

IT'S A SPEED THING

With the Tempo, Audio Physic presents a new version of one of its best-known models. And although you can hardly see it from the outside, the upgrade is quite something.









The magnetic decoupling feet VCF II are a worthwhile upgrade and cost an extra 769 euros

Basics

There is no doubt that the Sauerland-based company Audio Physic is one of the most important loudspeaker manufacturers in Germany. For around 40 years, handmade precision sound transducers have been produced under this name, combining a discreet visual appearance with optimum performance. Audio Physic is one of the very few companies where two developers have achieved international fame and honour: Company founder Joachim Gerhard was succeeded by Manfred Diestertich, who has now been responsible for Audio Physic's creations for almost 25 years.

The Tempo model is a case in point, and one in which much of Audio Physic's history can be traced. It once began as a compact two-way monitor with Scandinavian loudspeaker equipment and has now matured into a handsome three-way floor-standing speaker that only has the objective anchored in its name in common with the original model.

The last incarnation of the Tempo was the anniversary model 'Tempo 35', the new version is simply called 'Tempo', although the speaker boxes already hinted at what the latest update is all about. It is labelled 'Tempo SL'. The abbreviation stands for 'spiderless' and refers to the midrange driver, which is located on the baffle.

Cabinet

The formal aspects of the Tempo have not changed: The smallest floorstanding speaker in the 'Reference' series is moderately

tall at one metre, and the cabinet has a distinctly slim appearance. This is due to the slightly convex side panels, which allow for quite a narrow baffle. A gentle inclination of the cabinet towards the rear provides additional visual appeal and also facilitates the temporally coherent radiation of both drivers on the front of the cabinet. Solid aluminium cross-members equipped with the company's own 'VCF II Magnetic Plus' magnetic feet ensure that the slender spea-

Teammates

Turntable:

- **Transrotor Massimo Nero / Studio 12'**

Cartridge:

- **Transrotor Figaro**

Phono preamp;

- **Musical Fidelity Nu-Vista Vinyl**

Integrated amplifier:

- **Soulnote E-2**

Preamplifier:

- **MalValve preamp three line**

Power amplifiers:

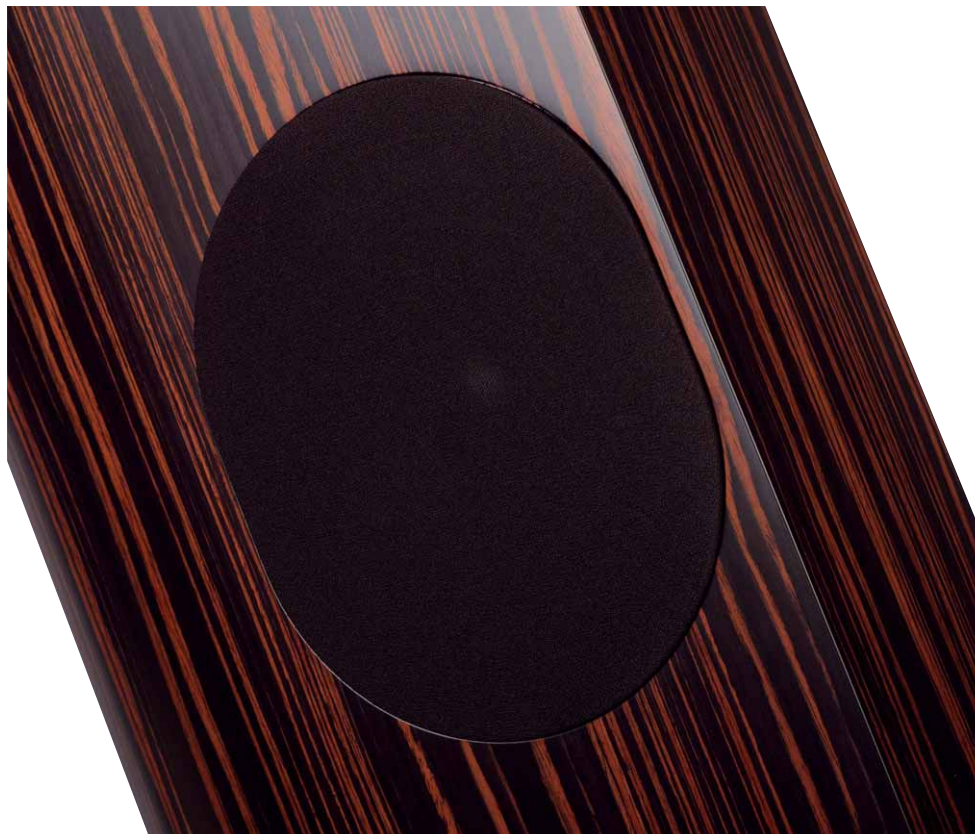
- **Atma-Sphere Class D**

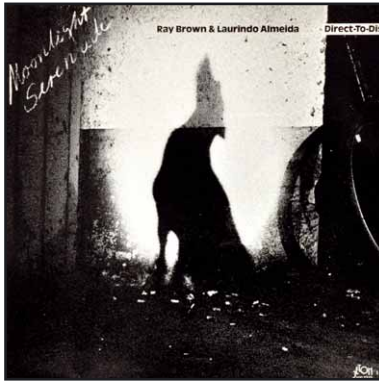
Competitors

Loudspeakers:

- **Rosso Fiorentino Certaldo**
- **Epos ES-14N**

The 7" woofers are concealed behind the side covers





What we played

Laurindo Almeida / Ray Brown
Moonlight Serenade

Rickie Lee Jones
S/T

Slomosa
S/T

Anouar Brahem
Barzakh

You can't tell by looking at it, but the tweeter works with a cone diaphragm



The WBT terminals are decoupled from the housing in two ways

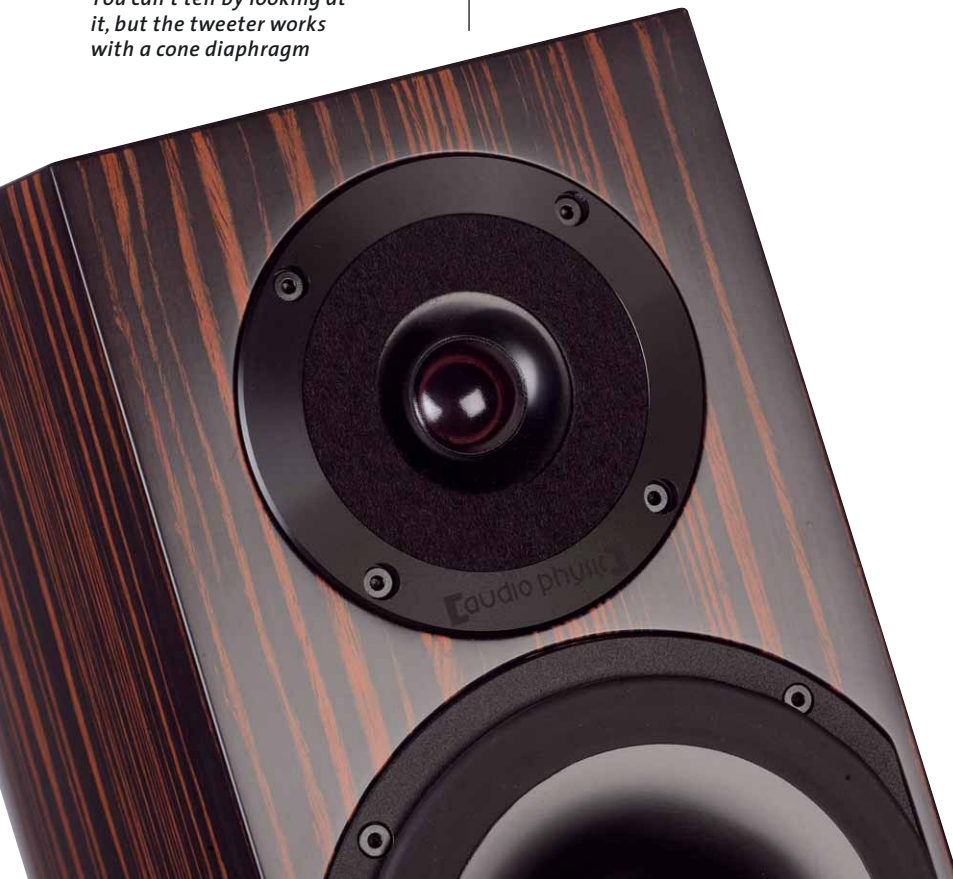
ker stands extremely solidly. These have already proved to be effective decoupling mechanisms with an astonishingly positive sonic effect elsewhere.

Almost nothing can be seen of the Tempo's bass protagonists from the front, as the two 7" woofers sit opposite each other on the side panels.

Drivers

The two bass drivers have an aluminium cone, are capable of delivering a decent amount of impact and guarantee the impressive bass foundation of the Tempo. The two drivers are driven in phase, which ensures a symmetrical distribution of forces in the cabinet and helps to minimise vibrations. The cavity is insulated by a highly effective ceramic foam, which works far better than the polyester wadding usually used in this area.

The tweeter and midrange drivers are very special constructions that Manfred Diestertich has developed in co-operation with the Far East driver manufacturer Wavecor and which can be admired in this form exclusively at Audio Physic. Firstly, there is the tweeter based on the HHCT III principle, the latest version of the 'Hyper



Holographic Cone Tweeter'. This is a new interpretation of the good old cone tweeter with modern means. In terms of dispersion characteristics, the ceramic-coated aluminium cone is in no way inferior to a dome tweeter, has a large sound-emitting surface and is rightly considered to have extremely low discolouration.

The brand new 'HHCM SL' midrange driver goes one step further. This is the first time that a spiderless has been applied. Spiders are used in practically all cone loudspeakers for precise guidance of the voice coil in the air gap and significantly determine the mechanical damping of the oscillating system. Due to the extremely flat design of the new driver, stable guidance of the voice coil could be guaranteed even without a spider. The lack of energy dissipation allows the driver to achieve exorbitant impulse fidelity. It is housed in a double basket construction made of metal and plastic, which minimises vibration transmission. The two components of the basket only touch at certain points. The rubber surround around the edge of the basket is noticeable from the outside and plays a crucial role in this design. There are many ingenious details in this driver - far more than could be listed here.

It goes without saying that the midrange and tweeter have their own separate volumes so that they can do their work undisturbed.

And what else?

The Tempo's bass section, which is generously equipped considering the size of the speaker, receives additional support from a rear-mounted bass reflex tube. The low tuning of the system is striking, which is unusual for a speaker of this size.

Audio Physic relies on tried and tested details for the signal connection: the two WBT-Nextgen connection terminals are rubber-mounted in the aluminium connection plate, which is once again decoupled from the housing. Single-wiring is standard, but a bi-wiring solution is also available on request.

Operation

The Tempo is essentially a four-ohm loudspeaker without impedance correction, which appreciates somewhat more power-



This is the brand new midrange driver without spider

ful amplifiers. Current-potent semiconductor models are the means of choice, push-pull amplifiers in tube technology may also work, but this has to be tried out on a case-by-case basis.

Sound

Our best experience with the Tempo was with the Atma-Sphere Class D monos, which propelled the speaker to sonic heights. The sonorous and voluminous bass range is far above what you would expect from a speaker of this size. The mi-

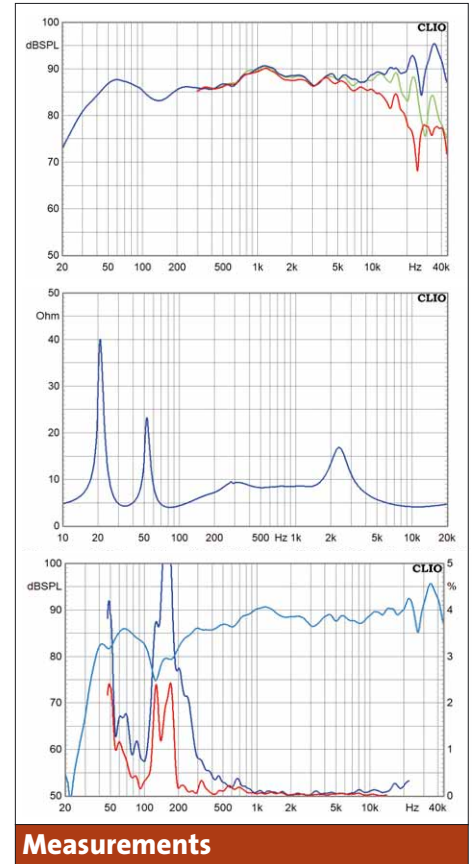


The characteristic rubber surround plays a very special role in the Tempo's midrange driver

nimal overemphasis in the 50 Hz range is undoubtedly audible, but it is within a range that I find not only tolerable but also very pleasant. It gives acoustic guitars body and power (Laurindo Almeida) and allows a double bass (Ray Brown) to be physically experienced. And it does so with a pleasing amount of colour and differentiation. The new midrange speaker achieves truly remarkable things in the vocal range: Rickie Lee Jones' "Coollsville" convinces with a dramatic combination of expressiveness and energy; the title is constantly balanced on the edge and threatens to plunge into unpleasantness. Not so with Tempo: they master the dance on the volcano with aplomb, delivering a dramatic and fervent interpretation of the song. The same effect is achieved with the Norwegian rockers Slo-



The petite Tempo sounds far larger than its physical size would suggest



Measurements

Lab commentary

The frequency response of the Tempo reveals a few special features: It reaches astonishingly low in the bass and still produces appreciable sound pressure below 40 Hertz. A slight overemphasis at 50 Hertz provides emphasis in the bass, while a slight rise in the midrange ensures expressiveness. The tweeter runs up to 40 kilohertz and the dispersion behaviour is very even. The average sound pressure level is around 87 decibels at 2 volts. The impedance curve reveals the very low bass tuning. From the mid-range onwards, the average impedance is eight ohms, in the bass it is closer to four. The distortion values at 85 decibels sound pressure are excellent.

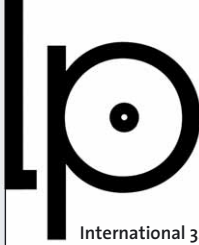
mosa, whose untitled full-throttle album is exactly on the Audio Physic line. It's impressive how easily and expressively the compact floorstanding speaker presents the frontman's captivating organ in the room, with the best speech intelligibility. The combination of unbridled energy and power also works with jazz: Tunisian oud virtuoso Anouar Brahem ignites fireworks on 'Barzakh' that are unrivalled in this class. Concise string attacks, excellent audibility and a lot of power – that's how it should sound.

Holger Barske

Audio Physic Tempo



- Price per pair 7,800 Euro
- Distribution Audio Physic, Brilon
- Phone +49 2961 96170
- Internet audiophysic.com
- Warranty 5 years
- Dimensions (W x H x D) 290 x 1087 x 323 mm
- Weight approx. 20.8 kg
- Finishes: Black high gloss, White high gloss,
Walnut veneer, Ebony veneer



Audio Physic
Tempo

International 3/24

» The new Audio Physic Tempo turns out to be an extremely dynamic and expressive transducer that sounds far bigger than its moderate dimensions would suggest.