

Oct./Nov./Dec. 2008
Volume 7 Issue 4

Recent and Upcoming Events

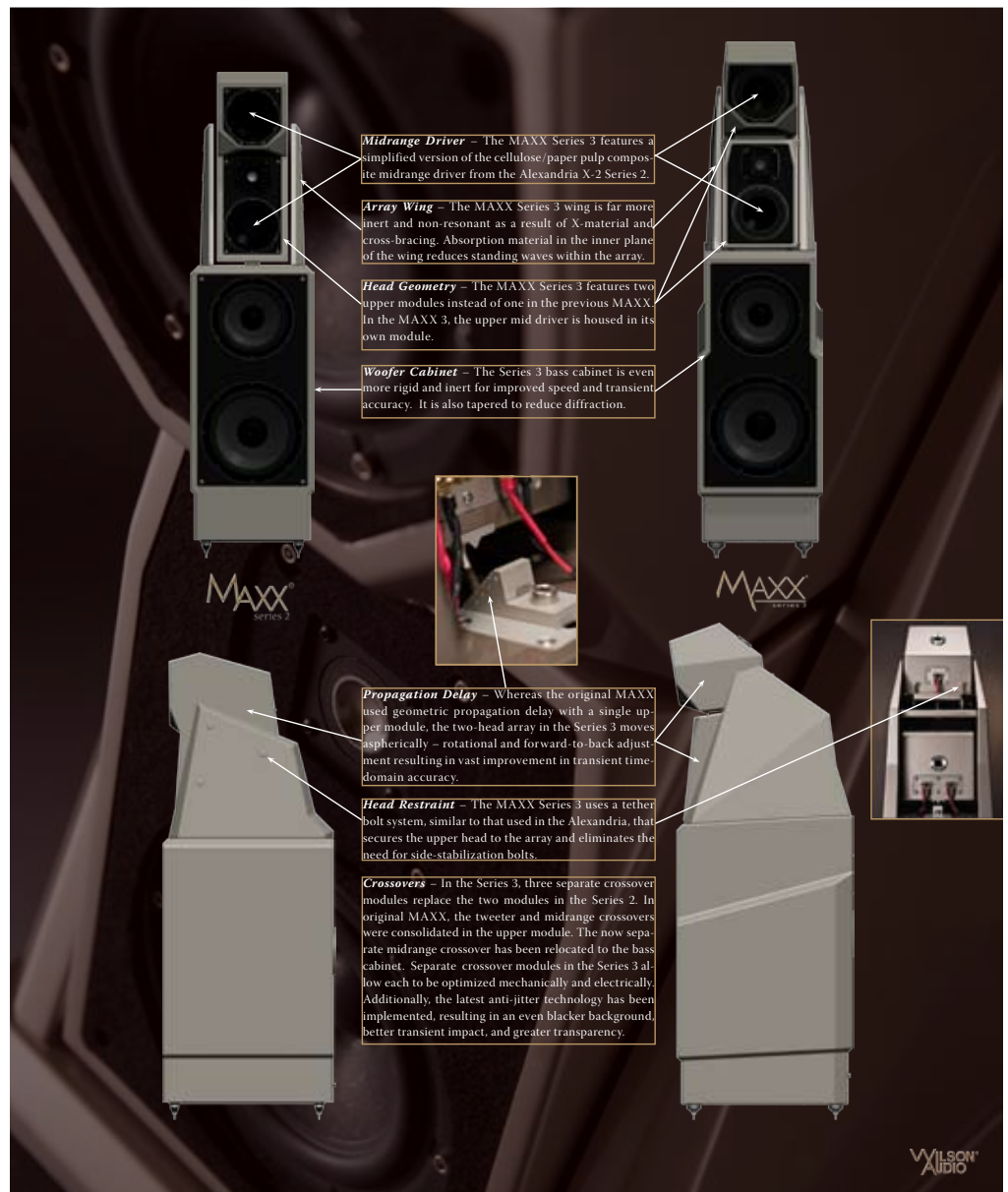
CES
January 8-11, 2009
Wilson Audio will be in a
Penthouse Suite in
The Mirage
Wilson Audio Dealers,
Please Schedule Your
Appointment

Dave and Sheryl Lee
wish you and yours a
Happy Holiday
Season!

November 13, 2008
Music Matters
Audio Advice
Raleigh, NC
Dealer MAXX 3 Event
with Peter McGrath

WILSON® AUDIOFILES

Wilson Audio MAXX Series 3 Compared to Previous Iterations (Dealers may order photo quality 20" x 24" posters by calling Wilson Audio. Posters are suitable for framing.)



Excerpted with permission from *The Absolute Sound* Nov. 2008 (www.avguide.com/the-absolute-sound)

Wilson Audio Specialties Alexandria X-2 Series 2: Musical Triumph! Loudspeaker Design at the Edge of the Art

by Robert Harley

“One of the most remarkable aspects of the Wilson Audio Alexandria X-2 Series 2 loudspeaker—and this is a loudspeaker that is remarkable in many ways—is its sense of musical intimacy....

“But the X-2 defies the paradigm; this new Wilson is chameleon-like in its ability to sound big and forceful when the music demands—an area in which it is unparalleled—and then to seemingly shrink to the size of a mini-monitor when reproducing solo classical guitar. It’s not just the physical size of instrumental images that the X-2 gets right; it also resolves fine information in a gentle and understated way, conveying to the listener a heightened degree of musical expression....

“The X-2 is heavy and massive, yet surprisingly manageable from a user’s point of view. As mega-speakers go, it is relatively easy to incorporate into a room. Its footprint is actually smaller than most six-figure ‘statement’ speakers.

“...the ability to portray the sheer

size and scale of big orchestral music with no compression of transients, no sense of strain on peaks, and no change in soundstage dimensions or timbral purity as a function of sound-pressure level—all accompanied by an exhilarating feeling of seemingly limitless dynamics. You simply can’t achieve these qualities in a small loudspeaker....

“The X-2’s construction from ‘X’Material and the extraordinary attention that has been paid to minimizing resonances must play a large role in the speaker’s complete freedom from volume—or dynamics-related artifacts....

“The X-2 presents a very easy load to an amplifier; high sound pressure levels are realized with the power amplifier running well below its dynamic limits....

“Perhaps the most surprising aspect of the X-2 (at least in my room) was its ability to deliver the bass extension and power of its 15” and 13” woofers in one instant, and then to make those woofers seemingly

disappear when the music doesn’t need them....

“The X-2 takes the bass agility and top-to-bottom transient fidelity I first heard in the MAXX Series 2 to an entirely new level. The X-2 goes lower in the bass and has greater authority, yet, astonishingly, is even quicker and more nimble than the MAXX 2. The X-2 has the dynamic reflexes of a two-way mini-monitor coupled with the ability to deliver massive, unfettered bass impact. I can assure you that it’s a combination that instantly becomes addictive.

“In addition, the X-2’s articulation in the bass and midbass was staggering. every nuance of pitch and every dynamic shading were fully revealed with a clarity one associates with the midrange, not the bass. This quality was revelatory on double bass and the lower registers of cello, whether solo or massed.

“...The system not only had the deepest and most powerful bass presentation I’ve had in my room; it had the cleanest, smoothest, most linear and best integrated bottom end I’ve heard from any system.

“...There was just a vivid sense of a human presence in the act of musical expression. The X-2 dug down into that lowermost level of micro-fine information that transformed her performance from merely wonderful to ineffably beautiful.

“...The Wilson Audio Alexandria X-2 Series 2 is hands-down the best loudspeaker I’ve had in my listening room in nearly 20 years of full-time reviewing. It possesses a remarkable combination of sheer explosive power and seemingly unlimited dynamics with a sublime delicacy, refinement, and subtlety. This is a speaker that ‘disappears’....

“I began this review by commenting on the X-2’s extraordinary sense of musical intimacy. At the end of the day, this is why we pursue musical realism in the home through high-performance audio equipment—to feel the composer or performer speaking directly to us. The X-2 achieves this illusive ideal better than any loudspeaker I know of.”

Excerpted with permission from the U.K’s *HI Fi +* Oct. 2008 issue. (www.hifiplus.com)

Bigger Than It Looks...And Cleverer Too! Wilson’s Wonderful Duette

by Chris Thomas

“...when it is cooking, the Duette is a very interesting design indeed and one that offers an almost unique solution to some of the limitations intrinsic in stand-mount speaker performance.

“...the Wilson produces deep and expansive views of the recording that just seem to appear in and around the speakers....I really like the perspectives they offer, especially their portrayal of ultra low-level detail and the way they preserve ambience within recordings....

“The key to their performance is the integration of those two drive units. It is remarkable and music is portrayed as a whole, living, breathing thing. The scale and full-blown size of the sound means that you never run up against that small-speaker

brick wall...

“Then there is the bonus of good efficiency and bandwidth as the Duette, while not exactly subterranean in bass response, reaches down and moves air with power and authority at frequencies that other stand-mounts merely suggest....

“Listen to the opening track of *Heartworn Highways* and the high and lonesome sound of Guy Clark’s ‘LA Freeway’ and you’ll be struck by the stark, dry nakedness of the vocal and the colourful contrast and acoustic space of that naturally recorded steel-string guitar. It’s just a man and his guitar, but through the Duettes this song is positively tactile and it becomes impossible to do anything else other than to listen to the story unfolding....”

Excerpted with permission from the United Kingdom's *HiFi Critic* Sept./Oct. 2008 issue. (www.hificritic.com)

Wilson Audio Sophia 2

Martin Colloms Assesses Wilson's Most Cost-effective and UK-Friendly Floorstander

by Martin Colloms

"...Thus the Sophia has one width for the bass, reducing somewhat for the midrange itself as it starts to taper, and continuing to narrow for the high frequency driver. In addition, the triangular shape also reduces diffraction effects by reducing physical symmetry, contributing to smoother on- and off-axis frequency responses.

"...We were initially misled during the listening tests because the Sophia 2 consistently revealed the sound of every other component we used with it. Before we had learned to trust it, we had thought these 'other' sounds were the responsibility of these speakers; as we learned how to balance the system, it was clear that the speaker sat above these issues - a rare occurrence, especially at this relatively moderate price level. While initially there was a risk that we were underestimating its potential, as the system came into line, complementary choices of power, cable and equipment combinations simply saw the speaker reveal more and more of its inner qualities. By the time the tests were complete, the Sophia 2 had won us over.

"It is the mark of a great speaker that it helps one assess the components elsewhere in the system. Sophia 2 can do this, which makes system building exacting but very rewarding.

"... Somehow Sophia 2 manages to walk the line between accuracy and musicality successfully, almost never sounding like

a loudspeaker, and almost always sounding like the source and the music. We learned not to underestimate the resolution and transparency, a characteristic of designs with very low self-noise. It has remarkable resolution and transparency, not just in the midrange but over the whole wide bandwidth, and compares well with much more costly references like the Sonus Faber Stradivari and Wilson's own System 8.

"...While it doesn't sound 'loud' or crowd the listener, do not underestimate its dynamic range. It can reproduce a grand piano with realistic power, and will play rock music with drive, impact, power and good timing....The sound quality really delivers, and for me it represents a transformation compared to the more reticent original Sophia. Open, fast and articulate, Sophia 2 is a notably complete design, evenly balanced in quality throughout the frequency range. It has excellent transparency, a natural timbre, sounds marvelous on music programme, and is exacting in terms of complete system build and alignment.

"It has a genuine big speaker sound: clean and dynamic, with deep tuneful bass. Stereo imaging is really good, deep and focused with wide soundstages and consistently rewarding perspectives. Top quality sources and low impedance cables are needed to develop its full potential."

Wilson Audio on Stage at the Moscow IBIS

For the Moscow Hi Fi Show Oct. 3-5, Dmitry Matyshev of Reference Audio in St. Petersburg, Russia, engaged the auditorium in the IBIS Hotel, Moscow and set up a killer display with the Alexandria Series 2 and the Thor's Hammer.

Wolfgang Linhard of Audio Components, Germany, was on hand to help with the set up and assist with the

demonstrations.

The large room was like a cinema with damped seats in a stadium arrangement. With seating for approximately 40 people, the demonstrations, given by Dmitry in Russian and translated by Wolfgang into English, ran every 30 minutes to full rooms throughout the entire weekend.

Wolfgang, who has hundreds of Wilson Audio demos under his belt, said the Moscow show was the best demo he's ever been part of. If one closed his eyes while listening, he could easily imagine an orchestra filling the stage.

Some of the Russian audio reviewers said that the Russian high end forum is "all about the Wilson show." One gentleman commented that he "could not express in English how good the sound is....I need my mother language to find the poetic words."

The Alexandria's were driven by LAMM electronics. The source was a music server by Sooloos. Crystal Dreamline cables were used.

Top Audio Show 2008 Milano, Italy Best Room at the Show Audio Natali

System:

Wilson Duette

Wilson WATCH Dog

Wilson Controller

Audio Research Reference 3

Audio Research Reference CD7

Audio Research Reference 110

Crystal Cables

England's *What Hi-Fi? Sound and Vision High End Ultimate Guide* Sept. 2008 (<http://whathifi.com>) says of the

Wilson Audio Duette

"First of all, there's the soundstage - huge, spacious and full of vibrant detail, the Wilson Duettes project a sound into the room that makes a mockery of their size...."



MAXX Series 3 World Premiere in Bremen, Germany Oct. 3 - 5.

In an approach as unique as high end audio is unique, the High End Society of Germany, in partnership with Germany's *Stereo Magazine*, sponsors a series of "roadshows," titled the "World of Hi Fi," that take place throughout the year.

Whether the show is in Munich or Bonn or Bremen or another location, the approach is the same. Live demos are set up in large rooms with plenty of seating for the public. A presenter, whose role is primarily that of entertainer, is charged with playing music, and that is all he or she is to do. The presenter does not discuss the

system - no mention of components, measurements, or pricing. For such information, one would have to visit a dealer's static display in a separate room.

It was in such a setting that the MAXX 3 was shown internationally for the first time. Matthias Bode, Chief Editor of *Stereo Magazine*, conducted each listening session during the three day show. The public response to the MAXX 3's debut was fantastic as evidenced by the over three thousand visitors to the room.



Above from left: Wilson Audio's Peter McGrath, Ute and Adib Khavari, owners of Germany's Wilson distributor Audio Components; Matthias Bode, Editor-in-chief of *Stereo Magazine*.

Right: One of many crowds in the MAXX 3 listening session.



Ute Khavari sits in a quiet room in anticipation of the start of the MAXX 3 demo. Matthias Bode selected the system components he thought would create the best musical listening experience to show off some of his favorite recordings and discuss the nuances therein.

Alexandria X-2 Series 2 Astounds Audiences in Sweden

In a corner suite at the five star Elite Plaza Hotel in Central Gothenburg on Sept. 12th -14th, Leif Haggmark and his Audionord team put on a show that left audience members "flabbergasted by what they heard." Beginning with the "By Invitation VIP Shows" on 12th, the room was literally jam packed from start to finish with attendees stating, "This was the best system I've ever heard, and by quite a margin." Peter McGrath was in good shape as usual. His sense of humor and his unbeatable catalogue of recordings, with details about the music that only a recording engineer can know of, makes for a supremely interesting and entertaining show. Press personnel from several audio magazines attended the show, some returning all three days.



Above, with Wilson Audio's Peter McGrath (center) are the Audionord team. From left are Mark Johansen, Bjorn Wiman, Ludwig Swanberg, and Daniel Hofman. Right is Leif Haggmark, Audionord's President/Owner, with the Alexandria in Obsidian Black.

Audionord's show system included KRELL Evolution amplification, Audio Research DAC-7 D-A converter, Nordost Odin cables, Brinkmann Balance turntable, Lyra Skala cartridge, Audio Research PH-7 phono stage, Pyrotech HRx server, and Finite Elemente racks.

