



'For our next trick...'

In a nutshell, if Monitor Audio keeps making loudspeakers as good as this, **Mark Craven** will keep raving about them

Auditioned here is a multichannel system assembled from the seventh generation of Monitor Audio's mid-range Silver Series. There are, naturally, changes aplenty, but these speakers have a vibe about them of being made by a brand that knows exactly what it's doing, and has done so for a while...

By this I mean there's nothing overtly flash about the Silver 7Gs; no obvious attempt to reinvent the wheel. Tried and trusted technologies rub shoulders with new ideas in cabinets that manage to look both thoroughly modern but also understated. Monitor Audio even has all bases covered when it comes to finishes: Satin White and High Gloss Black for those with minimalist tastes, plus Black Oak, Ash and Natural Walnut veneers for those of the older school.

Build quality and styling (no curves, but a striking clean aesthetic) is as impressive as the sound quality ...but I'm getting ahead of myself.

Climbing the ladder

Launched last August, the Silver 7G series replaces the 2017-era Silver 6G models. As before, the range is designed as a performance step-up from the Bronze Series [reviewed *HCC* #319], and a more affordable alternative to MA's premium Gold and Platinum sets.

Speaker names remain the same. This can cause a few headaches on Google while old stock lines are being cleared as new models arrive, so look out for the 7G suffix. Our system features the largest model, the floorstanding Silver 500 7G (£1,725), the Silver 50 7G bookshelf/standmount (£575), and the Silver C250 7G centre (£600).

Also in the 7G series are two more affordable, and more slender, floorstanders (Silver 300 and Silver 200); a bigger standmount model (Silver 100); wall-mountable di-/bipole surrounds (Silver FX); and a Dolby Atmos upfiring module (Silver AMS). There's no new Silver subwoofer, however,

with MA opting to retain the W-12 6G model (500W amplifier, 12in driver). This would be an obvious partner for any Silver 7G system, and is a feature of two preset bundles – one a 7.1.2 option using the Silver 300 floorstanders, the other a 5.1 option using the Silver 200. However, we opted for a bespoke array, because we really wanted to hear the biggest floorstanders in action.

So, what's new here? Lots. Drivers, cabinets and crossovers have all been fettled one way or another. Taking the Silver 500 as an example, this features new C-CAM (Ceramic-Coated Aluminium Magnesium) 8in woofer and 3in mid-range units that borrow the distinctive golf-ball texture cone profile of the company's Gold 5G models (a technique claimed to make for a stronger structure and a driver able to 'go louder for longer without compromise'). New neodymium magnets are deployed, and voice coils and surrounds tweaked for a

'Tried and trusted technologies rub shoulders with new ideas in cabinets that look thoroughly modern'

performance boost. The shallow wave-guided 'gold dome' C-CAM tweeter, meanwhile, is also new, with upgrades to its surround, magnet and dispersion grille.

Crossovers are specific to the Silver Series, designed at the same time as the drive units. The floorstanders also debut some new, funky outrigger feet.

The Silver 500 is a three-way speaker, as is the Silver C250, although the latter opts for 5.25in woofers rather than the 8in designs of the floorstander. This is probably for the best, as it's quite a big unit anyway – 48cm wide and 20cm high, enough to have you measuring up before buying.

The two-way bookshelf models used here as surrounds also feature the 5.25in bass/mid, sitting underneath that eye-catching tweeter. Both this speaker and the Silver 500 are tuned via MA's familiar HiVe II (rear-mounted) bass reflex ports. Sensibly, considering it's possible it will end up flush to a wall or in a cabinet, the centre speaker is sealed.

High-energy

What's striking about MA's Silver Series is how it blends hi-fi-oriented 'musicality' with an energetic, upbeat and fun disposition. It's not a particularly neutral sound, with bass >



AV INFO

PRODUCT: Mid-range floorstanding 5.0 system

POSITION: 500 7G are the top dogs in MA's Silver Series; Gold and Platinum lines are ranged above

PEERS: B&W 700 Series; KEF R Series

1. The Silver 500 floorstander has 8in C-CAM woofers and a 3in mid-range

2. The Silver 50 two-way speaker has a HiVe II port and dual binding posts on its rear

REVIEWS

erring on the warm side, but that's fine by me and it's accompanied by crisp, attacking high-frequencies and a talent for unearthing plenty of midband texture and detail. The feeling of believability and subtlety it brings to film/TV soundtracks is superb and – in case you're wondering – the boost in performance over the Bronze range is palpable. The sound here is bigger, more grown up and better divorced from the cabinets it's coming from.

The recent BBC One thriller *The Tourist* has a soundtrack that's all delicate, environmental detail, propulsive music and moments of intense dynamics. This Silver package

'The Silver Series sound performance is brilliantly rich and weighty, large in scale, and packed with detail'

sets the scene, conjuring soundscapes alive with succinct effects, and a wide, deep and impressively joined-up LCR spread.

Dialogue delivery is forthright yet nuanced, with the sonorous tones of the cowboy-hatted villain coming across with threatening menace, and irritating husband-to-be Ralph sounding authentically whiny and nasal.

The Silver 50s are sold as stereo speakers in their own right, and are likely destined to get a lot of love from hi-fi buyers looking for small boxes that are a grade above entry-level bookshelves. Used here as surrounds, they bring an admirable tonal balance to the system's wider performance, sounding like very close relations to the front-of-house trio. Nor is their dispersion so focused or narrow that it had me wishing we'd opted for the Silver FX models instead – and some will always prefer surround models that can be stand- rather than wall-mounted, as the latter very much screams 'dedicated movie room'.

A welcome facet of the Silver cabinets is their easy-going nature. The Silver 500s are rated at a healthy 90.5dB sensitivity, and the Silver 50 and Silver C250 at 86dB and 88.5dB respectively. Neither are the suggested impedances, refreshingly given by MA as minimal figures (4.1ohm at 170Hz in the case of the floorstander), particularly punishing.

What these numbers mean in the real-world is that your AV receiver won't be unduly strained. Running off my Arcam AVR850, the feeling was that the MAs were always ready and waiting to be pushed into action, so that the quickfire soundtrack that accompanies Denzel Washington's first fight sequence in *The Equalizer* (Blu-ray) sounded intense and explosive. The extended reach of the speaker's tweeter units adds a sharp, wince-inducing layer to this scene's barrage of breaking glass, crunching bones and slashing blades. Yet even with a less potent receiver (a slimline Marantz NR model), they didn't appear to run out of puff.

Bass extension is another highlight, the Silver 500s sounding as deep and large as you'd expect given their

SPECIFICATIONS

Silver 500 7G

DRIVERS: 2 x 8in C-CAM woofers; 1 x 3in C-CAM mid-range; 1 x 1in wave-guided C-CAM dome tweeter **ENCLOSURE:** Bass reflex, with dual rear HiVe II ports **FREQUENCY RESPONSE (CLAIMED):** 27Hz-35kHz **SENSITIVITY (CLAIMED):** 90.5dB **POWER HANDLING (CLAIMED):** 250W **DIMENSIONS (INCL. FEET):** 1,095(h) x 319(w) x 389(d)mm **WEIGHT:** 22.5kg

Silver 50 7G

DRIVERS: 1 x 5.25in C-CAM bass/mid; 1 x 1in wave-guided C-CAM dome tweeter **ENCLOSURE:** Rear-ported **FREQUENCY RESPONSE (CLAIMED):** 47Hz-35kHz **SENSITIVITY (CLAIMED):** 86dB **POWER HANDLING (CLAIMED):** 100W **DIMENSIONS:** 282(w) x 165(h) x 272(d)mm **WEIGHT:** 5.6kg

Silver C250 7G

DRIVERS: 2 x 5.25in C-CAM woofers; 1 x 3in C-CAM mid-range; 1 x 1in wave-guided C-CAM dome tweeter **ENCLOSURE:** Sealed **FREQUENCY RESPONSE (CLAIMED):** 65Hz-35kHz **SENSITIVITY (CLAIMED):** 88.5dB **POWER HANDLING (CLAIMED):** 200W **DIMENSIONS:** 206(h) x 481(w) x 272(d)mm **WEIGHT:** 10.6kg

TESTED WITH



THE EQUALIZER: Denzel Washington looks to be having a whale of a time in this action-packed and frequently brutal 2014 cinematic update on the old TV series. Available on a good-looking 4K BD, as is the also-solid 2018 sequel. Washington and director Antoine Fuqua are both lining up to begin shooting a third instalment.

dimensions. There's no murk to the presentation either. The fusion of drivers and cabinets is well engineered, so that the undulating basslines in Lynyrd Skynyrd's *Swamp Music* (CD) come across as tight and musical.

A star is born

This is a triumphant new iteration of the Silver Series, a range that has various options letting you build a system to suit your requirements. Our pack, with the big Silver 500s as the stars of the show, offers a sound performance that's brilliantly rich and weighty, large in scale and packed with detail. Equally important is the energy and fun they bring to the party. Invest in these and you'll always look forward to movie night ■



3. The full Silver 7G series, shown here in High Gloss Black

HCC VERDICT



Monitor Audio Silver 7G 5.0

→ £2,900 → www.monitoraudio.com

WE SAY: Gorgeous cabinets in a wide selection of finishes that offer a real head-turning sound performance. The mix here of musicality and muscle is spot on.