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Monaco High End 2013 | Best sounds

di Roberto Rocchi

Hören, Sehen, Erleben. Sentire, vedere, vivere. Credo non si possa riassumere più efficacemente di così il Munich High End 2013.

Sentire. Ho sentito tanto e anche molto bene. Devo dire che le salette suonavano mediamente tutte con una qualità accettabilissima, alcune in modo stratosferico come la saletta con le italiane **Leonardo Speakers** che hanno raccolto consensi da tutti i visitatori...

Hören, Sehen, Erleben. Listening, Seeing, Experiencing. The best words to describe the Munich High End 2013.

Listening. I listened a lot and very well too. On average, all the booths had a very acceptable sound quality. Some were stratospheric like the booth with the Italian **Leonardo Speakers** which got consent from all the attendees...

Leonardo Speakers

Con orgoglio affermo che questa era una delle sale meglio suonanti a Monaco, se non la migliore.

Dinamica, dettaglio, timbrica, raffinatezza, tutti parametri che meritano voti altissimi. In questa sala era piacevole conversare con Aldo Zaninello e Daniele Coen padri delle Leonardo Speakers, ma anche con Andreas Koch ideatore della tecnologia DSD e patron della Playback, con Roberto Torlai famoso costruttore italiano di testine, con Pino Viola della VYGER e con Massimiliano Magri della Grandinote, tutti presenti in questa prestigiosa sala a testimonianza della indubbia qualità di questi rivoluzionari diffusori italiani che meritano di essere pilotati da ciò che di meglio offre il mercato dell'high end. Ecco allora il CD player **Playback MPS-5**: gran bella macchina digitale dal suono analogico, per me questo è il miglior complimento che si possa fare a una sorgente digitale. Giradischi **VYGER Indian Signature** e la pregiatissima testina **Torlai Giada**, amplificazione **Grandinote** con il pre **Proemio**, finali mono **Demone** e pre phono **Coelio**. Non potevano certo mancare i cavi **White Gold Stradivari Reference** nella nuova veste finalmente anche bella.

Le Leonardo Speakers suonavano come non mai, una vera emozione ascoltare il nostro dischetto di riferimento.

Complimenti da parte di ReMusic.

With pride I state that this was one of the best booths in Munich, if not the best. Dynamics, detail, timbric, refinement: all parameters that deserve very good marks. Here it was possible to speak nicely to Aldo Zaninello and Daniele Coen, Leonardo Speakers' fathers, but also with Andreas Koch, inventor of DSD technology and Playback's patron, to Roberto Torlai, Italian famous manufacturer of cartridges, to Pino Viola of VYGER and to Massimiliano Magri of Grandinote, all presents in this prestigious room to testify the undeniable quality of these Italian revolutionary loudspeakers that deserve to be driven by the best machines that the high-end market can offer. So there you are the Playback MPS-5 CD player: great digital machine with an analog sound (for me the best compliment for a digital source); VYGER Indian Signature turntable and the prestigious Torlai Giada cartridge, Grandinote amplification with Proemio preamp, Demone monoblocks and phono Coelio preamp. The cables were White Gold Stradivari Reference in their new good looking appearance.

The Leonardo Speakers system was performing amazingly, a real emotion playing our reference disc.

Compliments by ReMusic.

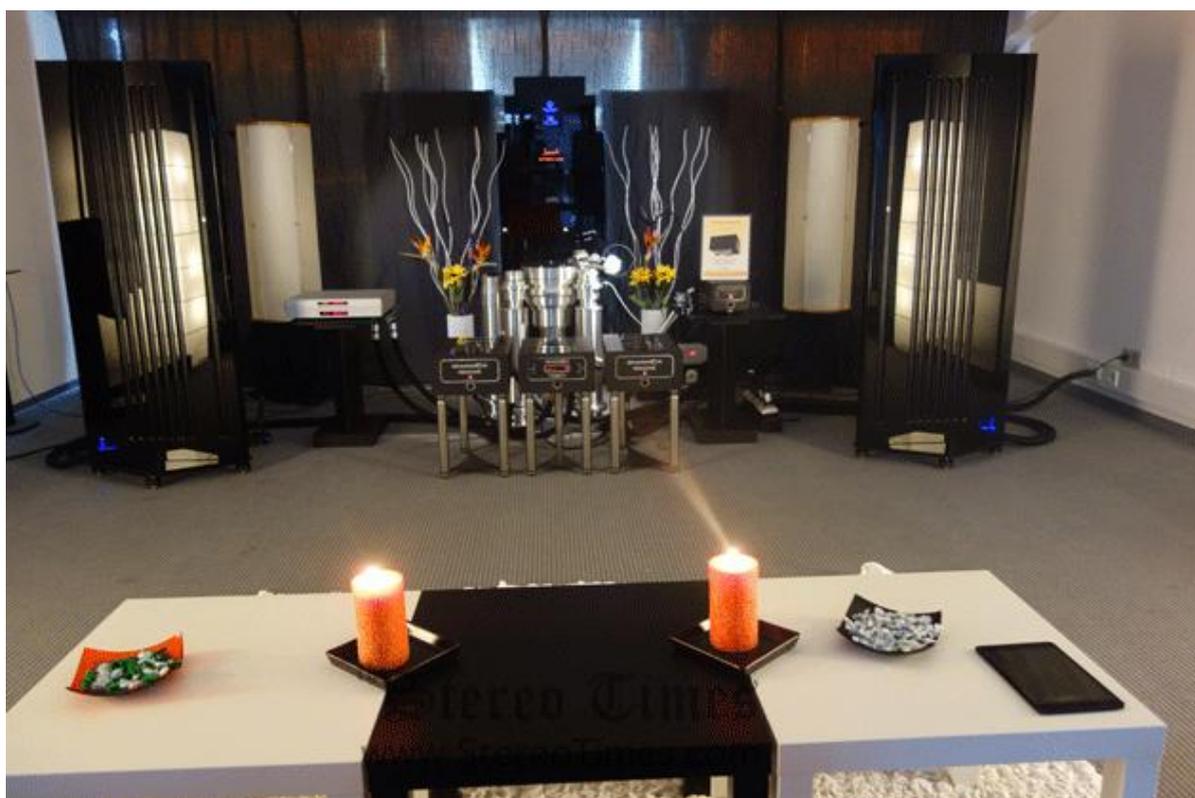


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High End 2013 Munich Report part 2 by Clement Perry



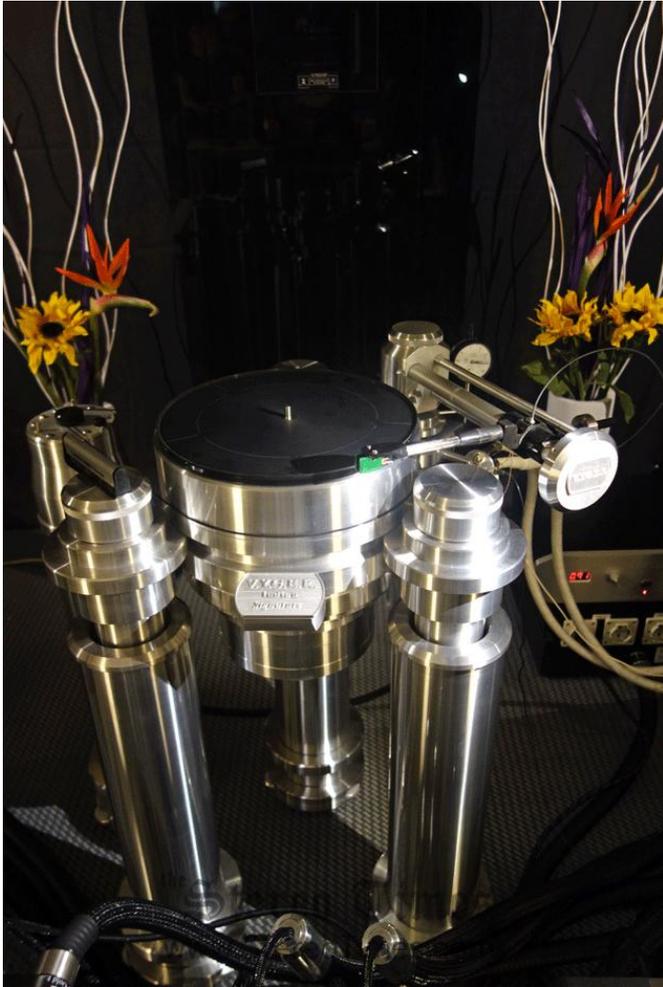


Team Leonardo which featured Playback Design digital, Extreme Audio, Grandinote electronics and V.Y.G.E.R analogue, all hail from Italy (except for Playback Design), really put on a great sounding demo room.

I spent a good amount of time in this room and would qualify the sound as easy, holographic and harmonically spot on. Most importantly, the sound kept me coming back day after day. Far more sophisticated than my first chance encounter last year. Grazie!



One of my favorite habits is to listen in a dim candle lit room. So you can imagine how much the Leonardo setup reminded me of home sweet home.



The V.Y.G.E.R Indian Signature turntable got its second wind after disappearing for nearly a decade. What a nice surprise to see it perform flawlessly in all its aluminum splendor. When I visited the Leonardo guys in Italy some months back, I saw the Indian Signature there and knew they were preparing for a major comeback. I had no idea it would have been here at the High End. Equipped with a new Torlai Graphite cartridge the sound was easy to slip into and get lost - despite all the activity that was going on in this room.





Heard the Grandinote for the first time on the Leonardo loudspeakers at last year's High End Show. I reported this as among the most surprising systems I ever heard and easily the biggest surprise of the whole show. One year later, I still find these loudspeakers to be the charm for what one can come to expect from a planar transducer. They still reproduce bass at an astounding level considering their pedigree. Now available in the USA, and retailing for \$65k, though very expensive, I think they're among few great loudspeakers available today. Duly noted, I do not think I would be able to state these claims if it were not for the 60-watt Grandinote Demone (pure Class A) mono amplifiers. I still am awaiting the opportunity to review these in my own system. And until that opportunity arrives, let it be known that in the past 12 months, I've heard the Leonardos on a number of amplifiers - yes, even in the Leonardo factory which is only a stones throw from Venice. I always find the Leonardos, to my ears, to sound their very best when played through Grandinote electronics.



Najveće pozitivno iznenađenje sajma dočekalo nas je u sobi elegantnih **Leonardo** Model 8 planarnih zvučnika (ribona), spojenih na GrandiNote Demone amplifikaciju, impresivan V.Y.G.E.R. Indian Signature gramofon s ručkom sa zračnim ležajem i, alternativno, MPS3 CDP-om tvrtke Playback Designs. Izuzetno koherentan, uravnotežen i spektralno točan zvuk koji je dopirao do nas bilo je isprva vrlo teško pomiriti s ranijim, mahom ne osobito nezaboravnim, iskustvima s raznoraznim full-range elektrostata i ribonima. Reprodukcijski bas, koja je do sada uvijek bila glavna boljka takvih konstrukcija, ovdje je bila potpuno na mjestu i nagnala nas da očima tražimo negdje skriven neki subwoofer. Ali, kao što smo se jako dobro uvjerali, nije ga bilo. Pored toga, zvuk je bio velik a ispravan zvučni doživljaj nije bio limitiran samo na izrazito uzak položaj *sweet spot*a, što je vjerojatno rezultat dizajna otvora na prednjoj ploči i velike stabilnosti samog zvučnika, koji je visok nešto manje od metar i pol i teži oko 140 kilograma po komadu, naravno zbog hrpetine feritnih magneta. Talijanska je ekipa napravila stvarno odličan proizvod jer je to nesumnjivo najpotpuniji zvučnik ovakve konstrukcije koji smo do sada imali prilike čuti. Bravissimi!

"The biggest positive surprise of the Show was waiting for us in the room with elegant Leonardo Model 8 planar speakers (ribbon), connected to GrandiNote Demon amplification, impressive VYGER Indian Signature turntable with an air bearing tonearm and, alternatively, MPS3 CD player from Playback Designs. The extremely coherent, balanced and accurate sound that reached us was initially very difficult to reconcile with our earlier, mostly not overly memorable, experiences

with various full-range electrostatic and ribbon speakers. Bass reproduction, which until now has always been the main drawback of such speakers, sounded so full that it made us look for some hidden subwoofers. But, as we found out, there were none at all. In addition, the sound was big and the correct sound imaging was not limited exclusively to some narrow sweet spot, which is probably the result of the front 'slots' and excellent stability of the speaker, whose height is just under 1.5 m and which weighs around 140 kg per unit (due to a whole bunch of ferrite magnets inside it, of course). The Italian team made a really great product as it is undoubtedly the most complete speaker of this kind that we have ever had the opportunity to hear so far. Bravissimi!"

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Playback Designs/Grandinote/Leonardo Speakers

By Michael Lavorgna • Posted: May 14, 2013



You can just see the Playback Designs MPS-5 (\$15,000) SACD/CD Player/DAC to the right of the left Leonardo Model 8 (\$65,000/pair) planar ribbon speaker. These doorways to your music were being driven by the new to me Grandinote Demone mono power amplifiers (€30,000/pair) from Italy. I happened to sit with Grandinote's designer Massimiliano Magri and a very congenial woman who was introduced to me as his bodyguard while having a still water break and then we went to their room together where I got to see Playback Designs designer and DSD-pioneer Andreas Koch.

This system was very easy to like and presented a big, sensuous sound to get lost in.



Les panneaux Leonardo (Italie) ressemblent fort à des Apogee optimisés puisqu'ils utilisent la même technologie, mais annoncent un rendement de 93 dB et la présence d'un super tweeter piezo qui permet de couvrir la bande de 20 Hz à 100 kHz. Probablement une des meilleures écoutes du salon, malgré quelques métallisations récurrentes dans l'aigu (câbles, électroniques ?). Les sources étaient constituées du lecteur CD/SACD intégré Playback Designs MPS-3 et de la platine vinyle V.Y.G.E.R. Indian Signature équipée d'une cellule Torlai, accompagnées des électroniques Grandnote Proemio (préampli) et Demone (blocs 60 W).

