

High notes

Italian audio specialist Gold Note arrives in the UK, and showcases its XT-7 floorstander with ribbon tweeter at Munich's High End Show

PRICE: £14,208 **AVAILABLE:** NOW **CONTACT:** 01329 279119 **WEB:** GOLDNOTE.IT

ITALIANS HAVE OFTEN been thought of as the masters of design, and the term 'made in Italy' is synonymous with elegance, craftsmanship and style. These have always been very desirable factors in hi-fi, and Florence-based Gold Note is hoping that its sumptuous designs – where every product is built by hand from scratch with high-quality materials – are going to attract the eyes and ears of audio aficionados here.

Distributed by Audio Pinnacle Ltd, the new-to-the-UK brand has existed

in its native Italy in one form or another for more than 20 years, and has plenty of experience with OEM collaborations worldwide in engineering and designing a complete line of domestic analogue audio equipment from amplifiers to loudspeakers, cables and turntables.

High-end showcase

Visitors to the High End Show held in Munich will be familiar with the Gold Note brand and this year's May event sees it displaying the newly

introduced XT-7 floorstanding loudspeaker. The three-way design is the company's first to use a ribbon tweeter and stands 1,110mm tall and weighs in at 50kg per speaker. The distinctive curved cabinet is built around a reinforced chassis with wooden multi-layer panels that help to control resonances. Separate internal cabinets for bass and mid/high frequencies enhance the XT-7's tuning and the bass cabinet fitted with 2x 180mm drivers is vented with an anti-turbulence bass reflex port,

while the cabinet containing the 160mm midrange and AMT ultra-linear ribbon tweeter is sealed to help reduce any internal reflections.

The floorstander employs custom drivers made from ultra-stiff woven polypropylene developed with SEAS and what Gold Note calls a deluxe crossover that's built with Mundorf components. It claims a sensitivity of 90dB with power handling capabilities ranging from 30-300W.

The XT-7 loudspeaker is supported by wooden swallow tail-shaped stands that feature adjustable spikes to assist with stability. The front baffle is finished in black lacquer with cabinet side cheeks available in a choice of gloss back or white as well as Italian walnut or grey maple finishes.

The three-way XT-7 is the company's first loudspeaker to use a ribbon tweeter

The XT-7's filter network uses quality components



COMMENT

RSD, NO THANKS

As Saturday 22 April came around we once again found ourselves asking: "What exactly is the point of Record Store Day?" If the intention is to pull in crowds of people that only step foot into a record shop once a year to pay vastly inflated prices for the sort of records that are painfully unrepresentative of what most people buy, then congratulations, job done. If not, it might be time for a rethink of what undoubtedly started out as a well-meaning celebration of vinyl.

The small record store in the seaside town that I go to once or twice a month was full to the rafters with punters this year (as it has been every other year) and while it could be argued that RSD is achieving its goal, you can guarantee that this time next week the shop will once again be empty. My problem with Record Store Day is not so much the fact that the majors use it as an opportunity to push artists that they want to market, forcing the indies that release vinyl during the rest of the year to the back of the queue at the record printing plants, or even that a lot of the stuff sold is immediately stuck on ebay for vastly inflated sums – the David Bowie Bow Promo and *Cracked Actor* RSD exclusives that I saw selling for £40 in my store were on ebay for £140 by the time I got home. My problem is the cost of the records in the first place.

Given that the whole point of the day is to promote vinyl and the joy of the black stuff, why not sell it at a vastly reduced price to lure people in? I'm sure the record companies can afford to take the hit and if people are picking up rarities for, say, a fiver, maybe they'll buy something else while they're in the store.

Like every year, I entered the shop with money in my pocket in the hope of buying something interesting, only to leave 15 minutes later frustrated and empty handed. Charging £8 for a 7in single and between £25 and £40 for an album is no way to reward the loyal vinyl fans that have kept this pastime going through the lean years when records weren't fashionable. From now on, I think I'll stick to record shopping the other 364 days of the year. **JDW**

