

I M FRIED MODEL Q

Manufacturer: I M Fried Products Co., 7616 City Line Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19151

Price: \$280

Source: Manufacturers loan

There is currently a lot of confusion in the minds of most audiophiles concerning the question: who is IMF? Let us begin by stating that I M Fried products are not the same as IMF International products, or IMF as they are commonly known. Mr. Irving M. Fried is the head of the company which produces the Model Q, and until a year or so ago he was also the importer of IMF speakers from England. I believe that he was also one of the founders of that English company; hence the name, and indications are that he was an active design consultant for them. At present there is no connection between the companies. IMF International products are built in England, and I M Fried products are made in the U.S.A.; although a few of their models incorporate English KEF drivers. Confusing; isn't it.

The Model Q represents this company's first effort at producing a low priced loudspeaker. The drivers are built for I M Fried in this country, and are not, to my knowledge, used by any other company. The Q is a small speaker; about the same size as the Smaller Advent. It measures 19 3/4" X 11 3/8" X 9 1/4", and weighs about 23 lbs. The cabinet is covered with a very dark walnut vinyl, and the removable grill cover is black acoustic foam. The overall look is a little too drab for my personal taste, but may not be for yours. The complement of drivers consists of an 8 inch low and mid-range unit which crosses to a 3/4 inch tweeter at 2500 Hz. The enclosure design is called a "line Tunnel" which the driv-

ers see as a heavily damped duct. The line tunnel was developed to simulate transmission line results in a small enclosure, at a low cost. It succeeds very well.

Well, how does the Q sound? GREAT. We A-B tested this little killer against all the loudspeakers tested in this issue, plus the Advent and smaller Advent. The Q produced a more realistic sound than all of them; except for the Dahlquists, and that comparison isn't fair because the Dahlquists cost \$510 more than the Q. Fried recommends 35 watts minimum power for the best performance. We agree, but must admit that the speakers sounded good even when powered by a lowly 12 watt receiver of questionable pedigree. They are very listenable with low power, and their sound just gets better as the related equipment is upgraded. The Q produces less bass energy than either Advent, but it is much cleaner in this area. A female on our listening panel stated that she would pick the Advents for shaking the dust off her windows, and the Q for listening to music. The dispersion of the high frequencies was very good, and so was the stereo image; when the speakers were properly positioned. We found placement on the floor tended to add bass distortion, and detract from the total sound presentation. They sound best when freestanding, with the tweeters about ear-level.

The Model Q is not a perfect reproducer, but it does come as close to that goal as anything we've heard to date, in its size or price classification. The ability of this speaker to reproduce the subtle nuances of a finger sliding on a guitar string, or the bite of a violin bow is what distinguishes it from many of its competitors. This type of transient reproduction ability is not common in a low priced loudspeaker.

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