

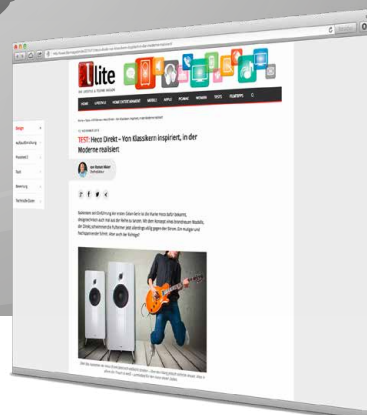
"Heco Direkt - inspired by classics,
realised in the modern age"

HECO

Direkt



- + SOUND: **1.0**
- + PRACTICAL APPLICATION: **1.0**
- + CONFIGURATION: **1.1**
- + CLASS: **TOP CLASS**
- + PRICE/PERFORMANCE: **VERY GOOD**



HECO

Ever since the introduction of the first Celan range, if not before, the Heco brand has been well-known for being a bit more out of the ordinary with regard to design. Right now, however, the Pulheim-based company is going entirely against the flow with the concept of a brand-new model. A courageous and very exciting step. But a step in the right direction?

I'm sure you know what I mean.... You see something nice - shoes, clothes, jewellery, a car or something for the home - and it inevitably become an object of desire. Better known as the "I have to have it" effect. Also happens to me now and again. The last time was around six months ago at the High-End trade fair in Munich when I came face to face with Heco's latest loudspeaker project, the Direkt, for the first time. Impressed by its exceptional looks, appeal and sound performance, the reasonably priced speaker in relative terms - we're talking about €1,500 each here - was definitely one of the highlights for me at the 2015 trade fair. Anyone who has been there knows what this means because there is certainly no shortage of impressive loudspeakers on offer, costing as much as 20,000, 50,000 or even 100,000 euro. ...

Heco Direkt: Courage for something new

First of all, the most obvious: The appearance of the Direkt is a polarising one. ...

... Instead of the typical tower structure, the Heco is - with a height of almost exactly one metre, which is quite normal for standard floor-standing speakers - based on a kind of upright cuboid with rounded corners and sloping slightly to the rear. One that also presents itself in a precise 2:1 format with a front height of 90 cm and 45 cm wide. It is the width that is really surprising because, at 45 cm as mentioned, the baffle in the Direkt spans roughly double the width compared with normal floor-standing speakers. This not only looks good - at least in my opinion - it also offers completely new possibilities in terms of chassis assembly. And the developers in Pulheim have taken advantage of this is an effective way to get the best sound.

One thing the Direkt certainly isn't: a pure design object! On the contrary, because the unusual enclosure concept also involves completely new approaches with regard to producing the best possible sound. Used in this mode for treble reproduction, for example, is an imposing 30 mm diameter dome tweeter located in the centre of an aluminium-turned recess. This combination provides a twofold advantage: "scatter loss" is minimised on account of the targeted sound conduction, while higher volume levels can also be achieved with comparatively low power output. All of this makes the tweeter, which is also driven by a double magnet, an absolutely outstanding component. Located right below this clever structure is what is probably the most striking feature of the Direkt, the low mid-range drivers. "Enthroned" would be the more appropriate description of its placement because, with a diameter of 275 millimetres, this dynamic loudspeaker is in itself already wider than most floor-standing speakers, including their enclosure. ...

A product with physical depth of sharpness that cannot be pigeonholed

... The preparations have been completed, as has the warm-up time already mentioned. So now it's time for the Direkt to finally be put to the hi-fi sound test. No sooner said than done. Even though the intro to Mark Knopfler's "Don't Forget Your Hat" has hardly begun, my thoughts go back immediately to the last High-End trade fair in Munich. Even though it's a completely different song, the Direkt is once again able to provide me with an almost completely self-contained, homogeneous and ordered soundscape that immediately makes listening to music even more enjoyable. ...

... Quite an exceptional performance, quickly making it clear that the Heco developers have very evidently been successful in finding the perfect balance between substance and high audio transparency! That is simply amazing! What impresses me even more though in this context, and all the more so after the change of title to "Bombtrack" by Rage Against The Machine, is the huge forward thrust and precision in tone that is now made accessible to me. Admittedly: a somewhat harder variation! And here, reproduced in a simply inspirational way.

Dramatic deep bass, hard-hitting drums - all peppered with wild electric guitar riffs and dynamics which will probably make sophisticates run away and rockers cheer with enthusiasm. Especially when the aggressive vocals of Zack de la Rocha, leader and singer of the Californian band, stand out from the metal sounds surrounding him as if cast in stone, as experienced here. But that's not all because, although the Direkt displays an astonishingly high level of activity even at the lower frequency levels - though without entering the very deepest stage of the bass range - it also whips up the rich kick basses of this power song in a snappy way, projecting them into our listening room with an extremely solid effect. Attributes that may, perhaps, suggest a certain brand sound. "No, no, no" is all I can reply to this because, despite all the pleasure and enthusiasm, the Hecos cannot be pigeonholed as "prettily playful" or be described simply as "window dressers". In short: they do a whole lot of things right, but without acting in an analytical or exaggeratedly temperamental way, instead going about their task in a comparatively rigorous and agile manner and simply ensuring enjoyment of the music. Any of virtually any music, if I may say so! ...

Conclusion

Although the Direkt is polarising in its looks, it offers a convincing and coherent concept with, at the same time, high material quality and a first-class finish. Its slightly hinted retro style may not please everyone - but the sound performance certainly will because it is undoubtedly sublime. Those who like boldly designed speakers and are looking for loudspeaker models that are top of the range in terms of sound but also affordable simply have to take a good look at and, above all, listen to the Heco Direkt.

