



Accomplished Act

QUAD 11LA ACTIVE STUDIO MONITORS **\$1399**

Quad needs no introduction: the company has been around for more than 60 years and if you haven't heard of Quad, you're probably not the kind of person who normally reads *Tone*.

The 11LA Active bookshelf speakers are designated 'Studio Monitors'. However, this is a product that fits fairly and squarely into the domestic market. The Active 11LA is a follow-on from the passive L series of Quads that are immensely respected by audiophiles around the world. I was genuinely excited at the prospect of having the Quads at home, and despite not getting home until very late, I just had to set them up and listen to a CD before bed!

The 11LAs are bi-amped, and each cabinet has a 60 watt amp for the 125mm Kevlar bass driver and a 40 watt amp for the 25mm soft dome tweeter; the active crossover is set at 1.8kHz. The Quad amplifiers have been specifically designed to match driver specifications and to develop sufficient power to keep a tight grip on the music at all times. The cabinet is a rear ported design; this, combined with the necessity to provide air cooling to the amplifiers, places the cabinet 20cm or more from the rear wall. As the 11LAs are magnetically shielded, they are also suitable for use in a home cinema environment.

The speakers provided for this review were finished in beautiful gloss silver, and the packaging included a pair of silk gloves to handle the speakers and keep them in pristine condition.

I set the 11LAs up using my CD player as a source connected directly to the line inputs on each speaker, and used the speakers' rear panel volume controls rather than follow Quad's recommendation to use a preamp. I really wanted to have the cleanest signal path for my listening session, although I have to add that I cannot see this as a satisfactory long term method of control for anybody contemplating owning the 11LAs.

I was very pleased by the performance of these speakers. They produced decent levels of in-room bass and imaged particularly well. I would not have guessed that they were bookshelves had I been testing blind. I can see why Quad has such a dedicated following, as this is the type of speaker that you could listen to all day without fatigue. Every track I played was handled well and there was plenty of power on tap to keep everything happening in its right place. Considering that these active Quad 11LAs are priced only \$400 above their passive cousins, they surely are a bargain. The amplifiers seem perfectly matched to the speaker drivers and I can't think of a less expensive method of bi-amping to this performance level.

And it's worth pointing out as well that any CD player with a variable output - preferably one with a remote control - can be plugged directly into this unit. In fact, even an iPod can be run directly into these beauties. Amazing value, brilliant sound.

■ STEVE SMITH



CONTACT:

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SPECIFICATIONS:

- FREQUENCY RESPONSE:** 45Hz to 24 kHz
- LF DRIVER:** 125mm Kevlar
- LF POWER AMP:** 60w RMS
- HF DRIVER:** 25mm soft dome tweeters.
- HF POWER AMP:** 40w RMS
- CROSSOVER:** 1.8kHz
- CABINET:** two-way, rear ported, 25mm MDF
- DIMENSIONS:** 326 x 190 x 284 mm (H/W/D).
- WEIGHT:** 8.2Kg

PROS

- ✦ Excellent imagery and detail

CONS

- ✦ Like all active models you need power available at the speakers

VERDICT

Fantastic if you haven't already invested in amplification

Aesthetics	86%
Performance	92%
Features	90%
Functionality	90%
Price Value	95%
Overall	

