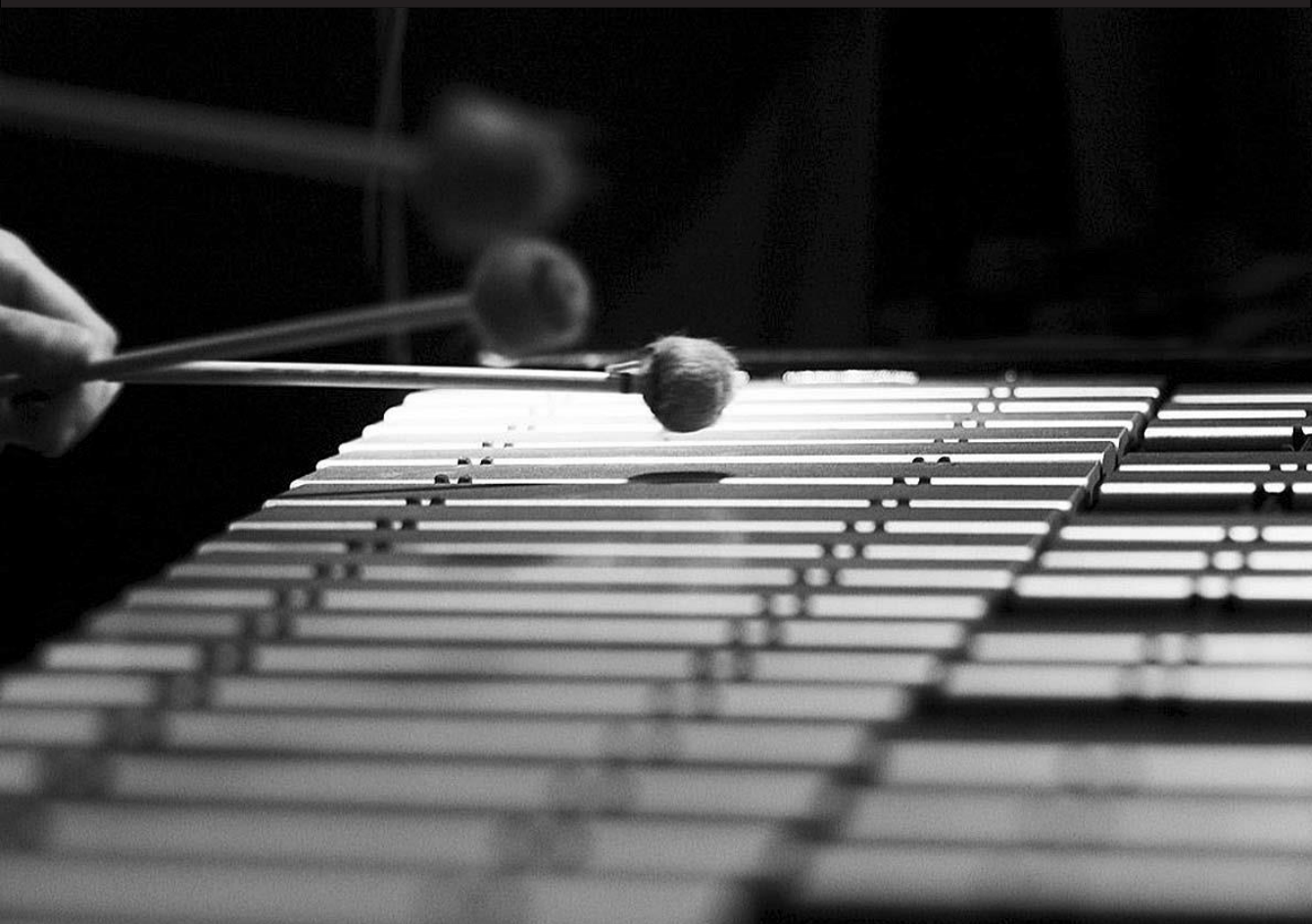


The German magazine for High Fidelity

www.hoererlebnis.de



Audio Physic: Codex



Hard shell, musical heart

by Marco Kolks

Codex loudspeaker from Audio Physic

For over three decades, the loudspeaker manufacturer Audio Physic has successfully carved out its niche in the market. During this time, the medium-sized company from Brilon, nestled in the eastern part of Germany's Sauerland region, has made a name for itself throughout the world and today stands for premium products and innovative developments.

This success is closely associated with the name of the company's Chief Developer, Manfred Diestertich. He is the mastermind shaping how the loudspeakers are built, not only with respect to engineering but also in terms of the signature design. He managed to pull off a bold feat with his sandwich construction, in which glass panels are applied as a final layer of the cabinet. Quite aside from the fact that an incredibly stunning, timeless design was created, this intelligent mix of glass, wood and the targeted use of porous ceramic foam in the interior is an essential reason for the vast sound potential of the loudspeakers. And in order to further increase the stability, there are additional crossbeams. We already came to appreciate these features in the recent facelift of the Avanti loudspeaker classic. Audio Physic is now launching the larger 4-way sister, Codex. The architecture is similar, only sized larger: the rear-tilted angle, the upper 7 inch mid-range woofer, the high tweeter (now in the third generation) and just below, the 6 inch

mid-range driver project towards the front. The 11" woofer, invisible from the outside, is mounted in the lower section of the loudspeaker, featuring its own cabinet. From 100 Hz, the woofers/midrange drivers, followed a bit later by the Hyper Holographic Cone Midrange drivers of the third generation, each handle their respective ranges.

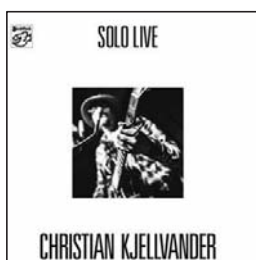
Audio Physic has the chassis made according to its own specifications. They feature, for example, a dual-basket design with a decoupling effect on the driver unit. As the chassis have no contact with the baffle, they are largely protected from vibrations and partial vibrations that could negatively influence the sound. The manufacturer provides all the chassis with their own separate cabinet compartments, and at the same time, the very well-equipped crossover is distributed on several levels. This virtually eliminates interactions in the interior caused by rogue air volumes. All these features are technically sophisticated and certainly come at a price.

The tweeter is in the form of the HHCT (Hyper Holographic Cone Tweeter). It involves a cone tweeter with a diameter of 38 mm. As Manfred Diestertich only has it kick in starting at 3 kHz, it achieves high dynamic reserves. What's more, the cone extends higher than a dome, the transmission range is higher, and with fewer distortions. It is also worth taking another look at the connection terminal. The loudspeaker cables are inserted into WBT nextgen™ terminals. They are also mechanically decoupled. Manfred Diestertich had a hand in their development as well.

Available as an option and deftly recommended are the VCF V magnetic feet from Audio Physic, instead of serial spikes. Two repelling neodymium magnets generate a strong magnetic field, which takes the load off the rigid web fabric and, at the same time, amplifies its effectiveness. Unlike spikes, they do not simply channel the energy into the ground; instead, they convert most of it into thermal energy. As a result, the energy is fully eliminated. The Codex is available in five different wood designs and in six high-gloss glass finishes.

Listening experience

In the weeks I had the Codex, I really put it through the works. This is because the Codex motivates you to squeeze out every last bit of extra performance. It's like what happens to a car aficionado encountering a new sports car. It is full of surprises at first, as you begin to fathom how this gear behaves differently and how much more performance it delivers if you do everything right. With the Codex, you fight for dynamics, homogeneity, extreme airiness and sensuous flair. After all, I just have to admit it, this loudspeaker has unbelievable charm.



Music tip

Christian Kjellvander Solo Live

Stockfisch/SA-CD

The voice of Christian Kjellvander is something truly special. It has practically a gripping effect on the listener. Somewhere between the warbling, crooning style of Stuart Staples and the wise, deep baritone of Leonard Cohen. Like so many Scandinavian songwriters, Christian Kjellvander always injects a layer of the darkness and melancholy typical of his country into his sound. It's unlikely we'll ever hear him singing party songs. Every Nordic songwriter is capable to penning songs that maneuver well clear of painful melancholy. Not a single song, it's about love, life and death, is falling

into the trap of the expected. The guitars are far removed from any virility. His magnificent folk pieces with rich lyrics are so warming, exciting and full of verve, so understandable and logical, so beautiful.

Max Petersen Trio

Dream Dancing

Records Tune/CD

In "Dream Dancing" there is a balance of various factors, you find a wide spectrum of sweet melodies, through awkward moments, right down to extravagant numbers with influences from Swing, Bebop and some fusion elements. What's more, the ballads are a forté of the band. There is a tumultuous drum flourish at the end. "Bad Kingdom" features a

The Max Petersen Trio (Dream Dancing; Records Tune/CD) sees in many years of close collaboration the key to a new contemporary form of jazz. It is where the "roots and soul" of African-American blues meet the tradition of European Classical music, and the harmonious aesthetic of modern European jazz meets the groove of the New York metropolis. In addition to the

Interior design: The striking features include separate compartments for the individual chassis, along with the separately mounted crossover modules.

very percussive finish to a very interesting recording with music that emerged out of a melange between American jazz, its very special European style and Classical music.

Big Daddy Wilson

Neckbone Stew; Ruf/CD

The idea for "Neckbone Stew" was all about creating a tasty soup out of many delicious ingredients. Big Daddy Wilson achieved the right mix of blues, spirituality, soul, reggae and his southern roots, and presents an intricate work, particularly impressive in its unique voice and wonderful songwriting. The booklet contains all the lyrics and a lineup of the people involved in the CD. The listener will note musicians who have accompanied the band for many years, such as Cesare Nolli on guitar and Paolo Legramanti on bass. Not to mention old companions such as Eric Bibb and Staffan Astner, also listed.

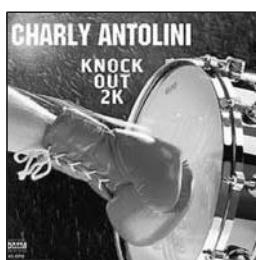




somewhat groovy "Take Easy Thai" or the "Goodbye Käpt'n" ballad with brushes, the music is thus marked by fascinating, unusual moods. Fragile interval sequences, impressionist-style moods, along with polymetric and atonal influences are found in this trio music. The ability to listen so closely to this music is a function of the explosiveness and, at the same time, the holographic resolution of the Codex. The reproduction is as springy and lively as it is pure. What you can hear is that these musicians have a bubbling energy. The members of the band, Lukas Traxel on bass, and Jimmy Macbride, the 25-year-old drummer from New York, have already racked up lots of experience despite their very young age. They are really good, superb in their phrasing. And the Codex is equally capable of bringing out the trio in all its intricate detail and homogeneity. Listeners may be inclined to dreamy dancing, given the title song that invites you to fall into the enchanting piano melodies. It does take some initial getting used to the quality of the resolution of ranging; the reproduction is clear and lively. The separation of the piano keys, the positioning of the individual tones, not to mention the flow of vitality and intensity, make the dimensions of the music palpable.

Even though "Give me one reason" was not composed by Big Daddy Wilsons, but rather by Tracy Chapman, it is a highlight of the album, "Neckbone Stew" (Ruf/CD). Ruthie Forster's truly unmistakable voice and her flair

The Codex is a four-way loudspeaker. The bass is in the cabinet, the woofers/midrange drivers are located on top of the front panel.



Listening tip
Charly Antolini

Knock Out 2K
Inak/ 2LP (45 rpm)

*There is a warning sign on the album:
 This is not a children's birthday party. These*

records are played at your own risk. Extremely high volumes can destroy the loudspeakers. Please take this warning seriously. It is neither rock nor jazz, actually it has certain elements of both. Add to this a touch of funk, especially when Wolfgang Schmid is giving the strings of his bass a workout. Antolini already delivered a classic in 1979. What he now released in 2016 is no less exciting. In terms of sound, vinyl mastering has reached the achievable limit with dynamic-enhancing 45 rpm.

are a great contrast to Big Daddy Wilson. The Codex defines the woman's voice with incredible clarity, gives it character and its own dynamics, without being too manly about it. A beautiful interpretation of what is already a beautiful song and a good idea of Big Daddy Wilson, to invite Ruthie Foster to a blues duet. The Codex illuminates an intricate mesh of sound spectra and stands out with its spatial qualities. It not only defines the sound range accurately and contoured, the extension of the range into lower and broader frequencies fulfills high audiophile tastes. The common denominator of the 12 songs is Big Daddy Wilson's penetrating, warm and jovial voice, which is probably his key to success. Once the Codex loudspeakers have found the right place, they quickly win over the hearts of their listeners. Because even the bass frequency is amazing. Unlike the visual appearance of the loudspeaker, the bass is anything but thin. On the contrary: It is stiff and has lots of verve. Nearly four decades

All the chassis are proprietary developments, produced exclusively abroad for the manufacturer from Brilon. The tweeter has a cone.





The connection terminals from WBT are also uncoupled from the mounting plate.

after the debut of "Knock Out", Swiss jazz drummer Charly Antolini has remained true to his recipe: "Knock Out 2K" (inak/LP) is a fireworks display of percussive sounds, with which Codex explores just what a drum is capable of. But here it's not all about just banging on the drum. And yet the Codex is loud and fast, and shows the brilliance of professional drumming. However, it is also about a connection with sounds and rhythms

that are always full of surprises, which only become possible with his two partners. Both bassist Wolfgang Schmid and Nippy Noya, who with his percussions introduces true world music, provide for unusual musical twists in the plot. On the bass lines, the Codex extends far into the lower frequency, showing power and substance, and allowing the listener to feel the deep vibes.

Yes, the Codex knows how to make music palpable. There is an integration of experiencing and consciously perceiving music. Experiencing in this case, however, does not mean mere amazement, emotion or blind contemplation. What this means is an experience that encompasses feeling and thought, emotion and cognition. The differentiated perception of music is a function of the Codex's ability to express its layers. Music reproduction that is perceived as "getting

The product:

Codex: four-way loudspeaker

Price: 10,500 Euros (per pair)

Dimensions (HxWxD): 1195 x 202 x 370 mm, base (WxD): 360 x 500 mm

Weight: 44 kg

Recommended amplifier power: 40-250 W, Impedance: 4 Ohm

Frequency response: 28 Hz - 40 kHz, Sensitivity: 89 dB

Various color designs with and without glass

Optional magnetic feet

Manufacturer:

Audio Physic GmbH

Almerfeldweg 38

59929 Brilon, Germany

Phone: +49 2961 96170, Fax: +49 2961 51640

E-mail info@audiophysic.de, Website: www.audiophysic.de

under the skin" and not merely remaining there, only to disappear, but rather moving us to recognition and reflection, which after all, is what audiophile listeners want. For this, you need excellent music recordings, such as those from Christian Kjellvander, one of the most distinguished Swedish singer/songwriters (Solo Live, Stockfisch/SA-CD). During a European tour, Christian Kjellvander visited the Stockfisch Studio. Günter Pauler spontaneously produced "Solo Live" in its usual stellar quality, a live recording from the "Bürgersaal" in the former Benedictine monastery of St. Blasien in the German city of Northeim. In this, the Codex conjures plasticity. Physicality and warmth: When listening, you can literally see Christian Kjellvander, how he is driving down a Swedish country road in his Subaru Forrester. The street is as straight and plain as it can be. To the left is an ancient forest. To the right is a canyon. On the back seat the trademarks of his album: a guitar that conjures associations with Leonard Cohen, a transformer that once belonged to Neil Young, a voice as deep as the truth it is proclaiming.

So where does the Codex fit in within the Audio Physic family? The Avanti is already tremendous and is similar in many ways to the older sister Codex. Yet the latter makes a more seasoned impression under the same framework conditions, has a larger foundation and is capable of greater volume if required. It is also more capable of filling the room, especially if the room is larger.

Towards the upper range, the Codex approaches the even more expensive Avantera+. At this point, however, prospective buyers will have to make a decision. The sound matching is very similar throughout the

family. The Avantera+ offers more substantial definition than the Codex - in the same way and to the same extent the Codex is a step ahead of the Avanti. The essential difference in my view lies in the construction of the two cabinets. The Avantera+ has a rounded shape towards the rear and does without the use of glass panels. That is why its reproduction is not quite as precisely defined as with the Codex. In final analysis, it is somewhat more balanced, which does not mean it is better, but simply different. Thus, the stated differences cannot be weighed in qualitative terms. They are more a question of taste.

The Codex rightly assumes its renowned place in the Audio Physic line-up. Given its price, its quality of workmanship, including the design and its sound potential, it is bound to attract a following of friends who want to join it in re-discovering their love of music. Because under the hard glass exterior beats a deeply musical heart.

MK



The optional magnetic feet provide greater solitude and fine definition into the sound characteristics.