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Q Acoustics

3050i

Q Acoustics reaffirms its strong position in the midrange floorstander market



If your love for bass and big sound is greater than your budget, a pair of mid-range floorstanders could be just what your living room needs. And these Q Acoustics 3050i would be a great starting point.

The 3050i are more evolutionary than revolutionary, in terms of both performance and aesthetic - but there are some technical advancements over their Q Acoustics 3050 predecessors.

As with Q Acoustics' five-star 3010i and 3020i, the standmounters' cabinet rigidity has been improved - P2P (point-to-point) cabinet bracing gives extra support to the parts that require stiffening to make them quieter; the baffle is thicker to support the tweeter and mid/bass driver; traditional terminal panel cut-outs make way for embedded sockets within the cabinet.

The 3050i's 20mm soft-dome tweeter has been decoupled from the baffle via a suspension system to isolate it from vibrations from the two sandwiching 16.5cm woofers. Unique to the 3050i, however, is their use of HPE (Helmholtz Pressure Equalizer) technology, which Q Acoustics first introduced in its high-end Concept 500 and has since trickled down to this lower price point. Essentially, this is a tube filled with damping material inside the cabinet, which aims to absorb energy and reduce resonance.

Smoothness and scale

The 3050i's performance isn't short of energy. Echoing the musicality of their predecessors, as well as warmth, smoothness and scale, they are also clearer, cleaner and punchier than those previous entry-level floorstanders.

The experimental approach and wild groove of Jack White's *Corporation* feels like the song was ad-libbed during a protest march, and the manifold patterns, flitting tempos and stereo interplay make for great tests of timing and rhythmic aptitude. There's never a dull moment as the instrumental parts switch between

Cabinet rigidity has been improved for the 3050i speakers

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cascading guitar strums and solos, playful basslines and African drum patterns, while White shrieks between sparse lyrics.

The 3050i keep it all in check, clocking different dynamic signatures and tracking overlapping instruments in a spacious, orderly soundstage so that nothing feels like a mere footnote. It's an interesting delivery, and the QAs demonstrate their adaptability as we jump between genres.

The ambient sounds of Gas's *Rausch* could easily be deemed uninteresting if heard through dynamically flat speakers - the Q Acoustics have the subtlety to pick out textures and discern dynamics without combing over intricacies. With effortless concentration they ride the piece's undulating waves of techno beats - taut, punchy and punctual through the

woofer. The ability of the 3050i to anchor the deepest, most foreboding notes allows them to communicate threat and peril effectively. *Texas Midlands* by Nick Cave and Warren Ellis is also a great advert for floorstanders of this calibre, allowing these Q Acoustics to extract greater out-and-out low-end reach than just about any standmounted alternative.

That talent doesn't come at the expense of the higher frequencies. With Suede's *Filmstar*, Brett Anderson's midrange vocal lifts and lurches between the dense electric instrumentation as he belts out his cynical lyrics, while there's crispness to the leading edges of the thorny guitar lines.

Having squeezed more performance into its entry-level towers than ever before Q Acoustics remains one of the class leaders in floorstanders at this level.

"The ability of the 3050i to anchor the deepest, most foreboding notes allows them to communicate the threat and peril"

WHAT HI-FI?

RATING ★★★★★

SOUND



BUILD



COMPATIBILITY



FOR

- Punchy, musical and subtle performers
- Large-scale presentation
- Smart finish

AGAINST

- Tough competition

VERDICT

Full of energy and even better than their predecessors; Q Acoustics has come up with the goods once more