

GROUP TEST

**AURUM CANTUS
LEISURE 3SE £1,250**



The Leisure 3SE uses a proprietary G3Si ribbon tweeter made from aluminium measuring 100x 8.5x 0.01mm. The mid/bass (AC-165/50CK) 165mm driver (also bespoke) uses a non-woven carbon-fibre (and Kevlar cone, 25mm copper cover aluminium voice coil and 100x20mm Y30 ferrite magnet. In the crossover it uses a Mundorf Supreme MKP [??? - Ed.] high-quality polypropylene capacitor, 5N (99.999% purity) copper wire inductor, metal oxide film resistor and ceramic resistor. Additionally, 5N Supra Classic internal copper wiring is employed within the Leisure 3SEs. The quoted specifications are 88dB sensitivity and 6ohms (min 6.4ohms) impedance [see MEASURED PERFORMANCE]. The Leisure 3SE is made within from MDF, measuring 400x246x302mm and weighs 12kg. Externally there are Poplar Burl (pictured), Cherry, Rosewood, and Maple side finishes.

Silhouetted, the Leisure 3SE is a fairly complex and attractively sculptural design. The front baffle's edges taper both into and backwards at the top half appealingly, and acoustically Aurum Cantus use this profiling to aid the vertical diffusion of the ribbon tweeter. The 3SEs have been designed in a pyramidal shape (wider at the base) because apart from being striking, its shape is good at diminishing bad resonances and standing waves, says Aurum Cantus. At the rear there is a large port and single-wire binding posts. The design, feel and build quality is superlative, with flawless flush mounting and attractive hex-head fixings to the drivers. Personally I am not as keen visually on the review pair's Poplar Burl finish as it is a little ostentatious; though a simpler all black/solo colour gloss would enhance and purify the inherently attractive sculptural design.

SOUND QUALITY

The 'Allegro' from 'Elgar Violin Concerto' was smooth and sumptuously spatial. The low-frequency notes were unsurprisingly deeper than the other speakers on test as the Leisure 3SEs had the biggest

physical cabinet size. Drive-unit integration was very good and provided a seamless changeover from orchestration to violin solo. The violin sound itself was smooth and had a quite even tonality overall, erring into the lower frequencies slightly with a small yet discernible amber-coloured, caramel-sweetness to it. On 'Super Overdrive' the Leisure 3SEs even tonality produced a rather stirring result, as the superb drive-unit integration really came into the fore with this track as there were wonderful dynamic swings.

Steve Steven's guitar solo fared less well however, with some surprising high-frequency stridency as he hit the more demanding notes and

as such this was a disappointment considering the quality of the rest of the musical spectrum that the Leisure 3SEs so obviously excelled at. The less demanding 'Rat Race' had some nice instrumental decaying notes enabling a more three-dimensional feel to the music. Bass dexterity was very good and so was its bass extension, if not quite as amazing in complexity as the Finish 1s overall.

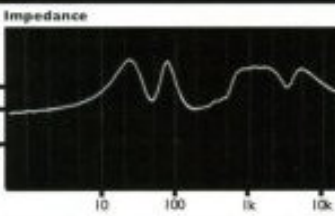
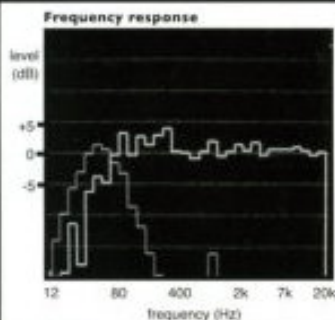
An interesting loudspeaker this one, with a wide range of talents - not least of which being its big, seamlessly smooth sound and lucid musicality with a nice full bottom end. Excellent finish and striking aesthetic design make it more attractive still.

MEASURED PERFORMANCE

A good ribbon tweeter measures almost ruler flat, meaning it's resonance free, a property domes can't match - and the benefits are clearly audible. The long ribbon tweeter of this loudspeaker delivers just such a result, our analysis shows. Aurum Cantus integrate it smoothly with the bass/midrange unit, avoiding dips or peaks at the crossover point. Forward integration was good above and below the 'speakers main forward axis too - a weak area for ribbons - so seating height won't be too critical. The quality of this ribbon and the high standard of engineering within the Leisure 3.5se results in an impressively flat forward response, reaching from 40Hz (-6dB) up to 20kHz, with relatively little variation. Subjectively, this suggests a fairly forward sound with 'obvious' treble, but good detailing. There's just a little bass lift around 200Hz to add a bit of body to the sound. Slow bass roll off below 40Hz suggests good low frequency damping.

Sensitivity was low at 82dB but this wasn't surprising as the 'speakers impedance is very high, measuring 12ohms overall. It is a very light load, even for a valve amp, but does need 'power' (volts) to go loud.

The Leisure 3.5se is well engineered and fundamentally very accurate; it will seem insensitive, needing a powerful amp to go loud. Sound quality is likely to be impressive. NK



VERDICT ●●●●● £

Big, full, smooth and seamlessly musical sound makes for a great, if unconventional styled, all rounder.

AURUM CANTUS LEISURE 3SE £1,250

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FOR

- luxurious build, finish
- attractively complex aesthetics
- excellent musicality

AGAINST

- occasional high-frequency stridency