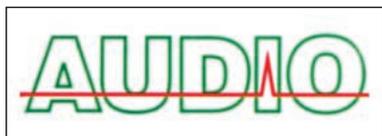


“... NEUTRAL ... NATURAL
... POWERFUL ...”

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“The Mini Monitor is an extremely well-designed speaker — very comprehensive — not only perfectly neutral, but able to differentiate itself from its competitors by its rich sound and powerful and efficient bass.”



Canadian speaker manufacturers are producing some interesting and highly capable speaker systems. In the early part of last year another Canadian firm made its debut in the Polish market—Paradigm, a company that, despite its fairly recent arrival in our market, is certainly no amateur when it comes to manufacturing speakers. Paradigm is a major competitor in the loudspeaker market, well respected internationally. At home in North America the company serves a huge market and is known not only for its extremely competitive pricing, but for its ability to consistently offer very good value.

Paradigm’s fundamental offerings include the Monitor and Performance series, part of the regular Paradigm® line, and the fairly new Studio series, part of the Paradigm® Reference line.

The company’s entire speaker line-up is designed to suit the demands of both music and home theater. It includes a

The New Mini Monitor

(Improved over version reviewed for even better sound.)

number of center-channel speakers as well as surround-sound speakers, all of which utilize the same or similar drivers as the rest of the speakers in their series. In keeping with the popularity of home theater, Paradigm also produces a number of subwoofers. Rest assured—no matter which speakers you purchase from Paradigm, your taste for home theater will be satisfied. What’s more, you’ll always be able to find a Paradigm speaker that integrates well with the ones you already own.

Despite all this talk about home theater, Paradigm hasn’t forgotten how to satisfy the traditional stereo music lover—an exhaustive selection of affordable high-end, high-quality speakers await the audiophile on a budget.



The Mini Monitor, the smallest model from the Monitor Series, was selected for our review testing. The name for this speaker is somewhat modest—a 6-1/2-inch bass/midrange driver could be considered small, but definitely not miniature. For those who don't like to see the word "miniature" exaggerated, we'll put your minds at ease. Unlike certain British micro monitors, the Mini Monitor *à la Paradigm* has little to do with "mini." By European standards it's quite a specimen.

"... strong sense of balance, comparable to far more expensive speakers. ... Vocals were natural, rich, finely articulated and well dispersed. Acapella vocals sounded far more vivid through these speakers than through others we tested."

The entire Monitor series is based on the same technology—bass/midrange drivers have a semi-transparent co-polymer polypropylene diaphragm and the 25-mm domes are pure titanium. It's worth noting that the bass/midrange drivers have solid die-cast aluminum baskets, most unusual in this price range. (No other speaker we tested in this group could boast this detail.) Drivers were exceptionally well mounted using eight separate screws.

The Mini's hardboard enclosure was soundly insulated and solidified with vertical bracing. The bass-reflex configuration vents through a 5-cm-diameter port on the rear wall. The 5-way binding posts are gold-plated.

The Mini is available in three wood-like veneers—black ash, light cherry and rosenut, with all front panels finished in a silver-colour laminate to complement the milky semi-transparency of the cone.

The Mini Monitor is also available magnetically shielded at a slightly higher cost per pair (black ash only), for use close to your television or computer.

LISTENING

Right off the bat, we could hear the Mini Monitor's strong sense of balance, comparable to far more expensive speakers. The midrange was nicely reproduced. Vocals were natural, rich, finely articulated and well dispersed. Acapella vocals sounded far more vivid through these speakers than through others we tested. However, we felt that music that combined vocals and rich instrumentals was better separated by other speakers. From these and other comparisons we felt that the Mini Monitor lacked somewhat in analytical ability. On the other hand, overall sound was lively and musical with clear and effervescent bass, an area which proved scant in other speakers. The colorful richness of the midrange was not consistent through the high end. However, our objection may be slightly unfair since the high frequencies held their own when compared with those of every other speaker in our test. They were smooth, quantitatively well matched with the midrange and the crossover was smooth and virtually unnoticeable. Sound coherence in this speaker was very good. When compared with the exceptionally dynamic sound of certain high-end speakers the Paradigms came off well in the comparison, agreeably soft and at ease with higher-priced competition. Certainly in this price range there are speakers that perform more "briskly," although chances are a compromise would have to be made in other areas of the sound reproduction.

The Mini Monitor is an extremely well-designed speaker – very comprehensive – not only perfectly neutral, but able to differentiate itself from its competitors by its rich sound and powerful and efficient bass. A serious competitor in a group of the best small monitors in this price range.

"It's worth noting that the bass/midrange drivers have solid die-cast aluminum baskets, most unusual in this price range. (No other speaker we tested in this group could boast this detail.)"

PROS

- Good balance
- Smooth, rich midrange