

# hi-fi news

THE HOME OF REAL HI-FI

& Record Review

## ULTIMATE HI-FI

2010 – the year's finest products & vintage audio heroes

rarely recorded **HOLST**  
**THE PLANETS**  
SIR ADRIAN BOULT  
London Philharmonic Orchestra  
Geoffrey Mitchell Clark

### VINYL ICON GUSTAV HOLST

Out of this world: The Planets Suite

'We originally  
built 50 but  
sold 30,000'

Audio Milestone, p116

### Also inside

- The Best Music of 2010
- Your Guide to buying Vintage
- Opinion: our columnists speak out
- Iconic kit: the A&R A60 integrated amplifier
- Hi-Fi @ Home: corner horns and the hi-fi museum



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UK £4.00 US \$9.99 Aus \$9.95



hi-finews  
EDITOR'S  
CHOICE

AUDIO  
FILE

Three-way, four-driver floorstanding loudspeaker  
Made by: Monitor Audio  
Supplied by: Monitor Audio  
Telephone: 01268 740580  
Web: www.monitoraudio.co.uk

# Monitor Audio PL200 (£4750)

If the Platinum Series was designed to enhance Monitor Audio's 'street cred' among audio purists in the 21st century, it certainly hit the mark, the compact PL100 standmount and floorstanding PL300 having garnered numerous awards and accolades around the world.

In photographs the '200 might look identical to the PL300 but sit them side by side and immediately you'll notice that it is unquestionably better suited to cramped living spaces, being 155mm slimmer, 85mm shallower and standing 115mm shorter at 998mm (39in) in height.

The ribbon tweeter employed is formed of a material that Monitor Audio calls C-CAM: Ceramic-Coated Aluminium/Magnesium, the company claiming an output approaching as high as 100kHz. The ribbon was developed to work in a two-way speaker so it had to be able to operate from 2.5kHz. It's protected by using an 18dB per octave high pass filter while its deliberately short length and horn profile are aimed at ameliorating

'Listen to audiophile recordings and the PL200s spring into life'

the issue of the narrow dispersion common to ribbon transducers – especially long ribbons.

Meanwhile, the bass and midrange drivers are a new in-house development intended to increase cone rigidity while maintaining low mass, so that the cone can work as a piston throughout its operating bandwidth. Similar in design philosophy to Leak's 'sandwich' cone of yesteryear, it comprises a core of an ultra-light honeycomb fibre material called Nomex (originally developed by Dupont)

bonded between two ultra-thin, 40µm, layers of C-CAM alloy.

## PLEASINGLY PUNCHY

Compared with the bigger PL300, the PL200 appears to sacrifice very little in terms of subjective bass extension and 'wallop', sounding as fast and pleasingly punchy in the lower registers as its elder brother. Listen to audiophile recordings, however, and the PL200s spring into life. Opus 3 Records' beautiful analogue recording of *The Omnibus Wind Ensemble's Music* by Frank Zappa [CD19423, a hybrid SACD] sounded natural and holographic, with the bassoons, clarinets and horns recreated in space in a most delicious fashion.

It's the ribbon tweeter that makes the PL200 stand out from the crowd. Treble detail is fabulous, the speaker sounding clear, open and brightly lit, while lacking the fizz and harsh 'glare' that is common to most speakers that err towards the brighter side of the tonal spectrum.

On 'Still... You Turn Me On' – with Greg Lake's vocal just in tune – the Monitor Audio PL200s proved highly revealing of the recording's innate high quality. Elsewhere, sustained bass notes from Emerson's Moog synthesizer and Carl Palmer's rabid assault on his massive drum kit were

simply taken in their stride.

## VERDICT

Unashamedly luxurious with a high price to match, the PL200 nevertheless represents fine value given the immaculate finish and attention to detail. While it won't fill a barn of a room with high SPLs, for those smaller than, say, 20ft by 16ft, it's probably as good a monitor as such a room can sensibly accommodate. It delivers explicit, full-range sound in abundance and thus comes heartily commended. Ⓞ

**RIGHT:** With their front baffles upholstered in high quality leather and sculpted enclosures immaculately finished, Monitor Audio's flagship Platinum Series speakers ooze luxury. All drivers, including the ribbon tweeter, are made in-house



## HI-FI NEWS SPECIFICATIONS

Sensitivity (SPL/1m/2.83Vrms – Mean/IEC/Music)	90.3dB / 89.0dB / 88.9dB
Impedance modulus min/max (20Hz–20kHz)	3.8ohm @ 138Hz 15.0ohm @ 26Hz
Impedance phase min/max (20Hz–20kHz)	-41° @ 80Hz 35° @ 20Hz
Pair matching (200Hz–20kHz)	±0.6dB
LF/HF extension (-6dB ref 200Hz/10kHz)	47Hz / >40kHz/>40kHz
THD 100Hz/1kHz/10kHz (for 90dB SPL/1m)	1.0% / 0.2% / 0.2%
Dimensions (HWD)	998x255x285mm

## **NAGORY ROKU 2010 MAGAZYNU „HI-FI NEWS & RECORD REVIEW”**

Brytyjski magazyn „Hi-Fi News & Record Review” ogłosił list nagrodzonych urządzeń za 2010 rok. Znalazły się wśród nich kolumny Monitor Audio Platinum PL200

### **Monitor Audio Platinum PL200**

#### **Werdykt**

Bezwstydnie luksusowe, drogie, PL200 mimo to reprezentują bardzo dobrą wartość – szczególnie, jeżeli weźmiemy pod uwagę wybitne wykonanie i dbałość o detale. Choć nie wypełnił pokoju wysokim SPL, w mniejszych niż – powiedzmy – 25 m. kw. Będzie prawdopodobnie równie dobre, jak monitory. Dostarczają pełnozakresowy, wyjątkowy dźwięk bez żadnych zahamowań, dlatego są szczerze rekomendowane.

Nagroda „Editors Choice”