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SOUND AND VISION

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Canton Movie CD 202



£850

Quality construction

This is one of the most well-made systems in this test. Each speaker is beautifully machined, with small details sure to impress

Plain Jane bass

The subwoofer isn't quite so exotic. It isn't necessarily poorly made, but it doesn't exude the style of its siblings



“This system is built to exemplary standards, and the finish – in lovely brushed aluminium – is just superb”

CANTON'S LATEST OFFERING is, in many ways, typical of the way the German company likes to do things. For starters, it's built to exemplary standards, and the finish, in brushed aluminium, is superb, although it's a shame the look doesn't extend to the subwoofer: it has to make do with a more prosaic finish. If you prefer (and in keeping with current market preferences) Canton has

“The CD 202 goes loud without distress, and has considerable shove, too”

also introduced high-gloss black at extra cost, although finalised pricing wasn't available as we went to press.

This being a style package, the CD202 is easy to install. It comes with all the mounting extras you'd expect, including an integrated plinth for the centre and wall-brackets for the satellites, while optional floorstands with cable management cost £95 per pair.

FOR

Build-quality is superb; system blends together very well sonically, and has plenty of drive when called upon; sounds fast and articulate, too

AGAINST

Can be too harsh for some tastes, so partner with care

VERDICT

In keeping with the high standards in this test, this is a fine package, although it's not as well-rounded as some rivals here

But what of the system's specifics? The subwoofer is a 150w design with a 23cm downward-firing drive unit, while every speaker employs the same 25mm tweeter and 10cm midrange driver (two of the latter in the centre).

Unusually, every driver in the package is a Canton-designed affair, rather than something off-the-peg. This effort, so the company claims, allows the system to offer less distortion, high power handling, a sweeter top-end and more power handling than a less 'purist' option.

Exciting sound has plenty of drive

In practice, we've few qualms over any of Canton's claims. The CD202 goes very, very loud without distress, integrates from speaker to speaker coherently, and has enough energy in the low-end to add considerable shove to big action moments. It's happy punching through the big dynamics of the *Master and Commander* DVD, and copes admirably with the task of resolving intelligible dialogue during that movie's loudest

moments. It's also musically deft enough to make sense of, er, *Stop Making Sense*.

However, with both this and other soundtracks, there's an undeniable glint to high-frequencies, something an age of running-in doesn't smooth off. Careful partnering – we'd use an Arcam or a Yamaha amp – tames that. This caveat aside, there's much to admire here.

Test it with

Transformers



While hardly the most intelligent movie on test this month, this is a fine tester in every sense. First, it's got plenty of energy going on in every **surround channel**, so it'll test the Canton system's ability to capture detail and relay dynamic shifts. And second, it's got plenty of **shrieking metal-on-metal** action, so if your system has a natural tendency to provoke the Cantons' **already edgy top-end**, this disc will quickly reveal any potential problems.

FACTS AND FIGURES

		MAX POWER (W)	LOW SENSITIVITY (dB)	LOWEST IMPEDANCE	DIMENSIONS (HWD/CM)				BIWIREABLE	FINISHES			
		FRONTS	CENTRE	REARS	SUBWOOFER								
ACOUSTIC ENERGY AEGOT £ 800 www.acoustic-energy.co.uk 01285 654432		★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	100	86	8	20x12x15	20x12x15	20x12x15	36x36x36	1
MOVIE SOUND This former Award-winner has shed a star but little of its quality – it's highly adept at drawing you into the action		MUSIC SOUND There's decent insight, but package like the Arcam offer better timing and toe-tapping entertainment		BUILD Not the most stylish here, but the satellites and subwoofer give little away in terms of fit or construction materials									
ARCAM MUSO/LOGO £ 1200 www.arcam.co.uk 01223 203203		★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	100	85	4	23x12x16	16x23x12	23x12x16	43x30x30	1
MOVIE SOUND Provides the most seamless sound of any here, and also one that's enjoyable and absorbing with all kinds of films		MUSIC SOUND As you'd expect from a manufacturer that loves music like Arcam, the package is a consummate performer here		BUILD True, they're not exactly visually inspiring, but the Muso speakers and Logo sub are all well built and exude subtle class									
B&W MT-20 £ 975 www.bowers-wilkins.com 01903 221500		★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	100	85	8	24x11x17	11x24x17	24x11x17	33x33x29	2
MOVIE SOUND The weak point is the subwoofer: while the sats are smooth and offer detail, the weak bass means films can lack punch		MUSIC SOUND Again, strongest in the midrange and the treble, but compared to the best, the bass makes tunes sound loose		BUILD At the top table as far as build is concerned, and those curvaceous satellite speakers are really easy on the eye									
CANTON MOVIE CD 202 £ 850 www.canton.de 023 9250 1888		★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	100	87	n/a	14x22x10	43x14x10	14x22x10	26x45x37	1
MOVIE SOUND The slight glint of hardness at the top end means careful matching is necessary, but apart from that it can really move		MUSIC SOUND With music, the same caveat applies – avoid the slight glint to the treble by matching with smoother kit		BUILD It's a pity the superb brushed-aluminium finish of the satellites doesn't extend to the more prosaically fashioned sub									
KEF KHT3005SE £ 1000 www.kef.co.uk 01622 672261		★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	100	88	8	25x12x15	13x30x18	25x12x15	39x44x18	2
MOVIE SOUND The best-sounding package here by some distance: great integration, balance, and you can push it mightily hard, too		MUSIC SOUND Makes a good fist at music reproduction, especially in a '2.1', stereo speakers plus subwoofer configuration		BUILD A great-looking package, which is very well made, too. The fit and finish of the sats and the sub are sensational for the money									
MONITOR AUDIO RADIUS R90 AV12 £ 1375 www.monitoraudio.co.uk 01268 740580		★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	100	85	8	19x12x14	61x12x11	19x12x14	34x34x37	7
MOVIE SOUND A strong, powerful, detailed-sounding set-up, though there's a slight lack of integration across the front three speakers		MUSIC SOUND Like with film soundtracks, there's thump and punch in spades, though the front three speakers don't integrate well		BUILD All the satellites and subwoofer are constructed to a high standard, and that piano gloss finish looks exceptional									
TANNOY ARENA LITE £ 800 www.tannoy-speakers.com 01236 420199		★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	100	88	8	19x14x18	13x25x15	19x14x18	32x29x29	1
MOVIE SOUND Lots of detail helps HD soundtracks sing, though the weakness to the bass can make some action sound a little thin		MUSIC SOUND The Lite package sounds good with music, with lots of detail and a persuasive sound, though bass could be a bit better		BUILD The best in this <i>Supertest</i> , which is some feat considering the relatively low price – these owls are worth 'owling about									

MAXIMUM POWER-HANDLING This tells you the maximum power (per channel) of the multichannel amplifier or receiver that should drive the speakers. The fact is that some popular home cinema receivers will have outputs that exceed these figures, but you shouldn't worry about

that too much. Speakers are most often damaged by being driven by too weak an amp, and the subsequent distortion gives the speakers a hard time. Whatever amp you choose, be careful of turning the volume control all the way clockwise. Most amps emit close to their max with the

volume control only halfway around to the max. Remember this, and that peaks in music or movies soundtracks can be much louder than the current volume, and you won't damage your kit. **SENSITIVITY** Speakers with a very low sensitivity can be difficult to drive to loud

volumes. All the packages in this test are built to work with typical amps on the market today. Therefore, they all have sensitivity figures within the normal range. **IMPEDANCE** The nominal figure of 4 ohms for the Arcam system suggests that it might be harder to drive by

a normal amplifier than the others that all have 8 ohm figures. However, in practice, we found the package to go just as loud as the others. **BIWIRE** None of these speakers provides two sets of terminals to allow you to biwire the speakers. **FINISHES** Some of the

manufacturers are happy to offer only one – usually black or silver – finish. Others, Monitor Audio in particular, provide a wide range of finishes to help you match your speaker system to your interior décor. And let's face it, if you're buying one of these, that's important.