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Recommended Components

2013 Recommended Components Loudspeakers



Loudspeaker Systems

Editor's Note: Class A "Loudspeakers" are sufficiently idiosyncratic and differ enough from one another that prospective customers should read Stereophile's original reviews in their entirety for descriptions of the sounds. I have therefore just listed every system or combination that at least one of Stereophile's reviewers feels, as a result of his or her experience, approaches the current state of the art in loudspeaker design. (Note that, to be eligible for inclusion in Class A, the system must be full-range—ie, feature bass extension to 20Hz. It must also be capable of reaching realistic sound-pressure levels without any feeling of strain.)

For those unconcerned about the last few hertz of low-bass extension, we have created "Classes A, B, and C (Restricted Extreme LF)" for those speakers that are state of the art in every other way. Candidates for inclusion in this class must still reach down to at least 40Hz, below the lowest notes of the four-string double-bass and bass guitar.

In addition, such has been the recent progress in loudspeaker design at a more affordable level that we have an extra class: E, for "Entry Level." Someone once asked us why Stereophile bothers to review inexpensive loudspeakers at all: In effect, aren't we insulting our readership by recommending that they buy inexpensive models? Remember: It's possible to put together a musically satisfying, truly high-end system around any of our Class D and E recommendations. That's why they're listed—and why you should consider buying them.

Class C (Restricted LF)



Triangle Bookshelf Color: \$799/pair (stands necessary) \$\$\$

Available in stunning finishes of white, black, or red lacquer, the Bookshelf Color is a simple two-way design with a rear-firing port, a 1" titanium-dome tweeter, and a 6" doped-paper-cone low-frequency driver. Though it lacked the low-level resolution, bass extension, and overall refinement of the more expensive Dynaudio Excite X12, the Bookshelf Color had an easy, almost laid-back overall sound, with excellent imaging and a deep, wide soundstage, said ST, though he warns that the Bookshelf is "Slightly pricey for the performance offered." (Vol.34 No.6)

