

A black Bryston Mini A Loudspeaker is shown on the left, featuring three drivers: a large woofer at the bottom, a midrange driver in the middle, and a tweeter at the top. To its right is a black Bryston digital player with a remote control resting on top. Both are on a dark, reflective surface against a brick wall background.

BRYSTON
Mini A Loudspeaker

“ Space projection, three-dimensionality, depth gradation: Here the Mini A are first class, especially if they are placed on speaker stands and not upon a shelf.

Small money, big sound: The A Mini can fit in any musical situation. They bring high-end sound in the living room, but it is also sensible as near field monitors in the studio.

The Mini As have what it takes to be long-time companions for musical discovery journeys.

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He who has eyes, listen

Practically everything is played without pause. Guitar, bass, percussion; rock, pop, jazz, basically “Everything from Abba to Zappa”, that’s how the commercial sound providers have described their assortments during the last decades. Vinyl discs, silver discs with coatings, and everything from AIFF to zip.Folder are played upon. The interest in high quality listening equipment occurs after childhood and is usually only financially possible when adolescence has terminated into financial competence. Therefore the friend of superior listening pleasure undoubtedly no longer plays child games. Although with a few minor deviations there are a number of children’s games that would fit well into the listening hobby: For example “Blind Man’s Bluff” and that would proceed as follows: One plays one’s favorite music (in one’s favorite format). Everything from Abba to Zappa is permitted, so for a test let’s take Sara K. One is blindfolded, and now the task is to move through the stereo panorama groping until one finds via the sound picture the location of the nose of the guitar player and of the singer. If one wants to make it somewhat more complex, one can also go in the same manner exactly to the place where the viola is positioned in an opulent recording of a romantic orchestra. This game provides fun and good entertainment. But one must pay attention that one does not accidentally bang into one of the loudspeakers with one’s eyes covered. Here is where Bryston’s new sound transducers come into play. One would have to aim precisely in order to physical locate them. With the Mini A the prestigious Ontario, Canada, firm presents not only bookcase loudspeakers in decidedly handy measurements -- barely 40 centimeters high and about 20 centimeters wide -- but especially distinctly capable compact units that have a very special virtue: They deliver a three-di-



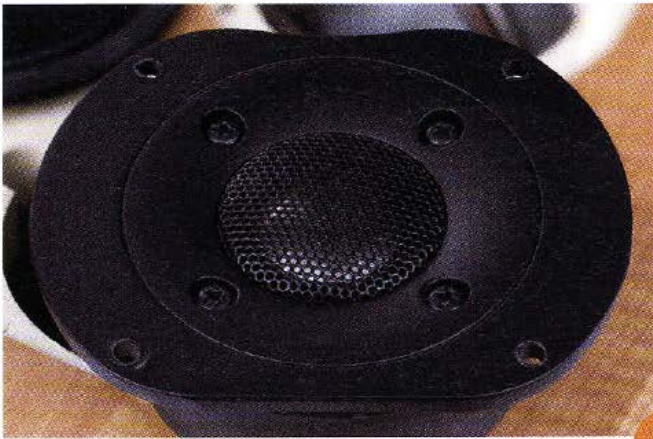
mensionality which negates worries about millimeter precise location and sitting in the exact “sweet spot.” They not only open a stage of impressive size but, permit a precise location of audible occurrences, one indeed has the impression that one can audibly locate, centimeter exact, the position of an instrumentalist in one’s living room. Actually the manufacturer Bryston made his first appearance primarily with amplifiers -- Both for domestic use in the home as well as for professional amplification requirements in live arenas such as theaters and stadiums to broadcasting and recording studios. In the meantime Bryston also provides DACs, digital players, and now loudspeakers. The products enjoy an excellent reputation:--One trusts the prominent engineering spirit at Bryston, and the company therefore provides a twenty year guarantee. Bryston does not keep it a secret that the Mini A was jointly developed with the specialists of Axiom Audio. It follows its just slightly larger brother, the Mini T, and represents the entry level model equipped with a 16.5 centimeter woofer, an approximately eight centimeter diameter midrange, slightly smaller than the one in the Mini T, and a titanium dome tweeter. High frequencies are dispersed by means of a round wave guide which spreads these frequencies up and down, and right and left. According to Bryston this allows the listener a freedom of movement which one does not find all too often, and indeed the Mini A does provide surprisingly equal sound all around the room. This was also the idea during the development of this speaker, even though it looks like a classical three-way speaker. But in reality it is a two-way loudspeaker whose additional midrange has basically only one task, namely to linearize the dispersion of the reproduction. The goal is to achieve an as wide as possible sound stream dispersion which should not exhibit any “off axis” roll-off. In order for this to be especially successful each pair of speakers is individually “paired.” This

is certainly not a matter of course even for considerably higher priced speakers. The cabinet tapers toward the back where there are generous provisions for connecting the speaker, from banana plugs to stranded copper wire. One can connect the Mini As by using bi-wiring, and naturally also bi-amping. Furthermore the bass reflex opening is located in the back, which for once is unfortunate in this case for one does not just see an opening with an ugly plastic tube because the opening is disguised with some kind of artificial leather which exhibits a number of noticeable wrinkles. This does not only look novel but generates a few inferences, however it compensates for an often observed systemic disadvantage of this principle: the speakers breathe uniformly and even under a large load without irritating secondary port noise. Now, as usual, in order to determine the optimal location for the Mini A one can take a yardstick in hand and begin to lay out the ideal stereo triangle. But one can also just be brave—simply place them into a sturdy bookcase. Indeed the speakers do not necessarily require a position in the middle of the room, a location near a wall benefits the bass which in light of the speakers small dimensions can be very desirable. The little Brystons are decidedly modest in reference to their location. In their positioning they are overall almost undemanding and indulgent, which makes it easier for them to fit into existing home environments—their acceptance in marital or cohabitational situations should skyrocket to absolute dream values. Living or listening rooms are usually set up so that music can be enjoyed in an upright sitting position. Often it incorporates a quite narrow “sweet spot”, and basically does not allow much leeway if one wishes to enjoy the sound totally. That’s perfectly OK, but those who want to move around should seek out the dance floor in a club. However in everyday life one often lies down on the sofa so exhausted from the daily tribulations that the energy to sit in an optimal position is gone. But the Mini A Brystons are even sympathetic to that because they reach ones ears despite such completely adverse circumstances. Moreover when one places one’s head on a pillow in the corner of a sofa thereby distorting the fairly even isosceles listening triangle



into an almost ungeometric form, no matter, the Mini As continue to provide approximate stereo sound. Room projection, three dimensionality, tonal depth, in reference to these the Mini As are first class, especially when they are not in a bookcase but on stands. The concept that aims at a widespread sound pattern succeeds splendidly, but these are not their only virtues. So let’s try it with some bass: on the album Blood Sugar Sex Magik by the Red Hot Chili Peppers one can hear not an especially accurately played but rather a very lively bass. The Mini As draw Flea’s lines cleanly, the up and down can readily be followed, on top of which they have oomph. The sound transducers sometimes seem to stretch the limits of physics, but they cannot abrogate them. Those who want to go even lower at all costs could consider the addition of a subwoofer. Despite that the Bryston Mini As deliver, not only in respect to their size, remarkably full-bodied bass, which contributes to an impressive complete clearly drawn sound pattern. Whether classic, rock, or jazz, the Mini As present an amazingly large sound field. Their playing is supported by sovereign midrange reproduction coupled with radiant but well-controlled highs. This is demonstrated with the shimmering cymbal crash deployment in Supertramps “Gone Hollywood” (Breakfast in America) and likewise by Shirley Bassey’s “Our Time Is Now.” Here one can really hear the cymbals of the Schellenkranz bang against each other. Little money, large sound – The Bryston Mini As excel in every musical situation. They deliver high-end sound into the parlor, but certainly can also find use in the studio as near field monitors. One can unhesitatingly make them work hard, and the only distortion one will hear is the escalating voice of the complaining neighbor, however they can also quietly accompany a Sunday breakfast, but still sotto voce. The Mini As have what it takes to be long-time companions for musical discovery journeys – should one start these with closed or covered eyes ...

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