



SPEAKER SYSTEM

Balls of sound

Tasty, but will these speakers rock or roll?

THE ORIGINAL GALLO Micro system has been widely regarded as a landmark surround sound speaker package for years, combining compact, funky design with great audio performance. This new version offers titanium drivers in an effort to make them sound even sweeter.

Audio quality is superb, with the new drivers seeming to add even more clarity, depth and detail. On a dialogue-heavy movie such as *Stander*, the actors' voices are projected clearly, with little of the muffling you often find. Equally, in the film's early riot scene, surround effects zip around with great energy, giving a feeling of sitting right in the middle of the chaos. The subwoofer isn't a real heavyweight in the bass department, but provides fast-paced sound that fits very well with the satellites.

As with most small sub/sat packages, this one falls down slightly with music, as the subwoofer has to work far too hard. If you only listen to tunes at lower volumes then it's not too bad, but you will notice a difference at higher volumes, where there's a distinct lack of mid-range. Tracks such as *Wires* by Athlete sound a bit too strained and thin.

The design, which has become iconic, is still much the same – the sats are cute little spheres, about four inches across. The only visual difference is that those precious tiny titanium cones are now protected by metal grilles, rather than the old fabric coverings. Even the sub looks a little different, like a big section of pipe.

As a discreet 5.1 system, there are no products that can touch this in terms of performance or style – and it's a distinct improvement over the old version. You can get better sound for the money, but only with bigger, uglier boxes. So why not flaunt it? **SO**

ANTHONY GALLO MICRO TI

www.soundimage.com.au

TECH 5 satellites with 3-inch titanium drivers. 120W power handling. 100W subwoofer.

LOVE The compact and eye-pleasing design. Detailed sonics.

HATE Reliance on the subwoofer for music at higher volumes.

T3 ★★★★★

WE SAY Great-looking speakers with some amazing punch for their size.



MICRO HI-FI

Sonic art

WITH SLICK STYLING and a real-world price tag, this little beauty is aimed at those of us who lust after stylish kit from B&O or Loewe, but simply can't afford it.

The piano-black main unit houses a CD player with a cool lid-opening action, plus there's an FM/AM radio and enough amplification for the 2.1 speakers. The attractive satellites have NXT flat-panels in them and are also wall-mountable, while the sub is a somewhat uglier affair that should be hidden if possible.

Sound at background level is clean and sweet, but things start to fall apart when the volume is cranked up. The satellites only handle the treble, so as the music gets louder, the sub has to work much harder across the mid-range and bass until it takes over too much – you lose the stereo effect and the sound becomes very hollow. On *Run*, Stephen Fretwell sounds like he's singing into a barrel. It has the same effect on dance music, too. We also had to position the sub directly between the satellites to keep the left and right channels in balance.

Although we love the B&O looks, the performance is just a little too budget to warrant the asking price. **SO**

OREGON SCIENTIFIC MUSIC ELEMENT

\$529

www.oregonscientific.com.au

TECH CD player. FM/AM radio. 2 NXT flat-panel speakers. Passive subwoofer. Remote control.

LOVE B&O-esque styling. Classy CD opening mechanism.

HATE The sound at high volume. Ugly sub.

T3 ★★★★★

WE SAY Looks gorgeous, but the sound isn't good enough.



Also consider

The Mordaunt-Short Genie

sounds superb. The sats look cool and feel solid, but the sub is an ugly box. It's **\$2,799**.

The **Cabasse Xo2**

costs **\$2,990**, although it doesn't sound or look as good as the Gallo system.

