

STYLE SPEAKER PACKAGES

PRODUCT OF THE YEAR

Monitor Audio Radius £1350

**IF AWARDS WERE** available for sheer, bloody-minded persistence, Monitor Audio would have been high up the list of contenders. The manufacturer has consistently adhered to the 'try, try again' school of product development, and here, finally, is the reward for its application.

The Radius R90-AV12 system, shown, is the third surround speaker system we've tested from Monitor Audio's smallest model range, with each earlier iteration being impressive

**"It's third-time lucky for Monitor Audio, with its brilliantly capable set-up"**

*Andy Kerr, Deputy Editor*

in part, but not entirely satisfying as a whole. But now? Third time lucky, so they say, and the R90-AV12 is so very right that it's been able to overcome the considerable challenge of the established class-leaders from B&W.

**New bassbin is the difference**

So what's changed? By comparison with the system we reviewed in May 2005, only one thing: the subwoofer. But that's good, because that's the area where our reservations were most concrete. The compact R90 satellites used for front and rear surround effects and the substantial R225 centre channel were already impressive, and didn't need any revision. It was the system's subwoofer – too slow, too lacking in definition and lacking in authority – that let the side down.

**VERDICT**

Afluent, articulate communicator with bags of flexibility, the Radius package delivers grand sonic scale from a set of miniature speakers

But not now: now, Monitor Audio has finally bitten the bullet and deployed the mighty RS W12 active subwoofer, already a confirmed favourite in these parts – it's certainly not short of pace or articulation. And the result is magical: the four satellites and centre speaker retain their lively yet composed balance, their

crisp, accurate focus and plentiful punch, while the subwoofer both underpins and complements them beautifully.

The resulting system is capable of charging through explosive set-pieces with wide-eyed enthusiasm, buoyant with bass energy, loaded with weight and drive, while remaining composed at the top-end, and allowing voices in the midrange plenty of space to breath. It's loud, too: play *The Island* at indecent volumes, and you'd be forgiven for thinking you were listening to a much larger system. That's a real achievement, so bravo Monitor Audio – and everyone else chasing an Award, let that be a lesson to you...

Don't like the black finish, shown? Five others are available



**KNOW HOW RADIUS RANGE OPTIONS**

**QUITE APART FROM** its superlative sonic capability, Monitor Audio's Radius range is available in an extraordinary number of models. For instance, if you require your system to be even more discreet than the one in our picture, you might choose to specify in-wall or in-ceiling variations on the Radius theme.

**IF THAT'S NOT** the kind of discretion you had in mind, perhaps matching R225 or R250 left, centre and right channels, designed to be wall-mounted alongside and underneath a 42in or 50in TV, would be more appropriate? Or, if you have a larger room to fill, how about using floorstanding R270 Radii all around?

Even if you decide to go with the system as illustrated, chances are you'll

need to support the satellite speakers one way or another. Monitor Audio provides two solutions: the speaker stands shown here, or a tidy wall bracket. And then, having trimmed your Radius system to your own exacting requirements, there's just the speakers' finish to think about. Here, too, there's an excellent range to choose from: black, white, silver, cherry, walnut or rosemah. So, there's no reason why you shouldn't get precisely the look you crave.

The Radius floorstands (right) are available for around £125 per pair



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