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»Holy Grail«:

Magico A5

The life of a reviewer is always made a little easier when products from a family that is already known are announced. Like, for example, Magico's A-series, from which both the compact A1 (issue 2/2020) and the mid-range floor-standing speaker A3 (issue 3/2019) were able to sustainably convince me. Now, with the number five, comes the shiny black alpha animal for sound conversion. What could possibly happen? Loudspeakers are similar to wine. There are an incredible number of winegrowers, different wines, growing locations and secrets about pressing. Moreover, there is no one grape juice that tastes good to everyone. But the winegrowers do set their own quality standard, which is somewhere between a supermarket range and a unique luxury product.

For about 16 years, Magico is well known for the production of the noblest sound drops. For years, experiencing the exceptional performance of these speakers was reserved for a small, exclusive and audiophile audience. For a long time, company founder Alon Wolf was forced to create a more affordable series. For an 08/15 manufacturer, this is not a difficult task: Lower-priced cabinets and drivers, produced in larger quantities and/or with less material, are combined with a simpler crossover, and the entry-level series is finished. But Magico is considered one of the world's leading manufacturers of high-end loudspeakers and consequently has a reputation to lose. The Americans set technical and sound standards, so how should an »entry-level« line work? On the one hand, it must spread the haptic »spirit« of the top models and contain their sound DNA, but it must not follow too closely on the heels of its larger siblings. In the case of the A1 and A3, this balancing act has been successfully achieved.

The black aluminium cabinet of the A5, a sound body made of 82 kilograms of material, is extremely refined. Despite the simplicity of the form, the craftsmanship makes a lasting impression on me. The internal stiffeners and their arrangement are taken

Review: Loudspeaker Magico A5

With the A5, Magico has created an innovative loudspeaker masterpiece – with plenty of membrane area and a closed cabinet.

from the larger Q series. The construction is supported by four solid spikes, which are probably unique on the market in terms of dimension and perfection and ensure the ideal acoustic coupling.

Neither chassis nor crossover are old and possibly only adapted acquaintances. Magico develops and researches continuously; when something is ready for series production, it will be implemented immediately. Like the new 12.7 centimeter midrange driver, for example. The diaphragm material is still nanographene carbon fibre, whose modified composition improves the relation between stiffness and weight once again. The new coated foam surround should not only be durable, but also benefit the impulse behaviour thanks to minimal mechanical losses and enable low distortion values. In contrast to the A3 with two 18 millimeter woofers, the A5's closed cabinet contains three 23 mm bass drivers, all equipped with a highly rigid nanographene carbon-fibre cone. The voice coils with windings of pure titanium – they have a diameter of almost 13 centimeters – are immersed in powerful magnet systems. With the support of massive computing power that records thermal, electromagnetic and mechanical parameters, Magico has optimised the dispersion characteristics.

With the 28-millimeter beryllium dome tweeter sitting in its own housing damped with high-tech materials, there is a very familiar chassis to be discovered after all. There was simply nothing to improve on its power handling, dynamic capabilities and low distortion level. The crossover, optimised for phase linearity, operates with a slope of 24 decibels and is equipped with Mundorf components, among others, including the brand new »MRes Ultra« resistors, which immediately catch the eye thanks to their striking red colour. Magico is the first manufacturer to use these components made of copper/manganese foil. According to the Cologne-based manufacturer, the core virtue is the absence of any distortion, which other types of resistors are said to exhibit.

Power and concentration are required to bring the Magico into the listening room, to free it from its

Holy Grail

packaging and to align it at the listening position. The latter works best without spikes and is not witchcraft, because the A5 is fortunately not a diva. However, it has much greater sound potential than was initially foreseeable. After all, the noble Pass INT-60 integrated amplifier was in use, and I was already amazed in the first hours with the Magico at the performance this black calibre delivered with both the Clearaudio Anniversary and my Marantz SACD player. Of course there are burn-in effects and always the potential for further optimisation, but the motivation to do so didn't

really materialise. The Magico A5 made music from the very first moment. And how! Familiar albums like »Get Rhythm« by Ry Cooder are suddenly unrecognisable. There are clearly more dynamics, and the bass range is like a sensation – deep, punchy, bone-dry and with a turn-on physical force. To a greater extent than its two smaller siblings, the A5 opens the window to the music even

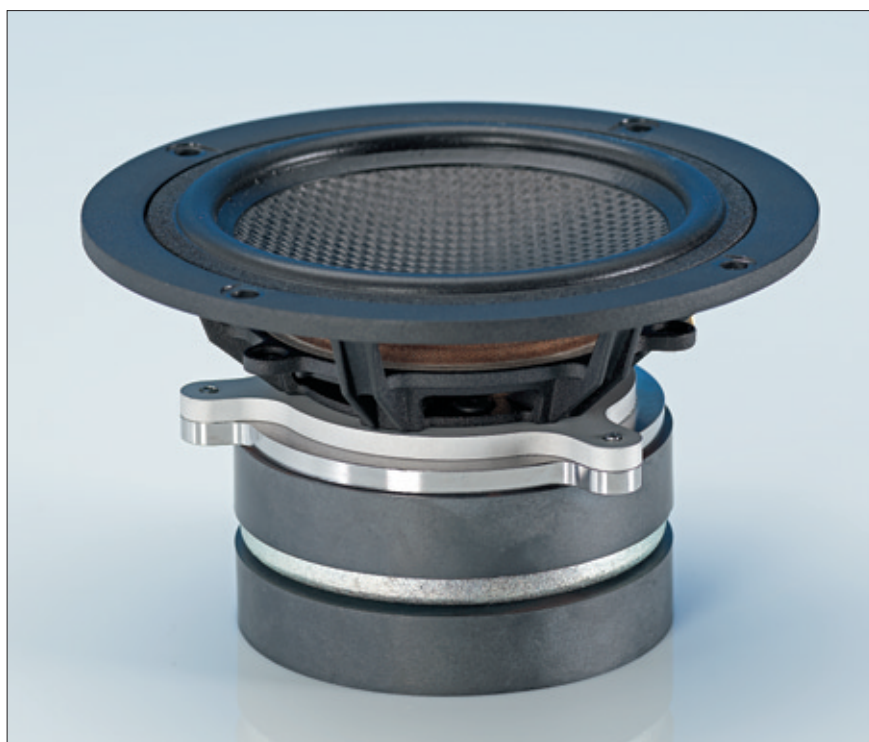


wider and sets standards with its open and clear playing style.

Its high frequency range is exemplary. When I used my work speakers for a brief comparison, I already suspected that their tweeters were not playing along, because it sounded as if someone had thrown a tarpaulin over the musicians. It's also a mystery to me how the A5 can provide such an impressive in-

crease in dynamic range. The »Moonlight Sonata« in the interpretation of the Jazzrausch Big Band is an example of this, because the wind instruments play quieter and louder through the Magico than through other transducers. The percussion seems faster and is definitely more contoured, and the pulsating bass cannot be topped in terms of precision – I have never heard this before in anything like comparable form.

But then came the day that changed everything: It began with the harmless announcement of a delivery by a forwarding agent. After unpacking, the SDR-4000 SV CD player, the DMC-30 SC preamplifier and the DMA-250 S3 stereo power amplifier from Spectral, which was also intended for a test, including the appropriate MIT cabling, were standing in my listening room. Spectral! Didn't Wilfried Kress once state in black and white that »there are amplifiers – and Spectral«? I was soon to find out how right he was.



Magico's core competence lies in the quality of the drivers. On the left the new midrange driver with nanographene carbon fibre cone and double magnet system.

Do you remember the moment when spaceships in science fiction films accelerate from normal speed to the speed of light? That's what happened to me at my listening position. Clueless, I put Dead Can Dance's live album »In Concert« into the Spectral player, it was supposed to be a cautious first contact after all. A concert review published in 2013 read the following: »The fascinating character of a Dead Can Dance performance seems so unique not least because its special atmosphere can hardly be reconstructed outside a concert



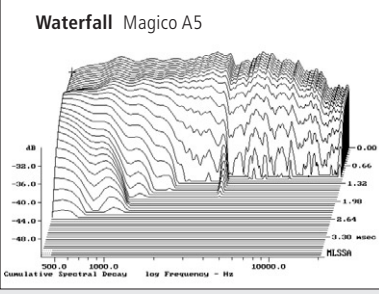
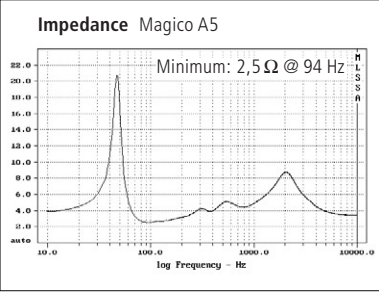
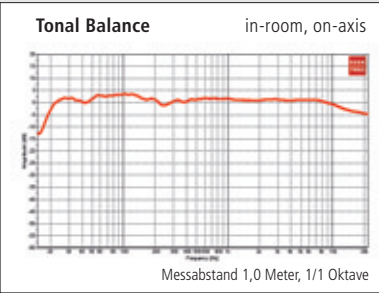
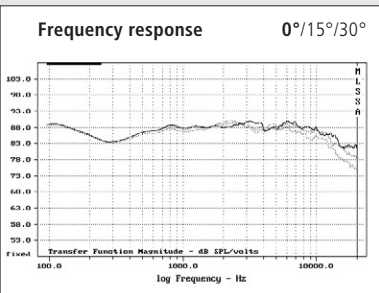
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MAGICO



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Lab-Report

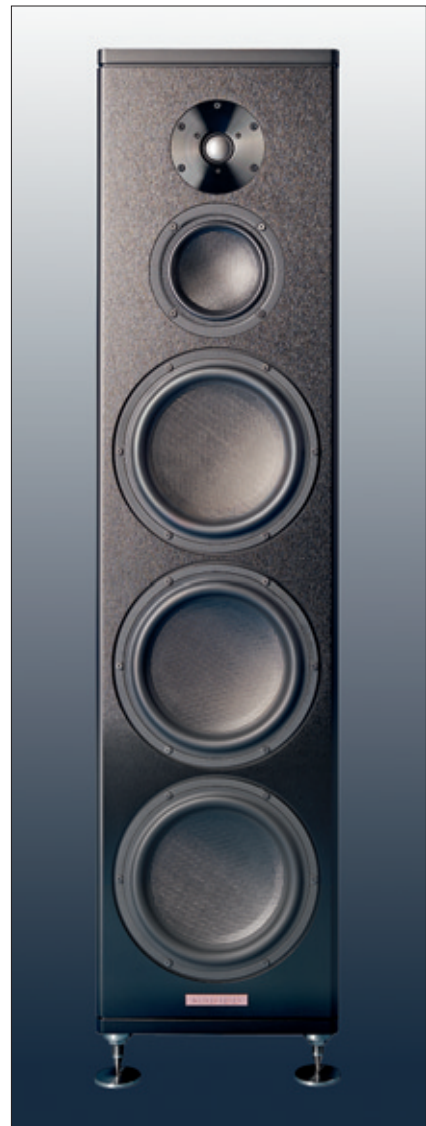
A highly interesting loudspeaker that does many things differently from others. For one thing, the A5's openness does not go hand in hand with an exaggerated high frequency, on the contrary. At the other end of the spectrum, the Magico remains very precise even in our small measuring room; this is where the closed cabinet pays off. The dip around 300 Hertz is due to the 1m measuring distance, the linearity of the A5 is ± 2.1 dB for horizontal dispersion and ± 1.6 dB below 15 degrees. The sensitivity is 88.5 dB (2.83 V / 1m, 700 - 5,000 Hz).



hall.« I vehemently disagree with this statement today in the face of Spectral electronics and Magico A5. Two magical concert hours are alive again, the images of the event are stored in my head, and with the now realistic soundtrack, the enjoyment is perfect.

Things are supposedly less spectacular when Fausto Mesolella plucks the strings of his guitar with great skill. No sound is accidental, the reverberation is clearly attributable to its cause, and the space is simply there – not too small, not too large, but corresponding to the recording reality. With increasing listening time, it becomes clearer and clearer to me that Spectral and Magico form a wonderful symbiosis and regenerate one hundred percent of what is stored in the groove or in zeros and ones. This 1:1 ratio between recorded and reproduced music is the classic high-end promise – which I had to wait four decades for to be redeemed in this quality.

December marks the 250th anniversary of Ludwig van Beethoven's birth, and I remember hearing his Ninth Symphony for the first time some 20 years ago with the Orchestre Révolutionnaire Et Romantique under John Eliot Gardiner through a system of Mark Levinson electronics and Audiodata loudspeakers. »First impression counts« also applies to sound impressions. But to perceive such a dramatic leap in technical development came as a surprise to me. It is exactly the same CD as back then. And yet the orchestra now plays more vividly, the timbres shine more brightly, and the spec-



trum seems expanded in both the lower and higher octaves. If I change even one detail in the meticulously tuned system of Magico and Spectral, the effects are immediately audible.

Result Just as the Holy Grail is said to have been capable of true miracles, so it is with the sound of the Magico A5. Immense material expenditure, innovative technology that has been thought through to the end and the unconditional will to occupy the top are ingeniously combined in the A5. It sets such high standards in terms of sound that Alon Wolf and his team can already look at the competition in the rear-view mirror from their A-class. *Olaf Sturm*

**Magico
A5**

WxHxD 27 x 114 x 38 cm
 Warranty 5 years
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