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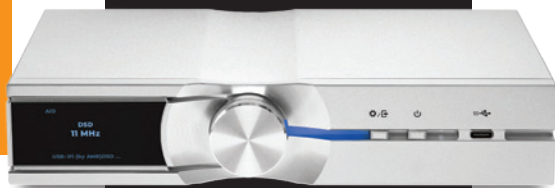
## RAIDHO TD3.8 YES, YOU CAN BUY A THRILL



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ROGIER VAN BAKEL

# Raidho TD3.8

## LOUDSPEAKER

In my high-school days, I visited a friend whose well-to-do dad proudly demonstrated his new Quad ESL system for us. First up was a recording of a man with heavy footsteps traversing the space from left to right. Next came a speeding police car, siren engaged, complete with Doppler tail. I found it impressive, and a little lame at the same time. My friend and I, in love with our own artsiness, preferred *Fear of Music* by Talking Heads and *Drums and Wires* by XTC, or (in a pinch) U2's *Boy*.

It wouldn't have occurred to me that I'd ultimately derive frequent joy from listening to sound effects (though in my case they're usually integral to the music, not apart from it). When I hear Yosi Horikawa's bouncing marbles on *Wandering*, I prick up my ears and smile. A panting dog on Holly Cole's *Temptation*, an overhead hovercar on the *Blade Runner 2049* soundtrack ... bring it on. A babbling river on Andrew Bird's *Echolocations*; seed pods on Tom Waits's *Blood Money*; liquid splashes and crinkling paper on Felix Laband's *Dark Days Exit* ... yes, please. I don't care if it's a little gimmicky. It's also sensual in the original meaning of the word, an aural pleasure.

The Raidho TD3.8 speakers that, after three months, just departed my home, do the trick of conjuring points in space with great acuity. I figured they might after they made a fool of me at AXPONA 2022. Here's what happened: I'd entered the Danish brand's room and taken a front-row seat for a brief audition. Suddenly a deep-voiced man spoke up, just to my right: "You guys ever heard of the Purple Man?" Puzzled, I looked in his direction; no one was there. Being from Maine, I wondered if I'd somehow ended up in a Stephen King horror flick.

A millisecond later, my brain clicked into gear. The



## SPECIFICATIONS

**Description** Rear-ported three-way loudspeaker with planar-magnetic ribbon tweeter and two 5" (127mm) tantalum-diamond (TD)-cone midrange drivers in an MTM configuration; two 8" (203mm) TD woofers. Crossover frequencies: 400Hz and 2.4kHz, stepped slope. Frequency range:

24Hz-50kHz. Sensitivity: 89dB/2.83V/m. Nominal impedance: 6 ohms; minimum impedance, 4 ohms @ 120Hz. Power requirement: 50-300W. **Dimensions** 56" (1422mm) H x 17" (432mm) W with supplied outriggers x 23" (584mm) D. Weight: 183lb (83kg). **Finishes** Piano black, walnut

burl, others available.

**Serial number of units reviewed** 131105 (both speakers). Manufactured in Denmark. **Price** \$103,000/pair in black; \$117,000/pair in burl walnut. Approximate number of US dealers: 15. Warranty: 5 years. **Manufacturer** Raidho Acoustics,

15 Bransagervej, Pandrup, 9490 Denmark. Tel: +45 98247677. Web: raidho.dk. US distributor: AV Luxury Group International, 6738 West Sunset Rd., Suite 160, Las Vegas, NV. Tel: (702) 661-3464. Web: avluxint.com.

voice was on the recording (nine seconds into Natalie Merchant's "The Peppery Man," from *Leave Your Sleep*). Cheeks flushed with embarrassment, I realized that I'm apparently no smarter than my dog, who sometimes barks at other dogs he sees on TV.

At this point, I was deeply intrigued by the Danish duo and hoped to do a review. It would be another 10 months before the speakers, in a premium burl walnut finish (\$117,000/pair), arrived chez moi, accompanied by US importer Bruce Ball, who, for an afternoon, kindly oversaw and tweaked their setup.

Before Ball even had them dialed in, I heard and enjoyed the forward-projecting effect again. On Roger Waters's "Perfect Sense Pt. 2," from *Amused to Death* (24/192 FLAC, Columbia/Qobuz), the dialog between the sportscasters that starts at 1:35 comes from the left speaker—seemingly not just several feet outside it but pushing so far to the front that it seemed as if the duo had taken up residence on the leather couch that's 5' from my left knee.<sup>1</sup> The vast majority of speakers I've auditioned paint the soundstage left-right-and-back; they don't tend to place sounds *into* the room. By contrast, the Raidho TD3.8s sometimes render two-channel mixes with imagined Dolby wizardry—as if there were auxiliary speakers on the sides. It's almost too cute and coincidental that Raidho is headquartered in Denmark's *Jutland*.

Speaking of: Can we just take a moment to marvel at the country's 100-plus-year rise as an audio powerhouse? In 1915, Danish inventor Peter Laurits Jensen and his American partner Edwin Pridham produced the world's first moving coil loudspeaker.<sup>2</sup> Jensen's pioneering work seems to have fed a petri dish of hi-fi innovations in his homeland. According to the 2015 e-book *Danish Loudspeakers*,<sup>3</sup> "Danish companies manufactured more loudspeakers per capita than any other country in the world" in the 1960s

**Perhaps more than any other speakers I've auditioned at home, the TD3.8s made me want to turn off all the lights in the room, to be alone in the dark, transported by the music. Into the music.**

and '70s. Today, Denmark's hi-fi industry includes AudioTechnology, Bang & Olufsen, Børresen, Buchardt, DALI, Dynaudio, Gryphon, ICEpower, JAMO, Lyngdorf, Peerless, Ortofon, Raidho, Scan-Speak, Scansonic, SEAS, Vitus, and more. That's *stu-*

*pefying* for a population of just 5.7 million people—about the same as Minnesota—and for a country that, in terms of land mass, is half the size of Maine.

#### Fast as a bullet

4'8" tall and lanky, the TD3.8 does a better job at softening its visual dominance than other tower speakers I've had in my room recently, including the Focal Maestro Utopia EVO and the all-beryllium-driver version of the Tekton Moab (reviews of both forthcoming). No, the Raidhos don't exactly disappear from sight, but their front baffle (slightly curved concavely in the vertical plane and convexly in the horizontal one) is only 10" wide. Viewed from directly overhead, the forward-sloping tops of the three-way speakers have a pronounced bullet shape as the flanks swoop sharply backward to end in a wedge-shaped rear (the bullet's tip). The TD3.8s are much deeper (23") than they are wide. I'm sure that all design decisions regarding their enclosures were made for acoustical reasons—time alignment, minimizing diffraction, subduing standing waves—but

<sup>1</sup> This song, like the rest of *Amused to Death*, was recorded in Qsound, a 3D-positional sound-processing algorithm that renders a binaural image from a two-channel system, enhancing such spatial effects—which takes nothing away from the Raidhos' impressive rendering. —**Jim Austin**

<sup>2</sup> They later started Magnavox together.

<sup>3</sup> Free at [tinyurl.com/2kkfuc45](http://tinyurl.com/2kkfuc45).

## MEASUREMENTS

**D**ue to the Raidho TD3.8's bulk, I wasn't able to bring it up the stairs from the driveway to our living room, where I usually measure loudspeakers. I therefore measured the speaker in the driveway, keeping its front baffle turned away from the sun so the drive units would stay cool. I used DRA Labs' MLSSA system with a calibrated DPA 4006 microphone to measure the loudspeaker's behavior in the farfield and an Earthworks QTC-40 mike for the nearfield responses. It wasn't possible to raise the 183lb TD3.8 off the ground for the measurements, so the first reflection from the ground occurs earlier than is usually the case with my measurements.

Raidho specifies the TD3.8's specified sensitivity as 89dB/2.83V/m. My B-weighted estimate was somewhat lower, at 86.5dB(B)/2.83V/m. The TD3.8's nominal impedance is specified as 6 ohms. I measured the speaker's impedance parameters with Dayton Audio's DATS V2 system. The speaker's impedance

magnitude (fig.1, solid trace) drops below 6 ohms in the midrange and upper bass, with a minimum value of 2.98 ohms at 82Hz. The electrical phase angle (dotted trace) is occasionally high, especially at low frequencies. The equivalent peak dissipation resistance, or EPDR,<sup>1</sup> lies below 3 ohms between 170Hz and 540Hz and below 2 ohms between 56Hz and 101Hz. The minimum EPDR values are 1.1 ohms at 70Hz and 2.17 ohms at 287Hz. The TD3.8 is a demanding load.

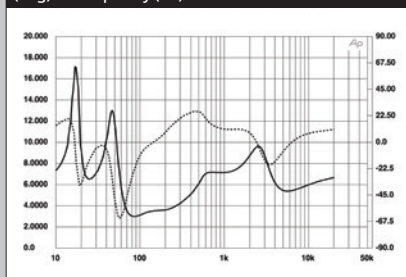
An equipment failure meant that it wasn't possible to investigate the enclosure's vibrational behavior. However, listening to the side panels with a stethoscope while the TD3.8 played the MLSSA noise signal, I could hear a couple of resonant modes in the midrange, very low in level.

The saddle centered on 27Hz in the TD3.8's impedance-magnitude plot suggests that this is the tuning frequency of the three ports at the top of the rear panel. The two woofers behaved identically, their summed nearfield

response (fig.2, green trace) having the expected reflex notch at this frequency and rolling off sharply above 80Hz. The ports also behaved identically to one another; their summed output (fig.2, red trace) features a broad peak between 20Hz and

<sup>1</sup> EPDR is the resistive load that gives rise to the same peak dissipation in an amplifier's output devices as the loudspeaker. See "Audio Power Amplifiers for Loudspeaker Loads," *JAES*, Vol.42 No.9, September 1994, and [stereophile.com/reference/707heavy/index.html](http://stereophile.com/reference/707heavy/index.html).

Stereophile Raidho TD3.8 Impedance (ohms) & Phase (deg) vs Frequency (Hz)



**Fig.1** Raidho TD3.8, electrical impedance (solid) and phase (dashed) (2 ohms/vertical div.).



it doesn't hurt that the speakers ended up looking aerodynamic and fast. And fast they are, transient-wise, which starts with the high-frequency drivers.

Raidho's proprietary ribbon tweeter, mounted in an MTM array with 5" midrange drivers, are 3" tall. It's a planar magnetic with an 11µm-thick foil membrane that weighs just 20mg, equivalent to maybe a dozen snowflakes.

The purple prose on the company's website explains that Raidho's bass and midrange transducers (8" and 5" in diameter, respectively) are no slouches in terms of speed and other virtues. Each combines strong neodymium magnets with underhung titanium voice coils. The magnet systems and the baskets that contain them are turbine-shaped, claimed to counter reflections that would otherwise smear and colorize



the sound.

The diaphragms of these midrange and bass drivers consist of layers of aluminum, ceramic, and tantalum topped off with a 10µm-thick deposit of artificial diamond. These tantalum and diamond layers, which give the TD series its name, are applied in "highly specialized machines [that] pump in argon gas and fire particles at lightspeed, thus fixating the atoms to the membrane," the website says.

The TD3.8 is fourth from the top in the series—after the \$250,000/pair TD6, the \$156,000/pair 4.8, and the \$146,000/pair 4.2. At this level, nothing is off the shelf, Raidho says. "No essential part is picked from a brochure. All is custom made" to achieve "unique creations." The drivers are designed and built in-house in Pandrup (population 10,000), the company's home in north-

## measurements, continued

70Hz, implying extended low frequencies. The port's upper-frequency rolloff is disturbed by some resonant peaks. Standing behind the TD3.8, I could hear these faintly with the MLSSA signal, but as these modes have a high Q (Quality Factor) and as the ports face to the speaker's rear, their audibility will be minimal.

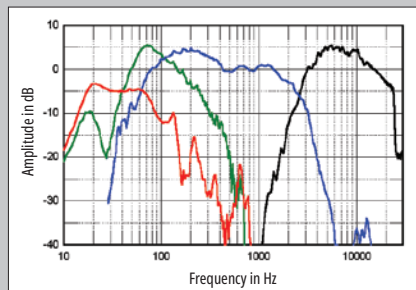
The blue trace in fig.2 indicates that the midrange units cross over to the woofers just above 100Hz, two octaves lower than the specified 400Hz. Even though the microphone was placed immediately in front of the midrange diaphragms for these nearfield measurements, I wondered

if the response was affected by crosstalk from the woofers. However, the lower midrange driver behaved identically to the upper unit, and the latter is too far from the woofers to be affected by crosstalk. The crossover between the midrange drivers and the ribbon tweeter occurs at the specified 2.4kHz, though the tweeter appears to be balanced 5dB too high in level.

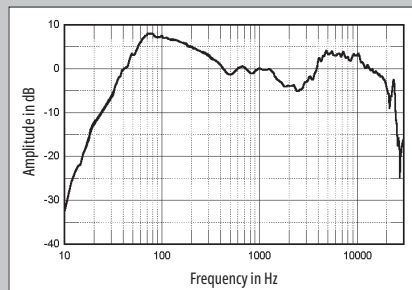
This can also be seen in fig.3, which, above 300Hz, shows the Raidho's farfield output, averaged across a 30° horizontal window centered on the tweeter axis. There is also a lack of energy in the

presence region, at the top of the midrange units' passband. The complex sum of the midrange, woofer, and port responses is shown as the black trace below 300Hz in fig.3. The boost in the upper bass will be due in part to the nearfield measurement technique, which assumes that the drive units are placed on a true infinite baffle, ie, one that extends to infinity in both vertical and horizontal planes. But the excess of upper-bass energy does suggest that the TD3.8's reflex alignment is underdamped, which will not be optimal for small rooms.

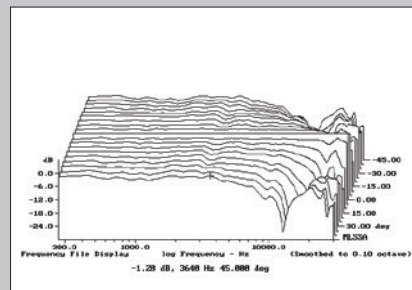
The TD3.8's horizontal dispersion graph



**Fig.2** Raidho TD3.8, acoustic crossover on tweeter axis at 50°, corrected for microphone response, with the nearfield midrange (blue), woofer (green), and port (red) responses plotted below 440Hz, 650Hz, and 300Hz.



**Fig.3** Raidho TD3.8, anechoic response on tweeter axis at 50°, averaged across 30° horizontal window and corrected for microphone response, with the complex sum of the nearfield responses plotted below 300Hz.



**Fig.4** Raidho TD3.8, lateral response family at 50°, normalized to response on tweeter axis, from back to front: differences in response 45°-5° off axis, reference response, differences in response 5°-45° off axis.

ern Denmark.

Within its stepped-slope crossovers, Raidho does use third-party materials, including Mundorf components connected with Nordost wire. Bass frequencies up to 400Hz are handled by the TD3.8's double 8" woofers; above that, the dual 5" midrange drivers take over. On yonder side of 2.4kHz, the ribbon tweeters fire.

### Pairing is caring

For a week or two, I did my listening with the fabulous all-in-one HiFi Rose RS520 I reviewed in the July 2023 issue. Judging by retail prices, this should have been a dicey matchup. The Rose, a streamer, preamp, tuner, and Class-D stereo amp in one, costs only \$3695. That means you can buy 30 of 'em for the price of the Raidhos and have money left over for a bacchanal or two at a Michelin-starred restaurant (or half a ticket to a Taylor Swift show<sup>4</sup>). In reality, the Rose+Raidhos combo wasn't as Oompa-Loompa-meets-the-Hulk as you'd expect. I enjoyed everything I played, although it fell short of world-class performance in terms of absolute resolution and midrange fluidity.

Next, I gave my Krell FPB 200c stereo amplifier a whirl, fed by an Auralic Vega DAC. Crispness and bass authority increased, and with the further addition of an Audio Research LS16 MkII preamp, I also had a winsome midrange, bending toward mellifluousness. Nice.

Ultimately, these were just warmups—a form of delayed gratification. I hadn't forgotten how supple and seductive the TD3.8s sounded at AXPONA 2022, where they'd been married to a pair of Margules U280 SC 30th-anniversary-edition tube amps. The same amplification had driven the \$46,500/pair TD2.2s at

the Florida Audio Expo in February of this year, producing such synergy that it became one of my top three systems at that show. "Pure and surprisingly 3D in a way that turns off your brain and connects you to the music in seconds flat," I wrote in my wrap piece.<sup>5</sup>

Helpless against such beauty, and partly in anticipation of the TD3.8s' eventual arrival, I purchased a U280 SC. In my room, the synergy between the Mexican tube (ch)amp and the TD3.8s was apparent from the get-go. The music flowed easily, beautifully, without a hint of strain. But it wasn't perfect. I now felt that heft and authority were on the skimpy side compared to what I'd heard before. After a few weeks of belly-aching and telling myself it was all in my head, I called Bruce Ball to get his take. He wasn't surprised. Essentially, he relayed the old Doublemint chewing gum motto ("double your pleasure, double your fun"), pointing out that at the shows where I'd heard the 3.8s, they'd been driven by two U280 SC amplifiers. On paper and in practice, the 89dB-sensitive Raidhos are certainly happier with 100W of Ultralinear power per channel than with 50. A short-term loan of a second Margules amp was arranged, and a week later I had the duo side by side, set up as monoblocks. Power was now more than adequate, even in triode mode.

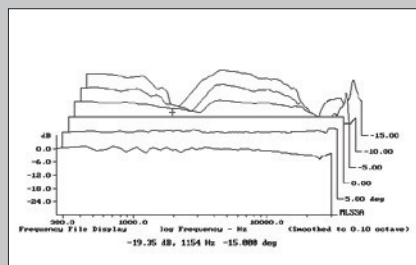
Timbrally, the speakers were at their best when I was sitting almost 12' away. There, Ry Cooder's voice on "John Lee Hooker for President" from *Pull Up Some Dust and Sit Down* (24/96 MQA, Nonesuch/Tidal) sounded true to life, with riveting body and

<sup>4</sup> See [tinyurl.com/pca9s6yj](https://tinyurl.com/pca9s6yj).

<sup>5</sup> See [tinyurl.com/bdertmta](https://tinyurl.com/bdertmta).

### measurements, continued

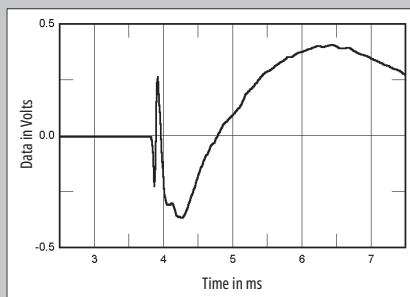
(fig.4), with the off-axis outputs normalized to the tweeter-axis response, indicates that the presence-region depression doesn't fill in off-axis. (Due to the geometry of my driveway, I could measure the responses only up to 45° to each side.) However, the speaker's top-octave output falls off to the speaker's sides, which implies that the in-room high-treble balance can be adjusted by reducing the toe-in to the listening position. In the vertical plane (fig.5), the tweeter-axis balance is maintained 5°–10° below that axis, which is useful considering that the center of the tweeter is 43" from the floor. A suckout at 1.15kHz, an octave



**Fig.5** Raidho TD3.8, vertical response family at 50°, normalized to response on tweeter axis, from back to front: differences in response 15°–5° above axis, reference response, differences in response 5°–10° below axis.

below the upper crossover frequency, appears 15° above the tweeter axis.

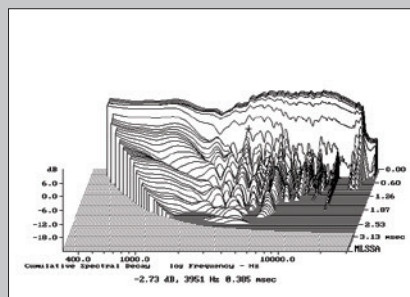
Turning to the time domain, fig.6 shows the TD3.8's step response on the tweeter axis. The tweeter and both midrange units are connected in negative acoustic polarity, the woofers in positive polarity. The tweeter's output arrives first at the microphone, followed by that of one of the midrange units. The small glitch at 4.1ms in the response is due to the output of the other midrange unit arriving a little later than the first. The decay of each unit's step smoothly blends with the start of that of the next lower in frequency, which implies



**Fig.6** Raidho TD3.8, step response on tweeter axis at 50° (5ms time window, 30kHz bandwidth).

an optimal crossover implementation. The Raidho's cumulative spectral-decay, or waterfall, plot (fig.7) was affected by the early reflection from the ground in front of the speaker, which meant I had to window the impulse response more aggressively than usual when I calculated the plot. Even so, the initial decay is impressively clean.

It is possible that in a medium-size-to-large room, the Raidho TD3.8's under-damped low frequencies will subjectively balance the excess of treble energy. But that still leaves the lack of presence-region energy, which might make the speaker sound somewhat laid-back.—John Atkinson



**Fig.7** Raidho TD3.8, cumulative spectral-decay plot on tweeter axis at 50° (0.15ms risetime).

presence. But when I moved a few feet closer, I somehow *felt* closer, too—closer to the music, more able to mind-meld with it.

In the end, after I extensively Goldilocks'd it, the drivers were 10'2" from my pinnae and 6'8" apart measured from the speakers' centers. Toe-in was minimal, about five or six degrees. The outer flanks of the TD3.8s were, coincidentally, 3'8" from the sidewalls; the very backs of the speakers stood 4'9" from the front wall. This meant that I sat almost 5' from the dual 3' x 3' skyline diffusers behind me. There, I graduated from cloud eight to cloud nine.

### Sound as a bell

Depending on the source material, the Focal Scala EVOs, my current reference speakers, can be a touch resonant or forward in the top end. While normally the words "ribbon tweeter" and "laid-back" don't belong in the same sentence, the TD3.8s have a slightly rounder, softer signature above 7 or 8kHz than the Scalas do.

Also like the Focals, they plunge you deep into the music. I heard for the first time that the piano in the intro of Steven Wilson's "First Regret," the opening track of *Hand Cannot Erase* (24/96 FLAC, Kscope/Qobuz), is processed through a detuner, and that a slight tremolo effect has been added.

Davitt Sigerson's downtempo "Break My Heart," from his self-titled 1980 debut disc (16/44.1 FLAC, ZE/Tidal), features a screaming electric-guitar part throughout the entire song, calling to mind an Adrian Belew wannabe having an aneurysm. Even after hearing the track a couple of hundred times over the years, I can't quite decide if it's masterful or ridiculous. Nonetheless, the song, a narrative about a tryst with a mysterious woman aboard a European Wagons-Lits train, remains a favorite. *Deep inside the Simphon pass The light will switch from red to green. I'll peel you like a tangerine. Break my heart.*



**The bells and their incredibly long reverb t(r)ails were, again, beautifully delivered, with a subtle, sumptuous shimmer.**

It bursts with decadence and sleazy glamor, and the Raidhos rendered it with gusto, adding or subtracting nothing.

Metallica's new *72 Seasons* (24/96 FLAC, Blackened/Qobuz), so very cleanly produced by the band and Greg Fidelman, also sounded *rawking*. "Too Far Gone?" is the standout track. Somehow, Metallica not only helps keep distorted-guitar riffage alive as a genre; the band also makes it sound creative and relevant. There'd been times when I felt the TD3.8s were overly polite with hard-hitting rock, but two little switches showed me I was wrong. With the Margules amps flicked to Ultralinear mode instead of triode, the Raidhos sounded alive and exciting when playing roiling metal beats and other aggro material, such as Control Machete's sledgehammer of a hip-hop track "Si Señor" (16/44.1 FLAC, Motor/Tidal). The delicateness, thankfully, was still there: for instance, the final crash-cymbal hit on "Too Far Gone?" disappeared into the ether with a long, exceedingly lovely tail. The Raidhos don't match the terrifically fun brute force and boisterousness I've heard from, say, Klipsch's Jubilee horns or Troy Audio's Acapulco speakers, but I think they may be better all-rounders.

Riding my metal-mania mood, I cued up a few Rammstein songs. Many of the band's recordings have the main guitar part doubled and panned hard-left and -right; good examples are "Bück Dich" and "Küss Mich (Fellfrosch)," off *Sehnsucht* (16/44.1 FLAC, Slash/Tidal). You hear either a single part recorded twice to a



digital multitrack machine or PC, or the same part digitally copied with deliberate timing differences—and often pitched up/down by a barely perceptible six or seven cents. The technique produces a wall-of-sound effect, making the ax part seem a mile wide. With the Raidhos, it became a fun game: Is the minutely delayed guitar positioned in the left or the right channel? Which channel has the part with the subtly lower pitch?

Next, I played “Chorale,” an Anthony Fiumara–composed tribute to Philip Glass performed by the Dutch ensemble Slagwerk Den Haag. It’s a hyperdynamic recording of rich sonorous bells and other resonant percussion instruments. The album is called *Vitreous Body* (24/48 FLAC, Orange Mountain/Qobuz), no doubt a reference to Glass’s oeuvre (vitreous means glass-like). The bells and their incredibly long reverb t(r)ails were, again, beautifully delivered, with a subtle, sumptuous shimmer.

Now I was on the hunt for other recordings that would put the Raidhos’ prowess with transients and decay to the test. Third Coast Percussion’s “Ordering-instincts” on *Perpetuum* (16/44.1 FLAC, Orange Mountain/Qobuz) features various sharp-sounding wood and metal percussion instruments, including heavy bells. My fondness for this track reminded me of the bon mot attributed to Alan Parsons: “Audiophiles don’t use their equipment to listen to your music; they use your music to listen to their equipment.” Well, guilty, in this case—not that the recording isn’t a dizzying soundscape that deserves our appreciation regardless of its demo-disc capabilities.

#### When all is said and done

The TD3.8s are time-stealers. Often, while listening to them, an hour disappeared in seconds. Perhaps more than any other speakers I’ve auditioned at home, the TD3.8s made me want to turn off all the lights in the room, to be alone in the dark, transported by the music. *Into* the music. These speakers are lavish in both sonics and appearance—so, on second thought, leave those lights on. “Mind-bendingly good” was one of the first notes I scribbled after I began playing music through them.

Copper wire was born when two Dutchmen fought over a penny, so, true to my birthplace, the Raidhos’ price gives me pause. In this ultraluxury range, I can think of other deeply impressive loudspeakers I’d put on my shortlist. The \$76,000/pair Focal Maestro Utopia EVO springs to



#### ASSOCIATED EQUIPMENT

**Digital sources** 16" MacBook Pro M1 Max running Roon 2.0; Roon ROCK (Lenovo ThinkCentre); Auralic Vega; NAIM Uniti Atom; and HiFi Rose RS520, controlled via iPhone 14 Pro Max.

**Preamplifiers** Benchmark HPA4; Audio Research LS16 MkII; Margules SF-220.

**Power amplifiers** HiFi Rose RS520; Krell FPB 200c (recapped); two Margules U-280 SC tube amps, used as monoblocks.

**Loudspeakers** Tekton Moab; Focal Scala Utopia EVO.

**Cables** AudioQuest, Blue Jean Cable, Clarus Crimson, Nordost, RSX, Viborg.

**Accessories** Core Power Technologies Equi-Core 1800 MkII and Deep-Core 1800 power conditioners. Townshend Seismic Isolation Podiums for power amplifiers.

**Listening room** Special-built 21' × 15' space with ceilings 10' at the walls sloping up to 16' for a total volume of about 4000ft<sup>3</sup>. Double-thick drywall over Rockwool and mass-loaded vinyl. Hardwood floor over plywood, rubber, and a concrete slab.

12' × 15' wool rug on a thick pad. Acoustic treatments include four bass traps, two Skyline diffusers, and a dozen wall- and ceiling-mounted absorption panels. Dedicated powerline and 20A outlets.

—Rogier van Bakel

mind; the \$94,000/pair Magico M3; the \$91,000/pair MBL 101 E MKII Radialstrahler; even the tremendous Klipschorn Jubilee (for \$87,500/pair you could go crazy, buy five, and put together the most bitchin' Dolby rig ever.<sup>6</sup>) All these products are soul-stirring—and so are the TD3.8s.

The Raidhos trump the competition with the forward-projecting, 3D nature of their spatial signature, an often startling trait I couldn't get enough of and will sorely miss now that they're gone. I also found the TD3.8s to be standouts in making music sound fully engaging at moderate levels (although this wasn't a practical benefit to me personally: I like to turn it up to 11).

We are spoiled for choice, and Steely Dan was wrong: You *can* buy a thrill. If, after hearing the Raidhos, you find your self-control yielding to a severe case of YOLO, I'll be the first to understand. ■

<sup>6</sup> Please don't do this.