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Review : B&W 704 - Ultimate Group Test

Source : Hi-Fi Choice
 Date : 01-Sep-2004
 Country : United Kingdom

The leading brand in serious hi-fi speakers around the globe, Worthing-based B&W's representative in this six-way group test is the bigger brother to the two-way standmount 705, which received a Best Buy Flag in our May group test.

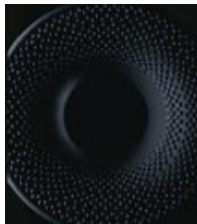
Sound Quality

Firm, deep and weighty bass with fine articulation and agility is the first thing one notices with this elegant pair. That's partly because the bass end is particularly good, deftly avoiding midbass 'thump' while delivering ample low-bass weight. But it's also in part because the upper midband and presence zones are decidedly laid back.

Indeed, for some listeners it might arguably be a little too restrained and it sometimes seemed necessary to turn the system up a little louder than one might expect in order to maintain good voice intelligibility. The up side to this is that it will never sound aggressive, even when reproducing something like a close-miked harmonica.

The treble level is about right, and the quality is impressive too, with an openness and delicacy that ensures superior air and detailing. The external tweeter probably contributes to the airiness, and also to the fine 'out-of-box' imaging.

And if the midrange isn't the smoothest, it is nevertheless impressively free from boxy colorations, and delivers good dynamic expression from a very well controlled enclosure. Low-level detail is therefore very well maintained, adding realistic textures to orchestral material in particular.



This is an easy speaker to like. It goes about its task without drawing attention to itself and will never sound unduly intrusive. There will be those who will prefer a little less restraint through the presence region, but this is a fine all-rounder nonetheless, which is unlikely to disappoint.

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