

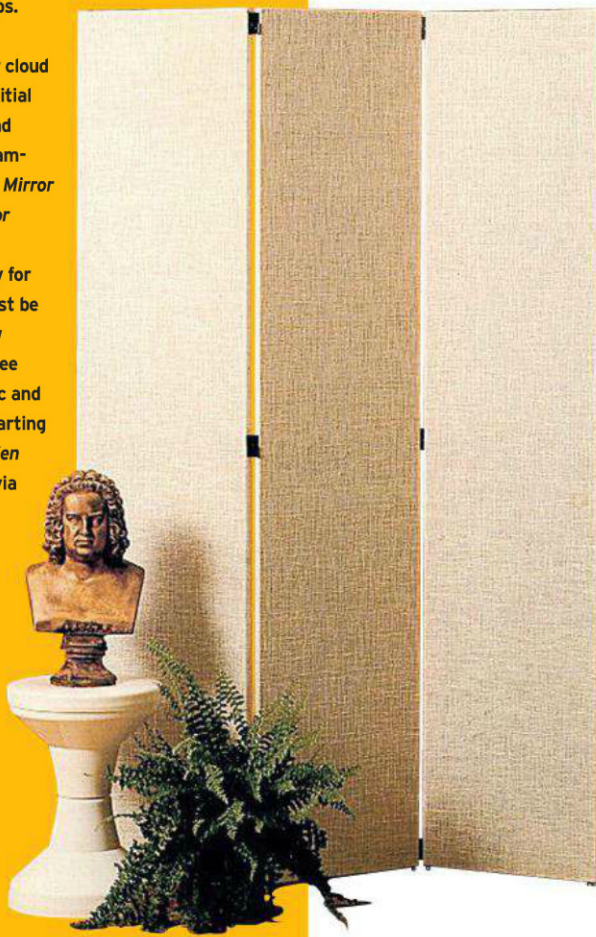


GREEN LIGHT FOR M-GO APP

If you absolutely must have your download of *Kung Fu Panda* on the same date as the disc release, M-Go is for you. Created under the aegis of Technicolor and DreamWorks, it has the support of Warner Bros., 20th Century Fox, Sony Pictures, Paramount, Universal, and Relativity Media. Launched last year, it appears in TVs, Blu-ray players, and tablets from both Samsung and Vizio, along with Vizio digital media players and Intel-based ultrabook laptops.

M-Go is an authorized UltraViolet retailer for cloud storage and access. Initial titles include *Shrek* and *Madagascar* from DreamWorks and *The Raven*, *Mirror Mirror*, and *Act of Valor* from Relativity.

Release-date parity for download and disc must be contagious. Fox is now dropping hot titles three weeks before their disc and on-demand debuts, starting with Ridley Scott's *Alien* prequel *Prometheus*, via UltraViolet, Amazon, CinemaNow, iTunes, PlayStation, Vudu, and Xbox. Though hard-copy sales still top online sales, the studio is trying to give eager fans a legal alternative to torrenting.—MF



MAGNEPAN TYMPANI SPEAKER

Jim Winey didn't set out to design a new type of speaker, just a better electrostatic speaker. He worked evenings, weekends, vacations, whenever he could starting in 1966, while he was still working for 3M as an engineer. His experiments with flexible bar magnets and Mylar led Winey to invent and patent the planar magnetic speaker. The original speakers had wires mounted on large but super-thin Mylar diaphragms placed in a magnetic field created by a vertical array of bar magnets. There was no cabinet or box, just a flat, medium-density fiberboard panel with cutout spaces for the Magnepan drivers. Unlike electrostatics, Winey's speakers don't need to be plugged into an AC power outlet, and there's no transformer between the amplifier and the speaker's driver. Winey left 3M in 1969 to start Magnepan.

The very first speaker, the \$995-per-pair Tympani 1U, was marketed and distributed by Audio Research. That partnership continued for five years, during which time the hinged three-panel design was refined. The 2 x 18 x 72-inch-tall panels could be positioned in a flat line or with the bass panels in a shallow "V"

array. The Tympani looked like a room divider. By the late 1970s, the Tympani IV still had two bass panels (with 1,254 square inches of bass radiating area), but Winey added a planar magnetic midrange and a 15-inch-tall ribbon tweeter on one panel. Magnepan sound was fundamentally different than what audiophiles heard from conventional speakers, and the company sold more than 200,000 speakers over its long history.

Size was an issue for some buyers, so the Tympani was replaced with the single-panel MG 20 in 1995. The MG 20.7 is the current flagship of the line, and there's a range of smaller speakers, including the 14-inch-tall Mini Maggie desktop system. It's also worth noting that Magnepan still builds all of its speakers in its factory in White Bear Lake, Minnesota.—Steve Guttenberg

(Thanks go out to Jim Winey and Magnepan's Wendell Diller for providing the information used in this report.)

Vintage Gear

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