

Swan F2**Review: Swan 2.6F Speaker**

Music appeals to people on many different levels, it is an emotional experience for many. I find audio or stereophilia to be quite a different story, speakers and equipment evoking different responses from different people. I can hear differences in wire or characteristics of preamps, cables wiring, etc. I like the way they look or mine cost over \$20K! For example Wilson Audio owners appear to be a fan club of the brand then true music lovers.

Music stimulates sometimes on a primal level, sometimes on an intellectual level. Music for me involves musical experiences of both heart and mind, the pursuit of emotional enrichment and at the same time comprehension of the structure of music and sound itself. Some speakers have been able to capture both sides of the equation effectively enough that under the right circumstances they will appeal to both your heart and mind in such a way that it transcends you to an emotional experience that connects you directly to the artist and what they are trying to convey.

On rare occasions some speakers evoke a musical experience akin to a live concert, powerful feelings, many times too emotional in nature to be explained. One of the few times I experienced this was listening to Hugh Masekela's Train Song on Merlin VSM speakers through Joule Electra amplifiers. Then switching over to Jascha Heifetz playing a violin concerto. Trying to replicate this experience takes time and patience creating synergy between equipment, room placement and room acoustics.

The first moment I listened to the Swan F2.6 I knew I had something special and under the right circumstances I could create musical experiences in my home that evoke the emotional experience I am looking for when listening to music in my home. I have been breaking them in for quite a while and at the same time trying to fix a room much too small for a speaker of this magnitude, even though again they are baby 2.3 BF's! So I started playing with absorption and diffusion. Absorption on the front wall and a mix of absorption and diffusion on the rear and side walls. I also used absorption in the corners and in the folds of the side walls. Next I changed out my Edge CD player for an ESound platinum cd player. I upgraded the power supply on my PS Audio preamp amp and am utilizing a Wyred4Sound class D amplifier. Wired the system with Nerve Audio (<http://www.nerveaudio.com>) bi-wire speaker cable and XLR Vagus interconnects. Now I am getting somewhere!

The F2.6s sound a lot like music, unlike a speaker like the Wilson's which strive for laboratory detail, detail which never occurs when listening to real musicians in a real hall. The Swans go for the emotions of the event! Timbre in music, timbre (pronounced /'tæmbər/, like the "tambour" of "tambourine", or spelling pronunciation /'tɪmbər/; French: [tɛ̃bʁ]) is the quality of a musical note or sound or tone that distinguishes different types of sound production, such as voices or musical instruments. The physical characteristics of sound that mediate the perception of timbre include spectrum and envelope. Timbre is also known in psychoacoustics as

tone quality or tone color. I remember reading once a reviewing stating quite effectively that it is an underrated quality in high end audio. It was one of the things I noticed about the 2.6, their ability to get it right. They get every aspect of the timbre of saxophones (I play a Keilwerth), Trumpets, Grand Piano, the cello and viola, organ, etc. with critical levels of upper bass and lower midrange energy right. For example, they do an excellent job of reproducing YoYo Ma,s Cello right on Mendelssohn: Piano Trios Op 49 Op 66. Also listening to some well recorded piano music I noticed the wood on the piano resonating just like it was in front of me!

Even though the cabinet has eight ribbon tweeters you will not get artificial or exaggerated highs. What you get is musically natural highs that do not wear you out over the course of an evening of listening.

I am a big jazz buff and love listening to recordings of small ensembles. I also like small ensemble classical music, Perlman and Heifetz being two of my favorites. These are artist that convey emotion in their music and in the right system and under the right circumstances you can hear and feel their message.

Vocals from the eight mids are extremely natural almost spooky, try some Johnny Cash or Frank Sinatra with Joabim and you will be captivated. While writing I am listening to Rachel Ferrell who is an amazing vocalist, it motivated me to begin writing this update!

Bass response out of these speakers is nothing short of remarkable. Listen to some well recorded upright or electric bass guitar and you will be astonished. Also, I am trying some new nerve cables, a bi-wire set of cables which look a lot like Nordost cables (at a lot lower price point), they seem to transport the speaker to an even higher level...

I guess you can tell I like the speaker... I have also posted newer pix of the speakers and room. The adventure continues...

Attached Thumbnails

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