

Review of TAD ME1 TX by Piero Gabucci, 07/2025 on: [hometheaterhifi.com](https://www.hometheaterhifi.com)

I am not sure how much sonic improvement Technical Audio Devices Laboratories (TAD) can make, taking the highly regarded TAD-ME1 and replacing with the TAD-ME1TX, but I am certainly going to enjoy finding out.



I have the utmost respect for Japanese design and ingenuity, the ME1TX are at once superbly crafted and impeccably engineered.

TAD monitor speakers are easily recognizable from their side-mounted floating panels, which will be discussed later. These updated monitors' slightest design modifications are hardly recognizable.

Highlights

TAD-ME1TX Monitor Speaker

- 3-way design with concentric driver
- Frequency response from 36 Hz to 60 kHz from a small cabinet
- Robust Bi-wire binding posts
- Excellent fit and finish



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Introduction

Technical Audio Devices Laboratories (TADL) was originally established in the 1970s as a brand under Japan's Pioneer Corporation, focused on professional and studio-use speakers. In 2007, TADL was founded as a wholly owned subsidiary of Pioneer, under the TAD brand name, with the mission of uncompromisingly and earnestly pursuing better sound through its products. Today, it is known simply as "TAD" or "TADL." TAD has come to be recognized as a fusion of art and engineering, renowned for its exceptionally high quality and the precision that is characteristic of Japanese craftsmanship. TAD Labs nowadays also has preamplifiers, amplifiers, and disc players. Respectfully, it is their speakers that still garner the lion's share of attention and praise.

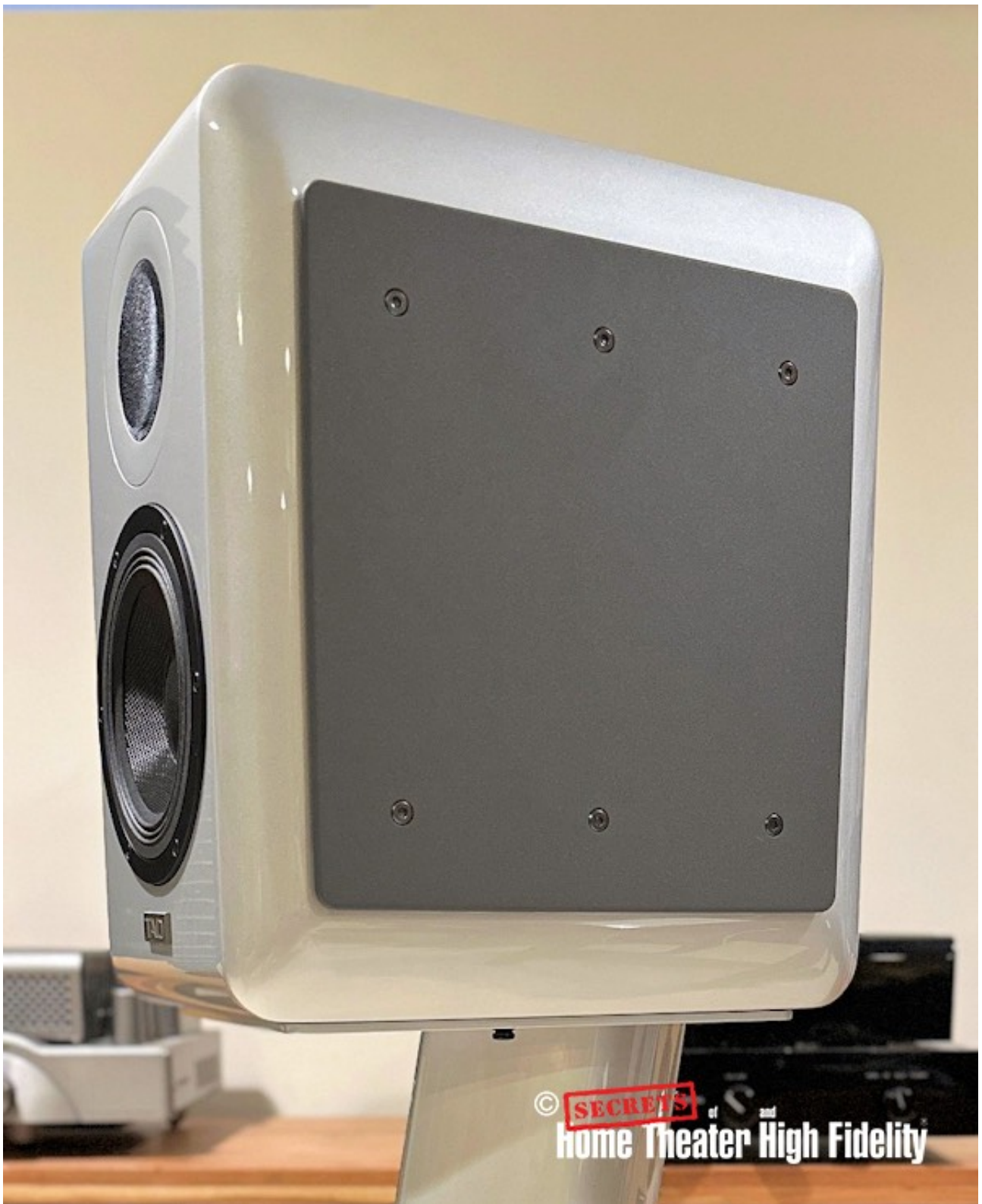
TAD Labs introduced their first home monitor speaker in 2003 with the TAD-M1 before introducing their Reference Series several years later. The TAD-ME1 was introduced in 2016 as part of their Evolution Series and has now been refreshed with the new TAD-ME1TX, the topic of this review. The differences are not staggering but rather a series of significant refinements. Other than an extra 3 millimeters in width and an additional kilo of weight, they look the same. They are each based on a 3-way bass reflex design with a 16 cm cone woofer and concentric 9 cm midrange and 2.5 cm dome tweeter.

TAD Laboratories boasts that their CST (Coherent Source Transducer) Driver is present in every speaker they produce. The coaxial (or concentric) design with the tweeter and midrange cone – Japanese excellence at its core. It's tweeter uses a beryllium-diaphragm said to have an ultra-extended range in the upper audio frequencies, well beyond the normal hearing spectrum. The midrange cone is newly designed using Magnesium alloy for its lightness of weight and low distortion properties in that critical bandwidth. The 16 cm low-distortion woofer cone (about 6.25") will reach down to 36 Hz. Made of laminated layers of woven and non-woven aramid fabrics, the goal is to deliver rich, color-free bass frequencies.



Exploded View of CST Driver from TAD's Reference Line

The enclosure is something else to admire. With the high range capability of the drivers, the enclosure needs to control the secondary reverberation and vibrations, and TAD Labs does it in several ways; isolate the driver mounts and stiffen the enclosure with what they call SILENT (Structurally Inert Laminated Enclosure Technology), which combines MDF panels with birch plywood stiffeners. Additionally, what I would call a key design feature is also very functional in the side, 5 mm-thick steel panels that float off the cabinet face. Not only does it provide more stiffening in the cabinet, but it also hides the vertical slit ports on either side of the cabinet made to vent and allow better airflow. TAD Labs refers to this feature as Bidirectional Aero-Dynamic Slot (ADS) port design.



The enclosures are really very elegant and come in two colors, traditional black or a white-silver, which I have. But beyond that, the fit and finish, the turned corners, the exposed machined screws, the soft steel plate, the bi-wired binding posts, all reek of perfection. Which leads me to describe the weighty stands that come optionally with the speakers.

Frankly, I would find no reason not to order the stands; they are similarly designed to perfection and complement the design of the TAD-ME1TX perfectly. The sloped back stand not only gives strength to the weight of the speaker, properly centering it, but also offers a design aesthetic of speed and power.

TAD-ME1TX MONITOR SPEAKER SPECIFICATIONS

TYPE:

3-way, bass-reflex bookshelf

WOOFER:

16 cm cone

MIDRANGE AND TWEETER:

Concentric 9 cm midrange and 2.5 cm dome tweeter

FREQUENCY RESPONSE:

36 Hz to 60 kHz

CROSSOVER FREQUENCIES:

420 Hz and 2.5 kHz

SENSITIVITY:

85 dB (2.83 V @ 1 m)

MAXIMUM INPUT POWER:

150 W

RATED IMPEDANCE:

4 Ω

DIMENSIONS:

254 mm (W) x 411 mm (H) x 402 mm (D)

WEIGHT:

21 kg (46.2 lbs.) each.

FINISHES:

Piano Black or Silver White

ACCESSORIES:

Woofer grille, short cables x 2, non-slip pads x 4, cleaning cloth, owner's manual

MSRP:

\$18,200.00 (Black), \$19,200.00 (Silver White) per pair. Optional stands: \$2,800.00 (Black), \$2,900.00 (Silver White) per pair.

WEBSITE:

<https://www.technicalaudiodevices.com/>

COMPANY:

TAD

SECRETS TAGS:

tad, me1tx, bookshelf speaker, audiophile, coaxial

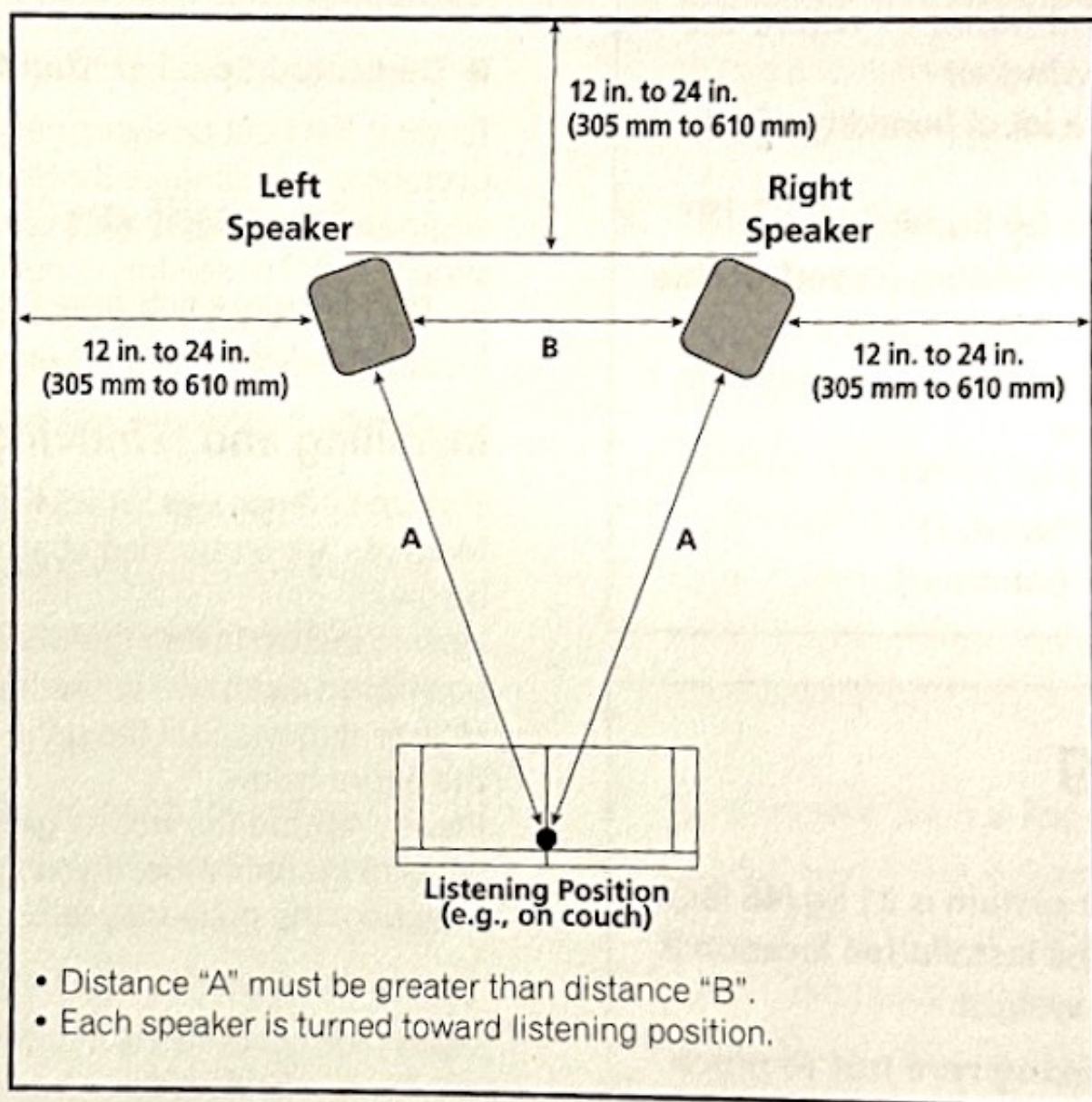
Setup

At my disposal are several amplifiers (I did wish that TAD were able to get me an amplifier from their Evolution series to pair with the ME1TX), but it did quite well regardless with my Parasound JC5 amplifier and P6 preamplifier combination. The digital sources in my system include a Silent Angel Munich MU Streamer and Topping D90SE DAC and analog from a Marantz TT-15S1 turntable fitted with Clearaudio Virtuoso cartridge. Transparent Audio cables throughout connected everything.



The included stands take some time to assemble, and placing the speakers on the stands, or the stands on the speakers as I did, really is more than a one-man job. But given I was solo and anxious to listen, I took precautions to assemble slowly and

methodically, avoiding any speaker or stand damage. But once all the screws and plates were in place, the speakers sat about 8 ft apart, with a slight toe-in and about 10 ft from my chair. In fact, the TAD manual makes the same recommendation for the listening triangle. It made truly a minor difference as I played and twisted the alignment of the speakers to my ears. A slight off-axis made no audible difference. Given the fact that the speaker and stand combination is quite heavy, I settled into a location rather quickly.



In Use

The first impression from the TAD-ME1TX: well balanced, with the bass very adequate and full, and the highs never pierce your ears. There is just clean, fully detailed, and elegant sound. Hard stop. The next phrase that comes to mind is ahhhhhh! Like settling into a big comfortable chair.

The TAD-ME1TX were refreshing from the onset. I never looked for music to suit the speakers but rather found myself challenging these stand-mounted gems with a variety of sources and types of music. What do I mean when I say, music to suit the speakers?

Subconsciously, there are times that when I have, say, a large speaker in for review, I tend towards the larger, orchestral music, looking for that big sound. Or if I am listening to smaller, modest-sized speakers, that I look for music that has less punch and say, more finesse? I realized that with the TAD-ME1TX I was consciously looking for anything (everything), from large orchestra to folk singers with a guitar. If that makes sense to you, thanks.

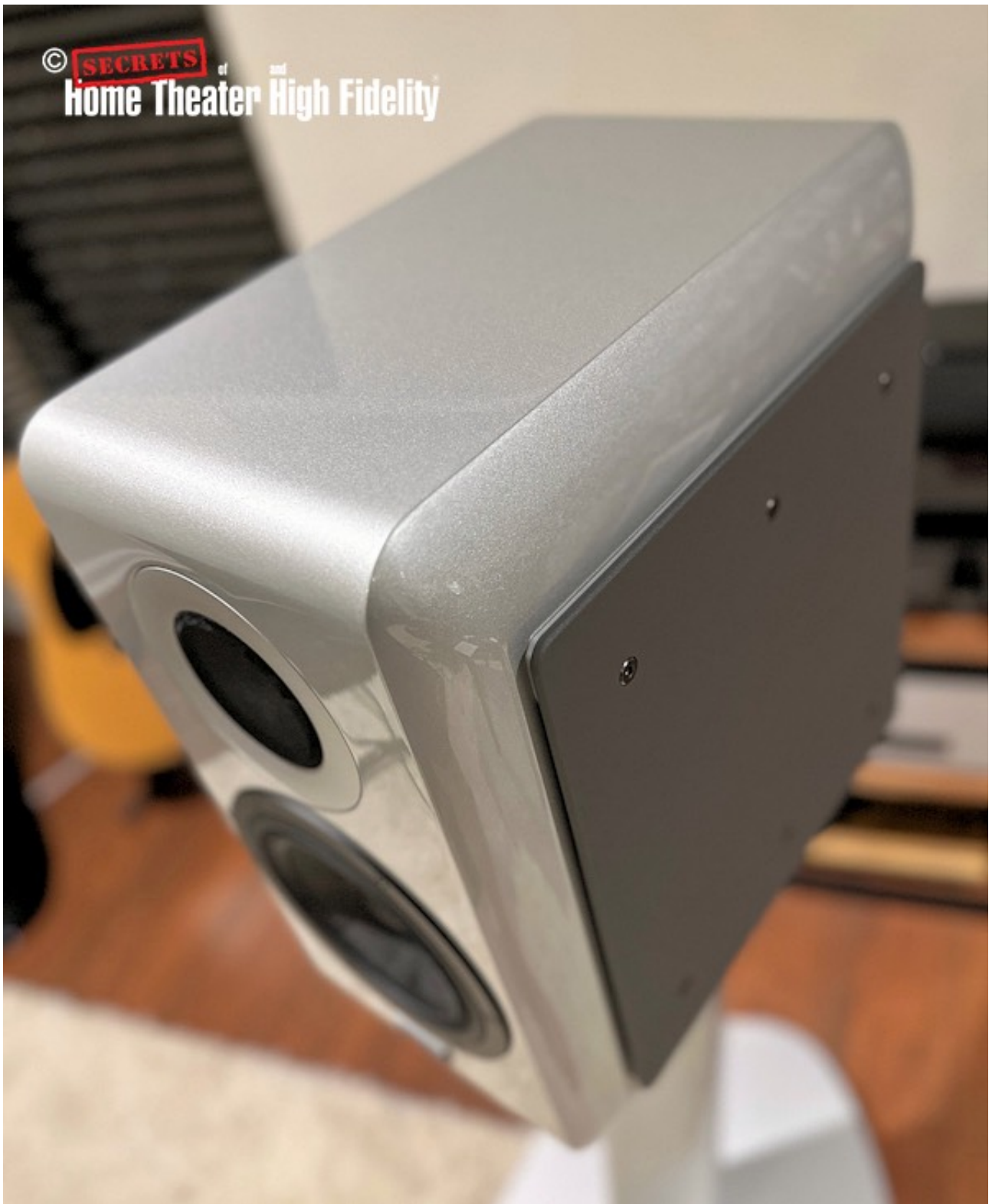
I recently took a flight and found a documentary on yacht rock. Never quite understood the term until it was explained to me. Headlined by the likes of Michael McDonald, who performed with everyone from the 70s and 80s through the 2000s, including Steely Dan. Known for their smooth, well-engineered sound, they are the epitome of the yacht rock mantra, reluctantly, by the way, as Donald Fagen's interview went badly. I pulled out Aja both in vinyl and digital. The TAD-ME1TX ate it up, and out came amazing music. Track after track, this album sparkles with clean, intentional sound. The brilliant horns leap off the drivers while the low baselines render the music rich, full. I was taken immediately by the TAD's neutrality and superb clean reproduction.

It is hard living in northern New Jersey and not hearing Bruce Springsteen, love or hate him; his body of work and influence continue to grow. His 2022 cover album, Only the Strong Survive, is a tribute to soul music he admired. His cover of The Commodores' Nightshift. Originally recorded in 1985, probably captures the essence of what he wanted to accomplish with a

faithful rendition. I loved hearing that track on the TAD-ME1TX, from the opening percussions through the background vocals. Bruce sounds like himself; his voice sounds elder and raspy. The TAD speakers again thoroughly give you everything in the recording.

I could not be further from Bruce than with Maurizio Pollini and son Daniele Pollini playing Schubert Piano Sonatas. Released after Maurizio died, the album has fourteen tracks that dance and glide along. I was impressed that the lightly played piano sounded warm and emotional from the TAD-ME1TX. The undertones are vibrant, and the highs are crisply rendered. I still believe that piano reproduced properly is the proper test for any speaker, and I give the ME1TX full marks.

A lovely change of pace is listening to Arianna Neikrug's 2017 Changes album. A pure jazzy record that features her soft voice with some great musicians. This is one of those classic, "sounds like you're in a small jazz club" recordings. Her whispery voice, her soft tones, and combination of lovely piano playing and bass, all sounding so "live" from the TAD ME1TX.



Conclusions



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The TAD-ME1TX are one of the best stand-mounted loudspeakers I have had the pleasure to experience in my home. Expensive, yes. Worth every penny? Emphatically YES!

LIKES

- Exquisite sound
- Beautiful design and craftsmanship

WOULD LIKE TO SEE

- Can being heavy and cumbersome to move around be a dislike?

If I were to put a bucket list together of speakers to review, somewhere near the top would be a pair of TAD Laboratories speakers. I have done that now, and someday a pair of Reference would be nice, if anyone is listening.

I have been fortunate to have reviewed some really great speakers lately, but the TAD left their mark as some of the best stand-mounted speakers I've reviewed – tight, razor sharp, and yet soft and soulful. The ME1TX were as close to perfect as I could imagine.

What the TAD-ME1TX does so well is play back music uncolored and transparent. Far from clinical and sterile, the ME1TX has a marvelous sense of warmth and grace. It is almost sad that this type of listening is a luxury to most, including myself. Given any opportunity to listen to the TAD-ME1TX (or any TAD Labs speakers), do yourself a favor: grab a listen and enjoy.