



**ANALOG HI-FI AND VINYL CULTURE**



# ASSIMILATED

With the "Borg" model, the Essen-based manufacturer Fink Team launched its statement on two-way floor-standing speakers in 2018. Now, there is an upgrade that significantly improves the concept.









*The „Episode 2“ can be identified visually by the base plate tapering towards the rear*

## Background

As is well known, Karl Heinz Fink and Norbert Theisges earn their livelihood primarily by building loudspeakers for other people. In other words, with „Fink Audio Consulting,“ they run one of the most renowned service providers on the market when it comes to implementing loudspeaker projects. However, the gentlemen get itchy fingers from time to time, and then they build exceptional loudspeakers for their portfolio. These can then be purchased under the „Fink Team“ label. For example, the compact „Kim“ is one such creation, which we have already featured in detail here. This is our first „official“ encounter with the Borg model but by no means my first experience with the speaker. I poke my nose into Fink’s domicile occasionally and always get to see what’s cooking in the developer’s kitchen. And I got to see the development of „Episode 2“ up close and personal.

There are a few pleasing things to report during the update development – apart from the fact that the new variant represents a significant sound improvement. The sales price has remained unchanged: the Borg Episode 2 costs EUR 30,000 per pair in all possible finishes. And there is the possibility of an update. You can make the original Borg into a full Episode 2. To do this, it has to be returned to the manufacturer, where the rear connection plate, the base plate with the crossover mounted on it, and a few other small things are replaced. The update costs EUR 4000 per pair and is an excellent idea.

*The Borg’s woofer is a real big hitter when it comes to motors*





A few of the gems used on the crossover of the „Episode 2“. The potted transformer at the top is still a prototype

### General information

The Borg – no matter which version – is a 1.05-meter-high and 52-kilogram two-way floor-standing speaker with a ten-inch midbass driver and an AMT tweeter. The two drivers are housed in a massive, thick baffle, the complex shape of which is driving the cabinet manufacturing operation increasingly insane. However, the structure, which looks like stealth technology, had to be there because it is partly responsible for the speaker's excellent omnidirectional sound distribution. The cabinet is a double-walled MDF construction with a gel-like adhesive between the two layers for excellent damping properties. This gives the speaker the lowest-vibration cabinet I have ever encountered.

### Driver technology

The two drivers are specially designed for this speaker. This is standard practice at Finks; the professionals rarely take their components „off the shelf.“ There is practically always something for the intended application. The Borg's bass driver is an entirely new design. Fitted with a coated paper cone, the driver has an impressive motor that, at first glance, makes it look like a full-blown midrange driver for sound

reinforcement applications. However, Karl Heinz Fink puts a resistor in front of the driver, which pushes the otherwise far too low total Q of the driver back into bass-suitable regions. Although this is a costly way to build a woofer, the designer swears by the fact that it simply sounds better.

While the bass driver is manufactured in the Far East, the tweeter comes from Cologne: the Air Motion Transformer is made by Mundorf and contains a whole range of design tricks not found in any production model.

### Filtering

The Borg crossover is the area that underwent the most significant changes in the Episode 2 update. This affects not only the components used but also substantial structural changes. In the meantime, Fink has discovered that the way in which

### Teammates

#### Turntable:

- Transrotor Massimo Nero / Studio 12“

#### Pickup Cartridge:

- Transrotor Figaro

#### Phono preamplifier:

- MalValve preamp three phono

#### Preamplifier:

- Accuphase C-3900

#### Power amplifier:

- Accuphase A-300

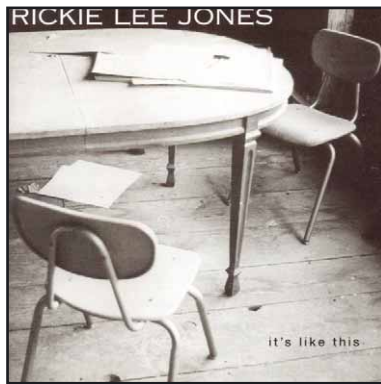
### Competitors

#### Loudspeaker:

- Wilson Audio Sasha V
- Fyne Audio Vintage Fifteen

The AMT tweeter is a custom-made product from Mundorf





### What we played

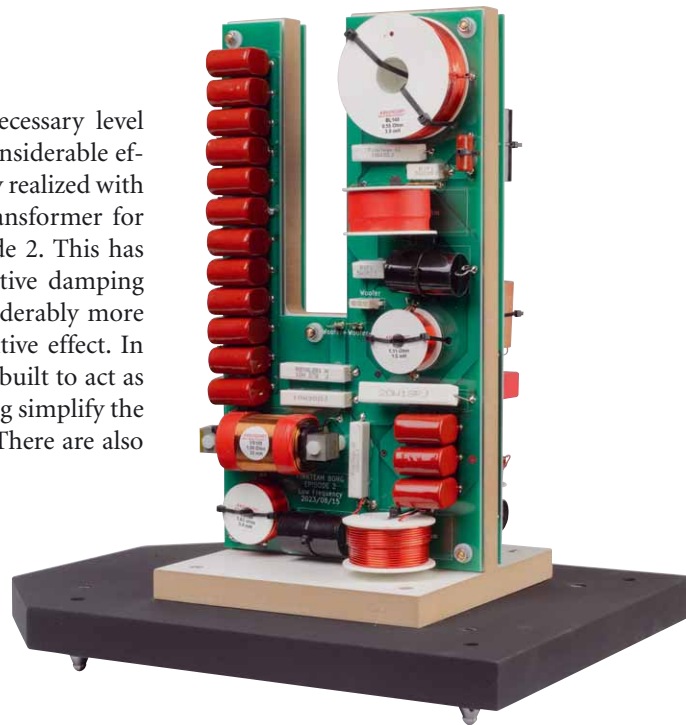
**Rickie Lee Jones**  
It's Like This

**The Blackwhitecolorful**  
Brace For Impact

**Fleetwood Mac**  
Rumours

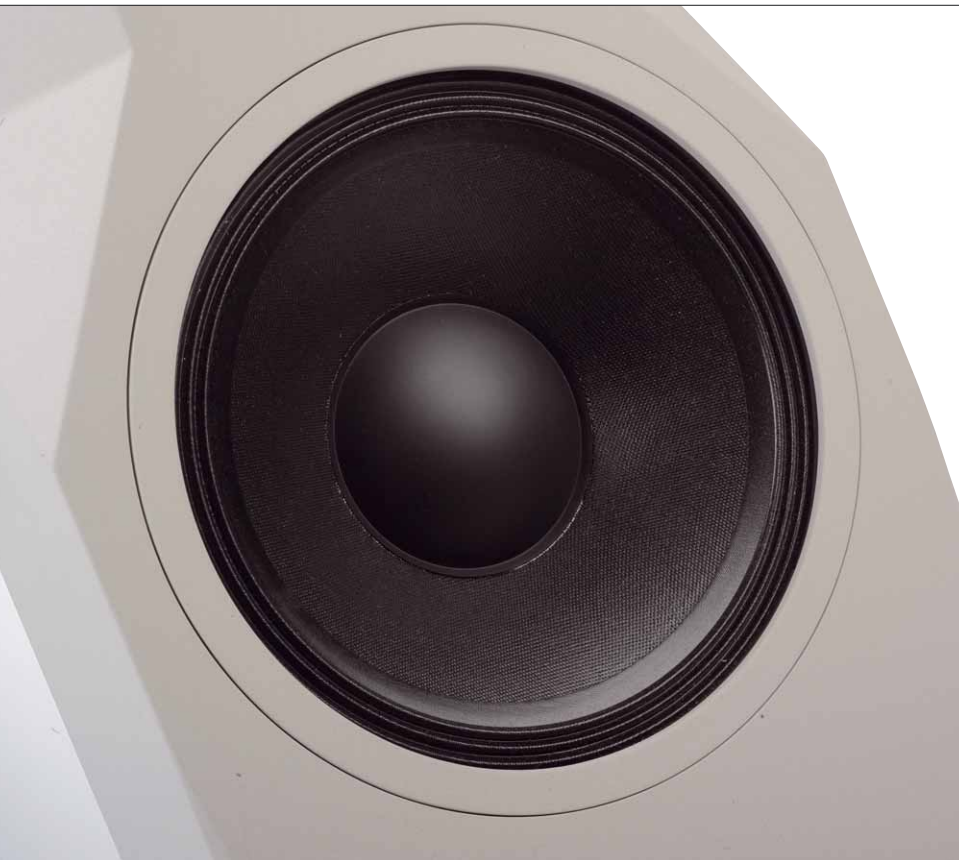
**Simon & Garfunkel**  
Parsley, Sage, Rosemary And Thyme

a tweeter's almost always necessary level reduction is realized has a considerable effect on the sound. It is usually realized with resistors, but Fink uses a transformer for the first time in Borg Episode 2. This has the advantage that the effective damping factor at the tweeter is considerably more significant, which has a positive effect. In addition, this transformer is built to act as a filtering component, helping simplify the tweeter crossover structure. There are also



*A real beauty of a crossover  
- here, the bass section*

*A cover ring conceals the edge  
of the woofer basket - the right  
idea in terms of appearance*



some remarkable changes to the component quality: There is even one of the legendary Danish Duelund capacitors in the tweeter section.

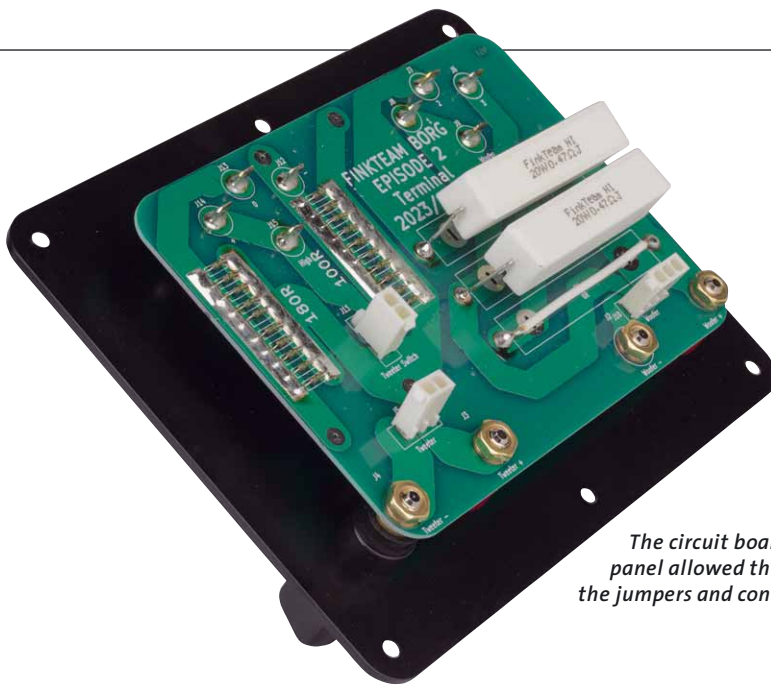
The rear connection panel is also completely new. Four rotary knobs for adjusting the mid-high range have been turned into two jumpers, which is not only in the interests of an unrestricted signal flow but also makes operation easier. The speaker is still connected via two pairs of solid binding posts, with jumper cables connecting both branches - but if you want, you can also use real bi-wiring or bi-amping.

The crossover is a rather impressive structure mounted upright on the base plate of the speaker. In the event of an upgrade, this base plate is also replaced. It provides the greater degree of tilt that characterizes the new version.

### Control

The Borg Episode 2 is generally a frugal loudspeaker regarding power requirements. Thanks to a decent efficiency and a linearized impedance curve, it is compati-





*The new connector panel with bi-wiring bridges*

*The circuit board of the connection panel allowed the integration of the jumpers and connection sockets*

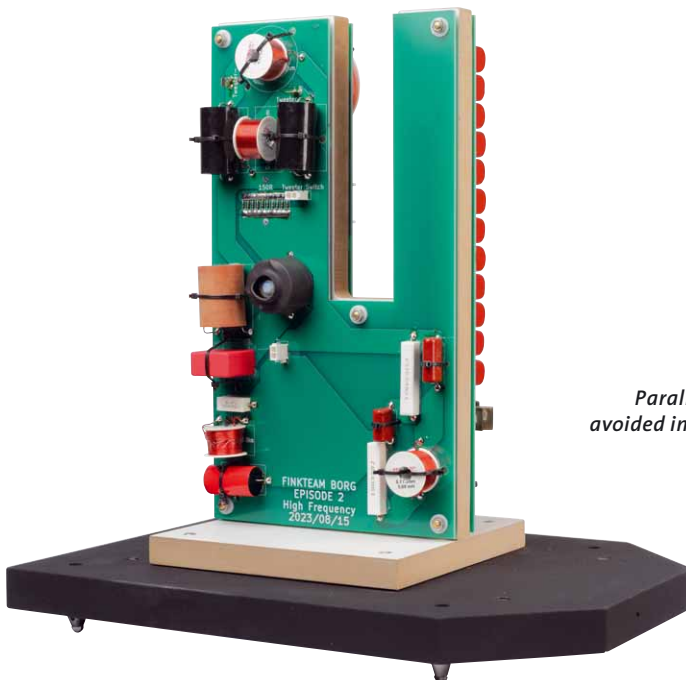


ble with almost any electronics, including all kinds of tube devices. However, quality in this area is rewarded with high transparency.

### Sound

No, I wasn't surprised. I had already spent too much time with Borg Episode 2 during its development for it to have taught me anything I didn't already know. However, I was thrilled once again by her abilities. Again, it was the awesome Accuphase com-

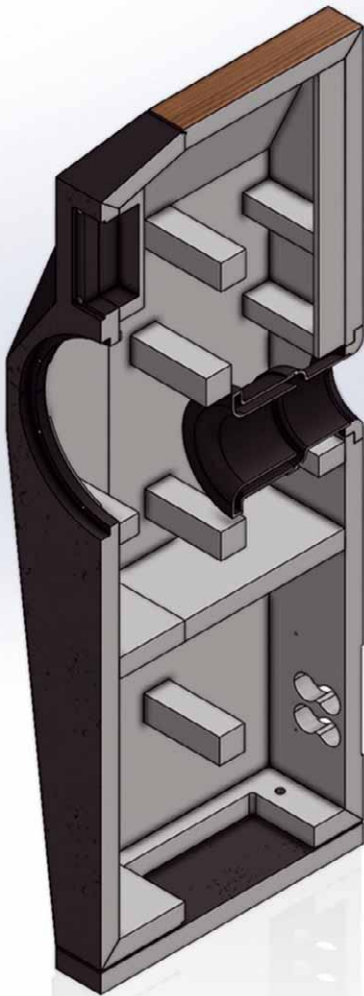
bo I couldn't live without regarding amplification after a while. The wonderfully snarly bass on Ricki Lee Jones' excellent 2000 album „It's Like This“ is something the Borg can reproduce brilliantly with these amplifiers. I also like the sound of the piano here enormously. Very energetic, with lots of detail, but without a trace of sharpness – fantastic. The way Fink has taught the big AMT to breathe and achieve finesse is



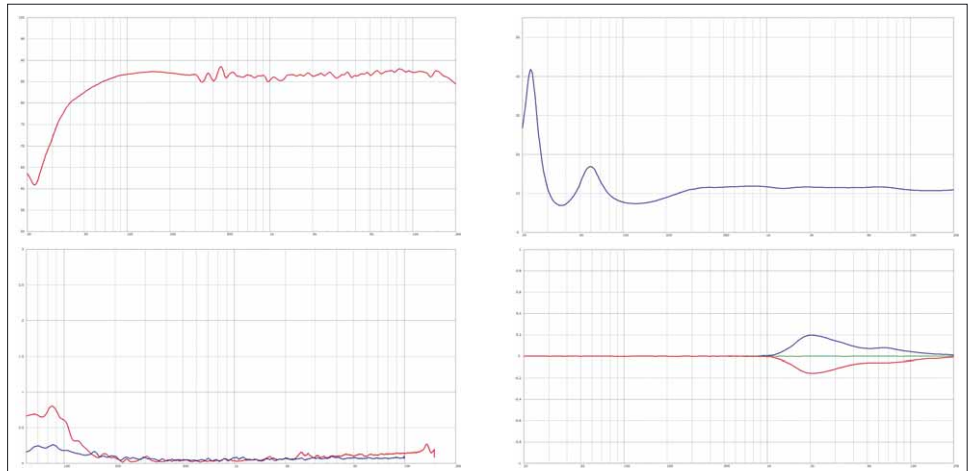
*Parallel walls were consistently avoided in the design of the housing*

*This is the tweeter crossover in its final form*





The cabinet sectional drawing reveals numerous reinforcements for even more stability



### Measurements

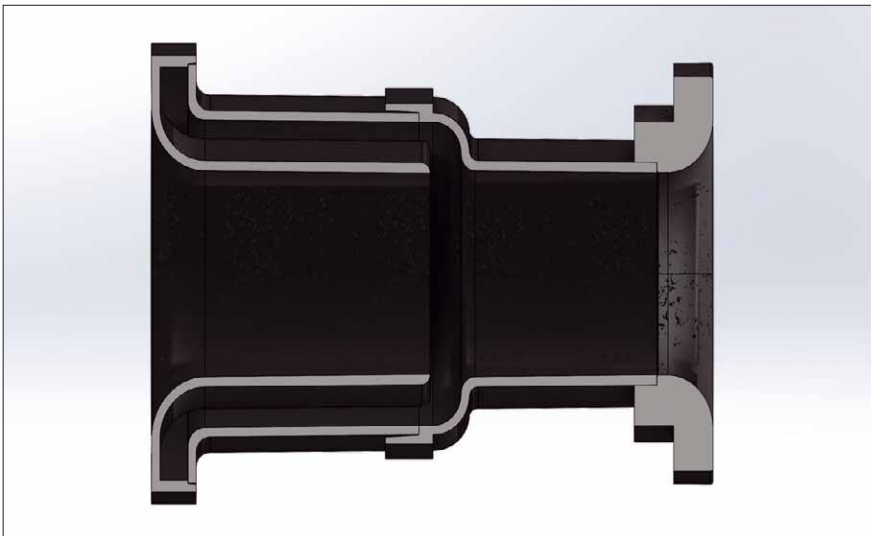
#### Lab comment

In this case, we rely on the manufacturer's measurements. The amplitude response of the Borg Episode 2 is very balanced. In the bass, the sound pressure drops relatively early but very gently, which is suitable for "real" living rooms. The efficiency is 87 decibels at an average impedance of around ten ohms. The impedance curve is linearized. The distortion curve at 84 decibels of sound pressure reveals extremely low distortion values down to low frequencies, which speaks for excellent drivers. The last diagram shows the effect of the three-stage reversible "high" filter. The slight difference in level of a maximum of 0.2 decibels is also comprehensible.

genuinely outstanding. The transformer coupling works great - something I always noticed during my many years working for our DIY magazine Klang & Ton. Meanwhile, the loudspeaker swings soulfully through the super-tense „Low Spark Of High Heeled Boys,“ which lives decisively from its rhythmic finesse.

The Cologne band „The Blackwhite-colorful,“ whose new album (review at the back of the magazine) is a perfect choice for the Episode 2, caters to the fun-loving faction. The bass drum kicks impressively, and the vocals are highly convincingly extracted from the guitar wall and stand well ahead of the rest of the action. That's how it should be. The Borg Episode 2 passes the „seventies test“ of Fleetwood Mac with flying colors. The bottom end is warm and gritty, and she does an excellent job of keeping the two singers apart, granting them passion and conviction. I really enjoy that the Borg has become a loudspeaker with passion and has shed the slightly ascetic quality still characteristic of the original version. However, its transparency, which was already noticeable in the past, has increased, as has the atmospheric density it can create—definitely a transducer for the desert island.

Holger Barske



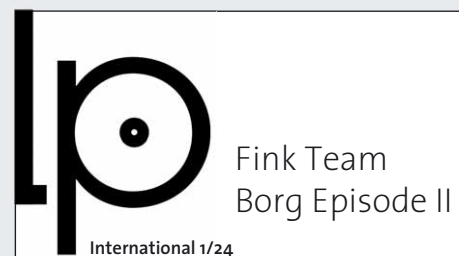
The vent is an extremely tricky design with a built-in resonator



## Fink Team Borg Episode II



- Price per pair ca. 30,000 Euro
- Distribution IDC Klaassen, Lünen
- Phone +49 231 9860285
- Internet [www.finkteam.com](http://www.finkteam.com)
- Warranty 2 years
- Dimensions (W x H x D) 300 x 1050 x 400 mm
- Weight approx. 52 kg



» The new Borg achieves a wonderful balancing act between monitor-like transparency and captivating warmth. It has a foundation, lightness, and an impressive degree of completeness. A great loudspeaker!