

Mission's Elegante all-rounders

Mission Elegante e82 £3990

Multichannel speaker package

↑ FOR

Outstanding performance in all areas; superlative build; looks marvellous

↓ AGAINST

Treble could be overblown if partnered with bright electronics

...? VERDICT

A surround package that more than lives up to its name in every respect: pricey, but worth all those pennies



MISSION'S AIM FOR its Elegantes is to offer all-round movie and music performance with style: that'll be mission accomplished then.

Cheaper 5.1/6.1 Elegante set-ups are available, but we decided to test the range's strength with this seven-speaker set-up consisting of two e82 fronts, four e80 surrounds, an e82 centre and the e8asi sub. All but the subwoofer have an Alien-like slant-top form, are more compact than many rivals, and certainly look the part in a deep metallic-grey finish. The fact that Mission provides a cleaning cloth with each speaker shows it's clearly proud of the results of the two-day finishing process.



THE UNUSUAL SHAPE

of the Elegante cabinets isn't just for show. The curvature helps eliminate standing waves, reducing resonances that can colour mid-bass frequencies. Cabinet materials are novel, too: a



layer of chipboard between two layers of Modite aims to deaden cabinet vibrations. Another fine detail is the decision to mount the crossover directly on the binding posts for a shorter signal path.



“You get a free cleaning cloth with each speaker: Mission is clearly proud of the two-day finishing process”

The Elegante package is particularly well integrated, with up to seven speakers providing a seamless surround sound experience

The 60cm-tall e82s are three-way ported designs, and Mission recommends positioning them over 30cm from a rear wall for optimum performance. The sealed cabinets used by the rest of the speakers make them less fussy – indeed, wall-mounts are supplied for them. There's also an adjustable shelf stand for the centre speaker, and dedicated e80 floor-stands are available at extra cost.

All the full-range speakers use 25mm Vionex-S tweeters and 110mm Paramid drivers. The e82s sport a total of five of the larger cones, making them capable of moving substantial volumes of air without the need for large cabinets.

The Elegantes might be a joy to behold, but their performance even outshines the 18-stage finishing process. Cohesion is the watchword throughout, the speakers working exceptionally well together to create a soundstage that's utterly seamless and three-dimensional. Rather than a 'front and back' surround experience, you get totally convincing imaging and sense of movement.

That's an impressive trait, too often missing from surround

packages. But there's much more: these speakers are subtle, agile, fast, detailed, refined and dynamic. Spin any action sequence from *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy and you're greeted by an exhilarating rush of a sound that, thanks to the 350w digital amp feeding the subwoofer's 25cm driver, provides enough impact to make you reel with each explosion.

Play something quieter, such as Tim Burton's bewitching *Big Fish*, and the soundtrack makes a stunning hi-fi backdrop to the superbly rendered dialogue, pouring every ounce of emotion from the instrumentation. The tremendous sense of atmosphere is exactly how home cinema should sound.

Music sounds great, too. With a multichannel DVD-Audio disc of Motorhead's riotous *Art of Spades* set the Elegantes are room-levelling in potency, and the fine midrange delivers Lemmy's guttural vocals with aplomb. Push it and the sound never hardens up or compresses. A spin of Radiohead's *The Bends* shows two-channel music sounds goods, too.

Problems? Well, the treble has a mildly bright tendency, so careful

partnering is required, and the dispersion characteristics of the little e80 surround speakers don't make them particularly suited to use in 5.1 systems. However, that's nit-picking really – this excellent package is worth every penny of £3990.

TECH SPECS

MAXIMUM POWER 150w
LOWEST SENSITIVITY 85 dB(w/m)
LOWEST IMPEDANCE 8 ohms
DIMENSIONS:
FRONTS 96 x 30 x 33cm
CENTRE 47 x 44 x 25cm
REARS 28 x 16 x 25cm
SUBWOOFER 42 x 37 x 40cm
BIWIRABLE Yes
FINISHES Metallic grey

M&K 850/CS35/V-850
£3900 ★★★★★ (July 2001)
Best Buy in Awards 2003, with a superb movie performance

ALSO CONSIDER
ATC Concept 3
£4877 ★★★★★ (February 2004)
Big, heavy and not that elegant, but massively effective speakers