



hifi & records

Das Magazin für
hochwertige Musikwiedergabe

manufacturer's current state-of-the-art in loudspeaker technology for 2005. I have once described the Spark's predecessor as a »continuation of the mini-monitor by using other means«. My statement is based on the fact that the Spark – being a two-and-a-half way speaker – is, so to day, supplemented by its own »subwoofer« which gently takes its leave at 500 Hertz and only supports the upper woofer/midrange driver by providing more fullness in the bass and lower midrange region. However, since the two Peerless drivers used for the Spark

A beautiful floor-standing loudspeaker for small-sized rooms: Audio Physic has "re-invented" the Spark.

Audio Physic Spark

Sometimes things do not turn out the way you expect. You end up spending so much time listening to different loudspeakers at the HiFi dealer's until you finally find your top model, then when you take it home with you, you realise that the loudspeaker does not sound at all the way it should. The major flaw often lies with the bass region which meddles too much for its

own good, shows its potential for smearing recorded information and may very well spoil your musical enjoyment. What do you do if you do not feel like getting a compact loudspeaker, but instead wish for a modern and very good-looking floor-standing gear? Just go for the Spark, a vintage Audio Physic product which chief-designer Manfred Diestertich has re-engineered and upgraded to meet the

are fitted with slim baskets, the loudspeaker comes with a small baffle which is otherwise only found in mini-monitors. With its ultra slim design, only 17 cm (6,5") wide, the Spark is even slimmer than a BBC LS 3/5 A.

The immediate obvious difference between the new Spark and its predecessor are the curved sides of the enclosure making the new loudspeaker look less "like

a box". What matters even more – from an audiophile point of view – is how the Spark is provided with solid metal stand stands where the spikes can be adjusted from above. This is a very hands-on solution allowing the user to firmly place the loudspeaker without fumbling around.

The goal of re-engineering also included revising both woofer/midrange drivers; they are now equipped with coil formers reinforced by fibreglass whereas the bass driver features a four-layer voice coil to serve its purpose well. Both drivers also use the good old treated paper cones. Diestertich is of the opinion that the much-praised and seemingly “miraculous materials” used for cones are almost guaranteed to fall short of delivering the promised miracle when applied. Therefore, he either uses metal cones or paper ones.

Just like with the older sister “Tempo” (see issue 2/2005), the tweeter of the Spark is no longer fitted with a ring radiator, but instead now features a conventional Vifa soft dome. Manfred Diestertich expects the Spark to profit from this change, to become less complicated and more easy-going about less than perfect amplifiers and loudspeaker cables. “In terms of sound reproduction the Vifa dome is perfectly all right,” Diestertich affirms, “just the principle it is based on is different to that of a ring radiator.”

The decoupled connecting terminal of the Spark (no bi-wiring) is a fine piece of design and it was with high expectations that we hooked the loudspeaker up to the integrated amplifiers from Creek and Arcam as well as to the excellent V10 tube amplifier of T+A (5,000 Euro, issue 4/2004) in order to explore its full “audiophile potential”.

The Spark predecessors occasionally managed to upstage their larger Tempo sister due to the fact that they took on a more relaxed feeling and a greater delight in playing. This comparison is no longer as relevant as it once was for the simple reason that the new Tempo is a



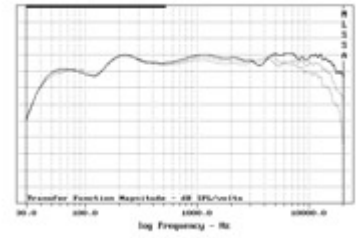
three-way system. And yet the approach of the Spark has remained the same, inasmuch as the loudspeaker's forte is a lively and dynamic music portrayal rather than an excessive bass boom. It is more the provision of an open spatial image than high levels which the Spark excels at. The acoustic centre of the loudspeaker is placed at a relatively high level which means that you are well advised to resume a rather high sitting position in your listening seat (if your sitting position is too low, you may well be missing out on the lively presence of the sound reproduction). When you keep this in mind, the Spark will live up to its full sonic potential even in small-sized rooms whereas the Tempo is sometimes prone to inject too much bass into the room. That is what the Spark is designed for. And let me tell you that no-one is going to ask for a larger loudspeaker when there is no boom and when the music no longer seems to originate directly from the loudspeaker thanks to the slim front baffle of the Spark. Promised.

Wilfried Kress ■

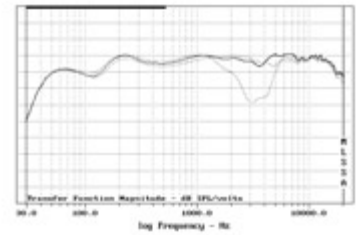


Lab-Report

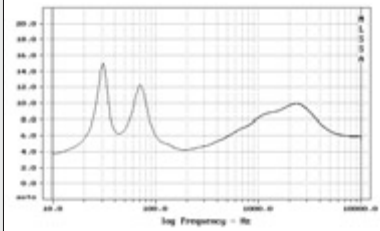
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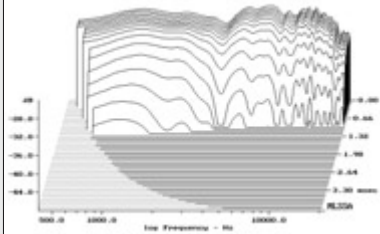
Frequency resp.: in-room, vert. -10°/10°



Impedance: Audio Physic Spark



Waterfall: Audio Physic Spark



Audio Physic Spark

WxHxD	17* x 101 x 34,5 cm
Guarantee	10 years
Price	2.000 Euro
Distribution	Audio Physic Almerfeldweg 38 59929 Brilon
Telephone	0049 - (0)29 61 - 96 170

* with stands: 29 cm