

Giant killer

The Italian company has updated the floorstander in its Classica range.

Mark Craven reckons it's a stylish winner

From the same Classica line as Opera's Prima v2 two-way standmount (HFC 544) comes the Quinta v2.

Twice the price, at £6,000, and packing twice the drive units, this floorstander promises to up the performance scale while retaining the Italian marque's sonic signature – billed as one of: “musicality, ease of drive and long-lasting listening pleasure”. And if that all sounds a bit ‘valve-y’, it's to be expected – Opera's

sister company is Unison Research, the Treviso-based manufacturer known for its tube-based amplifiers, preamplifiers and CD players.

As the name suggests, the Quinta v2 is an updated version of an earlier model, which launched in 2011. Before you wonder whether 15 years is a long time to leave a loudspeaker in production, note that a Special Edition version of the Quinta debuted in 2018, albeit with a markedly different cabinet shape and styling.

DETAILS

PRODUCT
Opera Loudspeakers
Quinta v2

ORIGIN
Italy

TYPE
3-way floorstanding
loudspeaker

WEIGHT
39kg each

DIMENSIONS
(WxHxD)
319 x 1,158 x 529mm
(with base)

FEATURES
● 26mm soft
dome tweeter
● 150mm fibreglass
mid/bass driver
● 2x 180mm
aluminium cone
bass drivers
● Quoted sensitivity:
91dB/1W/1m (6ohm)

DISTRIBUTOR
Karma AV

WEBSITE
operaloudspeakers.
com/en
karma-av.co.uk



For the v2, Opera has largely returned to the template of the original.

In place of the SE model's ‘busy’ look the Quinta v2 is all clean, elegant lines and pleasing proportions. Like all Classica models, cabinet finish options are Rosewood or Cement Grey, the latter being both attractive and unusual in a market dominated by whites, blacks and wood. With either finish, the Quinta v2's baffle is wrapped in black leather, extending over the top of the cabinet.

Of the claimed improvements, the headline is an increase in sensitivity from 88 to 91dB, allied to a nominal impedance of 6ohm. The result, says Opera, is greater dynamic ability, a more linear performance at high output and an easier ride for your amp.

As with the upgraded Prima model, the Quinta v2's drive units have been manufactured in collaboration with Danish specialist Scan-Speak. The tweeter is a 26mm soft dome, framed by a black aluminium mounting plate and backed by a dual ferrite magnet motor. This hands over, at 2.3kHz, to a dedicated 150mm midrange driver with a coated fibreglass cone.

Completing the three-way lineup are two 180mm bass drivers, operating in series to maintain the

The Quinta v2 does its best work with more intimate, finely struck recordings

speaker's targeted impedance characteristics. Opera is eager to emphasise the less-than-3 percent production tolerances of these bass units and how this ensures: “consistent behaviour, both in terms of the reflex loading and the impedance curve seen by the crossover”. There are twin rear ports, above a single set of binding posts.

Sound quality

While the Quinta v2 has the as-advertised easy-going nature in relation to amplification alongside a low-end delivery that often has a warmish, resonant quality to it, this is not the stereotypical laid-back speaker. There's pep and attack to its music making, an immediacy which, when coupled to a seamless, cohesive soundstage, is very involving. At the same time, it isn't interested in drowning you in flashy detail. Treble is not explicit – the finger clicks on Dominique Fils Aimees' *Birds* lacking that last ounce of extension – but that





HOW IT COMPARES
Monitor Audio's Gold 500 6G offers a more extended sound in both bass and treble, while KEF's six-driver, Uni-Q-toting Reference 11 Meta goes for a clean-lined, modern look at odds with the Italian style on show here. Going toe-to-toe in pricing terms and aiming for a similarly refined sound, is Acoustic Energy's Corinium (HFC 513) flagship. Certainly not a bass-monster, the Corinium earns its crust through sheer listenability, particularly with orchestral and acoustic recordings. And for an Italian rival, consider the £6,500 Sonetto V G2 from "Artisan of Sound" Sonus faber.

doesn't stop it sounding clear and open.

Spending time on placement is strongly recommended and richly rewarded. I find the Quinta v2 benefits from a degree of boundary reinforcement to solidify the low end. Opera's Sales Manager, Bartolomeo Nasta, suggests 30-40cm "breathing room" from the rear wall, while

Its crowd-pleasing side means it laps up Billie Eilish as easily as Beethoven

experimentation leads me to an on-axis positioning, for a focused, cohesive portrayal at the expense of some stage width. Your mileage may differ, of course.

Shelby Lynne, Anna Leone, Billy Joel... the midrange delivery does excellent work with vocals. Lynne's country-inflected, breathy textures

on her cover of *Rainy Night In Georgia* are startling, as are the sweet, ringing acoustic guitars. Nor do you need a high-quality recording to savour the v2's vocal charms, as shown by the different timbral characters of Bowie and Mercury on *Under Pressure*.

The Quinta v2's low-frequency handling has generous extension, although it's not 'best in class' for a floorstander at the price. However, there's good detail, definition and structure to its presentation of basslines, notable on Dusty Hill's energetic, bluesy playing across ZZ Top's *Tres Hombres*. It also gives Billy Joel's *Piano Man* a full-range feel, the rolling, rich bass becoming a foundation for the track's percussive details and harmonica.

However, you may find yourself missing some detail with more congested material. Listening to Heaven And Hell's *Eating The Cannibals* powering along at full throttle or the Rolling Stones' *In The*

Stars, Opera's floorstander sounds somewhat out of its comfort zone. Orchestral dynamics are, however, handled with aplomb, the speakers leaping into the massive blasts of brass during the *Kong: Skull Island* soundtrack with alarming veracity, creating a big-picture performance with all the necessary drama. Equally, crank up the volume with Black County Communion's *Song Of Yesterday* and the drive and energy given to Joe Bonamassa's Led Zeppelin-esque riffs, and the tightness of the drums, is thrilling. But again, it's arguably with more intimate, finely struck recordings that the Quinta v2 does its best work and sounds every bit as good as its none-too-shabby price tag. Streaming Daisy Gray's cover of Chris Isaak's *Wicked Game*, it's hard not to be caught up in the astonishing vocal presence, atmospheric electronic backing and generous bass swells.

Moreover, the refined, musical midrange handling comes up in all places – such as the piano and keys on drum 'n' bass track *Songbird*, by Tokyo Prose, where they also manage to convincingly pressure-load the room with deep, liquid-like bass. I doubt this track was used when Opera's engineers were voicing their new floorstander, but the Quinta v2 locks right into its groove and swagger.

Conclusion

The Quinta v2 has the classy, refined nature that its elegant styling and excellent build quality intimate, but there's also a crowd-pleasing side to its performance that means it laps up Billie Eilish as easily as Beethoven. Its sound is vibrant and hard hitting when needed – drifting off on the sofa is never an option. A little attention paid to room integration goes a long way in fine-tuning its low-end and soundstaging, but that's hardly a chore when the resulting performance is as good as this ●

Hi-Fi Choice

OUR VERDICT

SOUND QUALITY ★★★★★	LIKE: Insightful sonics allied to an open, vibrant demeanour
VALUE FOR MONEY ★★★★★	DISLIKE: Rival models are able to pack a deeper bass punch
BUILD QUALITY ★★★★★	WE SAY: Refined, but still playful and gorgeous to boot
EASE OF DRIVE ★★★★★	

OVERALL

