Julie Mullins

Crystal Cable Arabesque Minissimo Diamond Edition loudspeaker

$19,999 ($21,499 with stands)

High end meets high style here. The Arabesque Minissimo Diamond Edition marks another unique offering from the always-inventive Edwin and Gabi Rijnveld, the Netherlands-based husband-and-wife team behind Crystal Cable. If you've ever seen—and hopefully heard—either the original or the Diamond Edition upgrade (with diamond tweeters, CC's Absolute Dream internal wiring, etc.) Arabesque Minissimo, chances are you'll remember it as much for its whimsical, curvy "comma"-shaped form factor and unexpected high-gloss color choices—aquamarine blue, pearl white, and solar orange (like a Dreamsicle)—as for its incredible resolution, musicality, and dispersion, which make this versatile two-way an all-around standout that defies any number of category expectations. These are high-resolution transducers that (once set up properly) pull off a marvelous disappearing act, sounding natural and steadfastly gorgeous across many genres. With some rock 'n' roll cuts, I was surprised and delighted by how much in-your-face muscle and raw power these elegant little speakers pumped out. Still, as with most two-ways and smaller monitors, a little extra lower bass support enhances and extends the speakers' dynamic range; to this end I paired the Minissimos with Crystal Cable's formidable Subissimo powered subwoofer ($11,999). This proved to be a winning and highly addictive combo that achieved a wholly pleasing balance of structure, substance, and detail retrieval (without skewing analytical), alongside a generous dose of spaciousness. (Reviewed in Issue 273)