

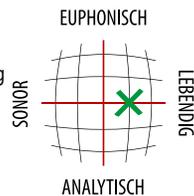


Audio Physic Codex

# RIGHT IN THE THICK OF IT



**Audio Physic Codex: H:** Superlative workmanship meets outstanding musicality and a neutral yet stirring character. Combined with its incomparable serenity, this makes the Codex an irresistible addictive drug.



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THE CODEX IS  
A DREAM  
TRANSDUCER  
WHERE  
EVERYTHING  
IS JUST RIGHT:  
SOUND,  
EMOTION,  
LOOKS,  
WORKMAN-  
SHIP. AND  
EVERY DETAIL  
OF THE FLOOR-  
STANDER HAS  
ITS OWN  
STORY TO  
TELL ...



— They probably thought I was making a joke," Manfred Diestertich remembers and laughs. This incident happened years ago. At the time, he was looking for innovative materials for his loudspeakers and came across silicon carbide in the form of a heat-resistant, concrete-hard ceramic foam. The material is normally used to separate liquid iron from slag. He can even understand that the manufacturer was irritated by an inquiry coming from a loudspeaker manufacturer. But Diestertich remained stubborn and obtained his material after all. And after a few attempts it turned out to be the end of his journey: Carbide

insulates, stabilizes and quiets a loudspeaker. As it features pores like a sponge, it does not restrict the interior volume too much and keeps the weight within limits. And if required, it lets the sound penetrate. The most consistent example of the use of this wonder material is Audio Physic's top-of-the-range model "Structure", whose enclosure is largely made of ceramic foam. But that's not our topic here, as we're talking about the smaller, but no less exclusive Codex. Silicon carbide is also used here - as a seal with lots of pores at the bottom of the cabinet and as punctual reflection insulation behind midrange and tweeter.

The Codex uses Audio Physic's ceramic foam on a comparatively low scale. Two small plates on the cabinet's back panel dampen tweeter and midrange driver. What the picture doesn't reveal: The bass reflex port in the bottom plate is completely "sealed" with the air-permeable material.



If you follow Diestertich's explanations you may wonder whether he regards himself as a loudspeaker designer or as a materials researcher. The magnetic feet "VCF V Magnetic plus" (around 1400 Euros), which were supplied to us "for playing around", provide a perfect anchor point within this discussion. They levitate the weighty Codex from the floor and let it float. Not fully, of course. Magnets are incorporated into a fabric layer that fixes them to the sides. The effect: compared to the standard spikes, the floorstander performs on the VCFs in such a detached, open and transparent way that you can no longer locate it with your eyes closed. The space in front of the listening position turns into an endless stage.



Virtually every aspect of the speaker could tell its own story, as there are practically no off-the-shelf solutions to be found at Audio Physic. The four drivers of the more than waist-high floorstanding speaker are the most likely to be referred to. These are supplied by Wavecor, but are especially made for the company from Brilon according to their own specifications. And if you wonder about four drivers mentioned here, you're right ... on the loudspeaker's baffle you can only see three of them.

At the centre of this triumvirate you find the feather-light, ceramic-coated aluminum tweeter, which soars into spheres up to 40 kilohertz. The radiation behaviour of the tweeter is controlled by a fabric ring. Above and below two drivers with 17-centimetre diaphragms are located, operating as midrange and midwoofer respectively, whereas the 27 cm measuring long-excursion woofer inside the speaker is not visible. It handles the frequencies below 100 Hertz and plays down to the lowest registers ending up for the Codex at 28 Hz. The woofer features a paper diaphragm and is housed in its own compartment, the bottom of which is sealed by the aforementioned silicon-carbide plate, serving as the luxury version of a bass reflex port. If you take a closer look at the speaker's underside, you can notice the mouse-grey, coral-like ramification. We would have to be pretty hard-boiled if we didn't allow all the "Ohhs" and "Ahhs" to slip from our lips when unpacking and setting up the speaker, as, for example, in view of the honey-coloured grained loudspeaker veneer, whose multifaceted nature and depth overwhelmed us. Given the right light, the fine drawings seem to dance like flames. Audio Physic has sourced the supplier of its precious surface finishes way down in Italy.

The manufactory processes local, readily available woods and cuts them into very fine, almost translucent layers. These are then glued into unique, heterogeneous veneers. The Codex can also be ordered in a lacquer finish or in a glass-panelled version, giving an even more flawless and glossy finish. In contrast to the 38 kg of the standard version, the glass-panelled Codex weighs an impressive 44 kilograms.

## Let's have a listen, then ...

Speakers from Brilon always surprises me anew. Audio Physic's creations perform so a fast and tight, so coherent in time and true to phase that a tiny devil in my head wants to file them under them as "tendentiously slender sounding". And, strangely, like other speakers before it, the Codexes prove me wrong: Despite their unobtrusive appearance, they push the bass into the listening room with respect-commanding authority and breathtaking agility. The kickoff to my listening test is Tori Amos' "Cornflake Girl". The first seconds of the track consist of a lively guitar, which is replaced after a few moments by the accompaniment of piano, bass and drums. The tempo seems to be bisected, but that's exactly what makes the backing instruments evolve so powerful and enchanting. The speed and stability of the fading bass notes are excellent. The bone-dry sonic foundation reaches deep down and doesn't reveal the slightest hint of compression or distortion ... not even when the kickdrum throws its powerful punch into the room and the snare attracts all attention with its whipping impulses. I grab the remote control of Naims Star and jump a CD back within Amos' portfolio: Little Earthquakes. „Precious Things"

May we present the Hyper Holographic Cones of the 3rd generation in close-up. According to the manufacturer, the feather-light tweeters and midrange drivers of the Codex should no longer emit parasitic sound components due to their insulation.



Things“ immediatly builds up tension with its striking piano movement carried by a deep reverberation. The short, sparkling tones get lost in an indefinable space, while the rhythmic breathing in the intro of the song seems to come from next to me rather than from somewhere between the speakers. Breathtaking - and somewhat irritating. But as already mentioned, the Codex vehemently refuses to appear as a locatable sound source. If I were asked to describe this superb speaker with a single word, I would choose "musical". It's fascinating how outstandingly well these speakers are crafted, how they play absolutely linear and how they produce up deep, powerful and tight bass. But you will forget all that anyway the minute these speakers start playing and draw you into the centre of the music right away. And the Codex does that like no other speaker in its class. ■

#### Floorstanding speaker | Audio Physic Codex

**Concept:** 4-way floorstanding, passive | **Drivers:** HHTC III tweeter (2.5 cm aluminum/ceramic dome), HHCM III midrange (17 cm aluminum/ceramic cone), midwoofer (17 cm aluminum cone), woofer impedance: 4 Ω | **Sensitivity:** 89 dB | **Frequency response:** 28 Hz to 40 kHz | **Dimensions (W/H/D):** 20/120/37 cm | **Weight:** 38 kg (standard), 44 kg (glass version) | **Warranty:** 10 years | **Price per pair:** around 11 000 €  
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#### TEAMMATES

**Digital sources:** Audiodata MusikServer MS II, Melco N100, Auralic Altair, Ayon CD-3sx | **Integrated system:** Naim Uniti Star | **Turntable:** Clearaudio Innovation with universal arm | **Phono preamp:** Cambridge Audio Duo, Einstein The Phono Amp | **Power amplifiers:** Lumin Amp | **Speakers:** B&W 702 S2, Wilson Audio Sasha DAW | **Cables:** AudioQuest, Chord Company, Vovox