

A Super-Dreadnought Class System from a New and

# **Powerful Manufacturer**

A Masterpiece Incorporating State-of-the-Art

Technologies



### Anat Reference

YG ACOUSTICS / Loudspeaker System

## PROFILE

The YG Acoustics Anat Reference Studio was first exhibited at the 2004 International Audio Show, and immediately became a topic of conversation. It is a double-cabinet design which includes two-way three-driver main modules and active subwoofers. The cabinets are made of aluminum and laser-cut in Switzerland. It is definitely a dreadnought-class model with a total weight of

140kg.

By the way, the model's designation was adopted from the name of the beloved wife of the designer.

Tested, listened to and written by Makoto Fujioka

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### A Behind-the-Scenes Look at the Development Process

## A Realistic and Cool Design Based on a Physical Concept

YG Acoustics Ltd. is a company specializing in the manufacture of loudspeaker systems. Established in 2002, its headquarters and R&D facilities are located internationally, while manufacturing is done in the U.S. (handcrafted). YG stands for Yoav Gonczarowski, the founder of the company. He is a technical expert who once served in the R&D section of the military. It is unknown why he founded a loudspeaker manufacturing company. My personal guess is that his love for audio went as far as seeking belief in the possibility of an ideal loudspeaker system.

According to data I gathered, Mr. Gonczarowski's design concept seems to be far from emotional. In light of his career path, it is understandable that his system is based upon an electrical/physical concept. In his own words: "(my system) does not "sound" at all; it merely transforms the electrical input signal into sound pressure waves". This is a realistic and cool design concept, which does not define a loudspeaker system as a musical instrument. In this sense, Anat Reference is the loudspeaker system for those who pursue pureness in sound. Let us now see how such a design concept has been embodied.

### General Description of the System

### **Stunning Accuracy of the Aluminum Cabinets**

Anat Reference was designed as a two-piece system, consisting of two way, three-driver main modules and active subwoofers. It comes in two models: "Studio" and "Professional", with different subwoofer sizes. In this article, the former will be discussed. I would like to start with the main module, which is common to both models.

A special note should be given to the cabinet, which includes a 19mm-thick baffle and 19~20mm thickness in other parts, all of which are made of aircraft

aluminum. 5mm-thick stainless steel is also used. All parts are CNC-machined and laser-cut in Switzerland, which ensures the system's homogeneity and an overall rigidity impossible to achieve with wooden models. Indeed, I could do nothing but be amazed by its unprecedented accuracy. I had seen some all-metallic cabinets including die-cast ones; none of them used more advanced materials or were more accurate than this system. The dimensions are  $90W^1 \times$ 480H x 494D (in mm). The weight is *continued on next page...* 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Correction during translation – width is 190 mm.



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50kg. The enclosure is fully sealed. When placed atop the active subwoofer, the dimensions become 330W x 1212H x 594D (in mm). The total weight is then 130kg.

The drive-unit configuration is two-way with a Vifa ring-radiator tweeter surrounded vertically by Scan-Speak 15cm woofers. The crossover frequency is 1.75kHz and the network is 4<sup>th</sup>–order Linkwitz-Riley. As a matter of fact, the

cutoff slope is extremely sharp, and the level of accuracy in stereo pair matching and phase tolerance is peerless. Needless to say, each unit is coupled to its own chamber. The two woofers placed top and bottom have spider grilles installed for directional dispersion adjustment rather than protection of the diaphragm, which is not significant. The output sound pressure level is 87dB. The impedance is 40 nominal and 2.70 minimum. The input method is dual with four-terminals, in which a uniquely shaped shorting bar is used. I experimented a little and found out that this shorting bar was quite reliable, with distortion successfully inhibited by dispersion. This is a shorting bar that gets the job done.

The frequency response of the main module alone is 40Hz ~ 40kHz. With these figures, the provided data is stunning: Less than  $\pm 0.7$ dB in the audible band; less than  $\pm 0.2$ dB between the left and right channels. Although such figures as these were not easy for me to believe at first, flat measured data of each unit are published along with phase characteristics. These are amazing characteristics, or data, indeed.

Well, I decided to start listening to the main module only. In short, my attention was drawn to the accuracy and the wide-band performance. What impressed me most, however, was the low-frequency response. Generally speaking, a main module of this size, with two small-diameter woofers and fully sealed cabinets, fails to perform as specified in the manual, with poor low frequency response and low sound pressure levels. This is not the case with this main module. Tympanis, gran cassas and giant Japanese drums were all reproduced with full sound pressure, good response and a low center of gravity. I could not help but wonder how this was possible. Moreover, mid and high ranges are flat and naturally balanced. At this moment, I was reminded of Mr. Gonczarowski's above-mentioned ideal of a loudspeaker system as a transducer: "(my system) does not 'sound' at all. It merely transforms the electrical input signal into sound pressure waves." Despite this somewhat dry expression, the sound quality and tones do have emotionality. Female vocals sound sexy and instruments in a string ensemble play tenderly. A brilliant piece played by a large orchestra is naturally colorful. This model is capable of reproducing any type of music, as it should be.

#### Pictures

*Top*: Main module and active subwoofer separated from each other. The former

weighs 50kg, the latter 80kg.

*Bottom left*: Rear view of Anat Reference. Main module is connected to power amplifier, active subwoofer to preamplifier.

Bottom center. Main module bi-wiring terminals.

Bottom right: Control section of active subwoofer for adjusting volume, bass boost, etc.





体の構成を見ると、メインモジェールは 豊かだ。とにかく何を聴いても懐が深 で、完全密開型。使用ユニットはスキン のが目的である。キャビネットはメイン のことである。 はペアで ウェイ小型システムとなるだろう。予備 売が行われる。同違いなく世界水産のま タンドが完成した時点で、<br />
直ちに単体発 それほど遠くない時期、予定では専用ス レンジのモジュールなのである。そして 田棲のように思えるが、実は見事なフル あたかもミッドレンジ以上の帶域再生真 を持つ。 た対抗菌を抑えた台形のプロボーション は傾斜させ、内部定信意講像を目的とて 那中心を整合させるため、面面バッフル ンスピーク社義加田口禄で、スパイダー モジュールとまったく同様の素材と作り て、最低域方向の伸びと音圧を補助する ンモジェールと組み合わせることによっ 極めてデリケー グリルを装着。メインモジュールとの音 アナット・リファレンス・システム全 内蔵するパワーアンプはオランダの日 アクティブサブウーファーはこのメ 聴の価値があるハイエンドシステム 的結合を抑える手法を考える必要があ ど、アクティブサブウーファーとしての フラットレスポンスだから床面との音響 明らした さの証明。そしてステージイメージの素 でないのは低重み本と位相の整合性のよ られる。とにかく加希な相省音が聴こえ 中、高域方列のフラットレスポンスが得 ような朝鮮城と完現で線を引いたような ンモジュールと組み合わせたのがアナッ フラットレスポンス 機能を全て装飾することはいうまでもな 連続可変。レベル調整、位相切り替えな ニットが否正口径で内蔵パワーアンプは プロフェッショナル」仕様のそれはエ 作方式で200年を発生する。ちなみに ジョヒを(ハイペックス)社教。 末腰の會に離れる くる。極めてデリケートだが、神経側 セッティングは、とにかく胡依城まで このアクティブサブウーファーをメ 90家部力となる。 周波数は30~10版 -リファレンスであり、聴けば波動の 人日極美 だろうが、高敏オーディオ専門氏、各種 物のハイエンドスピーカーシステムが を、アシストする役割であることを認識 プウーファーのレベルは控え目なコント る。また、メインモジュールに対してサ 前は絶対あるし、今後のオーディオライ ひ一眼して欲しいと思う。それだけの領 イベントなどの概念があれば、読者もず 価格だから、専人は特徴な人に限られる **用北実してきたことを高びたい。価格が** しておくべきだろう。 ジュールに対しての超鉄域の伸びと音圧 ロールが望まれる。あくまでもメインモ いからである。 フの方利性を許しく発見するかもしれな それにしても、本機の出現によって本 45

### Very Delicate but not Nervous

## A High-End System that is Worth a Listen

A look at the whole configuration of the Anat Reference system gives an impression that the main module is intended for the reproduction of mid-range and upward only. The fact is that it is a true full-range module. In the not-so-far future, as soon as a special stand is completed, it will be marketed separately. It will undoubtedly be a world-class two way compact system.

The role of the active subwoofer is, in combination with the main module, to assist it in bass response as well as the sound pressure level. Its cabinet is fully

sealed. The materials and the manufacturing are exactly the same as those used in the main module. Spider grilles are installed on the Scan-Speak 20cm unit<sup>2</sup>. The front baffle is tilted in order to adjust the center of the sound source in relation to the main module. The trapezoid shape contributes to preventing formation of internal standing waves by reducing interaction between opposing planes.

The built-in power amplifier is produced by Hypex in the Netherlands. It employs Class A/B operation method and generates 200W. By the way, the "Professional" model, which uses a 25cm-diameter driver<sup>3</sup>, generates 790W. The frequency range is 20 ~ 50Hz and is continuously variable. Needless to add, it performs all the functions expected from an active subwoofer, including level adjustment and phase switch.

## Experiencing the Sound of the System

### **Perfectly Flat Response**

This active subwoofer combined with the main module creates Anat Reference, which offers a subsonic-bass range that sounds like tangible waves in motion, and a perfectly flat response in mid to high range. I was simply hearing unmatched accurate sound. Extremely delicate but not nervous, proof that it has low distortion and superior integrity. And, the quality of its soundstage imaging was just superb...

As for positioning, considering the system's flat response even at the deepest bass range, a way to control acoustical coupling with floor reflections is needed. It is advisable to lower the level of the subwoofer in comparison with that of the main module; it should be remembered that the role of the active subwoofer is, in combination with the main module, to assist it in bass response as well as the sound pressure level.

Anyway, I am glad that the emergence of this system added depth to the real high-end speaker market. The price is such that only special people can afford it, yet I strongly recommend the reader to give a listen at any opportunity, such as a specialty audio shop or various events. It is definitely worth it, and the experience might change your future course of your audio life.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Correction during translation – woofer diameter is 25 cm.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Correction during translation – the Professional Sub uses twin 25cm woofers.

## **Technical Specifications**

? Frequency response:  $20Hz \sim 40kHz$  (Less than ±0.7dB in the audible band. Less than ±0.2dB between the left and right channels? Crossover: acoustic 4<sup>th</sup> –order Linkwitz-Riley? Crossover frequency: 1.75kHz? Impedance: 4O nominal, 2.7O minimum? Cabinet materials: Baffle - 19mm aluminum/titanium, Enclosure – 19 ~ 20mm aircraft aluminum / 5mm stainless steel ? Amplifier: Class A/B operation, with circuit protection mechanisms, output 200W ? Dimensions (in mm): 330W x 1212H x 594D? Weight: 140kg? Distributor: Acca inc.

## **Pictures**

Left. The author impressed by the solid enclosure

*Right*: Listening tests were carried out in our auditioning room. Equipment used in the test was Acuphase DP-85, Acuphase C-2800 and Exclusive M8 x 2.