

Advanced Metallurgists

AAD 7001 REFERENCE MONITORS **\$19,999**



CONTACT
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SPECIFICATIONS
HF: Horn-loaded neodymium ribbon tweeter
LF: 5.25-inch woofer aluminum cone, neodymium motor 50mm voice coil
BASS LOADING: 6.5-inch passive radiator
FREQUENCY RESPONSE: 25Hz-60kHz +/-2dB
NOMINAL IMPEDANCE: 8 Ohms
POWER HANDING: Up to 300 watts
SENSITIVITY: 86dB/watt/metre
DIMENSIONS: 420 x 250 x 420mm (H/W/D)
NET WEIGHT: 35kg
STANDARD FINISH: Aquamarine tiger maple, piano black or cherry

PROS
 + Absolutely breathtaking sound quality, looks and build

CONS
 * Not for headbangers.

VERDICT
 As if from out of nowhere, AAD has waltzed into my home and stolen my heart with the Reference 7001s

Aesthetics	98%
Performance	96%
Features	90%
Functionality	95%
Price Value	90%
Overall	



American Audio Development describes the 7001s as 'mini-monitors' – surely an in-joke, I muttered as I struggled to lift each of the four cartons out of my executive hi-fi mover.

Yes, there are four cartons supplied with the Reference 7001s: two contain the speakers themselves and the other two are for some rather luscious aluminium stands that comprise part of the package.

I'll have to admit my interest was piqued, and this in turn was fuelled by the Ed's exuberance when describing them to me. "They're the most stylish speakers I've seen in ages," were his last excitable words as I heaved them into my trusty Holden.

Although an American company, AAD has a strong English connection through the presence of Phil Jones of Acoustic Energy fame. His expertise in loudspeaker design is legendary within the industry; his AE-1 and AE-2s are regarded as classic low-sensitivity British monitor loudspeakers, and even today are highly sought after on the second hand market.

It's not every day I get to bring home a \$20k pair of speakers, and I was full of anticipation and just a little nervous as I manhandled them into place in my sound room. The AAD 7001s are a true statement in luxury audio overbuild. Both front and rear baffles are hewn from a slab of missile-proof aluminium, while the cabinet proper is lined with three-centimetre lead sheets, turning the 7001s into possibly the most acoustically inert cabinets I have ever come across.

But the build quality (emphasis on quality) has to take a back seat to the aesthetic. These are simply gorgeous loudspeakers, their seemingly indestructible aluminium enclosures lending a timeless class to their looks, so much, in fact, that my partner almost swooned when they were unveiled in my listening room.

It's a two-way design with a twist: a high tech 5.25-inch aluminium-coned bass/midrange has been nicely rebated into the massive front baffle, with a very classy horn-loaded ribbon tweeter situated above. It's the bass loading that makes the 7001 a bit unique; it uses a 6.5-inch passive

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radiator to augment the bass output without the 'chuffing' of a conventionally ported box. And it certainly works, for despite the relatively modest cabinet and main driver dimensions, the 7001 generated serious bass extension in my listening room – fast, clean bass without boom or thud.

I experimented with their positioning, but found they were happiest pulled into the room well away from rear and side walls.

And what sound. Not only are they probably the least coloured speakers I have ever heard, they have a spellbinding suite of sound quality pros and hardly any cons. Beck's *Seachange* filled the room with breathtaking imaging and presence, and the exceptionally articulate bass/midrange mated perfectly with the ribbon tweeter to provide pinpoint accuracy. I can understand why the 7001s are used in upmarket sound recording studios; they have that beguiling realism and transparency the studio engineer needs to master complicated and multi-layered recordings.

And cons? Due to the relatively small main driver (these are bookshelf speakers, after all) they won't provide rock concert SPLs, but then, the 7001s were never made for headbangers.

The AAD 7001s have been created for the well-heeled music lover, but they're the finest loudspeakers I have heard in my home. Considering the sound quality and Rolls-Royce-standard build and styling, I'd consider them an investment worth making. ■ GARY PEARCE