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Up to \$2000

Triangle Elara LN01A



My goodness, what a delightful surprise I had when I looked at the back of the Triangle Elara LN01A active loudspeakers. They have a set of phono inputs, along with a substantial grounding post. We say hooray!

Equipment

There's much more to these French loudspeakers than that of course. What we have here is the smallest model from Triangle's Elara loudspeaker range, fitted with 50W-per-channel amplifier and relevant electronics. So far, the LN01A is the only active model in the range.

These mid-sized bookshelvers use a 25mm silk-dome tweeter with neodymium magnet and a 135mm bass driver with a treated paper cone... or not quite a cone, it has a concave spherical section. Triangle says avoiding a dust cap increases its rigidity and efficiency. The bass reflex port is at the rear.

The enclosures are available in black or white. The grilles are removable. To my eye, they looked better naked. *[Don't we all... Ed.]*

There are inputs beyond the phono ones. Indeed, the phono ones can be switched to line-level input using a slider on the back. But there's also permanent line-level input (via 3.5mm), plus optical and coaxial digital audio inputs, plus Bluetooth with support for the aptX codec. That means the Bluetooth is kind to those Android phones which support aptX, though less so to iPhones which will have to fall back on the lower quality SBC codec. The amplifier and electronics

are in the right speaker. The passive left speaker is connected via the supplied three-metre cable.

Not happy with the claimed 50Hz bass extension? Then add an active subwoofer to the system using the dedicated output. There didn't appear to be any filtering on this output, so you'd do best with a subwoofer that has its own low-pass filter.

You will typically control everything using the remote control, but there is a volume control on the rear of the right speaker. It doubles as an input selector (you press it to cycle through the inputs).

A bright light with sufficient intensity to push the photons through the grille cloth is located to the bottom left of the main driver, indicating that power is on. It's green in most circumstances, but blue when Bluetooth is in use.

Performance

It was a genuine pleasure using these speakers. They were trouble-free in operation and sounded delightfully smooth, including with digital audio inputs. But I spent quite a bit of time just enjoying some vinyl, taking the opportunity to pull out some discs which apparently never made it to CD or other digital formats. Such as 'Cha' by Jo Jo Zep, a wonderfully irreverent recording featuring a great mix of voices and instruments with big band, jazz and pop influences. It was nicely rendered by these speakers, with the kind of dynamic delivery needed to fully convey the delight of the performers.

Prince's album '1999' (a new pressing) was delivered with a tight bass control and timing fitting for both his musicianship and craftsmanship. Surface noise wasn't unduly emphasised, though of course inevitable with vinyl. The inner tracks of Laura Marling's 'Short Movie' were still marred with defects (as they were when brand new last year, I may say) but tolerable.

Which led me to going digital and Marling's latest, the brand-new 'Semper



SPECS

Triangle Elara LN01A \$1199

Connectivity: Bluetooth, analogue stereo, optical & coaxial digital audio, phono, sub out
Dimensions: 291 x 165 x 291mm
Internal power: 2 x 20W
Quoted frequency response: 56Hz-22,000Hz ±3dB

Contact: Audio Marketing
Web: www.audiomarketing.com.au

- + Excellent high fidelity sound
- + Very good imaging
- + Phono input!
- No marked centres for tone controls

Femina', played from Spotify, using a Denon streamer connected via optical to the speakers. Marling, it turns out, is getting better all the time. Her characteristic vocal, close-miked and pushed near to overload, sounded as immediate and with as much presence as my regular much more expensive system. As usual, her voice verges on sibilance in some songs, but these speakers held it just the right side of being objectionable.

I switched over, while remaining in Spotify, to Bluetooth and continued listening with the music now being delivered by a Samsung Galaxy S7 (with aptX) via Bluetooth. There was a slight degradation, to be sure, essentially a harshening and a slight loss of imaging focus, but the delivery was still musical and pleasing.

Switching to high-quality FLAC, decoded to PCM and delivered again by the Denon streamer, I played some UB40 to check out the bass. The extension and control of the bass line on *Madam Medusa* completed the music. It actually seemed fully realised, and felt like it extended beyond the 50Hz bottom end indicated in the specifications.

The optical digital audio input — and I will assume the coaxial one as well — happily accepted 24-bit, 192kHz stereo PCM when tested, so you can freely run your high definition audio into here.

I appreciated the presence of the treble and bass controls on the remote, but a clear indication of the centre position would have been useful. The volume control changed the level by a little over a decibel on each press.

Fine little speakers, then, with an excellent set of inputs for versatility, and truly hi-fi performance available. +



FACTS & FIGURES

The close-miked woofer in the LN01A delivered a flat response from 95 to above 500Hz, with its output down by six decibels at 82Hz. The output from the bass reflex port peaked around 65Hz. I'd judge the output to be down by six decibels at 43Hz, and by ten at 40Hz. Which explains a lot about the bass performance.