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**Quick-Info**

■ Home Cinema	■■■■■
■ Living Room Cinema	■■■■■
■ Music (Stereo)	■■■■■
■ Music (5.1)	■■■■■

**HEIMKINO**  
**Highlight** 1/2-2017



**M&K Sound S300 Series: Professional Home Cinema Set with THX Ultra2 License**

# **Best in Class**

Those who want an uncompromising home cinema sound and have sufficient space as well as a wallet that's big enough should consider a THX-certified sound system. Such systems guarantee professional sound, exactly like the director wanted it to be during the production of the movie. M&K Sound offers the perfect set for these demands, the S300 series.

Until now the Miller & Kreisel brand had been not very well known in Europe, but this will probably change quickly with its new distributor. M&K Sound actually is one of the most renowned speaker manufacturers in the movie field; blockbusters such as Star Wars, King Kong or Lord of the Rings have been mixed and mastered on M&K Sound systems. There's almost no prestigious film studio that didn't use the legendary S150 as a sound reference for their productions during the last two decades. Our review samples from the S300 series are the current successors of the S150 and want to better them once more.

## M&K Sound

In the mid-70s, Ken Kreisel and Jonas Miller founded their own loudspeaker brand in California, immediately earning the respect from the industry. No less a figure than Walter Becker of Steely Dan assigned the founders to build a studio monitor system with which he could produce the album "Pretzel Logic". Even the world's first active subwoofer came from M&K Sound in 1977. In 1995, a true legend was born when M&K Sound introduced the S150. The THX Ultra-certified loudspeakers set new standards in terms of tonality, sound dispersion and dynamics. Today, M&K Sound is headquartered in Denmark, where all M&K Sounds products are being developed and assembled.

## M&K S300 Series

The new S300 series follows in the footsteps of the legendary S150 Series, continuing the proven construction principles but equipped with completely new drivers and improved in many details. Basically the S300 set consist of three almost identical front speakers, two tri-pole surround speakers named S300T and the massive X12 active subwoofer. The front and rear speakers sport a double-wall cabinet with two layers of MDF and a damping intermediate layer of bitumen, which have been stuck together under high pressure. This increases mechanic stability a lot and makes for an almost resonance-free cabinet. No wonder that the compact main speakers in studio monitor design (34 x 40 x 33 cm) weigh in at 18 kilograms per piece. Even the still smaller S300T rear speakers are among the heavier specimens of their type, putting 12 kilograms on the scale.



*Scan Speak builds the tweeters exclusively for M&K Sounds. They share an acoustically decoupled mounting plate*

## Armament

As their predecessors, the current S300 speakers are housing a twin pack of two powerful bass/midrange woofers with 140 mm cones each. They are playing on a relatively small closed cabinet, optimized for impulse response and cut at

80 Hz, from where the X12 subwoofer takes over – exactly as required by the THX Ultra2 specifications. Another M&K Sound trademark are the three tweeters per front speaker. They allow for a significantly higher power handling capacity and better dynamics than a single high-frequency driver, while giving the developers the possibility to realize a lower and more favorable separating frequency. Furthermore, the three tweeters achieve a wider sound distribution on the horizontal plane, as the THX specifications demand. Hence the sound is being reproduced on the entire width of the "Movie stage", while sound reflections from the floor or ceiling are minimized, prohibiting sound cancellation. The tweeters are mounted both beautifully and in an acoustically useful way: They have been placed on a dampened plastic front panel that also serves as a little horn rudiment. All drivers are mounted from the back through a bolted back wall, so there are no screws visible on the front panel, just the slightly rounded baffle openings and the cones themselves. This is supposed to reduce sound rebounding at the edges. By the way, all cabinet parts are of the highest quality and covered with a velvety matt black lacquer – ideal for the home cinema.

## Tripoles S300T

M&K Sound calls its rear speakers „tripoles“ as they emit sound towards the listening position using a 140 mm cone and a tweeter as well as using two additional 40 mm wideband drivers that emit their sound to the front and back in a dipole configuration. This is supposed to produce gripping yet diffuse surround sound.

## Subwoofer X12

The subwoofer has to meet special requirement in a THX Ultra2-licensed setup. It has to play down to at least 35 Hz with a virtually unlimited dynamic range without distortion. At M&K Sound, the developers chose an impressive closed cabinet, a 400W power amp and two 12" woofers. One of the drivers has been mounted as a classic front-fire woofer; the second resides on the inside of the cabinet and is configured to support its visible counterpart as a "backwards mounted" push-pull driver. Thanks to this patented design, potential distortion of the woofer cone and asymmetrical excursion are said to be eliminated. The results are a significantly cleaner, more precise bass rendering and a tremendous power rating.

*left: The studio monitor design of the M&K Sound S300 and a triple tweeter array ensure enormous dynamics and a wide sound dispersion*

*right: M&K Sound sounds on the S300T-Tripole for the rear. They are a combination of direct radiators and dipoles*



## Lab and sound

The three front speakers have the same very linear frequency response. Even at an angle of 30°, the measured response only varies in a window of +/- 3 dB – an excellent value that gets a virtually perfect performance especially out of the center speaker. The distortion we measured is far from any kind of criticism, also the impulse response of the S300 sets new standards. Even under 500 Hz, the S300 come to a halt immediately after the impulse. This should guarantee a precise, crisp sound. The subwoofer X12 is no less impressive. It delivers full sound pressure from 35 Hz and doesn't run out of breath at high volumes either.

In the home cinema, the M&K Sound set shows unambiguously that it's a truly professional tool set. Thanks to the identical front speakers, it plays very homogenous and projects an unbelievably gripping and coherent soundstage. Correspondingly, the S300T rear speakers embrace the listener with a transparent yet room-filling backdrop of sound – it's impossible to locate the speakers themselves, the atmosphere is realistic in 360°. Never before did we experience our test movie "The Book Thief" with such a gripping and palpable performance. The menacing scene in the protection cellar with the hail of bombs almost makes you feel as if you were sitting in the narrow cellar itself. The X12 subwoofer adds bloodcurdling, physically perceptible rumble of the aircraft bomb explosions while the voice of the main actress prevails crystal-clear against the rage.

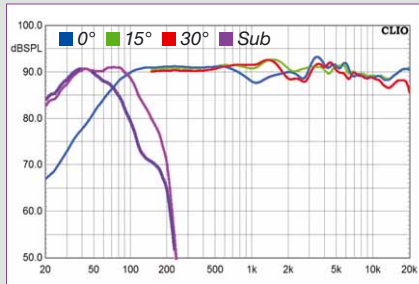
## Conclusion

M&K Sound mean business: Like virtually no other loudspeaker set, the S300 Series raises the bar for demanding THX Ultra2-licensed cinema sound. It delivers peak performances in all disciplines: tonality, freedom from distortion, dynamic range, resolution of detail and spatial depth. The X12 subwoofer is a true highlight of its class; with precise, gripping deep bass reproduction, it ensures a real hone cinema experience. Unfortunately it's not cheap, but it certainly is an investment for a lifetime. The M&K Sound S300 Series is the best in the home cinema reference class!

## Lab report: M&K Sound S300 THX Ultra 2 Set

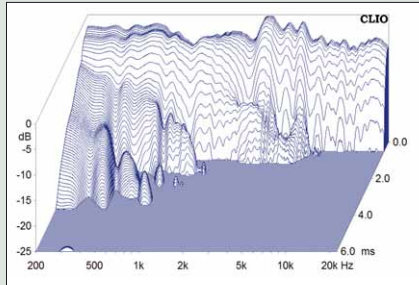
<b>Set price (5.1-Set)</b>	<b>around 17.000 Euro</b>		
Single speakers:	around 6.200 Euro (Front/pair) /		
	around 3.100 Euro (Center / piece)		
	around 4.200 Euro (Rear/pair) / 3.500 Euro (Sub)		
Distribution:	Audio Reference, Hamburg		
Phone:	040 53320359		
Internet:	www.audio-reference.de		
<b>• Equipment</b>			
Styles	matt black		
<b>Front speaker:</b>	<b>S300</b>		
Measurements	(W x H x D) 340 x 395 x 330 mm		
Weight	18,2 kg		
Connection	Single wiring		
Woofer	2 x 140 mm		
Tweeter	3 x 25 mm dome		
Cabinet type	closed		
<b>Center:</b>	<b>S300</b>		
Measurements (W x H x D)	340 x 395 x 330 mm		
Weight	18,2 kg		
Connection	Single-wiring		
Woofer	2 x 140 mm		
Tweeter	3 x 25-mm dome		
Cabinet type	closed		
<b>Rear:</b>	<b>S300T (Tripole)</b>		
Measurements (W x H x D)	225 x 345 x 180 mm		
Weight	12 kg		
Connection	Single-wiring		
Woofer	1 x 140 mm		
Tweeter	1 x 25-mm dome		
Dipoles	2 x 100-mm wideband		
Cabinet type	closed		
<b>Subwoofer:</b>	<b>X12</b>		
Measurements (W x H x D)	440 x 660 x 460 mm		
Weight	36 kg		
Power output	400 Watt RMS		
Woofer	2 x 260 mm		
<b>• Sound</b>			
Dynamics/Liveliness	70 %	1+	████████████████████
Deep bass	15 %	0,8	████████████████████
Tonal balance	10 %	1,0	████████████████████
Detail resolution	10 %	1,0	████████████████████
Homogeneity	10 %	1,0	████████████████████
Listening zone Center	10 %	1,0	████████████████████
<b>• Lab</b>			
Frequency response	15 %	1+	████████████████████
Distortions	5 %	0,9	████████████████████
Level stability	5 %	0,8	████████████████████
<b>• Practice</b>			
Workmanship	15 %	1+	████████████████████
Equipment	5 %	0,8	████████████████████
Manual	5 %	1,1	████████████████████
<b>• Price/performance</b>			
			<b>adequate</b>

### Technology: Frequency Responses of Center + Sub:



Three times identical frequency responses from the front speakers: perfect dispersion characteristics even at an angle; that's how professional home cinema sound is achieved. The X12 subwoofer reaches down to 35 Hz and sets new standards thanks to the THX Ultra2 license.

### Breakdown spectrum front speakers:



Like virtually no other speakers, the M&K Sound S300 distinguish themselves through an almost perfect waterfall diagram. Even at low frequencies they produce virtually no post oscillation.

**M&K Sound S300 THX Ultra 2 Set**

- + extremely high level of workmanship
- + THX-Ultra2-license
- + enormous dynamic range

**HEIMKINO**

Highlight

1/2-2017

Reference Class

Verdict:

1/2-2017

HEIMKINO

Outstanding

1+