. Makes me happy as I LOVE the looks of the SE84UFO3s, that simple elegantly assembled look is just what I want to see in my system!

[Email](#) [PM](#)

184.56.37.219

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
☆☆☆☆☆

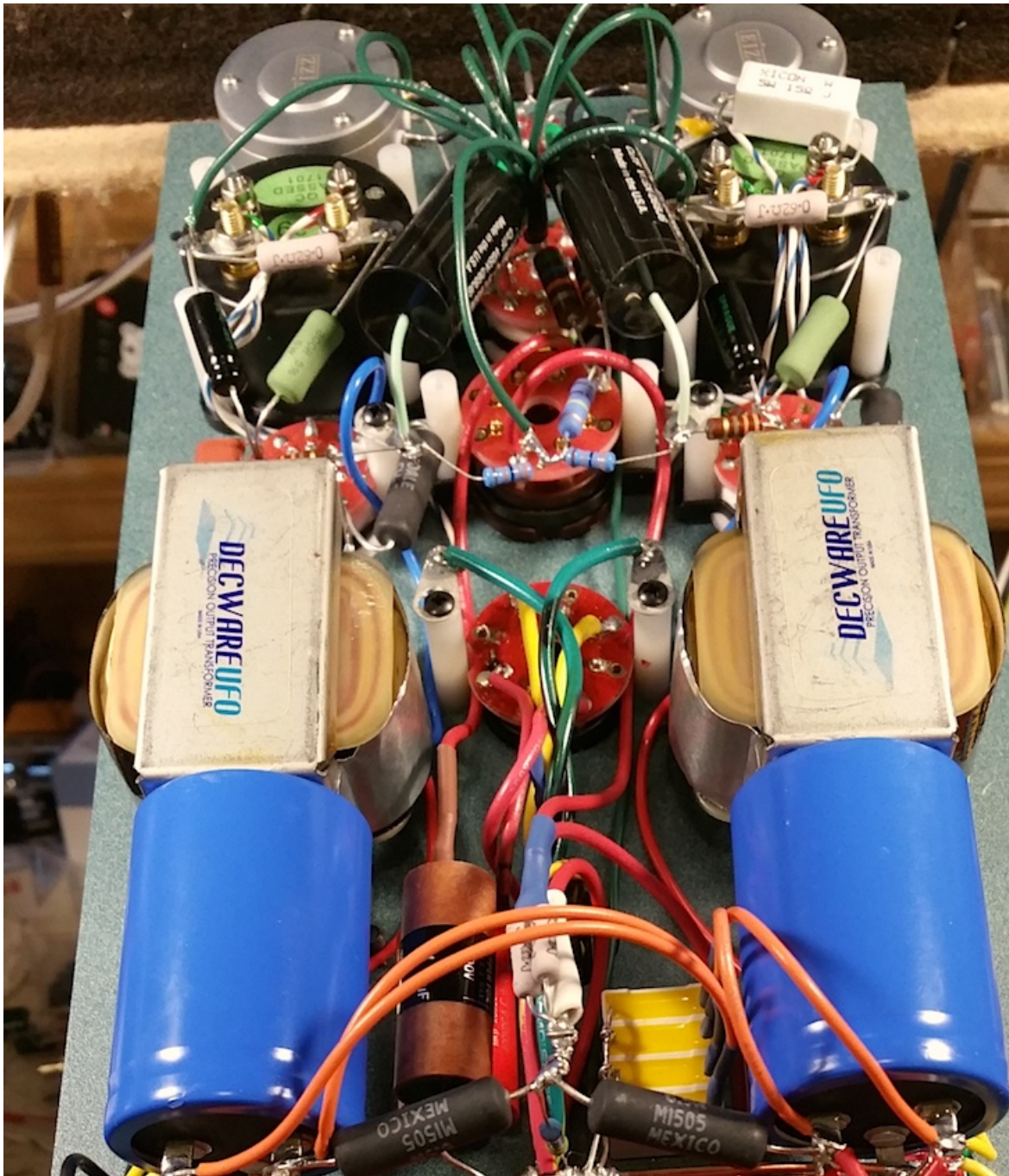
**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #428 - 04/01/18 at 9:08pm

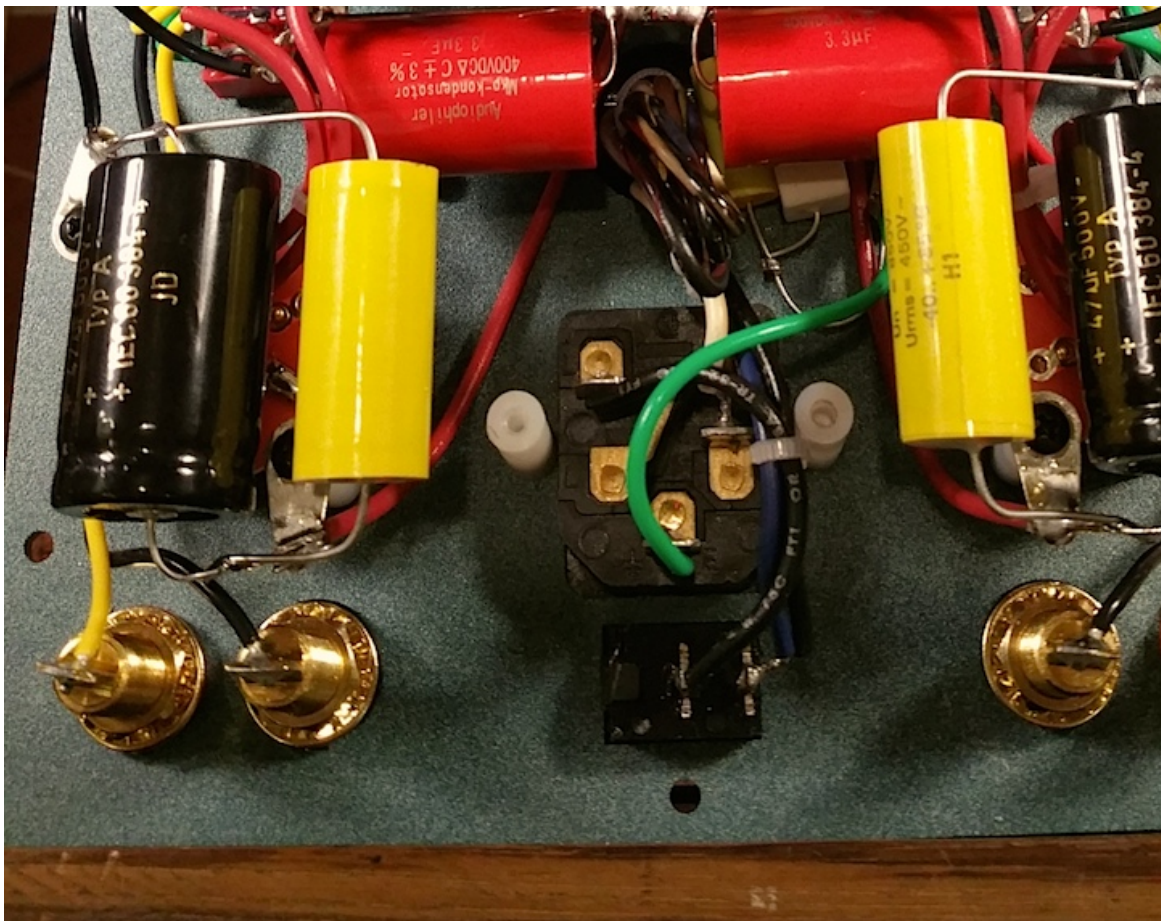
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If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304





This is the complete amp now at this point. (I think)

The rest of the bypass caps are installed. The orange wires lead to a group of polyurethane bypass-caps. The copper-foil beeswax cap and the 3.3uf film-cap under it are for the input tube's plate resistors.

Now here is an interesting paradox for you... the "signal path" consists of the input jack, the resistor connecting that jack to the control grid of the input tube and the capacitor connecting the plate of the input tube to the output tube's control grid.

A control grid is like a window shutter. When the shutter is open the electrons flow right through, just as light comes in your window. When the shutter is closed, no electrons. The electrons flowing through the shutter are actually those flowing between the cathode and plate of the tube. That means the electrons used to operate the shutter are not the electrons you "hear"... it is the electrons that flow from the cathode to the plate that you hear. Well the cathode is connected to ground through a low value resistor, and the plate is supplied by high voltage.

This means the high voltage that supplies the plate is actually the electrons you "hear". So what is more important, the coupling cap between stages, or the bypass caps in the high voltage supply? Which ones are you actually listening to?

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50.80.57.123

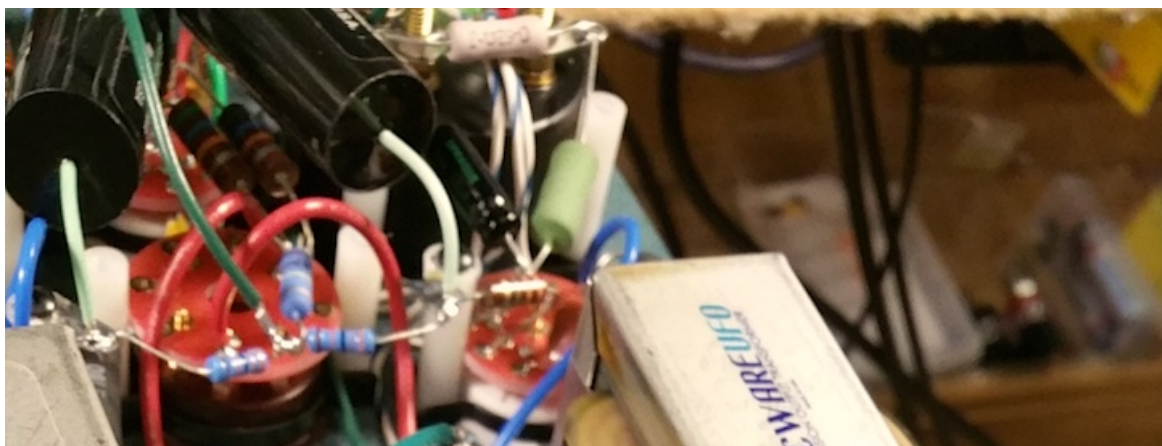
**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
☆☆☆☆☆

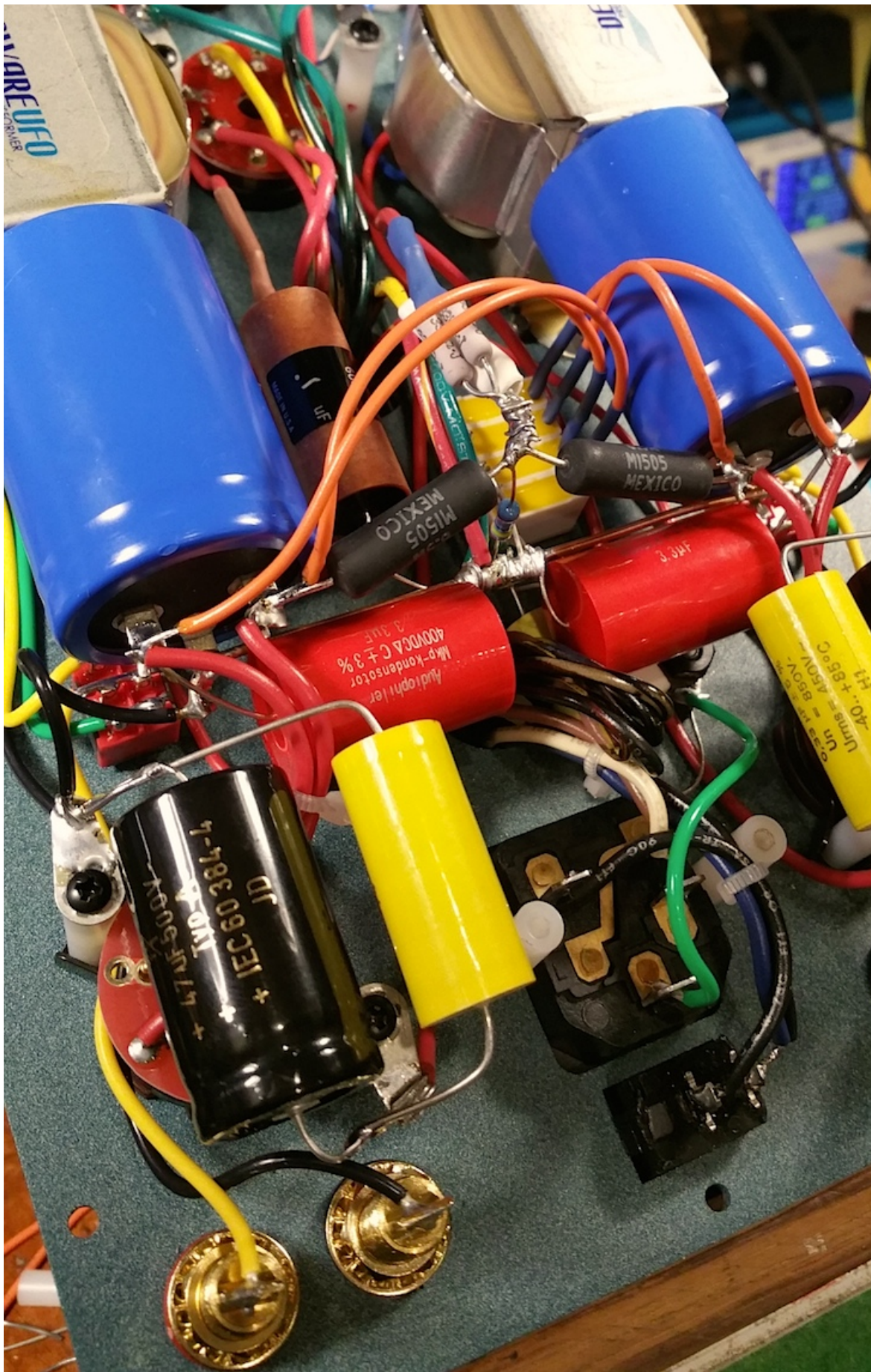
**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #429 - 04/01/18 at 9:28pm



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304





This is how Decware hand-builds amplifiers, and my advise is enjoy it while you can, because this two day project could have been completed in 1 hour had it been constructed on a circuit board.

I want you to ponder that for a minute... this was about a 14 hour surgery. So for the labor at \$72 an hour you just watched a thousand dollars go by. That could have been \$72 with a circuit board.

Just look at it. Do you think a circuit board could possibly sound like this ???

Happy listening!

Steve



[Email](#) [www](#)

50.80.57.123

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #430 - 04/02/18 at 9:50am

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

Steve, that's a thing of beauty! If not for the dust, I'd order one bottom side up! 😊

[Email](#) [PM](#)

71.211.134.14

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #431 - 04/02/18 at 12:23pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

I, for one, can scarcely wait to begin enjoying the listening!!  
I can feel the "HAPPY FACE" forming as I think about it!

[Email](#) [PM](#)

162.237.14.147

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #432 - 04/02/18 at 12:32pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

Absolutely Joe! When your stuff is built and arrives you're going to be bounding around the place thirty years younger! 😊

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

[Email](#) [PM](#)

184.56.37.219

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #433 - 04/02/18 at 12:57pm

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Hi Steve and all, I've been lurking for some time, and I've had a thought about what Steve is hearing from this new amp, particularly with regard to the sound of Randy's OB speakers, and I have a question: Is it possible that this new amp is acutally listening to the room and actively responding to the room's acoustic capacitance via the speakers themselves, which are, essentially, large microphones? A kind of synergistic, positive feedback. The OB speaker design would include more information, as both sides of the diaphragm are exposed to the room, thus seeing more clearly into the room without adding the filter of a resonant chamber. What do you think?

[Email](#) [PM](#)

98.19.52.153

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #434 - 04/02/18 at 10:38pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

This was and is a feature of the TORII MK4 and you're pretty spot on about what is happening. In the Zen Triodes however, there is no positive or negative feedback loops and the output transformer blocks the back EMF from the voice coil leaving the amp largely unaffected by the loudspeaker.

I think with amplifiers like this it's the musical honesty resulting from the layers of resolution that unlocks a higher dimension of listening, just as live music can.

BTW, Today I tested the amp and it actually worked. I'm listening to it now. It's good. We'll know more in about 600 hours when we A/B against the prototype.

While it's burning in over the next 30 days, I'll be working on hardwood base designs. Because the depth of the chassis is 1/8 inch none of the existing bases in the Decware line will work. We have to make a custom base for this amp, so we are exploring different woods and different profiles hoping to find something that looks so good everyone will like it. At this point I am pretty sure the amp will be offered with only one base design made from one exotic wood and anything other than that will be a custom order item and non-refundable.

Steve

[Email](#) [www](#)

50.80.57.123

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #435 - 04/02/18 at 10:44pm

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Posts: 194

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**Stefan**  
Verified Member  
☆☆☆

Posts: 37

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**Lonely Raven**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆☆

Jack of all Trades,  
Master of None

Posts: 3100

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**Tommy Freefall**  
Senior Member  
☆☆☆☆

Posts: 94

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**Stefan**  
Verified Member  
☆☆☆

Posts: 37

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**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆☆

"Love without  
guts is  
worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

**Quote:**

Posted by: Steve Deckert    Posted on: Yesterday at 01:55:56

Depending on the success level of the SE84UFO25 soon to be released, we might design a new chassis for the SE84UFO3 to match the new SE84UFO25.

I was considering the SE84UFO325 instead of the SE84UFO25 because of the black top. Feel like I need to jump on it now before they get the new color finish.

ANALOG: Thorens VN-150, 2M Black, ZP3, ZSTAGE  
DIGITAL: Apple TV, Moon 230HAD, ZROCK2  
AMP + SPEAKERS: SE84UFO, Dayton PS220-8, DeepOmega 8

104.193.168.168

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
**Reply #436** - 04/06/18 at 9:33am

This looks and sounds like a really special amp! I enjoy all the detailed work and love that goes into one of these.

I think it has been asked in this thread before, but haven't seen an answer to it, will it also work its magic with the ERRx or HR-1 speakers in a 200 sft room not playing disco level output, but reasonable loud? Or does that require the SE84UFO325?

- Stefan

Rega rp6, Lounge Audio phono pre-amp, Torii IV, ERRx, Woo WA-3, Senheiser HD800S

47.35.58.175

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
**Reply #437** - 04/06/18 at 11:05am

My listening/theater room is about 12' x 25' and opens into other rooms, so some sound is lost.

I'm currently running the pre-prototype 25th, and sort of a prototype El Camino speakers which are about 91db and M-T-M design with a basic crossover.

I can run the little Zen amp out of steam if it's an usually quiet recording, or if I'm maybe rocking out a bit too much while cooking dinner in the other room, or showing off for friends. But 90% of the time I get perfectly enjoyable listening levels.

You \*will\* run any flea watt amp out of steam at some point, it's just the nature of the beast and why I wish Steve could scale this design up to 15 watts. But for what I consider typical listening enjoyment, I find it does most everything I need. Hell, I have a ZMA and I haven't even plugged the damn thing in since before Xmas! I do feel that 91db is on the edge of acceptable though. I'd feel better with 3db more efficiency in the speakers...or, you could supplement the low end with a subwoofer and probably wouldn't feel the need to push the amp so much.

I admit, I have had some fun playing some electronic music with the 2 watt zen through the El Camino, and backing it up with an 18" home theater sub with 2000 watts coursing through it! LOL And yeah, you can balance it all out and make it sound great!

12.235.113.146

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
**Reply #438** - 04/06/18 at 1:11pm

I probably overlooked this in one of the many previous posts on this thread, but what are the two RCA-looking connections - right above the toggle switch - for?

Torii Jr., ERRx, ZBIT, Zenhead, Grado 325e

4.14.204.34

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
**Reply #439** - 04/06/18 at 3:37pm

Thanks for the infos Lonely Raven!

- Stefan

Rega rp6, Lounge Audio phono pre-amp, Torii IV, ERRx, Woo WA-3, Senheiser HD800S

204.16.142.227

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
**Reply #440** - 04/06/18 at 3:51pm

Pretty sure that is where you input the signal from your source!

[Email](#) [PM](#)

184.56.37.219

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**busterfree**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #441 - 04/06/18 at 4:02pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)



Posts: 289

**Quote:**

I probably overlooked this in one of the many previous posts on this thread, but what are the two RCA-looking connections - right above the toggle switch - for?

It is the only input for the amp.

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**beowulf**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #442 - 04/06/18 at 4:16pm

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Posts: 1350

[Email](#) [PM](#)

184.59.81.144

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**busterfree**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #443 - 04/06/18 at 4:34pm

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Posts: 289

[Email](#) [PM](#)

72.220.3.94

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**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #444 - 04/06/18 at 6:17pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

My guess is that since this amp is about ULTIMATE sound quality, he put the input there so that only parts leads would be used for the input to the input tube. . . as is an optimal way to have the ZP3 set up for instance.

[Email](#) [PM](#)

184.56.37.219

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**Jeff of Arabica**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #445 - 04/06/18 at 6:54pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)



Name the greatest of all inventors...  
Accident.

Posts: 535

I second Lon's reasoning. I believe it has everything to do with sound quality by minimizing the distance between the most vulnerable connection points.

[Email](#) [PM](#)

172.1.34.66

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## Crazy Bill the Eel Killer

Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Tubes Rule !!

Posts: 151

 **Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #446 - 04/07/18 at 5:05am

Hello Steve,  
What make pot is that in the SE84UFO25 ?  
Does the SE84UFO325 get the same pot ?

Thanks, Crazy Bill

 71.234.201.16

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## Crazy Bill the Eel Killer

Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Tubes Rule !!

Posts: 151

 **Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #447 - 04/07/18 at 3:53pm

Never mind Steve. I found it.

 71.234.201.16

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## Steve Deckert Administrator

★★★★★



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

 **Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #448 - 04/07/18 at 10:17pm

OK, Time for another update!

I'm actually listening to the new SE84UFO25 that I just built, now past the disturbing part of the VCAP burn-in with enough hours to already be indistinguishable from the red prototype!

Which leads me to my post:

Dammit! This hobby... this addiction to the fidelity ladder! Once we climb a couple rungs, going back down to where you were is simply not an option unless you're forced to by circumstance. Tonight I just took the 25th Anniversary amp experience about 3 more rungs on the ladder... a ladder I did not know was taller than the rung I was standing on, which is often the case...

You're never going to believe this... but I have to tell the story so bear with me.

I've been haunted by the sound of this amplifier since I made it and without any pressure leisurely and playfully contemplating how I could apply this technology to more stuff. The CSP3 preamp was one of the first things to come to mind. So recently I developed the anniversary mod for the CSP3 preamp! I had the perfect test bed to develop it. Simply place it between the SE84UFO25 and it's source and hear what it did.

Let's talk about the source. The source is the ZDAC2 feeding the ZTPRE which feeds a ZBIT that feeds the amplifier. If I can place something between the ZBIT and the amplifier without ruining the spectacular focus I have, THAT WOULD BE IMPRESSIVE.

So I started with the stock CSP3. I lost more than I gained. I preferred the sound without it. It felt like one preamp too many. This is my speedometer. I take the CSP3 to the bench and begin surgery. After I thought I was probably done I placed it back in the signal path and listened some more. Still not there.

Another three rounds of trials and additional stuff and then it happened. I put it into the signal path and knew immediately it was good. A night to break in a little bit and then today...

Beautiful blue skies, no clouds anywhere as far as the eye can see all day. Just sun and music. I took the day to catch up on my digital music library maintenance so I was able to listen pretty much since this morning, 12 hours so far straight. I have no intention on stopping for at least several more hours.

What would motivate a man to listen non-stop for what will probably be 16 hours? Think about it.

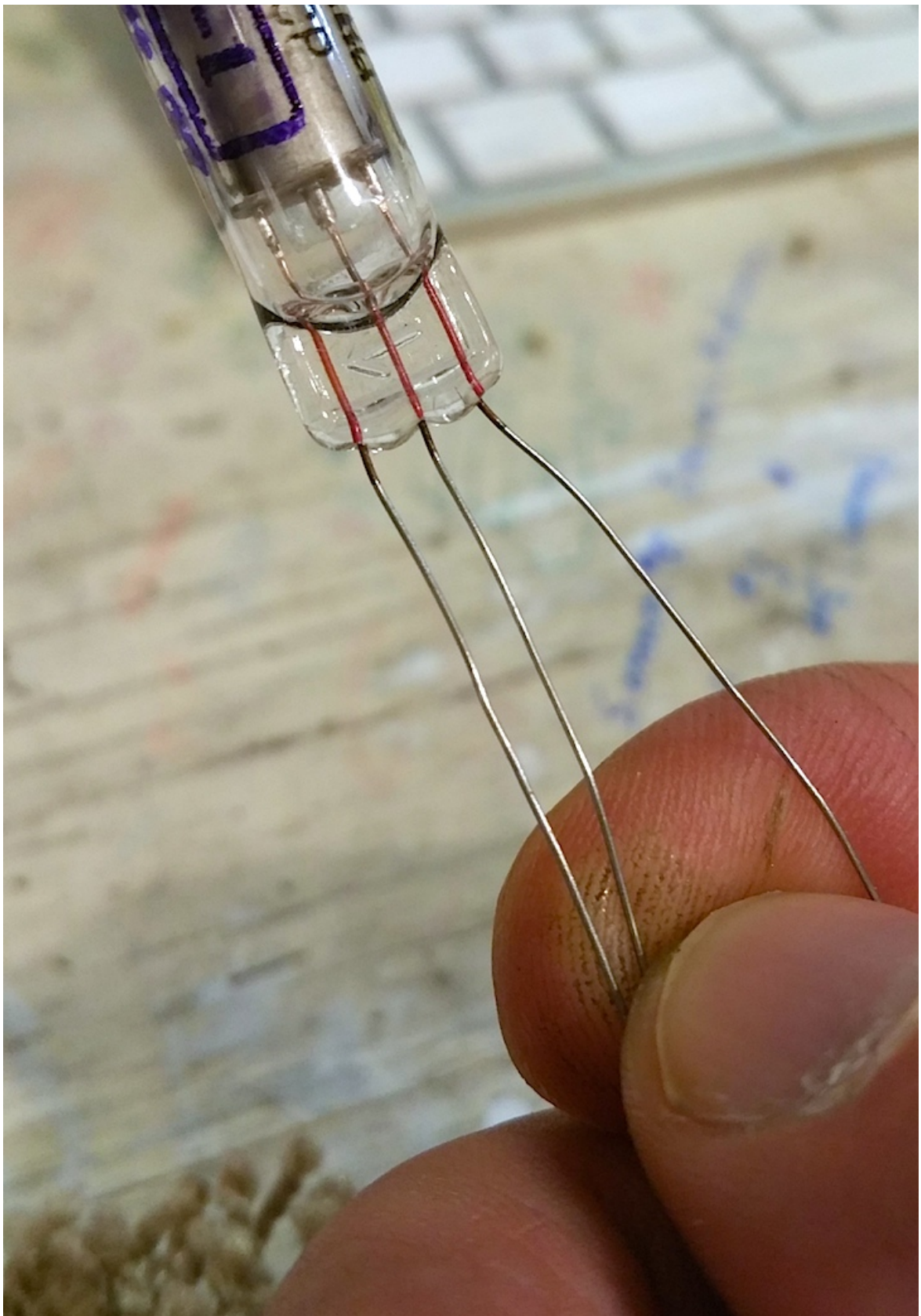
Now, here's the rub... It has been sounding extra spectacular tonight, so I took the modified CSP3 back out of the signal path and damn it... I have to have it in there now. This is insane. That's another 2K to add to the puzzle but OMG I can't believe what it is doing to the sound of my reference signal path!

This will be by far the hardest sound to describe, but it is firkin magic. When it plays, time slows down. You can feel the cheeks expand and the puff of air behind the words. I thought the density was good before, and the textures were complex before, but I just got taught another humbling lesson by my teachers.

I'm starting to realize that density is it's own form of power. The density counts as watts that you can't measure. Density is a watt multiplier.

Sorry as usual I'm listening as I write, and it's so damn juicy and round with a subtle magnifying effect on the music that adds saturation to the colors and dimensionality to the shadows and focus. You don't see the hairs on the peach... you see the hairs and each hair's shadow on the peach. You can smell the peach.





Say hello to our new best friend! The SG5B voltage regulator tube from Russia. This tube is rated for between 5 and 10 milliamps and has a voltage drop of 150Volts. It was selected especially for the CSP3 circuit where there will be one per channel. Each tube will see 7 milliamps.

How was this done to the CSP3 you ask? Visit the development thread here for more info:

<http://www.decware.com/cgi-bin/yabb22/YaBB.pl?num=1408725911/363#363>

-Steve



**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★

 **Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #449 - 04/07/18 at 10:53pm

The color of the SE84UFO25 Anniversary amp will not be repeated on any other amplifiers. It is this green color to make it stand out and look different because it is the 25th anniversary of the amplifier that started Decware. No other amplifier will look like it.

Will we come out with completely new anniversary editions where possible? Hopefully! If we do, the chassis will not be green like the SE84UFO25, but will in fact be black similar to what they are now. They will be an 1/8 inch thick and black textured like they are now with gold silk screening and the same sockets and hardware as you see on the SE84UFO25.

Steve



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

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 50.80.57.123

 **Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #450 - 04/08/18 at 1:48pm

Steve, Exciting, and expensive, stuff!! What happens to the sound if you substitute the 25th anni. modified CSP3 for the ZTPRE rather than adding it to the chain which includes the ZTPRE?

Posts: 39

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 162.237.14.147

 **Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #451 - 04/08/18 at 10:58pm

Tonight I'm at it again! 16 straight hours of listening yesterday and I hated to quit. Tonight it's even better because I decided to change from the studio reference to the silver reference cables and the difference was not subtle. The sound is so tangible that it's alarming... for lack of a better word! The thought tonight was - can it get too real? I didn't used to think so, but this is so real it takes you well outside your comfort zone.

The preamp does the same thing it's always done which is compliment the Zen. In my system, the ZTPRE really only serves to send the signal into the listening room to a ZBIT located next to the amplifier - the idea to get the signal there without any losses. The ZTPRE you really can't hear any effect on tonal balance or transparency... it's like a ghost component in that way. So when I put the DAC next to the CSP3 and bypass the ZTPRE and ZBIT I really don't hear a change once I adjust the controls on the CSP3 to sound the same as what I had.

It has the magical ability to keep the amp from clipping while at the same time making it louder. The tone that I'm hearing now is just **ear candy**. Literally it's like when you decide to eat the whole bag of snacks, you can't stop until it's gone.

My advise with this anniversary stuff is that you might want to wait until retirement to try it out otherwise using it might get you retired early. I had plenty to do this weekend, but I feel like nothing was more important than the sound I've been hearing so it's all good. Again, you never thought what you are hearing was possible, it's bending your reality about as far as your sanity will allow it, and you don't know for sure if it will ever sound this good again so you have no option but to listen.

And listen we will : )

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 50.80.57.123

 **Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #452 - 04/09/18 at 8:39am

Great!, Steve. it seems a shame to be forced to listen alone. There are those who are anxiously waiting to be able to join in the fun and pleasure!! If you get my drift ;) 😊

Posts: 39

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 162.237.14.147

 **Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #453 - 04/09/18 at 6:21pm

Steve, sorry if I missed this somewhere, but can the same mod be applied to the ZTPRE as you did with the CSP3?

**beowulf**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★



Posts: 1350

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 72.220.3.94

 **Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #454 - 04/14/18 at 12:06pm

Steve, have you tried the UFO25 or UFO325 with the S3HOXRS speakers?

**pursuitofnow**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★



Posts: 194

ANALOG: Thorens VN-150, 2M Black, ZP3, ZSTAGE  
DIGITAL: Apple TV, Moon 230HAD, ZROCK2  
AMP + SPEAKERS: SE84UFO, Dayton PS220-8, DeepOmega 8

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104.193.168.168

**maddog07**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #455 - 04/16/18 at 4:52pm



did I miss it somewhere, or has the approximate price point of the 25th Anniversary Zen been mentioned somewhere?

seeker of truth

Posts: 484

Decware Torii MK3, Wyred4Sound DAC2, Theta Digital Miles, Emotiva XMC-1, Emotiva XPA-5, Aesthetix Calypso, Wyred STP-SE, Martin Logan Vista, Audio Nirvana 12" Alnico's, PS Audio PW P5, Goertz, Kimber, Nordost and DIY wires, PSA pwr cords, Cary SLI-80, DM945's.....

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199.169.204.154

**Jeff of Arabica**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #456 - 04/16/18 at 5:21pm



Nothing official has been handed down - only estimates and assumptions have been tossed around here. May still be a bit premature for Steve to commit as technically the amp is still in development.



Name the greatest of all inventors...  
Accident.

Posts: 535

ZMA//Zen Ultra//Rachel//ZDSD//Super Zen//Taboo MKIII//PS Audio DirectStream DAC + Memory Player + P10//Muse Phono Stage//London Decca Reference//Dynavector DV-507 MKII//Zen Head//SonoruS Reel-to-Reel w/ tube playback pre-amp//Omega SAHOs//DM946

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174.210.7.129

**Archie**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #457 - 04/16/18 at 6:53pm



I remember reading a Steve comment about the Zen at the Torii price. that's why I got the impression it would be well over \$3K but it's all speculation at this point.

Posts: 926

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75.166.153.98

**lazb**  
Verified Member  
★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #458 - 04/16/18 at 6:55pm



Yes, all speculation at this point.

Posts: 39

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162.237.14.147

**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #459 - 04/18/18 at 8:00pm



**The estimated price is currently \$2800.00 subject to change.**

Soon I will have a few different hardwood base designs to play with for the Anniversary amp and once I've chosen one I can take the photographs so we can all see what the final amp will look like and start construction of the web page for it.

: )

If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

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50.80.57.123

**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #460 - 04/18/18 at 8:04pm



That's great news Steve! I know there's more than "a few" eager to know the final details and possibly place an order.

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2



184.56.37.219

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**HockessinKid**  
Senior Member  
☆☆☆☆

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #461 - 04/18/18 at 8:24pm



Steve, that's really good news. Best of luck with the different bases. I think this is going to be a "no brainer" for folks with high sensitivity speakers. Yowsa!

HK

Lonely Raven Windows PC (or) TEAC PD-600H>TWL USB/coax cables>ZDAC2 (or) Nottingham Interspace TT w/ heavy platter + Dynavecator 20X2LO + P75 MKII phono pre>iFi micro iTube>CSP3+ preamp>Zen Mystery amp>Omega SAHO XRS speakers> ZenWave Audio IC's & PC's.



108.36.96.199

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
☆☆☆☆

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #462 - 04/18/18 at 8:27pm



Tonight I'm A/B testing the SE84UFO25 Anniversary amp against a 25 watt OTL amp that I built! It's a \$20K tube amplifier with anywhere from 20 to 50 watts depending on the speaker and bias settings with 0.03% THD and an output impedance of .5 ohms... meaning death grip on the woofers.



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304



The OTL is an exhilarating amp to listen to because of its combination of power and transparency... a true reference amplifier with only two output tubes per channel! Gotta love those low impedance 6C33C triodes! They were used in Russian ICBMs so rugged is an understatement!

I have to say that SE84UFO25 is holding it's own handsomely despite being only 1/10th the power it is hard to notice any difference in size, weight, scale or volume at my normal listening levels. The OTL is male with great absoluteness. The UFO25 is female with surreal magic spells that cast themselves upon you.

It's hard as hell to say which is actually better. One has no output transformers but uses feedback, the other has no feedback but uses output transformers. I actually think the bigger difference is the even order vs. odd order harmonics each amp has. Some will prefer one some will prefer the other some will enjoy both. The point is that after 25 years we've taken a Zen Triode Amplifier to this level and it's for real!

Can't wait to start shipping these baby's and start hearing everyones reports!

Steve

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
☆☆☆☆☆



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #463 - 04/19/18 at 1:21am

Modify Split Delete

So hear I find myself once again at 1:10 in the morning with no chance in hell of being able to stop listening right away.... it's just so good. Tonight as you know I am listening to my OTL amplifier.. still, and since I could I have been pressing the volume a little bit here and there and have come to the conclusion that the DNA2 speakers are or should be my 25th anniversary speaker, because it is equally as elevated as the amplifier. I am convinced that these speakers are the best I've ever heard in any of my rooms over the years. When you pair these with the SE84UFO25 haunting things happen. When you pair them with bigger power you find yourself saying "holy crap!" an awful lot...

In all honestly I never thought I would ever hear music sound this good in my lifetime and certainly never from my own stereo : )

The beauty of this is it can be replicated.

-Steve

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**Lonely Raven**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆☆



Jack of all Trades,  
Master of None

Posts: 3100

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #464 - 04/19/18 at 3:34pm

Modify Split Delete

Wow, that's exciting news!

Now I want to try a pair!

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**lazb**  
Verified Member  
☆☆☆

Posts: 39

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #465 - 04/19/18 at 3:53pm

Modify Split Delete

just so you know, the line forms behind me!

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**Costas**  
Verified Member  
☆☆☆



Posts: 12

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #466 - 04/19/18 at 11:40pm

Modify Split Delete

lol..

To Be or Not To Be! That's the question...

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
☆☆☆☆☆



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #467 - 04/22/18 at 10:37pm

Modify Split Delete

ANNIVERSARY AMP UPDATE:

I'm in the home stretch now, all the big things are done. I've been logging the hours on the production sample and it should be nearing a full burn-in by now. So now is the time to start some A/B comparisons with the prototype. The differences between the two amps are as follows: thickness of chassis, tube sockets, attenuators, and some of the bypass caps. In general the production sample is using better parts... well, more expensive parts. If they are better it remains to be seen.

In the first comparison I found the prototype to be better. Granted it has more hours on it, but I was still not expecting it. The Attenuators I am trying in the production sample do not have the same taper and I am really picky about the taper... it's almost everything. Also the resistors are carbon film which I thought I might like, but I may not. So, the taper, some of the bypass caps, the resistors in the attenuator, and the burn-in are the suspects ... now it just a matter of finding which one.

I suspect the attenuators so I will likely give it a few more days and then change back to the original Decware attenuators used in the prototype. If by chance that by itself was the culprit I'll hear it in the first minute and then I'll know we're done and we can start production. If it doesn't fix what I'm hearing then we'll explore the rest as it continues to burn in.

I'll say this, after spending some time with big power last week (the OTL amp) and then switching back to these, I am stunned at how well they hold their own. With these speakers anyway, there is no way you would know you were listening to a two watt amp.

Also I forgot to mention that during the last month or so I've had a nagging whisper in the back of my mind to literally move one wire in the amp, and have been ignoring it because doing so "should" make it sound worse...

Well once again it becomes apparent that even the audio Gods after listening to it for months had a tweak of their own, and holy crap it wasn't a small one. Yes, I had to try it, and the performance of the driver stage has almost doubled. This came as a complete fascination since the power supply ripple should have gone up but instead went down, and the dynamics should have gotten soggy and instead got tighter. I admit this experience toasted my head pretty good, and may have thrown me off just enough to be over critical of the newer of the two amps... But we've covered that, the news here is that another 15% improvement in sound quality. I suspect this is going to make it sound very close to the monos if not almost indistinguishable.

This is why you can't rush product development. Around here we don't model circuits on Spice programs, but rather channel a higher intelligence.

Happy Listening!

Steve

Email [www](#)

50.80.57.123

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
☆☆☆☆☆

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #468 - 04/26/18 at 8:20pm

Modify Split Delete



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

Still waiting for the "change" with the production sample, and despite a few more days and another 70 hours, no change. I'm convinced it's the attenuators, so this weekend I will remove and replace them with the Decware Attenuators. I guess I've grown spoiled over the years with our attenuator.

In our attenuator we use ultra low-noise thin-film nichrome surface-mount resistors rated nearly 10 times the resolution as 1% metal film leaded resistors used in most attenuators. These resistors are so good by comparison that you can stack dozens of them in series and hear no difference between the series string and the single resistor. Up until these resistors became available the only type of attenuator worth using was a Ladder type which has only one resistor in the signal path at any one time.

Since we could no longer hear the difference between the ladder and series attenuator using these resistors some realized (and we recognized) it was possible to take it even one step further by almost eliminating all the circuit board traces. This was done by positioning 20 of these Nichrome SM Resistors in a circle as small as possible so that the end-caps of each resistor touched each other. The circle is soldered together and the gold wiper is then swept across gold pads at the end-caps of the resistors. This puts the wiper within a few thousandths of an inch away from the end caps of the resistors. It is the simplest most pure attenuator design God will allow. And it sounds like nothing is there, which is what you want.

Neither DACT or GoldPoint or anyone else do it this way, and it's because it doesn't LOOK impressive and is fragile. Well you know me, I don't give a blank about any of that IF it sounds better, and it does.

I have our attenuators custom made for me in Japan. Of course there are dozens of Chinese clones on ebay.com. My guess is that if you got three of the fakes to ensure at least one of them worked properly, even without the premium resistors it would probably still sound respectable.

**Shown below is one of our attenuators I've disassembled so you can see the simplicity (zen) of it's design.**



In the "real world" where most of our amplifiers live I usually recommend the standard carbon volume pot over the attenuators. The reason for this is that the amps are so transparent the warmth of the carbon pot is kind to mid-fi digital. The SE84UFO25 is not a real world amplifier. In fact it is an out of this world amplifier that is magnifying the differences in attenuators to the point of ruining the entire amplifier.

Anyway, I'll report the results once these attenuators are installed in the production sample.

[Email](#) [WWW](#)

50.80.57.123

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #469 - 04/27/18 at 11:15am[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

I'm guessing my Mystery amp isn't using this type of attenuator? Since my sources are so high quality and I'm trying to get closer to the music, would replacing my attenuator in the Mystery Amp with one of these help get me closer?

I do like the click pot you put on my little Zen, quite a bit. So it's been in the back of my mind to have a better pot installed in my Mystery.

[Email](#) [PM](#) [WWW](#) [MSN](#)

12.235.113.146

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #470 - 04/27/18 at 11:22am[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

LR - this is the only attenuator we have used since about 2005 so if you your amp has an attenuator, it is this.

[Email](#) [WWW](#)

50.80.57.123

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #471 - 04/27/18 at 12:59pm[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

Ahh, OK, I misunderstood your last section above. I thought you were saying that you use the carbon film pots instead of these nice ones, with the exception of an exceptional amp like the SE84UFO25.

I'm still hoping you can coax out some more detail from the Mystery Amp like you have with the 25th. I know you said you can't do the same mod, but I'm wondering if there is some tweaking that can be done never the less.

Maybe if I dump my Mystery amp in your lap like I did the Zen amp, some inspiration would happen! LOL

Edit to add: the same way my gut told me there was something more left to do with the Zen amp, my gut is telling me there is something more to do with the Mystery amp. I won't say more than that so as to not influence inspiration.

[Email](#) [PM](#) [WWW](#) [MSN](#)

12.235.113.146

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #472 - 04/27/18 at 11:01pm[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

Well I removed and replaced the attenuators and can confirm that was the entire problem! The incredible sound is BACK!

The high-end machined attenuators I hoped would work looked like a million dollars, most fitting for such a special amplifier. Sadly they turned out to be series type and used conventional leaded low-grade resistors and circuit boards as I probably mentioned earlier.

It's amazing how large the difference is. Now the production sample sounds exactly like the prototype and I mean exactly. Nothing can proceed until that type of consistency happens, because consistency is the oak tree of success.

You know you have a great design when you can exactly replicate it. Remembering back when I was just another D.I.Y. amp builder, I can say it's pretty easy to be proud of yourself when your amp project is finally completed and sounding the way you wanted it to but it is damn humbling when you try to build more just like it and they all sound different. I've always said you know you're good when you can build the same amp five times in a row with identical results. You know you're really good when you can build it 25 times in a row with each and every one sounding identical. Even then, your amps don't become great until they stay in service for 25 years without unforeseen failures which is why this 25th Anniversary amp is so dear to my heart.

I'm listening to it now.

It's ear candy. Like a sweet new chocolate that the world has never tasted. Each note momentarily hangs time so you can enjoy it's full decay. It's like hearing music in slow motion and live at virtually the same time supporting the sense that there's a multidimensional element to it.

I've been listening to this amplifier for weeks and until this KEY of a new attenuator unlocked the lock placed on it by the old attenuator, there was absolutely no multidimensional element to the sound. This is what separates this amplifier from virtually everything I've ever heard. See how fragile this is? And Lon is right, your room is not going to stop this element from dominating your listening experience.

Time to do some levitation... and marvel at how much information is actually captured in a good recording. Not even the engineers had any idea in many cases.

Listening to the same garden of music during this development process helps to hear what changes when it changes. Between last night with the the old attenuators and tonight with the new, the sound can not be contained in the listening room. It comes out into the surrounding space with a seductive quality that was never there. It's so much better it's just ridiculous.

[Back to top](#)**Lonely Raven**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★Jack of all Trades,  
Master of None

Posts: 3100

[Back to top](#)**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★If the 1st watt  
sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

[Back to top](#)**Lonely Raven**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★Jack of all Trades,  
Master of None

Posts: 3100

[Back to top](#)**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★If the 1st watt  
sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304



To maintain context, this is an amplifier with 1 capacitor and two resistors in the signal path. The inferior sounding attenuator just added between 1 and 24 more low quality resistors to the signal path and the additional solder nodes was equally devastating. Perform the same test in a solid-state receiver where each of 8 op-amps have 27 transistors and heavy feedback loops with large value electrolytic coupling capacitors between the many stages and you will hear no difference between the two attenuators. This should give those who have never heard such a good tube amp a basic scale of just how much better sounding it really is.

Steve

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50.80.57.123

**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #473 - 04/27/18 at 11:33pm



Still listening...

It is just stunning how deep the music is. See, after being away from it only for a short time, I'm just blown away by its magic. This amp is so good you can listen to the same recordings over and over and not realize that you're listening to the same recordings. Literally. I'm serious.

Boy, I'm already starting to have visions of DECFEST2018... speaking of which, and I shit you not, I saw a UFO today in a dream during my 5:00 o'clock nap! It was a rounded-rectangle shape that I have never seen before, clear as a bell too... I walked around the corner and there it was so obvious all you could do is just say "holy-shit" and then turn around and walk the other way hoping it didn't see you.

Hehe, you can absolutely be certain the UFO video series of Zen-Amp abductions are not over yet... that was a sign.

BTW, with respect to high-end digital files from Blue Cost Music, I found it easy to hear a difference between DSD 11.2MHz and 5.2MHz with this amp virtually every time I try it... something to ponder.

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50.80.57.123

**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #474 - 04/27/18 at 11:37pm



Yea, LR, I know it too, as evidence by what Jeff has already accomplished with his... it will be a fun journey and I look forward to it. I already know what it's going to sound like, because I can hear it in my head as I write this. The word that comes to mind now as I listen to that... is... "exhilarating"... hard to turn off.

Steve

If the 1st watt  
sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

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50.80.57.123

**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #475 - 04/28/18 at 12:31am



So back to tonight... I was listening to a song that was overwhelmingly good sounding in every category and started a post about it. Then I deleted it thinking people are tired of hearing me blab on about it. The song was "Liberty" by Anette Askvik. Moving on, I went back to researching the latest and greatest in signal path resistors. Something that is on my mind as I listen tonight. (I updated those also when I changed the attenuators). The next thing I know there is this incredible music that once again makes me go to the listening chair and I was just dumbstruck by how good it sounded. It was insane.

So when it was over I came back and looked to see what it was... the same song: Liberty by Anette Askvik. I was stunned that it was the same song because what are the odds of that song coming up again on random play in less than an hour I thought! Of course it was the same track, only 5:45 in length that was so good I thought a lot more time had passed, and thought I was listening to a different song. I attribute this to the mind frantically trying to wire new networks to process the super high resolution it's never heard before.

Nevertheless, this track on this amplifier in my room and on these speakers is just sick. The sound quality aspect of it is hard to believe.

Don't worry, it's not a magic track... the very next track that is playing now is equally stunning, and I mean just stunning!  
"Chompy's Paradise" by Babbadnotgood

I can already see where this will end up as it has many times in the past, every song that plays from now until I stop, will be too good to be believed. This I think is because it's not the tracks, it's the music that the amplifier is letting express itself without the typical western science straight-jacket.

Yup, now it's "How Can You Mend A Broken Heart" by Hanne Boel, and it sounds and feels completely real to the point of being almost awkward as it bends the brains ability to deal with the illusion.

It leaves me humbled as a secret digital hater for so many years how I blamed most of the sound I didn't like on the format or the recording, usually both, instead of the amplifier, but now I'm hearing the sound I wanted from recordings and formats that I didn't think were capable of it, and rather than doing it by clever filtering as is the mid-fi way to stomach it, I'm doing it by extreme resolution... it's just so ironic that it's going to take this tired head about a year to fully absorb the reality of it.

Equally disturbing with this amplifier is that the gaps that have always existed between digital and LP and the MASTER TAPE have always been large. They are getting uncomfortably close together now, and it's hard to accept what my ears are telling me. Very hard.

Happy listening!

Steve

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50.80.57.123

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #476 - 04/28/18 at 7:00am



I like your listening tips. For once I know these artists from earlier. Both Askvik and Boel are norwegian. An additional tip would be Radja Toneff with the album Fairytale, a very popular jazz album around here

Posts: 209

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109.247.28.248

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #477 - 04/28/18 at 8:27am



Good news (Reply #474), for the ZMA!

If anyone is interested and owns a Zen Mystery Amplifier, we have been talking about this mod, for over a couple months:  
<http://www.decware.com/cgi-bin/yabb22/YaBB.pl?num=1519064780>

But, first things first. I look forward to the launch of the benchmark Anniversary 25th Triode.

Then, Steve, for us ZMA push/pull junkies...Steve wrote (#474):  
"it will be a fun journey and I look forward to it. I already know what it's going to sound like, because I can hear it in my head as I write this."

Cool. Can I live without it (the mod)? Yes, I'm 3 months into my 5th year with my ZMA of bliss. However, why not! Other than the shipping Nazi's.....

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference I2S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

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75.168.127.39

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #478 - 04/29/18 at 8:19pm



stone\_of\_tone said: "into my 5th year with my ZMA"

Already five years of the Mystery amp! If asked I would have said it was 7 or 8 months ago that we were reading the forum page introducing this new model. It does not seem possible that much time has got away.

Posts: 419

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75.170.62.6

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #479 - 04/29/18 at 10:37pm



Amen.



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

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50.80.57.123

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #480 - 04/29/18 at 10:59pm



Ordered all the custom parts for about 30 UFO25's this weekend! That should get the ball rolling.

Also completed the CNC work on the tube caddy this evening...



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304



Just threw in some random tubes to check the fit. This case will be included with each amp.

I should be able to start contacting people on the list by no later than Memorial day!

Literally the only thing left is the photographs and to lock in the introductory price on the web site - both to be determined once I get the hardwood bases and the cost of those bases.

Steve

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Email WWW

50.80.57.123

**Stefan**  
Verified Member  
☆☆☆

Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier  
Reply #481 - 04/29/18 at 11:52pm

Modify Split Delete

Looks amazing! I really enjoy the love for all the details Steve. 😊

Posts: 37

- Stefan

Rega rp6, Lounge Audio phono pre-amp, Torii IV, ERRx, Woo WA-3, Senheiser HD800S

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Email PM

84.174.169.112

**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier  
Reply #482 - 04/30/18 at 2:24am

Modify Split Delete

Wow, very cool case! This amp is really going to be something!

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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Email PM

184.56.37.219

**Acetone**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier  
Reply #483 - 05/01/18 at 11:22am

Modify Split Delete

Looks like there will be a Decware "tube straightener" in that box.  
Is that correct?  
If yes I will hold off buying one and wait for the SE84-UFO25 I plan to purchase.



4 years with my Decware and Loving it!!!

Posts: 587

SE84-CKC, ZP3, Zstage, ZRock2, ZSB, DM947-(946)Monoliths, VPI-Traveler-2M black. Philips CDR-880. Audio Envy/RAC-PC's & IC's, Mapleshade Dbl Helix+ Spkr wire & jumpers, Blue Circle PLC FX2X0e. Herbies tube damps, tenderfoots, GIK, PI Audio, DIY room treatments

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Email PM

172.248.144.108

Any chance of dual outputs on the se84-25? Add-on option?

Posts: 81

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99.62.233.159

Steve Deckert  
Administrator  
☆☆☆☆

Quote:

Any chance of dual outputs on the se84-25? Add-on option?

Dual output would just be a matter of connecting two speakers to each binding post. If you mean dual inputs, there is zero chance of that. The work-around is a ZSB switch box outfitted with the better jacks.

Steve

If the 1st watt  
sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

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50.80.57.123

Steve Deckert  
Administrator  
☆☆☆☆

I am pleased to announce that the SE84UFO25 bases have been here for well over a week! 😊


I have chosen Peruvian Walnut for the Anniversary amps standard base. This is an exotic wood for an exotic amp. This wood is to standard walnut what the anniversary amp is to the standard zen amps. This weekend I'll try to get some photos.

Here is what the wood and natural finish look like:

If the 1st watt  
sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304





So now we're really close. To expedite things I have estimated the labor cost to build when I came up with the target price of \$2800.00 so the final step is to have Dennis build serial 001 to be sold and make sure my estimate wasn't way off. I hope to have him start the build next week. This means we are still on track for contacting people on the list by May 30th.

Pretty exciting stuff! Listening to the amp just brings me joy!

Also Bob's starting the build on the DNA2 speakers to make sure we can replicate it. Normally that wouldn't be a real concern, as you build it the same way with the same tolerances and parts and it sounds the same. These particular speakers sound so good I'm going to have to hear at least 3 pair between me and Bob to believe it's actually happening - if you know what I mean.

So that's where we at, sailing down wind at about 5 knots in clear weather with land in sight!

Happy listening!

Steve

*NOTE: Shortly thereafter (Days) I changed the wood to African Padauk which you will see in later photos.*



 [Email](#)  [WWW](#)

 50.80.57.123

 **Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #487 - 05/03/18 at 12:39am

 [Modify](#)  [Split](#)  [Delete](#)

Sadly I'm still listening to this amplifier despite being well after midnight... it's been a detox process. The more you listen to it, the better you feel : )

Anyway, I was going to make the comment about the two voltage regulator tubes on the rear of the amplifier.

These two OA3/VR75 regulator tubes supply the two output tubes with ultra-filtered high voltage (like a DC battery) and are perfectly sunked to the current meters on each channel. By that I mean when you turn the amp up as loud as it can go without distortion, that point is indicated by the sudden movement of the otherwise steady meter readings. At the point of clipping, the meters start to dance. At that exact same moment the OA3 tubes begin to flicker and in the same linear proportion to the meters. This makes it possible to see from clear across the room if the amp is nearing clipping, or is clipping or is not clipping whatsoever.

This is one of my favorite things about this amp because of it's ability to throw out dynamics and weight like something 20 times it's size at times, you find yourself always wondering if it clipped. You wonder because the sound was louder than should be possible with 2 watts, and you didn't hear any distortion. Well now you know... and just tonight I notched the volume for each channel up about 3 clicks and the music exploded out of the speakers with a volume and density that I was certain simply had to cause the amp the clip, but this time I was sitting there looking at the amp when it happened, and the glow inside those rear OA3 tubes didn't even flinch. That means 1000% there was ZERO clipping. I find myself looking at these tubes all the time from my listening chair, just as Lon mentioned he did with his monos.

It will be a great help during demos as well, because you typically demo the amp near it's power limit and during the demo there are several times when you wonder if it clipped. With this you know if it did or didn't if it did, you know exactly how much. **This arms you with the ability to tell the difference between distortions in the recording and distortions in the amplifier. (possibly one of the most enlightening things that could ever happen to an audiophile)**

As the resolution of an amplifier increases, you hear ten-fold the distortions in the recordings and the natural tendency is to blame the amplifier or in some cases speakers.

So to have a low-power amp that gives you a real-time visual distortion display for each channel is kind of the ultimate because you can see when it's getting ready to clip before it actually does so if a super compressed modern day junk recording blows into your stream you can adjust the amp before any actual clipping is ever heard - again a nice tool when showing your friends what 2 watts can really do.

Steve

 [Email](#)  [WWW](#)

 50.80.57.123

 **Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #488 - 05/03/18 at 7:58am

 [Modify](#)  [Split](#)  [Delete](#)

This "visualizing the distortion" thing is really cool. Unfortunately I find that in my system I like the bottle-shaped **OB3** tube best. . . and there's less "visible" area on these and it's not as easy to tell distortion. But my experience with the OA3 has let me know where the power boundaries are with the HR-1s and I never need to go into distortion land to get the output that I need.

That said I've ordered a pair of short, straight OB3s and I think these will allow me to see flashing if it occurs, and I hope they sound as great as the Sylvania bottle-type I'm using.

I love the sound of the Monoblocks. With the ZTPRE and ZBIT and ZROCK2 I get the lower end left and presence that the Torii Mk III brought to the system for the first time, and I get that organic "I've never been split" sound of the SET amps and that atmospheric detail and drama of the Anniversary mods. Man it's a great sounding pair of amps.

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV,PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

 [Email](#)  [PM](#)

 184.56.37.219

 **Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #489 - 05/07/18 at 9:53pm

 [Modify](#)  [Split](#)  [Delete](#)



Glass Vacuum Tube Resistors for a vacuum tube amplifier...

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

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**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

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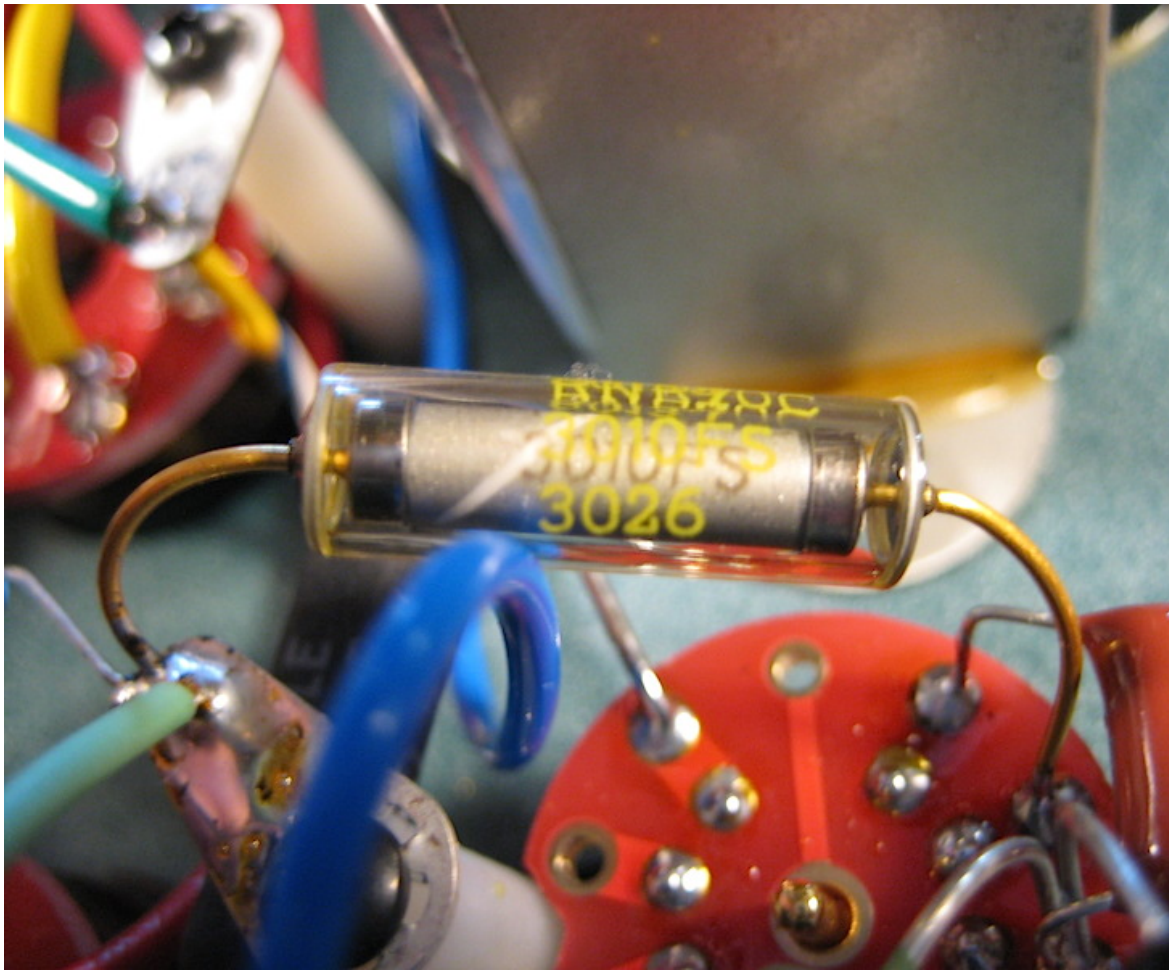
**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★





If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304



As those who are familiar with the Zen Triode already know, the amplifier has only two resistors and one capacitor in the signal path.

With the immense resolution of the new Anniversary model I have been exploring the sound of a number of boutique resistors to see how much the audible differences are between them. This I have done several times in the past throughout the lifecycle of the Zen Triode amplifiers and each time have chosen the very best ones that were at that point of diminishing returns price wise. I remember the differences or gaps between them and suspect a larger gap now so it will be interesting to see what prevails.

As you know these four resistors (two per channel) are the last things to explore now that we've resolved the attenuator issue.

Tonight I am listening to the resistors shown in the amp pictured above. These seem nearly impossible to get in any quantity unless you want to have them made for you, nevertheless they are my current favorites. The average price is \$72.00 for a single 3/4 watt resistor, and that's not with the audio-fool multiplier as you can only imagine what certain audiophile companies would try to get for one!

**Quote:**

DESCRIPTION: For the highest degree of reliability, stability and uniformity of construction, Vishay Angstrom hermetically-sealed metal film resistors are unquestionably the first choice. The true glass-to-metal hermetic enclosure seals the resistor element in an inert gas atmosphere and protects it from virtually all adverse environmental influences. The glass enclosure will withstand in excess of 3000 psi external pressure without leakage. The reliability and stability of Vishay Angstrom hermetically-sealed resistors have been established by their use in nearly every military, missile, aerospace and oceanography program having the most demanding applications and the most hostile environments.

The part I love, is that this resistor has no coating on it, and while they say the best insulator is air, I'd bet money an inert gas is even better. This is how you would design a true cost-no-object audiophile resistor with absolute neutrality... at least it's how I would do it. Sadly this is almost what you have to go through to get a resistor as good as the SMR's used in the attenuator. Keep in mind however that if you use the ultra low-noise high-precision SMR on a classic circuit board, the board traces become the resistor leads and undue the most of the sonic glory of the naked SMR making this a far better solution.

Anyway, never a wasted moment around here... we'll keep you updated in these final weeks!

Steve

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★



[Email](#) [www](#)

50.80.57.123

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #490 - 05/07/18 at 11:21pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

Well, just had a holy crap moment during the intro to After Midnight by Hanne Boel Outtakes album... honestly wasn't expecting



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

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**Lonely Raven**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★



Jack of all Trades,  
Master of None

Posts: 3100

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**stone\_of\_tone**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Listen Often/Listen  
Deep

Posts: 2901

that one! These resistors are better than I knew. You won't be hearing from me for the rest of the night as I'll be preoccupied.

-Steve 😊

Email WWW

50.80.57.123

Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier  
Reply #491 - 05/07/18 at 11:44pm

Modify Split Delete

I know this much... you're going to have to have a license to listen to this amplifier. We can't have newbies to out of body experiences bouncing off the walls and getting hurt. Holy Crap!

Email WWW

50.80.57.123

Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier  
Reply #492 - 05/08/18 at 8:18am

Modify Split Delete

Quote:

Yea, LR, I know it too, as evidence by what Jeff has already accomplished with his... it will be a fun journey and I look forward to it. I already know what it's going to sound like, because I can hear it in my head as I write this. The word that comes to mind now as I listen to that... is... "exhilarating"... hard to turn off.

Steve

I know you're busy with 25th Anniversary stuff, but I'm not listening to my ZMA since I've had my Pre-Prototype Zen in place since December. I can drop it off anytime if you want to tinker with it.

Quote:

DESCRIPTION: For the highest degree of reliability, stability and uniformity of construction, Vishay Angstrom hermetically-sealed metal film resistors are unquestionably the first choice. The true glass-to-metal hermetic enclosure seals the resistor element in an inert gas atmosphere and protects it from virtually all adverse environmental influences. The glass enclosure will withstand in excess of 3000 psi external pressure without leakage. The reliability and stability of Vishay Angstrom hermetically-sealed resistors have been established by their use in nearly every military, missile, aerospace and oceanography program having the most demanding applications and the most hostile environments.

That sounds seriously amazing! I may have to pick up some for my little Zen! Would it be worth it in the ZMA as well? Or are there too many components in the path, comparatively?

Email PM WWW MSN

12.235.113.146

Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier  
Reply #493 - 05/08/18 at 8:29am

Modify Split Delete

I like it LR! Push the ZMA agenda ~ has my vote! 🙌

Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier  
Reply #477 - 04/28/18 at 14:27:38

Good news (Reply #474), for the ZMA!

If anyone is interested and owns a Zen Mystery Amplifier, we have been talking about this mod, for over a couple months: <http://www.decware.com/cgi-bin/yabb22/YaBB.pl?num=1519064780>

But, first things first. I look forward to the launch of the benchmark Anniversary 25th Triode.

Then, Steve, for us ZMA push/pull junkies...Steve wrote (#474):  
"it will be a fun journey and I look forward to it. I already know what it's going to sound like, because I can hear it in my head as I write this."

Cool. Can I live without it (the mod)? Yes, I'm 3 months into my 5th year with my ZMA of bliss. However, why not! Other than the shipping Nazi's.....

However, running my Gold Lion Cryogenic KT88 Quad, from Ron @ Cryoset...my bliss meter is even higher now/ZMA!

Of course, I will have the mod done. Why live without it...as I said above. Bringing the ZMA even closer to perfection.....

Sorry Steve, not out to hijack the Thread. I am just so enthusiastic about this great Amp/ZMA. I look forward to when you get to it. I know it will be worth the wait.

It will fit my budget better too; 6 to 9 months from now~fully developed for the ZMA.....as only your thoroughness will do. As evidenced by the development of the 25th.

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference I2S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

75.168.127.39

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
**Reply #494** - 05/08/18 at 9:30am

**Quote:**

That sounds seriously amazing! I may have to pick up some for my little Zen! Would it be worth it in the ZMA as well? Or are there too many components in the path, comparatively?

LR, I was wondering the same thing when I read Steve's post last night. Looks like there are a couple 1/2 Watt resistors coming off pins 2 ad 7 (Grid) of the input tubes and a couple 2 Watt resistors coming off pins 3 and 8 (Cathode). I assume the two 1/2W resistors would be the ones to target.

ZMA//Zen Ultra//Rachel//ZDSD//Super Zen//Taboo MKIII//PS Audio DirectStream DAC + Memory Player + P10//Muse Phono Stage//London Decca Reference//Dynavector DV-507 MKII//Zen Head//Sonorus Reel-to-Reel w/ tube playback pre-amp//Omega SAHOs//DM946

172.1.34.66

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
**Reply #495** - 05/08/18 at 9:51am

These seem nearly impossible to get in any quantity unless you want to have them made for you.....

.....this lends to an alternative to those guys....that Steve might decide on when doing the power cap/bypass enhancement.

I look forward to the journey (Steve's posts/replies).

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference I2S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

75.168.127.39

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
**Reply #496** - 05/08/18 at 11:02am

**Quote:**

LR, I was wondering the same thing when I read Steve's post last night. Looks like there are a couple 1/2 Watt resistors coming off pins 2 ad 7 (Grid) of the input tubes and a couple 2 Watt resistors coming off pins 3 and 8 (Cathode). I assume the two 1/2W resistors would be the ones to target.

Yes, the grid is the input.

Since the DirectStream DAC has it's own volume that doesn't drop bits, I'd be tempted to bypass the attenuator pot and try these resistors on the ZMA input tubes. Sounds like an expensive experiment...so I'll leave it to you, Jeff. ;D

12.235.113.146

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
**Reply #497** - 05/08/18 at 9:36pm

Haha! Well, you know if I can get my hand on them, Im going to do it.

Not a bad idea about bypassing the attenuator altogether. Is the DS DAC your only source?

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**Jeff of Arabica**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★



Name the greatest of all inventors... Accident.

Posts: 535

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**stone\_of\_tone**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Listen Often/Listen Deep

Posts: 2901

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**Lonely Raven**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★



Jack of all Trades, Master of None

Posts: 3100

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**Jeff of Arabica**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★



Name the greatest of all inventors... Accident.

Posts: 535



[Email](#) [PM](#)

172.1.34.66

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**Lonely Raven**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★


**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #498 - 05/09/18 at 12:10am

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

**Quote:**

Not a bad idea about bypassing the attenuator altogether. Is the DS DAC your only source?

I have the DS and the TEAC NT-503

  
Jack of all Trades,  
Master of None

Posts: 3100

[Email](#) [PM](#) [WWW](#) [MSN](#)

73.75.83.94

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**Jeff of Arabica**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★


**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #499 - 05/09/18 at 12:22am

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

Roger that. Well, for signal purity, the best attenuator is no attenuator.

I reached out to Vishay about these resistors and their availability. Ill let you know what I hear. If I can get them, Ill have them installed. Why not? Ive already come this far, why let a few resistors get in my way of even greater sonic reward - even \$72 a piece resistors! 🙄 Regardless, they are pretty bitchin' in looks and concept.

At the end of the day, unless one auditioned my ZMA<sup>2</sup>, they would not appreciate the money I have sunk into it (\$2700 money well spent!) above and beyond the purchase price. So, even if I ever wanted to sell it, which I wouldn't, getting my ROI is unlikely - outside of someone witnessing its magic.

  
Name the greatest of  
all inventors...  
Accident.

Posts: 535

[Email](#) [PM](#)

172.1.34.66

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**Archie**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #500 - 05/09/18 at 9:33am

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

Jeff, have you read the posts of the ZMA owner in Vietnam? I can never remember his exact name (something like Vyghong). Stone might recall it. He practically rebuilt his ZMA's insides.

Posts: 926

[Email](#) [PM](#)

71.211.179.235


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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #501 - 05/09/18 at 9:22pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

For those reading along who might not know: With or without an attenuator, you will still need a 100K loading resistor to ground, it's essential. Also when the attenuator is all the way up, there is no resistor in the signal path, only the needed 100K resistor to ground, so turning the attenuator all the way up is the same thing as removing it. You're only trading a gold contact against a solder joint which is really splitting hairs.

  
If the 1st watt  
sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

[Email](#) [WWW](#)

50.80.57.123


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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #502 - 05/09/18 at 9:54pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

Well, after a week of staring at the new Anniversary Zen Triode amplifier in a wide variety of base designs and woods, I have finally finished and will be taking photographs next. Here's a cell-phone shot before it goes upstairs for pictures.

  
If the 1st watt  
sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304





Notice the Wood Guru Bob Zieglers touch on this one : ) This unique profile will be used on all anniversary amp(s) and will be able to be custom ordered in different exotic hardwoods.

See now if any one bitches about the price I'll just blame it all on Bob. 

Steve

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50.80.57.123

**Jeff of Arabica**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #503 - 05/09/18 at 11:53pm



**Quote:**

For those reading along who might not know: With or without an attenuator, you will still need a 100K loading resistor to ground, it's essential.

Thanks for chiming in Steve. I do remember you posting such in a thread a while back about still needing the 100k resistor, even if the attenuator is removed. Good to know about the volume max emulating the absence of one.

ZMA//Zen Ultra//Rachel//ZDSD//Super Zen//Taboo MKIII//PS Audio DirectStream DAC + Memory Player + P10//Muse Phono Stage//London Decca Reference//Dynavector DV-507 MKII//Zen Head//Sonorus Reel-to-Reel w/ tube playback pre-amp//Omega SAHOs//DM946

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174.213.3.107

**Jeff of Arabica**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #504 - 05/10/18 at 12:06am



**Quote:**

Jeff, have you read the posts of the ZMA owner in Vietnam? I can never remember his exact name (something like Vyghong). Stone might recall it. He practically rebuilt his ZMA's insides.

I do remember his journey Archie. Most of what he replaced, with the exception of a few key capacitors, was rather superficial and he very much kept the innards of the ZMA intact. He did add the Obbligato bypass power caps, which I did install, and later removed. He also replaced the .022 uF signal caps and a few other 0.1 uF coupling caps with very nice (and very expensive Duelund caps). Additional upgrades/mods included speaker binding posts, RCA input jacks, IEC connector, audiophile fuse and the removal of the attenuator. With regard to the ZMA, he left the majority of capacitors, and all of the resistors original.

ZMA//Zen Ultra//Rachel//ZDSD//Super Zen//Taboo MKIII//PS Audio DirectStream DAC + Memory Player + P10//Muse Phono Stage//London Decca Reference//Dynavector DV-507 MKII//Zen Head//Sonorus Reel-to-Reel w/ tube playback pre-amp//Omega SAHOs//DM946

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174.213.3.107

**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #505 - 05/10/18 at 5:35am



Wow, that's a beautiful amp Steve!

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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184.56.37.219

**stone\_of\_tone**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #506 - 05/10/18 at 8:52am



Arch, yes, if you go to the ZMA Forum and read the Speed Thread, you will read our talk of Vyokyong's work.

Listen Often/Listen Deep

Steve! Absolutely stunning/beautiful man!

Posts: 2901

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference I2S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030

Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

[Email](#) [PM](#)

75.168.127.39

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
**Reply #507** - 05/10/18 at 8:56am

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

Beautiful amp! I do wish I had one in my stable of amps. ;)

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**Lonely Raven**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★



Jack of all Trades,  
Master of None

Posts: 3100

[Email](#) [PM](#) [WWW](#) [MSN](#)

12.49.106.98

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
**Reply #508** - 05/10/18 at 11:53am

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

Lovely! In the home stretch. I can't wait to get my ears on one!

[Back to top](#)

**Acetone**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★



4 years with my  
Decware and Loving  
it!!!

Posts: 587

SE84-CKC, ZP3, Zstage, ZRock2, ZSB, DM947-(946)Monoliths, VPI-Traveler-2M black. Philips CDR-880. Audio Envy/RAC-PC's & IC's,  
Mapleshade Dbl Helix+ Spkr wire & jumpers, Blue Circle PLC FX2X0e. Herbies tube damps, tenderfoots, GIK, PI Audio, DIY room treatments

[Email](#) [PM](#)

172.248.144.108

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
**Reply #509** - 05/10/18 at 10:43pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

I started taking photos... here are my three favorites from tonight starting with this one.

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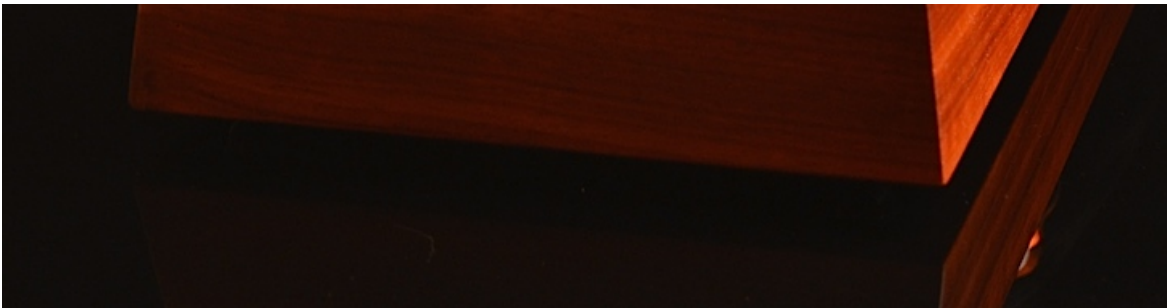
**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★



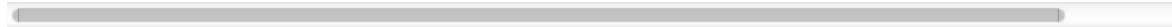
If the 1st watt  
sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304





-Steve



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50.80.57.123

**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★

Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier  
Reply #510 - 05/10/18 at 10:45pm

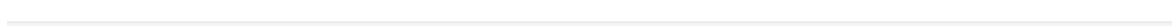


If the 1st watt  
sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304



-Steve



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Email WWW

50.80.57.123

Steve Deckert  
Administrator  
★★★★★

Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier  
Reply #511 - 05/10/18 at 10:46pm

Modify Split Delete



If the 1st watt  
sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304



-Steve

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Email WWW

50.80.57.123

Steve Deckert  
Administrator  
★★★★★

Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier  
Reply #512 - 05/10/18 at 10:52pm

Modify Split Delete

BTW, To pry the amp in the pictures out of the listening room so I could take some photos, I actually had to fire up the original prototype so I wouldn't melt.

Steve



If the 1st watt  
sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

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Email WWW

50.80.57.123

Tal  
Verified Member  
★★

Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier  
Reply #513 - 05/11/18 at 12:13am

Modify Split Delete

Stunning!



Posts: 49

Back to top    138.229.254.240

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #514 - 05/11/18 at 2:31am   

Steve Deckert wrote on 05/10/18 at 10:52pm:

BTW, To pry the amp in the pictures out of the listening room so I could take some photos, I actually had to fire up the original prototype so I wouldn't melt.  
Steve

THAT I totally understand!

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2


Back to top    184.56.37.219

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #515 - 05/11/18 at 10:21am   

Looks great! At the same time, I was kind of hoping to see a metal base to this amp, like lab gear back from 1950s! Any such possible option, Steve? Or, am I asking for too much? :)

Best,


Alper

Back to top    67.86.128.222

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #516 - 05/11/18 at 10:29am   

I bet a metal base would not sound as good as the wood. . . .

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

Back to top    184.56.37.219

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #517 - 05/11/18 at 11:57am   

is that a type 80 rectifier in that baby?

CSP3, CAD 120s MKII, UFO2, Sota Star Sapphire, SME309, Hana SL, JC3+, Schiit bifrost multibit, CXC, MG1.6QR w/ ext xo & mye stands/betsys/Augies/Alpha15. herbies iso, VH audio flavor diy pwr cords, Beden 8402 IC,

Back to top    192.189.128.14

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #518 - 05/11/18 at 12:08pm   

Yup.

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

Back to top    184.56.37.219

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #519 - 05/11/18 at 4:47pm   

Is this amp going to be a regular offering or a limited/special edition?

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**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

Back to top

**alper\_yilmaz**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Posts: 204

Back to top

**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

Back to top

**Tripwr1964**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★



Posts: 372

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**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

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**Showme**  
Verified Member  
★★★

Posts: 20

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174.234.130.15

**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #520 - 05/11/18 at 6:38pm



The SE84UFO25 is planned to be a standard skew in our product line.

Steve



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

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50.80.57.123

**ZYGI**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #521 - 05/11/18 at 8:21pm



I see, blame it on Bob has made it all the way to Peoria....Sorry Steve, did I forget to mention that was the last piece of that wood left on earth?

My Bad!!!

It does look brilliant!



HR-ONE

Posts: 712

All Decware amps and sources, Turning Point Audio speakers

[Back to top](#)



47.134.224.251

**Jeff of Arabica**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #522 - 05/11/18 at 8:28pm



What! What? Bob, please elaborate. Last piece of what wood?



Name the greatest of all inventors... Accident.

Posts: 535

ZMA//Zen Ultra//Rachel//ZDSD//Super Zen//Taboo MKIII//PS Audio DirectStream DAC + Memory Player + P10//Muse Phono Stage//London Decca Reference//Dynavector DV-507 MKII//Zen Head//Sonorus Reel-to-Reel w/ tube playback pre-amp//Omega SAHOs//DM946

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172.1.34.66

**ZYGI**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #523 - 05/11/18 at 10:52pm



Hi Jeff...That wood!



HR-ONE

Posts: 712

All Decware amps and sources, Turning Point Audio speakers

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47.134.224.251

**litefootdan**  
Senior Member  
★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #524 - 05/12/18 at 12:59am



Sounds crazy to say but..... I want that wood!!!!

Posts: 90



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136.32.80.96

**beowulf**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #525 - 05/12/18 at 1:11am



Who has wood for that wood? 😊



Posts: 1350

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72.220.3.94

**Jeff of Arabica**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #526 - 05/12/18 at 2:37am



Oh, I've got wood for that wood!



Name the greatest of all inventors...  
Accident.

Posts: 535

ZMA//Zen Ultra//Rachel//ZDSD//Super Zen//Taboo MKIII//PS Audio DirectStream DAC + Memory Player + P10//Muse Phono Stage//London Decca Reference//Dynavector DV-507 MKII//Zen Head//Sonorus Reel-to-Reel w/ tube playback pre-amp//Omega SAHOs//DM946

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172.1.34.66

**Donnie**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #527 - 05/12/18 at 5:08am



I am currently contracted to grow the tree that will be used as the wood for the 50th Anniversary amps.  
It will be a stunning curly maple. I go outside every day and tickle the tree so that it will be even more curly.



Why does it hurt when I pee?

Posts: 1161

Owner of the infamous RED TORII

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98.223.205.186

**stone\_of\_tone**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #528 - 05/12/18 at 7:41am



I knew you "wood" come through Donnie!

Listen Often/Listen Deep

Posts: 2901

Sony as Transport  
Illuminati D-60  
Audio Alchemy DTI-Pro  
Audio Magic Mystic Reference 12S  
Audio Alchemy DDE 3.0  
Kimber Select 1030  
Zen Select #76  
Kimber Select 3033  
Polk Audio LS-90  
Tri-config/TipToes & Vibropods underneath Speakers  
360 degree Rm Treats

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75.168.127.39

**waveydavey**  
Verified Member  
★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #529 - 05/12/18 at 8:03am



Looks good except I'm not a fan of the input or output rca jacks up in the front myself. Whatever sonics are achieved by having them right between the volume pots and next to hot tubes I'm sure most people will not be able to hear. Be nice to have them at the back and out of the way, less clutter and potential for issues imo and works better for most. Dave.

Posts: 33

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142.167.103.198

**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #530 - 05/12/18 at 8:08am



Donnie wrote on 05/12/18 at 3:06am:

I am currently contracted to grow the tree that will be used as the wood for the 50th Anniversary amps. It will be a stunning curly maple. I go outside every day and tickle the tree so that it will be even more curly.

LOL

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

[Email](#) [PM](#)

184.56.37.219

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #531 - 05/12/18 at 1:50pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

Once in a lifetime chance to pick out the very hunk of wood that you want for your 50th anniversary bases right here!  
Limited time offer, don't miss out!

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

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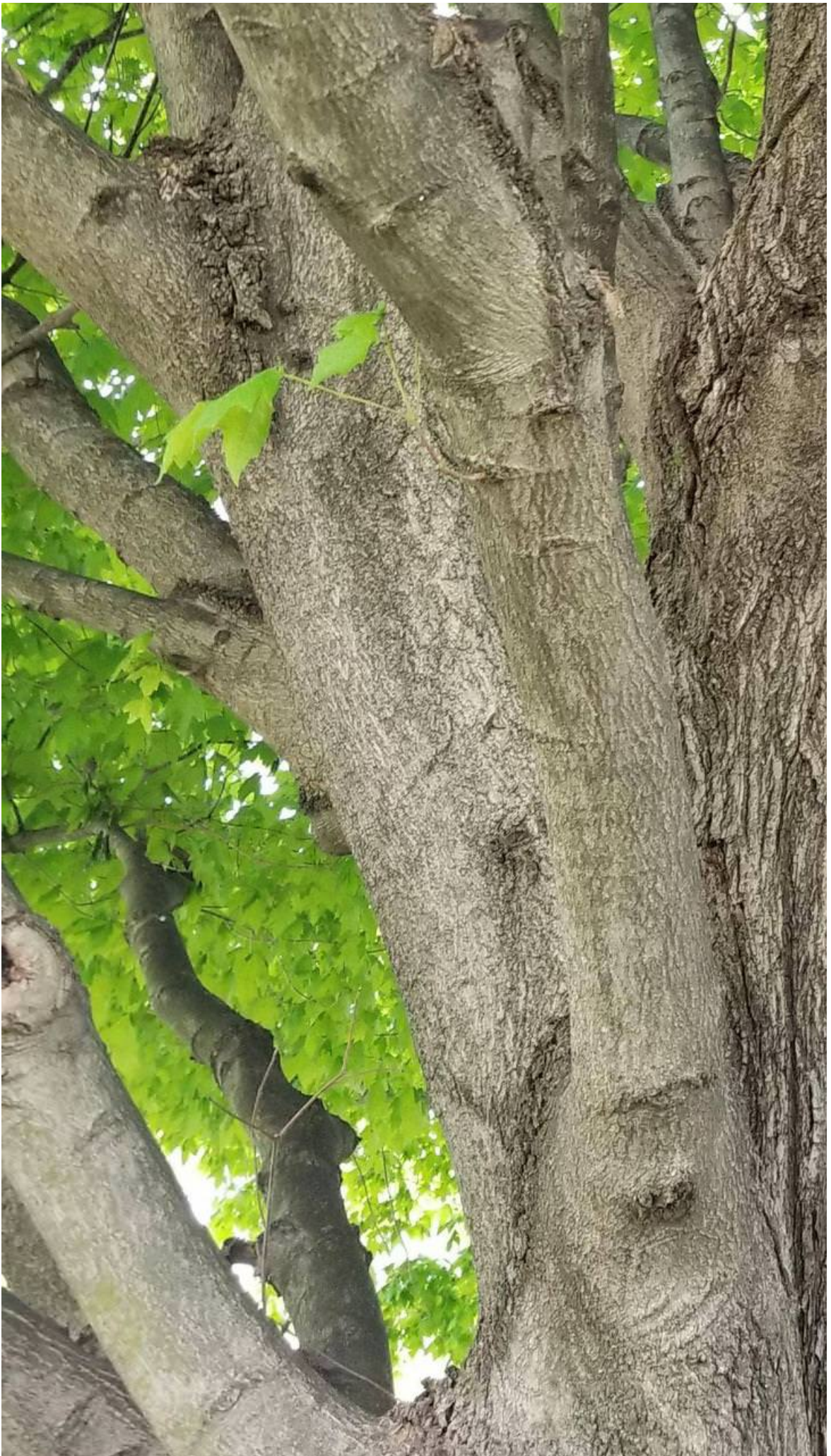
**Donnie**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆☆



Why does it hurt when I pee?

Posts: 1161







Owner of the infamous RED TORII



98.223.205.186

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #532 - 05/13/18 at 1:49am



Donnie,  
Ill take dibs on the first left offshoot branch from the base trunk, 23.2456" start to 40.9013" end. That should provide just the right amount of material to work with.

Just to clarify, you can confirm this tree is purely Grass Fed, right?

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**Jeff of Arabica**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★



Name the greatest of all inventors... Accident.

Posts: 535

ZMA//Zen Ultra//Rachel//ZDSD//Super Zen//Taboo MKIII//PS Audio DirectStream DAC + Memory Player + P10//Muse Phono Stage//London Decca Reference//Dynavector DV-507 MKII//Zen Head//Sonorus Reel-to-Reel w/ tube playback pre-amp//Omega SAHOs//DM946



172.1.34.66

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #533 - 05/13/18 at 6:45am



antibiotic free too?? ;D

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**Tripwr1964**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★



Posts: 372

CSP3, CAD 120s MKII, UFO2, Sota Star Sapphire, SME309, Hana SL, JC3+, Schiit bifrost multibit, CXC, MG1.6QR w/ ext xo & mye stands/betsys/Augies/Alpha15. herbies iso, VH audio flavor diy pwr cords, Beden 8402 IC,



50.80.80.106

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #534 - 05/13/18 at 7:45am



Totally free range.

Back to top

**Donnie**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★



Why does it hurt when I pee?

Posts: 1161

Owner of the infamous RED TORII



98.223.205.186

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #535 - 05/13/18 at 12:11pm



What are the RCA jacks at the from of the amp?

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**Showme**  
Verified Member  
★★★

Posts: 20



174.234.128.61

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #536 - 05/13/18 at 12:28pm



They're the RCA jacks. 😊 They are the input from the source component.

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**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

[Email](#) [PM](#)

184.56.37.219

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**NormD**  
Senior Member  
☆☆☆☆

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #537 - 05/13/18 at 4:48pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

As close to the input tubes as possible!

Posts: 95

OPPO Sonica DAC  
Technics SL-1200M3D Turntable  
SoundSmith The Voice cartridge  
JRMEDIA Center running on a MacMini  
Oppo 103D for video  
Marantz AV8802a Pre  
ZTPre & ZMA for Stereo  
Rotel RMB-1585 amp  
Focal Electra 1038Be speakers (93 db)  
2Hsu Research ULS-15 M

[Email](#) [PM](#)

98.244.74.45

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
☆☆☆☆☆

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #538 - 05/13/18 at 7:39pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

Just a reminder that this amplifier is a sonic celebration of what is possible with the Zen Triode design. It was not designed to be popular, affordable, or ergonomic and was designed with no regard to sales. It is what separates the ultra serious from the norm. We have 3 versions of this amplifier that are affordable, and have rear mounted jacks for the exact reasons that have been pointed out. SE84UFO, SE84UFO2, SE84UFO3.

Steve



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

[Email](#) [WWW](#)

50.80.57.123

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**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #539 - 05/13/18 at 7:44pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

A good reminder Steve. My 25th Anniversary SE84UFO3 Monoblocks certainly are **SERIOUS**. They make me think I'm a recording microphone. Worth the price!

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

[Email](#) [PM](#)

184.56.37.219

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
☆☆☆☆☆

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #540 - 05/13/18 at 7:50pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

Here is another picture showing the rear of the amp.



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304





Steve

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**Showme**  
Verified Member  
☆☆☆  
**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #541 - 05/14/18 at 3:26pm [Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

So would a switch box to allow more sources defeat the objective of this amp. I guess I would have a minimum of two sources.

Posts: 20

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**Jeff of Arabica**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆  
**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #542 - 05/14/18 at 3:56pm [Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

Showme,  
Absolutely not. The fact of the matter is, you have multiple sources, like many of us. No matter what amp you purchase, you will have to deal with a switch of some type, whether it be internal or external. I have a Decware ZSB in front of my Ultra and ZMA. The way Steve designs these ZSB switches is minimalistic. The goal, in a "World of No Constraints," is obviously to reduce the number of connections and the lengths of runs. But then reality crushes all of our hopes and dreams. Most of us have multiple sources, and most of us need more than 6 inches of interconnects between components. This 25th Anniversary still improves the conditions for the signal by taking away an otherwise additional lengthy run internally from the RCA inputs to the input tube sockets.

As Steve mentioned in his last post, this is an amp of no compromises, regardless of how marginal of an improvement each design element offers. If I am reading his mind correctly, he created an amp that when he goes to sleep at night (sometimes very late due to listening to this very amp) he can rest comfortably knowing that there was nothing more worth doing to it. Once he hands us this amp, all we can do is attempt to feed it with nothing but greatness in source material, allied components, interconnects, proximity, room treatments, power and everything else. But those elements have nothing to do with Steve or the design of this 25th Anniversary amplifier, and everything to do with us doing our part once the amp is in our hands.

ZMA//Zen Ultra//Rachel//ZDSD//Super Zen//Taboo MKIII//PS Audio DirectStream DAC + Memory Player + P10//Muse Phono Stage//London Decca Reference//Dynavector DV-507 MKII//Zen Head//SonoruS Reel-to-Reel w/ tube playback pre-amp//Omega SAHOs//DM946

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**Showme**  
Verified Member  
☆☆☆  
**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #543 - 05/15/18 at 12:38pm [Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

Well put Jeff. I guess I'm going to have to buy one of these.

Posts: 20

Back to top [Email](#) [PM](#) 67.45.112.66

**Ellsworth**  
Senior Member  
☆☆☆  
**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #544 - 05/15/18 at 6:45pm [Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

I am a current Zen UFO owner and am looking forward to placing an order. My rack has about 3.5 inches of clearance space on top of the UFO rectifier tube and is open on the sides so I am a bit concerned about the heat.

With the extra tubes, will this amp produce significantly more heat than the standard Zen amp?

Back to top [Email](#) [PM](#) 108.35.215.126

**Acetone**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆  
**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #545 - 05/15/18 at 7:09pm [Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

Ellsworth, the OD3 and OA3 tubes don't get hot. So, with balance of tubes used the amp should run as warm as the UFO does.



4 years with my Decware and Loving it!!!

Posts: 597

SE84-CKC, ZP3, Zstage, ZRock2, ZSB, DM947-(946)Monoliths, VPI-Traveler-2M black. Philips CDR-880. Audio Envy/RAC-PC's & IC's, Mapleshade Dbl Helix+ Spkr wire & jumpers, Blue Circle PLC FX2X0e. Herbies tube dampers, tenderfoots, GIK, PI Audio, DIY room treatments

Email PM

172.248.144.108

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**Ellsworth**  
Senior Member  
☆☆☆☆

Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier  
Reply #546 - 05/15/18 at 8:07pm

Modify Split Delete

Acetone, thanks for the note. That is good to know.

Posts: 52

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
☆☆☆☆☆

Email PM

108.35.215.126

Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier  
Reply #547 - 05/15/18 at 10:22pm

Modify Split Delete

ANNIVERSARY AMP UPDATE:

As a follow-up to the post about the glass resistors, I have managed to find another version of it and purchased 100 sight-unseen. When I discovered these, I thought if they were readily available it might be worth making them standard in the amp and raising the price accordingly but at this point I think the best we can hope for is an option on the amplifier due to limited availability. So that is my plan, just to make them an option on the amp while supplies last.

The new batch I found are white glass instead of clear, but otherwise the same design and by the same manufacture. So far both types come individually packaged in a foil-lined sealed paper packet. I thought you would enjoy seeing what that looks like as well as the new resistors. I will be comparing these with the previous ones and both against the standard ones I use to see what the discernible differences are. In the event that these sound like crap, (unlikely) I'll certainly let you know.



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304









I'll put these in the original prototype and see what I hear... or is it hear what I see?

Steve

[Email](#) [www](#)

50.80.57.123

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #548 - 05/16/18 at 5:10pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

Hi Steve,  
Is 9/66 on the packet a date? Are these from an old stock from the 1960s?

Brian

[Email](#) [PM](#)

75.170.59.108

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #549 - 05/16/18 at 7:25pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

Yes, that's the date code!

Steve

[Email](#) [www](#)

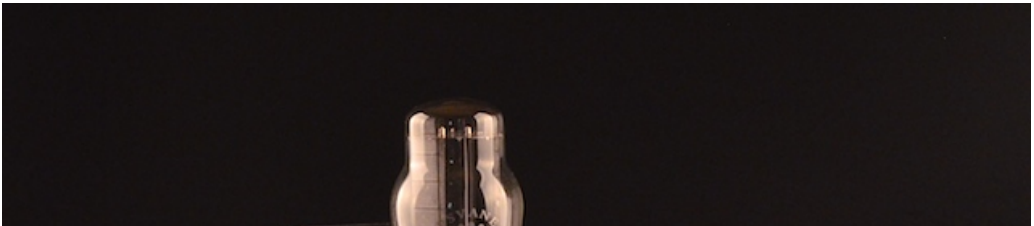
50.80.57.123

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #550 - 05/16/18 at 10:09pm

[Modify](#) [Split](#) [Delete](#)

25th Anniversary Amp UPDATE:

A new picture of the SE84UF025 in a custom natural Cherry base and black knobs.



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**Brian**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

Posts: 419

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★



If the 1st watt  
sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

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**Steve Deckert**  
Administrator  
★★★★★



If the 1st watt  
sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304



The PSVANE 5U4 is the chosen rectifier that will be shipping with this amplifier. Additionally an 8 pin socket saver will also be supplied so that you can raise the height of the tube as shown in the pictures If you're going to be rolling rectifier tubes the socket saver will protect the main socket from wear.

Steve

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50.80.57.123

**Jeff of Arabica**

Seasoned Member



**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #551 - 05/16/18 at 10:36pm



Sure is beautiful!! And I like the rectifier choice. Same one I settled on in my Ultra 😊 Speaking of which, I need to get sent back to you for the capacitor upgrade and topology re-work to elevate its 2-channel performance.

Having not opened it up, I wonder if it would lend itself to any or all he 25th Anniv mod?



Name the greatest of all inventors... Accident.

Posts: 535

ZMA//Zen Ultra//Rachel//ZDSD//Super Zen//Taboo MKIII//PS Audio DirectStream DAC + Memory Player + P10//Muse Phono Stage//London Decca Reference//Dynavector DV-507 MKII//Zen Head//SonoruS Reel-to-Reel w/ tube playback pre-amp//Omega SAHOs//DM946

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172.1.34.66

**Steve Deckert**

Administrator



**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #552 - Yesterday at 11:50pm



Today was interesting... I was forced to listen to the ZMA for the first time since creating the SE84UFO25. As those who've been following this thread know I've been putting it off until after the release of the UFO25... and if that wasn't enough I also for the first time am listening to a pair of UFO25's bridged mono.

A friend from out of state came by today to listen to the new Anniversary amp and the ZMA both paired with the HR-1's. On the more power hungry HR-1 a single UFO25 did a respectable job but was on the edge of what it could do much of the time in my larger, deader room. This is what lead to running a pair in mono which we did.

The results were as expected quite good. So now that we have enough power for the HR-1 in a larger room it became a choice between a pair of UFO25s bridged into mono at 6 watts a channel vs. the Zen Mystery Amp dual mono amplifier at 40 watts a channel.

Took a respectable 10 minutes to choose the UFO25s over the ZMA as the amplifiers to drive the HR-1's !!! After he left, I had to listen for myself and the difference is definitely there. As my friend described it, with the UFO25 amps in mono the sound was easy to listen to and you could hear the sounds coming... vs. the ZMA where you didn't hear the sounds coming until they were right there on you making the listening experience more startling. Really one of the best analogies I've heard in a while and totally true.

So again a bitter sweet moment as the UFO25's dust even the ZMA, which is on record at Tone Audio as sounding better than Shindo and Wava! This really brings a perspective to the resolution of these Anniversary Zen Triode amplifiers



If the 1st watt sucks why continue?

Posts: 3304

Don't worry ZMA owner's it won't take a whole lot to shrink the gap between the two amps, and even a slight narrowing of the gap when leveraged against the 40 watts would be huge. I will (when it's the right time) do a Zen weekend on it and see how far it can be taken.

This might be a good time to remind all of us that the Zen Triode Amplifier uses a 9800 ohm primary impedance transformer with a 6 ohm secondary and relies on reflected impedance from the loudspeaker to determine what the plate of the output tube actually sees. The output tube in the Zen would happily operate at maximum efficiency with an impedance of 3300 ohms but instead it sees 9800 which dramatically drops the power but equally dramatically increases the headroom. This way when an 8 ohm speaker has a dip in the impedance of 2 ohms which is not uncommon, the amplifier's power doubles instead of halves. This is why a Zen Triode Amp has such excellent bass control and why it can happily drive a nearly dead short.

Why is this high primary impedance important beyond performance as just described? Because the higher the impedance the better the high frequency response and that means not only extension but how high frequencies are handled. The difference between hearing the same output tube with 3300 ohms vs. 9800 ohms is a beautifully long shimmering decay in the top end that hangs notes in space for all to see and digest while the 3300 focuses your attention on the mid bass with dumbed down top end magic.

All of the bigger amps / tubes use much lower impedances. For example the EL84 uses 3300 , the KT66 in the ZMA uses 4000 and the TORII JR and MK4 uses 6000. All of these are a long ways away from 9800. Also the smaller output tube in the UFO25 is faster than all of the above. The combination of the high impedance and faster tube is always going to have a musical advantage when speaker efficiency isn't choking the chicken.

Still shaking my head that a pair of UFO25's was easily chosen over the ZMA...Shindo...Wavac... and we noticed no difference in power. In fact my observation during the comparisons was that the UFO25's were louder. Let me explain...

When we switched to the ZMA I tried to set the volume the same which I think I did. But from my location it sounded about 3dB quieter than the UFO25's. But then when the music became more energized the volume jumped up and I knew the levels were exactly matched.


This would suggest that the low level detail with the UFO25 amps is 3dB louder than anything we make including the holy grail ZMA so when you listen to it, as my friend stated, you "hear it coming" before it gets here!

Great stuff!

Time to go float around in the listening room with a pair of Anniversary Amps in Mono driving the HR-1's !

Steve

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Back to top    50.80.57.123

**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆☆  
 **Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
**Reply #553 - Today** at 5:24am   

Really interesting Steve. The "you can hear it coming" is understandable to me. I had thought before of it in this way and noted it in the forum: to me it's as if "You ARE the microphone." It feels as if you are doing the recording, the event is transpiring with you, it's so different from what we are accustomed to hearing reproduced. A control booth experience more than a listening room experience. I hate the old warhorse audio comment "You are there." I know full well when listening I am not there. But I do feel closer to the recording process and as if I'm integrated within that process in a way I never have before with even Decware amplification.

I've fallen in love with the SET design and the little tubes again (and in my case I prefer the SV83/non-military version). ZMA owners will be very happy when you can narrow or eliminate the gap between these two amps, but I'm very glad to have moved to the single-ended amps again with those little dynamo tubes.

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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**alper\_yilmaz**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆☆  
 **Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
**Reply #554 - Today** at 10:19am   


Steve,

This has been asked a zillion times at different Forums... But for the UFO25 specifically, does bridging them into monos bring any sonic difference? Or is it just a gain in volume?

Best,

Alper

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Back to top    67.86.128.222

**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆☆  
 **Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
**Reply #555 - Today** at 11:42am   

Here is what Steve has posted on the SE84UFO product page:

#### **Worried about 2 huger than life SET watts not being enough power?**

**The SE84UFO employs a unique floating output transformer scheme where the negative speaker wire is not tied to chassis ground. That means when the amp is bridged, both channels may either be series or parallel wired. In series, both channels work as one and transparency is preserved.**

**So with no sonic drawbacks to running the amps in mono, you can expect 6 dB of additional power rather than the expected 3dB. This is thanks to the power increase the amp has when it sees half the speaker load from being series bridged.**

<http://www.decware.com/newsite/SE84CKC.html>

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**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆☆

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

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**alper\_yilmaz**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆☆

Posts: 204

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**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆☆

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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184.56.37.219

**NormD**  
Senior Member  
☆☆☆

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #556 - Today at 11:49am



I'm confused. I only see two input input jacks (left and right, presumably). Is the amp mono or stereo? Are the four output jacks for left and right or for 4 and 8 ohm?

Posts: 95

OPPO Sonica DAC  
Technics SL-1200M3D Turntable  
SoundSmith The Voice cartridge  
JRMedia Center running on a MacMini  
Oppo 103D for video  
Marantz AV8802a Pre  
ZTPre & ZMA for Stereo  
Rotel RMB-1585 amp  
Focal Electra 1038Be speakers (93 db)  
2Hsu Research ULS-15 M

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98.244.74.45

**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #557 - Today at 11:56am



The pictures are of a single input stereo amp. The inputs in the front are for left and right RCA terminated interconnects. The four binding posts on the rear are for left and right + and - speaker cabling.

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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184.56.37.219

**Stefan**  
Verified Member  
☆☆

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #558 - Today at 2:00pm



Hi Steve,  
don't forget the Torii and schedule a Zen weekend for this beauty to further improve it :)

Posts: 37

- Stefan  
-----  
Rega rp6, Lounge Audio phono pre-amp, Torii IV, ERRx, Woo WA-3, Senheiser HD800S

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68.186.53.205

**RLB**  
Verified Member  
☆☆

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #559 - Today at 5:24pm



Steve, here's hoping that you will provide commentary at some point that compares the sound of the SE84UFO25's with the HR-1's vs. the DNA2's! Maybe the fairest comparison would power each pair of speakers with the amps bridged in mono (although I would be interested, as well, in your thoughts on how the DNA2's sound with just one of the amps vs. both).

Posts: 2

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166.137.240.75

**Brian**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #560 - Today at 6:21pm



Steve said: "For example the EL84 uses 3300,"

Was this a typing error for EL34?

Posts: 419

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75.170.59.108

**Jeff of Arabica**  
Seasoned Member  
☆☆☆☆

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #561 - Today at 9:33pm



Not a typo. The 25th Anniversary uses the EL84 power tube in the output stage. My Taboo MKIII also uses this tube type.



Name the greatest of all inventors...  
Accident.

ZMA//Zen Ultra//Rachel//ZDSD//Super Zen//Taboo MKIII//PS Audio DirectStream DAC + Memory Player + P10//Muse Phono Stage//London Decca Reference//Dynavector DV-507 MKII//Zen Head//Sonorus Reel-to-Reel w/ tube playback pre-amp//Omega SAHOs//DM946

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172.1.34.66

**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #562 - Today at 9:44pm



I think it's a typo and I think he was referring to an EL34 in the Rachel. Though the Anniversary amp could use EL84 (Steve tends not to) I don't think that would be "the number."

I could be wrong.

**Lon**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★

"Love without guts is worthless!"  
Philip K. D\*ck

Posts: 14002

HR-1,ZP3,ZTPRE,ZBIT,ZROCK2,SE84UFO3-25, Taboo MkIV;PS Audio: Soloist SE, DMP+DSD, P10, PowerBases, XStream Statemt spk cb, AC-12 power cds; Mapleshade:SamsonV2+V3; Oppo UDP-205;VooDoo Cremona +Amati,Iso-Pods;MD90-T SE tuner; headphones: Oppo PM-1,Audeze LCD-2

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**Re: 25th Anniversary Zen Triode Amplifier**  
Reply #563 - Today at 9:53pm



I was assuming the question centered around what was used on the 25th Anniv amp and after going back to read Steve's post, I see what Brian was actually referring to. The EL34 has much lower output impedance than an EL84 so the 3300 can't pertain to the EL84. So I believe you are both correct. Sorry if I added to the confusion.

**Jeff of Arabica**  
Seasoned Member  
★★★★★



Name the greatest of all inventors...  
Accident.

Posts: 535

ZMA//Zen Ultra//Rachel//ZDSD//Super Zen//Taboo MKIII//PS Audio DirectStream DAC + Memory Player + P10//Muse Phono Stage//London Decca Reference//Dynavector DV-507 MKII//Zen Head//Sonorus Reel-to-Reel w/ tube playback pre-amp//Omega SAHOs//DM946

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