

**SPECIAL PRINT  
MANGER MSSP1**

# FIDELITY

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Relativitäts-Praxis

# EINSTEIN THE AMP ULTIMATE



## Manger MSS p1

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# PLAYGROUND WITH STAR

**The active version of this sound transducer is a precision instrument of premium quality. However, the passive model opens up even more perspectives: You may season to taste.**

**Author: Cai Brockmann. Fotos: Ingo Schulz**

**A** few basic statements have to be made right at the beginning. Firstly: This loudspeaker looks incredibly elegant. I must admit, that lately I'm using this proposition more often than in previous years, but that's the way it is: The "Reference Passive System MSS p1" by Manger (short: "MSS p1" or even shorter "p1") is a very handsome object of desire. Why the p1 looks exactly like it does and why good design shouldn't be marginal (and indeed is not) will be clarified later during my talk with the designer of the p1 himself.

Secondly: In its original fully active version the Manger column (MSM s1; see FIDELITY no. 9, "Reading Newspapers on the Moon") embodies the ultimate tool for professional and semi-professional audio nerds such as very ambitious high-end fans or sound engineers. And it does such a good job that I find it difficult to name an affordable alternative, especially when it comes to recordings of acoustic music. So the recently available passive model presented here follows in rather big footsteps.

Thirdly: The p1 wants to be a pretty normal loudspeaker, although it actually can't be in the strict sense. Because the Manger Sound Transducer (MSW), which is used in this version as well, isn't a normal driver, but a work of art. Well, technically speaking it's an extremely precise and unique driver that sets absolute benchmarks for speed and impulse fidelity. Hence the pitiable bass driver has to give its best and meet the extraordinary challenge of working in a team with the gorgeous MSW. It must operate as briskly as possible up to 360 Hz and try to keep pace. That's the reason why the bass driver can only be mounted in a sealed cabinet which enables fast impulse responses.

Of course, it is debatable whether one of those pretty fast and pretty well attuned reflex designs would do an even better job, since they offer certain advantages with respect to efficiency and "boom" compared to sealed enclosures. But that's not the point of the Manger system. If out of all the practicable options a sealed cabinet with the corresponding LF driver provides the fastest and most accurate bass, the choice in favor of the sealed enclosure is beyond question. To put it even more offhand: Bass reflex is an absolute no-go. And "boom" is a misnomer used only by bass philistines. The only uncompromising alternative to a sealed enclosure would theoretically be a bass horn the size of a vacation home, but this idea was abandoned early on for obvious reasons, I guess.

Because the Manger p1 declaredly wants to be a loudspeaker for ordinary people. For music lovers, who have a sound grasp and basic understanding of aesthetics in everyday life and who strive for top sound quality, but are not willing (or able) to adapt or even sacrifice a whole room to the loudspeakers. Sound transducers which stand in the way or visually dominate the room and thus cause annoyance day by day are not an option for Manger.



» On the other hand it is not uncommon in hi-fi practice that a pair of loudspeakers is indeed supposed to stand in the middle of the room. Or has to, for example, if the room is very narrow and long or L-shaped. When space is limited or the Manger p1 is used as a room divider it cuts a perfect figure and easily adapts to every environment.

The cabinet design isn't austere and sharp-edged but rather graceful and low-key with rounded vertical edges. "We did that on purpose, of course," comments Markus Thomann, who answered all my questions concerning the design of the p1, "as heavily rounded edges nestle much better to existing surfaces and edges." The architect and designer from Zurich/Switzerland has been gathering intense experiences with Manger loudspeakers over the years and is also responsible for the design of the active model version. He also specifically praises his German colleague who designed the compact ancestor MSM c1 years ago. Because both the active and passive columns have more in common with the c1 than it may seem at first glance.

Take for instance the cavity volume of the Manger c1, which is not so compact but rather deep. After all it is as large as the volume of a column. The space available for the LF driver stays the same but is stretched lengthwise or rather heightwise. Markus Thomann: "This made the cabinet wider than deep, which in turn facilitates placing the loudspeakers close to a wall." And with the passive version the space normally used for the smartly integrated electronics was converted into a compartment for the crossover components.

- 1 **Perfect for living rooms:** The elegant and surprisingly heavy columns can also be placed close to the walls.
- 2 **Connect 4:** Manger recommends Nordost Norse Cable Jumpers, if bi-wiring or bi-amping is impossible.



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Moreover, the nifty appearance of the s1 and p1 must be attributed to the form of the Manger transducer. Markus Thomann sums it up like this: "The design of the Manger p1 and s1 should be timelessly elegant, unpretentious, well-proportioned, and balanced – just like the

## LOUDSPEAKER



sound reproduction: no-frills, pure sound.

The transducer is at the heart of the p1 seconded by the covered bass driver. The surface is similar to taut skin into which the “skin” of the transducer is inserted. The large circles float lightly in the object and emphasize the graphic character of the design. This is most apparent with a white finish, as it blends with the walls in

the background so the circles stick out. The object smoothly fits in the room.” And finally a few brief words on a detail that is woefully neglected by most designers: “The base plate acts as a joint between the cabinet and floor and grounds the object. The “sounding body” rests in itself and keeps a low profile just like the Manger transducer steps back behind the music.”

Now that everything has been said about the appearance of the

p1 we will take a critical look at the technical advantages of the active version: The integrated electronics are perfectly adapted to the loudspeaker and in addition take care of slight corrections. Both drivers are directly controlled since passive components or crossovers are not part of the signal path. However, quite a few high-end fans just cannot get enthusiastic about

» active loudspeakers. Some dread a certain paternalism which restricts the choice of electronics, others simply want to experiment with cables and power amps – and thus affect the sound of the loudspeaker. And still others want to keep on using their existing amplifiers, be it out of habit or frugality.

For all of them the passive Manger column is the ideal choice. Their different and preferably high-performance power amps or stereo amplifiers are allowed to intersperse their sonic signatures into the sound image. The same goes for the cables, of course, especially as far as LS cables and bi-wire jumpers are concerned. For the latter Manger recommends the “Norse” set by Nordost as an affordable upgrade, by the way. In any case: With the p1 every alteration becomes instantly audible, its acoustic transparency is at the upper limit of the feasible, aside from the lowest fundamental bass which simply isn’t practicable due to the lean design. The p1 makes it very easy, for instance, to evaluate whether a (piece of) cable sounds better or worse than a competing product.

And if you plan to explore the Manger cosmos with a “cheap” or somewhat feeble amplifier and to not upgrade until your hi-fi account has accumulated a little money again, you shouldn’t expect any mercy from the p1 – according to the inventor’s intention. It will tell you frankly when the amp performance is faltering.

But you will be even more delighted when the quality of the peripherals catches up and improves. Motto: If the MSS p1 is pleased, you will be pleased even more.

It opens up completely new

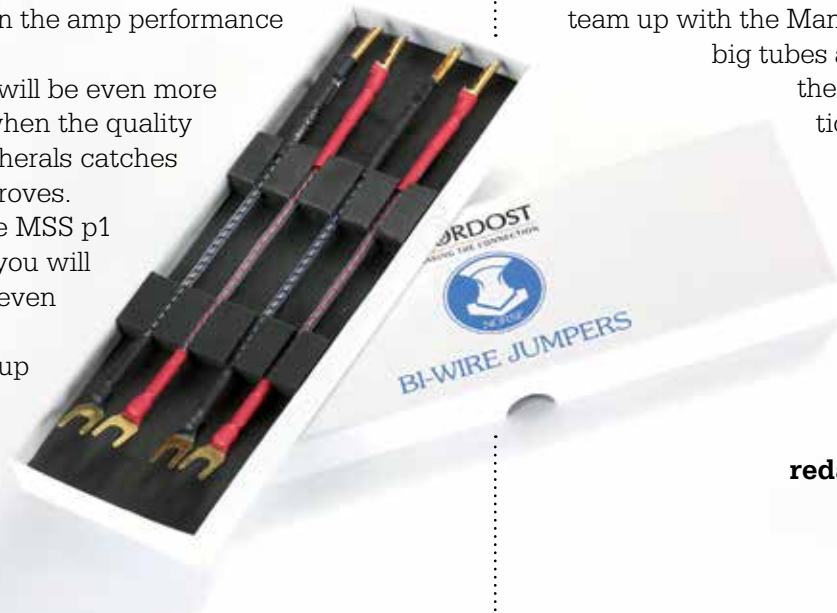


perspectives in terms of “sonic seasonings”. For example, I tested the fat Moon 700i stereo amplifier and enjoyed its mighty power, experienced the AVMPAB/SA8.2 as an incorruptible power duo with enormously accurate spatial imaging, embraced the strong Musical Fidelity HPA-1 power amp, while I was somehow disappointed by the palish and rather shallow M8-S500 – although you must consider that it costs almost nothing compared to the rest. On the other hand, my modified Altec-Monos didn’t really team up with the Manger – they were out of place like

big tubes and atmospherically didn’t match the ultra-clear, extremely clean diction of the Manger MSS p1.

What I want to say: The p1 provides a huge sunlit playground for powerful electronics. In combination with the proper peripherals it offers tremendously spatial listening pleasure at the highest level – while standing close to the wall, looking marvelous! ●

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## LOUDSPEAKER



### Manger MSS p1

2-way floorstanding loudspeaker - sealed

**Efficiency Factor:** 88 dB/1 W/1 m

**Nominal Impedance:** 4 Ohm

**Components:** Manger Sound Transducer (MSW), 8" bass driver with carbon fiber paper membrane by Scan-Speak

**Crossover Frequency:** 360 Hz

**Features:** MSW, bi-wire terminal, near-wall placement possible

**Finish:** silk-mat lacquer in RAL colors, Nextel or veneer optional (EUR 400 surcharge) or piano lacquer (EUR 1600 surcharge), natural or black aluminum base plate

**Dimensions:** (W/H/D): 10.6"/44.9"/8.7"

**Weight:** 61.7 lbs

**Warranty:** 3 years

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## Präzise

mit der handwerklichen Kunst eines Uhrmachers gebaut.

## Innovativ

wie ein umgekehrtes Ohr, jedes kleinste Detail in den Raum gestellt.

## Authentisch

der Künstler, die Wiedergabe, das Erlebnis.

## Stundenlang

des Hörens nie müde, Aufregung, Entspannung wie im Konzertsaal erlebt.

## Musik

für sich neu entdeckt.



**MANGER**  
PRÄZISION IN SCHALL

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