



The Spheres That Spoke

Elipson is known for their spheres that talk beyond their design principles. The Elipson 4260 floorstanders will reinstate its faith in producing sound that's devoid of any colour and pleases you with its honesty.

When you find a speaker manufacturer whose design has been copied time and again by many other companies, but never getting it quite as right, it makes you wonder just how good the original must be. ELIPSON or E(motion) L(eon Joseph, bien sur...) I(nnovation) P(rofessional) S(phere) O(ffice de Radio & Television France) N(o compromise), is one such company that has spent a good 70 years in perfecting the spherical chassis. One of their most advanced illustrations of this is in their 4260 beast of a tower speaker. A speaker that was so huge that it couldn't come to us, we had to go to it.

OUT OF THE BOX

When each speaker of a pair weighs 129kgs, space would be something you'd want to think about. That said, these guys look nothing short of majestic and they are a sight that is as overwhelming as one of the wonders of this world.

Draped in a gloss white finish, the speaker is divided into two distinct sections: the main curvy speaker unit that holds nothing more than the bass driver and the globe at the top that holds the tweeter and the mid-bass unit. The bottom also houses the massive bass reflex port that's responsible for a lot more than just giving you a black void to stare at. The speakers look very sturdy and have a wide

footprint that extends an inch all around, thanks to the thick base that the cabinet sits on. The back panel has a lot to offer besides the metal line that drops from the top of the cabinet all the way to the base. You can get confused about the speaker terminals as they have been divided into the bass (bottom) section and the high (top globe) section.

TECHNOLOGY

Essentially, the Elipson 4260 has been divided into a subwoofer unit and the sphere that can be said to be the 'rest of the speaker'. The subwoofer's rigidity comes from heavy internal reinforcements and a 75mm thick chassis. The speaker has been stabilised by adding an open frame that applies pressure through vibration absorbers, making both rigidity and power handling work at their optimum. An internal resonator neutralizes the main resonance frequency of the cabinet so as to prevent any sort of internal distortion from hampering with the sound. As for the vent on the bottom half other subwoofer, a special treatment has been applied to it to reduce distortion in the 3rd harmonic*, which is usually the most hearable when dealing with those really low frequencies. At the same time, its large size avoids airflow noises, a common problem with vents that need to handle powerful lows.

The sphere also has an internal resonator, which is the secret of Elipson's spheres, and since this is

Specifications

- DESIGN:** 3-way
- DRIVERS:** 15" PHL Audio Paper Bass Woofer, 8" PHL Audio Paper Mid-range Woofer, 1" Scanspeak Soft Cone Tweeter
- FREQUENCY RESPONSE:** 31Hz-40kHz
- NOMINAL IMPEDANCE:** 8Ω
- POWER HANDLING:** 250W RMS
- SENSITIVITY:** 92dB
- WEIGHT:** 129kg
- DIMENSIONS:**





pure sphere we're dealing with, the resonant frequencies can be all over the place. The damping material used here does help a great deal in eliminating the stationary waves. However, the major element about both the subwoofer and the sphere is the filter on the back panel. There are seven terminals you see on the back, arranged into two sections titled 420 and C60. The 420 is concerning the tweeter and the C60 concerns the subwoofer. In the former, the terminals labeled I, II, and III stand for the three different filter settings you can choose to hook up the tweeter with. Each of these three settings offer an increase in the frequency response between 10kHz and 20kHz, with I marking the flatest response you can get and III marking the highest rise. The same goes for the labels of A and B marked in the C60 section, with the frequency changes happening between 30Hz and 80Hz. The drivers themselves are as spectacular as the body they come

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housed in. The mid-range is an 8" paper-based, high efficiency driver with a phase plug, while the bass is a massive 15" paper based woofer. The tweeter is a custom made one from the Danish company Scanspeak. Together, these guys can deal with 250W RMS, which is incredible for any speaker. Considering what we've just written and what you've just read, let's see if the performance lives up to it.

PERFORMANCE

We were in a showroom in New Delhi that dealt primarily with Cambridge Audio amplifiers, so we had to settle for their 840E preamplifier and two 840W power amplifiers, wired to act as monoblocks. Knowing the Cambridge Audio sound, we could expect a more laid back sound that needed driving to get the most out of these Elipson 4260 beasts. We dropped in a CD of Christy Baron and sat back in their demo room to get a whiff of what was being offered to us in the female vocals department. The spheres immediately came to life illustrating her voice with the dazzling mids and tingling highs that her voice deserves. The Elipsons make sure they wash you with the sound without adding any sort of colour to the music. The subwoofer, throughout this CD, kept itself in the same lowered position in the soundstage as it did physically. It was no doubt present and sturdy, but didn't feel the need to come pouncing at you.

This however did not mean that we underestimated the entire lower half. With Otto Von Schirach's "Gelatin Fixation", that deep ripping bassline came pouncing at us with the power of a 10 tonne truck. It literally shook every single driver in every single speaker that the showroom was holding. But yet, the driver was amazingly quick to keep with the transiental kick drum that drove the track. At the same time, the top end wasn't forgotten and got buried underneath the lows, which is very often the case with such a commanding lower end. The sphere was as rapid as the bass, snapping the electronic snares and hi-hats as fast as they came through the lines. We also could hear a good amount of bass coming from the mid-range driver, which meant that there was a broad crossover point between the sub and the sphere that helped incredibly in integrating the top and bottom half of this speaker together.

With the OST of 'Sweeney Todd - The Demon Barber From Fleet Street', there were a lot of moments where we could taste the true timbre of the actors' singing voices. There are only a handful

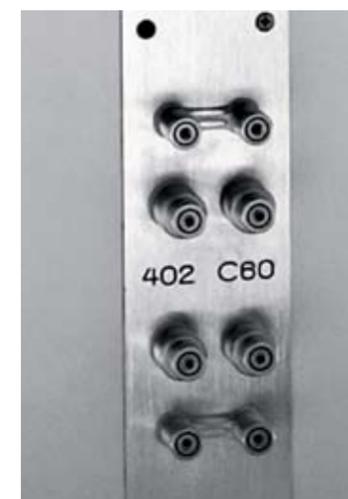


of voices in this world that can match up to the warmth of Johnny Depp's, and this same warmth came bleeding through these spherical masters with ease and absolutely no distortion. The imaging was spot on, with his voice at the very centre and the entire orchestra spread out around the space surrounding the speakers. The soundstage did feel a little thin during some of the softer parts of this soundtrack, and this could be the amplifier playing its characteristics through these guys. So we decided on something a little more forward to make up for it. We dropped in Red Hot Chilli Peppers' 'Stadium Arcadium' and shuffled over to "Strip My Mind". The speakers jumped and came back to the energy level we had during the Otto Von Schirach session, except this time they exercised their ability of letting the vocalist take the centre seat. The sandwich our ears received was thick and squishy, with the entire speaker working as one unit without letting you ever feel the various components at work. We did try messing around with the

filter settings on the back panel, and our ears got just what the specification chart had mentioned would happen in the frequency range. In the end, we landed up going with the II setting for the tweeter and the A setting on C60 section, primarily, because the bass was getting a little more attention already because of all the passive drivers in all the display speakers around it.

WHAT IS

***Harmonics**
Every frequency consists of a fundamental frequency and its harmonics. The harmonic is an integer multiple of the fundamental. So, for example, if the fundamental frequency is 20Hz, the harmonics of it would be 2x20Hz=40Hz, 3x20Hz=60Hz, etc. The fundamental frequency itself is considered as the first harmonic.



CONCLUSION

When a pair of speakers costs upward of 10 lakhs, you know that only the most serious and richest will even think about getting a pair. You need plenty of space for these guys and it won't seem feasible to buy these guys and expect them to adapt to your small apartment living room. We heard from their New Delhi dealer that buyers were building their rooms around these speakers, which would be the only way to accommodate the 4260s. There was also a moment when we drove the speakers to an excruciating level on the amplifier and did hear the tweeters nagging our ear drums enough to make us ask the owner just how many hours had these guys been vibrating for. He said, "Not more than ten hours". That explained this bit, but didn't explain the fact that how could these speakers be so freaking good otherwise without any sort of break-in? And that could only mean that these guys were going to get better over time, making any owner of these speakers the happiest man alive.

Karan Gour

Elipson 4260

PRICE	₹ 11,50,000 (+ Taxes)
WARRANTY	5 Years
CATEGORY	Floorstanding Spkr
AESTHETICS	★★★★★
BUILD	★★★★★
AUDIO	★★★★★
EASE OF USE	★★★★★
VFM	★★★★★

WHAT SAY AV?

There are only a handful of speakers out there that are as large as Elipson's 4260s and even fewer that can dazzle the eyes and the ears as spectacularly as this pair can. They bring to the table clean, uncoloured music with coherence amongst the three drivers that can only be heard through single full-band drivers. There is no doubt that if you can afford these guys, you will be satisfied, although considering their price and their size, you would already know that before you went in for the purchase.

OVERALL ★★★★★
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