

**GATO PHASE-IT £55**

Checking your drive units are all phased correctly is vital to correct sound reproduction. Obviously the external wiring is easy to check, but confirming the phase of that mystery woofer you found in the loft, or troubleshooting the internal wiring of your new loudspeakers that don't sound quite right usually involves applying a battery to the terminals and seeing which way the cone moves - a little Heath Robinson! It is not even a foolproof method, as any series capacitors in the crossover will block the D.C. from the battery and, when it comes to tweeters, trying to see which way a 19mm dome is moving is virtually impossible.

Fortunately Gato Audio's little Phase-It gadget comes to your rescue. A small item, powered by a 9V battery, it has a built in

microphone and a jack connector for a lead that terminates in two crocodile clips. It's then simply a case of connecting the clips to your loudspeaker's terminals, holding the microphone end of the unit towards the drive unit you wish to check and hitting the 'Pulse' button. The Phase-It sends out a test signal and lights the indicator LED green for positive phase and red for negative. It worked beautifully on all the loudspeakers in the Hi-Fi World listening room, but it should be noted that most of the tweeters came back as out of phase - although they are not wired like this, second order high-pass crossovers reverse the signal's phase, so this is something to be aware of! All in all, though, a very handy gadget. **AS**

[Contact: Gato Audio on 0045 4095 2205, www.phase-it.com.]

soundbites

DSPeAKER ANTI-MODE 8033 SUBWOOFER EQ £190

Many hi-fi enthusiasts view the subject of subwoofers with concern or even scorn, mumbling about how they are always obvious and don't perform as musically as a large pair of loudspeakers. Whilst nothing beats a proper pair of big full-rangers, subwoofers can actually work very well with music, but the key is to set them up properly and position them appropriately...

Unfortunately, modern house decor and the demands of house-proud partners usually means that the poor old sub gets tucked away somewhere unobtrusive where it can often boom merrily away. The likes of Mordaunt Short have thought of this, and include Notch filters on most of their subs which can attenuate these unwanted booms very effectively. The trouble is, their setup really requires a sound level meter, is rather fiddly, and automated systems are still relatively uncommon. What would be superb would be a universally applicable automated tool...

Enter the DSPeaker Anti Mode 8033. This is a clever little box that sits between amplifier/processor and sub and has its own measurement microphone. Operation is simplicity

itself - simply connect up, position the microphone at your listening position, press and hold both front panel buttons, and the 8033 runs through an automated sequence of tones, equalising the signal to attenuate room modes. Once done, the setting is stored in memory and can be switched on or bypassed at will. A second sweep can be performed with the microphone in a different place (called 'Wider Area Correction') if it is felt the original adjustment was not enough, and two additional fixed options are built into the unit - one boosts the 15-25Hz region and the other the 25-35Hz region for restoring low bass that may be sucked out by less than optimum positioning. Or indeed, if you just fancy annoying the neighbours a bit more...

Using the unit with the Sunfire HRS-12 showed subtle but effective improvements over the standard unit, already optimally positioned and tuned in. Bass rhythms became tighter and unwanted 'thump' was lessened, making the bass more fluid and natural. To really test the 8033, however, I pushed the HRS-12 right into the corner, tuned it again and then re-ran

the calibration. This time the 8033 made a very impressive effort of sorting out the booming mess that resulted from the poor positioning - the result being quite listenable!

All in all, the DSPeaker Anti-Mode 8033 is a very useful gadget that's verging on essential if your subwoofer does not already have a notch filter or some sort of room correction facility, or if you do not have free rein over placement. **AS**

[Contact: - 2001 Electronic Components +44(0)1438 742001 www.2kl.co.uk]

