

\$20,000 and above**Graham LS5/5****\$21,190**

Based on a loudspeaker originally designed by the British Broadcasting Corporation in the mid-Sixties, the 5/5 is a three-way that, by slot-loading the midrange and woofer for wider, smoother, more even axial response, manages the difficult trick of a uniform frequency response across an approximately 60-degree window, while at the same time realizing state-of-the-art imaging and a commandingly impressive dynamic range.

Bass response is deep enough to obviate the need for a sub-woofer, while the overall tonal balance is such that day after day on recording after recording over several months the 5/5 left reviewer Paul Seydor feeling he was hearing back to original sources in a way he's experienced with very few speakers. PS judges it the finest three-way, cone-based loudspeaker in his experience and one of the finest, period. PS, 331

Legacy Audio Aeris with Wavelet DSP**\$21,477 (\$27,792 with Wavelet II upgrade)**

The combination of the frequency-and time-domain-optimized four-and-a-half-way Aeris loudspeaker and its companion Wavelet DSP processor/crossover provides some of the most musically realistic sound reviewer AHC has ever encountered. This duo takes digital processing and room correction a vital step forward and show that a DSP'd speaker can reach levels that are even competitive with the best purist speakers, and some that sell for far higher prices. AHC, 269

Magnepan MG20.7**\$21,995**

These Maggies' magical ability to transport listeners to a different space and time, and

to there realistically recreate (with lifelike scope and size) the sound of acoustic instruments and the venue they were recorded in is extraordinary. It almost goes without saying (since these are Magnepans), but the 20.7s are also incredibly good values, although you're going to have to bring a lot of power to this party, and you're going to need a good deal of room to house two speakers the size and width of a couple of NFL linebackers. Don Saltzman, 249

Muraudio SP1**\$22,400**

This elegant if unusual speaker combines two sealed-box cone woofers above and below Muraudio's unique, doubly curved electrostatic drivers. The curvature of the driver element both horizontally and vertically generates an effect resembling a virtual point source rather than sounding like a typical flat panel. The SP1 is very clean with extremely low distortion. The bass is very well integrated and precise in character, albeit not extended to the lowest lows. The spatial impression is attractively unconstrained, and the balance is overall neutral. Muraudio became famous a few years ago for its omni PX1 model, which used three doubly curved panels to form a 360-degree source. But the SP1, at a much lower and very reasonable price for what is involved, is a truly exceptional speaker in its own right. REG, 293

Crystal Cable Minissimo Forte**\$24,000 (Scala \$1400)**

The Minissimo Forte is the best Minissimo yet. The unique apostrophe shape of the 2-way loudspeaker's enclosure remains, and there's still an integral stand. What's very different is the crossover, described as "semi-active

balanced second order." AC powers a buffer amplifier inserted between the crossover and drivers. (A pair of sleek Crystal Cable power cords is supplied.) As a result, the crossover needs no inductor coil—distortion is reduced, and dynamics improve. Reproduction of the human voice is exceptional, and bass is surprisingly prodigious for a speaker of this size. The beautifully machined aluminum Scala "top hat" (\$1400) that sits atop the speaker and further improves image focus is optional, but really should be considered essential. AQ, 346

Raidho TD1.2**\$24,000, piano black;****\$27,000, walnut**

This wonderful mini-monitor plays music with a lot more dynamic impact, control, and sonic heft than it should be able to muster given its size. Its robust sound could easily be mistaken for that of a small-to-medium floor-stander. It recreates a large, airy soundscape filled with well-defined images in a coherent contextual whole. High resolution without sounding forced is the TD1.2's main strength. One has a feeling of peering into the recording event, so well does it portray fine details. It also allows all kinds of music to retain their verve and beauty, and thereby makes listening a real pleasure. It is limited in low-frequency extension and dynamic range, as all mini-monitors are, and it is expensive. The TD1.2 is for the enthusiast of fine mini-monitors, who appreciates the strengths—and accepts the weaknesses—of the genre and is willing to acquire one of the best available. Kirk Midtskog, 304

MBL 120**\$26,500 (stands \$2080)**

The omnidirectional MBL 120 has been specially en-

gineered for medium-sized rooms—and in such environs it sounds fabulous. The soundstage it throws has never been more holographic or enveloping. More extended across the frequency spectrum and far less colored in the bass than the 121, it is a more refined speaker in every category. The best small MBL yet. NG, 228

**Magico A5****\$26,800**

Magico's A5 brings the company's vaunted technologies to a less lofty price point. The A5 is a three-way, five-driver system in a sealed, anodized-aluminum enclosure that features materials and construction techniques previously implemented in Magico's top Q series. The result is a speaker that offers crisp, tight extension down to 24Hz, staggering dynamics for its size, and a lifelike sense of weight and body. The overall presentation is triumphantly cohesive; image accuracy and presence are meticulous. The A5 offers micro-resolution, yet never sounds analytical. A terrific speaker and a great value. MC, 320

Kharmia Elegance S7 Signature**\$28,000**

A loudspeaker for connoisseurs who appreciate the finest the high end can offer. The look is sumptuous, the