

Sonodyne Sonus 3165 | Speaker | ₹25,000 Each

Budget butt-kicker

FOR Classic proportions; Smooth delivery; Extended low-end response

AGAINST Patchy build quality; Resolution could be better

As the crown jewel of the Indian hi-fi manufacturing industry, Sonodyne has been at the top of its game for a while now.

That while started a few years back when they decided to focus on the consumer side of the business as much as their already successful professional line of active speakers. But now that things are already in overdrive, they are adamant to replace every piece of the puzzle with shiny new examples of what their engineering team can achieve. The Sonus 3165 is a new design that has more than its fascia revamped. The 3-way design consists of four (all-new) drivers, an all-new cabinet with improved bracing and even new crossovers. What catches your attention at first though are the fresh aesthetics that have been spruced up for domestic purposes and easier approval from other members of the family. A smart, screw-less front baffle is finished in a dark shade of grey while the handsome cabinet itself is available as a black ash or rosewood veneer.

one that can decide how involving the music listening experience will be with these.

Hooked up to our resident Hegel integrated amplifier and the Elac Discovery Music server, the Sonus' were placed 2 ft from the side wall, slightly toed-in and 3ft from the front wall, giving them plenty of breathing space to impress us with their imaging and soundstaging skills. Starting with John Mayer's lush new production, *Love on the Weekend*, the bass extension immediately grabs you by surprise and sounds more like a single 12in driver moving serious amounts of air instead of two quick 6.5 inches. There is a slight hint of chestiness to the upper mid-bass which can be cleared to a certain extent if you set the toe-in angle just right. And when you do, the imaging and sound staging are quite a revelation for a speaker its price. The resolution from the HF drivers is satisfactory but it strikes a chord by exhibiting a smooth response with no listening fatigue even after extended

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Coming from the professional universe, like all Sonodyne speakers, even this passive design has hints of serious ability. The gentle waveguide surrounding the 1in dome tweeter is engineered to aid in wider dispersion and efficiency while the drivers are now designed for even greater extension (read abuse) and a wider frequency response. Even the supplied spikes are now higher quality with the cups made of polished chrome too. Build quality is generally good, but the front baffle does flex a little upon provocation. Around the back, a fancy metal name plate, bi-wirable binding posts and twin ports complete the package. While, this definitely helps with the bass extension, it means that the Sonus 3165 floorstander is definitely a loudspeaker that likes to be placed out into the room, away from the corners. The Sonus 2000, which was the predecessor to the 3000 series also had a similar driver complement, but the new 3165 has a slimmer and a much more smarter profile too. But that's not all we're interested in are we? With Sonodyne's rich heritage, its sonic prowess is what we really cared for. First impressions don't fail us. The 3165 is fairly easy to place around the room but the twin ports mean that the bass response can be uneven at times, depending on your preferred location. Experimentation, like with all loudspeakers is the key here, but a critical



sessions. Moving on to *Gospel* by Alicia Keys, the drum-loop-laden track with a piano hook and her powerful vocals filled our room with energy that shows off the dynamic capability of the 3165 and that is its most endearing quality. It's adept at keeping time and maintaining rhythm with whatever music you throw at them. The coherence from the drivers doesn't give away the fact that this is a 3-way design and is proof that the driver selection has been obsessive to ensure that each of them work perfectly in tandem with each other and also the crossover. On the same album, *She don't really care* is a great test for bass boom and things falling apart, but the Sonodyne keeps it together with agility and tautness that never ever calls for help from our resident REL subwoofer. The low-end is well weighted and shows off the obvious benefits of using smaller drivers by avoiding the usual pitfalls.

Moving on to more technical recordings like *A time for love* by Mellisa Walker shows a couple of chinks in the armour. While the 1in dome tweeter is high on smoothness and the 5in midrange allows for a seamless blend into the lower registers, the harmonics have a hard time leaving the confines of the cabinet, especially at lower volume levels. Shift to a more commercial recording like *Jam* from Michael Jackson and it places sounds around the room at remote locations, creating a holographic image that is super entertaining but it highlights the speakers' selective behaviour towards the genre of music. It's best suited to commercial music that is dynamic, electronic and it can certainly play loud without ever sounding strained. For a pair of speakers costing as much as a premium portable Bluetooth speaker, this is truly an achievement and a showcase of what Sonodyne can do given its considerable experience and resources. If you're in the market for a no-nonsense pair of speakers that are scalable to a full 7.1 system and beyond, this is the perfect starting point!

WHAT HI-FI? Says

VERDICT Dynamic and entertaining, if not the most refined. The Sonus 3165 is nevertheless a revelation at its asking price with a big, effortless sound

TECH SPECS

Design 3-way vented **Drivers** 2 x 6in woofers, 1 x 5in midrange, 1 x 1in dome tweeter **Sensitivity** 92dB **Nominal Impedance** 8ohms **Frequency Response** 50Hz - 20kHz **Dimensions (WHD)** 210 x 981 x 292 **Weight** 19.2kgs



The rather plain jane looks of the Sonus are timeless in design and suit every kind of decor