



AAD 7001i



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AAD
Model: 7001

Immortal Shelf Life

Phil Jones has created a set of hi-end speakers that not only look visually alluring, but produce a sound that is rich in bass, especially towards the lower end.

AD is not a new name to the average Indian audiophile. Phil Jones' understanding of and approach towards the bass frequencies had definitely struck a chord with the Indian heart. We have already reviewed a couple of speakers from their entry level and upper-mid level of products, but the product that we have here is something very special. Phil Jones considers this speaker as his best design — the AAD 700li studio monitors, that is.

OUT OF THE BOX

Bookshelf speakers have never been a muse for speaker designers to experiment and showcase their aesthetic design skills as against floorstanders. Most of them feel that the small size does not really offer much of a scope to be wild and wacky in terms of creativity.

Likewise, the 700li are also a conventional box-shaped design but with a touch of bling on it. An eye-candy for sure, the classic combination of shiny silver and solid black works great guns for the 700li. Absolutely clean and neat, with minimal embellishments, the speaker is a sight to see. The tweeter, though will raise some eyebrows as the silver mesh reveals only a glimpse of the yellow ribbon beneath it. And if you ask us about build quality, then the 700li seems to be one of the sturdiest pair of bookshelves that we have got here in our studio. With each speaker weighing a good 35kg, try lifting the set alone and you will understand what we are trying to say.

TECHNOLOGY

Only after we could pull ourselves out of the 700li's silvery influence, could we get a peek inside Phil Jones' mind. He has made the 700li as a two-way design which incorporate three main components: a 5.25" aluminium-coned bass/mid-range driver, a horn loaded neodymium ribbon tweeter and a 6.5" passive radiator. The 5.25" mid-bass driver is neatly

hooked into the massive front baffle, while the classy horn-loaded ribbon tweeter sits just above the woofer. And the 6.5" passive radiator whose function is to augment the bass output finds its place on the rear panel just above the bi-wired binding posts. As compared to a bass reflex port design, the passive radiator gives you a linear and a chuffing free (distortion or the inconsistency caused because of the interaction between the port and the air that flows out of it) bass response. Well, all of this would sound very conventional and routine for a bookshelf speaker, but the 700li's uniqueness lies in its cabinet design.

The strong and sturdy cabinet's baffle and rear panel are made up of 0.50" aluminium while the rest of the cabinet is constructed of 1.5" MDF. Inside, there are 0.13" lead sheets lined to the cabinet walls

SPECIFICATIONS

DESIGN	2-way
DRIVERS	1 x 1 Neodymium Ribbon Tweeter
	1 x 5.25" Mid-Bass Woofer
FREQUENCY RESPONSE	25Hz-60kHz
NOMINAL IMPEDANCE	8Ω
POWER HANDLING	100-1000W
SENSITIVITY	86dB
DIMENSIONS (H x W x D)	16.5" x 9.8" x 16.5"
WEIGHT	35kg Each
CONTACT	www.designeraudio.in

for further rigidity and sturdiness. So that explains the 700li's heavy weight. But one can only imagine what wonders such stability can do to the shelf life of the speaker and effectively, the sound of the speaker. With speakers made of such high-quality construction, it won't be any exaggeration to expect a sound that is rock solid and consistent in all aspects forever — be it the tonal balance, the timbre or even the



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TRIED & TESTED

KANDISA



One of the best albums of the renowned Indian Band, Kandisa is a treat for anybody who loves music. It is recorded and produced extremely well where they have managed to transfer all the details just as it is. Be the drums, percussions, guitars or even the vocals.

CD



AAD 700i



musicality in the speaker. Also to tap the optimum potential of the resolution that the 700i can offer, they have used very high quality transparent audio cabling inside the speaker which is an ultra-low noise Teflon dielectric with the purest grade oxygen-free copper in a multi-strand construction.

PERFORMANCE

AAD's exclusivity is very evident right from the point we started this review. They have taken immense care that every single aspect of the speaker is carefully thought after and hence we thought that its our duty to give it an apt atmosphere to show us its true potential. In fact, the AAD 700i bookshelves require enough space and importance, just like your favourite four-wheeler neatly parked in your garage. And with the directive nature of the ribbon tweeters, it is better that you keep them far apart from each other. The further away you keep them, the wider the soundstage you get.

We had placed the 700i speakers a good 12–13ft apart with the listening seat at a distance of approximately 7–8ft from the speakers. We tried the speakers with both a valve amplifier (Quad QC 24 pre-amplifier and II classic monoblock power-amps) and later a solid state (Quad 909 stereo) amplifier and as it turns out, the key to the 700i's performance is the powerful combination of the ribbon tweeter with the 5" bass driver. Unlike many other ribbon speakers, the 700i's small size of the bass driver makes it easier for it to cope

with the lightning fast response of the ribbon tweeter for a coherent performance. Time coherency is crucial when it comes to listening to slow, laid back music like jazz, blues and even Indian classical or upbeat styles like rock, electronica, pop etc and nothing beats the experience of listening to each instrument in sync with each other with the optimum timing information.

That's what happened while we played an entire gamut of genres ranging from Patricia Barber's 'Mythologies' followed by Kailasa's 'Chaandan Mein', John Mayer's 'Where The Light Is' and Indian Ocean's 'Kandisa'. The 700i's were simply superb in their timing when paired with both, the valve amp and then, the solid state. The difference, as expected, was that in the solid state amp, the speakers exhibited more drive and enhanced snap in the sound. They opened up nicely with a certain urgency (speed) in the overall sound that resulted in its crispness. Speaking of crispness, the 700i is inarguably one of the most transparent speakers available in the market today with a dynamic range that is almost as wide as the Grand Canyon. During the super lengthy stretches of virtuoso guitar and drumming on Indian Ocean's 'Kandisa' we could effortlessly perceive each sound as soft as a pluck of the guitar string or even as smooth as a shuffle on the hi-hat.

The 700i bookshelves are primarily studio monitors (even if they don't look like one), so we did expect a flat frequency response

from them. Most of the times this flat response does not really excite a lot of us as it ends up being very mechanical without enough juice in it. But much to our delight, in the 700i's we noticed a flat yet much balanced response. The spark in the highs was nicely balanced by the tight rounded bass while the mids enjoyed equal importance, which brought the vocals to the fore. This brings us to the soundstage, which more or less was not as exciting as the other features like the power, the snappiness or neutrality of the 700i. The soundstage revealed some depth and also traces of information in the vertical plane, but the horizontal dispersion was confined to the speakers — it did not disperse in the real sense.

CONCLUSION

The AAD 700i speakers impressed us with their well rounded bass and balanced highs. The sound field is evenly spread, while they have a detailed and balanced response that does not really come across to be mechanical enough as expected from a general studio monitor. Instead, they are nicely rounded speakers with a drive or urgency (speed) that will keep you engrossed in the music for hours at a stretch. And the crowning glory is the bookshelves' build quality and their sheer power. You can be rest assured that the 700i speakers will remain your true companions ever after. ☺

Sumit Bhosle

*Including VAT



AAD	
MODEL >> 700i	
CATEGORY >> BOOKSHELF SPEAKERS	
PRICE >> Rs 6,00,000* (INCLUDING STANDS)	
WARRANTY >> 1 YEAR	
AESTHETICS ★★★★★	WHAT SAY AV? The AAD 700i demand a rich premium of a whopping Rs 6 lakhs (including the stands). Make sure that they have a dedicated room for you to take full advantage of them. And with their sharp, detailed and snappy sound spectrum, you can be sure that these speakers are worth their weight in gold.
BUILD ★★★★★	
AUDIO ★★★★☆	
EASE OF USE ★★★★★	
VFM ★★★★★	
AV MAX ★★★★★	
OVERALL SCORE	