



The sense of hearing is indeed a gift to mankind. Apart from its practical use, a subtler appreciation comes in the form of music. In other kingdoms of nature, this sense has developed only as an extension of the survival instinct. Not so with humans. We can actually heighten the joy of living by applying this sense perception to beautiful sounds in the form of music.

The basis of entertainment is sound and sound applied to vision. In modern times, a music system has become a very basic requirement. Music systems come in various shapes and sizes, and naturally, various price ranges. In the previous articles we have touched upon the 'Low End' systems. Today let's move into the world of 'High End' audio systems.

These are naturally expensive. We could even be looking at costs of a couple of lakhs of rupees. However, not all expensive systems are 'High End'. The design goal of any 'High End' music system is an authentic reproduction of the original sound source. There are no other fancies taken into consideration. Looks are not important. Sound, and just sound, being the ultimate aim. A 'Low End' and a 'High End' music system will have the same basic principles. There will also be a similarity of components like amplifiers, cassette decks, C D Players etc. The difference lies in the superiority of the quality of electronic components used in the 'High End' system, the circuit design and the design goals, which may be different.

You may be surprised to know that a 'Low End' music system actually has a greater number of features like remote controls, double cassette deck, complicating tone controls, jazzy looks etc., whereas a 'High End' system might end up looking like a crate, and may not even have a simple tone control for 'bass' and 'treble'.

M High on Music

What does an audiophile look for in his music system? Certainly not its good looks, writes SANJIV MALVI, enumerating the many splendoured sounds a High End system can deliver

Audiophiles using such systems, often find the need to use accessories like interconnecting cables which could be as expensive as US\$5000 for a meter length. These cables are used to link up the amplifier to the cassette deck and so on. A regularly available cable can be as cheap as Rs 20. Speaker cables could be a little more expensive.

SOUND TREATMENT

The phenomenal costs of these are not because they may be made of gold, but because a lot of research has gone behind them and their production techniques are expensive.

To the affording audiophile, money then becomes just a piece of paper. If there is any piece of equipment which will help preserve the authenticity of the original sound, then it's got to be had.

A 'High End' music system is like a Ferrari. It requires constant care. Believe it or not, the users are never fully satisfied with its

performance. They are always fine tuning and 'tweaking' the system and the surroundings to upgrade its performance. A 'High End' system user is not really looking for enjoyment of the music, but would like to be enthralled by the systems performance or the changes in its performance level brought about by his ingenious 'tweaks'. He either feels great about how the system sounds, or is totally depressed. Rarely, truly rarely, does an 'audiophile' simply sit down to listen to music.

Not all companies manufacture such equipment. In fact companies that do, are not commonly known. To name a few: Jeff Rowland, Conrad Johnson, Mark Levinson — all known for their amplifiers and pre-amplifiers. Thiel Audio, Wilson Audio — both known for speakers. Monster Cable, Van Der Hull, Straight Wire — all known for great cables.

The thing with super Hi-Fi is that there is no end. Achieving musical realism in home depends upon selecting the proper hardware and optimally installing it in the listening room.

Next time, we will see how to get the most out of your music system, by setting it up correctly.