

HECO

Celan GT 702

"The Heco is a textbook
TEST WINNER.
A magnificently rich sound
that is extremely good value
for money."

stereoplay
Highlight

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Price/Performance: outstanding
Sound: Top class

HECO[®] Celan GT 702



“Without a shadow of doubt the hi-fi world has become more complicated: Heco and KEF are traditional speaker manufacturers with their head offices located in Germany and England respectively. However, they have both been predominantly manufacturing their products in the Far East for some time.

Besides the associated costs this is due to the ownership structure. KEF has been owned by the Chinese company Gold Peak since 1992, whereas Heco has been part of the American Audiovox Group for almost ten years. Both of the manufacturers, however, are still developing their products in Europe.

This means local purchasers are able to get their hands on state-of-the-art products, which are produced impeccably, at extremely competitive prices. The chassis and housings of both the Celan GT 702 and the R 500 are extravagantly elaborate.

The question of what comparable speakers would cost that are “made in Germany” is academic, as there are only a few suppliers of chassis and crossover components in the respective countries.

Both of the floor-standing speakers exhibit impeccable workmanship, even in areas that are not immediately noticeable. Heco’s speakers in particular, even though they are around € 200 cheaper per pair than the KEF units, turn quality standards that have been around for decades on their head.

The GT 702’s housing is embellished with a high gloss finish. In addition to a black and white veneer, the speakers are also available in an ‘Espresso’ wood finish at no extra cost. The sides are gently curved, which creates an elegant appearance and enhances rigidity.

Beautifully designed fascias

While both manufacturers utilise low-resonance basket constructions, the speakers themselves differ in terms of detail. Heco has invested in cast aluminium mounts and front panels, which are elegantly refined at visible areas. ...

The front grilles on both models, which are upholstered in sound permeable fabric, are held in place by hidden magnets. This ensures no sockets or pins disrupt the visual appearance of the speakers or the sound produced. The connecting terminals are both compatible with bi-wiring configurations and are easy to access. Heco also offers an additional feature in the shape of a treble boost for highly damped rooms.

... Heco has set the spikes in a discreet base plate, whose area is equivalent to the speaker’s footprint.

In both units the crossover divides the signal into three individual ranges. However, while Heco’s unit operates with rather steep-flanked filters and component-rich switching circuits, the KEF unit prefers smoother-acting filters that have less of an impact on the signal and demand more of the chassis.

Heco’s method avoids the generation of excessive overlapping zones between adjacent drivers and creates a clearly defined acoustic centre, which is located pretty much directly between the tweeter and midrange.

No time lag

As the acoustic centres of both individual systems are at exactly the same location, the distance to the listener’s ear is independent of the frequency and solid angle. In other words, the listener is provided with all of the tonally sensitive frequencies simultaneously. Heco’s two-part mid/treble range unit achieves this at a relatively slight angle, which means the speaker setup and listening location needs to be selected more meticulously.

The spatially separated construction, however, also has its advantages. The magnetic fields do not tend to interfere as much and the chassis do not generate any reciprocal sounds. The Heco and KEF units also differ in terms of the cones used. The R-series utilises rigid specimens which are predominantly manufactured from aluminium and magnesium. The Celan GT 702 uses a soft fibre cone for the tweeter, which does not reverberate significantly at any frequency. The cone drivers are equipped with kraft paper, a very popular, natural material amongst high-end users, which has a reputation for enabling particularly vivid sound patterns. The use of this material has been tried and tested in the significantly larger Heco Statement, which is quite rightly regarded as the epitome of liveliness for a moderate price.

Both Heco and KEF have utilised modern simulation software to trim their chassis for maximum performance. In the new Celan series the aim has primarily been to process complex signals finer and cleaner than in previous generations.

Both speaker candidates are very interesting, as they are both derived from larger models that have proven successful in earlier tests, where they emerged as masters of their class. ...

True to the saying “The apple doesn’t fall far from the tree”, both the Celan 702 and R 500 put forward a masterful performance - each in their own special way: Both achieved a sound level that, until now, has been the reserve of much more expensive speakers.

Heco emphasises liveliness

Heco’s speakers get to work in a terrifically complex and direct, almost impetuous manner, that is gripping, yet calm at all times. Ultimately, our testers had to resort to significantly more expensive (and larger) speakers, such as the Vento 890.2 from Canton, to find a similar performance in terms of liveliness and enthusiasm.

The combination of a large, flexible dome and audiophile kraft paper midrange generate a sound that is reminiscent of the speed and direct manner exhibited by speakers with broadband systems. However, these cannot be seriously recommend, as their headstrong angular behaviour means they do not deliver an even energy balance - and therefore no natural timbres.

Such side effects are foreign to the Celan 702, and the testers were able to enjoy the speakers’ outstanding temperament with tonally sensitive classical pieces - with high resolution and impressive, natural timbres. Some very deep bass tracks from Swiss duo Yello brought the testers back to the earth with a bang. This is down to the fact that the two 17 cm bass drivers are only able to reproduce the physically perceptible grandeur that is generated by world class speakers with some compromise in terms of depth and punch. But let’s not get carried away here. For its size the GT 702 generates a perfectly respectable performance in the lower frequencies.

...

At the end of the day we are left with two highly talented products, with Heco’s offering just coming out on top. The Celan GT 702 is a textbook test winner. A magnificently rich sound that is extremely good value for money.”