

# Meyer UPA-1P

## powered speakers

Trevor Cronin gets a hands-on sneak preview of Meyer's forthcoming UPA-1P powered speaker system...

For over 15 years, North American audio manufacturer Meyer Sound have supplied speaker systems to some of the world's top concert production and theatre sound companies. Throughout this time, they've gained a reputation for supplying products that are well packaged, easy to use, and provide loud high fidelity sound in a multitude of applications.

A couple of years ago, Meyer introduced the first three products in a new range of self-powered speakers: the MTS4, the MSL4 and the 650P subwoofer. These products have been very well received, with over 3000 units sold internationally.

Meyer now introduce the UPA-P series of compact self-powered speakers, currently consisting of two models, the UPA-1P (wide dispersion) and UPA-2P (narrow dispersion). A compact bass speaker is soon to be released. For this review I received a pre-production pair of UPA-1Ps, courtesy of System Sales in Melbourne. Having used the standard UPA-1C box on many occasions, I was very interested to check out this new powered version.

### The UPA-1P

Despite the inclusion of a two channel amplifier and control electronics, the UPA-1P is identical in size to, and only 4.5kg heavier than, the UPA-1C. It's a small black trapezoidal box weighing a hefty 35kg. Construction is of 15mm thick Finnish birch wood ply with internal metal bracing and support for the three flying points on top and the hardware points on the bottom. At the rear there's a mains power input connector, which I am told will be the new Speakon locking power connector on the production model. A female XLR is provided for line level input, with a male XLR for linking to other speakers. There's a green LED for power on indication, red LEDs to indicate LF and HF limiter activity, and a ventilation grille. It's designed to be tamper proof, so there's no power switch or attenuation control to mess around with.

The power amp and processor electronics are in two parts, with the 48V power supply, cooling fan and associated electronics sliding in from the rear and

mounting on the bottom face of the enclosure. An intelligent AC power supply is included, which auto selects the correct operating voltage (allowing simple international use), provides soft-start power up, and suppresses high voltage transients.

Along the back is a large heat sink to which is



attached the amp and crossover/processor electronics. Internally, it's a little similar to a computer, with cooling fans on the hot bits and ribbon cables and multipin connectors to link the circuit boards together. The electronics of this unit are designed for easy access – a great help if service is required.

The drive electronics are phase-corrected through the crossover, which provides flat acoustical phase response from below the crossover point (1.2kHz) up to 14kHz. This phase correction, along with flat amplitude response, results in very good system impulse response and precise imaging. The UPA-1P can also be equipped to operate with Meyer's Remote Monitoring System (RMS) network and software application. RMS runs on a Windows-based PC and displays signal and power levels, limiter activity, amplifier temperature and cooling fan status for all speakers in the network.

The HF horn is manufactured from hi-tech carbon fibre. Meyer Sound developed the horn in an anechoic chamber, measuring coverage patterns using angular and frequency resolutions of one degree and 1/24 octave respectively. The horn exhibits Constant Q and the beam width remains consistent across the operating frequency range in both the vertical and horizontal planes.


### In use

The first show I tested the UPA-1Ps on was a live performance for 150 people with a loud percussion and vocal act called 'Bad Boys Batucada'. One box was faced at the stage as an in-fill, and another at the audience for vocal reinforcement. Using a little EQ, I found it quite easy to get the vocals above the 110dB of acoustic drums, both on stage and out front.

The second show was a theatrical production for 250 people. Three AKG 451 condenser mikes were used to reinforce the actors' voices, along with a couple of Shure SM58s, and some inputs for music playback. Using the boxes for stereo front of house provided very good coverage for the audience, and it wasn't too difficult to achieve enough gain before feedback (which isn't easy in this application).

### Conclusion

Over all, I was very happy with the results from this product, and obtaining a clear vocal sound was very easy. I'd like to hear the UPA-1Ps with the forthcoming bass units, because I think the system would really kick.

Self-powered speakers make a lot of sense. You save money with faster setup time, and there's no need for amp racks, crossovers, expensive speaker cabling and patching systems. Finally, there's a three-way Meyer PA that will fit in the back of the Commodore wagon! Well done Meyer. With the UPA-1P, you get what you pay for – yet another great package. 

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