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STAND LOUDSPEAKER REVIEWS

Harbeth Super HL5*plus* loudspeaker

Art Dudley | May 28, 2015



To some, the measure of a company has less to do with the amount of

money it makes than with the honesty of the things it sells: the assurance that every product in its line is designed not as a marketing exercise but as a straightforward and presumably unique answer to a real consumer need.

Consider Harbeth, founded in 1977 by ex-BBC engineer Dudley Harwood, the first syllable of whose surname is immortalized on thousands of loudspeakers whose shared heritage is unmistakable. That in itself is testament to the durability of Harwood's point of view, and to the no-less-apparent dedication of Alan Shaw—who, since 1986, when Dudley Harwood retired, has owned and steered the company. One is forgiven for regarding Shaw as the rare businessperson who bought a company not just for the selling power of its name, but because he shares its founder's belief in the rightness of doing things a certain way.

At Harbeth, that certain way is the classic British box: a thin-walled enclosure that controls resonances by means of panel tuning rather than sheer mass, said box containing drivers of generally low coloration and reasonably high sensitivity. Nowhere is evidence of Harbeth's dedication to that premise more clear than in the fact that they do not sell multiple speaker *lines*: The company offers only five models, each suited to a different budget and/or room size (footnote 1). As refinements in materials and manufacturing techniques become available, those models evolve—something that happened not long ago, when Harbeth changed their flagship model from the M40 to the M40.1. Now Harbeth has reworked the second-most-expensive model in their line, the results being their recent Super HL5*plus* (\$6695/pair).

Description

The backstory: As with other companies that started out making broadcast monitors for the BBC, Harbeth's first models were built around plastic-cone woofers of the company's own design and manufacture. For years, Harbeth remained loyal to polypropylene, which they felt was better suited to driver cones than were pulp or woven synthetic fibers. Then, in 1990, Alan Shaw initiated a research project intended to find a plastic that could outperform polypropylene in some key areas: not just a stronger material, for better

"pistonic" behavior, but one by means of which the cone's performance could be optimized for each portion of the bandwidth it serves. With the help of some university students, Harbeth hit on a polymeric composite to which they gave the trade name RADIAL, an acronym for Research And Development In Advanced Loudspeakers—though it also refers to the fact that the lines along which a RADIAL cone exhibits its greatest stiffness and efficiency are, indeed, radial. (This apparently derives from RADIAL's suitability for injection molding, instead of mere vacuum forming from sheets of plastic stock.)



By 1995, Harbeth had begun upgrading their line with RADIAL woofers and midrange drivers, and with concomitant upgrades to their crossover networks, earlier versions of which had apparently been designed to compensate for the shortcomings of lossier cones. Now, just a few years after the last of those upgrades, Harbeth has introduced an even newer and presumably better cone material, RADIAL2. Thus has the already popular Harbeth Super HL5 evolved into the Super HL5*plus*, with the addition of a RADIAL2 woofer and the associated crossover refinements to suit it.

Like the sturgeon, the hellbender, and the woodlouse, the Super HL5*plus* bears an unusually strong resemblance to its prehistoric ancestor—in this case, the seminal Spondor BC1. Both are three-way loudspeakers with a *ca* 8" bass/midrange driver and two tweeters, one of the latter being slightly larger than the other. (The same can be said of the BC1's own descendants, the Spondor SP1/2 and Stirling LS3/6, both of which endure.) For the new Harbeth, those drivers are its 7.8" RADIAL2 woofer, a 1" aluminum-dome tweeter, and a 0.78" titanium-dome tweeter; the woofer is constructed in-house, while the tweeters are made by SEAS in Norway to Harbeth's specifications. All are fastened, with machine bolts and threaded inserts, to recesses on the front of a baffle made of $\frac{3}{4}$ "-thick MDF and veneered on both sides, to stabilize the wood. (Only the outer veneer is finished.)

The remaining five panels of the Super HL5*plus*'s two-cubic-foot enclosure, which measures 24.8" wide by 12.6" high by 11.7" deep, are made from thinner sheets of MDF. The top, bottom, and sides are lined with a very dense, high-quality acoustic foam, and an even bigger chunk of the stuff, some 4" thick, is tightly stuffed inside the enclosure. No damping is applied to the front baffle, which incorporates a foam-lined plastic reflex port approximately $2\frac{3}{4}$ " long and $2\frac{3}{4}$ " in diameter. The Harbeth's crossover network, built onto a printed-circuit board of moderate size, is mounted to the inside surface of the rear panel, directly beneath a 7.5" by 14.5" sheet of damping material best described as *tarry stuff*, which is stapled in place. On the rear panel are four gold-plated binding posts, in pairs connected with stamped-brass links that are removable in the event of biwiring. Internal connections are made with the very flexible Van Damme Blue OFC speaker cable.



My review pair was well finished, and although I'd spring for the extra-cost rosewood or tiger ebony veneers if it were my \$7000 on the block, the somewhat plainer cherry finish was pretty in its own right. Build quality was fine—and here I'll offer an apology regarding my earlier review of the

ostensibly similar [Stirling LS3/6](#)). In describing the construction of that British box, I mentioned my disappointment that its front and rear baffles were fastened to the enclosure not with machine screws and threaded inserts but with mere wood screws driven into furring strips. I implied that that was a less-than-perfectly tight or rigid join, and I was correct—and, as further research has shown, that's precisely what the designer of a thin-walled loudspeaker is after.

Ideally, different panels will resonate at different frequencies: the low-amplitude energy can be spread over a wide range and swept into a corner, where it's least likely to be noticed. Yet to prevent the cabinet as a whole from resonating, there must be gaps or interruptions between individual panels, and especially between the front baffle and the wrap. Recent conversations with luthier Richard Hoover, founder of the Santa Cruz Guitar Company, confirm the notion that different methods of joining and bracing two structures can be used to enhance or prevent the flow of acoustical energy from one structure to the other, and that experienced craftspeople will manipulate these variables in different ways, depending on how they want the structure as a whole to behave.

Installation and setup

Though designed to be mounted on a stand, the Super HL5*plus* isn't supplied with one, nor does Harbeth recommend any specific brand or style of support. I pressed into service a pair of 20"-tall open-frame, alloy stands that I've owned for at least a quarter of a century, which placed the Harbeth's lower, 1" tweeter some 39" above the floor. Initial listening tests led me to think that I'd prefer having both tweeters a bit farther from the floor; as a stop-gap measure, I placed 12" squares of $\frac{3}{4}$ " plywood—cut for some crazy project that never saw the light of day—between the tops of the stands and the bottoms of the Harbeths. That height suited me and my room just fine, providing good spaciousness, tonal balance, and stereo imaging.

Here's where it got weird: I knew, from my experience with scores of other British boxes, that fine results could be had by placing four pea-sized balls

of Bostik Blu-Tack between the bottom of each speaker and its stand. This I did—and was brought up short by how much duller, less lively, and less involving the music sounded. The Blu-Tack seemed to confer no performance advantages over the speaker-on-plywood-on-stand approach. I removed and discarded the Blu-Tack and carried on as before, happily. Go figure.

Footnote 1: Harbeth also has a separate pro-audio line, comprising texture-painted versions of three of the company's five domestic models.

NEXT: [Page 2](#) »

COMPANY INFO

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ARTICLE CONTENTS

- [Page 1](#)
- [Page 2](#)
- [Specifications](#)
- [Associated Equipment](#)
- [Measurements](#)

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COMMENTS



Respect for Harbeth

Submitted by jporter on May 28, 2015 - 12:09pm

when this review goes up on our website, a few members of the "I prefer to think of my mother's basement as an apartment with a shared entrance" crowd will write in to tell us how much smarter they are than the manufacturers who design and build classic British boxes, and how stupid Stereophile is to write about such things...

Harbeth is obviously an extremely "smart company". The profit margin on this design must be truly remarkable. I commend them for getting reviewers like you to call them a bargain at \$6600...I commend them

even further for getting people to buy them. Feel free to dismiss me, but I do own a home and I obviously have a much better grasp of budgets and bargains than you do.

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Ô Canada!

Submitted by ppgr on May 28, 2015 - 5:22pm

Canadian suggested retail price is \$6299 which is roughly equivalent to \$5000usd given today's exchange rate. My advice to smart US buyers is to drive north, have a nice meal (hell! stay for a weekend at the Ritz-Carlton!) and bring the Harbeths back with some spare change.

<http://audioallianceinc.com/product-category/harbeth-speakers/>

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Construction Quality

Submitted by william.meredith on May 28, 2015 - 7:33pm

The construction of this speaker looks like it came from the local five and dime.

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I would rather have one tweeter..

Submitted by remlab on May 29, 2015 - 3:47am

without the destructive interference.

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It's based on the original BBC design

Submitted by jmsent on May 29, 2015 - 5:47am

for studio monitors from more than 40 years ago. The tweeter they used back then was the Celestion HF1300, which died very quickly above 13kHz. So an STC (Coles) "super tweeter" was added to fill in. Modern tweeters are for more capable and can easily make it well beyond 20kHz with little problem. I don't really see why Harbeth continues this practice, other than to stay faithful to the old design. But the extended frequency response of the

modern tweeters seems to work against this arrangement as evidenced by the horribly choppy response above 10kHz; caused by the interaction of the 2 tweeters both operating over much of the same range. I don't recall the older BBC designs with tweeter/super tweeter configurations exhibiting this behavior...at least not to this extent.

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second tweeter

Submitted by avanti1960 on May 29, 2015 - 9:52am



I heard these at AXPONA. The super tweeter sounded incredible. Added a significant amount of smooth "air" and breathy presence, especially with female vocals. A highlight of the design IMHO.

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looks like a kit

Submitted by james alan on May 29, 2015 - 5:49am



At best this looks like a \$200 DIY kit from Parts Express! Opening that 1980's looking speaker box is to peer behind the Wizard of Oz curtain. And who needs shielded magnets on woofers these days, especially on \$7000.00 speakers?

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The second magnet on the woofer..

Submitted by jmsent on May 29, 2015 - 6:59am



is probably not for shielding. What would be the point, given that the tweeters aren't shielded? 2nd magnets are often used to get a little extra flux into the magnet system. Sometimes manufacturers use this method to "trim" their woofers; i.e., to compensate for variations in magnet strength from batch to batch. So you may find the 2nd magnet only on some woofers and not on others.

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no comments about imaging?

Submitted by avanti1960 on May 29, 2015 - 9:50am



why no comments about the quality of sound stage imaging and precision of location queues? weak spot in the design given the wide profile and rectangular box shape?

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For the life of me

Submitted by Nellomilanese on May 29, 2015 - 1:44pm

I can't see where 6700 \$ have gone into building one of these...it really looks horrible...more like 300\$.

Look I took apart a Dali Zensor 3 (450\$ pair) and it looks MUCH MUCH better constructed than these...including the cables and the foam used inside...not to mention the actual walls of the speaker !! I'm sure they sound great..but for God's sake these are off the shelf drives from ScanSpeak...look on their website. What i'm see in' here is a 2k TOPS speaker and i'm being generous.

Cudos to them if they manage to actually make a living by selling at these inflated prices !

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Whist i agree witgh you that

Submitted by utubecomment21 on January 16, 2016 - 3:53am

Whist i agree with you that this obviously doesn't represent over \$6k, there are few speakers that do ... your suggestion for Dali included.

As for your comment on Scanspeak, i haven't seen any scanspeak with inverted surrounds, but that would also be true of so many brands including Wilson Audio, Sonus Faber, Totem and a host of other overpriced brands.

My question is; why do acoustical engineers use more humble equipment, whilst so-called audiophiles get more excited the higher the price tag or the shinier the speakers are? .. again, your suggestion of Dali speakers kicks in there!

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Re: Dali

Submitted by Nellomilanese on January 7, 2016 - 1:37pm

Dali makes their drivers and tweeters in-house. So does B&W, Focal, Elac (which sells them to other brands also) and a few others.

I think these brands offer best bang for ur money for obvious reasons.

While from the outside it would seem like SonusFaber just slaps german DKM drivers and sells speakers at inflated prices the reality in this case is quite different.

I co-wrote an article on Sonus Faber 3xtrema speakers and visited their factory in Arcugnano (200 km from my home). The drivers are made for them only under their requirements (which are high). I was allowed to observe the whole manufacturing process in the factory and trust me you would be mind-blown at the level of artisan hard work that goes into these speakers (unlike these piece of cr@p boxes presented here). we also interview Paolo Tezzon which is their chief R&D. After a whole day there I realised their speakers are priced just right and you really do get what you pay for! The leather-pulling and fitting over the cabinet was amazing to witness.

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Your reply I've heard 100

Submitted by utubecomment21 on January 16, 2016 - 4:01am

Your reply I've heard 100 times, but that still doesn't guarantee any kind of acoustical performance enhancements over 'Store Bought' components. The car audio industry in the U.S. are going through the same nonsense, and so-called M.I.A. products offer no acoustical benefits over those made in China!

At best it might secure a cost saving to the manufacturer, but in my 30+ years of testing such drivers against the like of Scan, Seas, Morel, and other OEM manufacturers, building in-house offers little to no benefits acoustically. Believe me over the years i've ripped apart and tested enough speakers to last me 3 life times, which is why for serious listening I haven't bought a pair of commercial speakers in over two decades.



And whatever you do, don;t

Submitted by utubecomment21 on January 16, 2016 - 3:54am

And whatever you do, don't look into the Boenicke speakers, you will be disappointed.

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Shouldn't hi fi be judged on its performance?

Submitted by lo fi on May 30, 2015 - 1:47am

I find it telling how the comments disparaging this speaker are in no way based on how it actually sounds. Also, Harbeth isn't the only speaker company that uses OEM drivers (from SEAS, not Scan-Speak). I was under the impression that it's rare for speaker companies to manufacturer their drivers in-house these days, particularly relatively small enterprises such as Harbeth. Having said that, it's notable that Harbeth does produce its proprietary RADIAL2 bass/mid driver in-house. But with all hi fi, the true test of a component's merit is in the listening and Art Dudley clearly liked what he heard from the unprepossessing Super HL5 plus.

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harbeth super hl5plus

Submitted by bounce177 on May 31, 2015 - 3:11pm

the prices of Harbeth speakers in the USA are determined by Fidelis AV. The prices are higher than the prices in the UK and Canada. I have seen claims on the internet that Fidelis has higher quality wiring in the USA versions. Many people resent the high USA prices. Sterling Broadcast's LS3/6 started out with a price of \$4,000 and now is \$5,000. If anyone knows whether USA Harbeths have upgraded wiring please tell. Harbeth has come out with a new 40.2.

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Objective performance

Submitted by dreite on June 2, 2015 - 7:51am



I find it amusing that what is essentially cheap construction can be rationalized into a "deliberate design decision" and the result is objective performance "beyond reproach."

I can't argue with subjective evaluation, but there are obviously numerous issues with this speaker.

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Well that's a sweeping statement

Submitted by lo fi on June 3, 2015 - 6:06am

Care to elaborate upon it dreite? Notwithstanding that the speaker designer's philosophy is steeped in the BBC tradition and is a considered evolution of it, what specifically makes the construction cheap and what are the "obviously numerous issues" that you have identified?

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Did you look at the

Submitted by dreite on June 3, 2015 - 8:04am

Did you look at the "Measurements" page? As with most of JA's testing, you have to read between the lines and interpret the results...objectively.

There are numerous wiggles in the impedance sweep, the cabinet "rings", the "extra" tweeter is not well implemented, etc, etc. I understand some of those are "design decisions" but nevertheless, they are easily seen as "issues" in the objective performance.

As I alluded to, subjective evaluation trumps everything else. If you like the way the speaker looks and sounds, that's all that matters. But let's stay objective about objective performance.

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Yes, I looked

Submitted by lo fi on June 6, 2015 - 12:10am

Yes, I looked over the measurements and didn't see anything there that would cause me concern, and it's clear from John Atkinson's conclusion that he didn't either. It seems to me that in reading between the lines, you are looking for something that isn't there.

Reading between the lines, it appears that the "deliberate design decision" that John is referring to is the speaker cabinet's lossy construction. Cabinet resonances are an expected consequence of this design approach, where the speaker cabinet is constructed as a tuned box rather than an acoustically inert one. Whether you agree with this approach to speaker design or not is up to you, but it is Harbeth's way.

You say that we should "stay objective about objective performance", which is commendable I suppose. However, in your posts you smirk at what you regard as the "essentially cheap construction" of the Super HL5 plus (presumably based entirely on a photo of its innards). You then attempt to justify your "essentially" superficial judgement of this speaker by casting doubt over John Atkinson's positive assessment of its objective performance, and by zeroing in on anything that appears faintly negative to you regardless of how inconsequential it is. I suspect that your own "subjective evaluation trumps everything else" in this instance.

With regard to John Atkinson's measurements, I think it's worth mentioning that he employs a different measurement methodology to the speaker designer. This was the subject of a "lively" exchange between them some time ago. So objective performance isn't as clear cut as you might think and speaker measurements should be regarded as indicative rather than definitive, or to put it another way, "taken with a grain of salt."

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Objectively speaking

Submitted by rogeronimo on October 2, 2016 - 6:45pm

" the Harbeth Super HL5plus's measured performance is beyond reproach." — John Atkinson.

Did you read that bit?

Or were you just too busy with your own subjective assessment ?

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Harbeth Speaks With A Musically True Voice

Submitted by Ricardo on June 4, 2015 - 12:19pm

While it seems that the discussion of the Harbeth 5s has gotten off track, it might make a little more sense to ask those who have experience listening to the speaker to chime in. I own a pair of the previous versions (the SHL5 sans Plus), and as someone who has owned many high-end loudspeakers over the last fifty plus years, I have to say I continue to be amazed at how musically satisfying and non-fatiguing the Harbeth 5s are. I find the model five to be more engaging (less dry) than the model 3.0 (which seems to be the Harbeth model that reviewers go ga-ga over) and the C7ES-3, which I also own. And much like every loudspeaker out there, I don't think Harbeth's are right for every listener or for every type of music, i.e., in particular I don't find the 5s are as suitable for Rock music, or even large scale symphonic music. However, I do think that the 5s would be appreciated for what they can do for smaller ensemble high quality classical and jazz recordings in vinyl or on High Res Flac and DSD players, especially discriminating listeners looking for instruments that sound natural with plenty of timbre detail and rich in harmonics captured in the best recordings. And surprisingly (I was surprised) the Harbeth 5s can do justice to a well recorded piano,(and I have a 7ft grand in my living room that I play and hear all the time). Harbeth states that the speaker is "voiced" using the human voice, but equally satisfying through these 5s are strings, woodwinds, horns, and guitars. The golden age of 1950s Jazz giants, recorded by the likes of Rudy Van Gelder, sound marvelous, Staging and imaging will require some effort with your room and with placement, but listening to the likes of Art Pepper Meets The Rhythm Section, there is both sensational tonal quality, and impact (the drums kits sound marvelous, as does the entire drum kit, as when enjoying the equally well recorded "Steve Davis Project Quality of Silence" with his cymbals seeming to float endlessly with full yet crystalline clarity that I've rarely heard and even then only wearing the best of today's newest and most expensive high end headphones).

So, in my humble opinion, if one is not primarily listening to rock

music, and one is unable to purchase a pair of Quad loudspeakers due to either their cost, or the fact that one doesn't want to electrocute one's dog or house cats, allow me to suggest that such a listener take an actual LISTEN to Harbeth loudspeakers, preferably in your home, before ruling them out.

One last comment, simply because it seems misplaced. Apparently, there ARE performance considerations regarding the choice of materials out of which the speakers are built, and granted, the insides of the Harbeth's speakers are not going to win any glamor awards, but it is really a distortion to say that Harbeth loudspeakers are not finished well, and quite off the mark to say that Harbeth 5s or 5+s look cheap. As someone who looks at them each and every day under every kind of lighting condition, I would have to say that quality of the finish is really remarkable. The rosewood veneer and matching and look of the finish is remarkably professional, as good as I've seen on any speaker, quite frankly. I've had professional woodworkers in the house as guests, and they have all remarked at how beautifully finished the Harbeth 5s are. So while "finishing quality" wouldn't have been a the major consideration for me, I feel it's necessary to correct the record in this blog that Harbeth speakers look cheap. Quite the opposite, friends. Quite the opposite! Take a close at the finish next time you are near a pair of Rosewood or Tiger Ebony 5s. I'm sure others who have lived in close proximity to them, as I have, would have a similar opinion.

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Well said

Submitted by lo fi on June 3, 2015 - 7:23am

Well said Ricardo.

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Re: rock music

Submitted by Nellomilanese on January 7, 2016 - 2:06pm

"So, in my humble opinion, if one is not primarily listening to rock music, "

Your phrase here represents everything that's wrong with these brands and hi-fi. Basically you're ok with spending 6k \$ on a speaker that in your own words is not suited for rock music?? Is

this the level of marketing brainwashing in hi-fi? THAT is your expectation on a 6k speaker? so if I wanna listen to Mettatica I should spend another 6k for other speakers that do rock well? then another 6k for hip-hop speakers? LOL

Any speaker over 1k SHOULD play rock/hip-hop and what else in a satisfactory manner!

Case in point: 2 years ago I was in a high-end hi-fi store which where demoing a Spendor bookshelf (I think it was around € 3k) with a € 4k amp . They were playing jazz and I swear the trumpets and sax sounded HEAVENLY. I was mesmerised!

Then i said hey let's play Dark Side of the moon (which I always carry with me). I swear I have NEVER NEVER heard such muddled drums and basslines on DSOTM...not even from my 1st speaker (200 € Boston Acoustics standmount)! I was literally gutted and so was the dealer who openly admitted that on rock music they suck completely (not to mention electronic music or whatnot). conclusion? SOME speakers are "sugarcoated" to sound well on the "audiophile" music. truth is that for your thousands of € you're paying a speaker that can't hold a candle to a 700 € studio monitor !!

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Factual mis-statements

Submitted by bgiliberti on June 10, 2015 - 2:41pm

Don't you love the internet? People get to make any factual assertion they want, without the taking the least responsibility for it. For the record: (1) Harbeth's SEAS drivers are not off the shelf. They are custom manufactured to Harbeth's exact specifications by SEAS. (2) Anyone who has ever seen a Harbeth speaker knows that they are beautifully crafted. (3) Anyone who has ever listened to a Harbeth speaker, which apparently is not the case with the detractors on this board, would not give a crap about how they looked. The sound is what the Harbeth experience is all about, and it is amazing. Whether one likes the BBC sound is a matter of taste; factual misstatements and arrogant ignorance are not. And they are certainly not helpful.

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They amuse, and amaze, me

Submitted by Delbert on June 10, 2015 - 10:58pm

Sadly, these anonymous know-it-alls are way too predominant on audio forums. They are so ignorant, that when they open their mouths to tell the rest of how it is, they tell the whole world how much they do not know. They also tell us that they have put their money where their mouths are. Experience comes with a price.

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I own a pair of Super HL5+

Submitted by Loren on June 13, 2015 - 9:29am

Here's what I can tell you after owning a pair for some weeks. The exterior cabinetry is wonderful. The grain follows continuously through the exterior on the eucalyptus wood, as a seamless piece. The sound is wonderful. I compared across a range of speakers. My listening prefers neutrality and clarity. The Harbeth design philosophy is known for this. I truly feel they were worth every penny I invested.

That being said, yes, the photo of the internals can take you a bit aback. The money is where it counts on these and I'll never be spending any time looking at the internal structure.

System: Bel Canto 2.7 DAC/Preamp, Balanced Audio Technologies VK-200 amp, Nordost Hemidall 2 XLR interconnect (brought the vocals forward nicely). Getting Nordost Heimdall 2 speaker cables and USB. Sound Anchor stands: Really improved the isolation of each speaker.

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HI5+

Submitted by Olu on September 7, 2015 - 2:30pm

Extremely rich sound coming from these. Would use Sound Anchor stands for these. Will be an OWNER SOON.

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Happy owners

Submitted by Nellomilanese on January 7, 2016 - 2:21pm

let's just agree to disagree. Don't want to sound like those internet trolls. It's ur money...so to all you guyz who enjoy these Harbeth speakers: happy listening!

At the end of the day that's what matters most.

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Let sleeping dogs lie?

Submitted by Tesla one on July 17, 2016 - 9:47am

"... when this review goes up on our website, a few members of the "I prefer to think of my mother's basement as an apartment with a shared entrance" crowd will write in to tell us how much smarter they are than the manufacturers who design and build classic British boxes, and how stupid Stereophile is to write about such things. That may be funny or it may just be sad, depending on what kind of day I've had: I'll have to wait and see."

Mr. Dudley --

I enjoy reading your reviews and articles in general, this one included, though I can't help but think that above quoted paragraph is a sly allusion to my initial gripe with a show report of yours on Volti Audio's Vittora speakers - something about their price and supposed value (and some homemade cables..). It's a shame really the Vittora's were to be placed in the center of that rather heated "debate," as I found them to be highly intriguing speakers (I've since gone on to invest in their UK sibling in a sense, namely Simon Mears Audio's Uccello - based on the Klipsch Belle). I enjoyed your follow-up on the Vittora's in the Stereophile review, as well as your addressing named intial gripe of mine through the "Tesla" surrogate, indeed too hard to overlook. I asked for it and you were right to call me out, I guess, even when it meant seeing you looking eye-to-eye with an invented mother-bound character of (mental) young age (hence the joy in reading this part of the review also); perhaps surprise was an element of my reaction, seeing you getting back to this (and yet again?) quite some time after the show report, but of course this way your bashing was all the more visible for all to see :) I'd even since come to read your article "Skin Deep," which made my griping seem somewhat awkward (and your reaction perhaps more amusingly understandable). Nevertheless,

here's another post of mine, and you are free to verbally rip me to threads, should you feel like it. Indeed call me out. Or, let's move on (afterwards). Truly, I enjoy your writings and taste in speakers in particular. Sorry for the late reply (and adolescent griping).

Best,
M

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titanium-dome tweeter

Submitted by Ck3 on September 23, 2016 - 12:46am

Your fact is wrong. The 0.78" titanium-dome tweeter is not made by SEAS as Harbeth would like you to believe. It is a low quality cheap tweeter made by an unknown supplier.

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SEAS tweeter

Submitted by rogeronimo on October 24, 2016 - 2:05pm

Produce your evidence for this, Mr Ck3 please.

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Not-so-super tweeter

Submitted by Ck3 on October 19, 2016 - 5:27am

SEAS say so. [flame deleted by John Atkinson. And like the other poster, if you continue to flame, you will be blocked from posting to our site]

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Not-so-super tweeter

Submitted by Ck3 on October 2, 2016 - 9:06pm

To put the record straight, Harbeth has never said that their super tweeter is made by SEAS. Whenever SEAS is mentioned, it's referring to the 25mm tweeter. People take it to mean both the 25mm tweeter and 20mm super tweeter are made by SEAS because they are mentioned in the same sentence. However, Harbeth has also not

pointed out this false belief. This seems deliberate as they are always very quick to rebut undesirable issues on the HUG forum... I think because it's cool to be associated with SEAS!

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SEAS tweeters

Submitted by rogeronimo on October 17, 2016 - 5:46pm

I don't see that Harbeth are under any obligation to refute other peoples' ignorant assumptions; I'm sure they have better things to do with their time than worry about what Internet trolls are wasting THEIR time with.

To further put the record straight, the tweeters in other models in the Harbeth range are also supplied by SEAS, namely the 19mm soft dome unit in the P3ESR and the 27mm soft dome Excel unit used in both the M30.1 and the M40.1 monitors. That pretty much covers the full range.

Professional loudspeaker manufacturers don't merely associate with reputed suppliers "because it's cool", but for proper engineering and commercial reasons.

That's because they are grown-ups.

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Harbeth Supertweeter

Submitted by rogeronimo on October 19, 2016 - 11:17am

As a final word on this subject, while their tweeters are from SEAS and the bass/midrange unit fully manufactured in-house, Harbeth have the supertweeter built from tooling of their design.

(I trust that will put an end to some immature and ill-mannered comments which have no place on this site.)

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Are you Alan Shaw or someone

Submitted by gizmo101 on March 24, 2017 - 3:08am

Are you Alan Shaw or someone from Harbeth? You

certainly sound like one of them on the Harbeth users group forum...someone who comes across as a petty, condescending, mean spirited despot towards anyone who politely dares to voice any negative opinion about Harbeth products.

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Some advice

Submitted by rogeronimo on March 24, 2017 - 4:01pm

Clearly you need to take your own advice regarding politeness.

If you have nothing useful to say, best not to say anything.

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Super tweeter

Submitted by gizmo101 on October 20, 2016 - 9:55pm

I can't imagine SEAS making such poor quality driver. It's not even a super tweeter in the first place. Calling it SEAS-made would be an insult to SEAS.

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Super tweeter

Submitted by rogeronimo on October 24, 2016 - 1:56pm

The drive unit in question provides an extended treble response with wider dispersion up to and beyond 20khz. In case you didn't know, that is the very definition of a super tweeter.

As regards quality, I'll just refer you to J.A's conclusion : "the Harbeth Super HL5plus's measured performance is beyond reproach".

Also, it has already been pointed out here that it is not a SEAS product ... duh!

In the words of a previous poster here ("They amuse, and amaze, me", Submitted by Delbert on June 11, 2015 - 6:58am)

"Sadly, these anonymous know-it-alls are way too predominant on audio forums. They are so ignorant, that when they open their

mouths to tell the rest of how it is, they tell the whole world how much they do not know."

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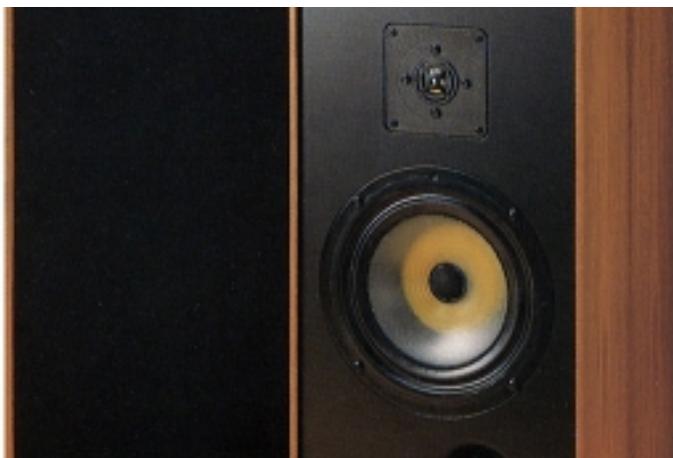
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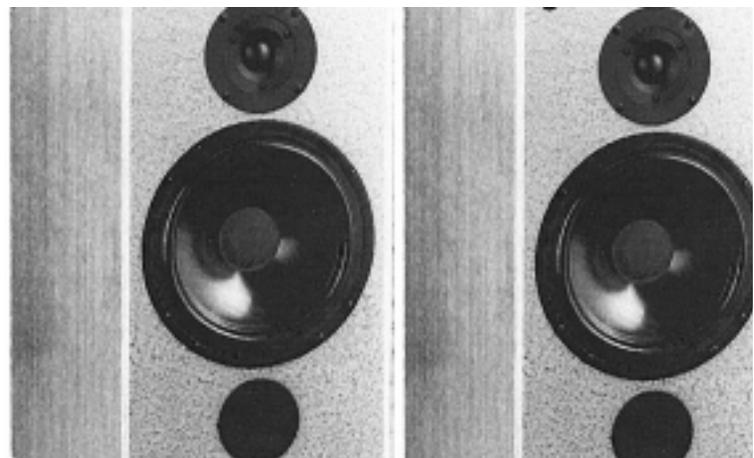
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