



Our Answer to the Stereophile Fremont Review

The Fremont loudspeaker represents a true leap forward in loudspeaker design. Like many innovations, however, there are some associated caveats. Because The Fremont loudspeaker has more actual *moving-mass* than almost every high-end loudspeaker available, including those which are significantly larger and pricier, care must be exercised in their installation and placement. Otherwise, the advantages of the design may not be fully realized. The unmatched transient response and speed of The Fremont result in not only more detail, but also better low-octave phase linearity. Marrying this type of speed with about one pound of moving mass presents a specific and unique requirement in that this speaker **must** be spiked and leveled...if not, the *dynamics, tonal balance, and transparency* may be severely compromised. Additionally, in many instances, the upper bass could become woolly and entirely over-emphasized. The degree to which the upper-bass would be *over-emphasized* would remain in direct contrast to the degree to which everything else would be *de-emphasized*. The amount of sheer energy produced by The Fremont loudspeaker system results in a correspondingly enormous amount of energy that must be dissipated through the entirety of the driver/cabinet/stand combo as a whole...which necessitates an effective de-coupling of the speaker assembly from the room.

Unfortunately, although we informed the Stereophile staff about these requirements when we delivered The Fremonts, “real world considerations” apparently took precedence: in order to avoid marring the floor’s finish by employing the provided spikes, the speakers were tested under less than ideal circumstances. The floor was spared, but the layer of plush material upon which the speakers rested created frequency and phase anomalies. Despite this, however, there was much to like about the sound:

- *“The Fremont’s...took my breath away”, and “sounded as open and dynamic as anything else [I’ve] heard.” They “produced the sweetest upper midrange and best-defined bass at reduced volume levels that I’d heard in some time.” Dr. Larry Greenhill experienced “eye-popping pace, impact, and,” he also mentioned “the bass seemed to extend much deeper than the warble tests had suggested.”*

Dr. Greenhill added that The Fremonts have “jaw-dropping pace’n’rhythm and...glowed with rich timbres” and had “a natural vocal timbre.” They are “blazingly fast and extremely loud, but coherent and focused...the Fremont’s superb dynamic range enabled it to reproduce organ music with a realism and a power that swept me away...open and perfectly imaged”

He continued by revealing that “the Fremont’s tonal balance produced much less listening fatigue than the treble emphasis of some other full-range speaker,” and concluded by sharing that he “was rewarded with tight, tuneful bass, speed, ear-popping dynamics, raw energy, and freedom from overload. I was delighted with the Fremonts...the Fremonts will bring rock-concert realism to your home”

We've made no secret of the fact that this is a ***new technology***...and what we firmly believe to be outside, and far above, the old paradigm of existing loudspeaker designs and more traditional technologies. We've also emphasized particularly that The Fremont's phase characteristics are much closer to those of live instruments than virtually anything else available. When measuring something that employs radically different technology, special care must be taken to ensure that the speaker is measured in a manner that more accurately represents real-world conditions, and also represents what the listener would hear.

Years ago, there was a company that produced cassette decks that sounded better than the others, but measured "bright", with an evident rising high end. It was discovered that the standard tape used to measure playback performance actually had a rising high end to compensate for the deficiencies of the other decks! The reviewers and testers were apparently unaware that the "standard" by which the superior decks were measured, was actually designed to accommodate others' imperfections. Of course, anyone who heard those cassette decks knew in an instant how superior they were.

We only blame ourselves for not communicating both before, and after the testing, about the absolute need to adhere to specialized setup practices. We cannot, nor do we wish to, blame Stereophile for this mishap. We can only do our best to support the reviewer and their set-up process better in the future. We can certainly promise to communicate more frequently and clearly with future reviewers.

Tierry Budge is an incredible genius in the world of audio, and we at Escalante Design consider ourselves privileged to be working with him. He has the rare ability to hear the truth in music and translate what he hears into the realm of *the technical* in order to share what he hears with the audio world. The Fremont represents the fruits of his labor, and has been hailed as one of the most accurate and musical transducers ever. It is a Bugatti® in a world of Mazda® *Miatas*® (no offense), but, like a Bugatti®, it must be provided the proper means, in terms of setup, in order to realize its full potential. Does this mean that the purchaser must spend megabucks on room treatments and kilowatt amps? No, but it does mean that care must be exercised when performing speaker placement, regardless of the system or room. The Fremonts are the most musically and emotionally engaging, and in the widest range of audio systems and listening environments, when they are set up properly.

The Stereophile Fremont review has been a great learning opportunity for us, especially as it was published just before a major recession plagued the world economy. We will be publishing additional technical information and specifications in our new literature and on our new website to help you begin or continue your education of this extraordinary technology which is so very dedicated to the truth in music. Once again, we invite everyone to...Come Listen

