



RESTORING A VINTAGE CONE LOUDSPEAKER

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Beginning in the Twenties with the pioneer work of Voigt and Rice-Kellogg, the evolution of the modern loudspeaker is a fascinating chapter of electroacoustics. Over the years many types of such devices were developed. So the collecting of loudspeakers is a rewarding activity among the many fields of electronic memorabilia, in part because of the speaker's simplicity and its importance as an interface between electrical signals and live sound.

In Brazil, antique loudspeakers are quite rare, so searching for them is "different." In case one turns up, its restoration is also an unusual activity. Since a photograph is "worth a thousand words," this article illustrates in pictorial sequence the basic collector's approach to restoring. The loudspeaker covered, a very old

cone type with brand name Sferavox, was found in a junk yard. It was rusted and damaged by time, but fortunately with all its basic parts. At the same time, the story shows the shelf display of the restoration.

(Author's thanks to Mario Rodrigues for helping locate the artifact, and to Guy Lietard for support and advice during cone reconstruction and finishing.)

REFERENCES

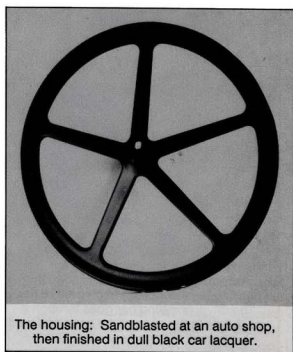
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Paul, Floyd A., "A Decade of Electroacoustic Reproduction (1920-1930)," AWA Review, Vol. 4, 1989, pp. 84-98.

Photos: Carlos Alberto Fazano, 1985-89.



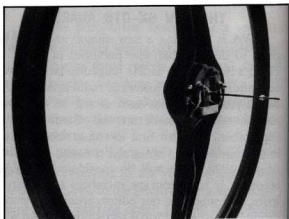
"Ao Belchior," probably the oldest and most famous Brazilian antique shop, located in Porto Alegre, R. S. [Some things are universal: "Antiguidades e Artigos de Utilidade em Geral" in Portuguese is "Trash and Treasures" or "Junique" here. - Ed.]



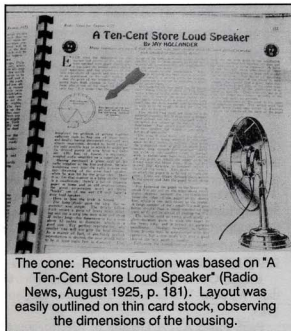
The housing: Sandblasted at an auto shop, then finished in dull black car lacquer.



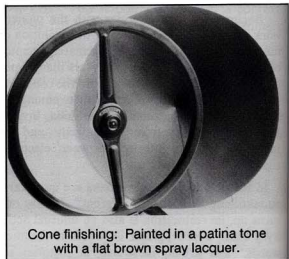
Mechanical parts: Very small items (phone tips, cone retainers, screws, washers, nuts) were carefully hand-sanded and polished.



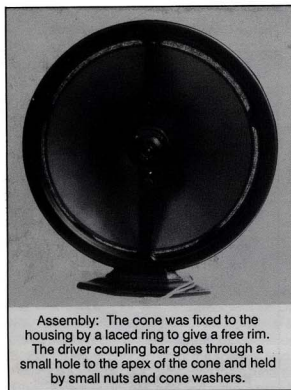
Armature driver: Parts were brushed in light solvent. The coil, which was open [they always are!], was carefully hand-rewound to keep its electrical characteristics. Silk-covered 20-ga wire was used for the cable.



The cone: Reconstruction was based on "A Ten-Cent Store Loud Speaker" (Radio News, August 1925, p. 181). Layout was easily outlined on thin card stock, observing the dimensions of the housing.



Cone finishing: Painted in a patina tone with a flat brown spray lacquer.



Assembly: The cone was fixed to the housing by a laced ring to give a free rim. The driver coupling bar goes through a small hole to the apex of the cone and held by small nuts and cone washers.



Displaying: While restoring requires skill, displaying an antique is a matter of subtlety and taste. Here is the restored vintage speaker on display.