

Rihanna's Engineer Greg Ogan on World-Class Vocals

RECORDING

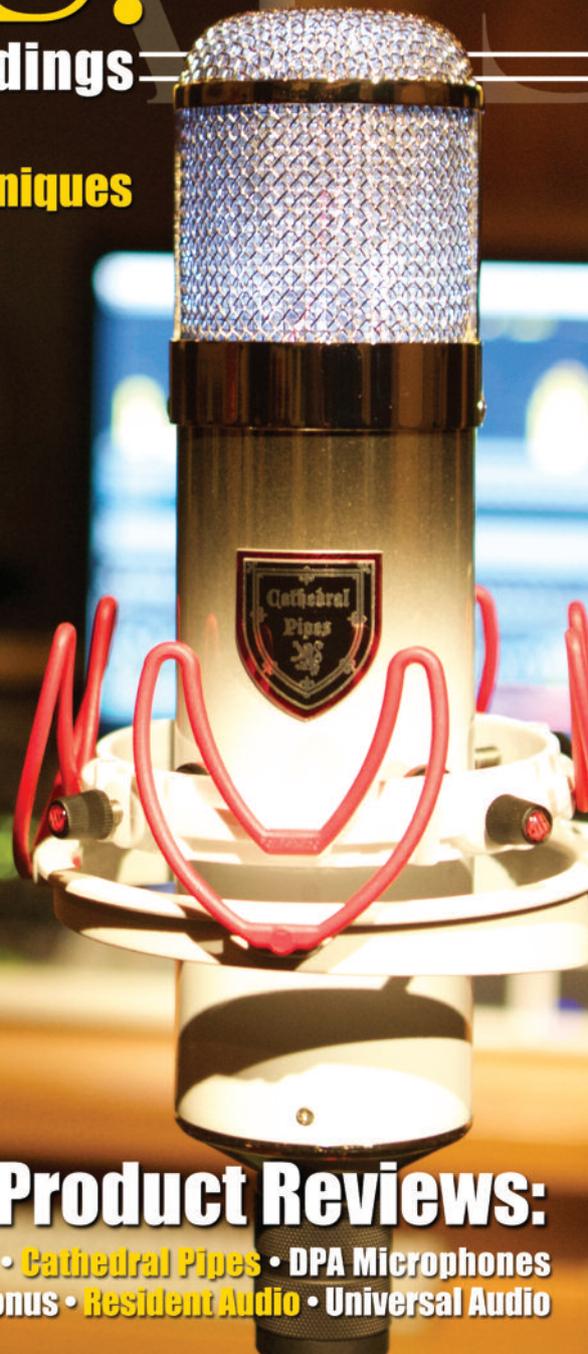
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REVIEW



What makes for a “good” subwoofer? When I review a sub, I look for a combination of factors: flexibility in wiring, so it can easily be integrated into a wide variety of studio monitor setups; a sensible and comprehensive set of controls, to allow maximum flexibility when adjusting the sub to match your monitors and room; and bass that sounds realistic and nuanced when successfully integrated in your system. With those criteria in mind, I ran the new PreSonus Temblor T10 subwoofer through its paces...

What’s a Temblor?

“Temblor” is a Spanish word meaning “earthquake”, commonly used in tremor-prone areas of California. That’s an apt description for this sub, which can rattle the fillings right out of your mouth if you tell it to. It’s a big box, 12.6" wide and 15.75" high and deep, weighing a hefty 40 pounds. A reasonably nonresonant MDF cabinet holds a 10" front-firing glass composite woofer, just above a generous port that reinforces the speaker’s low-end response. With a Class AB power amp that delivers 170W RMS / 250W peak, there’s some serious boom awaiting you.

PreSonus Temblor T10 Subwoofer

Lots of boom for your listening room

The rear of the T10 offers the flexibility I look for in a subwoofer primarily designed to support stereo monitors. Stereo inputs are available on balanced XLR, balanced 1/4" TRS, and unbalanced RCA; the unbalanced inputs are blended with the balanced ones, with the TRS superseding the XLR if anything’s plugged in there. A rear-panel Input Gain pot sets level from –30 to +6 dB.

The outputs include stereo XLR and TRS plus an XLR Sub Out for feeding a second sub. Controls include an 80 Hz highpass filter (HPF) switch, polarity invert, ground lift, footswitchable subwoofer bypass, and a Low Pass Filter knob with a frequency range of 50–130 Hz. The spec sheet claims a frequency response of 20–200 Hz (no tolerances given), better than 98 dB signal to noise ratio, and 113 dB maximum SPL at 1 meter.

Putting the T10 to work

Hookup is the same as for any subwoofer with built-in bass management: you feed your audio from your mixer or interface to the T10’s inputs, and run cables from the outputs to your stereo monitors. You then adjust the controls to get the smoothest possible response in the low end for your listening position in your room. As the manual warns, you should also be prepared to move the Temblor around to find where it speaks most evenly at the listening position, and if possible, be prepared to use a pink noise source and SPL meter to calibrate listening levels at a reasonable volume.

A lot of the controls are in the realm of “if it sounds better one way than the other, leave it there.” Does the bass sound stronger and more defined when you flip the polarity switch? Good! Is there ground loop hum that is alleviated by the ground lift? Then let it do that for you. By the way, the lift switch actually puts a 1 kilohm load across the balanced inputs; it doesn’t mess with the actual ground for the unit’s power cable, which on an amp this big would be asking for Dr. Forrester’s Deep Hurting.

Do you want your stereo monitors reproducing audio as low as they can go, or do you want to let the T10 do all the heavy lifting down there? If the latter, set



the Low Pass Filter to 80 Hz and flip the High Pass Filter switch, so the sub hands off to the mains at that frequency. Otherwise, you can dial in the bass by adjusting the Low Pass Filter to where the overlap sounds musically smooth with no bump or dip in power. I preferred to leave it set quite low, as my ADAM Audio A5X mains (reviewed September 2014) are 3 dB down at the Low Pass Filter’s 50 Hz lower limit.

The included remote bypass footswitch is something every serious sub should have. Defeating the sub so you can hear what it’s doing helps you assure yourself that you’re hearing real bass rather than “impress the client” thunder. The backlit blue PreSonus logo on the front of the T10 flashes blue and red when it’s bypassed; the 80 Hz HPF is also disabled.

How does it sound? I’ll admit that just for fun, well after hours in my studio at our offices, I cranked up the T10 and watched the windows and walls vibrate. After that, it was time to get serious. I dialed it in at lower gain with the Low Pass Filter set to just touch up the lows in the ADAMs, and the result was exactly as it should be. All of a sudden, there was extended, present, believable bass that the 5" woofers of the ADAMs couldn’t deliver, and my mixing decisions were instantly more accurate and translatable in the lows. A good subwoofer is supposed to do that, and the Temblor T10 delivers the goods. ➤

Price: \$399.95

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