



Eve Audio SC203 Monitors

slave two-way active system, so again, all of the electronic circuitry is housed in one of the speakers and then connected to the other via a four-core cable providing independent feeds to the satellite speaker's woofer and tweeter. All four of the drivers are powered by a dedicated 30-watt Class-D amplifier. The speakers include a subwoofer output that follows the volume setting on the SC203s.

The monitors accept both digital and analog inputs. Digital input is via Toslink or USB connectors and analog input is via a pair of RCA connectors. A 3.5 mm stereo mini-jack to dual RCA phono cable is included for connection to devices with headphone jacks. Each SC203 includes a FlexiPad, an orange rubber-esque pad that allows the speakers to be properly angled for the desired listening position. The speakers are angled 7.5 degrees upwards without the pad. If the pad is used, they are either level or angled 15 degrees upward. Optional mounting adapters allow the speakers to be mounted on a mic stand or to a wall.

As is the case with the large Eve Audio speaker designs, the SC203 utilizes an Air Motion Transducer or AMT tweeter, an extremely smooth, natural and musical tweeter that many producers and engineers love. Instead of utilizing a ported cabinet design, the SC203 incorporates a rear-mounted passive radiator. DSP handles crossover, voicing and component protection duties, ensuring exceptional performance from the small box.

I've found the SC203 monitors to have an impressive sound, delivering far more low-frequency information than you would think possible for a speaker of its size. The imaging is good and the tweeter delivers a smooth, natural sound making the monitors a perfect option for a home studio or edit bay.

GIG GLOVES

Whether you are setting up for a live recording or loading in a band for a show, protecting your hands is a top priority and gloves are the perfect solution. Unfortunately, there have never been gloves designed specifically with the engineer/musician in mind. That is until Daniel Shatzkes became frustrated with the problem, which led to his designing the Gig Glove (\$39), which perfectly addresses the needs of anyone working in the live/broadcast music industry. I anticipate that in a short time, the Gig Glove will become a staple in the music community. The strong, durable gloves incorporate TPR molding on the back of the hand and fingers to protect against impact, scrapes or pinching. The gloves are available in solid black or in black with yellow highlights to allow for user visibility of hand and finger positions in low-light environments. The padded grip provides palm protection while simultaneously strengthening the user's grip. The fingertip material allows the gloves to be used with touch-screen devices without removing the gloves and they also incorporate a design that allows the material on the thumb, pointer and middle fingers to be folded to allow the fingers to be exposed when working with small tools or anything requiring finesse.

I spent the last five days working



Gig Gloves

with the broadcast audio team for the 2017 CMA Awards and I found the Gig Gloves to be indispensable. In comparison to the gloves I've used in the past, the first thing I noticed was that I wasn't constantly taking them on and off. You can do everything with the gloves on. They are comfortable, too. They are a bit stiff for the first hour or two of use, but after they loosen up, they fit perfectly. They breathe, too, so your hands don't get hot and sweaty. Gig Gear also offers the Thermo Gig Glove, which is an insulated Gig Glove for use when working in cold environments.

ULTIMATE EARS SOUND TAP

The UE Sound Tap personal monitoring DI box is one of those brilliant inventions that make you scratch your head and ask why didn't someone think of these 10 years ago. Here's the situation: Most pro musicians have their own IEMs that they use regularly when touring or playing high-profile shows. The problem is that when they walk into a small club or coffee house, there typically isn't a way to interface their IEMs into the house system. This is where the UE Sound Tap (\$249, pictured with UE's 900s IEMs) comes in, as it allows the user to "tap" into the monitor mix and turn it into an IEM mix. The

5x5.6x3-inch active box runs on two 9v batteries and supports both line-level and speaker-level inputs. The box includes a 6-foot quarter-inch-to-Speakon cable, a 6-foot XLR-to-quarter-inch TRS cable and a 10-foot 3.5 mm headphone extender, which is adequate in nearly every situation.

The Sound Tap gets roughly 30 hours of use per battery change and a red LED illuminates when the batteries are in need of changing. A Speakon connector provides speaker-level input, and quarter-inch and XLR connectors provide line-level input. A signal can be run directly from a console into the Sound Tap, or the Sound Tap can be wired in-between two monitors (passive or active) on stage. Setup is a cakewalk. Gain is adjusted until the level LED is solid green and then the volume knob is adjusted to the desired listening level. The box sounds good, is quiet and gets extremely loud. The only real downside is the IEM mix has to be mono.

IK MULTIMEDIA IRIG PRE HD

There was a time when an audio interface built for your iOS device didn't work with your laptop and an interface built for your laptop didn't work with your iOS device. Thankfully, those days are over as more and more interface options are now compatible with both iOS devices and computers.

The IK iRig Pre HD (compatible with iOS, Android, Mac and PC) is one such device. I was fortunate to get a review unit before it was released and upon opening the box was immediately impressed as the \$99 device is extremely small (4.3x1.6x1.3-inches) and lightweight (2.6 oz). After using it for several weeks, I've been even more impressed with the sound quality of its Class A mic preamp and converter. The device provides 48 dB of gain, phantom power (activated by

Ultimate Ears Sound Tap



a switch) and supports 96 kHz/24-bit resolution. Also built into the unit is an onboard headphone output with dedicated volume control, which in addition to use during the recording process, can act as a high-resolution headphone amp for any mobile device (even the new iOS devices that don't include headphone jacks). It also offers direct monitoring which overcomes the latency problem often associated with budget recording.

The iRig Pre HD includes Lightning and USB cables for connectivity, 2 AA batteries (only needed for supplying phantom power) and a Velcro strip for securing the pre to a mic stand, belt, etc. Also included are the Mic Room (Mac/PC and iOS) virtual microphone emulation application and both the Mic Pack for VocaLive and Pro Bundle for iRig Recorder iOS apps.

I've used the iRig Pre HD to record vocals (with an Audio-Technica AT4050), percussion (with a Shure SM57) and electric guitar (with a Royer R-10) and had good results in every instance. Anyone in need of a high-quality recording interface that includes a mic pre should give the iRig Pre HD consideration.



Cloud Cloudlifter Zi

BLUE RASPBERRY STUDIO

If you are in need of both a microphone and an interface, Blue's Raspberry Studio (\$199) is a great option. The Raspberry is an iOS, Mac and PC compatible device that is perfectly suited for the home studio or as an on-the-go mobile recording solution. The bus-powered Raspberry is a cardioid condenser mic that supports up to 48 kHz, 24-bit recording and includes a built-in headphone amp.

The mic incorporates Blue's patent-pending Internal Acoustic Diffuser or IAD. The IAD is a physical acoustic diffusion system built inside the mic to help minimize the boxy sound so often apparent in recordings done in untreated rooms. Knobs on either side of the mic are used to control input gain and headphone volume. The back of the mic includes a headphone jack for zero-latency monitoring while recording, and a Lightning USB port handles connectivity. The mic has a built-in alumi-

OWC Thunderbolt 3 Dock



num stand that folds around the front of the mic when not in use. While the mic includes a carry bag, it feels fairly fragile so I'd hesitate before throwing it in my bag without better protection.

I've used the mic to record both male and female voice-overs and it worked extremely well in both instances. I also had good results using it to record acoustic guitar with vocals. The Raspberry is a great option for anyone in need of a high-quality, portable microphone.

CLOUD CLOUDLIFTER ZI

I reviewed the Cloudlifter CL-Z back in 2013 and loved the sonic versatility it added to my microphone collection. The Cloudlifter Zi (\$379) is Cloud's newest adaptation of the variable impedance microphone activator. It supports microphone input but also applies Cloud's patented variable impedance technology into an active DI, allowing guitars, basses and keyboards or anything else recorded direct to benefit from the device. It truly is a must-have! Check out Strother Bullins' review of the box in the Oct. 2017 issue of *Pro Sound News*.

OWC THUNDERBOLT 3 DOCK

While there are many positives to the new Apple USB-C connector that is standard on the new Apple laptops, it comes along with a fair share of negatives (besides the obvious loss of the MagSafe power connector that has easily saved me hundreds if not thousands of dollars since its 2006 release). Most notable is the difficulty in simultaneously connecting multiple devices (external hard drives, iLoks or similar dongles, external monitors, legacy devices and so on). As is so often the case, OWC has come to the rescue, this time with the OWC Thunderbolt 3 Dock (\$299), which I've put to use over the past several months. The dock, which connects to one of the computer's USB-C ports, is available in silver or space gray and provides a multitude of inputs and outputs, including a front-panel mounted 3.5 mm headphone jack, SD Card slot and a USB-A 3.1 port. The rear panel adds four more USB-A 3.1 ports, digital audio out via S/PDIF, FireWire 800, gigabit Ethernet, two USB-C Thunderbolt 3 ports, a mini DisplayPort and the power connector for the brick. Note that one of the Thunderbolt 3 ports is always in use, as it needs to be connected directly to the laptop.

(continued on page 35)



iK Multimedia
iRig Pre HD



Blue
Raspberry
Studio