

"LISTEN BEAUTIFULLY"

Magnat

Quantum Edelstein

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Reference



- + Sound quality: outstanding
- + Workmanship: very good
- + Overall rating: very good
- + Test verdict: very good



Magnat

The Quantum Edelstein denotes a prominent, solitary position within the Quantum series of the German manufacturer Magnat. What distinguishes it is presented and experienced here. The appearance of the ultra-compact speaker shines with a successful combination of understatement in terms of stylistic elements and high-quality workmanship. This impression deepens immediately when one holds the audiophile gem for the first time. That the Quantum Edelstein is available at just €349 each evokes astonishment. How do the audio specialist from Pulheim make that happen?

The elaborate configuration begins with the housing: solid MDF on the inside, high-gloss finish on the outside, solid polished aluminium on the front. Aluminium plus very distinctive polished acrylic glass again on the bottom, both decoupled from one another. On the back, we find a bass reflex port with a particularly large opening and special coating to eliminate flow noise. The terminal screws are manufactured in a single solid design – no bi-wiring, something completely dispensable in this performance class. Better simply good than doubly simple. The name "Edelstein" not only turns out to be a marketing brainstorm, but a simple statement of fact. Such use of materials with flawless workmanship is certainly not indicative of the class. Such workmanship we usually find only in the four-figure range.

Appearance and reality

The sophistication continues on the inside of the speaker. A combined aluminium oxide-ceramic sandwich cone in the torsion-resistant, non-magnetic die-cast aluminium basket is operated as a bass-midrange speaker to pass to the coated fabric dome tweeter from 2,500 Hz. The tweeter powered by a neodymium magnet with its particularly wide surround, like the bass-midrange, is located behind a conically machined front panel – because of the optimized sound guidance. That this manner of construction also looks noble fits into the concept of the speaker available in black or white. The sound-permeable front grille is attached magnetically, nevertheless additional mounting screws are installed. Visually not the optimal solution, but a graceful, clear elegance still prevails.

In terms of craftsmanship and technical configuration, the Quantum Edelstein flexes its muscles in the area of compact shelf speakers. We will work out the extent to which the technological effort impacts the sound in painstaking listening sessions.

Precious sounding stones

After a break-in period of several days and experimenting with different setups, things took off spiritedly in a slightly angled position: On the cover version of "Cosmic Slop" from the Material album "The Third Power" which

I recently rediscovered in the depths of the record collection runs the driving, pulsating bass motif packed throughout with the appropriate authority while the melting string arrangements are reproduced soft as butter and the throaty, soulful vocals sound exactly as intended, masculine to the max!

More voices come into play. The rousing acoustic performance of their early hit "She's Gone" hidden as a bonus track on a Hall & Oates maxi single from 1990 reveals another strength of the Magnat Edelstein speakers, clear differentiation capacity and great agility. The two singers come alive in their diversity and harmonious interplay, casually executed scrubbed guitar accents create authentic live dynamics that the speakers vividly convey.

But even solid electronic material is well made. With "Lulu's Theme" on the LuLu Rouge CD "Bless You" from the Trentemøller milieu, deep Moog sequences based on a deep house beat push the track incessantly forward where sawed synthesizer filters and echo chamber cascades make for the musical illustration. Of course, the bass was still running somewhat corporeal with alternatively cross-checked floorstanding speakers, but the bass range also remains credible and intensive from these small shelf speakers.

Free of housing constraints

The Magnat Quantum Edelstein had to call upon its analytical skills again for the following recording: Archie Shepps' Jazz classic "Attica Blues" overwhelms the listener with a mistimed sound attack with conviction whose orchestrated individual elements remain well understood, and here much happens in parallel. Even though the album itself is not exactly a prime example of masterful recording technique as a 180 g vinyl rerelease, the two Edelstein units brings out the best possible. In addition, one of the principle benefits of small speakers becomes apparent: the special "unboxness", i.e., the serenity of the sound pattern.

Naturally, the fun has its limits if the level is too high and the rooms are too large. In rooms up to 25 m², the compact speakers strike up comprehensively and very lively with a touch of light-timbre at an amazing bass response that lacks little. Whose listening room is bigger, who likes it consistently louder and/or likes to venture into the bass continuum of the Dubstep should think about an additional subwoofer. Magnat has something suitable in the programme with the Quantum Sub here, too.

Seeking a partner

With a surprisingly high efficiency of 90 dB, the Quantum Edelstein is also suitable for smaller sized amplifiers, e.g., as a qualitative upgrade to the included, typically lightweight speakers of compact micro systems.

A quick check with a Class D amp of 2 x 30 watts of sine power showed decent levels and solid performance. But in their acoustic quality, Magnat speakers benefit considerably from a partner of the performance class € 500 to € 1,000. Controlled in this manner, they deliver very convincing performance. More brings more audible.

That is why we dared to pair the luxurious shelf speakers in another session with an available tube amplifier in the € 1,500 range, coincidentally also from Magnat. And lo and behold, the listening experience could be further increased. The consistency of the sound, whose inner harmony immediately impressed, supposed hardship in the top frequency range dissolved into pleasure and the bass response amazed by considerable vehemence. Undoubtedly, the speakers have a higher calling.

Positioning ideas

The special formatting, deep rather than broad, and the factory-fitted rubber feet suggest positioning the Edelstein units on the shelf or on the sideboard. Set up appropriately, no one would want to hide this speaker between books and DVD cases, the Magnats show their best side. Of course, use of feet is conceivable. In this case, however, attention should be paid to setup relatively near the wall and a floor plate with the appropriate depth if good sound and appearance are important. Because if you've chosen a Quantum Edelstein, you are certainly also concerned about visual harmony.

Conclusion

The Quantum Edelstein is a hot candidate for the pole position within the shelf speaker class up to € 700 per pair. Visually impressive and sound on the level of the best, the speaker is perfectly suited for anyone with high demands in terms of design, those who strive for the smallest dimensions and anyone who does not accept any acoustic compromise. One can congratulate the Pulheim manufacturer for a great achievement: 40 years of speaker know-how in compressed form, beautifully packaged and now with an i-fidelity.net reference logo.