

THE ULTIMATE NEWCOMER?

A new name on the loudspeaker manufacturing scene. "Perlisten" from the USA has just brought the S7t to the German market. A splendid specimen of a loudspeaker. Is it worthwhile to mark the name in red?

■ By Andreas Günther

When boarding your private jet next time with the instruction: "Take me to Verona!", it might happen that you wake up six hours later in the U.S. state of Wisconsin. Because there is also a Verona, northwest of Chicago. As a high-end lover you should mark this relatively small town fat on the world map. For this is where Perlisten Audio resides. This could be the new super brand for loudspeakers worldwide. Brand-new also available in Germany. The Audio Reference distribution service has added it to their portfolio. Which is already an accolade. Even we as professionals are surprised. Not even the experts had this brand on their radar.

First we look at the name: this is a short form of "Perceptual Listening", hence "attentive listening". Two men stand behind Perlisten: Daniel Roemer and Lars Johansen. Or in slightly more dramatic words: these are "renegades" of Miller & Kreisel, in short MK. Who in turn have clearly laid out their loudspeaker imperium for home cinema and multi-channel. Precisely the field where also Perlisten is now entering the stage. And we are served



up big time – even certified with the highest quality seal which THX has to award: THX Dominus. Unpack, set up and be amazed. We have chosen the biggest floorstander, the S7t – and are sailing purely stereophonic oceans. Already the weight and the price are impressive: 56 kg (123 lbs) per speaker and 18,000 euros per pair. These are no little tinkers, these are professionals aiming for the maximum impact on the market. Our first impression: this looks like the ultimate D'Appolito orchestration. Four identical big drivers flanking a center tweeter. Here we are right and yet wrong. Because in this very center sits a "Directivity Pattern Control". This exists only here, it's the heart and trademark of Perlisten Audio. A unit of midrange and high-frequency drivers. A complex matter, explored in detail by Perlisten on the computer. Two mid/high-frequency dome speakers made of carbon frame a beryllium tweeter. They play down to one kilohertz, the entire construction is cased in a waveguide. The aim is to get the early room reflections under control. The transients shall not be corrupted by the walls; instead all the power is to go from this triple horn straight to our ears. Whereby the fans already react like electrified to the word be-

MIGHTY APPEARANCE:

The Perlisten S7t rises about 130 centimeters (4' 3") above the floor.

HOME COOKING: All drivers used are developed inhouse by Perlisten who even have a production line of their own.



ROOM AND PLACEMENT

Room size
K M G

Acoustics
T A H

Placement
D W F

Near-wall or free placement, adjust brightness by angling in towards the listener, neutral acoustics, listening distance from 2.5 m (8.2 ft.).

For the symbol key see page 108.



THE TRADEMARK:

In the center of the S7t two compact high/mid drivers frame a beryllium dome tweeter.

ryllium. Which currently is simply the best and most expensive material for tweeters. So with regard to the bass producers, Perlisten goes adequately in style. They use woven carbon fibers which are made under the name Textreme and are lighter by ten per cent than common designs.

My first association when listening to a few bars over this speaker: al dente, crisp, tight. Here we meet a master of contours. The lows roll in with mighty force. Here we can sense the genetic predisposition of a loudspeaker that's supposed to play along on the frontline of a large home cinema system. However, can it do stereo as well? You bet. But we recommend about 50 hours of break-in time; then the attack mode will be pared down and the desired harmony among the drivers sets in.

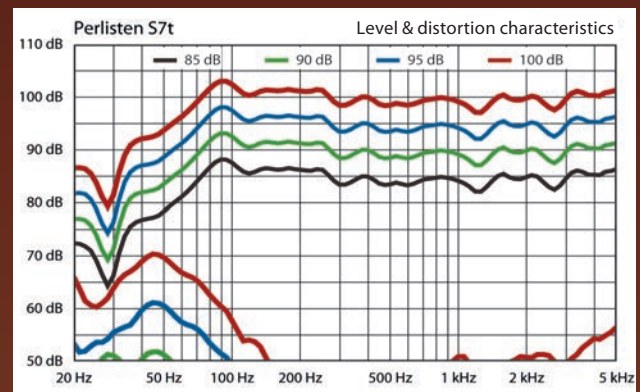
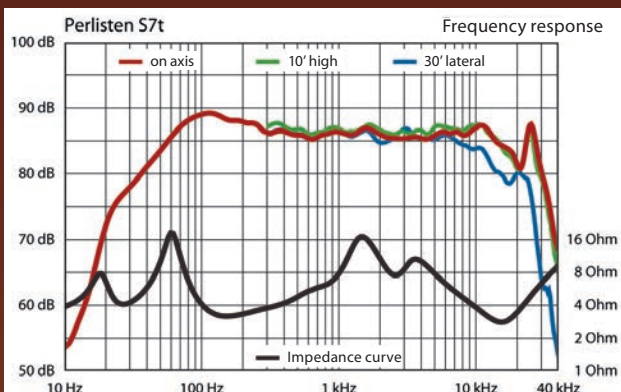
Sound tip: "Skinty Fia", the new album from Fontaines D.C. The two previous albums have influenced the Brit Awards and earned them a Grammy nomination. "Big Shot" is characterized by a power-

MEASURING LAB

4 dB of bass boost, but rather little in the way of deep bass (-3/-6 dB @ 50/38 Hz). Between 300 Hz and 10 kHz extremely linear frequency response with no ripples, good omnidirectional sound pattern: 10 degrees vertical (green) and axial frequency response are congruent, on the horizontal plane beaming occurs only at high frequencies (30 degrees, blue). Striking: between 12 and 20 kHz at one meter measuring distance a level drop occurs, probably due to interference. The fast decaying waterfall plot (not pictured) gives evidence of a clean transient reproduction.

Right: also at high levels the Perlisten produces very low distortions, as is shown by the distortion curves that vanish in the ground of the diagram. A lush 113 dB SPL are possible in the bass, provided it is fed with 440 W (4 ohms). Owing to its high sensitivity of 87 dB/2V/1m, the S7t doesn't necessarily require powerful amplifiers; already 30 W (3 ohms) are sufficient for 100 dB SPL. Because of the low impedance of 2.8 ohms @ 15 kHz the Perlisten should not be run on amps which cave in at low impedances (loss of treble!).

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ful, rough riff on electric guitar and recurring prominent, ultra deep bass runs. A loudspeaker which has only been geared for analysis would be out of place here. We want to bathe in the beautiful minor chords. The Perlisten S7t is struggling a bit with this charm offensive. It's more designed for speed and punch. Therefore our advice: the upstream electronics must be carefully chosen. If those were to follow the same ambition of ultimate analysis, things would get chilly in the listening room. So we'd rather play the tracks in HiRes or also put on a good vinyl pressing for a change. And also experiment with a fine tube? Better don't. The Perlisten loves the drive and is clearly hooked on high-wattage solid-state amps. In the ideal case this may lead to the very great experience. With flying colors Perlisten demonstrates their own ambition to control the room reflections, producing a soundscape like painted with a brush, very present and far before the diaphragm plane. How does it perform with classical music?

Right now the complete collection of Beethoven's string quartets is rotating on the harddisk beside me. Recorded by the Amadeus Quartet in the 1960s for the Deutsche Grammophon and very recently transferred to 24 bit and 192 kilohertz. What a feast of sound. It's only there that we learn to love the sonic force of the S7t. My personal tip: the great fugue op. 133. Here Beethoven is leaving all known paths of harmony, here a mighty beam shall hit us right into the heart. And the Perlisten follows. Precisely at this point its will for total analysis convinces us. Every movement of the bows can be heard with ultimate finesse, the up-bow, the down-bow, the crescendo – like a hyper-analytical studio monitor. This approaches the realm of superlatives, here we experience the very finest of information. It's not just a look through a magnifying glass, but a zoom-in through a microscope. This can provoke the greatest fascination. And we do state: like hardly any other loudspeaker in the past ten years, the Perlisten S7t has thrilled us.



MASSIVE:

An impressive sight is the bi-wiring terminal with rhodium-plated sockets. Via slots the bass reflex energy is directed backward and to the sides.



NOBLE DESIGN:
The solid spike construction shimmers in copper and black.

PORTRAIT

PERLISTEN AUDIO S7T	
Distributor	Audio Reference GmbH Tel. +49 (0)40 53320359
www.	audio-reference.de
List price	18 000 Euros
Warranty period	5 years
Dimensions W x H x D	24 x 129,5 x 40 cm
Weight	55.7 kg (123 lbs)
Veneer/Foil/Lacquer	• / - / •
Colors	black, white, ebony
Design principles	4-way, bassreflex
Room adjustment	-
Special features	Directivity Pattern Control

AUDIOGRAM

AUDIO 06/2022

+	high-definition, fast, analytical	-
Neutrality (2x)	100	██████████
Detail precision (2x)	105	██████████
Locatability	105	██████████
Spatial imaging	105	██████████
Fine dynamics	100	██████████
Maximum SPL	105	██████████
Bass quality	105	██████████
Bass depth	100	██████████
Workmanship	superb	

AUDIO SOUND SCORE 103 POINTS
PRICE/PERFORMANCE OUTSTANDING

FAZIT



Andreas Günther
AUDIO-editor

18,000 euros are quite a lot of money for a factually unknown company. But Perlisten gives us a broadside, for the two S7t floorstanders reveal a rare combination: here we get the most up-to-date drivers and a superlative sound. Every detail is delivered blazingly fast to the ears, this is pure analytical bliss.