

*Renowned Mastering Engineer*  
**STEVE HOFFMAN**

Shares his thoughts about  
**Escalante Design's Fremont loudspeaker!**

*"...I became lost in the music. [I] didn't even realize where I was for a while. That almost never happens with me!"*

*August 2007: After a few weeks with The Fremont™ loudspeakers in his reference system in Camarillo, CA, Steve Hoffman shared his impressions with Escalante Design.*

E.D.: Where did you first hear The Fremont™ loudspeakers, what caught your interest then...?

**STEVE: I first heard the Fremont at 2007 CES/T.H.E. Show when Mike Verretto (Concert Fidelity) called me in to give a listen. I never care much for the sound at shows but I did notice a nice pleasing tonality and an interesting looking design. Mike thought I should have a pair for my work and made it happen.**

E.D.: There are audiophile/hifi grade "reference" products and then there are true professional reference products used daily by recording or mastering engineers like you. How do you feel The Fremont™ performs in each of these categories and what do you think The Fremonts have to offer to each of these end users?

**STEVE: The Fremont is a good blend of Audiophile and Studio speaker to me. It has the midrange lifelike "sock" of the classic studio monitor with the natural finesse of the audiophile speaker. A good blend of both; the "sock" can be smoothed down or increased a bit with different electronics and wiring at will. The speakers are very sensitive to change in electronics. This is a very good thing as most audiophile speakers have one "sound" and that's it no matter what electronics one uses.**



E.D.: How have you utilized our speakers in the recording/mastering/engineering process, and with what recordings?

**STEVE: I have been using the speakers now for about a month on many famous projects, all of them secret (at the moment)!**

E.D.: There are a lot of speakers out there that perform very well in one or more aspects of musical reproduction. At Escalante Design we are striving for a balanced approach by engineering our systems to reproduce music in its totality: transient onset and decay, uncompressed dynamics, phase, imaging, frequency response, timbre, each and every order of harmonics. We believe these should all be as natural as possible. Another design goal of our products is to successfully bridge the gap between the *Reference/Pro Audio* and the *High-End Audio* worlds – How are we doing and what could we do better?

**STEVE: I would say you nailed it. I'd like to see a 15" version!!!**

E.D.: At Escalante Design, we strive to come close enough to live music with our products for you (the end listener) to just be able to listen without noticing that you are listening to equipment – How are we doing and what could we do better?



**STEVE: As above; you nailed it. I always notice that I'm listening to equipment (being a mastering engineer) but I was playing a classical CD on them a few days and I became lost in the music. Didn't even realize where I was for a while. That almost never happens with me!**

E.D.: At the end of the day (and for you, we imagine that day usually includes a lot of listening on multiple systems), how has The Fremont™ changed the way you listen to music, if at all?

**STEVE: I am using the Fremonts as my final reference speaker. That says it all. It's the last word before my masterings hit the market. It jolly well has to sound damn good.**

E.D.: Finally, please feel free to list or mention any related experiences or suggestions that you would like to share with Escalante Design or future end users of Escalante products. Thanks – Escalante Design

**STEVE: The Fremont reproduces the midrange (the heart of music) very well. Some of the best mids I've ever heard, either in a studio monitor or an audiophile speaker. It's so hard to get that right. If a speaker blows that, for me, everything else is pointless. The magic of the music is in the midrange!**

The Fremont has an uncanny way of drawing you into the music. Usually when I'm checking out a new speaker I will listen to a minute or so of my "usual suspects" CD's and LP's to get a handle on the sound. I found myself (much to my surprise) playing the familiar songs all the way through from beginning to end, not wanting to stop. This is high praise coming from me.

The little Audio Points upgrade helped make the bass a bit less foggy and thereby helps the crucial lower mids. Note that the speakers do not have foggy bass but in my upstairs listening room the floor is wood and I need all the isolating help I can get. The Audio Points were a crucial upgrade for me.

The Fremont stands are really nifty. They do their job well and look nice. They're easy to adjust and aesthetically striking. The finish on the speakers is flawless; the build quality is top notch. At first I was surprised that there was no bi-wiring option but if this is how the designer has made it I'm totally fine with that.



I like how the grills just stay on with hidden magnets. I've found that listening with the grills on (in my listening room) sounds just about right. With the grills off there is too much wall bouncing for me. Of course this is just in my room. Somewhere else it would be different.

I have an itching to try these speakers in my two other audio rooms in the house but at 200 lbs each, forget it! They will stay right where they are; I have over 100 projects to work on with them. I honestly can't wait!



**Escalante Design Loudspeakers**  
3585 N. University Ave. Suite 200, Provo, Utah 84604  
P: 801.373.4712  
E: [people@escalantedesigns.com](mailto:people@escalantedesigns.com)  
URL: [www.EscalanteDesign.com](http://www.EscalanteDesign.com)  
Dealers contact: [info@worldhifigroup.com](mailto:info@worldhifigroup.com)

Visit Steve's fan site <http://www.SteveHoffman.info/equipment.html> to learn more about him and his work in the recording industry etc.

*Notes on **Audio Points™**, when used with **The Fremont™***

Please note that Audio Points™ do not improve the performance of The Fremont™ in every room and/or in every setup scenario. Trust your own ears or those of an authorized dealer to decide whether these accessories are right for your system. Escalante Design recommends:



- Audio Points™ Coupling Discs (part# APCD2-A)



- Audio Points™ (part# .2AP.7D)

You may find more information regarding Audio Points™ products and where to purchase them at <http://www.audiopoints.com>, or you can read more about the Audio Points™ Upgrade in The Fremont™ Manual at <http://www.escalantedesigns.com/viewer/docsmanager/documents.asd>