

## Review Vienna Acoustic Haydn Jubilee

by Geoffrey Van Houwaert

### Pros

- Insight
- Impact
- Speed
- Fun

### Cons

- There's only 500 of them!



### Intro

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We remember it as if it was yesterday, X-FI 2017 in Veldhoven. We already visited lots of rooms and heard a lot of nice set-ups but the best was yet to come. Unsuspectingly we stepped into Hifi Matters' room and saw a relatively simple system. A Dayens integrated amplifier, a tube buffer

made by Icon Audio, a beautiful turntable by Perpetuum Ebner and then the real star of the show: A set of Vienna Acoustics Haydn Grand Symphony Edition monitors with their bizarre Spidercone driver and that strange pliable front.

We sat down in the chairs and listened, like everyone else, in absolute silence. It was a magical moment. The music not only sounded detailed and very 3D but also just right. Everything sounded right. When we read that a special anniversary edition of the Haydn was coming out, we asked for a test sample. Fortunately, Hifi Matters had one because only 500 are being made. So hurry if you want one!



Oh Vienna!

Austrian Vienna Acoustics isn't a company concerned with trends and fashions. They sail a clear course and do not deviate from it. They work modestly but with conviction on their well-organized series of loudspeakers. This Haydn Jubilee is in fact the perfect example of that modesty. Instead of boasting with an exclusive floorstander, they choose a unexpensive, compact monitor to celebrate their 30th anniversary.

The Haydn Jubilee is actually a thank you to the customers and is more sharply priced than the current Haydn Grand SE! In our opinion, the Haydn Jubilee is the perfect opportunity to get acquainted with the 'house sound' of Vienna Acoustics. And this is aptly summarized in their slogan: The art of natural sound.

### **Construction and appearance**

We have a feeling this manufacturer knows what he's doing because everything about this speaker radiates solidity. The construction, the used components and the finish are top notch. Everything is expertly put together in the factory in Vienna and you can feel that. Head designer Peter Gansterer has been with Vienna Acoustics for decades and has also taken care of this monitor.

The Haydn Jubilee is a two-way monitor with a simple silkdome tweeter, used in the original Haydn. The driver is a different story because after a lot of research Vienna Acoustics developed the transparent XP3 cone driver. This patented driver consists mainly of polypropylene and is therefore very light and stiff. In any case it looks cool and we can already tell you it's very fast and clean.



### Small is beautiful

This limited edition Haydn Jubilee is only available in 'piano black' so keep that in mind. That being said, the black piano lacquer is of the highest quality and the golden logo at the bottom gives this monitor some extra pizzazz. There are a number of lines running through the front and back of the cabinet that gives another special touch to the monitor. These are speakers that are meticulously put together.

It's also a small speaker that is quite narrow. Although slightly higher than our Audiovector QR1, they seem smaller due to their limited width (17cm). The advantage is that they don't take up too much space, so they will easily find a place in your listening space. On the back we see a pair of solid speaker clamps and on a metal plaque we see serial number 35. With their weight of 8.5 kg each they weigh considerably more than our Audiovector QR 1.

### Different but the same

The Haydn Grand SE turns out to be a different speaker than this Haydn Jubilee and that makes us a bit insecure. Will the Jubilee match the performance or will it be a Haydn Light? Soon we notice that our worries were not needed. This jubilee version has the same character as the Symphony Edition and soon turns out to be equally addictive.



## Set-up and installation

The Vienna Acoustics Haydn Jubilee speakers replace our Audiovector QR1 monitors in the set below.

- Ps Audio Stellar gain cell preamp
- Benchmark AHB2 power amplifier
- Metrum Acoustics Onyx d/a converter
- Nad M50 streamer/cd transport
- IsoAcoustic Aperta stands
- Norstone Stylum 2 stands
- Cabling: Grimm, Audioquest

We put the monitors on IsoAcoustics Aperta stands in the small room and on Norstone Stylum 2 stands in the big room. We rotate them slightly and place the listening chair a little closer than usual to be completely immersed in the music. Monitors are usually good at 'disappearing' and these little Haydns are masters at it. These are precision instruments so the better you adjust the speaker, the better the result.

Because the bass port is at the back they need some breathing space. From 40 cm from the back wall we get a tight and punchy bass. In the small space they are 2 meters apart and in the big one about 3 meters. Both spaces are moderately damped because we think that affordable speakers should perform well in a normal living room. Not everyone has a separate listening room or wants his living room full of damping material.

## First impressions

These monitors are not difficult to power (88db sensitivity ) and that's a plus in our book. But the lovely Keces E40 is not a great match. This little powerhouse amplifies the bass tones in such a way

that the bass becomes boomy. The Haydn Jubilee produces a lot of punchy lows by itself which makes it 'too much of a good thing'. A Rega Brio will probably not work well either. The Audiolab 6000A seems a better candidate because it is very linear all over.

We press play on our varied playlist and soon we are relaxing. The music has a realistic soundstage right in the middle of the speakers. The sweetspot is spacious and we hear a lot of detail. These are fast monitors that give a lot of insight into the recording. There is a high dose of energy and fun with a tight low-end full of punch.

Dynamics are rather limited with this compact monitor and of course there is not that much power present. But the music comes through so effortlessly and naturally that most genres sounds excellent. Bad recordings are not made nicer, but it never gets sharp. We enjoy the pure playback and have difficulty to sit still. These monitors play full of guts and passion and are certainly not wallflowers. They are always ready to throw a party.

## Listen

We start with the new solo album "Between the lines" by Henny Vrienten. The song "Buttermilk with macaroons" is a current favourite but there are more gems on the album. The Haydn Jubilee let's us hear all the nuances in the voice of this 71-year-old legend. The slightly grating aspect, the breathing in between and especially the timbre. The beautiful song Carnival is the best example of this. The voice is put dead center and the rich accompaniment sound sparkling which adds to the fun factor.

We take out "Soundmirrors" from Coldcut and it's like hearing this album for the first time. So fresh and sparkling and above all so open and clear. It used to be quite a job to plough through the whole album but now the album is finished before we know it. It's never compressed and because of the speed the Haydn Jubilee approaches perfection. The way this monitor organises the music is one of its biggest assets.

All elements are skillfully dismantled and come together again as a coherent whole. This is not a bare monitor because of that beautiful, tight bass that comes out of these little cabinets. With a lot of punch and enough impact so we don't really miss anything. The small driver remains surprisingly stable and barely hardens when we turn up the volume but they won't be able to fill a large space.

Female vocals this time from Vagabon, the alter ego of Laetitia Tamko, a Cameroonian multi-instrumentalist who has lived and worked in New York for some time. The MQA stream from the eponymous album sounds excellent and really brings out her beautiful voice. This recording is quite close-miced but it never sounds sharp or aggressive. At the same time, nothing is disguised or softened. In our rather sparse listening space female vocals can sometimes sound too bright but the Haydn Jubilee sounds 'smooth as butter'. Everything just sounds so ... right. We simply can't describe it better.

Of course we also played classical music with a loudspeaker named after a great musician. And although we're not specialists in the genre, we always listen to "Radio Klara" in the car to discover new music. We love Schubert's chamber music more than Haydn's actually and play his adagio for octet in Fa major for string quartet, bassoon, horn, clarinet and double bass. Here the rich timbres and the intimate character of the music are particularly striking.

Great orchestration and heavy metal are not ideal on any small speaker. You really need a bigger speaker for that. Although the Remaster of Megadeths "Countdown to extinction" sounds nice and

tight and fast but with limited dynamics and power to be really convincing. A small speaker has its limitations of course.

## CONCLUSION

The Vienna Acoustics Haydn Jubilee is a limited edition monitor of which only 500 pieces are made. Therefore, the value of this review is rather limited. Nevertheless, this test is relevant on several levels. On the one hand, to put this special monitor in the spotlight and on the other hand the company Vienna Acoustics. Because a company that celebrates its thirtieth anniversary with a modest monitor, without a profit margin, is not only selfless but believes 100 percent in its own ability. The Vienna Acoustics Haydn Jubilee in any case is a great speaker. Alpha Approved and my new reference!

## Compare

Our current reference in this price range is the Audiovector QR1 which is very similar to the Vienna Acoustics Haydn Jubilee. Think speed, transparency and a tight bass. In addition, they are easy to place, close to a back wall, and their AMT tweeter makes them less prone to reflections. But the Vienna Acoustics Haydn Jubilee is even more insightful and has a wider sweet spot. The interaction between the tweeter and driver is seamless and provides speed and energy.

The biggest difference between both speakers, however, is in the bass. The QR1 can seem a bit shy in the lower regions with the wrong amplification. This is not the case with the Haydn Jubilee. Depending on the distance to the rear wall, you can even adjust the end result a bit according to taste. So the Haydn Jubilee is more complete than our QR1 but requires a little more attention when it comes to placement. Both play effortlessly but the Haydn Jubilee wins on points.

## For whom

The Vienna Acoustics Haydn Jubilee is a compact monitor that stands out especially in a smaller space. It needs a little space to perform optimally but can be relatively close to the back wall. Because it's a limited edition it will only be available temporarily so we are looking for a special kind of buyer. If you're thinking about a small (black) speaker in this price range then you should definitely give this Haydn Jubilee a chance.

You will not only be the proud owner of a limited-edition, we all want to admit that, but you will also get a top brand monitor. In this price range we do not see so many possibilities besides the Audio vector QR1. There is the new Acoustic Energy AE500 (1200 euros) that we would like to test and the Monitor Audio Studio but that's about it. If the Jubilee is sold out you can always grab a pair of Haynd Grands!