



## Loudspeakers Marten Oscar Duo | Review

By Manisha Singh

One word immediately came to mind the moment I heard the Marten Oscar Duo (website) for the first time. Fast, that word. The same word was used by Dave McNair to describe his initial listening while reviewing the much larger Marten Oscar Trio.

Maybe because I don't take priority speed when it comes to loudspeakers, I don't use that adjective frequently when describing high-end audio gear. Fans of large panel speakers often refer to ribbons and electrostatics as "fast" because of how sharp the sound is, how immediate and lifelike the momentary edges are, and how it makes you jump. This music constantly absolutely amazes you with its theatre.

The noise produced by the complex shapes doesn't disturb me at all. I've found a lot of them to be impressive. Is it true that I've grown to the place in my headphone life where I can say things like, "I'm more of a dynamic speaker kind of guy"? Let's just say I'm relaxing into the later stages of my audiophilia and I still enjoy listening to high-quality two-way monitors.

I have several explanations, and none of them involve the fact that "small two-ways sound amazingly quickly." The ***Marten Oscar Duo*** loudspeakers, however, are quick. Wow, these do sound like great big panel speakers, lovely and open and lightning-quick, was my initial reaction. Do I want a two-way bookcase speaker that can do that? About to find out, I thought.

## Marten Oscar Duo

The Best Two-Way Monitor in the World Competition that has been taking place at my house for the past three years was extremely competitive when The Marten Oscar Duos unexpectedly arrived. Our 2020 Product of the Year, the Vimberg Ames, had just left the building as I was concentrating on the Volti Audio Razz, which I had enjoyed liked and had just delivered to our newest reviewer, Graig Neville. I was informed that the Acora Acoustics SRB two-way monitors were coming soon after the Acora Acoustics SRC-2 won the Summit Award. Additionally, the SE version of the Steinheim Alumine or an Amea with the \$10,000 diamond loudspeaker option was still on my mind. I had to get to work.

Would the Marten Oscar Duo, which is less expensive and smaller compared to the Vimbergs or the Acoras, or the Stenheims, fall behind in the competition for the top spot? With such a low MSRP, how could I possibly be interested in these cute little monitors from Sweden? I had to throw on my competitive face and analyze the Marten Oscar Duos without considering the other smaller pleasures I've experienced over the past year. "Good for the money" doesn't exist at this level of performance. It must be excellent, period.



As I mentioned at the beginning, the Ricky Bobby situation attracted my eye first, and I immediately realized that this analysis would be more complicated than I had imagined. Sweden-based Marten Audio is not a rapidly increasing speaker manufacturer and does not release identical goods. It is a respected brand known for some of its bolder and significantly more expensive designs.

I believe it was the first time I had heard of such a technology; as far as I can tell, those designs always seem to use diamond drivers. I started to think about those diamond drivers and how, although being relatively new to them, I know I had such a positive response—almost automatically. The ceramic-treated Accuton drivers used by the Vimbergs sounded so amazing that I began to believe that "I'm more of a ceramic driver kind of guy" would be the following chapter in my audiophile experience. (This follows the 2016 statement, "I'm more of a rainbow speaker type of person.

## Going to listen

I played a continuous flow of these recordings since the Marten Oscar Duos were so good at playing complicated music filled with minor elements. One of my favorite electronic albums from last year, Rasmus Kjaer's Tourist LP, regularly gives me the clear impression that I was hearing a tonne of little details for the first time. fact, I thought that some of these well-known tracks had been changed slightly in the studio, the classic Different Take effect. By concentrating on this, I was better than ever able to distinguish between artificial sounds and genuine drumming.

The interaction between the music and vibraphone on the outstanding new album *Further* by musician Satoko Fujii and “mallet virtuoso” Taiko Saito (performed under the duo name Futari) is beautiful and elegant because you can immediately compare the differences in melody, decompose, and dynamics of each instrument. The idea of two performers performing in a gigantic area, immersed in a sea of continually changing sound, was complemented and improved by the gigantic platform and highly specific imaging.

Speaking of performers in large settings, the Marten Oscar Duos were excellent with all of my 2L Recordings. In many ways, these Swedish monitors created an insane amount of synergy with those Norwegian recordings, to the point where I occasionally had an all-day 2L marathon while the Martens were playing.

## **Conclude**

On the other coast, Dave McNair appears to share my excitement for the Marten Oscar Trio. spoiler alert, I guess. Dude, I’m sorry.

There are several compelling elements of The Marten Oscar Duos. They cost \$6995 for a pair, which may seem expensive when viewed up close or from a long distance, but the fit and finish are exceptional. (Our own Grover Neville finds them to be wonderful in a traditional Norwegian sense.) These are fantastic deals just based on sound quality; you get a smaller monitor that sounds much larger than it is, but the Duos’ excellent imaging and sound staging raise them to a whole new level.

The Marten Oscar Duos, on the other hand, are interesting since they sound different from the other high-end two-way monitors I’ve recently discussed, though I do believe they share a lot of similarities with the Stenheims in terms of definition and presence. I’m going, to be honest, and state that these speakers have forced me to reexamine what I consider to be a priority in desktop speaker designs but instead of simply noting that the Duos aren’t like those other speakers, which suggests a “not my a cup of coffee but it’s possible that love it” pseudo-recommendation. I concluded to the conclusion that I could surely make this new, faster approach “my” sound the more time I spent with the Marten Oscar Duos.