

# Space saver squares up

**Adam Rayner** can't get enough of this talented and modestly priced sub



## → Specifications

**Drive Unit:** 12in Peerless XXL 12 driver with paper cone, 2.2kg magnet and 51mm voice coil

**Enclosure:** Sealed

**Frequency Response:** >19Hz to 120Hz in-room

**On-Board Power:** 400W RMS Bipolar Class AB amplifier

**Dimensions:** 400(w) x 460(h) x 400(d)mm

**Weight:** 28Kg

**Connections:** High-level speaker wire input via supplied gastight Neutrik 'Speakon' connector with long cable, plus stereo phono input for LFE level signals. Phono cord included

**Cute cube:** It may have a 12in driver, but BK's sub is small and stylish

## AV/CV

### Product:

Subwoofer with high-end driver and classic 'AB' amp for warm 'hi-fi' output

### Positioning:

Below BK's Monolith models in the brand's sub lineup. A front-firing version is also offered

### Peers:

M&K KX 12; Monitor Audio RXW12; ATC CI

This subwoofer has a classic sweet-sounding, 'hi-fi' analogue class AB amplifier in its guts, plus the suddenly trendy driver from Peerless called the XXLS 12. (The very same driver was used in the XTZ subwoofer reviewed in *HCC* #188.)

In this far smaller enclosure, the honest paper pulp-coned woofer is sealed in rather than differentially ported like the XTZ, and is far easier to set up as a result. It is a down-firing design in a box that would suit a 10-incher. It's certainly priced like a product of this size, with its rivals list having to be drawn from competing subs of up to £200 more in price!

Our sample came in a shiny black finish and with not only a nicely made Speakon plug-on-a-wire to hook to your speaker outputs, but also a high-quality mono phono cord with plugs that are clearly handmade.

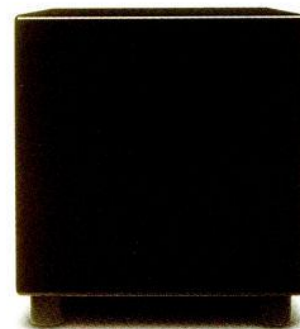
The feet that hold the woofer boundary-loaded off the floor can have either PTFE studs or spikes fixed into their bushings, and the sub's controls are brilliant. For one, you get a separate gain pot for each

of the high and low level inputs, because you are meant to use both. Use of a simultaneous speaker level input makes sure you get to amplify *all* the bass.

Also, you can switch the lowpass crossover filter out of circuit just for the phono or low-level input alone. This means you can use pure direct mode and feed the woofer with LFE; you filter at your decoder/AVR, while the full range stuff sent to the speakers can feed bass into your woofer, unimpeded by mids and highs.

In action, BK's sub is deliciously musical. It is tight and tracks a bass line with taut precision and almost no overhang. The opening sequence of the Blu-ray of *Hancock* was handled brilliantly, too: gunfire, big American trucks crashing into cop cars and helicopter rotor blades scything the air. But cut to *Hancock* drunk on a bench and the BK still delivers the bluesey bass line behind him, even deeper.

Accurate and authoritative, this punches way beyond its weight and, bizarrely, out of its price point, too ◊



## HCC VERDICT

BK Electronics XXLS400DF  
£410 Approx

**Highs:** Clean, rich and tight output; excellent value for money

**Lows:** Other brands match the Peerless driver to more potent amps

**Performance:** 1 2 3 4 5

**Design:** 1 2 3 4 5

**Features:** 1 2 3 4 5

**Overall:** 1 2 3 4 5