



Mojo

The Magic Speakers

My first experience of Gryphon Mojo Speakers was at the Audio Equipment Exhibition at Sheraton Taipei.

My impression on the pair of small speakers was pretty good, however, they were not stunning. But my second experience of Mojo was at the Shengfengqun Stereo Store Zhubei, and THAT was stunning.

I used to think that these speakers were too expensive but this changed my impression.

If they were priced by performance sound instead of its size, the Mojo is absolutely worth every penny of it.

You want to know why? Then the following listening experience will give you the answer.

The test listening was in a small room on the ground floor this time.

I've been to Shengfengqun Stereo Store at Zhubei many times. Every time I go, I listen to the music or conduct other activities in the two big listening rooms upstairs. Obviously enormous efforts have been spent on the acoustic design of the two rooms, and their outstanding sound quality has impressed all. The listening room downstairs is comparatively small and is about 5*4.5*3 feet. There does not seem to be any special acoustic treatment for sound, so it is just a common room. It cannot be regarded as a good space in terms of the room's width and length since the extension of the low frequency in LMF are affected by the room's length, width and height. It might be due to these downsides that Shengfengqun has never invited me to try out the equipment in this room before.

However, the two listening rooms upstairs may be too large for the small Mojo so it was tried out downstairs. The equipment testing this time was performed at a small room at the first floor, Shengfengqun Stereo Store Zhubei. I experienced a wonderful acoustic performance. The back wall only has a decoration for visual purpose and does not have anything for sound absorption or diffusion. Behind the walls, there actually is a storing room which can be accessed by opening the boards on both sides.

Though I was invited to do the "Side Story on Equipment" in the small room, the agent (Artist World) and Shengfengqun made preparations seriously. Several days before my arrival, they had been tuning and trying associated equipment and wires. Finally, they decided on the adoption of the Diablo integrated amplifier of Gryphon, Scorpio CD player, and the VIP Reference cables. No wonder, the agent and Shengfengqun had done their homework so well, that no tuning was needed when I arrived, not even the position of the speakers. There was absolutely no need for extra tuning because the sound quality of the whole system was extremely good when it was turned on.

The speakers are small in size, but the performance remains outstanding.

How could the sound quality of Mojo be so good that I feel no tuning can be made at all?

Let's talk about the sound quality of Mojo later, and let me begin with its design. Readers may still remember the first pair of Gryphon speakers, Cantata, whose bookcase type is quite similar to Mojo. Then came Poseidon, Trident, and Atlantis. One could hardly imagine that Gryphon would keep

downsizing its speakers, and now comes Mojo. What has led to the design of Mojo? Let me guess. Flemming E. Rasmussen, the boss of Gryphon, who is near retirement, wants to return to something truly simple, and then comes up with the small Mojo.

Although the box of Mojo is not big, its surface is exquisite, and multiple painted colors and panels are available. The user can also make a customized order to match the interior decoration of one's house. The frontal face is only 20 inches wide, and the narrow part down the front is to avoid the diffraction of high-frequency sonic waves. Examined from the side, one can notice that there is an inset curve in the center of the Mojo's box. This design is shared with Gryphon's other speakers, and it is used to time coordinate sound from the tweeter and bass so that the accuracy of the phase can be maintained..

Compared with the tweeter indentation by ordinary speaker manufacturers, Gryphon's procedure is much more complicated and expensive, however, it produces excellent quality.

Besides internal reinforcing braces/struts in the cabinet enclosure, there is real and synthetic wool for damping.

The Adoption of AMT Tweeter

As a change, Mojo has adopted AMT tweeter this time.

Although Gryphon has not disclosed the provider, after researching, I think it is likely to be the AMT by German Mundorf. What is the merit of AMT? You have read the article on the AMT tweeter of ELAC Jet, so I won't elaborate here. In a word, it means large dispersion, low distortion and high bandwidth.

In order to get the most accurate phase, Mojo follows Gryphon's tradition.

that is, using two 6 inches paper cones bass drivers from Denmark to surround the tweeter from top and bottom, which forms a structure of point source. This D'Appolito configuration has been discussed here many times on the forum so I won't dwell on it.

What cannot be seen from the outside are that the exquisite crossovers of Mojo. Each crossover has been manually adjusted and welded with Teflon insulated hard wire. The soldering tin is silver tin. The resistor, capacitor and inductor of the crossover are all products of high quality including the graphite resistor of Duelund Coherent Audio, capacitor of Denmark Jensen, air core paper/oil inductor of Jensen, and the low-memory capacitors from Germany. All the best components have been used. The crossover divides the frequency by 4 scales. The frequency division point is set at 2kHz.

On the back of the speaker, besides the terminal of speaker wire by Gryphon, one can see two long resistors horizontally installed across the back panel.

They are exquisite resistors made by Duelund used to adjust the -0.5dB/0/+0.5dB in high frequency. Their role is to adjust according to the reverberation volume of high frequency in the listening room in order to get the most ear-pleasing high frequency effects. In addition, there are two bass ports holes at the back covered by soft black cloth.

Stand is a must-have for the bookcase type speakers and it should be exquisite otherwise the sound quality will be affected. Gryphon knows the importance of stands, of course, so it makes customized orders for Mojo, and sells the stands as well. The stand is sturdy and has a nice design and exquisite surface. And I believe no one will say no to it. (it should be filled with sand for max damping)

The sound body and weight is stunning.

What kind of sound did Mojo make in the small room that left me stunned?

My first surprise was that such a small speaker could produce such excellent sound body and weight which were even better than more expensive and bigger speakers.

I mean what I've said. The sound body and weight of Mojo were really remarkable. The first CD that I played was the Blue Mind of Anne Bisson, and it is the most familiar software for me recently. When the first song came across, I was surprised by the body of both man and the instrument. The weight was so firm and full, leaving no trace of weakness at all.

Mojo is just a small bookcase type speaker with three drivers, and where did the fullness and body come from? It puzzled me. Then I played another disk of The Holly Cole Collection Vol 1.

It gave me a even bigger surprise. Since the first song "I can see you clearly now" started with strong bass sound, I was expecting strong mid and low frequency peaks in the small room. The bass should have unbalanced sound. But when I had finished listening to the entire song, the bass was strong and firm, and had no expanded peak. What's more, the bass went down smoothly and naturally at the low-key part.

Why didn't I hear the mid-low and low frequency peaks? I looked around with doubt. The room was really average with ordinary floor and carpet. The ceiling was made of mineral fiber board. The wall behind the speaker was hanging a sign of Gryphon, and had no sound absorber. The back wall was hollow and could store miscellaneous goods. In addition, there was a window with a heavy curtain behind the listening position. Strictly speaking, only the two side walls had sound absorbers, but it could only absorb some high- and mid- frequencies, not low-frequencies. Could the space in the wall behind the speaker be a low frequency trap? It made no sense to me.

When I kept listening I fell in love with it, because many low-frequency passages in The Holly Cole Collection Vol were made so natural by Mojo. The image of Holly Cole Vol. 1 was made so real that it felt like she was singing right in front of us.

No matter whether it was the sound of strings, piano, human voices or jazz drums, everything was just so evolving.

1. The equipment used that day was the Diablo integrated amplifier of Gryphon and the Scorpio CD player. At the back there were preamps and a Clearaudio turntable.
2. The ceiling of the room was made of simple mineral fibre board and there was no sound absorber.
3. There was wood floor and carpet.
4. The two side walls were wrapped by cloth with sound absorbing cotton inside.
5. There was a curtain behind the listening position.

6. The back of Mojo had two bass ports. There were two Duelund resistors in the centre, set at different positions to adjust the volume of -0.5dB, 0dB and +0.5dB.

The full-range of high, medium, and low frequency

My second surprise was its total tonal balance. As a pair of small speakers, Mojo had only two 6-inch bass drivers, so it must have had limited extension of the low frequencies. However, I had not perceived any limitations during the listening trial. On the contrary, from small band Jazz, to explosive percussion instruments and pedal big drum, then to human voice, piano, violin and even large orchestra, Mojo produced enough high, medium, and low frequencies and showed great control as well. Honestly, the control was really remarkable.

Low Distortion and Wide Dynamic Performance

My third surprise was the low distortion and wide dynamic performance of Mojo. When I listened to music including orchestra, singing and live music at high volume, everything was so energetic no matter it is human voice, violin, drum, string or piano. What's amazing was that with such loud volume and wide dynamic range, I still heard sweet voices, neither ear-piercing nor aggressive. I believed that this was the quality of the low distortion AMT tweeter and the two 6-inch bass drivers. When I tried out the 17-track jazz drum set performance on the third trial disk of Accuphase, Mojo handled it pretty well at a loud volume. When I listened to the Acoustic Live of Nils Lofgren, the steel-string guitar sounded clear and crisp like sunshine all over the room. The man's voice was wild and strong. No matter how loud I turned it up, it was just sweet and terrific.

My fourth surprise was from its rendition of dimension, orientation and its resolution capability. When I listened to Philips' record of Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, no matter whether it was the Violin Concerto of Bruch, or the Peer Gynt Suite of Grieg, or the Quintet for French Horn Quartet by Anton Reicha, Mojo demonstrated good dimension, orientation and resolution capability. There was no any trace of obscurity, chaos, or drifting. In such a small space and short distance, the music was so clear that I felt like being in front of the control station of the recording room.

My fifth surprise was the strong musical quality of Mojo.

What is "music quality"? It is to let people melt in the music and feel the "soul". Not only did I feel the music involvement, I believed that those people of Shengfengqun and their agents must have felt it as well. Why? Because for every CD I played, they came to shoot the CD cover by cell phone and take down the CD number. It was like everything played by Mojo had some kind of awesome magic?

Behold that "magic" is different from "charm". The former one goes deeper than the latter and is hard to understand.

Orchestral or solo, ensemble or singing, The Mojo presentation was full of life and energy without any shyness.

My sixth surprise came from the full, large and unconstrained feeling of the sound of both the instruments and human, which is even better than the large speakers. It was strange that I didn't perceive these features when I first listened to Mojo at the stereo exhibition. What's more, the associated equipment this time was not the top-end products of Gryphon. They were just the integrated amplifier and the recently-launched Scorpio. However, whichever CD I played the images of the instrument and voices were so full and large. Actually, if small speakers could do such a good job, there

seemed no need for big speakers at all. Was this Mojo's power? Or was it a result from the smart arrangement of the room? Anyways, without my eyes closed, it would never believe that it was the work of small speakers like Mojo.

The specification said 37Hz. Let's count it as 4-3dB. It was not a surprising figure anyways. But one could feel the low and full low-frequency weight in the actual listening so Mojo had done a really good job and no cheating. Some readers may think that the bandwidth of 37Hz is not enough. As a matter of fact, low-frequency extension of 50Hz instead of 37Hz is already enough for the appreciation of the "ordinary" music. Why? You know what? The lowest scale of a 4-string bass is 41Hz (decimal point ignored), and that of a 5-string bass which adds one more bass string is 31Hz. As for cello, it is 65Hz; violin 196Hz; pedal big drum about 60-100 Hz and bass drum 40-100Hz; the lowest scale of Timpani, in addition, is 65Hz while its average is around 100Hz. If you persist a low frequency under 30 Hz, the natural instruments include Organ, Pipe organ Contrabass Trombone (24Hz), Tuba Saxophone (25Hz) and bass Clarinet (29Hz). Even though a few instruments do have such low scale, seldom will the composer employ the lowest scale of instruments to write music. So if a pair of speakers can truly deliver the low frequency extension of 50 Hz, they are already enough for the enjoyment of music. Should Mojo be able to deliver a true 37Hz, one should be satisfied.

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Honestly, when I wrote the article I was still wondering how Gryphon Mojo managed to give me so many surprises in that small room. In terms of the satisfaction I got from that day's listening experience, it surpassed what I had from listening to more expensive speakers in larger spaces. When I was amazed by the extraordinary performance of Mojo, I had to admit it also resulted in the perfect coordination of the equipment and space. So, was this Mojo's magic? Should Gryphon Mojo be able to produce the same super high quality sound in most small spaces as it did at the Shengfengqun Stereo Store? If so, then I think it's worth of its price !

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