



NEED TO KNOW

CONSIDER IF

You want serious, hi-fi speakers that are active and can also go wireless

YOU'LL NEED

To take your time and experiment with placement. Closer to the wall is better

MAKE SURE

You turn the unit off before you switch cables or you might erase files on the amps

AVOID

Playing low quality files, these speakers don't like anything low quality

HIGHLIGHT?

An active bookshelf that can give larger speakers a run for their money

Audiovector SR1 Avantgarde Arreté Active Discreet
₹4,75,000 (approx.)

Slowly churning out sweet notes in the Leviathan Systems' room at the *What Hi Fi Show Mumbai* were the Audiovector Avantgarde Arreté Active bookshelves.

We heard the potential and had to call for them for a private listen. Our review samples came clad in beautiful 'African Rosewood' veneer that is specially selected and pair-matched. There are four other options available to choose from.

Take the magnetic grille off the rigid, extremely well built cabinet, and the first thing you notice apart from the striking industrial look, is the much loved and respected, top-of-the-line Avantgarde Air Motion Transformer. This is used here in a 30 percent rear-firing SEC (Soundstage Enhancement Concept) configuration. This is paired with LCC (Low Compression Concept) technology which is responsible for the fast transient response of all Audiovector SR-series models. With this, the membranes of the drivers move freely under all conditions.

What's more? Audiovector employs a composite sandwich technology involving aluminum rings, high-strength titanium

voice coil formers and a magnesium chassis for the mid/bass driver, all of which claims to reduce hysteresis distortion and provide ample stiffness. Phew! That's a lot of delicate engineering.

And there's more! The speakers are powered by the 24V Discreet external unit that serves as a hub for your connections. The hub uses a patented technology called Actiline to transmit the power as well as

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the digital audio signal on ordinary speaker wire. The hub provides Bluetooth, two optical digital inputs, a coaxial digital input and an analogue stereo input as well. It also has a subwoofer out and applies a high-precision 4th order digital Linkwitz-Riley filter at 80Hz.

Now, for the main question. How do these sound? Tonally, they're astonishingly spot on. They judge the balance between frequencies beautifully. The highs carry a nice, rich texture but also have the right amount of subtlety. Another striking ability is the immense amount of control. Play something complex like Shubert's *Sonata No. 20 in A Major Adantino* and the Audiovectors do a brilliant job at unravelling the intricate details especially in the complex and fast

parts of the recording. Even the end section is delivered in a cohesive manner with a lot of muscularity and insight.

Vocals, too, are handled well. Bon Iver's voice pushes through with healthy bouts of emotion from amidst a powerful march of drums in *Perth*. The SR1 manages precision and complexity very few speakers can match. Careful positioning (close to the walls and slightly toed in) and a decent level of volume ends up in a focused soundstage and transparency that belies the speakers size, which is no mean feat for a bookshelf. The frequency response ranges from 39-52kHz, and they produce an authoritative bass, but some might find it a tad controlled. Yes, they are expensive, but you get what you pay for - insight, agility, speed and superb dynamics.

Rating

FOR Superb insight, balanced presentation, focused but wide soundstage, superb build

AGAINST Discreet Hub is made of plastic and feels low quality, no dedicated remote

VERDICT Active speakers this good are a rare breed. Wireless ability is the icing on the cake

TECH SPECS

Sensitivity 87.5 db **Nominal Impedance** 8 ohm **Frequency Range** -6 db 139-52 kHz **Internal Shock Absorbers** yes **Finishes** 5 **Powered** yes **Non Parallel Surfaces** yes **Dimensions (hwd)** 37x19x28