

# Adam A7



The ART ribbon tweeter remains, but the A7s get a brand-new woofer and 100 watts of power. Huw Price is in the firing line.

#### KEY FEATURE

- **Woofer:** 6.5-inch Rohacell/Kevlar cone
- **ART tweeter**
- **Frequency response:** 46Hz–35kHz
- **Rear-mounted EQ controls**
- **Power:** 80 watts RMS
- **Inputs:** balanced XLR, unbalanced RCA
- **Dimensions:** 180 x 330 x 280mm
- **Weight:** 8.1kg

#### MEASURING UP

The Tannoy Reveal 8Ds (£699) are bigger and more powerful speakers with more comprehensive equalisation and (for better or worse) a super-tweeter. The Fostex NX6As (£799) offer similar power levels and arguably superior imaging, but they don't match the A7's bass end or transient response.

#### A7

Manufacturer **Adam**

Price **£599 pair**

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We can't believe it's actually happened: a manufacturer of active monitors has finally realised that it is a good idea to put the power switch and volume controls on the front of its units! (OK, there are probably others out there, but we haven't seen them yet...) And we don't believe that we're being pedantic, either: many engineers work in small studios and project rooms these days and there usually isn't enough space to conveniently access the rear of the speakers. The alternative – namely, groping your speaker's backside as you try to locate that elusive power switch or fine-tune the volume balance – is likely to undo all your careful alignment.

So, these Adam A7s are off to a flying start. That aforementioned volume (or in this case Input Gain) control is notched and it ranges from -60dB to +6dB. The EQ controls are located around the back, but that makes sense because once your EQ is set, the

chances are that you'll want it to stay that way. There are two equalisation bands offering -6dB to +6dB of cut or boost below 150Hz and above 6kHz. There's also a separate Tweeter Level control ranging from -4dB to +4dB.

Analogue audio input is made via XLR (balanced with pin 2 hot) or RCA/phono jack (unbalanced). Since there's no provision for 1/4-inch jack input, maybe one of those clever Neutrik XLR/jack combo sockets would have made the A7s a bit more flexible.

Each drive unit gets its own 50-watt (RMS) power amp. The 6.5-inch bass unit is made from a new cone material that combines 'high rigidity and high internal damping with low weight, resulting in an extremely accurate monitor with all the clarity, detail and spectacular imaging traditionally associated with the Adam name,' according to Adam itself. It certainly feels very rigid and this 'Rohacell/Kevlar sandwich' has a woven and slightly tweedy two-tone look.

#### The wow factor

Listening to the A7s for the first time is an inspiring experience. This isn't because of any hyped treble or artificially pumped bass, but rather because of their effortlessly clear and open presentation. Some ribbon tweeter-equipped monitors can sound

a little too bright and forthright, but the A7's top end is smooth and nicely proportioned, with ride cymbals and complex hi-hat figures being accurately conveyed without setting your teeth on edge.

The generous bass adds to the A7's big sound, but it's certainly not over-blown and these monitors can easily cope with the most challenging bass lines without any boominess. What's more, the midrange has an impressively natural and unforced quality that carries vocals and guitars with plenty of detail and realism.

#### All in the detail

Complex acoustic guitar picking and percussion parts come across with all the vibrancy and clarity that you'd expect to hear if you were sitting in the room with the instrument – this has to be attributed to the lightning-fast transient response of the ART tweeter. The left/right imaging is also very precise and there's plenty of airy depth to the soundstage.

We have heard speakers that offer just a little more tightness and focus when dealing with seriously dubby electronica and jazzy double bass, but there's nothing really to complain about with the A7s and you never get the sense that they cannot be trusted. Even so, we decided to take the bass down by two notches via the indented EQ control for assessing a quick band mix – the A7s performed admirably for our purposes.

We also used them for testing a selection of ribbon and small-capsule condenser microphones. The A7s enabled us to hear distinct differences between the mics as well as the varying degrees of room ambience and noise floors. All in all, the Adam A7s are a very useable pair of professional-quality monitors that are equally at home playing back electronic or acoustic-based material. **MTM**

#### SUMMARY

##### WHY BUY

- Accessible power switch
- Effortless sound quality
- Very clear, clean treble
- Big sound
- Precise imaging
- Deep soundstage
- Sensible EQ controls
- Non-fatiguing

##### WALK ON BY

- Not the tightest bass representation

#### VERDICT

A very enjoyable and informative pair of professional-quality active monitors with some serious power and well-considered control placement.



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