

A Greek Baroque System

In 2005, after the winter holidays, I decided to build a special amplifier. I needed a Class A (no more than 50W), but the design needed to be impressive—eventually on wheels—to permit clean, sweet sound. I called Aris the architect, and thus began the process of building The Tower (Photo 1).

We finished the impressive-looking, three-tiered unit in one week, including the tests. We made three versions—each with some electronic differences, but the general view was the same. It's a decorative piece, which we needed to match the furniture.

As the photos show, the unit features a lot of massive wood and many Baroque ornaments. We only made custom prototypes, not production models. We sent the first one to the *Sound/Image* magazine for tests and evaluation, and received favorable results.

CIRCUITRY AND POWER STAGE

Because most listeners do not need more than 45-50W, I chose a Class A PP with 2xKT88 or 6550 with automatic bias (180Ω, 50W resistor) decoupled by two capacitors. I had the opportunity to find the tubes in Athens and in my numerous trips to my former country Romania. The common-cathode phase splitter uses the 6FQ7 double triode former TV horizontal and vertical oscillator, which has very big anodes, good dissipation, and did the job perfectly. Of course, it needs to balance the AC tensions, so the two RA resistors should not be the same.

I did not connect the lower tubes as triodes or UL because of the power losses and the need for more input tension.



PHOTO 1: Three-tiered Baroque Tower.

In place of the 6FQ7, I used E80CC and the Russian 6H1P, and the results were not much different. The two excellent quality OTRs (output transformers), with double C core type, were manufactured in a little shop by Tim, who helped me to experiment with all my crazy ideas. The transformers were mounted in special non-thermal plastic black boxes.

A vintage magic eye (6E5) and two VU meters complete the power stage plus some golden ornaments to make a big impression! The eye is not dancing with the music, but tells you that the

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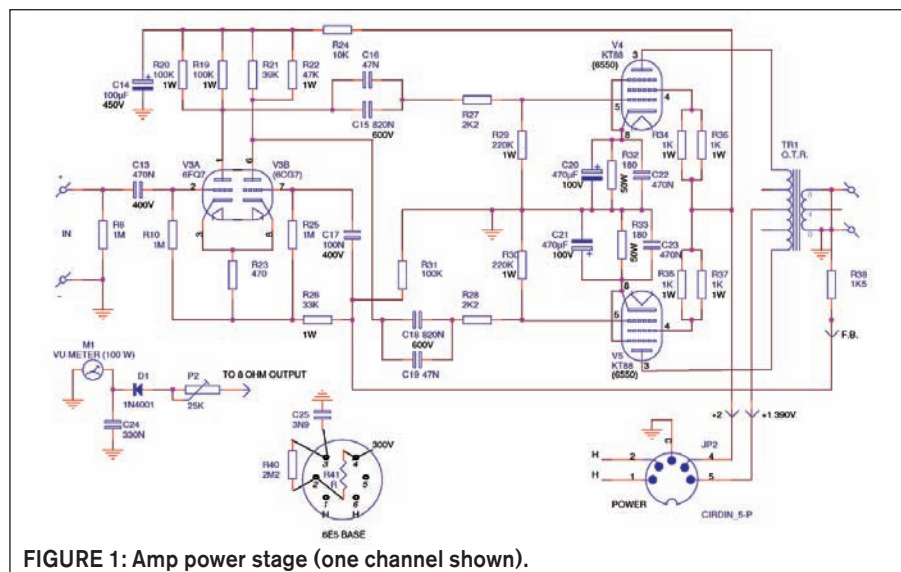


FIGURE 1: Amp power stage (one channel shown).

