

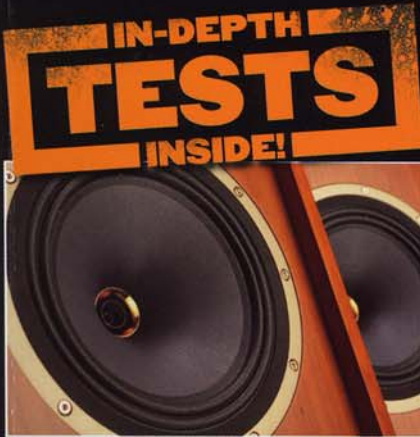
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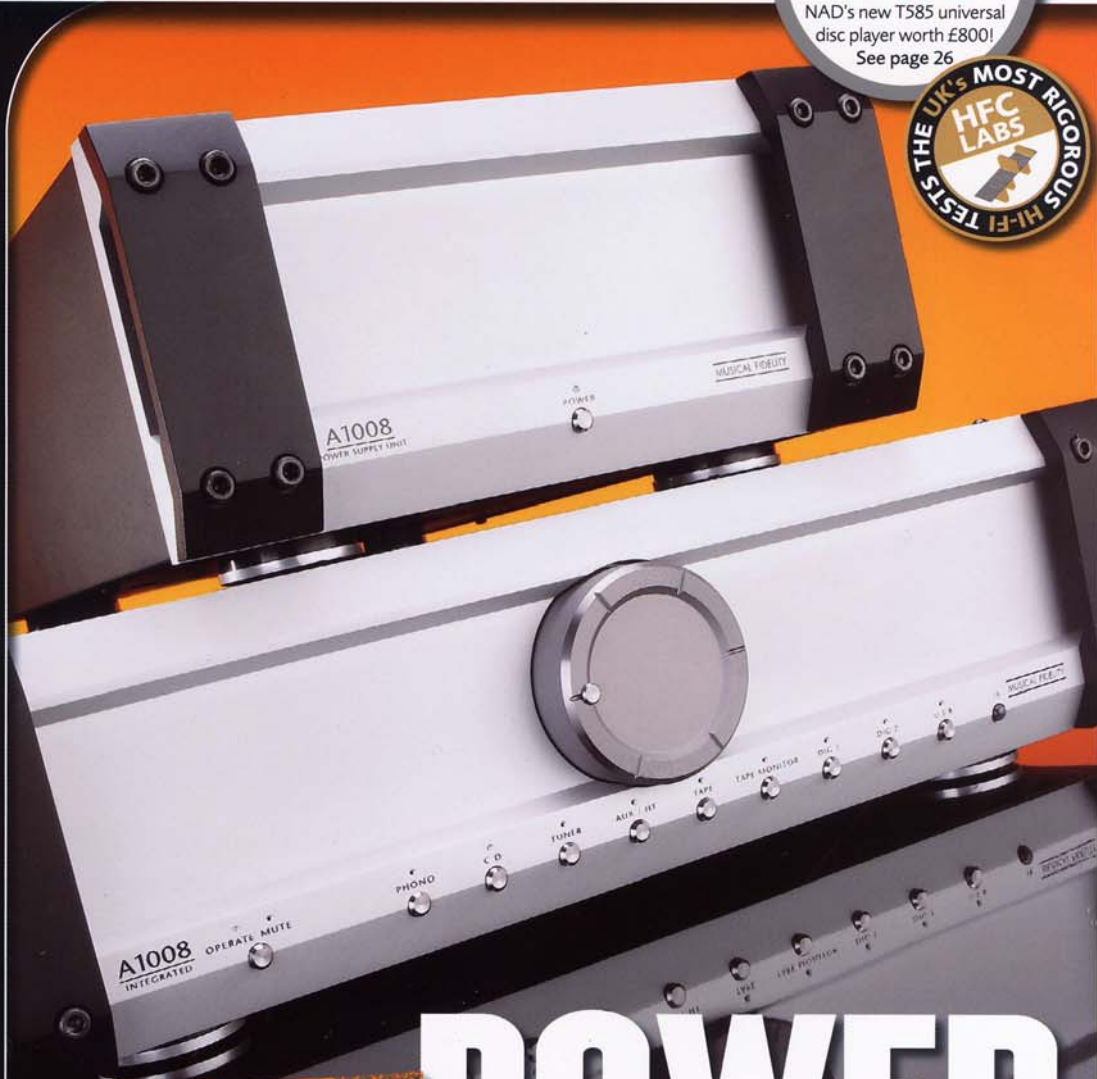
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Modern classic

Tannoy's new Glenair 10 is intended to give its Prestige range more modern appeal

PRODUCT Tannoy Glenair 10

TYPE Floorstanding loudspeaker

PRICE £2,999 per pair

KEY FEATURES Size (WxHxD): 36x100x35cm

• Weight: 28kg • 250mm Dual Concentric main driver with central 25mm tweeter • Real cherry-wood veneer • Sensitivity: 91dB • Impedance: eight ohms (nominal)

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The Glenair 10 is an attempt to bring an up-to-date aesthetic to Tannoy's classic, top-end Prestige loudspeaker range. The number refers to the driver size – the other model in the Glenair series has a 375mm drive unit in place of the 250mm driver found here. However, the standard Glenair is less likely to find favour in any but the most dedicated of living rooms. The Glenair 10, with its narrower front baffle, is far more visually appealing to those of us not stuck in the 1950s.

What brings the design up to date is the trapezoidal cabinet section and American cherry veneer, complete with a grille that forms a gentle curve. This shape has been used by Tannoy in the past for more affordable models and has the advantage of reducing the number of parallel surfaces within the box, which of course reduces the potential for standing waves internally.

This particular box is not made of MDF – as is the case with almost all loudspeakers – but plywood, and not any old plywood at that. This, apparently, is made from "birch grown in slow-growing cold regions of the world and selected for its denser quality," according to the brochure. No indication is given as to its thickness but the cabinet is claimed to be heavily damped and comprehensively braced to reduce resonance from the large panels that flank the speakers.

Its grille fits flush with the edges of the cabinet, which looks great and aides the magnetic system used to hold the grille in place. Removing the grilles is assisted by removing a brass thumbscrew from its resting place at the back of each speaker, screwing it into the base of the grille where a brass circle can be seen and pulling it out... you then realise how heavy a grille frame it has as it falls to the floor some three inches below! This isn't as exciting or as complicated as it sounds, but is actually a nicely thought out system that means there are no ugly plastic sockets ruining the look of the front baffle.

The drive unit is a ten-inch (250mm) framed example of Tannoy's classic dual concentric design with a pulped paper cone and twin rolled fabric surround, the latter being a retro approach to edge termination that's highly regarded by our fellow hi-fi nuts in Japan. It limits excursion and makes for a stiff overall drive unit. In its magnetic centre is a 25mm metal dome, with an output guided by a short exponential horn, the result being that both drivers operate around the same central axis. A true point-source driver would have both drivers in the same plane, but as the cone is so much deeper than the dome this is not possible with dynamic drivers. However, the coaxial arrangement produces a symmetrical polar dispersion both vertically and horizontally, which should aid image precision.

The speaker terminals are arranged in circular fashion, which looks attractive and allows for a fifth terminal beside the bi-wire pair. This green terminal is included to allow you to earth the speaker to your amplifier. This apparently optimises the performance further than mere bi-wiring but the literature does not

explain why. Still, we gave it a spin with another length of cable connected to a chassis fixing on the amplifier.

SOUND QUALITY

This is an elegant but generously sized loudspeaker, more efficient than average and thus easier to drive. The specification suggests amplifiers that can deliver 50 watts or more, but it seemed to work rather well with the new Sugden A21 Series 2 that we have lined up for a review next issue. This is no doubt due to the Class A operation as much as anything else, but whatever it was, it made for a beguiling combination. The smooth style of the amplifier brought a touch of polish to the all-revealing nature of the Glenair's midrange. However, this did nothing to disguise the fact that the Tannoy has an uncanny ability to delve deep into the mix and deliver seemingly every last nuance of the recording. The depth of soundstage it found on Keith Jarrett's *Carnegie Hall Concert* proved highly revealing of the ailments that seem to afflict many of those lucky enough to attend – there's a fair amount

“The Tannoy has an uncanny ability to delve deep into the mix and deliver seemingly every last nuance of the recording.”



of coughing going on as well! Then there are the master's vocalisations, which are still inclined to flow freely and which you can almost touch when this degree of 'being there' is brought into the living room.

The Glenair is adept at revealing the timbral signature of instruments and voices, thanks to the paper-based nature of its main driver. Whatever gets piped through its electrical veins is delivered in clear-cut form; whether it's the layered harmonies of the Kings Singers or the layers of samples produced by Timbaland and Missy Elliott, you'll hear what's going on.

This is probably also related to its dynamic capabilities. It can swing from low to high level with such speed and clarity that the attack of an instrument seems to be captured in all its vitality. For all its speed, however, the Glenair does not emphasise the rhythmic aspects of the music – some speakers will make your foot tap come what may. We are not sure this is any indication of fidelity, but it's a quality that some feel is fundamental. The Glenair does ▣

[Review] Tannoy Glenair 10 loudspeaker



POSITIONING

Tannoy is specific in the instruction manual about the Glenair's placement. It suggests that each be placed at least a metre from rear and side walls and that "the listening position is approximately 15 degrees from the axes of the speakers". It goes on to explain that the speakers' axes should cross slightly in front of the listening position. This is a well-tested technique for enhancing stereo image depth albeit usually with a reduction in image width. In our long but relatively narrow room we found that the speakers could be sited closer to the walls than is suggested, with about 60cm between cabinet and both side and rear walls. But it is essential that the speakers are not pointing directly at the listener because the energy from that horn-loaded tweeter is too great. Those that found this arrangement less convenient could toe the speakers so that their axes crossed behind the listening position.

Tannoy provides cone-shaped spikes that are said to be carpet-friendly. They probably won't pierce carpet, and they come with matching metal cups that can be used on wooden floors, which undoubtedly would show the effects of spiking. Those who would rather not use points can stick with the metal feet that are permanently fixed to the Glenair's base.

SYSTEM MATCHING

This speaker has a relatively high sensitivity and notionally benign load. On the amp front, we enjoyed everything from a 21-watt Sugden to a 200-watt Gamut. As for source components, this is a dynamic and revealing speaker, so we'd go with a Classé CDP-102 or Leema Antilla CD player in the upper price range, or Sugden's CD21 S2 or an Arcam FMJ CD36 at a more affordable level. Or any reasonably refined turntable and phono stage, for that matter.



Detail



something that's far more important in our view, which is to make the reviewer want to carry on listening. Rather inconveniently, we reviewers have to stop listening to music occasionally, to type out our findings and submit our copy to the commissioning editor. So, only the most appealing products get more attention than is necessary for the job; this speaker counts as one of them because it makes well-worn test tracks seem fresh and interesting again.

It does this by scouring for detail and presenting it in a highly coherent fashion. Those of you who like to turn it up to '11' might find the degree of exposure through the mid and top to be a bit punishing, especially if you're playing stuff like old Prodigy albums, which are not so clean. Our solution to this was prompted by the music alone and involved getting off the sofa and dancing around. Not something to be encouraged, obviously, but it was in the privacy of private listening facilities, hidden from view.

By this point in the proceedings, the amplification had been upgraded to a Russ Andrews HP-1 preamp and Gamut D200 power amp, the latter's extra grunt factor inducing a very lively and energetic response with music of the bombastic persuasion. It did plenty of favours for sophisticated tunes as well, the speaker's ability to communicate being merely enhanced by the extra control on offer – though it seems a pretty easy load on the whole. We even tried the earth connection, which brought a small but discernible improvement

to stereo imaging and seemed to reduce distortion a shade.

Overall, the Glenair 10 is a highly enjoyable and revealing loudspeaker that delves into the mix but keeps the musical message at the forefront. It requires refined ancillaries but not necessarily expensive ones and can be heartily recommended for combining great looks with a highly engaging and revealing sound. **HFC**

Jason Kennedy



VERDICT

SOUND >> 90%



EASE OF DRIVE >> 88%



BUILD >> 91%



VALUE >> 87%



PRO

Extremely revealing of detail, with excellent timbre and speed, and it doesn't need a lot of power. But it's the ability to keep you listening that marks it out as a winner.

CON

Looks more complete with the grille on but that muffles detail. Bass doesn't plumb the depths like some of the similarly sized competition.

CONCLUSION

Tannoy has done a good job of bringing its Prestige speakers up to date with the Glenair – a generously proportioned, highly resolute speaker for a very good price. Spend the same again on source and amp and you'll have a cracking system.

HI-FI CHOICE OVERALL SCORE >> **89%**