

Sound Lineup

Bring arena-quality acoustics to your living room with these all-star stereo speakers

By Jonathan Lesser

More so than most, professional athletes appreciate that the relentless pursuit of perfection is, in and of itself, a worthy endeavor. Let's face it: Does Tiger really spend hour after hour practicing three-foot putts for the money — or because he just likes the notion of doing it better than everybody else?

Kindred spirits you will therefore find in the high-end stereo makers of the world. These are folks who will stop at nothing to achieve the truest reproduction of the recorded medium. They use Kevlar, silver, gold — even diamonds — in the construction of their acoustic drivers, all of which are encased in housings that are more *objets d'art* than stereo components. Some are merely fairly pricey; others are worth more than many homes. But rest assured that each of the following will put your stadium's sound system to shame.



WILSON AUDIO SERIES 2 ALEXANDRIA X-2

\$148,000/pair

Color Commentary: Coasting on a guaranteed \$70 million contract and looking for the finest speaker on the planet? The Alexandria X-2 would surely have a puncher's chance for that title. Indeed, Utah-based Wilson Audio has risen to the top of the speaker world in recent years thanks to the astonishing precision of its construction; what emanates from these Jetsonian behemoths is as much a feeling as a sound. They total more than 2,000 pounds — making them, literally, a ton of tonality.

Scouting Report: Prepare to wake the world with one 13-inch front-ported woofer, a separate 15-incher, two 6.75-inch rear-ported mid-ranges, a one-inch inverted-dome sealed tweeter and an all-new one-inch rear-firing supertweeter. Wilson engineers have derived ever-new proprietary, über-dense materials to make the cabinet vibration-proof. The pièce de résistance? The Alexandria also comes in Mercedes silver and Ferrari red — you know, to match your car. Because everyone does that.

wilsonaudio.com



BOWERS & WILKINS 800D

\$23,000/pair

Color Commentary: From the British company whose speakers are used exclusively in Abbey Road Studios, the 800 series is B&W's most popular performance line — and the 800D boasts every bell and whistle B&W offers.

Scouting Report: B&W's ingenuities include silver and gold in the crossover capacitors, Kevlar cones and dimpled flowports that minimize air turbulence.



AVALON ACOUSTICS EIDOLON DIAMOND

\$33,795/pair

Color Commentary: It may look like an upright casket, but there's nothing dead about the sound emanating from this box. **Scouting Report:** The Eidolon pairs a .75-inch solid-diamond tweeter with a 3.5-inch concave ceramic dome mid-range driver and an 11-inch Nomex/Kevlar composite woofer. **avalonacoustics.com**