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RECTILINEAR MINI III SPEAKER SYSTEM



It's hard to accept that so much good sound can come out of a wooden box that is only 18½-inches by 11¼-inches by 9¼-inches deep. Inside this mini box there is a true three-way speaker system — woofer, mid-range, tweeter. They manage to put out a great deal of excellent sound.

I still can't fully get over the ability of small boxes to produce good bass. I'm in no way a big-speaker advocate. Quite the contrary, some of the best bass available anywhere comes out of bookshelf-sized speakers. But this is smaller than the usual bookshelf by a fair margin. And, while there is some sacrifice on an absolute basis, I believe that these speakers will make many listeners happy.

Easily, the strongest point in their favor is their superlative high end. It does indeed go out to beyond audibility. But more than that, it does it smoothly and brilliantly. I've never heard cleaner highs.

The mid-range is smooth enough. The bass end drives down smoothly too until it reaches 40 Hz. Then it tapers off rapidly. Nothing much of value comes out below about 30 Hz. That last half-octave to 20 Hz is not really missed, unless you are lucky enough to possess some good master tapes made on first-rate professional recorders. Otherwise, you just won't find anything below 30 Hz on records or commercially recorded tapes.

The rear panel contains good connectors that may be finger tightened. They will also accept banana connectors. At this rear panel are level controls for the tweeter and mid-range drivers. Each offers a wide range

of control over the output of the driver from full off to more than is ever needed. There are no indicated flat positions. In my listening room, which during these tests was on the bright side, I found the best position for the mid-range about halfway on, and the tweeter about three-quarters on.

In that position the best overall balance seemed to be reached. At the same time, I did find that there was a slightly muffled quality to the delineation of music. This could be alleviated by increasing the mid-range control, but the total balance seemed to then be tilted upward in favor of the so-called presence area. I preferred the slight muffle to that.

Call it my bag if you will, but I am extremely fussy about what I consider to be the overall musical balance. For that reason alone, if for no other, I prefer to have the slight muffling of this speaker in preference to a rising high-end characteristic. Not everyone will feel the same, I am sure, so do not consider it undesirable to set the speaker in any fashion you wish. The controls are on back both for reasons of personal taste and room acoustics. They are to be used.

This speaker is rated at 4 ohms. It is well that most amplifiers seem to give lots of power to this impedance, because the Mini III is quite low in efficiency. It wants a good powerful amplifier or it will drain the amplifier into its higher distortion ranges. I would say that a minimum of 20-watts *continuous* per channel is required. (Translate that to at least 25-30 watts of *music power* per channel.)

Given a good amplifier, you will hear clean sound overall, solid lows and glistening highs. Dispersion of highs is effectively done. Thus, there is no feeling of small-box sound, even though the sound comes from a small box.

The Rectilinear Mini III costs \$89.50 each. This is certainly competitive in the marketplace with other speakers of similar quality. I can't, frankly, develop quite as much enthusiasm for this system as I feel for its father, the Rectilinear III. *That* is a superlative speaker. This mini is good, quite good, but if space is no vital factor, I'll take the bigger ones.

As Seen In

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