

## Best traditional package £1500-£2500

### Cambridge Audio Aero 5.1

It's a pleasure to have these speakers back out in the open - not least because they've shed £150 in the last year.

The neat and robust Aero 5.1 package - consisting of a pair of Aero 6 floorstanders, an Aero 5 centre speaker, a pair of Aero 3 bipole

surrounds and a relatively compact Aero 9 subwoofer - sees off rivals for another year and remains a high-flier in the sub-£2000 market.

Following suit with the company's history of technology-packed products, the talking point of this Aero range is its BMR (Balanced Mode Radiator) drivers. These cover a much wider frequency range than a conventional driver (250Hz to 22kHz, to be precise) and move the crossover point into a region where our ears are far less sensitive to the distortions that are inevitable in any frequency handover. The result? A cleaner, more direct sound, and wide dispersion even at the very high frequencies.

#### Left and right in unison

The company has continued to incorporate the technology into many of its products of late, and we can see why. Here, the presence of the 4.6cm drivers in the front channels ensures they work in unison for a cohesive presentation.

Load up *Star Trek Into Darkness* and that tight co-operation is apparent as the *USS Enterprise* blasts left-to-right.

Producing a stunningly direct sound that excels in focus and clarity, this

system makes more conventional rivals sound a little soft and blurred in comparison. Its delivery shows no shortage of punch or attack as grenades are launched, and there's plenty to praise where detail and dynamics are concerned.

It only takes one on-screen explosion to appreciate the exceptional power and grunt from the sub's forward-facing 25cm driver.

It's not long before we're engrossed in the action - and that's in part thanks to the surrounds. Its their bipole design - which means they fire sound both forward and backward to make the soundfield more 'wrap around' - that make the experience totally immersive.

Though the package's slightly lean disposition gives it an agile quality, it makes system pairing crucial. Stay away from bright or aggressive electronics and you'll have a sound to marvel at.

*Producing a stunningly direct sound that excels in focus and clarity, the **Cambridge Audio Aero 5.1** makes rivals sound a little blurred in comparison*



72 www.whathifi.com