

WHAT HI·FI?  
SOUND AND VISION

GROUP TEST ★ WINNER

## ProAc Studio 110



£749

**LOOK ORDINARY, DON'T** they? After speakers as varied as the first three in this group, the Studio 110s don't look special at all. They don't have the same quality of veneer or attention to finish of the Opera Minis, or the unusual tweeter arrangement of the Dalis. Even the Neat's inverted metal dome seems cutting-edge compared to the ProAc's ordinary-looking tweeter.

Take a look round the back, and things don't get any fancier: the biwire

**“Whatever the musical genre, these speakers will wring out every bit of entertainment...”**

speaker terminal box would be put to shame by many a sub-£200 budget model, let alone those at this price level. Talking of price, in this test only the Spondors cost more in this test.

It's only doom and gloom until you start listening, though. Once you do that, the doubts vanish faster than a tub of ice cream at a children's party. You realise that ProAc's are all about the music and nothing else. Yes, you can

**FOR**

A great all round performer with no sonic weaknesses

**AGAINST**

A more luxurious finish is available for the money

**VERDICT**

With the right system, these are nothing less than spectacular. Well done, ProAc!

Other speakers might look more impressive, but we defy them to match the ProAc's sonic prowess

easily get something with greater showroom appeal, or something that impresses your friends with fit and finish. However, when it comes to music, the Studio 110s set massively high standards. This is a great all-rounder that's fast, punchy and dynamic when the music demands.

**Entertaining for all**

On suitable stands – Partington's £170 Super Dreadnoughts, or the similarly priced Kudos S50s – they'll deliver a sound full of excitement and drive without breaking a sweat.

Eminem, George Clinton or Gorillaz – these ProAc's don't mind, they'll render it all with the utmost clarity, and wring out every last ounce of entertainment. The same applies to every other genre: classical, jazz... you name it, these speakers will get the best out of it.

That's because the Studio 110s don't put a foot wrong. The tonal balance is a



touch obvious at the top end, but remains balanced enough not to offend. Scale is impressive, as is authority – due to a surprisingly solid bass performance – while the ProAc's timing is crisp enough to challenge the likes of Neat's excellent Motive 3s. If you want loudspeakers that do it all, listen here.

**TEST RESULT**

In a tough test with no obvious losers, **ProAc** eventually takes the honours, thanks to sheer entertainment value

**THIS IS A** tough one to call, because there are no duffers here. Each speaker has plenty of appeal. The Operas are beautifully made, and have the kind of cosmetic treatment that is rare to find for the right side of a grand. The Minis sound better than any entry-level Opera ever has, and are good enough to be a viable choice even alongside opposition as tough as this.

*“ProAc’s Studio 110s are more likely to please more people more of the time...”*

Spendor’s S3es might have dropped a star, but if you want neutral, insightful speakers, there are few better options at this price level. If Spendor could sharpen up the timing and give dynamics a freer reign, the S3es could well find themselves back on top of the pile. Build and finish are still deeply impressive, mind.

**Three five-star pairs you must hear**

The remaining three are even harder to separate. We judge things on a sound-per-pound basis, so the Dalis look to have it sewn up. However, good as they are, we reckon Neat’s Motive 3s and ProAc Studio 110s do enough to justify their greater outlay. In the end it’s the ProAc that just scrape through as winners. They’re better all-rounders than the Neats, and more likely to please more of the people more of the time.



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**NOW ADD THESE**



**SPEAKER STANDS KUDOS S50**



£ 160

These are a great alternative to Partington’s Super Dreadnoughts. Not as authoritative in terms of sound, but compensate with a wonderfully organic and articulate midrange



**CD PLAYER COPLAND CDA823**



£ 1750

If you can put up with a slow-witted transport, this is an excellent-sounding CD player that plays all types of music superbly. Timing and dynamics are great, which suits the ProAc’s perfectly. It’s not cheap, but it’s a source well worth long-term investment



**STEREO AMPLIFIER AVI LABORATORY SERIES**



£ 1499

OK, it’s a poor visual match for the Copland, but the refined yet forceful delivery of this AVI integrated amplifier makes it ideal for use with the ProAc’s. Build is great and power isn’t an issue either: it’s rated at 175 watts per channel

**TOTAL SYSTEM £4158**

**FACTS AND FIGURES**

PRICE RANGE £550-£795	DALI IKON 2	NEAT MOTIVE 3	OPERA MINI	PROAC STUDIO 110	SPENDOR S3E
<b>SPECIFICATION</b>					
PRICE	£ 550	£ 650	£ 650	£ 749	£ 795
TYPE	Standmount	Standmount	Standmount	Standmount	Standmount
SENSITIVITY	92 dB/w/m	88 dB/w/m	89 dB/w/m	88 dB/w/m	86 dB/w/m
IMPEDANCE	6 ohms	8 ohms	8 ohms	8 ohms	8 ohms
POWER HANDLING	130 watts	100 watts	60 watts	150 watts	125 watts
BIWIRABLE	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
DIMENSIONS (HWD)	44 x 19 x 30cm	33 x 16 x 20cm	28 x 15 x 25cm	38 x 20 x 24cm	34 x 17 x 26cm
FINISHES	2	4	3	4	4
<b>HOW THEY RATED</b>					
SOUND	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
BUILD	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
COMPATIBILITY	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
VERDICT	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★

**IMPEDANCE** A low impedance draws a high current flow, while a high impedance draws a little. So, speakers with a low impedance are more difficult for amps to drive

**SENSITIVITY** A higher figure here means the speakers will go louder for a given amp power

**POWER-HANDLING** This is maximum amp power that’s recommended

**BIWIRABLE** Speakers have two sets of terminals for joining to your amp with two lengths of cable for each loudspeaker

**DIMENSIONS** These standmount speakers only work effectively on stands, so factor in the size of these when buying