

“ I WAS CAPSULATED  
IN SOUND ... ”

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*“If you’re just getting into DVD entertainment or you consider yourself an old pro... make Paradigm part of your primary vocabulary. You’ll save yourself a lot of headache and money down the line.”*



Legend

by Clint Walker

“NO WONDER THE CANADIANS I MEET ARE ALWAYS IN SUCH A CHIPPER MOOD.”

Years ago while traveling through Canada with the circus, I happened upon a pub in what seemed to be somewhere between the Ice Age and the beginning of existence. It was so cold my nipples had cut through my favorite flannel shirt. I knocked the head off a beer or two and exchanged lies about fly fishing with one of the locals.

As the night wore on and my blood warmed up I found myself at home. And I pondered: I had traveled thousands of miles with the circus working as a sword-swallowing palm reader. And I had heard the complaints of almost every man, woman, and child from Pensacola to Portland. Yet I didn’t hear one complaint while I was in Canada—not a single one ...

What do you ask does any of this have to do with speakers? Well nothing really. But I thought it would be a good way to use the word “nipples” in a speaker review ...

Actually, there is method to my madness, in that I have been continually amazed at what comes over the Canadian/American border—particularly from a speaker company known simply as Paradigm.

Paradigm doesn’t spend ridiculous amounts of money trying to market products that don’t even really exist. But rather invests back into its product line and even more so, its customers. Take a look at their website and you’ll see what I mean.

The Paradigm Legend ensemble consists of two Legend towers for front left and right, a CC-270 center channel, a pair of ADP-170 dipole surrounds and a PDR-12 110-watt, 12-inch subwoofer.



## UNIQUE FEATURES

There really aren't any features I would classify as "unique" in the Legend ensemble. But this doesn't keep it from being a top performer ...

*"... I could feel the strikes of the guitar pick on my face. I was almost certain that when I opened my eyes I would be there in the front row."*

The components I enjoyed the most in the Paradigm ensemble were the Legend left/right towers and the ADP-170 surrounds. So I'll start here first. The ADP-170 surrounds are a compact dipole design and come packaged with mounting hardware. Each surround weighs about 12 pounds due to their rigid construction. The grilles blend seamlessly into the contour of the speakers that measure roughly 10 3/4-inches tall by 6 1/2-inches deep by 9 1/2-inches wide. Each surround features a single 3/4-inch ceramic/metal composite tweeter atop a 5 1/2-inch metallescent midrange.

The Legend towers are simple and sleek. Each Legend measures roughly 40-inches tall by 12-inches deep by 7 3/4-inches wide and weighs around 37 pounds. The front baffle of each tower has a total of four drivers and a frontward firing port. A single 1-inch ceramic/metal composite tweeter tops three 6 1/2-inch midrange/mid-bass drivers. There are five-way binding posts around back for solid connectivity.

Moving right along is the CC-270 shielded center channel speaker. This speaker also features a pair of the same 6 1/2-inch midrange drivers found in the Legend towers along with a single 3/4-inch

ceramic/metal composite tweeter. This ensures that the speakers will perform with the same inherent qualities for a well-matched ensemble.

Providing the foundation for the Paradigm Legend ensemble is the PDR-12, 110-watt subwoofer. Here again, a straightforward design with no frills and plenty of performance. The PDR-12 is a bass reflex (ported) design with a single frontward firing 12-inch long throw woofer capable of hitting frequencies at 25Hz.

*"When the bass drum kicked in, the mid-bass of the Legend towers came alive anchored by the solid foundation that the PDR-12 subwoofer provided ... highs were exceptional and the vocals were untainted."*

## INSTALLATION/SETUP

Being that the Legend speaker ensemble is relatively compact, there really aren't any installation issues to speak of except with regards to placement. As with any speaker ensemble however, proper placement is critical. This is especially true of the center channel speaker, subwoofer and towers. The ultimate goal of setting up any speaker ensemble is to achieve on-axis response. That is to say that ideally you would like every tweeter in the room to be at, or directed at, the listener's ear in the "sweet spot." Because only one seat in the room can truly be the sweet spot, off-axis response characteristics are especially important in home theater speaker ensembles. Such is the case with the Paradigm.

I found the CC-270 center channel to be more than a small challenge to properly place during set up. The CC-270 is a "set-top" design made to rest flat on top of or below the display. The large Zenith HDTV in my system did not allow for placement below and placement above was rather

awkward due to the "channel" between the screen and the top of the set. A simple solution for Paradigm would be to offer a small stand that would allow their center channel offerings to sit slightly above flush surfaces and articulate up or down to achieve on-axis response. The result without the stand is the creation of harsh reflective sound waves off of the TV's surface that invariably inhibit the sound quality of the speaker.

The Legend towers are not shielded but this did not seem to be a problem even when positioned close to the sides of my display. Tower designs are inherently the easiest to position because they are designed with a height already on axis and simply need to be centered in slightly to create a proper soundstage.

The PDR-12 subwoofer has two large ports around back enabling the woofer to attain maximum low-frequency extension effectively and efficiently. The connections are few, but simple on the rear panel of the sub, with rotary gain (volume) and crossover controls to effectively match up to your listening tastes. Additionally, there are high and low level ins and outs.

The ADP-170 surrounds were a snap to install and the contoured look will work well with most any décor.

## FINAL TAKE

Now to the good part—the actual listening evaluation. I connected the Paradigm Legend ensemble to a B&K AVR-307 receiver using a Harman Kardon DV50 DVD player as the source unit. The soundstage did take a bit of tweaking to get right but once it was right, it was right. I popped in my Eagles *When Hell Freezes Over* DVD and closed my eyes for



CC-270



ADP-170

a spell. I was encapsulated in sound and I could feel the strikes of the guitar pick on my face. I was almost certain that when I opened my eyes I would be there in the front row.

*"I then jumped from movie clip to movie clip to catch a glimpse of some sort of flaw — sure to exist — and found none."*

When the bass drum kicked in, the mid-bass of the Legend towers came alive anchored by the solid foundation that the PDR-12 subwoofer provided. I didn't expect much from this overly simple sub, but it certainly delivered. The highs were exceptional and the vocals were untainted. I then jumped from movie clip to movie clip to catch a glimpse of some sort of flaw—sure to exist—and found none.

If you're just getting into DVD entertainment or you consider yourself an old pro...make Paradigm part of your primary vocabulary. You'll save yourself a lot of headache and money down the line.



**PDR-12**