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Perlisten Audio S4b

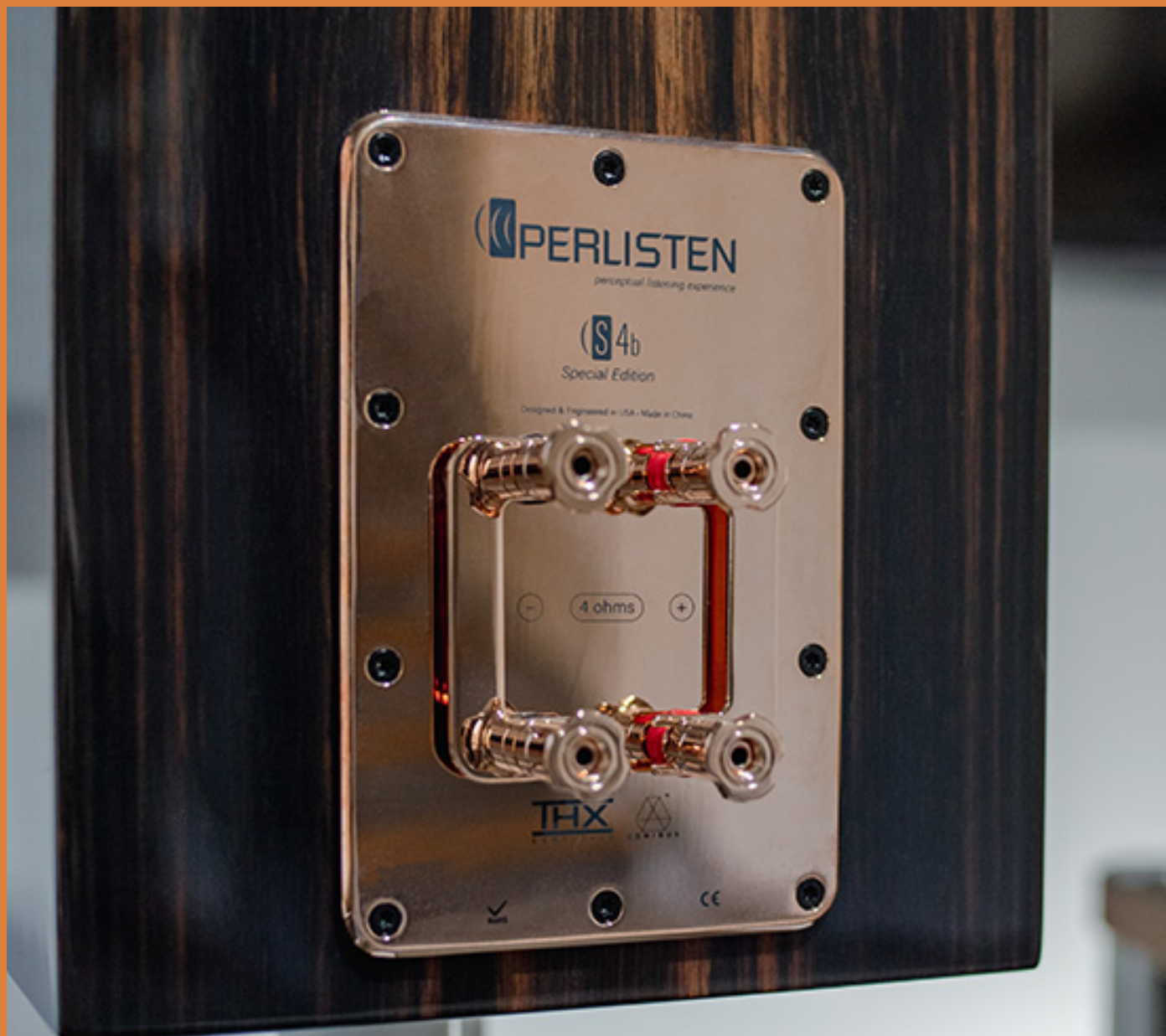
Bookshelf Speaker with THX Dominus Perlisten S4b Review

Although still being the cheapest bookshelf speakers from the Statement series, the Perlisten S4b will cost you just slightly less than 10.000 euros in a custom finish. Among other things, this price is justified by the elaborate workmanship, a patented tweeter system as well as a THX Dominus certificate. But do the speakers also sound accordingly? Our MODERNHIFI test reveals it.

What ends up in the distribution of Hamburg-based company Audio Reference is usually well selected and thought out. However, this also goes along with quite a more hefty price tag. The respective premium brands include big names such as Dan D'Agostino, Velodyne and Wilson Audio. New to this exclusive range is Perlisten Audio. A newcomer in Germany with headquarters in Wisconsin (USA), own manufacturing facilities in China and to some extent

also in Scandinavia. Here in Germany, the brand initially introduces its exclusive portfolio with the Statement series, which ranges up to 20.000 euros in price, depending on the size and design of the speakers. We tested their most "affordable" model, the Perlisten S4b, and explain the ideas with which the newcomer wants to position itself in the demanding high-end sector.





PERCEPTUAL LISTENING EXPERIENCE PERLISTEN

There is not much to criticize about the build quality of the Perlisten S4b. The ebony high-gloss finish of our testing units is flawless - although that is surely to be expected in this price range. Nevertheless, we are surprised about how much luxury these speakers have to offer. However, if you prefer a more classic look, you can also go for the black piano or even a glossy white coating. Other premium finishes in a range of wood tones are also available. Each speaker weighs in at around eleven kilograms. Taking into account that a speaker cabinet should vibrate as little as possible, this is a quite solid foundation, thanks to the 25 mm thick side panels with internal bracing and a bitumen damping layer. All in all, a massive thing, although the speakers don't even appear that bulky in our listening room. The manufacturer adds further design elements to the traditional rectangular format, which also have acoustic relevance. The 5 cm thick acoustic panel, for example is made of High-Density Fiberboard (HDF) and sits prominently at the front of the speaker.

The stepped front is intended to prevent unwanted distortion and detach the baffle from the main cabinet. If you approach the speakers from behind - which is quite possible, since the S4b are also suitable as surround speakers - you come across a luxurious brass panel. This is where we find the speaker terminals with their connecting bridges - made from polished copper and zinc alloy.

Also interesting: the whole S series, which also includes the S4b, inherits a THX Dominus certificate. Dominus is THX's new performance class, which is placed even above the previous categories Compact, Select and Ultra. The certificate is awarded to those who are able to fill up (home) cinema rooms (up to a size of 184 square meters) with sound levels of 120 decibels - at the lowest distortion values, at any listening position, with any program material. So far, the Perlisten Audio's S are the only loudspeakers worldwide that have received this certification.

*Perlisten Audio brings first
THX certified Dominus
speakers to home theaters*

DIRECTIVITY PATTERN CONTROL DPC

One horn and four drivers give the speakers a technically futuristic character, which can be hidden with magnetic covers. However, the choice of drivers is primarily based on the research results of Perlisten Audio. The result is the DPC (Directivity Pattern Control) array, a patented mid-high unit with special sound guidance. A beryllium tweeter is centrally placed in the horn. Two midrange drivers with silk domes enclose it. Together, the three 28 mm drivers play signals up to a cutoff frequency of 4 kilohertz. Beyond that range, the metal dome takes over. With less than 1.2 grams of weight, the dome also jumps extremely fast.

The waveguide features visibly more width than height. This ensures a wide image of the sound stage with fewer early reflections from the floor and ceiling. As a result, the speaker is also recommended for placements on the shelf or in the close surroundings of objects that favor sound reflection.

The 7-inch woofer is composed of a carbon fiber composite cone, aluminum alloy shorting rings, a large magnet for high efficiency, multi-layer Nomex spiders and lightweight voice coils. Ideal conditions for high rigidity, fast response and low resonance.



About Perlisten Audio

„Perlisten strives to transcend the room, remove the walls, and take you to that place where it's only you and the music. In order to pursue the perfect fusion of science, technology, and aesthetics every Perlisten speaker is designed by engineers in the USA with only the best components resulting in infinitesimal levels of distortion. Whether it's the internal quality of the speakers or the industrial design, the team pays attention to every detail. Perlisten wants to bring the quality and art of sound to you through their work, and they are proud to be able to convey the nuances of music to everyone who loves art and enjoys life“.



Listening session

Fanfares, choirs, strings - instruments that have their foundation in "serious music" march mightily in the hip-hop epic "Introvert" by London-based rapper Little Simz.

The Perlisten Audio S4b push the title with lots of fervor into our listening room. Always on point and with a lot of dynamic character, the speakers make us startle again and again during the impressive brass sections.

Meanwhile, the bass sound is full-bodied, tight and balanced at all volume ranges - even at low levels.

Amidst the wall of sound, the rapper grooves her way through the song with ease. When Little Simz sings her haunting words, "I'm a black woman, and I'm a proud one," it sounds absolutely clear and unstrained through the speakers. Meanwhile, the triple tweeter ensures that no syllable of her message remains unheard.

We linger a bit longer with driving beats and then switch to the 80s hit "Good Times" by Chic. In this disco tune, producer and musician Nile Rodgers casually shakes out his funk chords on the guitar, accompanied by a groovy bass line.

This puts us in good mood and makes us forget the outside world for a moment. At the same time, we also forget about the presence of the speakers and lose ourselves in this feel-good vibe. This is not a matter of course, because we often hear a certain peculiarity of the technology. Here, on the other hand, we clearly don't. Whether this also applies to some quieter tracks? We check that out with the soundtrack to the animated documentary "Waltz with Bashir." In "The haunted Ocean," German composer Max Richter jumps between orchestral walls of sound and filigree solo instruments. Again, the mix of enormous width and a lot of emotion challenge the dynamic capabilities of the speakers. And again, the Perlisten S4b convince us in every imaginable way.

The DPC array finely highlights the filigree details and places them precisely to their intended spot on the stereo stage. This also works quite wonderfully when the sound nuances are a few levels further back and only accentuate the music. Such micro details tend to be obscured by awkward speaker placement or a "difficult" room. The S4b are much more forgiving in those aspects due to their DPC technology, which noticeably reduces early reflections.

*The S4b sound
transparent,
authentic and
dynamic*

Perlisten S4b

Conclusion

Whether the name came before the product or vice versa will remain unknown to us. Perlisten is made up of the words Perceptual and Listening - in German: bewusstes Hören. The phenomenal dispersion behavior leaves no details uncovered. The S4b sound transparent, undistorted and dynamic. Although this comes at no low cost, anyone looking for a loudspeaker without compromises will surely find what they are looking for. A newcomer that will properly stir up the premium HiFi segment. ■

Perlisten S4b

Price: 3.995 Euro in black / white (per piece)
Custom Finish: 4.795 Euro (per piece)

Distribution: Audio Reference GmbH
www.audio-reference.de

Perlisten Audio
www.perlistenaudio.com



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