

AUDIO ROUND-UP

Every issue, our audio expert *Nick Renshaw* takes a look at the best new audio and video products to help you get the most out of recorded classical music

BBC MUSIC CHOICE

SMALL ROOM, BIG SOUND:
the Maxi's master cabinet (right)
houses an amp and iPod dock



POWERED LOUDSPEAKER

Epoz AktiMate Maxi £600

If you're not blessed with a mansion-sized front room, then accommodating a stereo hi-fi separates system can be a struggle. If you fall into that category but still want a high performance audio sound then investing in powered or 'Active' loudspeakers might be the answer.

They resemble and sound like your traditional

standmount cabinets but differ from their passive cousins by the 'master' left channel speaker housing a built-in amp, feeding off a mains supply and featuring inputs for a CD player, iPod or computer. It connects to the 'slave' right channel speakers via a standard speaker cable to deliver stereo sound.

In the case of the Epoz's AktiMate Maxi, you get more into the bargain. An iPod dock has been carved out on top of the master speaker while it

even delivers FM/internet radio via a Wi-Fi connection or Ethernet cable. The solid cabinets are expertly made – the walnut real wood veneer gets my approval over the red, white and black gloss finishes – and are best placed on speaker stands for an improved fidelity.

Connecting to a home Wi-Fi is easy enough if a little fiddly; typing in the security key via the erratic remote and

the pokey LCD display doesn't serve well for browsing through the myriad internet radio stations. But these niggles are

insignificant when you hear the Maxi. The amp fires out 60W of power per channel and listening to 320kbps sampled MP3 tracks, the Maxi serves up a rich fluid audio with well-judged low-end tones and a nice level of detail. If you can live without connecting a CD player and rely on listening to your music via the built-in iPod dock then the AktiMate Maxi delivers a sophisticated, space-saving solution.

www.redboxav.com ★★★★★

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