



Quadral Aurum Titan VIII

For men...!

The first speaker in the new Titan range was introduced by Quadral back in 1981 and nobody at this time realised that we were witnessing the emergence of a truly classic speaker and the trade magazines were full of praise back then. Today the Titan, as well as other distinguished names, is an integral part of the German high-end story. Having been well cared for and further developed over the years, we now have the eighth generation here in front of us, a truly outstanding phenomenon. Clad in its superb 'innocent-looking' white lacquered finish, this speaker monument effectively dominates the studio. At $139 \times 31 \times 58$ cm (H \times W \times D) it needs space from the positioning and technical volume sense. According to the manufacturer it can be used starting from 30 m^2 . Here it is playing at 40 m^2 , with acoustical treatment and it is a fact that the definition was acoustically positive, which we will be covering later on in the sound description.

Specialities

As soon as it is unpacked your gaze will go straight to the numerous features, such as the window at the back of the speaker, which lets you take a peek at the crossover-network. Of course, you cannot fail but to be impressed by the selected components that were chosen for this speaker, as they are the best available.

The switch is two-way so that woofer and medium / high tones do not interact. The special internal cabling, in which Real cables are used (a French cable manufacturer based outside Paris), reduce the skin effect as well as the ohmic and inductive losses. It is clear that there is nothing negative to be said about the Aurum when it comes to the speaker's important fittings even though there is nothing revolutionary about the development of the Titan VIII, as it is better to say that it is leading the evolution: The excellent seventh generation has already been further developed; it is only the current ribbon tweeter that has been redeveloped.

When compared to the previous version it only has a somewhat finer diaphragm, which is more effectively damped at the rear of the system, so that it can clearly handle greater ranges. Combined with two impressively strong neodymium magnets it is clear to see that it is heading in the "greater power" direction. Unmissable are the two woofers, as the 26 cm diameter drive unit



makes them extremely noticeable. The reflex tube for dissipating the sound is hidden inside at the foot of the speaker.

When this type of design with a crossover-network gets in the correct hands it can become extremely powerful. It also helps that the sophisticated pressure chamber / bass reflex design enables the two diaphragms to oscillate symmetrically. The fact is that it can only have a positive effect on the sound.

In addition to this, the diaphragms do not have to oscillate so far in order to generate the deep bass, so they are able to work absolutely effortlessly. The 17 cm middle tone chassis is made from three different metals, namely aluminium, titanium and magnesium. This also clearly confirms the manufacturer's well conceived approach, which is using light-weight materials that are easy to drive.



The bass and middle tone chassis is made from Altima' and the name is derived from the abbreviations of the materials that are used in it: aluminium, titanium and magnesium. The brief and to the point description covering the advantages of these materials is that they are "light and rigid". The main reason for the different sounds from different or diverse materials lies in the fact that they bend uncontrollably when oscillating and do not work optimally with the voice coil. The size of these so-called "partial oscillations" generates the majority of the membrane's specific sound picture.

Manufacturer prevent this by reducing the intrinsic resonances of the material as much as possible. They say that Altima is fast and therefore precise when it comes to working with exceptionally low intrinsic sound. Our conclusion: Ribbon tweeters, indisputably a very fixed response system, combined with the above-average fast diaphragms fitted in the accompanying chassis, controlled by the selected and symmetrically designed switch must also work in the resulting sound. A small metal flip switch enables the bass, middle and tweeter ranges to be optimised by ± 2 dB, which is extremely helpful when it comes to adapting the speaker to the size of the studio. The bi-wiring connections have cable lugs for the connections and these can be found at the back. We find this extremely commendable and we can only hope it serves as a good example for other manufacturers. We took our chance as always and connected up the speaker. HMS speaker cables were used as these are double

symmetric and designed as real bi-wiring cables and I only ever use this type of cable as they are the ideal "work tools".

A quick note about the housing versions: Available are natural oak and dark oak real wood veneers as well as white and black high-gloss and a cherry real wood veneer. The workmanship of our test speaker (white & high-gloss) was immaculate.

The speaker stands on a very solid pedestal, which guarantees safe positioning. A typical fabric front cover is also available even though I far preferred the open structure, as I find the cover with the material strands in front of the deep bass drivers visually appealing. The speaker weighs a solid 88 kg (per piece), which means that careful planning is needed with regard to the spinal disc. This is best left to the dealer, as his margin at a MSRP of 12,000 euros per pair must be considerable and he should be able to do something...



The “Titans” also have an efficiency factor of 90 dB, which makes it easy to drive the loads, but they also have a “firm hand” with regard to the amplification. Mellow tube power is absorbed quickly, as the chassis numbers are not controlled so rigidly as with a more potent semi-conductor.

Sound impression

I am itching to give you, with all proper respect, the shortest sound description of all time. Basically, the word “powerful” says everything about this passive speaker. In addition to this I also find the ribbon tweeter “just perfect”. It is also clear that this is no accident and therefore there is no way that I am going to jump out of the window here. But I have no hesitation in offering you a few music programs. A proven classic to listen to is the Manger CD. Basically, this covers everything that you expect from the different spectra of musical reproduction. Nothing is unknown here: Let’s start with the bells. This is the right job for the electronics and the respective chassis involved here. “The matching of the ‘instrument’ to the speaker” is absolutely sponta-

neous for me. I jumped immediately to track 10, a jazz quartet, whose subtle sound qualities, especially from the alto-sax, regularly ensure a goose-bump atmosphere and the Titan VIII will delight you from the very first note with its completely smooth and exceptionally homogeneous presentation of the individual Instruments with their conceivable and sculptural image and it is just at home reproducing a melodious tunnel, rather more in the width than in the infinite bass.

Jazz-club atmosphere? Yes, and the listening position clearly right in the front! A buzzing snare drum, vibrating piano strings, snappy bass strings, everything was there and in a class of its own. This was immediately followed by the famous whistling in the Hi-Fi scene. Superb: Livingston Taylor with “Isn’t She Lovely”. I was delighted with Maria Glenn’s “The Cost of Freedom” as I was able to reduce the bass. This depth did not affect my studio. The Titan VIII goes down below 16 Hz and it really can do this. As I have been continually optimising my listening studio over the past few years, “gross” modes in the important frequencies no longer stand a chance, as the engineering office that did the work

reported afterwards that: “The elimination of the modes by the ceiling and wall modules has reduced the reverberation time to 0.4 sec over all frequencies in the ideal range.

The reverberation time criterion has been fulfilled perfectly, so that no other measures are required with regard to the reverberation time”. Despite this every room has limits with regard to its physical conditions, even mine. As “snobby room tuning measures” using metal bowls, etc., are of no help at all, physical principles of the correct type have to be used, so that the room modes can be overcome; Keyword: Helmholtz.

Switching to -2 dB brought the sound back to rights and the chassis combination with ribbons and solids (and fast working metal diaphragms) once again reproduced perfect synchronisation. The celebrated wall of music gave me very light, completely naturally and simply haunting music.

A few words about the positioning. The sound propagation at the foot of the speaker means that you can position the speaker somewhat closer to the wall. My preferred distance for this sound transducer is around five meters away from the wall. This speaker needs space and if you give



it the space that it needs you will be able to enjoy any class of music that it plays. Back to the Manger CD: For a genuine performance hop to track 13, switch the speaker control to the right, take your seat and you will then be “captivated” by the Yuri Honing Trio. The dry as bones bass, the ruthless saxophone.....maybe I listen to too much jazz!

Herman Prey’s “I love you” brings me closer to the classics. I leave the CD to keep playing, as the next track is an octet playing Vivaldis “Four seasons, the Winter” in my listening studio and this virtually matched the season of the year.

The recording of Divox (CDX79404-F) from Basel is generally accepted as the best of its genres. Guess what the Aurum Titan VIII can also do ... it is a recipient that revels in the music’s concert volume. Truly a real sound experience. I have seldom heard this type of reproduction from such a large passive speaker. The pinnacle of the evidence in this summary comes with track 8 on this CD. Classical guitar from the guitar of Antonio De Torres – breathtakingly authentic. Straight afterwards comes a double bass that cannot be played cleanly, but how it is played! It sings across all of its frequencies, so I’m going to leave my sound description and enjoy this XXL speaker for grown and no less demanding listeners - as long as this Titan remains here...

Right on the dot!

This speaker can reproduce music quietly or loudly yet the quality is always impressive. For a passive and rather large speaker the current Titan VIII it truly sensational and its superior capabilities enable it to reproduce the finest details, especially regarding very quiet music. If you want to hear Richard Wagner’s “Götterdämmerung“ at home, the Titan VIII will bring it right into the room.

Information

Quadral Titan VIII speaker

Price per unit € 6,000

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