

HEIMKINO

"...On account of its dynamic capabilities, impeccable tonality and firm three-dimensionality, the Heco Elementa range can be recommended for discerning home cinema applications - and hi-fi systems - without reservation."

HECO Elementa 5.1A



2 x Heco Elementa 700
2 x Heco Elementa 300
1 x Elementa Center 30
1 x Sub 3830A

HECO

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Heimkino 4-5 | 2017



SOLID BASIS

A new line has been added to the extensive loudspeaker programme offered by the well-established manufacturer HECO. With the new Elementa range, HECO wants to appeal to demanding hi-fi and home cinema fans who, besides the best sound quality, also attach importance to an appealing exterior. HECO is a highly prestigious brand with a long acoustic tradition. From the time of its foundation in 1949, HECO has invented and used many technologies that are now taken for granted, such as dome tweeters and long-throw surrounds. The image of the HECO brand is still characterised by innovative technologies, as in the brand-new Elementa range, combining modern design with state-of-the-art driver technology.

The name of the new HECO range says it all, with the term Elementa derived from the Latin word for "basis", and is intended to underline the straightforward, simple style and design of these loudspeakers. In the case of the Elementa range, straightforward means that great importance has been attached to honest-to-goodness acoustic performance, consciously doing without exotic materials and fancy design. Our 5.1 set consisting of 2 Elementa 700 floor-standing loudspeakers, a pair of Elementa 300 shelf-top speakers, one Elementa 30 centre speaker and an Elementa Sub 3830A active subwoofer was definitely not geared towards cost savings, nor was it boring in terms of style and design. Quite the opposite: The more timelessly elegant speakers display an outstanding silk-matt varnish surface, have softly rounded edges, very high-quality connection terminals and, in the case of the floor-standing loudspeakers, even sturdy feet made of solid aluminium. The weight class of the Elementa loudspeakers also suggests that no savings have been made on the wall thickness of the enclosure or the internal bracing. First impression of the Elements set: Unobtrusive, very high quality and therefore ideally suited to the living room - a solid basis.

DRIVER ASSEMBLY

In the approximately 110 cm high front loudspeakers, the roughly 370 mm rear loudspeakers and the 51 cm wide centre speaker, a large high-performance tweeter with a 28 mm silk dome ensures adequate dynamics in the treble ranges. Its double magnet system delivers sufficient drive power and ferrofluid in the magnet gap helps to cool the voice coil at extremely high levels. HECO also uses proven HECO technology for the low to mid-range driver in the Elementa models: All cone drivers have membranes made of especially long-fibre paper, a material that has proven its worth for decades, both in terms of metrology and in listening tests, as being ideal for producing flawless sound. As all the loudspeakers in the set have extensively identical drivers - except for the membrane diameters -, this provides a good basis for balanced, homogeneous sound from the overall 5-1 set.

SUBWOOFER

With the Elementa Sub 3830A subwoofer, HECO has opted for a more narrow, though high and equally deep enclosure format.

This means that the powerful subwoofer actually looks less bulky and also provides space for a large bass driver as well as an equally huge passive membrane, with the two chassis built into the two side walls virtually back to back. It is a well-known fact that using a passive membrane offers bass-reflex tuning benefits, but does not tend towards flow noise at high levels as with conventional bass-reflex tubes.

LABORATORY AND PRACTICAL USE

In the acoustic laboratory, the Elementa loudspeakers stand out through their very balanced frequency response and low distortion. The Elementa 700's and 300's even display superb dispersion characteristics at an angle, which is at least a theoretical indication of excellent sound in real listening rooms. The Sub 3830A subwoofer also scores points with a lower cut-off frequency of around 35 Hertz and plenty of dynamic reserves. An additional "low bass booster" can be controlled in an optimum manner at 40 hertz to adapt individually to the listening room. Unfortunately, the Elementa Center 30, like all similar horizontally designed centre speakers, displays a decline between 1 kHz and 4 kHz at measurements below an angle of 30 degrees. In our test cinema, we first allow the Elementa set the usual warm-up phase over the weekend in order to achieve maximum sound performance. We could then get started with careful levelling of all the channels to normal level. Right from the start, the Elementa set played as a unified whole, with no fine-tuning needed on being positioned on account of the HECO set being absolutely uncritical in terms of set-up thanks to the excellent dispersion characteristics of the front systems and the tonally identical-sounding centre speaker. If a little bit more "kick" is desired in the treble range, a 2 dB louder treble level can be set via the bi-wiring bridge on the front systems; there is a similar possibility for the subwoofer, which can be fine-tuned individually by 40 hertz in the frequency range via a rotary knob. However, we preferred the Elementa set with the "neutral" setting, as this best demonstrated its honest-to-goodness nature and the delicate resolution of tones. The HECO units are also among the best in terms of dynamics. With "Avatar", the Elementa set really made the listening room shudder in the "tree-felling" scene with the rockets, demonstrating its ability to produce huge levels in a gripping and forceful manner without losing anything in the way of precision and sensitivity.

CONCLUSION

Heco has achieved a great success in the loudspeaker segment with the new Elementa set. This timelessly elegant 5.1 system stands out with its excellent finish and is a real highlight in acoustic terms, in particular, thanks to the high-quality chassis components together with HECO's legendary long-fibre paper membranes. On account of its dynamic capabilities, impeccable tonality and firm three-dimensionality, the Heco Elementa range can be recommended for discerning home cinema applications - and hi-fi systems - without reservation.