



Robert's Final Report from the 2019 Montreal Audi Fest

Robert Schryer | Mar 26, 2019



I was pleased as pie to see that, after a long absence from the fest, speakers by the German manufacturer Avantgarde Acoustic were back—not with just one model but with two, taking pride of place in adjacent rooms sponsored by Canadian distributor American Sound of Canada. The bigger room featured Avantgarde's semi-active, 107dB-sensitive, 18-ohm Duo XD (\$US45,000), its bass provided by two 12" drivers powered by a 1000W class-D amp, accompanied by Air Tight's 120W ATM-3211 monoblocks with 211 tubes (\$CD95,000), an ACT 5 preamp (\$CD12,800), Aurender's N10 streamer (\$CD10,000), and DCS's Debussy DAC (\$CD12,000).



Seen in the photo above is American Sound of Canada's Ashraf Nashed adjusting the bass output of Avantgarde's newest entry to its horn speaker stable, the semi-active, high-sensitivity Uno Fino (\$CD33,500), which was partnered with VAC's new 85Wpc, US-made 170i tubed integrated amp (\$CD13,500), and T+A's MP8 CD/streamer (\$CD6300) and DSD DAC8 (\$CA5900). Stands and cabling in both systems came courtesy of HRS and AudioQuest.



The bigger system may have sounded overall more refined, realistic, and grandiose than the smaller one, but they also had much in common: both made music that sounded highly expressive, resolved, glare-free, dynamic, tactile, and just plain beautiful.