

Associated Equipment

**Amplifier:** Krell preamp/amp  
Evolution 222 and Evolution 402

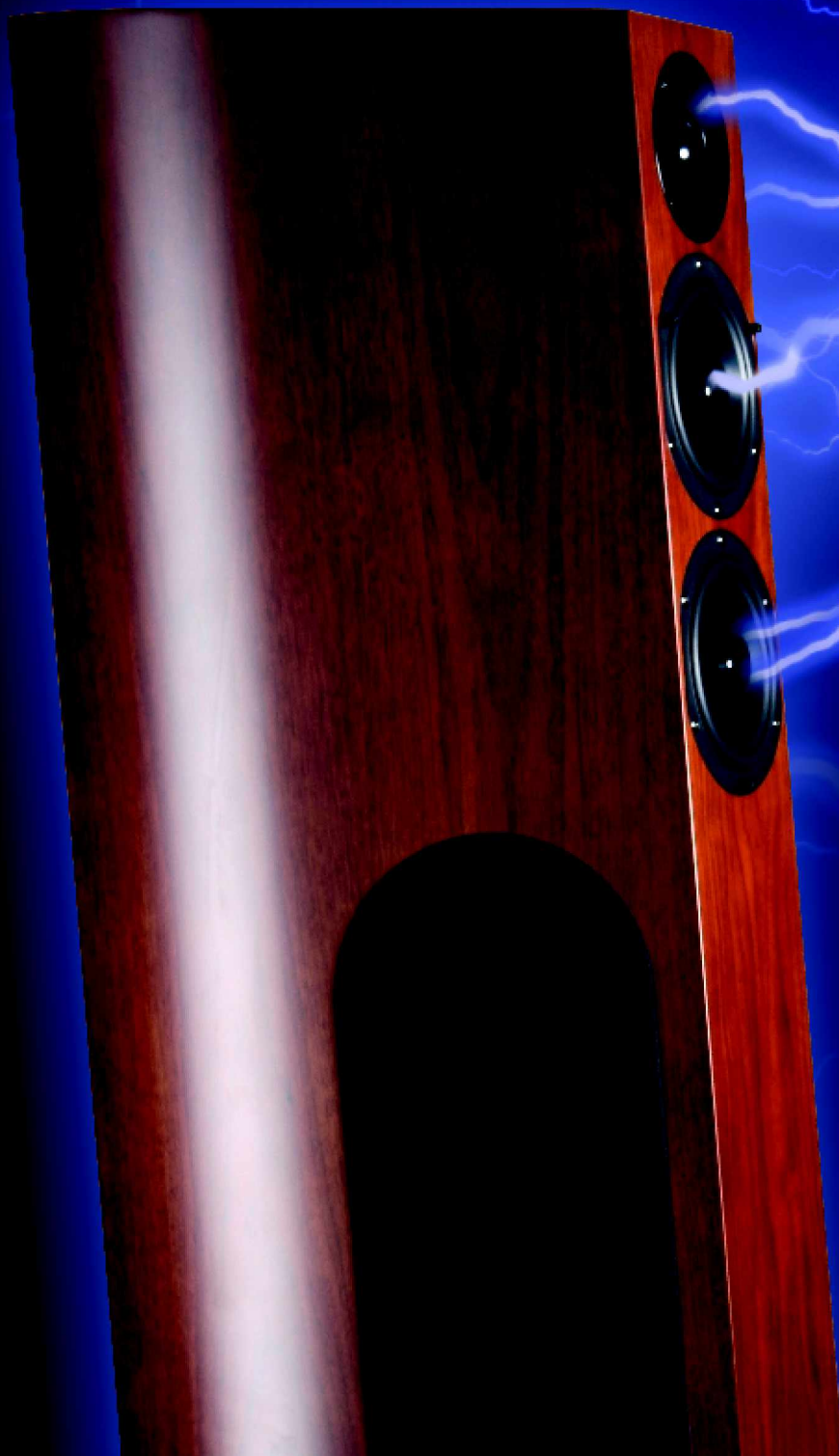
**Loudspeaker:** Audio Physic Avanti,  
Focal Electra 1027 Be

**Players:** Accuphase DP-500,  
Burmester 061, Linn Klimax DS, Linn LP 12

**Cable:** Silent Wire AC Reference,  
Sun Leiste, Fadel Art Coherence  
Low-frequency and loudspeaker  
cables

# Flaming

TEXT: Knut Isberner  
PHOTOS: by manufacturer and  
Josef Bleier Fotografie



Test Loudspeaker  
**Audio Physic Scorpio**

# Passion

The noblest task a loudspeaker can accomplish is to reproduce music as authentic as possible. If the loudspeaker is able to involve us emotionally as well as captivate our senses, it is the work of an exceptional talent which is mastered by very few.

**The new Audio Physic Scorpio electrifies the senses of every music loving audiophile.**

**A**n unbearable cacophony of sounds. A seemingly mindless picking and plucking of strings which at the beginning sounds like a child badly attempting to play something, which eventually turns to an increasingly darker mood interspersed with almost chortling expressions – it is amazing how long one and a half minutes can be. I hit the wrong button of the Accuphase DP-500 CD player blasting out songs by Van Halen ("Balance"/Warner). It had happened before where I unwillingly jumped to track six, "Strung Out", therefore I have made a habit of instantly pressing the skip button in order to go to another track.

This time however something caused me to freeze in my tracks. I began to carefully listen to the sound. All of a sudden the randomly plucked tunes and chords – you could not actually say that the notes were strung together - made sense. They were forming a disharmonious and anarchical, albeit fitting, counterpart to the "Not Enough" ballade which followed "Strung Out". The

two songs merged into one. Amazing how fast the 90 seconds went by. It is not that I had not played the song over other excellent loudspeakers. But this effect was new to me.

The new experience was brought about by the Audio Physic Scorpio celebrating its world premiere here. What I found so intriguing about the loudspeaker's performance is that the Scorpio succeeded in reproducing the tunes as they were meant to be heard, as "noises", while at the same time spanning the divide between such a logical as well as artistic element, managing to shape the sounds into a composition.

Speed and a striking openness in the midrange where our acoustic perception is most sensitive are key to such abilities. When we reduce a loudspeaker or any other product to just one component, we lose sight of the big picture. However in addition to the ingeniously designed solid cabinet construction, the side-firing woofers and the sophisticated tweeter, it is the midrange driver of the Scorpio which demands our full attention.



**EXKLUSIV IN**





Milestones in loudspeaker manufacturing: From 1990, the Medea (1) with its Manger drivers for the midrange and tweeter had the audiophile world buzzing whereas from 1993 the Caldera (2) with its modular design won one international award after another. With the Avanti 5 (3), Audio Physic jumped to the top of the HomeVision test reviews.

## Audio Physic – A German brand enjoying worldwide reputation

The fabulous Brilon based German manufacturer has an uncanny knack for producing extraordinary loudspeakers. Since 1985 loudspeakers of the Audio Physic brand have conquered the ears and hearts of German and international audiophiles alike. The export percentage is substantially higher than sales in Germany. Few other manufacturers can say the same thing. One of the most out-standing loud-speakers over the years was the "Medea", featuring expensive Manger drivers for mids and highs. The "Caldera" became just as famous, a true gem of a high end loudspeaker with an asymmetric cabinet generously providing the woofer and midrange drivers as well as the tweeters with their own chambers. Last but not least the "Avanti 5" was created, tested in HomeVision 4/07 and ever since the undisputed and frequently worked with reference loudspeaker of our reviewers.

Chief designer Manfred Diesterich loves to open up new paths in pursuit of a perfect sound reproduction. He did so successfully when he designed the Avanti, the undisputed champion of HomeVision test reviews, featuring a cone tweeter whereas the rest of the loudspeaker manufacturing world makes do with domes.

With the new Scorpio, Diesterich breaks again with tradition in order to achieve an unrivalled high precision in the midrange. The problem: Sound is produced by excursion in response to movement of the diaphragm where vibrations are not only transmitted to the surrounding air, they are also transmitted to the loudspeaker cabinet from where the vibrations make their way back to the driver and diaphragm. In the case of the midrange and woofer area this may have an adverse affect on the sound. Audio Physic's chief designer came up with a quite unusual construction in order to substantially break the vicious circle. What he basically did was design a midrange driver with two baskets:

one made of metal and one made of plastic. Plastic dampens vibrations whereas metal transmits them well. Knock against a plastic tube and you will hear a dull sound that quickly fades. If the tube is made of iron, you will for quite some time hear a rather high sound. However when it

comes to stability and thermal stress, metal is the material of choice.

Diesterich and a former Vifa designer put their heads together in order to translate the idea into a design ready for production. This is how the so-called "Hyper Holographic Cone Midrange" came into being. The inside plastic basket largely "swallows" unwanted resonances whereas the outside basket, made of aluminium, safely encloses the compact neodymium magnet powering the system as well as efficiently dissipates the generated heat via cooling fins.

Diesterich turned out to be right again. The Scorpio and the Focal Electra 1027 Be (test in 6/06) are in the same price range and are both considered serious sparring partners against which other renowned loudspeakers have attempted to measure themselves and failed. Played over the Focal, "Strung Out" was rendered more delicately in the highs while the voice of Sammy Hagar in "Not Enough" came through as smokey as usual albeit a bit airy. The Scorpio gave Hagar's voice more punch and body

### With the new Scorpio, Audio Physic breaks again with tradition

Are we about to witness a sensation?

In terms of resolution the two opponents were head to head. However the Audio Physic provided a more full-bodied tonality. Tanita Tikaram's mezzo voice was portrayed with a visceral and passionate force. I was tempted to lean back, relax





Ingeniously designed: The Scorpio midrange driver consists of a plastic basket which is encased in an outside metal basket, securing the midrange to the loudspeaker and efficiently dissipating the magnet generated heat via cooling fins.

and enjoy the music, picturing myself in front of a cosy fireplace watching the embers glow instead of looking for mistakes. Mistakes? Could it be that the voice of the delicately-built Tikaram sounded too full or too sombre? These philosophical questions were instantly brushed aside when the drum attacks in "Doin' Time" – I had again returned to Van Halen – hit me full-on and the Scorpio filled the room with brute, albeit controlled, force. I could literally hear the sparks flying.

Electrified by this performance and enjoying a pleasurable intoxicated state, I decided it was time to wrap it all up in cotton wool by putting a CD of the Wiener Hofburgkapelle (Philips) into the Accuphase, enabling me to travel into a "counter world". Wonderfully unadorned Gregorian chants came over the loudspeaker captivating me with their sobriety. Thanks to the sensitive and at the same time expressive reproduction, the music not only put me under its spell, it filled me from head to toe providing a harmonious blend of religion and ecstasy. The Scorpio carved out an eerily real-sounding vocal apparition of the voices, behind which could be heard even the tiniest

echo bouncing off the bare walls of the chapel while the chants were performed by former members of the Vienna Boys' Choir. What a fabulous purity. It makes you want more, keeps you reaching for more music. What else is a loudspeaker meant to do?

It can be said that the Focal had more breath in the upper registers, however it also sounded a trifle more like a "loudspeaker" and just did not have the Scorpio's power to rock the house. In the head-to-head matchups both loudspeakers came to a tie with the Audio Physic having a slim advantage over the Focal. Whether you are listening to Van Halen-like tirades, a string quartet or "just" text – the Scorpio is a more engaging partner for music of any kind.

**RESUMÉ:** *The Scorpio is a loudspeaker with a great potential for sonic bliss where passionate play and precise reproduction are by no means contradictory. A huge success by all standards enabling Audio Physic to set a new benchmark in the price range of the loudspeaker.*

by Knut Isberner

TEST PROFILE		HomeVision 5/08
Audio Physic Scorpio	Stereo Loudspeaker	
Price: Outstanding value for money		<b>91%</b>
Test result: Outstanding		
↑ awe-inspiring precision in the woofer and midrange	Groundbreaking loudspeaker in terms of technology, delivering precise sound with joyful abandon and setting a standard in its price range.	
↑ abundance of vitality		
↑ ingenious feet construction		
↑ available in many veneers		
<b>Sound quality // max. 700</b>		<b>645</b>
Naturalness // max. 100		95
Resolution // max. 100		95
Spatial image // max. 100		95
Vitality // max. 100		95
Bass precision // max. 100		95
Bass volume // max. 100		85
Level performance // max. 100		85
<b>Features // max. 70</b>		<b>50</b>
<b>Design // max 240</b>		<b>220</b>
Impression // max. 120		110
Material // max. 120		110
<b>Overall result [ 91% ] max. 1010</b>		<b>915</b>



Ingeniously easy: From above, the feet of the Scorpio can be adjusted to the floor in the split of a second. A metal cap covers the screw.

## HOME VISION HIGHLIGHT 5/08

### Facts

Manufacturer: AUDIO PHYSIC  
Model: Scorpio

Website: [www.audiophysic.de](http://www.audiophysic.de)

**Dimensions:** (BxHxT) 22 x 112 x 39 mm  
8,6" x 45" x 15,4"

**Weight:** 27 kg

**Warranty:** 10 years

**Accessories:** Special feet

**Connections:** Single-Wiring-Terminal for banana plugs and spades

**Measurements:** balanced frequency response showing light ripples and a tiny dip around 4 kHz. Minimum impedance of 3 Ohm at 80 Hertz, lower crossover frequency at 45 Hz/- 6 dB

**Special features:** side-firing woofers; wide feet easily adjusted from above to ensure stable positioning of the loudspeaker, available in 6 standard veneers