

AUDIO TEST

STEREO | STREAMING | HIGH-END

"... extremely dynamic speaker with excellent bass and powerful treble ranges"



HECO

CONCERTO GROSSO

The result:
EXCELLENT

Price/performance:
VERY GOOD

Bass reproduction:
11.5/12

Dynamics:
11/11



HECO

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Pure dynamism

At 1.35 meters high and weighing in at over 63 kilograms, the Concerto Grosso from Heco is one of the largest loudspeakers that we have ever been able to test in our editorial department. We'll also tell you if it really is one of the great ones in terms of sound.

On the 65th anniversary of the company in 2014, the high-end craftsmen at Heco wanted to set a new milestone in loudspeaker design and introduced the Concerto Grosso for this purpose, the largest, classiest and most expensive speaker produced by the company.

The top model of the Heco loudspeaker range measures an impressive 135.2 cm high, 32.4 cm wide and 61.7 cm deep. It is sloped to the rear slightly on 4 height-adjustable metal spikes screwed into the solid stand. Help should be sought when screwing in the spikes and setting up the speaker as its weight of 63.1 kg could otherwise damage your back, especially as there are no carrying handles or bass reflex openings for lifting it from the hip. Damage to the floor is also prevented by the rubber sleeves provided for the spikes. On account of its huge dimensions alone, the Concerto Grosso fits best in large open spaces. There it can spread its irresistible charm. Gentle curves create the elegance of the Golden Twenties, while the straight lines at the front stop it from slipping into the category of kitsch. The front has an aristocratic look due to the contrast between the heavy black piano lacquer and the shiny metallic frames of the three speakers, which can, as an option, be covered with the grille supplied. The large woofer and bass radiator openings covered with black fabric on the protruding sides are striking. Fitted to the back are the metal-framed and latticed openings of the mid-range section (top) and the connector terminal made of solid sheet aluminum (bottom). With 6 gold-plated banana-jack compatible screw terminals, the Concerto Grosso is bi-wiring, bi-amping, as well as tri-wiring and tri-amping compatible. This varied connectivity is not a given even in the high-end segment. If you want to operate the speaker in the conventional way, you should use the cable bridges supplied. An additional connector terminal top right enables the treble to be boosted by 2 decibels (dB), while another terminal right center allows the mid-

range to be enhanced by 2 dB – this enables the Concerto Grosso to be adapted to special spatial conditions or your own personal taste. The perfectly crafted enclosure made from MDF panels is fitted with multiple bracing inside. A phase and impedance-compensated crossover is provided to supply the individual loudspeakers with the necessary signals. A special feature of the Heco Concerto Grosso is the bass system with the 300-millimeter woofer and the passively driven bass radiator opposite, which have been fitted into the protruding side sections of the enclosure for acoustic reasons (sidefire design). This combination is intended to extend the low bass range down to 16 Hertz (Hz). For the sub-bass, the woofer has been fitted with a long-stroke rubber bead and a highly resilient 50-millimeter voice coil. Heco recommends aligning the subwoofers in the stereo triangle inwards. If problems arise with the bass range in this setup, reversing the order may provide a remedy. The woofer has, like the 200 millimeter woofer, a stable die-cast aluminum cage, with the magnetic system optimized with technology from Klippel®. The woofers and subwoofers operate with reinforced kraft paper cones. On account of the human voice mainly being in the mid frequency range, our hearing is particularly sensitive in that area. For this reason, Heco has provided its Concerto Grosso with a rear open compression-free mid-range chamber, the damping of which is aimed to ensure lifelike voice reproduction. The woofer itself has been fitted with a particularly taught paper/wool cone as well as a coated fabric bead to minimize signal losses. A selected 30-millimeter high-energy tweeter is designed to open the sound of the Concerto Grosso upwards, reportedly up to the ultrasonic range of no less than 53 Kilohertz (kHz). The Heco Concerto Grosso is therefore very clearly aimed at an audiophile audience looking for that special sound experience. Because conventional CD files are truncated above around 20 kHz. For the reproduction of higher frequencies, the loudspeaker should be fed with higher resolution audio files, which are now very much the current trend. Although it has not yet been clarified conclusively in scientific terms whether our hearing can perceive such high frequencies at all, it is possible that improvements in the representation of space do occur through high-frequency overtones.

The Heco Concerto Grosso made an extremely dynamic overall impression in our sound-optimized listening room. It presents quiet passages with polite restraint and rises to its powerful top form for the loud section. A real treat for classical music fans, with this music genre living from the emotions brought about by the dynamics. The large frequency range that can be reproduced by the Concerto Grosso is also striking. Its forte is clearly in the area of bass reproduction in this regard. The deep bass ranges are particularly powerful and assert themselves well although the human ear has natural difficulties in perceiving this frequency band. However, the Heco flagship reproduces even the lowest pedal basses of church organs with playful ease to flatter any organ recording. Another thing we found positive was that there are hardly any disruptive resonances in the bass range due to the solid enclosure structure. The lower mid tones and, therefore, the basic tones of many instruments are somewhat less present while, on the other hand, the upper mid tones and trebles come to the fore. In orchestral recordings, this emphasizes the brass section which, in conjunction with the considerable dynamics of the speaker, leads to loud passages in Wagner's "Flying Dutchman" sounding almost a little too energetic. If you do not want this effect in your listening experience, you can counteract it with the option of boosting the mid range. Swapping the two loudspeakers over may also remedy this. The very present high tones result in clear reproduction of the consonants "S", "F" and "T", rendering the voices in singing and speech recordings vividly in the foreground, though they can come across as somewhat sharp in individual cases. The location of sound phenomena in the horizontal plane functions very well.

To summarize, the Concerto Grosso from Heco can be characterized as an extremely dynamic speaker with excellent bass ranges and powerful trebles which cuts a good figure in a room of the appropriate size both visually and in terms of sound. With Heco's integrated level adjustment option, you can keep the elegant speaker under control to make sure its performance is not too headstrong or powerful. This is something that can happen in small areas because these speakers are built for real size.