Fyne Audio F3-12

A 12in driver, ported cabinet, and a decent amount of power under this Scot's bonnet...

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FYNE AUDIO HAS a growing speaker lineup that includes the F300 entry-level series reviewed in this issue [see page 50]. As part of that range, Fyne offers three subwoofers, of which the F3-12 is the largest and most expensive at £600. Yet it's also one of the more affordable subs in this grouptest, despite an impressive specification that sees a 12in driver tethered to a claimed 370W (and 520W peak) of Class D power.

The F3-12 uses a rigid MDF cabinet in an ash black finish, and the build quality is good although styling is unadventurous. The design very much sings from the standard subwoofer hymn sheet. There's only so much you can do when conceiving a speaker that is essentially a big black box, of course.

It's a traditional sub too, with a single forward-firing long-throw woofer. Yet this is combined with a downward-facing port, making it the only ported model in our quartet. Subsequently, it's also the heaviest and

largest – standing tall while rivals adopt a more cubic aesthetic.

Fyne Audio's DDX direct digital amplification not only provides plenty of grunt, but also boasts DSP control with a Bass Boost feature aimed at the central LFE range of 30Hz-70Hz.

Rear connections are basic, with just stereo line-level inputs and a mono LFE input, along with level and phase controls. As with all grouptest rivals, there are no EQ niceties or remote control here, but that's to be expected at the price point. There's also no crossover dial – the stereo input low-pass filter is set to 85Hz, while your AVR's bass management is used to set the crossover for the LFE feed.

Cruise control

When I'm evaluating a sub, the first scene I always put on is the very beginning of *Edge of Tomorrow* (Blu-ray). Here there are two truly titanic bass notes that dive right down to

the lower registers, resulting in a sub-sonic experience that you can literally feel. This tends to sort the wheat from the chaff as far as subwoofers go, and I was delighted to discover the F3-12 handles it like a pro. Its output is deep and well defined but also distortion-free, even as it fills the room with low-frequency energy.

The movie's repeated beach assault is another excellent test, and the F3-12's ported driver produces plenty of bass weight as gunships fall from the sky and slam into the sand. The percussive kick of heavy gunfire and huge explosions are handled with skill, and the sub proves surprisingly nimble for a ported design, handling the transients extremely well.

And if you really want to test the capabilities of your sub, what's better than a runaway train? The Blu-ray of *Unstoppable* boasts some impressive LFE that gives its wayward locomotive a realistic sense of heft, and again the F3-12 has the kind of low-end presence that makes it feel truly cinematic.

The recent arrival of *Overlord* on 4K Blu-ray provided the perfect opportunity to use the film's dynamic soundtrack as demo fodder. The movie opens with a parachute drop over Normandy on the eve of D-Day and there is nothing subtle about the sound design. A barrage of flak greets the approaching aircraft, signalled by a seismic thump from the F3-12, perfectly timed to the visuals. An explosion tears through one of the planes; there's nuance to the destruction.

Absolute cracker

The Fyne Audio F3-12 is an absolutely cracking subwoofer, and one that sets the bar high for the others in this roundup. The fact that it undercuts some when it comes to price doesn't do its chances any harm either...

SPECIFICATIONS

DRIVE UNITS: 1 x 12in multi-fibre long-throw bass driver **ENCLOSURE:** Front firing, downward ported **FREQUENCY RESPONSE (CLAIMED):** Down to 28Hz **ONBOARD POWER (CLAIMED):** 370W RMS (520W peak) Class D amplification **REMOTE CONTROL:** No **DIMENSIONS:** 375(w) x 480(h) x 443(d)mm **WEIGHT:** 20kg

FEATURES: Stereo line-level inputs; mono LFE line-level input; normal-reverse phase switch; automatic standby option; DDX amplification; Bass Boost feature; 12V trigger