



THE SPEAKER SHACK

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AVID HIFI EVO THREE SPEAKERS REVIEW

CONCLUSION

The Speaker Shack awards the AVID HiFi EVO Three speakers with an Outstanding badge award and The Speaker Shack's stamp of approval, they play all types of music to such a high level and standard with superb musicality and it is thoroughly deserved.

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AVID HiFi EVO Three Speakers Review

What an incredible year it has been so far, listening to so much HiFi and getting to review some fabulous products and systems, I am fortunate enough to be able to review and evaluate some of the very best high end audio equipment available. Although some of the equipment is way beyond the reach of most of us mere mortals there is still a lot of equipment which is in reach and affordable to get some of the very best HiFi into your music room.

One such brand is AVID HiFi which was only really introduced to me properly this year and so far I have been able to listen to quite a few of their products and evaluate their performance at home and in my living room, I reviewed the stunning EVO Four stand mount speakers in February of this year and was so impressed by their performance.

Fast forward and I am now in possession of the larger floor standing EVO Three speakers which takes the performance of the EVO line even further with extended bass and performance thanks to the larger cabinet size and design. How much further that is the question though that I want to know?

As per my previous reviews AVID HiFi was started back in 1995 when Conrad Mas wanted to take his audiophile passion further by designing his own turntables as his love of music and HiFi has been a journey just like most of us audiophiles he was looking for ways to improve upon what was already available. It led to him building and designing the Acutus turntable which is by all accounts one of the finest turntables money can buy, it was the foundations for his success and where it all started. Not just happy with building the best turntable Conrad went on to design and build what can only be described as complete portfolio of products based around his Reference range of products and backward engineered his designs to mirror and build upon this pinnacle of performance. The EVO series of speakers are built to the same strict ethos and one that Conrad has pursued since AVID HiFi began, to build the best and to give us audiophiles a more affordable product based around the Reference range which is the best of AVID HiFi.



Build Quality and Features

The EVO Three speakers are basically a floor standing version of the excellent EVO Four speakers, well not quite as it takes the design further by introducing another 6 inch bass driver and larger cabinet size which is tuned to extend lower and give a much larger sound with the extended bass response.

The build quality and design of the EVO series is exceptional and like the Four's I have them finished in gloss white which for me is the new black as I think they look stunning in the high gloss white finish. It features the 20mm machined aluminium baffle which compresses over the drivers to hold them in place this is something that is brought over from the Reference speakers using their exclusive metal compression plate, this gives the speakers an extremely clean look and finish but also helps to spread equal pressure around the drivers rather than the usual screw fixings that most manufacturers use. The EVO Three features a silk dome tweeter which is coated using the Acuflex technology which is a specially engineered compound to control high frequency breakup from the tweeter and allowing a much sweeter sound from the top end.

The 6" bass drivers are made from a polymer composite cone and thanks to the TMT (Tuned Mass Technology) they offer some awesome low frequency performance as I found out with the EVO Fours and I expect this to be enhanced due to the EVO Three's sporting 2 bass drivers and larger cabinet size. The TMT technology is very impressive as it really does counteract colouration from the cabinet and distortion in the sound, the dampening means that the TMT absorbs the energy directing it away from the drive units and allowing them to perform as they should with the incredible power that they generate. Both the bass and tweeter drivers use the External Voice Coil (EVC) technology which moves the magnetic drive system to within the coil, this helps with heat dissipation and helps reduce cone breakup to offer better performance.



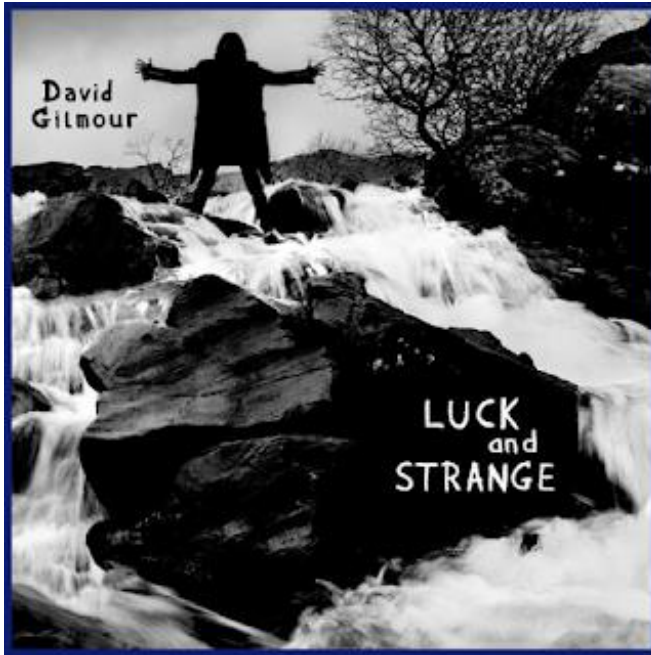
The cabinet is crafted out of 18mm moisture resistant MDF allowing for an extremely stiff and solid cabinet design, machined using a 5 axis CNC machine, each part is precision made and then hand assembled, it also features extensive cabinet bracing which helps to control the high air pressure that is generated inside the cabinet. On the rear is the solid aluminium back plate which also houses the crossover and the 4 speakers binding posts. Underneath the cabinet you have the 2 bass flex ports whereas the EVO Fours had a single port the EVO Three's now features 2 vertical ports firing down to the base plates on each of the speakers. This design allows for easier placement and also an excellent evenly spread frequency response in the lower octaves.

The EVO Three's are a 2.5 way design which are rated at 4 ohms impedance with a sensitivity of 87db and a recommended amplifier between 40-200 watts so a good and powerful amplifier is recommended to power them, the frequency response is from 32 Hz - 20 KHz so they drop low enough with plenty of bass output and weighing in at 33 Kg I would strongly recommend 2 people to install the speakers but if you feel brave it can be done on your own.

For this review I am connecting the EVO Three speakers up to the stunning Integra Integrated amplifier which I have just reviewed. I am using my Denon DP400 turntable for vinyl playback and then using Chord Electronics Hugo TT2 and M scaler for DAC duties with the Bluesound Node to stream music via Tidal, Qobuz and Spotify and also music that I have stored on my NAS HDD. CD playback is handled via my Cyrus Audio CD8SE CD player and then I am using Chord Cables Signature X Tuned Array speakers cables and Interconnects to tie it all together for a complete loom. I am using an EE1 noise isolator which is between my network switch and my Bluesound Node which I would not be without and also the Power Plug Array on my 8 way power supply strip to stop noise and interference entering into the system.

Setting up is straightforward and placement is where I previously located the EVO Four speakers and where all the speakers are placed in my room as this position gives me the optimal listening pleasure. I listen to a variety of music whether that be electronic, classical or rock but I absolutely love electronic music as you may have noticed from my social media channels but I also have some favourite artists whose music I use regularly to evaluate new speakers as I know the music so well.





Sound Quality and Performance

For my first album I am listening to the newly released album from the legend that is David Gilmour titled Luck And Strange, I am listening to this in high resolution 24bit 96kHz from Qobuz. It is another superb album from this legendary artist, I own so many of Pink Floyd's albums and he is one of my favourite guitarists sitting alongside Eric Clapton. The album has some great tracks and I already have my favourites with one of the bonus tracks at the end of the album being one that I keep listening to, as well as another track which features Gilmour's daughter Romany Gilmour who has such a beautiful voice, I suppose she has inherited her talent from her father as her vocals sound simply wonderful.

Track 6 Between Two Points features the vocals of Romany and it is such a beautiful track which starts off with the acoustic guitars to the left and right of the soundstage before the vocals come in front and centre which is presented with wonderful depth and imaging, creating a truly three dimensional image of the music being played in front of me. The kick drum which comes in has real power and the bass that the EVO Three speakers create is truly special with real visceral impact and feeling but it seems to have so many layers to the sound which the speakers present effortlessly. At about 3:50 min into the track Gilmours electric guitar solo sees the track out, instrument separation is superb with stunning depth to the image presented as his guitar playing is brought forward slightly to the left of the soundstage while the drums and other instruments play in the background.

Track 7 Dark and Velvet Nights is another stunning piece with vocals from David Gilmour and the EVO Three speakers paint such a perfect picture of the music with a dynamic performance and stunning clarity to the music, the soundstage presented is vast and instrument separation is perfectly placed with each instrument holding their own space within the soundstage, vocals from Gilmour is presented powerfully and his voice projected out into the room, there is a wonderful section where the violin comes in with stunning clarity and gives the track the orchestral big sound effect with incredible depth playing behind David Gilmour.

Track 11 Luck and Strange (barn jam) is 13 min and 59 second marathon of music but easily my favourite from this album and so reminiscent of the legendary Pink Floyd sound with keyboards taken from Richard Wright's' legendary playing when he was alive with the electric piano sounding superb off to the left and in some respect also reminds me of Ray Manzarek style from The Doors, the electric guitar plays off to the right while the drumming is placed centre stage with stunning impact and the shimmering cymbal's seem to hang in the air, the EVO Three's really do manage to capture the beauty of this music perfectly and you can really feel the musicians jamming on stage to what is an epic track, Gilmours guitar is superb and every pluck of his guitar strings can be felt and resonate through you allowing you to really feel the music that is being played, the same with the bass guitar which has real power underlying the beat of the music, this is a wonderful track and has been set to repeat as I just love the sound through the EVO Three speakers !

For my second album I am listening to the brilliant The Best Of Dire Strait's and Mark Knopfler Private Investigations on CD. Released in 2005 on Mercury Records it sounds so good through the AVID HiFi EVO Three speakers that I just had to include it into this review. I own quite a few of their albums and even some which are also SACD versions but this is just a CD release but an excellent recording and on CD is really impressive, I still love what a good CD player can do for music

Track 5 Private Investigations starts off with the piano playing and the acoustic guitar before Mark Knopfler's voice comes in centre of the sound stage and he kind of narrates to the music being played, the acoustic guitar sounds so beautiful and you can hear each chord being plucked with startling clarity and definition, each instrument has their own space in the acoustic soundstage, sonically this is an absolute delight to listen to as it highlights these instruments playing their different parts to the story that is being told through the music, the drumming section sounds magnificent with real impact and the EVO Three's really does bring this music to life and into my room, the sonic picture that they paint is just incredible with an almost holographic image filling my room with the instruments being played.

Track 6 Money For Nothing is such a classic piece and reminds of the my teenage years watching MTV which was our way of accessing music in the 80s I suppose before I really got into HiFi that is, music 24/7 who couldn't not like it. With the intro and vocals being sung "I want my MTV" which epitomises the 80s and what an intro which is iconic as it sounds, the soundstage is huge that the EVO Three speakers throws out with the drums and electric guitar sounding so powerful, the drums having real impact and slam before Knopfler's guitar and iconic riff comes in, the keyboards and synthesisers plays off to the right of the soundstage, the EVO Three speakers scale is superb with an immense soundstage presented in my room and the speakers really do disappear. I love the lyrics sung by Sting and make this track an all-time favourite of mine and the AVID speakers make such sweet music.

Track 7 Brothers in Arms is another one of Dire Straits classics and having listened to this track on so many of my systems going back 30 odd years the EVO Three's are some of the most natural and dynamic speakers I have heard this track played on presenting the music with incredible dynamics and superb timing and lightning fast transient shifts, stunning bass reproduction is always something that I love from a speaker and the EVO Three's deliver this by the bucket load but never sacrifice any of the top end detail or lush midrange !

On to my final pieces of music for this review and I have managed to listen to lots of my favourite electronic music with the EVO Three speakers and they performed flawlessly. I have found two new artists and DJ's, Extra Terra and Orphan King who both have some great music which they have created and produced streaming directly from Qobuz.



The first track by Orphan King sounds magnificent and has some incredible bass that the EVO Three speakers love and manage to produce perfectly energising my room with pulsating bass notes that you can really feel moving across the soundstage from left to right, electronic music always seem to have such great bass tracks and on a good pair of speakers like the EVO's and in my room you really don't need a sub to enjoy what this track has to offer, some of the effects that these artists produce in their music is all part of the enjoyment in the sounds that you hear and on a system of this calibre it is perfectly reproduced and almost verging on surround sound such is scale and width of the image produced, I will most certainly be keeping an eye out for future releases from the artist Orphan King.

My final track is from an artist Extra Terra that I found while searching through some melodic techno tracks on Bandcamp and with his music featuring in movies such as Borderlands with a strong Sci-Fi / Cyberpunk theme it is perfectly matched featuring melodic / ambient techno and strong bass sections. Listening to the track Entropy Club on the EVO Three's it sounds simply sublime with stunning bass reproduction and massive scale to the symphonic sounds produced from the music, taken from his 2024 album release Accelerate or Die which has some great tracks if you love this sort of music which I do. The EVO Three speakers play to extremely loud levels with not a hint of distortion or compression of the music with thunderous levels of bass produced. I can't help turning the volume up such is the level of enjoyment that this type of music gives me and pleasure.



The AVID HiFi EVO Three speakers represent quite the upgrade over the EVO Four speakers that I reviewed back in February, presenting music with better dynamics and improved soundstaging allowing the speakers to sound simply effortless in their delivery. Not taking away any of the glory from the EVO Four speakers as they are one of the best standmounts I have had here at The Speaker Shack and when partnered with the Accent Integrated amplifier they provide musical bliss for what is such a small but potent system with stunning performance. The same can be said about the EVO Three speakers partnered with the brilliant Integra Integrated amplifier which again is the perfect match as the Integra has some serious power on tap which the EVO Three's lap up and sound simply effortless with the music being played allowing for a much larger soundstage to be presented with better dynamic ability from this floor standing model.

Conclusions and Final Thoughts

My time with the EVO Three speakers has been extremely enjoyable and they are most certainly the next step if you are looking to upgrade from the standmount EVO Four's or any stand mount speaker for that matter, as they offer the same DNA which is an extremely detailed performance with stunning bass reproduction. Inheriting so much of the technology from the Reference range they have very similar sonic attributes and will happily put them at the top of my recommendation list. When partnered with the Integra Integrated amplifier it really is a match made in heaven for us audiophiles and a logical upgrade.

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