

Raidho Acoustics' D-3 Loudspeaker

by [A U D I O R N P O H V I E L M I B A E 3 R C 2 O 4 M M E N T S](#)
 in [L O U D S S P T E A A R K E C R O S M P O N E N T S](#)



Good things are supposed to come in threes, but sometimes, one or two of the three decide not to play nicely. This is especially true with unruly members of a 'family' of loudspeakers. Most speaker manufacturers, if well funded and have a good designer, will attempt to produce a line or family of speakers. The most vested among them will produce several families, at various price points. This makes good financial sense but is far more difficult than you would imagine, especially the 'baby step' from monitor to floor stander.

Many loudspeaker companies have failed attempting this elusive step. Others, like Focal are successful doing it in the reverse order. Design the big speaker first then trickle down the technology to fit in the monitor box. Companies like ProAc, Royd, Totem, Magico became famous for their monitors then reached for the stars with bigger and bigger floorstanders, all with varying results. But, that's for another article. Danish company Raidho Acoustics has done the same with its top D Series, produced a knockout, world-class monitor then followed up with two floor standing designs.

Capturing the magical essence of a great monitor design, which the Raidho D-1 surely is, and beefing up the bass and macro dynamics with a larger cabinet and more drivers is a akin to capturing lightning in a bottle. A recent experience at the 2013 Denver audio show was a case in point. I searched for the room of a manufacturer of one of my favourite monitors to listen to its new, vaunted floor stander. Disappointing, at least on this extended hearing. Sure, it was a very good speaker, but that magic I heard in the company's small box had gone. Has Raidho Acoustics followed in the same footprint?

The Raidho Acoustics D Series consists of the D-1 monitor, the 2.5 way D-2 and the subject of this review, the imposing, 3 way D-3.



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After my [rave](#) of the D-1 monitor, one of the finest loudspeakers of any size I've reviewed, I wanted to get right down to the perceived problems of going big. As such, I used much of the same D-1 repertoire as source material for the note taking portion of the review.

I can report very happy news right away that this larger sibling has all the D-1's magic and then some, with the addition of serious heft in the lower octaves. Much like the Hansen Audio family of speakers and the aforementioned Focal Utopia line, the same signature that Raidho flaunts through its sound design for the monitor is front and center on the floor stander.

The D-3s retain the sparkling timbres of acoustic instruments through its ribbon tweeter. This is a fabulous tweeter and is right up there in quality and refined sound with the most famous examples. Of course, you can't just plonk a sealed ribbon tweeter with standard drivers in a box and poke and hope. This tweeter is proprietary to Raidho and they are justly proud of its design.

The D-3 loudspeaker uses two different topologies to produce the sound — the aforementioned ribbon tweeter and Raidho's new diamond woofer (called 'Raidho Cutting Edge Diamond Technology'). Less expensive Raidho models like the C Series use a ceramic midrange/woofer, but the D-3 uses a mix of diamond and carbonite. Raidho's Lars Kristensen explained the driver's manufacturing process to me during a visit to Toronto last year. He was very proud of the development and the implementation of the technology. He called the driver 'a true industrial design'.

Following the 'more is better' philosophy, the D-3 adds two additional woofers over the D-1 and a midrange driver using the same diamond and carbonite construction. This extra driver, in addition to the two extra woofers and their associated crossover(s), is where the rubber hits the road.

The extra bass drivers gave more presence to the sound, a larger picture of the orchestra, the choir, the jazz combo, the stadium. Simple physics with a bigger box, more air movement and more drivers. But, Raidho has been subtle with its technology. It enhances the sound of the monitor's signature, not overwhelms it. You hear the imaging and soundstage that the D-1 replicates so magnificently, but your feet are not touching the floor. They dangle over a ledge with a floor way down below. They are said to go down to 30Hz. I don't believe it! Nothing feels missing. That said, you'll get a stadium, but you won't get much of the godawful sound and emphasized bass that usually occurs.

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The timpani (a far more difficult instrument to record than a bass drum) on the LP of Jean Martinon's Decca Les Patineurs reissue was a perfect example. Through a Brinkmann turntable, the instrument was heard equally on both the D-1 and D-3, with the D-3 adding the last bit of copper ringing and reflection. It's only a small difference, but important. And, with the capability of hearing a complete octave lower than the monitor, the D-3 captured the last ounce of grandeur on large scale works. Physics, again. But, careful design, too.

Although the extra bass and its blend into the family sound was enticing, what really sold me on the D-3 was its midrange driver integration. This was magnificent. Again, the monitor was no slouch in delivering this important tessitura, but the new midrange added even more bloom and sophistication to the sound. Woodwind instruments sounded more realistic and more specified in placement. Much like when an upgraded DAC or amplifier is placed in your system, a veil is lifted. Same, here. The specific midrange driver makes a magical midrange intoxicating. This alone makes the extra outlay for the D-3s worthwhile. Yes, it's that good.



For the price, you can purchase larger speakers that have a better published bass response, that could probably play louder in a very large room. Don't let that deter you from hearing these stunning loudspeakers. They are artisan in quality and the drivers are designed and implemented at the very highest technical and musical standard. If you match them to a reasonable room size and hook them up with real quality ancillaries,

you'll never need another speaker. Among the very best I've heard in twenty years of listening and reviewing. Very highly recommended.

[We are proud to award the Raidho Acoustics D-3 Loudspeakers an Audiophilia Star Component Award. Congratulations! - Ed]

Anthony Kershaw

Specifications

Size: 20 x 136 x 52 cm

Weight: 65 Kg

Freq. response: 30 Hz - 50 KHz

Impedance: > 3.5 ohm

Crossover: 150 Hz and 3 KHz 2. Order

Enclosure: Vented design — Port in rear panel

Drive units: 1 sealed ribbon tweeter, 1 100 mm Diamond Midrange driver, 3 115 mm Diamond Bass drivers

Finish: Walnut Burl Veneer, Black Piano, All possible paint colors

Amplification: > 50 W (Though we have seen excellent results with small tube amplifiers)

The Raidho Acoustics D-3 Loudspeakers

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Source: Distributor loan

Price: \$79K