

HIGH FIDELITY.PL ROCK HI-FI REVIEW

Several years ago, the presence of active speakers in home audio systems was difficult unthinkable. While companies such as Naim Audio, Linn, PMC, and previously also selected models Spendor and Celestion (to remain in the British Isles), had in its offer versions of passive and active the same column, integrated structures in which the active crossover and a set of amplifiers is arranged directly in the housing column was absolutely scarce.



In the world of pro audio, we have to deal with exactly the opposite situation. The rule number one is that the speakers are active and only in exceptional cases, manufacturers opt for external amplifiers, speakers, leaving passive crossovers. People working in the sector of professional, focused on publicising concerts, recording, mixing and mastering come out with the assumption that the passive crossover is not able to accurately divide the band, and in addition attenuates the signal. A world of pro thinks dynamics and rate of rise of the signal (and hence detail) as priorities, even more important than linearity, saturation, and imaging.

Today the thing looks different. In most homes we find speakers active on the computer. Because that computer is currently one of the main sources of music. "Activity" is based on computer speakers that are mounted amplifier and can be actuated directly from the output of the sound card. Volume set on your computer, or knob on one of the speakers. An example of this idea brought at a very high level speakers were Master Studio and Studio Oslo Ancient Audio.

The Rock MK II Hi-Fi

speakers Unity Audio are classic studio monitor. At first glance. This column active for listening in the so-called. near field, which is not more than 1.5 m from the base, aligned with the course of bandwidth on the main axis. They are equipped with two amplifiers, for separate tweeter and midrange and low-active crossover. They take a balanced low-level signal (in the world of pro uses the term 'symmetric', XLR) and unbalanced (RCA). Adjusts the volume knob. All slots and knob are placed in the hollow of the back wall.

At the same time, however, this column surprisingly many ranging from the experiences of our world - the world of home audio. The number one reason such statements are used

pickups - both come from the German company Elac. Number one is a tweeter Folded Ribbon Tweeter, which variety transducer AMT, which last month wrote on the occasion of the test speakers Audiovector QR3 (and not just more HERE). -Midrange transducer, in turn, is a membrane of aluminium strips on the cellulose pulp fi and a diameter of 180 mm.

Unusual amplifiers are also used to drive the speakers. He prepared them yourself Tim de Paravicini of Esoteric Audio Research. That's why we have to deal with transistor amplifiers operating in Class A / B, powered linear power supply. Because you know that the norm of the speakers are now active amplifiers working in class D. Tim de Paravicini is one of the icons of the world of audio, the man leading his company EAR Yoshino, order modifying a device study. It came from his hand modifications analog tape recorders used by the specialist publisher plates Mobile Fidelity Sound Lab.

And finally casing that takes the best of both worlds - a closed casing. speakers with a small internal volume not carry low bass, because they can not. But if we can integrate them with electronics, then they open up for us new possibilities. Currently the fastest is developed signal processing in digital circuits DSP, which gives excellent results. But to make sense, to the speakers you need to bring a digital signal. If it is analog, it must first get to the analog-to-digital, and finally must be converted back to analog. And that always means a loss.

Designers therefore need to think in terms of profit and loss and decide on a specific solution. If you remain in the analog domain, they can do so as the company Ancient Audio in these monitors to compensate for the imperfections of transducers and a small housing in an analog processor, or as the speakers in The Rock MkII, by compensating for the crossover.

Care was also that the speakers have the best possible support. The housing is entirely made of plywood Baltic birch (Baltic Birch), which is a more expensive than MDF, but giving better results. The front was reinforced slab of Corian, a rear metal plate, which is bolted from the inside electronics. Corian is a very stiff material, variety mixtures based on epoxy resin, patented by Du Pont, the same who gave us Teflon. Used eg. In the kitchen on countertops is easy and treatment and very stiff.

The company Unity Audio talking about we tested speakers uses such terms as "incredibly accurate", "a reference to which all other speakers are compared," "designed for demanding professionals," etc. (see. HERE). To give credence to publish the measurement bandwidth speakers. Chart is impressively flat course from 50 Hz up to 20 kHz. Both the edges are not in these places cut off, gently fall, reaching (respectively) much lower and higher.



It is difficult with these statements did not agree. With the reservations and observations speaking about the conditions, but with conviction about the fact that it was actually "monitors", ie. A column that can be used to assess the quality of the recording.

Even so, it is very well differentiate recordings, ie. Show changes in colour, dynamics, speed, etc., And provides insight into the recording itself. There's a lot of analytics, but without focus. So there was no difficulty with the settlement, which changed when the Japanese released the album Offramp Path Metheny Group on a gold backing. Registered in 1982, in the digital domain, the material was not specially remastered, and simply more carefully treated sent to the mill material. "Gold" version is stronger, fuller, thicker. There is so precise attack, like the classic, making acoustic guitars and instruments with a strong attack are a bit milder. But there was no doubt that the plunging Japanese are more distribution and has a fuller colour. It is simply better. The differences were clear and unambiguous, what helped precision tested speakers.

Based on this experience the first part of the listening spent a good recordings and thought editions. It turned out that the speakers are perfectly built higher harmonics, because of suitable material in sound focused, dense way. As with plate Carol Sloane Fri. Hush-A-Bye, which uwiarygodniły great voice of the singer, building its large and powerful image of the well indicated to lump. It was a real object in space, with the depth and density. Vocals and accompanying guitars were pushed forward and has always been an "anchor" around which everything else revolved.



When I listened to the song Guess Who I Saw Today, where the vocals are quite far behind, with reverb suggesting room to which we look from the outside, The Rock very nicely with grace showed what it is, but also increased the image, reduced the distance between us and vocals. This will be repeated each time. This column, which celebrate the fore and it's the focus of our attention, grooming him in terms of color and imagery. Further plans to pull up and increase, through which the message is denser and very impressive. Well, easier to understand what's in a recording it. It is precisely this element, by which so well these speakers differentiate the material to shock without details, details, without attacking our sense of good taste. Yes good resolution treble without emphasising is the domain of the speakers AMT. They have a sweet, wonderfully-saturated up to the multitude of details making up more than just the "ticking" of the plate. They describe the importance, manner and place of impact. Attention is also appreciating the lower range of mountains, at the turn of the measure. It seems a slightly raised (in a normal, living room) range in the vicinity of 600 Hz instead of lightning, because when we are in the recording noise left graciously by the contractor or the person remastered old material, it is with The Rock low, give you more information sounding than if you just odkreślono up.

Sure you can already be read between the lines, but this is a column in which attention is paid mainly to the middle of the band and it is on its lower range. It's a bit like speakers pro, unusual behaviour, because usually it comes to burning of detail and contoured sound. But through it was clear that Unity Audio does not want to duplicate schemas and want to combine the best of both worlds, ie. While remaining within the framework outlined for the study, reaches for solutions that have worked in the audio perfekcjonistycznym as converters, amplifiers, and even the character of the sound.

This is true also in the version instruments invested in the bass range, because the bass descends - for such a small column - deep, deeper than most stand-monitors with a bass-reflex. Only as sophisticated structures, as Kaiser Acoustics Kawero! Chiara descend even lower (curiosity: we find them AMT speaker, so that the production Mundorf). But here and now it is difficult to fault moving bass, as well as its definition. Low range is saturated, massive and although not as colourful and varied as you might wish, it is the price which we have to pay for other benefits.

The Rock MkII therefore satisfy the requirements for small speakers, which we put at home. They are fast, the bass is low, we focus on midrange and have a wonderfully

multicoloured, fatigue-free up. Maybe it does not have outstanding definition, but when it comes to colour is fantastic. But keep in mind that this is, of course, studio speakers with whom you have to know how to proceed and which have special features such appropriate structures, over which the house, in a classic room, you have to control. As I mentioned at the beginning, bandwidth on the main axis of the column is aligned above average, which reached the selection of transducers and adjustments introduced in the active crossover. It does not say, however, about how the speakers radiate off-axis. And not without reason. Studio is a place with a very damped acoustics, which counts only direct radiation, and the rest is switched off or bypassed, eg. By listening in the near field. In the house reflection they play equally important role as the beam axis. English speakers have the tendency to emphasise the range of 600-800 Hz. This is not so. "Higher diameter", which is said to often in the context of the speakers home tantalising listeners brightening vocals. It's all about range is located exactly on the top of the vocals, but no clear and distinct. This column, which unsuitable material can play strongly and have to either suppress the wall next to them, or set them so that they do not radiate directly to the listener. This, of course, the implementation of the postulate of "fidelity", I understand that. The best home-column, however, can show everything, but in such a way that, after all come on top of other advantages. The Rock MkII can be absolute material.

Summary

To make a professional system with the use of tested speakers just DAC with volume control and a computer. Therefore, the high price - in relation to the size - is not so high. Finally we get a column, active crossover and four - two per channel - amplifiers outstanding specialist.

Adding an external preamp, as long as high-class, we get deeper bass and greater plasticity. But even controlled directly from the output of the player or transmitter will be the speakers that show a large, low sound with a fantastic mountain. Having them at home we carefully chose issue plates, guided by the principle that it is never so good that it could not be better. This column, which will quickly show a too high compression and compact diameter, making some recordings sound too emphatically. This can to some extent correct choice of source or suppression room, or finally bend speakers.

So if we want high-class sound "monitor," we want to know more and do not want to have an extended system, we do not want to spend big money, The Rock MkII will become equal to the task.

Unity Audio The Rock MkII Hi-Fi is a stand mount speakers, active on the site closed. Their wide frequency range (37 Hz-38 kHz) has been achieved by the use of very good transmitters and compensation bass in the electronic crossover. The speakers are large, measuring 290 x 220 x 325 mm but are heavy. And this is a very solid case. Already talked about this, it is 12 mm Baltic birch plywood, reinforced with 12 mm front plate Corian, on the back of a metal plate, which is bolted electronics. The front and rear wall have been linked by two rods running at the height of tweeter. The interior is very well damped compacted, natural wool.



Both speakers come from the German company Elac. Treble plays Folded Ribbon Tweeter, ie. Loudspeaker with a large concertina membrane, acting like an accordion bellows. The bass plays in turn cone mid-woofer diameter fi 180 mm with a membrane composed of two layers: the base paper and aluminium on the outside. The coil is glued directly to the membrane from behind, without cutting the opening. This gave a rigid, uniform surface. Similar solutions can be found in the company Monitor Audio speakers. Both speakers have fronts with high-quality polymer. In the low-midrange speaker is part of the basket.

Manipulators hidden in a hollow on the rear panel. There are line inputs - RCA and XLR - IEC socket with a mechanical switch and knob, which we set the input sensitivity. The latter should be graduated, for now, set to "eye". The speakers do not have faceplates. It's solid, good work.

MARCIN PLAYER | ADAM Audio BIELEWICZ Właściciele Trionic - distributor speakers Unity Audio



Unity Audio in Paul Sydor

Marcin Gracza Jestem

In the audio industry for about eight years and less than four absorbed me the video industry. The very interested in music already eighteen years and during that time constantly looking for new paths. In addition to the interest of studio equipment and video'm a geek synthesisers and reach for anything that has a chance to scroll under my fingers. All these interests come together and focus my attention on the sound, so did the requirement for uncompromising monitors and speakers. That is largely influenced the willingness to provide people the most important chain of track listening, ie. High-quality speakers that allow you to hear everything that happens in your favourite recordings.

Adam BielewiczW

Audio industry since I was about eight years. For me it was a natural direction of development, because it coincides with previous hobby. Fun in the domestic music-making has been supplemented with interest in all kinds of devices, and so I became a man linked to part of the study of the environment. I think that the converter and the relevant monitors is an important element of the track listening. I do not forget, however, about the musicians, producers, and execution. At the end of last year, along with his friend Martin decided that we introduce into the Polish market brand of British studio listening Unity Audio. This year we completed the offer of speakers Hi-Fi. The choice was simple really - are excellent, and approach the manufacturer for them coincides with ours. We just like to do it.

Płyty użyte w odsłuchu (wybór)

Carol Sloane, *Hush-A-Bye*, Sinatra Society of Japan/Muzak XQAM-1031, CD (2008)

Cyrus Chestnut, *Midnight Melodies*, Smoke Sessions Records SSR-1408, CD (2014);
recenzja [TUTAJ](#)

Depeche Mode, *Dream On*, Mute Records CDBONG30, maxi-SP (2001)

Kings of Leon, *Only by the Night*, RCA/BMG Japan BVCP-40058, CD (2009/2010)

Kortez, *Bumerang*, Asphalt Records JB 029 2CD, CD (2015); recenzja [TUTAJ](#)

Michael Jackson, *Thriller. 25th Anniversary Edition*, Epic/Sony Music Japan EICP-963-4,
CD+DVD (1982/2008)

Muse, *The Resistance*, Warner Music Japan WPZR-30355-6, CD+DVD (2009).

Pat Metheny Group, *Offramp*, ECM ECM1216, CD (1982/?)

Pat Metheny Group, *Offramp*, ECM/Universal Music K.K. UCCE-9144, SHM-CD
(1982/2008)

Pat Metheny Group, *Offramp*, ECM/Universal Music K.K. UCCU-9543, „Jazz The Best |
No. 43”, gold-CD (1982/2004)

Patrick Noland, *Peace*, Naim Audio naimcd065, CD (2002)

Portishead, *Dummy*, Go! Disc Limited/Universal Music Company [Japan] UICY-20164,
SHM-CD (1994/2011)

Radiohead, *The King of Limbs*, Ticker Tape Ltd. TICK-001CDJ, Blu-spec CD (2011)

Technical data (according to manufacturer)

Woofer: 180 mm (7 "), ELAC

Tweeter: Folded Ribbon Tweeter, ELAC:

Closed cabinet, 12 mm Baltic birch plywood (Baltic Birch)

Front: 12 mm Corian

Amplifiers: 100 W (in total), Class A / B, Esoteric Audio Research

Frequency response: 37 Hz-50 kHz (+/- 3 dB)

Dimensions (D x W x H): 290 x 220 x 325 mm

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