

require a decent speaker for bookshelf application—my parents come to mind.

RESPONS

My "Hot News" report in Vol. 7, No. 8 commented on the good showing put on by these imports from Sweden at the Winter CES. Although I heard that their performance at Electrocompaniet's tiny room was not up to the WCES standard, the Respons were also being played in the Klyne Audio Arts room, driven by the (only ones in the world at the time) Nestorovic tube amplifiers—with the source coming through a Klyne preamp, of course. I felt that I may have gone out on a limb recommending these speakers on such short listen in the winter, but their performance at Klyne's room bore out my earlier impressions. They *are* quite analytical; some of Klyne's favorite records were a little too accurately reproduced for my ears (hot microphones, exaggerated sibilants). One of the Audiofon piano recordings by Peter McGrath, however, came across with shocking realism! The timbral accuracy and fast response (no pun intended) of the Respons speakers in the lower midrange made this particular instance of piano reproduction perhaps the best I've ever heard. I'm still looking forward to a home audition of these speakers—hint, hint.

AWARDS

I feel that all too few awards have been given in our Show coverage this summer, and will endeavor to correct that situation. Tops on the list is the Reuben Guss Memorial Award For Outrageously Bad and Expensive Speakers Award. This unwieldy title was occasioned by the memorable exhibit of Reuben Guss, whose \$50,000 speakers at last summer's CES garnered the coveted Department of Wretched Excess award. This year's Reuben Guss Award goes to Gold Ribbon Concepts for their \$66,000 system with the 48-driver subwoofer referred to above. The intended use for this speaker is high fidelity sound reinforcement, and high SPLs are one of its virtues, but even the folks at Gold Ribbon were referring to it as their "bad" speaker. ("Do

you want to listen to our bad speaker or our good speaker?" Mercifully, no comment will be made on the "good" speaker.) The John Meyer monitors, aimed at the same market, sound *much* better, and at last word cost a mere \$24,000.

Also going to Gold Ribbon is our newly inaugurated Frank W. Herbert Thumper award. Science fiction fiends will recognize the "thumper" as the drumming device placed on the deserts of Dune to attract the feared sandworms. In our context the Thumper award goes to that exhibit which most dramatically, in our opinion, interferes with the sound of its immediate neighbor by way of (usually low frequency) sound conduction through the walls. With the sound system off in the Klyne room, and conversation extinguished, SPLs reached an easy 80-85 dB from Gold Ribbon's attempts to demo their 48 woofers next door. Try showing off subtle inner detail with that racket!

Next show we'll start up our Earthquake Bad Neighbor Award which goes to that exhibit most disturbing an entire region of the hotel with low frequency tremors. Such behavior is in distinctly bad taste, and frustrates the efforts of others to carry out sensitive demonstrations. LA

Next month:

Don Scott takes on Audio Cheapskate territory in his comment on CES. The most expensive product covered by Mr. Scott costs \$1995, but the second most expensive is a mere \$850!



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