AUDIO FILE

Two-and-a-half-way floorstanding loudspeaker
Made by: Audio Group Denmark, Aalborg, Denmark
Supplied by: Signature Audio Systems, Westerham, UK
Telephone: 07738 007776
Web: https://audiogroupdenmark.com; www.signaturesystems.co.uk
Price: £8000

hi-fi news YEARBOOK 26 OUTSTANDING PRODUCT

Børresen X3

All things are relative but in the realm of high-end audio, the X3 looks like a lot of loudspeaker for the money. Described as an 'entry-level into the Børresen universe', this floorstander draws on technology created for the Danish company's higher-end models [*HFN* Sep '25], from the drivers to the enclosures.

Certainly everything seems to be present and correct here – the cabinet, finished in a choice of black or white piano lacquer with a carbon-fibre baffle inlay, is substantial and of a curved profile, always good for rigidity and keeping internal reflections and standing waves under control. Neither is the driver complement typical, with a planar magnetic tweeter positioned below a bass/mid unit that is run 'full-range'. The pair might easily form a two-way standmount in their own right, leaving the two lower drivers to simply reinforce the bass frequencies in Børresen's bespoke two-and-a-half-way design.

> 'This slender, stylish speaker isn't short of low-end substance'

There's also the small matter of the septet of ports/tubes on the loudspeaker's slim 'spine'. There are two behind the uppermost driver, and one to relieve back-pressure on the ribbon tweeter. A stack of four ports at the bottom of the cabinet, above a single set of 4mm binding posts, forms part of the X3's proprietary bass tuning.

GO WITH THE LOW

This slender and stylish speaker isn't short of low-end substance. Indeed, at times it can sound a little bass dominant, while our Lab tests also revealed a peak at the top of the bass/mid driver's range prior to a 6dB dip centred on the 2.5kHz crossover. Playing Anna Lapwood's take on Bob Dylan's 'Make You Feel My Love' [Sony Classical], the expansive sound of the choir was almost swamped once the powerful organ entered the mix. The X3's bass is both massive, and massively impressive, but arguably too much for every room and system.

Børresen's speakers were more assured with the Berlin Philharmonic recording of Rachmaninov's *Symphonic Dances* [Warner Classics] where the sound was very clean, with plenty of weight and dynamics. They delivered thrilling speed and drive in the build of the first movement, plus plenty of slam and punch, before settling into a slow but still rhythmic presentation of the second 'waltz' section.

The soundstaging didn't feel pin-sharp, but it was hard not to like the rich presentation. As an antidote for those who find many systems too brash and bright, the Børresen X3s will please. Moreover, the sense of inner detail and depth they provide is influenced by how far apart the cabinets are placed and the degree to which they are toed-out (crossing behind the listening position, as set out in the manual). Some experimentation goes a long way.

There was again plenty of low-end power with the star-studded Gorillaz album *The Mountain* [Kong]. The X3s thumped out 'The Plastic Guru' without overshadowing the contributions of Anoushka Shankar and Johnny Marr. Even on the stately 'Casablanca' the balance remained rich and weighty, with treble details sweet and informative.

This balance of qualities was also borne out by Pat Metheny's *Side-Eye III+* [Uniquity Music], where the X3s cruised through the tightly recorded 'Our Old Street', making the most of the guitar's distinctive tone even while the cymbals fizzed and shimmered alongside.

VERDICT

These gorgeous speakers have their idiosyncrasies, but the room-filling sound is never dull or boring. If your tastes align with Børresen's vision then you'll likely love them.



RIGHT: The stiffened MDF/HDF cabinet is offered in gloss black or white with a carbon-fibre inlay atop and on the lower baffle. The 128mm Børresen DCC5 bass/mid driver (with carbon-fibre/honeycomb sandwich cone) crosses to the brand's RP89 'ribbon' planar tweeter at 2.5kHz. Around the back of the tapered enclosure a single set of 4mm binding posts feeds a crossover mounted on the rear of the baffle. The top bass/mid unit is reflex-loaded via two upper ports while a smaller tube attenuates the tweeter's rear output. Four lower ports form one half of Børresen's novel bass tuning

HI-FI NEWS SPECIFICATIONS

Sensitivity (SPL/1m/2.83V – 1kHz/Mean/IEC)	89.2dB / 87.8dB / 86.2dB
Impedance modulus: minimum & maximum (20Hz–20kHz)	3.1ohm @ 20Hz 20.3ohm @ 1.55kHz
Impedance phase: minimum & maximum (20Hz–20kHz)	–25° @ 3.4kHz +54° @ 69Hz
Pair matching/Resp. error (200Hz–20kHz)	1.9dB/ ±5.0dB/±5.3dB
LF/HF extension (–6dB ref 200Hz/10kHz)	25Hz / 42kHz/45kHz
THD 100Hz/1kHz/10kHz (for 90dB SPL/1m)	0.3% / 0.2% / ~3.5%
Dimensions (HWD) / **Weight** (each)	1290x345x607mm / 55kg