

# Plug and play

**Adam Rayner** wrestles with a mass of wires and a Medusa of mains to taste the heady delights of a full-on professional system for the home...

## AV/CV

**Product:**  
Pro-level 5.1 system

**Position:**  
AE's most compact monitoring system

**Peers:**  
Genelec HT206B/HTS3B;  
Dynaudio BM5A/BM9S;  
Adam S1-A/Sub 8

Because my own roots are in pro audio I was glad to audition these professional active (self-amplified) monitors and subwoofer. Of course, you do get separate amps and speakers in the pro audio world, but this tends to happen only at the major level. This active satellite system is for nestling around mixing desks, but is so cute that Acoustic Energy was getting asked for them for home sales.

The AE22-10 ProSat marries a single midwoofer and a fabulously posh tweeter to a brace of differentially-sized channels of internal amplification. They bear a lot of the same DNA as Acoustic Energy's

AE1 speaker in performance, coming from the purity of a piston cone that's unforgiving, and not necessarily warm. As such, it's untiring to the ears for pro users who play them all day, and revealing of what their job needs them to hear – clinical detail with no power compression.

To send the signals from your AVR, you'll need an umbilicus of professional proportions, like a mini multi-core at a concert, or a wrist-thick bunch of signal wires, as I had. Also, you'll need to supply mains to all five speakers as well as the subwoofer. In fact, installation took up about two thirds of my setup time, thanks to



**D.I.Y.:** The satellites' tweeters and mid-range drivers are powered by separate internal amplifiers

a set-up pack of 11 fully-terminated cables, plus the mains plugs.

I used my Acurus ACT3 processor as its purity is supreme and I reckoned it would be good at the 'pro' application, and fed signals from the back of a disc-spinner into it via coaxial. With a video connection to the TV, I had a full rig.

The speakers are utterly non-nonsense. Tiny 'dip' switches in their rears give you some crucial control, like phase and HF boost or depth cut-off, but that's it; no level control on the sub, no knobs on the speakers. It's just level-accurate to what goes in. You cannot boost it artificially as that'd be changing the flavour.

### It's been emotional

In the event, my test period all got a bit emotional. I was flinging discs in and out of my player like a nutter to hear all my must-check tracks and clips. The simple fact is, these speakers, with their little amplifiers inside, are absolutely awesome. I played some bonkers DVD-Audio stuff called *Studio Voodoo*, and it was incredible; total clarity, believability and exquisite detail. The tweeters are god-like and the classic-AE-domed mids should

make the company's founder Phil Jones proud.

To test their mettle in a home cinema sense, I played some of the very beginning of Pixar's *Cars*. Lightning McQueen is giving himself a pep talk in his trailer, interspersed with ZOOM-NEOW! noises of the racecars on the track. Now, only systems of deep purity of detail-retrieval can make out the crowd sounds some 30dB down in that mix, but there they were. The bizarre thing was that I had heard them before, and better, but on a super expensive set of huge floorstanders.

And that's the point, these are professional-grade, easy to use and literally gorgeous to listen to. I could wax on about the taut control and depth of the bass, and more, but just believe me, this is amazing kit, and given how totally rapid and high-end the amps inside are, represents stupefying good value for money.

Yes, all the wiring involved is a bit of a pain in the neck, but you'll only do it once. And with the system up and running, I was blown away, to the point where I would happily consider swapping to active speakers and a sexy preamp. Wow! ●

### → Specifications

#### Acoustic Energy AE22-10 ProSat

**Drive Units:** 1 x 5.1in aluminium LF/MF driver; 1 x 1in ring radiator tweeter  
**Enclosure:** Active, two-way sealed  
**Frequency Response:** 100Hz-40kHz +/-3dB

**Sensitivity:** Not stated  
**Onboard power:** 50W (LF/MF); 25W (HF)

**Dimensions:** 150(w) x 220(h) x 180(d)mm

**Weight:** 4kg

**Connections:** Single gastight Speakon connector for balanced or unbalanced input, plus single phono socket

#### Acoustic Energy AE22-08 ProSub

**Drive Units:** Two x 10in aluminium drivers with high-power long-throw motor systems

**Enclosure:** Sealed

**Frequency Response:** -6dB @ 25Hz

**On board power:** 200W RMS

**Dimensions:** 350(w) x 350(h) x 330(d)mm

**Weight:** 14kg

**Connections:** Six gastight Neutrik Speakon connectors for input and five XLR sockets for output

