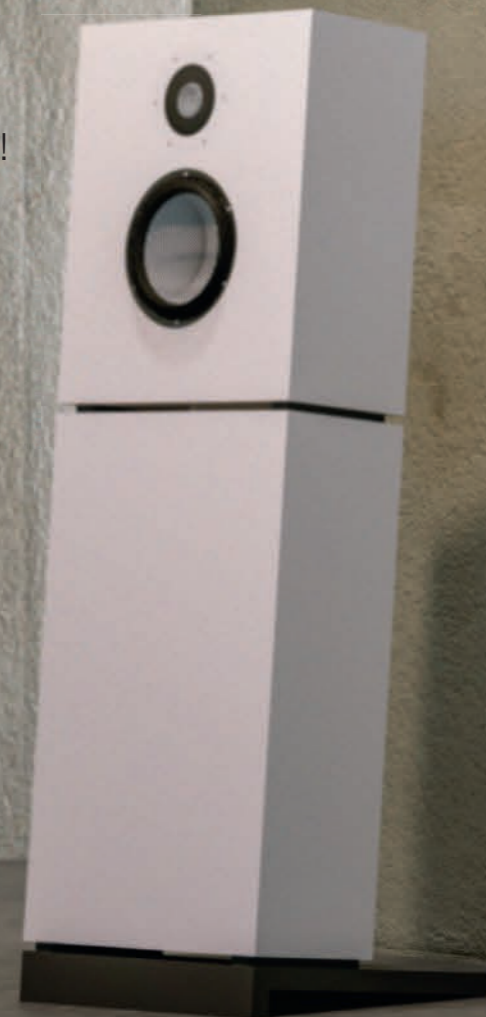


# Best of Both Worlds

Now this is supposed to be a complete streaming system? Yes! Lyravox does not only combine the set in a modern style, but also employs the noble ceramic drivers.



The first two stereo active speakers from Lyravox caused a big sensation at the HIGH END 2018. The Hamburg based factory, usually better known for their high-priced on-wall systems in a kind of exaggerated retro design, merged in Karl and Karlotta the benefits of digital active technology with integrated streaming capabilities and the ceramic drivers from Accuton for the high-mid range, which for many years have been considered by high-end lovers to rank among the finest there are on the OEM market. Goetz von Laffert and his team also followed Karl's nomenclature with their newly launched smaller version: Karlina is the name of the leaner three-way speaker which is equipped with similarly precious components, but at 17,800 euros for the entire package it is way more affordable and, under design aspects, the creation by Lyravox that's best appropriate for the living space.

**Ceramic in duplicate**  
For the mid and high range a combination of a 7" cone driver and a 1.25" dome tweeter is used, which both sit in the detached upper cabinet compartment, splitting the signals at 2200 Hz with a rather high edge steepness. As opposed to the concept of Karl and Karlotta, this results in a wider radiation angle on average and is to score bonus points especially in not too large, normally dampened rooms.  
The big all-ceramic diaphragm is a custom-built construction by Accuton. Loudspeaker specialists might be worried about the large, ultra hard inverted dome to cause significant bundling effects in the topmost frequency range and thus a lack of treble sparkle. Like in the Karlotta this is countered by an indirect-radiating tweeter unit which, however, does not radiate backward here – which would require a minimum wall clearance –, but upward in the form of a single AMT.

**Adaptable all around**  
Those who have remaining concerns that such a combo might be difficult to tune to one's own room, can breathe a sigh of relief: the fully digital three-way crossover allows to use a large number of pa-



rametric equalizing filters which, due to their layout in FIR technology, also work in a time-correct manner and without phase errors.

This is particularly important in the transitional zone to the sub-low range which is reproduced by one 10" aluminium driver on the back of each sculpture. At approximately 80 Hz the signals are passed on to the rear; phase shift and time skew are compensated completely digitally. Together with the sealed enclosure design and the cabinet detached from the mid-high block, this is to provide a strikingly accurate bass response. Despite its light-weight aluminium diaphragm, the Scanspeak cone driver is capable of executing those long splutter-free strokes as they are crucial for sealed enclosures.

**Chain inside**  
Shielded by a copper sheet and located on the rear of the right speaker, the electronic block holds the six power amplifier channels of the Pascal s-pro2 type to process the signals for the individual drivers after their active separation. The unamplified left speaker is driven in a fully active mode via custom multicore cables and Speakon connectors (bottom right).

**The new dome tweeter**

Like all ceramic drivers from Accuton, the 30 mm inverse dome is originally made from aluminium, which is transformed fully and homogeneously by a patented anodic oxidation into amorphous, ultra rigid aluminium oxide (Al<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>) and then turned through heat into a durable structure. The white diaphragm can only be cut by means of laser, otherwise it would break.



**Magic in the room**  
Already the first measure of Bruckner's 8th symphony (under the baton of Young) got the testers awestruck. So impressively staggered in depth, three-dimensional and with most delicate nuances did the orchestra fill the room that one had rather thought to be at the Elbphilharmonie than in stereoplay's compact listening room. Only a small overdose in the brilliance of the brass section didn't quite match the super velvety, transparent character so that the stereoplay crew – together with Lyravox designer Jens Wietschorke, who had also

come along – devised a little antidote in the shape of a minimal correction at 2.6 kHz and a hint of fundamental tone warmth.

What followed was a lecture in correct and at the same time vivid reproduction: Sara K's marvellously breathed cover version of "A Whiter Shade of Pale" was standing in the room with a dense atmosphere and an irresistibly beautiful voice, while the Karlina proved to be frugal in terms of listening distance and placement and displayed a threedimensional magic also in the nearfield. Attack notes like the plucked guitar strings were reproduced

precisely with just the right amount of energy, but without overemphasising the transients.

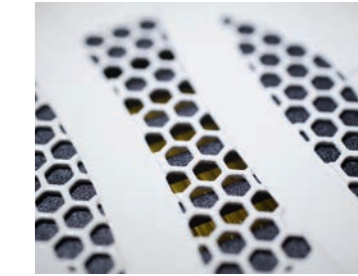
This was also true of recordings which sometimes do not sound like high-end such as Marillion's "Made Again": the driving rhythms with a punchy, musically involved low bass laid out the basis for a live-like, lush, yet never annoying performance. One could literally feel the vibes in the audience with lots of sparklers, cigarette lighters and applause without the Lyravox employing its resolution skills for anatomising the recording.

Instead it used its ceramic drivers to optimise the musical lucidity! Whatever the testers threw at it, there was hardly a recording that denied the magic of the combination. Miles Davis' "Some Day my Prince", still recorded in ping-pong mode, unleashed a literally blinding energy in the trumpet entries and yet, in spite of all the radiance, it never sounded over-the-top, but blended in with the accompaniment's deep acoustic fundament. Finally it was the rare entity of utmost resolution and natural transparency which made the Karlina one of the most audiophile active speakers ever.

**Malte Ruhke** ■



The 10" driver with alu cone comes from Scanspeak and, owing to its rear ventilation design, can perform long strokes even in a sealed enclosure.



The diffuse sound AMT sits on top of the loudspeaker and slowly fills up the indirect sound in the room only above 5 kHz. This will also work close to a wall.

### The control centre in the righthand speaker

The entire electronic unit including crossovers, amplifiers, streamer and input management sits in a coated sheet copper unit in the right speaker.

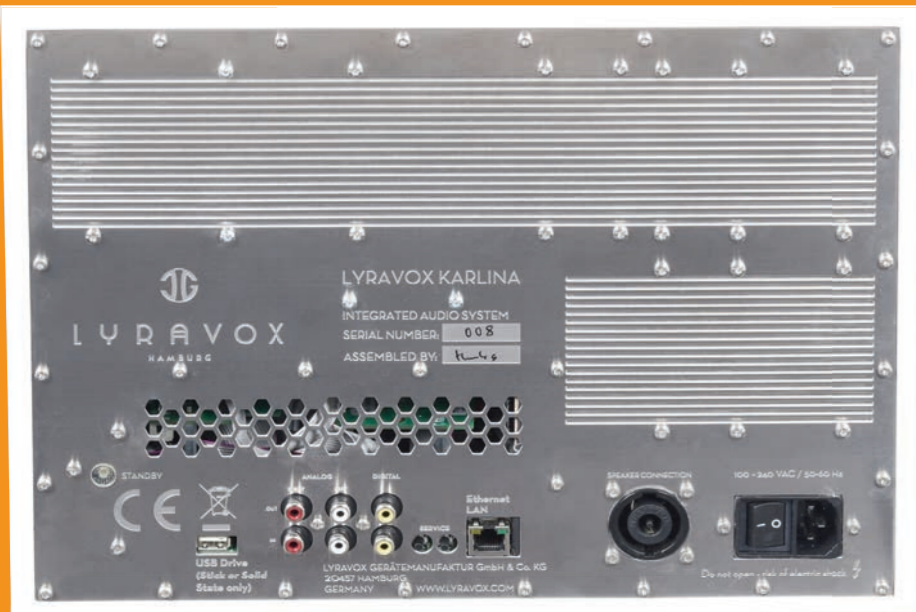
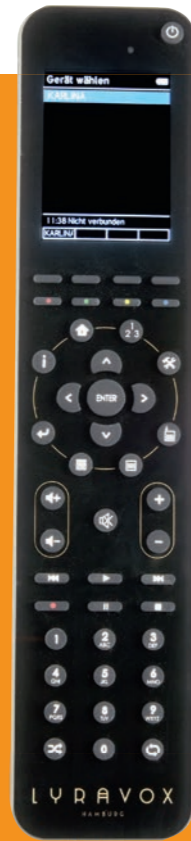
### The little one's talents

With one analogue and one digital input via RCA the Karlina isn't equipped in an overly versatile, yet practice-relevant manner. Signals from a turntable or tape machine are digitised at 96 kHz, the signals can also be slaved through in each case. Most often the user will stream directly via the integrated and very dependable streaming module anyway. This can be optionally controlled by the display remote which, however, only shows a limited overview on the display, but is required with certain setup functions.

Clearly more convenient in everyday use is controlling via the app (Android and iOS) which, owing to a long development timeframe, runs very stable and reliable. Music playback from NAS or com-

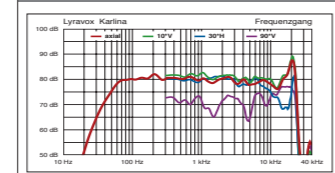
puter in a wired network is just as well possible as through a directly pluggable USB mass storage device. A full access to internet radio stations and the high-quality streaming services Tidal and Qobuz is also possible, which in practical use will probably be the main source for the integrated system. Coming

from a harddisk or the network, FLAC and AIFF data are sent straight to the DSP at 192/24 max. and even gapless without problems. Apart from the cover (see screenshot top center) the very lucid app shows all meta data and technical information about the track in play (top center/right).



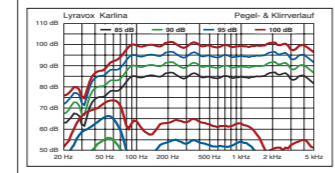
**Lyravox**  
Karlina  
17,800 euros  
Distribution: Lyravox  
Phone: +49 (0) 40 / 320897980  
www.lyravox.de  
Dimensions (W x H x D): 36 x 108 x 34 cm  
(14.2 x 42.5 x 13.4 in.)  
Weight: 29.5 kg (65.1 lbs)

#### Measured values



#### Frequency response

Rather deep, perfectly neutral, unsteady bundling, diffuse radiator sets in above 5K



**Level & distortion charts** 85-100 dB SPL continuously low distortions, only rising in the sub low range with limiter kicking in

**Lower limit frequency** -3/-6 dB 54/46 Hz  
**Maximum SPL** 101 dB  
**Power consumption** (standby/on) 5.3/27 W  
**Wireless system** Bluetooth  
**Coding** APT-X (BT), 24/192 (coax)  
**Equalizer** 5 fully parametric filters  
**Inputs** analog RCA/XLR •/-  
**Inputs** USB/coax./opt. •(Speicher)/•/-  
**Remote control/app** •/•

#### Practice and compatibility

#### Room acoustics and placement

Flexible in placement and adjustment, larger listening distances only in dampened rooms

**Listening distance** 1 m 5 m  
**Wall clearance** 0 m 1.5 m  
0.2 s 0.8 s

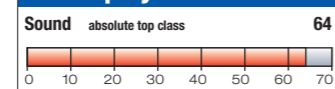
#### Evaluation

Naturalness	15
Fine details	15
High-level dynamics	10
Bass quality	10
Imaging	14

A unique design which combines the ultimate clarity of the ceramic drivers with active precision. Fascinatingly holographic spatiality, acoustically easy to adapt and with a logical operating concept – everything fits the bill if the room is not too big.

Measured values	Field test	Value
8	9	8

#### stereoplay test verdict



**Overall score** 89 points  
**Price/performance** outstanding



HIGH END AUDIO  
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„...put the listener in a veritable trance.“ *Malte Ruhnke, Stereoplay (Karlotta)*  
„I really came to love her sound.“ *Philipp Schneckenburger, Hifi EinsNull (Karlotta)*  
„One of the most audiophile speakers overall.“ *Malte Ruhnke, Stereoplay (Karlina)*  
„Can easily keep up with the world's best.“ *Hans v. Draminski, Fidelit (Karl)*  
„This speaker makes you want to listen to music without end.“ *Thomas Schmidt, Hifi EinsNull (Karlos)*



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