

Dolby Atmos Demo at the Audio Shrine

Review by David Das

I had the pleasure of attending the Dolby Atmos Demo on Saturday, December 7, 2024 hosted by Gregory Wann at The Audio Shrine.

Greg hand built this 60ft x 60ft outdoor shed from a prefab kit with the help of his wife and brother-in-law. Half of this enormous space is dedicated to Greg's passion for music and movies.

The 85" Samsung QLED TV is dwarfed by the size of this dedicated multimedia room still under construction.



All the equipment has been carefully matched and handpicked by Joe Goswami. Greg tapped into Joe's expertise in multichannel audio to complete this Dolby Atmos system.

A pair of [Philharmonic BMR Monitors](#) serves as the main Left and Right Channels.



They are resting on stable [28" high Rockville 2-Tone Speaker Stands](#).



This is the absolute best deal for the money.

The [Philharmonic HT](#) serves as the Center Channel.

It rests on a smaller [8" high Rockville Speaker Stand](#).



A pair of vintage [ADS L880 speakers](#) is used for the Left and Right Surrounds. They are more than adequate with a 10" woofer, 50mm midrange and 19mm soft dome tweeter covering a frequency range of 40Hz to 27kHz.



Greg's enormous space is bass loaded with 4 [RSL XDR-300 subwoofers](#) located at the 4 corners.



For the Dolby Atmos height channels, Greg has mounted 4 [Dayton Audio Classic B65](#) speakers.



This completes the 5.4.4 speaker array of the Dolby Atmos system.

For amplification, Greg has set up two instrument racks to house all his tube and solid state gear.

On top of the right instrument rack sits the [Black Ice Audio F22 Integrated Tube amp](#).

Below that sits the [Marantz AV7706 11.2 Channel Processor/Preamp](#). This constitutes the heart of the system steering the multichannel input to the 5.4.4 surround matrix.



Below the Marantz Receiver, there is a [4 channel Emotiva power amp](#) feeding the 4 Dolby height speakers.

Sitting underneath the Emotive Solid State power amp is a [Transcendent Sound Tube amp](#) that is powering the Philharmonic HT Center Channel speaker.



The Turntable sits on top of the left instrument rack.



Below the turntable, there is an [SPL Elector Analog Preamp](#).



Next to the SPL sits the [Bluesound Node](#) Performance Wireless Music Streamer on top of the Cambridge Audio DacMagic.



In the lower shelves you have a Sony 4K UHD 3D Blu-ray player, a [Tascam DA-3000](#) Stereo AD/DA converter and a PS Audio DAC.



This is quite an impressive collection of high end gear!

But wait that is more.

Suspended high on the ceiling is a pair of gigantic 30 inch woofers mounted inside massive enclosures.



Greg will have them hooked up for a future audio demo.

How does this 5.4.4 Dolby Atmos setup sound?

Impressive, engaging, balanced with seamless 360 degree sound steering and sense of height that filled up the entire room.

I was surprised how the relatively small Philharmonic BMR Monitors were able to effortlessly generate adequate SPL levels in this large space while maintaining pinpoint imaging.

I was the first guest to arrive at 10am and got to see how Joe set up the volume levels of each channel on the Marantz AV7706 processor. I could see why Joe needed to have a subwoofer at each of the 4 corners to even out the bass response. A single sub in this large space would not have sufficed. Joe got them dialed in to blend them seamlessly with the Mains and Surrounds.

By 11:30am, we had a full house and Joe was ready to play all his selected multichannel tracks. For sake of comparison, Joe had 2-channel recordings along with Quad, DTS and Dolby Atmos releases of the same tracks.

Joe played the Dark Side of the Moon by Pink Floyd.



Joe preferred the original stereo recording on vinyl. He mentioned the bass was thicker and overall pleasing to the ear. I liked the Dolby Atmos version where each instrument had better separation in the 360 degree sound space with additional surprise audio cues coming from the 4 height speakers. While it sounded thinner than the original stereo cut, it had more resolution and projected a tantalizing immersive experience.

Joe had ripped the Blu-ray discs to MKV files on his laptop for convenience. The Quad recordings also sounded good, but they lacked the spatial gimmicks the producers steered to the height channels in the Dolby Atmos mixes.

Joe came equipped with a large selection of Vinyl tracks, Audio CDs, Blu-rays and audio files on his hard drive. He played a variety of tracks to showcase what this system can do with straight 2-channel stereo as well as full Dolby Atmos productions.

I felt Joe wisely distributed the funds across all the speakers, amps, and preamps to arrive at the best system synergy that delivered in spades. Greg couldn't have chosen a better system integrator. Every dollar spent was worth it.

The star of this presentation was the Philharmonic BMR Monitors (\$2,200/pair) along with the Philharmonic HT Center Channel (\$1,500) that blended in seamlessly. I do not know of any other LCR speaker array that could deliver this level of performance for \$3,700.

The next critical component in this multi-channel setup was the Marantz AV7706 11.2 channel processor (\$3,200). This is essential to steer your sound and level match each channel with Audyssey MultiEQ XT32 room calibration built-in.

When Joe played the Dolby Atmos productions of Pink Floyd I was impressed how well the bass sounded through the 4 RSL 10" vented subs. The bass sounded tight and fast. It never sounded bloated anywhere across the room.

Greg has spent a fortune building this dedicated multimedia room. Thanks a million to Greg for his generosity and willingness to host these club events at his Audio Shrine.

I certainly had a terrific time and would be eagerly looking forward to future events.

Best regards,

David Das.