



EVENT OPAL

It was a sunny day outside the CX bunker when Peter Freedman from Event Electronics rolled through the front door, a pair of Event Opal monitors in hand. Well, half a pair, James Biddle from Event was carrying the other one. They weigh a bit, and with good reason as it turns out.

By **JIMMY D**

TECH SPEC

Much of what has gone into the Opal is new. There are a bunch of developments which you can find out about on the Event website (eventelectronics.com), and it makes for interesting viewing.

Basic specs are as follows: The Opal

is a 2 way active studio monitor, encased in an injection moulded aluminium enclosure. Low and mid frequencies are supplied by an 8" carbon fibre composite woofer, while a 1" Beryllium-Copper tweeter on a rotatable elliptical waveguide supplies top end. Crossover frequency is 1600Hz, and the cabinet weighs 21.6kg. Continuous power handling is 387W on the woofer,

and 112W on the tweeter. Program and peak handling figures are 2-4 times higher, as is the amplifier output power for each driver. While there is an AES option available, all the internal processing is analogue (including the 48db/octave crossovers!).

Front panel controls include level, filtering to assist with room correction, as well as a dimmer for the power light located behind the logo. Rather than go with potentiometers, the Opals employ rotary switches with resistors – it's a more accurate way of doing things. These sit behind a little rubber panel cover to keep things looking neat and sounding right (yes, the cover does make a difference). The Event logo is magnetically attached, and can be rotated if you choose to lie the boxes down on the rubber support plinths. You'll want to use the plinths even if you stand the boxes upright, as the bases aren't completely flat.

Excitingly enough, there's a calibrated mic and software package on the way, which you connect to the speakers and run test signals through. The software looks at what the room is doing to the sound, and tells you the suggested settings for the front panel controls to accommodate this behaviour.

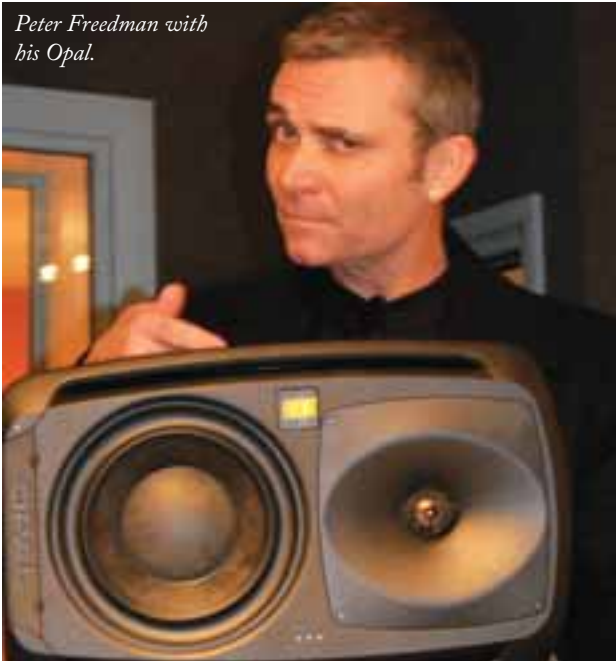
HOW THEY SOUND

We set up the Opals in the studio and plugged in a CD player, then Peter played us a couple of tracks he selected from a CD. One of them included piano. Andy was the first to make an observation: he could hear two different microphones on the piano in Left and Right respectively. He could also tell that they were different types of mic.

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Peter Freedman with his Opal.



Peter turned the reins over to Andy and I. Julius stuck around to supervise and look useful. The first track we listened to was an uncompressed recording – albeit a “desk tape” live mix, but a reasonably good one at that. Everything sat where it was supposed to – there are a few inadequacies in the track and these showed up where I expected them to. Top end is accurate without being over-present. The HF driver has a really big voicecoil, so it doesn’t need to run hard to produce level. Hence no distortion.

Peter explained how the LF driver has seriously long excursion (36mm), which is really good for low frequency response. “Concentrate” from Xzibit’s “Full Circle” album seemed a suitable selection to see if he was right. The bottom end in this track is demanding, and while it sounds ok on most speakers, it’s more like mind blowing on a box which has good low frequency response. No such problems were apparent. Even the swearing sounded clean.

“Winners” from the K’s Choice album “Cocoon Crash” was the next order of business – it’s a beautifully clean and precise acoustic track with fantastic vocals. We played it. We liked it. It sounded like it should. Not only is the mid where it’s supposed to be, it works with everything else. I smiled and asked how much the speakers cost. Peter smiled and replied that if I like them the price just went up. Julius smiled and told me they wouldn’t fit on my desk. I need a bigger desk.

You can only mix the things you can hear, but so far as the Opals are concerned your ears will probably limit that before the speakers do. Event Electronics is a new venture for Peter Freedman who already has a world-class audio business in RØDE microphones. RØDE has considerable experience in engineering parts for microphones, where precision is a prerequisite – it’s only logical that some of the same principals could be adapted on a larger scale to work in speaker technology. Make something accurate and precise, then make it bigger. Sound principle really.

I wouldn’t call the Opals flat. To be certain, they definitely have a very linear response, but flat would be the wrong term to describe it – to me flat denotes boring. Smooth or engaging would be better, but these terms tend to denote that they’re not very true. Too many words. They sound very linear, but they do it in an exciting way.

The Event Opals retail at \$4999 a pair and are available through Event Electronics. <http://www.event1.com/> 

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