Revel
Concerta2 F36 £2,000

Hi-Fi Choice RECOMMENDED

Despite the understated looks, Revel has a reputation for meticulous development and sound quality

DETAILS

PRODUCT
Revel
Concerta2 F36

ORIGIN
US

TYPE
2.5-way floorstander

WEIGHT
23kg

DIMENSIONS
(WxHxD)
245 x 1,124 x 305mm

FEATURES
- 25mm aluminium dome tweeter
- 165mm aluminium/ ceramic mid driver
- 2x 165mm aluminium/ceramic bass drivers
- Quoted sensitivity: 91dB/1W/1m (6ohm)

DISTRIBUTOR
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The second-generation Concerta range from Revel has a simple if familiar-sounding remit: high performance engineering and build at a reasonable price. The holy grail of affordable excellence in other words. But perhaps Revel is better placed than most to deliver. Part of the vast Harman Group, the company has the resources to ensure its reputation for sound quality and doing things right earned by its more expensive products is carried through to this refresh of its entry-level Concerta lineup which, as before, consists of six models ranging from the M16 standmount (*HFC* 416) to this, the F36 floorstanding flagship.

On the face of it, the F36 is a fairly straightforward proposition – a 2.5-way floorstander with a 25mm tweeter, a 165mm mid/bass driver, two 165mm woofers and an elegant, high-gloss, boat-backed enclosure with a rear-firing bass-reflex port. It's a distinctly unflashy design, too. But very smart in an understated way.

The waveguide that cradles the aluminium tweeter and merges with the gasket for the uppermost mid-bass driver works in conjunction with an acoustic lens that sits just in front of the tweeter dome. The upshot is increased sensitivity and better integrated dispersion. The main drivers use aluminium/ceramic composite cones for enhanced rigidity and internal damping without adding significant mass. No visible screws or nuts, either – very neat. The curved enclosures combat internal standing waves and are constructed from 19mm-thick MDF. The F36 isn't particularly heavy for its size but it does feel solid and 'knuckle-rap' inert, while the high gloss finish is very nicely done.

Sound quality

The F36 needs more space around it than some in the group but, sonically, it hits the ground running. On *Memory Lane*, the opening strings sound clear with fine separation, while Van Morrison seems a little more animated and expressive than he has before. Also apparent, though, is a very slight bloom to the lower frequencies. It isn't an issue with the older, and comparatively bass-light, Yes recording. Here, the Revel does a great job of making the track sound every bit as exciting and urgent as Trevor Horn intended. There's more acoustic definition to the sampled sections and the screaming guitars mid-way through really soar. As played by the Revel, the music just seems to have more life and attack.

The presentation works just as well with the Marcus Miller cut, which seems to sound bouncier and more infectiously rhythmic. And, taking the tempo down a touch, there's a better sense of acoustic space around Oscar Peterson's piano. The high notes sound brighter and more sonorous and the dynamics of Peterson's playing – the percussive thud of hammers hitting strings – are more emphatically carried ●

THROUGH THE LENS

Revel's research scientists discovered some time ago that the large difference in dispersion between tweeters and woofers (or midrange drivers) in the crossover region could have serious sonic consequences. Questioning whether this was only impactful for listeners positioned well off-axis informed the development of the company's advanced waveguides and acoustic lenses and led to a much closer correlation between the critical importance of the far off-axis response of speakers – especially in the crossover range – and sound quality for listeners on-axis. Resulting from this, Revel has designed all of its speakers from the start to optimise a smooth transition between the tweeter and woofer or midrange. The F36 dome profile and waveguide work together with the acoustic lens to smooth the response both on- and off-axis.

The F36 also comes in a white gloss finish

Hi-Fi Choice OUR VERDICT

SOUND QUALITY ★★★★½
VALUE FOR MONEY ★★★★½
BUILD QUALITY ★★★★★
EASE OF DRIVE ★★★★★
OVERALL ★★★★½

LIKE: Clear, energetic and engaging sound; fine build and finish

DISLIKE: Needs careful placement; occasional bass bloom

WE SAY: Understated aesthetics belie exuberant and entertaining sound