

I had two to use. Full-bodied tone and no boom, even on the downbeat. Nice, clean, bright highs. But smooth, not brittle.

I've had it set up as a room mic alongside a pair of Peluso CDM-4s. They're just set up, and I hit record whenever there's anything to record: studios, ball sessions, jam sessions. It's great as a room mic.

Even though I only had one mic to test, I decided I had to hear its use as a drum overhead. I gave my trusty drummer buddy Rick Letter a call. He has a small but respectable studio. We tracked into a True Systems Flamingo through a Focusrite ISA 200 at 24/48 into SP. Both of us have been favoring the Peluso CDM-4 pencil for drum overheads in general. In comparing the two, we both loved the body and the high mids of the P22. It has a bit more presence than the CDM-4. Tighter in the low end—less “wooly” according to Rick. Interestingly, neither one of us would have described the CDM-4 before as “wooly.” I actually thought the low end was slightly stronger, with no boomy presence in the P22. The high mids were gorgeous. The highs of the snare really popped open, and the cymbals were not too bright, brittle, or harsh like so many modern, typed mics. It sounds like a very expensive tube pencil with its smooth response.

Next, I tried it briefly on a 7 ft Yamaha grand piano. Normally I use a pair of AK4000s or less often C 4100s. I like the AK4000s on the piano, if for no other reason than that's what I have. But they sound great. I put up my single P22, and, well at this point I can't say I was pleasantly surprised as nothing surprises me any more in the Peluso line, but let's just say my faith wasn't shaken. It sounds great. I placed the mic in the center about 1 ft back from the hammers and 2 ft up. The P22 really captured the full range of the piano. The deep lows were there as were the highs. To say it again: this mic picks up great detail. Very natural and not typed, which I love about it and most of the Peluso line.

Doing these reviews is taking a lot out of me. I've got to try and find out how I can swing buying two of these now! I'd really like to put these on the piano instead of my AK4000s. They also make great room mics and great acoustic guitar mics. I'm sorry to say I didn't try them on electric guitar. My thought was acoustic instruments and room. At less than \$800 street, it's a steal. (\$899 MSRP; www.pelusoaudio.com)

—Henry Adkins, www.cafedigitalproject.com

ADAM Audio P22A active monitor

I love great-sounding speakers. I guess you could call me a monitor guy. Ever since I blew up the studio's last pair of NS-10Ms in 1990, I've been on a quest for the perfect tracking and mixing monitor, one which exhibits the rare balance between musicality and accuracy. It's not an easy thing to find, as I'm sure all you *Tape Op* readers know. I am also a true believer that an excellent pair of monitors, well-matched to the room, should be at the very top of any gear wish-list when assembling a project studio. Really, how can you get any work done if you aren't hearing the full spectrum of sound?

My own quest started seventeen years ago, when I experienced Genelec S30 ribbon monitors for the first time. They were the most realistic speaker I had heard up until then. I couldn't quite get them rocking loud enough for my tastes, but they sure sounded good. At this point, I realized there was no going back to the Yamahas. By '92, I was using Meyer HD-1, the first popular self-powered console-top monitor. By '94, it was the first generation KRK. And then it was onto the Genelec

1031A in '97. In 1998, I first encountered the Dynaudio BM 15A, a discovery which changed my life. Never before had I heard a speaker so dynamic, so three-dimensional and detailed, so punchy, and so versatile. I've used it for tracking, overdubbing, mixing, you name it—without getting fatigued. The bass is deep enough even to track drums and bass. I thought I'd found the perfect studio monitor, and to this day, I love that speaker. Since then, not much else has grabbed my attention... until now.

I recently became hip to the ADAM P22A, and wow, I am lovin' that monitor! And I thought I hated ADAMs! All I had heard before was the ADAM S3-A (*Tape Op* #33), which some people swear by, but which I have never been able to get a handle on. I guess they are a “Can you handle the awful truth?” kind of speaker. And at five grand a pair? Fuggedaboutit! I'll take my Dyns any day, thank you.

Then one day not too long ago, ADAM's Dave Bryce informed me that ADAM makes monitors in every size, shape, and price-range, so just because I disliked the S3-A didn't mean I should condemn all of the ADAM range. He asked me some questions about the type of speakers I like and then suggested the P22A. I'm very glad he did. Thanks, Dave.

For one thing, I'm a fan of vertically-aligned two-way monitors (like the BM 15A). So the P22A is a good match for a guy like me. (Even when I used the old NaSty-10s back in the day, I never laid them on their sides. Do people listening at home put their speakers on their sides?) I found the P22A to have tight, yet deep bass; high SPL; fast, supple mids; and highs that are sparkly but never harsh.

There are many things about the P22A I really like. First, they have a very wide and solid sweet-spot. Sometimes, traditional flat-ribbon monitors bother me because the off-axis response gets phasey and weird, and you have to lock your head into one tiny little mix position to get a clear image. This is not the case with the P22A's folded ribbons at all; they have nice dispersion. Second, you *cannot* hear the crossover. It's absolutely transparent—no odd valleys or peaks, which is a very desirable trait. Smooth from bottom to top. Even my beloved Dynaudio BM 15As get a little fussy at the crossover points. Third, the speed of the folded ribbon gives the P22A really nice dynamics, detail, and three-dimensionality. This enables fine sculpting because you can really hear your EQ, compression and effects. Fourth, they're *loud*, rating 109 dB in the SPL column. You rock and hip-hop guys can get them cranking, which again is a trait not typical of classic ribbons. Fifth, the P22A has deep bass, going down to 38 Hz, so you can feel the bottom octave; it's a tight, defined low-end—never boomy or rumbly. For many applications, this avoids the need for a subwoofer.

But what I like best is that the P22A is a very musical monitor. The silky highs, supple mids, and punchy lows make it a pleasure to work on all day long. Most importantly, they translate *amazingly*! I usually have to mix and remix a song a couple of times to get the frequency balance right. My very first mix on the P22A was perfect. One and Done! (One song on a ten-song CD was mixed on the P22A, and I liked it so much I told the mastering engineer to use that track as the model to match all the others to.)

It's a rare speaker that is both musical *and* accurate. Usually real “happy” speakers don't reference well, and super-accurate speakers are boring and no fun to work on. I can count the monitors that do both on one hand. The P22A is in that rare group. At half the price of the S3-A, it lands at the same \$2500/pair price-point as the Dynaudio BM 15A. Yep. I think the ADAM P22A just knocked my Dyns off the console. (\$1250 street each; www.adam-audio.com) —Drew Townson

The Creative Music Recording Magazine

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