

The ELAC 310.2 JET Loudspeaker

Anthony Kershaw

The designs of the ELAC line of speakers flow from the pen of one of Germany's most experienced audio manufacturers. Like other stellar German companies such as Burmester, BMW, Mercedes and Siemens, ELAC prides itself on cutting edge manufacturing techniques coupled with innovative design. I use a Siemens phone, I drive a BMW, and I still dream about [Dieter Burmester's 911 power amp](#) – I like German engineering. The Teutonic beauties I had in house for a short audition did not disappoint.

The ELAC 310.2 JET could be confused with a 'lifestyle' design much like products from Bang and Olufsen, Nakamichi and Bose. That would be a mistake. Yes, the look of the ELACs is very stylish and would fit into any swish décor, but the sound they produced was well above the 'zis, boom, bah' that permeates the drivers of lifestyle gear.



The mini monitors were easily transported and even easier to set up. Happily, they had already been broken in. The blocks were attached to the matching LS stands. The metal stands are as meticulously crafted as the metal speaker enclosures. Seamless. Together, they made a cool, post modern statement. I placed the speakers facing directly into the listening room and approximately three feet from side/back wall. This placement had the best balance of imaging (specific) and soundstage (wide and deep).

The bass reflex design uses two drivers designed and manufactured in house (an info DVD was most welcome in advertising both company and speaker - very slick promotion, especially in comparison with the fairly 'clunky' web site). The website suggests that: 'The ELAC JET tweeter is one of the most legendary tweeters in the hi-fi trade and has won international renown with its unusual transparent and effortless sound image. The JET tweeter was developed to perfection on the basis of the famous 'Air Motion Transformer' by loudspeaker pioneer Dr. Oskar Heil. Its principle: a concertinaed foil membrane is driven by a strong magnet system of neodymium rods. This 'motor' drives the air considerably faster than the conventional piston technique. High sensitivity and

extraordinary dynamics are the result.'

The TT115 AS woofer is described as: '...designed in the ELAC proprietary aluminum sandwich technique. In a special gluing procedure, an aluminum foil of 0.2mm is joined to a pulp fiber cone to form a sandwich membrane. The result: reduced partial oscillations, no distortions and an optimized large signal behavior. In combination with the aluminum-colored tweeters, the aluminum sandwich woofers also make innovative technology a visual experience.' They sure do. And with the rear port firing, the bass is prodigious. Also, the mids were smooth and the highs very extended.



ELAC gets the balance of its JET mini monitor right. Most genres of music were highlighted by the design. The speakers captured the essence, the 'goodness' of the recording. They shouted 'mini monitor' by the broadness of the soundstage (front, back and sides) and the tight imaging, but while not shouting thunder and lightning from the bass, ELAC is correct in its singing attribution of the dynamism of the TT115 AS woofer. It was real punchy, real accurate in timbre, and down to the stated 42 Hz in my room. Even the powerhouse Keith Johnson recording of Rachmaninov's *Symphonic Dances* was very impressive. The bass drum thwacks exploded like they do on many a speaker, but the ELACs captured the rebound off the back of the hall as well as many higher priced speakers.

It's a no brainer that well-designed mini monitors and the human voice are made for one another. As such, voices from Jessye Norman's soprano (Strauss' voluptuous *Four Last Songs*) to Hans Hotter's bass (Schubert's *Die Winterreise*) sounded superb. Jazz and chamber music, too. When not hampered by very deep bass info, the speakers allowed me to forget my large speakers standing adjacent. True, when my reference setup was played in comparison, the extra refugence and deep bass was appreciated. But this sound comes at five times the price and five times the size. Add a sub to the ELACs? Perish the thought!

The ELAC 310.2 Jets sound as good as very expensive mini monitors I've heard from Dynaudio, Totem and ProAc -- three manufacturers who have cut their teeth on designing gems of the style. High praise, indeed. So, if your room space is limited, you enjoy high style, and want some very impressive high-end sound, give these gorgeous silver blocks a listen. They sound as good as they look.

Specifications

Dimensions H × W × D 208 × 123 × 282 mm

Gross Volume 7.2 l

Weight 6.5 kg

Principle 2-ways, bass reflex Woofer 1 × 115 mm AS cone Tweeter 1 × JET III, (mag. shielded)

Recom. Amplifier Power at Nominal Impedance 50-150 W / channel

Crossover Frequency 3,000 Hz

Sensitivity 86 dB / 2.83 V / 1 m
Nominal Impedance suitable for amplifiers (from ... to) 4 Ohm 4 ... 8 Ohm
Minimum Impedance 3.3 Ohm / 265 Hz
Frequency Range 42 ... 50,000 Hz
Nominal / Peak Power Handling 70 / 90 W
Output Power: 2 x 50W channels
Input Sensitivity: 450mV

Associated Components

Speakers: fabaudio Model 1s and Brats
Amplifier: K&R 340 integrated amplifier, K&R Kronzilla poweramplifier, Audio Research VT100 Mk. II
Preamp: Audio Research SP9 Mk. III
CD: Accoustic Arts CD Player
Interconnects: XLO, Audioquest, Cardas Golden Cross, Microphonic Audio
Speaker Cable: Cardas
AC Cords: Sphinx
Accessories: Equitech Son of Q balanced power conditioner

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