

“ ...the Studio/20's are

TWO LAPS AHEAD

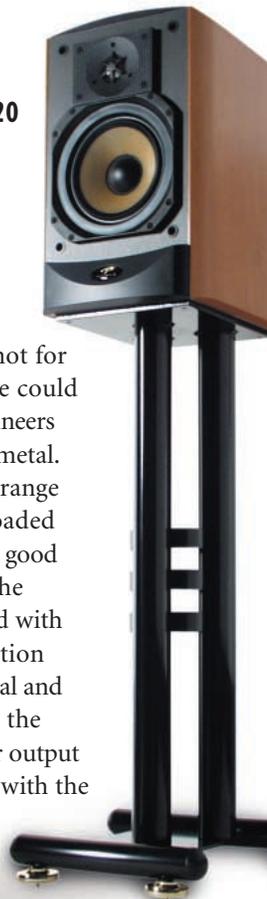
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STUDIO/20



The Studio/20 from Paradigm is part of a line of speakers known as Paradigm® Reference, the company's higher-end line of audiophile speakers. All Paradigm® Reference speakers feature an elegant letter “P” on their grilles.

We like Paradigm speakers and over the years this has been reflected in our reviews. In fact, our annual award for design and manufacturing went to Paradigm's Monitor 3 and Studio/20. So, knowing Paradigm's reputation for producing very good speakers we wondered, prior to opening the Studio/20's, what awaited us in the box ...

CONSTRUCTION

Waiting for us was a speaker with a 25-mm pure-aluminum dome tweeter and synthetic butyl suspension. Its chassis is also made of die-cast aluminum. Material within the voice

coil—also aluminum. If not for the oversized magnet, one could suggest that Paradigm engineers have found their favorite metal. The cone on the bass/midrange driver is made of mica-loaded polymer, providing a very good stiffness-to-mass ratio. The Studio/20 is also equipped with an AVS™ (airflow ventilation cooling system) and internal and external heatsinks. When the speaker is playing at higher output levels, the AVS™ together with the speaker's large magnetic structure will ensure smooth handling and exceptionally low sound distortion, indications of a very well-made and robust speaker.

Paradigm is known to be extremely cost-efficient. The company designs and manufactures all drivers and component parts under one roof—their own. Even

packaging of the speakers is done in house. Canada's National Research Council (NRC) is one of the few outside resources used by Paradigm. The Council's findings on the critical aspects that make up good sound are used by Paradigm in conjunction with the company's own measurement-based analyses and double-blind listening tests to constantly improve the sound of their speakers.

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Overall, actual changes to the Studio/20 are minimal. Does this new version play better? Our findings follow, but the real test for the Studio/20's awaits them on store shelves. Will these products gather dust? We think not!

SOUND

Sound was superb—clean and dynamic, with a deep, rich bass that had impact and weight considering the relatively small size of these speakers. Dynamics were extremely good. Those woofers can move a lot of air, yet sound was never distorted or out of control even when challenged by some quite detailed and difficult symphonic recordings.

Sometimes, we have to stop and wonder why manufacturers continue to make floorstanding models. They take up so much space in a room! Then along comes a speaker like the inconspicuous Studio/20, taking up very little space, while offering all of the sonic attributes we have come to associate with large, floorstanding models, including fast, deep and articulate bass performance.

The midrange performance of these speakers was accurate and authentic. The Studio/20 can be classed as a "pure-bred" with an overall tonal quality that is consistently natural and balanced. Our only criticism of these speakers was their

response in the higher frequencies—while clean and detailed, it is perhaps not quite as velvety smooth as some speakers in this price range. However, when it comes to reproducing stereophonic sound, the Paradigms are extraordinary. They offer a wide, accurate and revealing soundstage. And it is here that the Studio/20's are two laps ahead of the competition.

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CONCLUSION

Slightly pricey, but decisively recommended!