

Event 20/20BAS

V3 | £758

The much-venerated 20/20 gets its third coming. **Robbie Stamp** cranks up the beats and bass

WHAT IS IT?

Active two-way
bass-ported monitor

CONTACT

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HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Clear low-end focus
- 2 Rock-solid build
- 3 Plenty of power

The Event 20/20 has been working hard since the mid '90s winning many devoted fans along the way, but now

these bi-amped two-way nearfields have been given a third outing by Event, this time incorporating some of the (electronic) advancements made in developing their flagship model, the Opal. The all discrete component class AB amplifiers have been designed to deliver more detail and power alongside less distortion.

Chunky

At 17kg, this is no lightweight design and at 300mm deep the footprint is no small matter either. These are important attributes for low cabinet resonance – knuckle-wrapping the cabinet produces a very short, low thump that belies the structural density and stiffness. The front baffle uses a hard, rough material coating to further reduce cabinet resonance intermodulation with the speaker outputs. This is a ported design

so the intentional low frequency resonance from within the cabinet is piped out through the front-mounted port. The 20/20BAS has kept to the box aesthetic, eschewing the more curvy lines of the Opal, and just has its edges and corners rounded off to reduce edge diffraction (the creation of additional wavefronts through sharp changes in surface angles that can skew frequency response and stereo imaging).

At the rear of the 20/20BAS are the two inputs (balanced XLR and unbalanced RCA), the IEC power input and three control knobs. These allow for +/- 12dB gain trim and high/low frequency shelving adjustment (+/- 3dB). For matching settings between two monitors I prefer stepped controls, which these are not, but flipping your

monitor feed into mono makes it pretty easy to make adjustments for the room, your taste and the monitor/volume control relationship.

Upfront and personal

Those expecting the 20/20BAS to deliver the 'Big Ass Sound' as advertised (I'm assuming BAS actually stands for Bi-Amplified Speaker) will not be disappointed. My first (and abiding) impression of these speakers is low-end focus, especially the low mids which are key to the impression of proximity in a mix – I instantly felt the sound stage I'm used to come forward.

The combined performance of the LF transducer (woofer), amplifier and ported cabinet keep the low end relatively tight without any obvious ring-on effects or flabby rumblings. There is no loss of punch in the low-end and into the midrange with vocals, when mixed well, sitting up close in the sound stage without getting fuzzed out by poor articulation, a property the 20/20BAS V3s keep right up into their 'ouch' SPL range. There is plenty of power here and I didn't find any early onset of distortion or loss of clarity at the louder end of the dial. The high frequency range is somewhat softer than I am used to and would lead me to mix a little over-bright to begin with, but having spent some time with the 20/20BAS V3s, I quickly acclimatised





to their low-end bias and found I was monitoring louder than usual.

Transient detail is not reduced by this apparent softness and the tweeter produces a clear picture of the high end right up to and out of my hearing range (currently ~18kHz). I did use the HF shelving trim to compensate and ended up using the whole +3dB to bring the monitors into line with my own and by turning up the LF shelving trim I pulled up the low bass to form a flatter bass against the low-mid bias.

I must stress that both of these adjustments were mostly due to my room and monitoring preferences. The low end audibly drops off below ~40Hz

To Port or Not To Port

There are two main speaker cabinet designs: sealed/closed box or ported/vented, often referred to as bass reflex. The former is, as the name implies, a closed cabinet box, with the Yamaha NS10 being a classic example. The latter, as used for the Event 20/20BAS, uses a vent or port hole to allow the internal resonance of

the cabinet caused by the woofer driver movements to reinforce the low frequency output of the speaker. This acts to flatten and extend the low frequency reproduction. It also reduces the pressure constraints on the woofer that are caused by a sealed box, thus improving mechanical and electrical efficiency. The downside

is that the low frequency reinforcement involves a time delay with relation to the woofer movement and can result in poor phase linearity, thus hampering transient response and causing distortion.

Conversely, sealed boxes possess limited bass responses. A good quality design is always necessary whatever the enclosure type.

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so for those fixated by the lowest of the lows, a sub could be used in conjunction with the 20/20s.

Sense of space

A lot of stereo field auditory cueing comes from the high frequency range and so the low end focus of the 20/20s can give them a more centre dominant behaviour, but the stereo width is in no way lacking. If the mix contains a lot of stereo information in the mids and low mids the 20/20s produce a solid image that allows you to clearly pick out the individual sources. The centre spot for the best stereo picture is as wide as you'd expect from most good quality nearfield monitors and horizontal movement doesn't create an overly skewed stereo field, but I found the

vertical plane a little more prone to degrading phase shifts. Though reverb tails and the sense of space in sources and mixes are well defined, the low-mid focus can mask some of the quieter cues and thus produce a flatter picture.

Block rockers

When listening to and working on the 20/20BASs, I found many Hip Hop related genres to be well suited, allowing a clear picture of the relationship between kick, snare, bass and vocal to be perceived and thus manipulated. Conversely more intricate acoustic-instrument-led music is a little harder to balance, though not in any dramatic way. Considering the price, the 20/20BAS V3s definitely prove value for money, particularly if the high build

quality is taken into account.

There is a lot of raw power to fill small studios and will match dB for dB many more expensive near-

fields in larger production rooms. If you have enjoyed working with 20/20s in the past or work in Hip Hop, R&B or any genre where the low-end is boss then do give these powerful puppies a listen. **FM**

FutureMusic VERDICT

BUILD

VALUE

EASE OF USE

VERSATILITY

RESULTS

Serious low-end with bags of low distortion power to boot – a pleasure to listen to and work with.

SPECS

- Input:** 1x XLR (balanced), 1x RCA (unbalanced)
- HF/Tweeter:** 25mm silk dome/ferrite magnet
- LF/Woofer:** 180mm polyamide-glass fibre cone/ferrite magnet
- Amplifier:** Class AB, 80W @ 4 (long-term) and 120W @ 4 (burst power)
- Max SPL:** 105dB (long term) & 108dB (peak) at 1m, 80Hz-20kHz
- Frequency Response:** 35Hz – 20kHz +/-2dB
- Crossover Frequency:** 2.3kHz
- Controls:** Gain (+/-12dB), LF trim (+/-3dB), HF trim (+/-3dB)
- Dimensions:** 220 x 300 x 375mm
- Weight:** 17kg each

ALTERNATIVES



Mackie HR824 mkII
£898 per pair

Rear porting for a similar LF range and well-matched in power and features. A popular model.

mackie.com



Adam A7X
£899 per pair

More HF oriented with the extended range ribbon tweeter – more twinkle.

adam-audio.com



KRK VXT8
£929 per pair

Similar in power, LF extension and size, though a wee bit more pricey. Seemingly a little less low-mid focussed.

krksys.com