

Review



S1T Three-way Tower Loudspeaker (rosewood gloss finish) - shown as reviewed.

"The slender towers I received were beautifully finished in highly polished rosewood veneer on all surfaces, including the bottom. That may not have made them sound any better, but it showed a commitment to fine craftsmanship."

"Female voices, such as on The Best Of Julie London (Rhino CD R270737), sounded very natural, with no emphasis of sibilance...Judy Collins' In My Life (Elektra/Asylum 74027-2) was captivating and multi-dimensional...her voice was realistic, set far back on the stage."

"The Towers seemed to be at

Product Review
The Audiophile Voice
Number 7, Vol. 5, November/December, 2001

Induction Dynamics S1T Tower Speakers

James T. Frane

Can you say Induction Dynamics S1T Tower speakers quickly three times? It's a long name, but it specifically differentiates the design from the other speakers in the ID line-up.

The slender S1T towers I received were beautifully finished in highly polished rosewood veneer on all surfaces, including the bottom. That may not have made them sound any better, but it showed a commitment to fine craftsmanship. With other choices of black finish, cherry or maple veneers, as well as custom finishes, the speakers should blend in with a variety of decors. The front edges of the cabinet were beveled to help limit diffraction effects and this also softened their appearance.

The removable grilles use expanded aluminum frames which are covered by black double-knit cloth. The holes in the frames seemed to do their job of mitigating sound reflections that could be present with a solid frame material. Each grille had six posts that fit into matching sockets located in the front baffle.

The four drivers in each tower are mounted on the front baffle centerline, one above the other. They were, from top to bottom: a 1 1/8 inch inverted titanium dome tweeter with a phase plug, a 3-inch soft dome midrange and two 6 1/2 inch Kevlar cone woofers. There were four 1 1/2 inch diameter ports with curved tubes extending into the enclosure. The first pair of ports was above the top woofer and the second two below the bottom woofer. All of the enclosure surfaces were solid and I could not feel any vibration when the speakers were in use. The large, gold-plated binding posts accepted banana plugs and up to two gauge wire. They were spaced 1-5/8 inches on center, and so, will not permit

home with all types of recordings. I enjoyed listening to jazz combos, '50s and '60s rock and roll, big bands, and orchestras. I think the Towers accurately reproduced what the recording engineer intended."

"Part of the difficulty with reviewing really good products, such as these Induction Dynamics S1T Tower speakers, is reminding one's self to analyze the details so as to impart information. It's so easy to just enjoy the music instead ? perhaps the best compliment for audio equipment."

"These Induction Dynamics speakers were beautiful to look at...and beautiful to listen to."

"Most importantly, one can sit back and become lost in the music. That's what an audio system is all about. If you have the opportunity to hear them, I'd suggest you do so, as they do a superior job of music reproduction. They sound as good as they look, which is very, very good."

the use of dual banana plugs, which are 3/4 inch center-to-center. This may be important only to those folks who make frequent changes, such as reviewers. These posts were among the heftiest I've encountered. Each 3/4 inch diameter nut had three semi-circumferences for a good grip, making them easy to tighten.

The crossover design (which determines which frequencies are routed to which drivers) is of some note. It is covered by two patents (5,568,560 and 5,937,072) the second of which improves upon the first. The technically minded may enjoy reading these patents (at least the summary sections; they are accessible on the U.S. Patent Office website at www.uspto.gov. The patents describe the interconnection of two capacitors to "attenuate frequencies [outside the desired range] at a rate of 30 dB/octave or greater." They reach an attenuation rate of 30/dB/octave in less than half an octave. The crossover enables very precisely limiting the frequencies fed to a driver so that it operates only in the range of frequencies where its performance is best.

The eight-page owners' manual covered the S1 and S1T speakers, and provided instructions for unpacking, care, installations, mating with a subwoofer, and use in two channel and surround systems. It also makes cable size vs. length recommendations, addresses customer service questions, lists specifications, and spells out terms of the firm's seven-year warranty. Experimenting with location and toe-in to arrive at the best speaker position for a given room was recommended in the manual.

Positioning

I initially located the Towers 9 1/2 feet apart and about 9 feet from the listening position. After moving them around, I settled on 8 1/2 feet apart, 9 feet from the listening position, 5 feet from the nearest sidewall, and 4 feet from the wall behind them. Differences were slight, but the latter position gave a more solid center image. Most of the review was done without the subwoofers in use.

With the speakers aimed at my listening position, I played the Chesky Records' Jazz Sampler Vol. 1 (Chesky JD37). The disc's "Left-Right Imaging Test" voice locations were all in the proper positions (center, midway between center and speaker, at speaker, and beyond speaker, first on the right side, then left). There was some diffuseness at the beyond-speaker locations, as there has been with most speakers. On the CD's "Listening Environment Diagnostic Recording" (LEDR), the "Up" sound went straight up just to the insides of the speaker locations. "Over" arched about three feet above the speakers and "Lateral" panned straight across. The depth tests, where a voice and a tambourine move successively farther away from the microphone, were quite credible.

Many of the live performances I've attended over the past couple of years have been classical orchestra. With a good recording, such as Byron Janis with the Moscow Radio Symphony playing Liszt (Mercury/Phillips 432002-2), the Towers put the listener center hall. The three dimensionality of the performance spread beyond the speakers at about eye level and dynamics were portrayed without strain. All of the instrument sections were properly located, and the blending of the orchestra was realistic, as were detail and tone.

Male voices were natural as on Jim Croces's Life and Times LP (ABC Records ABCX-769). The Towers reproduced the mid- to high-frequency background detail that is not audible on all speakers. Nat "King" Cole's "Magic Moment" and "Make It Last" from the LP Thank You, Pretty Baby (Capitol ST 2759) had great detail, ranging from the wide and deep orchestra, the back-up singers, to his extraordinary voice. The title song even had some of the instruments beyond the outsides of the speakers. There was no chestiness or other artifacts associated with male voices, even with radio announcers.

Female voices, such as on The Best Of Julie London (Rhino CD R270737), sounded very natural, with no emphasis of sibilance. The orchestra spread out behind her, extending

slightly beyond the confines of the speakers. Judy Collins' In My Life (Elektra/Asylum 74027-2) was captivating and multi-dimensional. Her voice was realistic, set far back on the stage. Instruments were forwarded to each side, and extended well beyond the outsides of the speakers.

The Towers seemed to be at home with all types of recordings. I enjoyed listening to jazz combos, '50s and '60s rock and roll, big bands, and orchestras. I think the Towers accurately reproduced what the recording engineer intended. Bert Kaempfert's Blue Midnight LP (Decca DL 74569) had a wide and deep orchestra and particularly beautiful trumpet tone. The Dave Brubeck Quartet's Anything Goes LP (Columbia PC 9402) specifically located the performers and their front to back and lateral relationships. "Like Someone in Love" from Duo by Hank Jones and Red Mitchell (Timeless/Musical Heritage 513345Y) had great depth and detail, with accurate tonal balance. The bass was stage right of center. Percussive strikes and string plucks were well defined. The sounds never wandered with frequency.

Conclusion

Part of the difficulty with reviewing really good products, such as these Induction Dynamics S1T Tower speakers, is reminding one's self to analyze the details so as to impart information. It's so easy to just enjoy the music instead ? perhaps the best compliment for audio equipment. The depth and width of the presentation add significantly to the listening enjoyment. Dynamics (no pun intended) were handled very well, with no strain and the extended highs had no hint of harshness. I listened for hours at a time without fatigue. Coupled with correct timbre and seamless integration of the drivers and ports, the whole is greater than the sum of these parts. In comparison to my Mach 1 speakers, there were many more similarities than differences. Although both had measurable output down to 25Hz, the Towers had 2 to 3 dB higher output below 100 Hz and 3 to 5 dB less from 1 to 10 kHz ? above that they both gradually sloped downward to 20 kHz. Output was exactly the

same at 100Hz, 1 kHz and within 1 dB at 20 kHz, with the Towers having a slight sensitivity edge. Sound dispersion was similar (they are both slender, front-firing enclosures).

These Induction Dynamics speakers were beautiful to look at (especially with grilles on) and beautiful to listen to. With grilles off, they have a definite high-tech look that is a bit on the busy side with four ports and four drivers (two with yellow cones). The gorgeous veneer continues on the front baffle, so these openings and drivers have a great visual background. I found the sound to be slightly freer and more open with the grilles removed. The sound from both drivers and ports blended into a coherent sound source.

Although the Towers were down only 3 dB at 25 Hz, they benefited slightly from the addition of the NHT subwoofers, which I found easy to integrate. The music all sounded like it came from the main speakers. Induction Dynamics makes a good performing powered subwoofer (reviewed in Vol. 7, No. 1), which I would expect to blend quite well with the Towers. They were the right height to project an eye-level stage.

The Induction Dynamics Tower speakers are not inexpensive, and they will not be for everyone's pocketbook. They do a superb job of reproducing the nuances and the wide scale presentations of good recordings. They will also let you know when the recording is lacking or whether your room or your equipment may be in need of improvement. Most importantly, one can sit back and become lost in the music. That's what an audio system is all about. If you have the opportunity to hear them, I'd suggest you do so, as they do a superior job of music reproduction. They sound as good as they look, which is very, very good.

[S1T Three-way Tower Loudspeaker specifications page](#)

Reprinted by permission of The Audiophile Voice © 2001
Guts & Elbow Grease Publishing Ltd.
The Audiophile Voice, PO Box 43537
Upper Montclair, NJ 07043

The Audiophile Voice "...by audiophiles for audiophiles."

<http://www.audiophilevoice.com/>