

STEREO SPEAKERS

EPOS M12i

★★★★★

£ 525

FOR

Speed, dynamics and timing are exceptionally good; cosmetic improvement is worthwhile

AGAINST

Need careful system matching to perform at their best

VERDICT

The 'i' mods bring this classic standmounter back to the forefront at this price level

The Epos M12i are fantastic speakers, up with the leaders in their class

Epos update is better than ever

THE M12i IS the latest version of what is arguably Epos's most admired product. The 'i' mods include a slimmer, smarter cabinet and detailed improvements across the tweeter, mid/bass unit and crossover. None of the changes is massive, but together they make a significant difference

"Breathtaking agility and clarity of purpose that's hard to beat"

to the speakers' performance. This new version is notably clearer and better controlled than before.

What doesn't change is the speakers' character. The M12's DNA has always been stamped with blistering speed, forceful dynamics and the kind of surefooted timing that makes all but the very best of the competition sound as precise as a drunk at a party. Take a listen to Grinderman's debut set and **the speakers tear through the recording with breathtaking agility and a**

clarity of purpose that's hard to beat at this price – or any price, come to that.

The M12i are also lean, direct and not at all forgiving. These traits mean a great deal of care has to be taken with the rest of the system. You'll need electronics that mirror the M12i's good points, particularly the dynamics and timing, yet are refined enough not to egg the speakers into unruliness with already aggressive recordings. You'll also need some solid stands and a room big enough to let these stand-mounters breathe.

Best of the best

Do these things, and you'll get an enormously satisfying sound. Yes, the M12i veer towards leanness and don't have the harmonic richness, treble sweetness or

tonal neutrality of some rivals, but, despite these shortcomings, **they communicate the music's message with a skill few rivals can match, let alone better. It's for that reason they get, and richly deserve, the full five stars.**



ALSO CONSIDER ?

MORDAUNT SHORT MEZZO 2

★★★★★

£450

May 2008

The Mordaunt Short Mezzo 2s are very classy and impressively insightful. See p6

ACOUSTIC ENERGY AE22

★★★★★

£450

December 2007

Not pretty, but the AE22s are superb-sounding monitors for the money