



# Boom time!

The American loudspeaker brand's entry-level subwoofer range scratches **Mark Craven's** bass itch

**S**ince launching in 2021, Wisconsin-based Perlisten Audio has appealed to audiophiles with its flagship S series of speakers and subs. Prices here aren't exactly 'budget', but the compact R10s sub strikes us as more of a 'hi-fi' proposition than the company's bigger, costlier bassmakers.

Like all Perlisten subs, the R10s is a sealed rather than ported design. Facing front is a 250mm glass-fibre bass driver, framed by a 25mm-thick baffle whose curved edges give the otherwise cubic satin-black cabinet a degree of style. Lurking inside is a Class D amp stage rated at 750W (RMS), plus Perlisten's custom 48-bit DSP engine. This is not a model for the analogue hi-fi 'purist', but the manufacturer argues that the proof of its processing is in the performance.

The R10s' digital 'brains' facilitate a range of user adjustments and make setup a little different to the sub norm. There are RCA and balanced XLR in and outputs on the rear, but no on-body rotaries for crossover, gain, etc. Instead, control is through Perlisten's remote app (which connects via Bluetooth), while a 2.4in

touchscreen on the sub's top offers basic settings. The app is well presented and responsive, its options including preset EQ modes (THX, Large Room and Small Room) that affect the slope of the LF response; phase/delay/gain settings; and user-definable graphic and parametric EQs. You can have fun experimenting with the latter, but these are best used with room measurement software, such as REW.

The R10s offers no high-level (aka speaker level) inputs, which means it needs a line-level feed from an amp/preamp or the LFE connection from an AV receiver. During auditions, we use both a balanced connection from a Primare PRE35 and an RCA hook up from an affordable WiiM Ultra.

## Sound quality

Spend some time on placement and settings, and Perlisten's subwoofer effectively disappears into your stereo spread. It then proceeds to wow with a presentation that – at the price – is hard to fault. Paired with a set of Bowers & Wilkins 705 S2 Signature standmounts, the sub makes its presence felt across a range of genres – delivering tangible, chest-thumping

bass blows just as comfortably as a more subtle, sympathetic boost to low frequencies as the content demands. It's a bit Jekyll and Hyde in this regard, easily switching from delicate and musical one minute to room-shaking supremacy the next.

For example, there's a light-touch reinforcement of the bassline in Tony Joe White's *Rainy Night In Georgia* that gives this languid R&B track a welcome amount of extra weight without overshadowing the vocal track and guitar lines above. But with music such as the 2020 remix of DJ Brockie/Ed Solo's *Represent* or London Grammar's *Hey Now*, the R10s' ability to dig deep in the low octaves is instantly apparent; the latter's deep notes causing any rival bass driver to visibly throb.

## Chest-thumping bass is delivered as easily as more subtle low frequency boosts

The overall slickness of the R10s' performance, from the superb transient attack to complete lack of bloom and overhang, speaks of attention to engineering detail regarding amp, driver and cabinet. Meanwhile, the low-end extension is delicious for such a compact sub. Rush's upbeat *Witch Hunt* sounds authentically ominous and the deep, deep bass of Bass Mekanik's *Long Way Down* lives up to the title.

## Conclusion

The setup flexibility on offer here contributes to the R10s' not insignificant price, but this Perlisten sub is still a charmer. The expected attributes of slam, depth and output are all here, coupled with control, precision and sumptuous tonality. Those looking to get more from their setup should seek out an audition ●

### DETAILS

**PRODUCT**  
Perlisten R10s  
**ORIGIN**  
US/China  
**TYPE**  
Subwoofer  
**WEIGHT**  
21kg  
**DIMENSIONS**  
(WxHxD)  
388 x 340 x 380mm  
**FEATURES**  
● 250mm glass fibre bass driver  
● 750W (RMS) Class D amplification  
● App control/EQ  
**DISTRIBUTOR**  
Karma AV  
**WEBSITE**  
perlistenaudio.com  
karma-av.co.uk

## Hi-Fi Choice

### OUR VERDICT

**SOUND QUALITY**



**VALUE FOR MONEY**



**BUILD QUALITY**



**FEATURES**



**OVERALL**



**LIKE:** Superb performance; in-depth settings via Perlisten's bespoke app

**DISLIKE:** No speaker-level inputs

**WE SAY:** Small yet mighty, this is a cracker of a subwoofer