



TEST

Flagship upright floor speakers

QUADRAL TITAN VIII 11000€

METAL BALLADS

If it has Titan on it, then Titan is what you get! Quadral only uses metal membranes and a light ribbon in its newest "Generation 8" flagship models. This speaker can visibly move the air – but it does it very gently.

■ Text: Malte Ruhnke

The name says it all! This speaker that carries the "Titan" name just has to be the biggest, the most expensive and the best produced by Quadral. It is now 30 years since the first model was launched in the market in 1981. The transmission line, the 30 cm bass and the magnetostats tweeter made this the first "real man's speaker" back in the 1980s. This new model has now been added to the previous 7 generations and it tops them with relative ease: In an age of slim, elegant speakers and despite the introduction of the super-box with its bulbous design and showpiece internal bass in 2006, the zeitgeist is like a US muscle car fitted with a big-block engine driving amongst a herd of Smarts and Prius'.

Quadral decided that the new Generation 8 HiFi speakers would once again bring an elegant, smaller shape into your lounge in keeping with the customer's wishes. This was not so easy to realise when it came to the acoustic requirements: This meant working with the bass response, depth and maximum peaks so that the new model could not be regarded as being inferior to the old models in any way, even though the bass chassis on its own would have to be wider than the entire speaker in the future. Consequently, the Quadral team and the new head of research, Sascha Reckert, had to work meticulously on the new chassis. In order to complete the design of a 25 cm bass that would be clearly superior to the old 30 cm bass when supplied in a double-pack. The two-woofer chassis resides in a small chamber mounted at the front and they play at ventilated volumes at the back, which was incorporated as a standard feature in the previous Quadral design. The reflex tube is concealed in the foot of the speaker.

MATERIAL INFORMATION

Quadral has focused predominantly on the use of metal membranes for many years now. However, an alloy made from three differ-

ent metals is the medium that the company from Hanover has chosen to use even though hard membranes made from a single material are able to negate any partial oscillations and resonances in the medium range frequencies: The oscillating surfaces are made from an aluminium/titanium/magnesium alloy, which is known as "Altima". The designers have produced the most homogeneous tone quality possible by using the same material to mount all of the cones. The mid-ranges, which carry the main load, have to assume the entire vocal range between 200 and 3,000 Hz virtually on their own, whilst avoiding break-ups in auditory tone pitches. The switch, which can be reached through the window at the back of the speaker, has many special components integrated in it. The controls for all three tone ranges have three positions for optimising the sound to match the room and the positioning. The styling also ensures better emissions thanks to the baffle, which is curved slightly to the rear, which also ensures that the distance between all of the chassis and your ears remains as even as possible. The tweeter is also slanted slightly downwards and it bundles the sound in the vertical axis in a typical ribbon fashion.

The "ribbons" term has been quickly adopted by certain speaker manufacturers. Consequently, many of the advertised designs are based on magnetostats, which use a non-conductive membrane that has been bonded or vapourised onto a system made from conductive paths. According to the textbook a real ribbon is a piece of metal through which the full signal current flows and it is this process that generates the driving magnetic field. This is precisely this method that the designers decided to use in the new 8th generation of Titan speakers.



ROOM AND POSITIONING

Room size
K M G
Acoustics
T A H
Positioning
D W F

Should be aligned precisely for the listener, so that the mid-tones are not lost. If they are closer than 3 m to the walls then the deep bass will quickly become too rich.

You will find the symbol keys on Page 148.

LOW	MID	HIGH
+2 db	+2 db	+2 db
0 db	0 db	0 db
-2 db	-2 db	-2 db

COMPLETE NETWORK: The well equipped frequency separating filter ensures that not only are the frequencies separated cleanly and that the peak levels are matched, but it also acts as the filter component for the peak level switch. The bass, mid-tones and high tones can be reduced or increased in 2 dB steps, so that the system can be optimised for various rooms and their reverberation characteristics.



THE GENUINE ARTICLE: The Titan speaker released in 2011 is fitted with a flawless ribbon instead of magnetostats, which are bonded to the conductive paths and the membrane: a single piece of metal, which the full signal current flows through. The driving magnetic field must be sufficiently strong.



KEY PLAYER: The mid-range speaker made from the aluminium/titanium/magnesium alloy has to be able reproduce the entire vocal range from 200 to 3,000 Hz. It has been designed to be powerful in order to ensure that it works superbly at 200 Hz.



DOUBLE-PACK: This membrane is also made from ALTIMA, like the 25 cm woofer, and two of them are used in the Titan. The powerful drive and the large ribbing combine to produce more acoustic pressure than the 30 cm models did previously and this occurs together with improved precision and less distortion.



GENTLE GIANT

The Titan VIII looks extremely elegant in the listening area, but its ideal dimensions give it a somewhat masculine appearance.

GENTLE GIANT

	QUADRAL Titan VIII
Sales	Quadral 0511 / 7904-0
www.	www.aurumspeakers.de
List price	11,000 euros
Guarantee period	10 years
W x H x D dimensions	31 x 139 x 58 cm
Weight	88 kg
Veneer/Membrane/Varnish	• / - / •
Colours	Mocha, oak, black, red, white & other colours upon request
Operating principles	3-way bass reflex; ribbon tweeter
Room adjustment control	3-position peak level switch
Special features	-

AUDIOGRAM

- ➕ Harmonious and extremely dynamic speaker, exceptional sound but with a somewhat masculine appearance and superb timing.
- ➖ Small footprint but very powerful low-frequency bass.

Neutrality (2 x)	100	██████████
Attention to detail (2 x)	105	██████████
Localisation	100	██████████
Space requirement	85	██████████
Fine dynamics	100	██████████
Maximum peak	105	██████████
Bass quality	95	██████████
Bass depth	110	██████████

Workmanship: Excellent

RUDIC TONE VERDICT **101 POINTS**
PRICE/PERFORMANCE **EXCELLENT**



You will be pleasantly disappointed if you expect to hear bombast or effect sounds: Chamber music should be played to warm up, namely Mozart's piano trios (Guarneri trio). The sound coming from the Titan is pleasantly compact, harmonious and homogeneous and it is rather like having a top quality screen in front of the XXL speaker. You will be delighted from the very first note with the smooth, homogeneous instrument reproduction and the sculptural image, which has been precisely defined beforehand in both width and depth.

It goes without saying that the Titan will move you deeply whenever you turn the music on and glaring jazz such as Jacques Loussier's "The Four Seasons" sounds far more powerful as opposed to just watching it on a small screen and the bass and bass-drum also add much more vigour than usual. This is in contrast to the typical "too rich tuning" of large speakers – but it is not at the expense of the agility. The bass runs climb up the scales, the drum sounds generate the necessary weight without any soft ringing. The piano provides dynamic and very clear quadral reproduction, lets you discover all of the subtle nuances and also bestows a great atmospheric density on the music. Even with rhyth-

mical classics, such as Stravinsky's "Sacre du Printemps", the balance between impressive foundations and rapid ease is preserved, which is rather like a sumo wrestler taking up karate. The effect is like drilling into a solid board: Metallica's "Enter Sandman" crashes out in a way that is reminiscent of a PA system with powerful drum sounds and the previously unheard heavy bass beats are now within the listening range and the distorted E-guitars unfold at precisely the correct ear pressure, without sounding aggressive. The Titan VIII can also sound resonant and immense, but it is always cultivated and comes with respect.

CONCLUSION



Malte Ruhnke
AUDIO editorial journalist

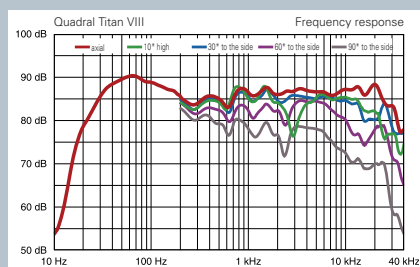
It can also be said that: that the limit of my tolerance for a speaker's appearance was reached with the Titan 7's "Tombstone" look. The new version is also not very slender, but it is very harmoniously proportioned.

The acoustics are the real hit as you can play both voluminous and fine at the same time, with high dissipation that caresses the ears. In particular the tweeter ribbons were a real "aha" experience for me: Their detailed reproduction capabilities are splendid, yet they remain fully transparent and self-evident. The Titan is a man's speaker, but not a noisemaker, yet I have seldom listed to such a cultivated and audiophile man's speaker.

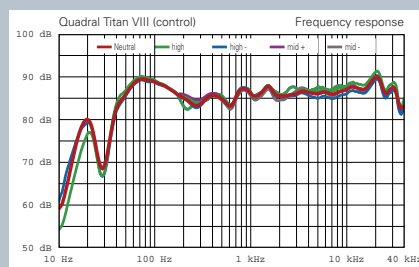
MEASUREMENTS LABORATORY

The Titan 8 has an accentuated bass response range but it is very well balanced otherwise.

The 22 Hz bass response, which is the lower frequency limit (-6 dB), is enormous. The measurements made outside the axis show even omni-directional sound distribution with large horizontal radiation areas.



Mild interference between the mid and high tones only occurs in the vertical axis. The peak switch with its ± 2 dB positions has very variable effects: Its effect is subtle in the bass range but is wideband and distinct in the high ranges. The centre switch provides more undertone warmth in the +2 position but is more prominent and sharper



in the -2 position. The distortion measurement shows ideal, clean reproduction and the ribbon tweeter does not show any evidence of distortion at all. The Titan also remains completely clean in the bass range and crests to a maximum peak of 115.5 dB, without reaching the distortion limit.

