

AARON

Audio Precision 4 Home Theatre Package

The main speakers in this system are Aaron's AP4s, the top model in the 'Audio Precision' line. Each of these is a three-way, four-driver, bass-reflex model. They stand 840 mm tall, 210 mm wide and 235 mm deep.

Treble is supplied by a 25mm ferro-fluid cooled soft dome tweeter. Below this is a 115mm dual laminate cone midrange driver and a pair of 173mm dual laminate cone bass drivers. Each of these has an actual cone diameter of 115mm giving a bass radiating area of 208 cm² per loudspeaker.

Aaron rates their frequency response at 40-20 000 Hz \pm 3 dB, impedance at 6 ohms, sensitivity at 91 dB and power handling at 140 watts.

The CC-30 centre speaker is only 155 mm high by 350 mm wide and 190 mm deep, yet still manages to contain three drivers. Treble above 9 kHz is produced by a 13mm dome tweeter while the remainder are handled by a pair of 115mm dual laminate cone drivers. Connections are by spring clip.

Aaron says that the frequency response is 95-20 000 Hz \pm 3dB, impedance is 6 ohms, sensitivity is 89 dB and power handling is 60 watts.

The SS-30 surround speakers are even smaller, at only 225 mm tall by 155 mm wide and 190 mm deep. Each sealed enclosure contains just a single driver, a 115mm dual laminate cone driver. Aaron rates this unit's frequency response at 95-16 000 Hz \pm 3 dB, impedance at 8 ohms and sensitivity at 89 dB.

The SUB-60 subwoofer is a neat unit, measuring 345 mm tall by 285 mm wide and 420 mm deep. It includes a 50 watt amplifier to drive the single, bass-reflex loaded, 213mm woofer (actual cone diameter 147mm delivering 170 cm²). It is equipped with both low- and high-level inputs and outputs, phase reversal switch, level control, variable crossover adjustment and an automatic on/off circuit.

Performance

Setting up the system with a high-quality 110 watt per channel surround receiver, we found that contrary to Aaron's sensitivity specifications, the centre and surround channels seemed to be rather more efficient than the AP4 speakers. Indeed, we set the centre speaker some 7 decibels quieter than the mains, and the surrounds 2 decibels below. With identical speakers at all positions, we normally have the front three at the same level and the two surrounds boosted by a couple of decibels.



As usual, we started listening just in plain stereo mode with no subwoofer. The Aaron AP4 speakers, given the price, are a delight to listen to. Very good stereo imaging, excellent midrange and a smooth top end with reasonable detail, and a good solid bass. Perhaps the mid-bass was just a little forward but the result was very satisfying with rock music and not at all distracting with classical material. More importantly, the bass was tight and controlled.

Kicking in the DVD player, we tried the system with several Dolby Digital 5.1 movies. The main speakers preserved their character while the centre and surrounds tended towards a predominance of midrange, leading to a somewhat closed-in nature to the sounds they were reproducing. As it happens, this did not detract at all from the 360 degree sound-stage imaging and had the virtue of providing clean and coherent dialogue from the centre channel. Their limitations became noticeable only when we played the street battle from the DVD of 'Heat' at a ludicrously high level. Some gun shots come from the surround speakers, producing a certain amount of stress from the diminutive SS-30s.

The SUB-60 subwoofer, though, is remarkably effective. Perhaps dinosaur footsteps are a little beyond it, but the great bulk of home theatre and musical material was handled with aplomb.

Conclusion

Given the price, this Aaron surround speaker system must be almost impossible to beat. What makes it stand out especially is the quality of the AP4 main speakers and that neat SUB-60 subwoofer. This would be the system for the budget conscious buyer who is a music listener first, and a DVD movie watcher second. **BB**

Aaron Audio Precision 4

PRICE: \$1399

WARRANTY: Ten years (subwoofer two years)

DISTRIBUTOR:

Betotec Industries Limited

PHONE: (02) 6686 0277

EMAIL: betotec@norcom.au

WEB:

www.spot.com.au/aaron

Great price
- Good main speakers and neat subwoofer

Centre and surround speakers not up to the standard of the rest of the package

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