

stereophile EXTRACT

November and December 2012 issues
Harbeth Monitor 30.1

“...no one does it better than Harbeth”

Sam Tellig writes in the internationally respected *Stereophile* magazine (Nov 2012) how he had been eagerly awaiting a pair of Monitor 30.1s since hearing that they were being launched at the Munich show in May. He admits to preferring stand-mounted speakers, pointing out how big floor-standers “spoil resolution, bloat bass and impair imaging”, as well as making cabinet resonances more difficult and expensive to control.

His first impressions of the M30.1?

He found a midrange which is “nothing short of ravishing” and summed up the Harbeth sound in two words... *tonality* and *resolution*.

In his column (*below*), the audio expert tells his readers how Harbeth delivers this tonality and resolution without taking the listener “over the edge” into exhaustion and fatigue, admitting this is an “extremely delicate balance”, but one which “no one does better than Harbeth”.



the sensitivity at 85dB/W/m, Harbeth suggests amplifiers from 25W.

Can I try my 12W phono? 25W? Can I try my 1.5W Sun Audio SV 2.3.3 stereo amp (Vibro) to amp Alan Shore's 1.4.1.1, and while 2.5W might work a very small room, it didn't in our living room. No success.

Union Research's 12W Simply Soft amp was something else, optimized as it is for a 6 ohm load. Enough power! That depends on you, and depends even more on the size of your room. And your music, of course. No one would buy a phono simply to plug into a play hard rock. No one would use a should-also be a pair of MS01s for hard rock, either. But the Simply Soft (SS01) is your first possibility—unless you have a very large room, in which case you might want to consider larger speakers.

Then I tried my sub-ante LFD Integrated MA IV, whose reputation got a slightly lighter grip on the Harbeths, with its somewhat more than the Monitor 30.1, did not feel like to deliver a midrange that was nothing short of ravishing. All right, less work, easily, and smaller cabinet to fit. And resolution I found the complete absence of midrange clarity.

Another amplifier brand often mentioned in connection with Harbeth is Sugden. At the risk of creating some cross-channel warfare, Harbeth speakers (except perhaps for the largest) fit especially well with amps from Lantini, a French designer. I recall what one (female) classical recording engineer once told me, though I now can't recall who. The gist: There's such a thing as too much detail in monitoring equipment (speakers, headphones, amplifiers, whatever). Yes, including cables.

After a few hours of monitoring, the engineer could no longer stand it. This is what Harbeth loudspeakers do: deliver the tonality and resolution that a listener (or a recording or broadcast engineer) needs—the accuracy without taking music and listener over the edge into exhaustion and fatigue. It's an extremely delicate balance, and maybe no one does it better than Harbeth.

And that's what the MS01 did even better than the larger (by volume)

...a solid Class B in Stereophile's "Recommended Component." The MS01 belongs in Class A ("Recommended LPF" not because it goes lower or plays back but because it has a resolution with more delicacy and definition, because of more of neither).

Two recordings from me, why was the Monitor 30.1 lacking in Class A. The first is Kim Perrot and Phil Dwyer's *Middle Ages: A New Look*, an Old Master CD's Summit MCD 568. The trumpet and piano are joined by Rick Van Matre (drum), Henry Burg (trumpet), and Dong Robinson (piano). Heri Paul Kapur, none on over. The other is *Concerto No.1* (Dmitri Shostakovich), conducted by Brian Truitt (CD: Ardenian AS04). I am astonished—and dismayed—that great jazz albums like these are refused in obscurity. Consonant represents beyond just an on best it was *Stonewall*, "according of the Month" for Mar 2012 and Tim Green, of NPR's *Fresh Air*, picks it up on:

If you're into classical and jazz, there is no other high-end amp I can recommend so highly for \$6500. You get for deep bass, remember Sam's note: bass makes work. Force you to buy extremely powerful amplifiers, for instance. It's a nice treat that doesn't mean a thing if it can't get through that's just a song. The sound and matter's something more. It's not just the instrument, the harmonic, the texture, the tonality, the heart of the instrument and the composition and the talent of the player. The job of the recording is to note themselves.

Harbeth's good! I'll hold something back for next month: more experience with Harbeth Audio's Monitor 30.1, which should be reviewed in more than a blink. Meanwhile, as usual verbal pre-showering, forget everything I've written so far on the MS01 for now. If you like it—so I say by now you're probably good at this—keep you can sit with for a while more to buy you a pair for Christmas.

And I'll be glad to speak for your audience. Free only MS01.

Sam Tellig (sam.tellig@comcast.net) does not allow money-right in order for Comcast. Love.

SAM'S by SAM TELLIG SPACE

INDIGOS ON ALL THINGS AUDIO

WALK, DON'T RUN

Never leave that full room when you're in it, judge. —Benjamin Franklin
Never do today what you can do tomorrow. Something may come to make you regret your premature action. —Auntie Beth
Never put off tomorrow what you can do the day after tomorrow. —Mark Twain

I just finished reading *Hit: The Art of Deceit*, by Frank Partnoy (Public Affairs, 2012). We are all, of course, in a state of delay decisions as long as possible. Partnoy advises:

Full of resolve, they sit in hardware and it will turn up in paperback. Or get to me and read it free from the local library.

After that is right. What before you buy that loudspeaker or amplifier reviewed this month in *Stereophile*, "Something must occur to make you regret your premature action." Like next month.

Burr didn't realize when it came to choosing Alexander Hamilton, Paul Revere, a crest by the late Gene Vlah, and one of his best. When you have a choice, Partnoy talks about how the top professionals in the sports world and on Wall Street use precession delay. A well-timed counter performance. That's not an fast-moving sports like tennis and baseball. It'll have to ask John Adams about cricket.

Get to me next year next because of how they can be on the ball before they let it. Some with baseball buggers. They see so much that they can hold back for milliseconds, then hit or swing at the last possible instant. It's almost as if they can see the clock.

This works with stock trading, too. You don't always make the most money by being the first to trade. As a former investment banker with Morgan Stanley, Frank Partnoy ought to know. Wall Street software designers sometimes build "kick" into their systems. The "kick" (number go) deliberately slow the computers to allow better trading results. In other ways to watch what other traders—or their computers—do. Act too fast and the computers fall over themselves, often with chaotic and disastrous results.

Partnoy discusses the finding that images of fast-food restaurants can interfere with a person's pleasure in music.

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Harbeth's Monitor 30.1 loudspeakers costs \$6790/ea in Tiger Derby.

Fast-forward to Partnoy's with chapter, about my judgment, or what academics call "distraction." According to Partnoy (p.85), Naim, Anahy and Robert Rosenfeld coined the term (and maybe some coin) for a 1992 article in the *Psychology Bulletin*. Partnoy traces this dating to the 1950s, when psychologist Gordon Allport claimed that people "make broad generalizations about the generalities of others based on limited exposure." It's like the late Mike Kay deciding, in two second flat, whether or not a potential customer had to leave. I've. I'll. "More recently, Anahy and other authors defined it this way as 'any concept of dynamic information less than 3 ms long' (p.87). Most hi-fi devices are probably shorter especially at shows. Maybe that's not long enough. Or maybe it's depending on who the listener is. It's like being late: some of us must

In the December 2012 issue, Sam continues his story of the Monitor 30.1, saying "Take time to get things right so you don't waste people's money. That sounds like Harbeth Audio's recipe for success, too....."

He continues his praise for the Harbeth philosophy and the new Monitor 30.1, finding them "impeccable" in his system, with "no peccadillos". He says that the in-room bass response was so powerful that it had him backing off the volume.

"Harbeths: resolving and ravishing", was how he described the sound he got. "Not sterile or science-ridden, the sort of sound beloved by audiophiles but detested by music lovers. timbres so true, and resolution, too...."

"Whichever amp I used, the tonality was superb. Never, ever fatiguing."

High praise indeed.

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