

# Classic Sounds

Swiss loudspeaker manufacturer Piega debuts its new Classic 7.0 floorstander complete with ribbon tweeter. Jon Myles listens in.

**P**iega may not be a household name in the UK as yet but the Swiss-based loudspeaker manufacturer is making concerted efforts to rectify that.

Spearheading the assault is its entry-level Classic series - with the 3.0 standmount the first of the range to enter Hi-Fi World's listening room earlier this year (see review April 2017 issue).

That model impressed with strong, articulate bass and a sweet treble courtesy of its ribbon tweeter. Now it's the turn of the larger Classic 7.0 model - a substantial floorstander measuring 104cm x 23cm x 32cm (H/W/D) and designed to fill large rooms with ease.

In common with a growing number of manufacturers nowadays Piega uses a ribbon tweeter for the high frequencies - but this is not a case of merely following fashion for the company has been an enthusiastic adherent of the technology since its inception in 1986.

The Classic series uses its latest in-house designed AMT-I version which works on the principle of an Air Motion Transformer (AMT) where a folded diaphragm is used to move the air.

In the 7.0 model this is coupled with two 180mm drivers in a two-and-a-half way configuration where the top one handles midrange and bass with the other dedicated to the low end only. Piega says this combination gives exceptional low frequency response with a quoted frequency range of 34Hz to 40kHz (see our Measured Performance for full details).





## REVIEW

On the rear are a pair of binding posts to enable bi-wiring if required plus a large reflex port. Costing £2399 a pair the 'speakers come in either white or black piano lacquer with a Macassar ebony finish available for a premium.

As with the previous Classic 3.0 model the 7.0s boast a high standard of construction, weighing in at 28kg each and feeling extremely solid and sturdy on their base plate.

### SOUND QUALITY

It's worth taking time to set-up these Piegas carefully. Point them towards the listening seat as is usual with many floorstanders and the treble can sound overly strong – also getting them too close to a rear wall can result in boomy bass.

I found a little way out into the room and firing straight ahead gave the optimal response. Once done they immediately gave to life with a big, vibrant sound coupled with a large soundstage.

On Massive Attack's 'Angel' the thumping opening bass line was delivered with plenty of punch while the drums had a real 'thwack' to them. Used on the end of an Icon Audio Stereo 30SE valve amplifier there was no difficulty getting them to go loud without the lower registers becoming flabby or uncontrolled.

Despite their size and those two bass drivers the Piegas don't actually dig that deep – missing the last octave on James Blake's 'Limit To Your Life'. But the bass is solid and tuneful, laying a firm foundation for the midband and treble.

With Fleetwood Mac's 'The Chain' every instrument had its own space, the 'speakers never smearing the tune or allowing it to drag. In fact they are extremely fast – handling the charging rhythm of The Pixies' 'Debaser' with aplomb.

Much of this is down to the quality of the AMT-1 tweeter. It's extremely detailed and manages the start and stop of notes with fantastic accuracy. So with 'Debaser' Joey Santiago's guitar had stunning clarity and ring to it – the notes reaching far out into the room and enveloping me in the listening seat.

The slight downside here is that poor recordings do not fair too well. Oasis's 'Definitely Maybe' on CD sounded just a little too edgy and harsh for my tastes.

However, on the plus side, good quality material, especially high-

resolution files, are given full room to breathe and bloom. Keith Jarrett's piano on 'The Koln Concert' (24/96) was rich and resonant, the texture of the instrument coming through at all times. Not all loudspeakers handle the full range of a piano well but the Piegas managed it.

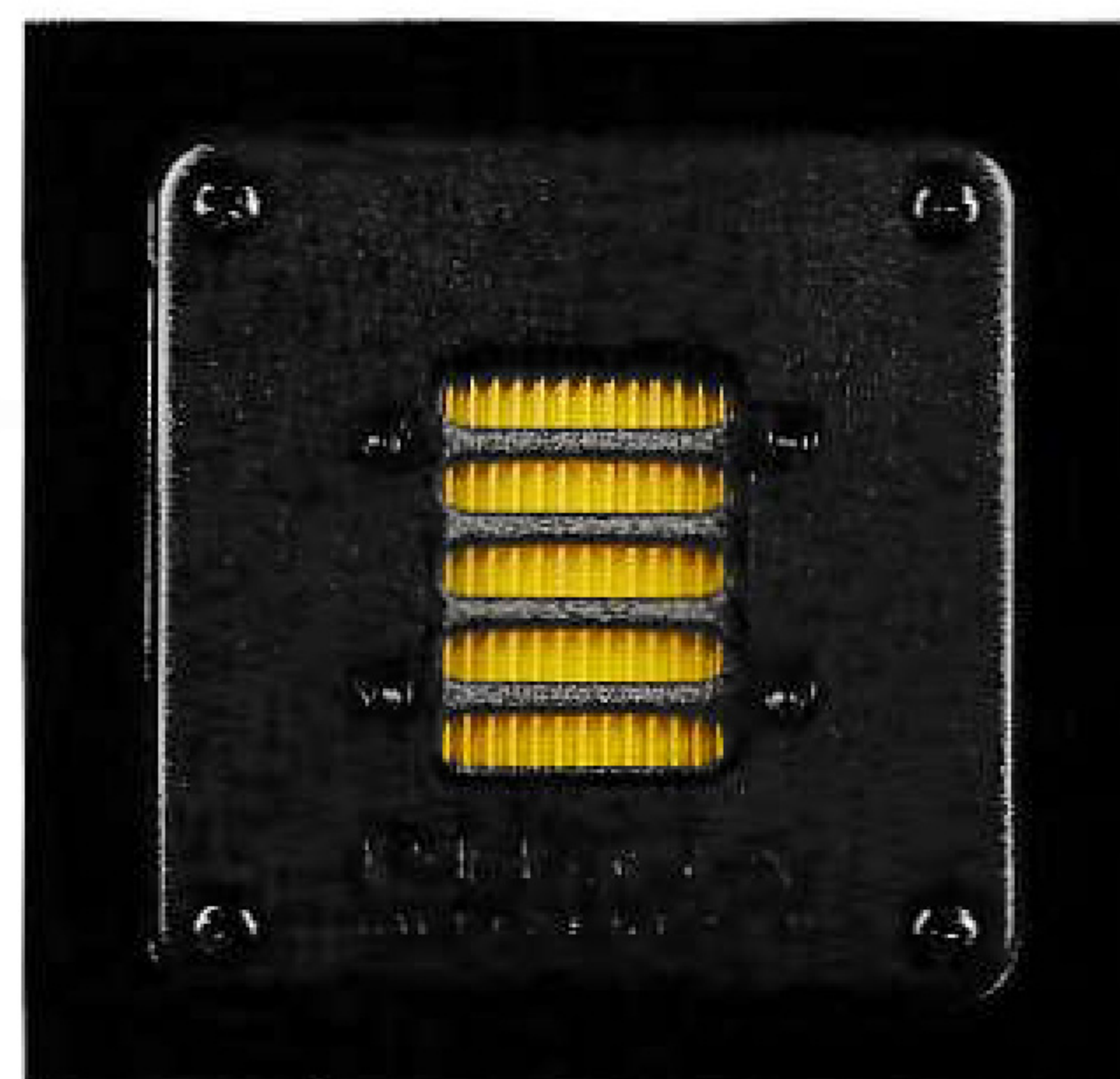
They were also adept at handling contrasts in tempo so when Jarrett ups the speed of his playing the Piegas kept pace with the change without missing a beat.

Taking all these attributes together the Piega Classic 7.0s make an attractive package. They don't need massive of power to go loud and are both crisply detailed and agile, meaning they make the most of whatever form of music you play.

### CONCLUSION

Piega deserve to make inroads into the UK market with these new Classic 7.0 floorstanders. They are refined sounding with a fast, firm bass

and smooth midband. Add in superb build quality and you are getting a lot of loudspeaker for your money. The only thin to watch for is the treble, which won't flatter poor source material.



*Piega's new AMT-1 ribbon tweeter. The new ribbon tweeter known as the AMT-1 works according to the principle of the Air Motion Transformer.*

### MEASURED PERFORMANCE

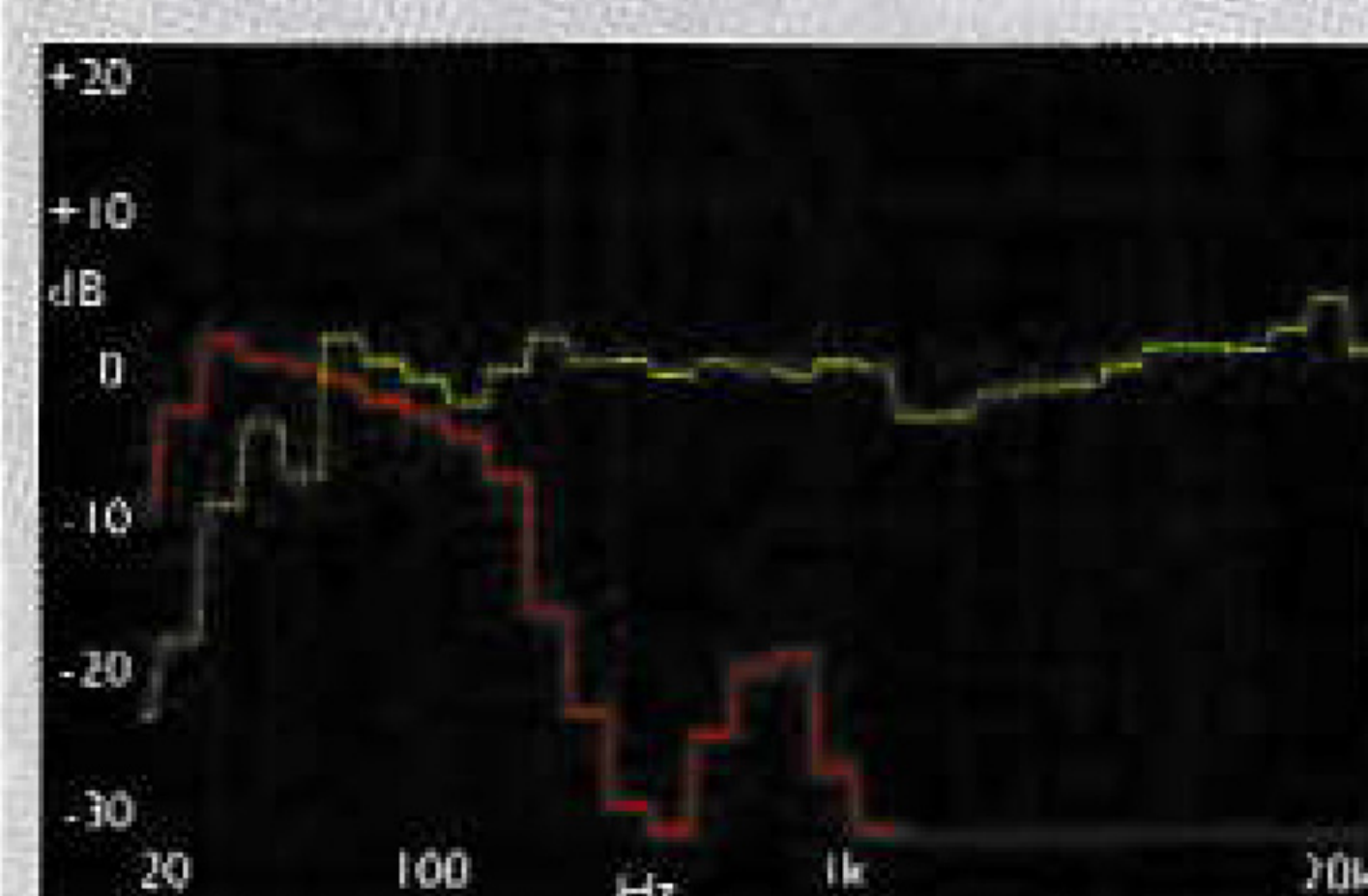
Our published frequency response of Piega's Classic 7 was flattest at 25 degrees off-axis, as shown; they are most accurate pointing straight down a room and not directly at listeners – as is common nowadays – to keep treble down.

From 60Hz up to 1.5kHz response is flat and smooth, which says quite a lot. Bass does not peak at all and is relatively well damped, so the Classic 7s will not be bass heavy, but should sound well balanced and reasonably dry and controlled. Broad port output (red trace) and lack of residual bass peaks in the impedance trace back this up, showing the port applies broad acoustic damping

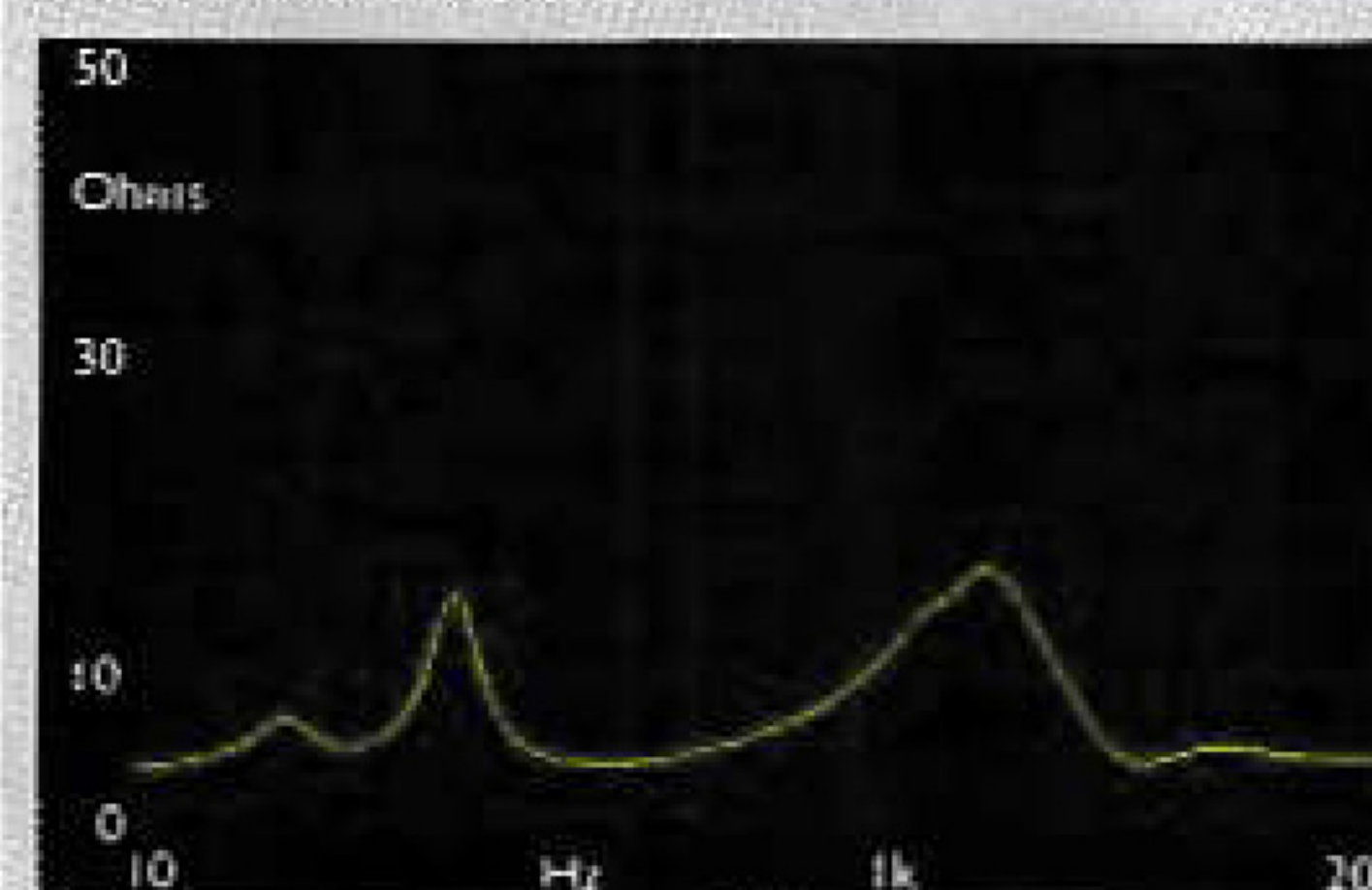
#### FREQUENCY RESPONSE

**Green - driver output**

**Red - port output**



#### IMPEDANCE



– a good sign, suggesting tuneful bass.

The smoothness of our third-octave pink noise analysis across the important mid-band, repeated in a stepped sine wave burst analysis not shown, suggest the Classic 7s will lack colouration; local resonances that produce colour are absent.

The folded ribbon tweeter acts above 1.8kHz and Piega have given it steadily rising output to 18kHz. With a dip at crossover that will soften upper midrange detail, but strong output above 6kHz that will add a bit of sting, so the Classic 7 will be distinctive up top. It's an easy matter to engineer a flatter response than this, but all the same it stays within reasonable bounds of accuracy. A problem with treble peaking however is that it accentuates distortion, especially from CD.

Sensitivity was high at 89dB from one nominal Watt of input (2.8V) so little more than 60 Watts is needed to go extremely loud, and 40 Watts is fine for anyone with neighbours. Impedance measured 6 Ohms and DCR 3.7 Ohms, determined by bass unit voice coil resistance.

Our impedance trace shows a largely resistive characteristic, with excellent bass damping – a relatively easy load.

The Classic 7 is well engineered, with tight clean bass, low colouration and smooth midband, but it will also have sharp treble. **NK**

### PIEGA CLASSIC 7.0 £2399



**EXCELLENT** - extremely capable

#### VERDICT

A clean, crisp-sounding floorstander with good bass and extended treble. High sensitivity means it will go loud with most amplifiers.

#### FOR

- fast, accurate bass
- smooth midband
- ribbon tweeter
- build quality

#### AGAINST

- strong treble

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