



STAND-MOUNT LOUDSPEAKER OF THE YEAR (OVER £2,000)

Amphion Argon 3S

The Argon 3S is the largest of the three stand-mount designs in Amphion's Argon range, sitting above the dinky Argon 1 and the positively cute Argon 0. It has much in common with the floorstanding Argon 7LS, utilising the same titanium tweeter and aluminium main drive unit, same crossover point, and the cabinet is the same width and depth, just shorter and with fewer drivers. It also uses the same approach of the sealed box with rear-mounted, passive auxiliary bass radiator as used in the Argon 7LS. In everything from finish to sound, the Finnish company Amphion do things a little differently, but anyone who thinks 'different' means 'wrong' clearly hasn't heard what the Argon 3S can do.

"These speakers do that small-box disappearing act supremely well," said Steve Dickinson in our test, "largely failing to draw attention to themselves, and just letting the music spill forth. It's a familiar Amphion trait, they don't impress by being impressive, they just let the music speak for itself." He also pointed out that the loudspeaker's imaging is excellent and that there is, "no obvious source of sound here, just tight, natural images on a convincing and lifesized soundstage."

Steve was particularly impressed by the quality of the bass of the Argon 3S; "Like the Argon LS7, the 3S uses a sealed cabinet and ABR rather than the more familiar (and probably less costly) reflex port. As far as bass is concerned, it's more about quality than quantity. Which is emphatically not to say it doesn't do bass, there's much more on offer in that regard than in those BBC monitor designs, for example, but the numbers don't tell the full story. There are small stand-mounters whose measurements will tell you they go deeper, and louder, and perhaps they do. But what the Argon 3S gives you is tight,

tuneful, convincing and, more importantly, properly focussed bass that securely underpins the music and propels it along, not woofy grumblings that rattle the rafters but don't seem to belong to anybody in the band." He concluded by saying, "Don't dismiss the Amphion Argon 3S, and don't assume it can't make sense in a high end system. It has reminded me that enough of all the important things is actually plenty." +

Reviewed in Issue **195**

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