We could stretch this out a little, but we won’t. ProAc’s Response D40/Rs are wonderful. So there you have our verdict. Want to know more? OK then, these are speakers to judge in a listening room, not on technology content or specification. As with almost every ProAc speaker we’ve reviewed it’s not as if the technical ingredients suggest anything special. A rectangular MDF cabinet and dual 10.5cm carbon fibre mid/bass drivers (ProAc’s own design) don’t exactly get the heart racing, though the inclusion of a ribbon tweeter sparks our interest just a little.

As always, it’s the details that mark the difference between ordinary and extraordinary. That cabinet may be a conventional MDF box, but it’s very solidly made and immaculately finished. The reflex

The cabinet features a downward-firing reflex port arrangement, where the port exits into a gap between the base of the cabinet and a plinth. The idea behind this is to get the port to ‘drive’ the air in the room in a more consistent manner, making the speakers less fussy about placement.

There is a soft-dome-equipped version of this speaker, simply called the D40. It’s available for around £250 less, but the ribbon version is the one that sells best. At £1200 tall, the Response D40/Rs are big speakers, and they need a decently large room to make sense both visually and sonically. They sound best when given plenty of room to breathe. That unusual port arrangement works well, though, and they weren’t that fussy about their position in our listening room. Just keep that ribbon at ear height – it has quite a narrow vertical dispersion.

Electrically, there’s little here that will worry any decent amplifier. These floorstanders are pretty sensitive at 90dB/W/m, so highish volume levels from relatively low-powered amps are possible. We’d go the high-powered route, if given the choice. The D40/Rs are capable of huge dynamic swings and massive volume levels, so it wouldn’t be a shame not to use these abilities to their full extent.

Once we heard old favourites such as the Inception OST delivered with such blood and thunder it was hard to do without it. That said, these speakers have no trouble weaving a spell at lower volumes too. Some may prefer a more attacking sound, but for us these ProAcs, lose none of the drive or excitement of The Dead Weather’s 60 Feet Tall! Their rhythmic precision is good, and the interplay between instruments is handled brilliantly.

There’s an exceptional level of transparency here, coupled to a superb level of detail resolution. These towers have the insight to take apart a track as complicated as Radiohead’s El Stop, but they never sound too clinical, preferring to push the music’s message to the fore. It’s hard to make a speaker that goes deep yet still sounds fast, but ProAc has managed it. Despite their massive bass slam the D40/Rs remain brilliantly agile.

Listen to Nick Cave’s Push the Sky Away and it’s the clever lyrics, subtle rhythms and beautiful melodies that grab you, rather than hi-fi considerations such as bass grip or spaciousness. If you want to analyse the recording it’s easy enough, but the ProAc’s suggest that the actual music is far more important. We like that.

As you might have guessed we’re really taken with the Response D40/Rs. They do the hi-fi things really well but have the pleasing habit of getting out of the way of the music. With the ProAc’s we invariably ended up thinking how much fun we were having listening, rather than how great the hi-fi was. Oddly enough, only great hi-fi can do that.

**TECH SPECS**

- **Type:** Floorstander
- **Sensitivity:** 90dB/W/m
- **Impedance:** 4 ohms
- **Max power:** 250W
- **Biwiring:** Yes
- **Finishes:** 6
- **DIMENSIONS:** (hwd) 120 x 21 x 34cm