"An Outstanding ACHIEVEMENT."

Reprinted with permission from

QUÉBEC•AUDIO

Studio/60

by Pascal Debien

"High frequencies were precise and detailed. Sound flowed wide, extending well beyond the speakers. . . . low frequencies were very well controlled and no stray wave escaped this ultra-solid cabinet."

AN OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT

Introducing Paradigm: A well-known Ontario-based manufacturer of loud-speakers whose reputation has long extended beyond our borders. While the Company needs no introduction in the industry, we would like to point out that its growth is based upon continuous research and development of new products and innovative speaker design techniques. Québec Audio presents Studio/60, a loud-speaker positioned in the middle of the Paradigm® Reference Studio Series.

An attractive three-driver contoured bass-reflex enclosure, Studio/60 is 96 cm high by 21 cm wide by 39 cm deep. Despite their compact appearance, Studio/60 speakers tip the scale at 32 kg each, and later we'll see the reason for this weight. The finish is flawless and is offered in natural wood laminate or simply covered with simulated wood vinyl. The cost will vary slightly depending on the type of finish chosen. Moulded plastic plates are glued to the top and bottom of the speaker to give it a more attractive look, particularly when the grille is in place. Under the speaker are four gold-plated feet with adjustable spikes. On the back a terminal plate with gold-plated receptacles is suitable for bi-wiring and accepts the main types of connections.

When the grille is removed, the three drivers are visible. The tweeter is made of a 25-mm aluminum dome secured by a textile suspension, all installed in a bell mouth. Two magnets provide power to the magnetic field. The bass/midrange driver measures 165-mm in diameter. It is made of a mica-loaded polymer (MLP™) cone, a synthetic rubber roll surround suspension, a beautifully-crafted pressure-moulded aluminum cone housing and a good-size magnet. The construction of the bass driver is similar to that of the bass/midrange driver, except that the cone

is made of polypropylene. All drivers are designed by Paradigm and are obviously shielded for home theatre viewing since the Studio/60 was designed with this in mind. A vent of 7.5 cm in diameter by 18 cm deep is located directly under the drivers.

> *"In my opinion, control of the low frequencies is the Studio/60s strongpoint — nothing else in the market-place compares at this price point."*

When we remove the drivers, we discover the extent of the work performed by Paradigm's designers. The cabinet is made of 25-mm thick medite (MDF). Vertical and horizontal cross braces in a cascading pattern from top to bottom form a rigid mass, which explains the weight of this speaker. The 48-litre internal volume is completely filled with ultra-fine high-loft polyfiber (UHP™) acoustic wool. The frequency separator, made of high-quality components, is fastened to the terminal plate with two small epoxy plates. It cuts the frequency at 1.5 kHz between the high and bass/midrange drivers and is a third-order frequency separator (18 dB/octave). Between the bass/midrange and bass drivers, the cut-off is at 400 Hz, from a second-order frequency separator (12 dB/octave). Quality cabling with a good gauge is used.

LISTENING SESSIONS

Paradigm's user manual clearly explains the basic principles for properly positioning the speakers in your listening room. We recommend that you read the manual first to save time during installation. Only small angle adjustments are necessary to get the most out of Studio/60 speakers. I listened with a bi-wired set-up because I like the results better, using a small built-in tube amplifier with 30 watts per channel.

My listening sessions began with a CD I discovered last summer, the techno jazz CD St-Germain *Tourist* by French composer Ludovic Navarre. On the third cut, *So Flute,* the potential of the Paradigm Studio/60 was instantly revealed. A flute solo at the beginning of the piece, in which we actually heard the flautist breathing deeply and blowing over the instrument, gave us the shivers. Then the other instruments came in, including the deep percussion and keyboards leaving us completely amazed. When you purchase a pair of Studio/60 speakers you are definitely going to get your money's worth. High frequencies were precise and detailed. Sound flowed wide, extending well beyond the speakers. The lower bass/midrange driver performed well, remaining stable, even though it was confronted with bass driver loads since both drivers share the same space in the cabinet.

The low frequencies were very well controlled and no stray wave escaped this ultra-solid cabinet. I tested it with the *Projekct Four* CD which makes heavy use of low frequencies, and no vibration from the cabinet could be felt. In my opinion, control of the low frequencies is the Studio/60s strongpoint—nothing else in the marketplace compares at this price point.

On the CD *Nouvelles cordes anciennes* by Toumani Diabate, the two instrumentalists and their koras were kept in spatial perspective. The Studio/60s responded well to the challenge of Mussorgski's *Picture at an Exhibition* with its deep and powerful bass notes. The tweeter never assaulted the ear, even after several hours of listening.

IN CONCLUSION

I have to rave about the excellent workmanship and the quality-to-price relationship of Canadian products in the global audio market. Paradigm speakers are good examples of products that outperform the competition, at very reasonable prices. The Studio/60s are versatile speakers that will more than meet the needs of most consumers. Paradigm has also been able to avoid the trend among some manufacturers to overload the low frequencies, thereby losing the realism of the musical performance. I invite you to do some comparative listening at your local audio dealer, with the Studio/60s as your starting point.

DISCS USED IN LISTENING SESSIONS

- *Tourist,* St-Germain, Blue Note 7243 5 26201 2 8
- *Tonic,* Medeski Martin Wood, Blue Note 7243 5 25271 2 0
- *Nouvelles cordes anciennes,* Toumani Diabate with Ballake Sissoko, Hannibal HNCD 1428
- *West Coast Live,* Projekct Four, Discipline Global Mobile DGM9913-D
- *Picture at an Exhibition,* Mussorgski, Deutsche Grammophon 437 531-2