

## Walsh style TLS-1 speaker by HHR Exotics review 1/21/13

I recently purchased a pair of HHR Exotics Walsh style TLS-1's. Before doing so I spent many months on a quest for the best system I could afford to celebrate my fiftieth year on planet earth. After reading some great reviews on Audiogon and other threads I decided to give Dale at HHR Exotic Speakers a call.

When I first spoke with Dale it was not too hard to come to the conclusion that Dale was very passionate and beyond qualified when it came to all things audio. Dale referred me to a client who purchased a pair of their TLS-1's and who was also a musician. This was very helpful because I could speak to someone who shared a view point that was similar to my own. After that call, I did what was the unthinkable for me. I purchased a pair of TLS-1's without hearing them! Mind you I did much reading and learned as much as I could about the Walsh style transmission line driver.

The process took about three months from the time I ordered the speakers from Dale, as their were prior orders ahead of me. We shared many ideas and had many phone conversations over the course of the time Dale was building my speakers. He also provided pictures and info teaching me about the speakers as he built them.

I drove to Ohio to pick them up when they were completed. When I arrived I was welcomed by Dale and his wonderful wife Yin like an old friend. Dale had my speakers set up and ready to go. We sat in his listening room, he fired up his system and off we went. After putting the TLS-1's through a laundry list of music spanning many decades and styles focusing on content as well as recording techniques I must say I was feeling like the Cheshire Cat.

What the HHR TLS-1's produce is much more than I could have conceived. The sound stage was more than a wide front facing curtain of sound, it was enveloping me. The amount of uninterrupted overtones produced by a single driver delivering the whole wave over the three different cone materials captured so many nuances in the timbre of all instruments it was mind boggling. I had never heard music produced this way. The sound is so three dimensional it actually becomes addictive, like some ride at Disneyland that stimulates senses you'd forgotten or didn't know you had.

After spending two great days with Dale I packed my truck with my speakers and headed home. It has been three months and I must say this is turning out to be a never ending honeymoon. I must also mention the fit and finish of the speakers all the way around are impressive.

Dale Harder offers a hand built speaker with old world craftsmanship while incorporating cutting edge upgrades that bring this speaker design to a whole new plateau. At this price point it would seem impossible that you could acquire something of this quality custom built by a master like Dale.

My System:

Speakers- HHR TLS-1

Amps- Carver Cherry 180 mono blocks

Pre- Conrad Johnson PV-12 (tube upgrade)

Processing: Aphex Aural Exciter

CD Player: Jolida DD-100A (with platinum Hotrod upgrades)

Tape: Akai 747 DBX

Tape: Denon DR-M44HX

Turntable: Audio Linear TD 4001

Dale and I still stay in touch and share our passion for music, I am so grateful for such an amazing product and experience.

Dan Donofrio, Connecticut