



Sonus faber Venere 2.0

Designed in Sonus faber's headquarters near Venice, the Venere range offers extremely high value thanks to volume manufacturing in China. Quality of finish – in gloss black or white lacquer, with wood side panels available at a small premium – is exemplary. Two floorstanders, two standmounts, a centre speaker and a wall-mount design make up the range – this 2.0 model is the larger of the two standmounts. The optional stand (£349) also represents exceptional value with its stylish and carefully considered design, tempered glass base plate and adjustable aluminium footers. It bolts to the underside of the speaker cabinet.

The Venere's drivers employ cones and domes manufactured by the German DKM group. In the 2.0 the mid/bass driver is a 180mm 'Curv' thermo-moulded polypropylene/textile composite cone, crossing over at 2kHz to a 29mm silk dome tweeter.

Avoiding parallel surfaces, the MDF enclosures have arched side panels and an upswept top plate with tempered glass inset panel, while the sloping baffle is deeply sculpted to create a waveguide for the tweeter and inset woofer. The reflex enclosure vents through a slot at the bottom of the baffle.

SOFT TRANSIENTS

The Sonus faber was one of the largest-sounding monitors of the group, rivalled only by the PMC in the manner by which it served up an impressive low-end 'oomph'. Of

course the bass didn't extend to very low registers but was satisfyingly full and weighty.

With Sting's live 'Roxanne' the applause sounded rather 'wooden' and the plucking of the acoustic guitar's strings appeared noticeably softened, lacking the leading-edge bite depicted by the PMC and Elac. The Venere 2.0 does, however, sound smooth and refined at the top-end, high frequencies rarely grating, but the sound lacks a degree of dynamic realism.

With our string quartet and challenging orchestral recordings the Sonus faber delivered a pleasingly wide but slightly diffuse sound image. 'Those wooden instruments appear to have turned to Bakelite,' said one of our listeners when hearing the Vivaldi concerto, disturbed by the speaker's tendency to veil transients. The image of a string quartet performing in an acoustic space was commendably three-dimensional but the sound was undeniably sugar-coated.

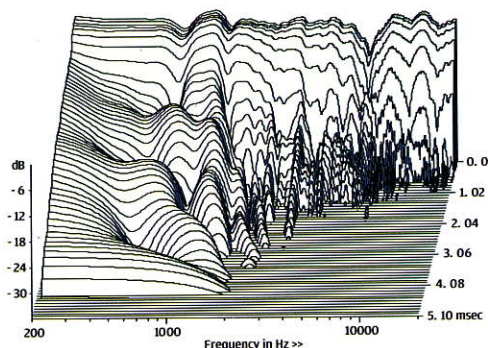
Sound Quality: 78%



LAB REPORT

At the time of writing, Sonus faber had offered no specification for the Venere 2.0's sensitivity or nominal impedance but 85dB and 6ohm would be the right figures according to our measurements. Pink noise sensitivity was 85.3dB and the modulus dipped to a low of 5.1ohm. Modest impedance phase angles yield a minimum EPDR of 2.8ohm at 323Hz, making the Venere 2.0 an easy load to drive.

On-axis frequency response is flat in trend but for a narrow 7dB notch of unknown origin at about 7kHz. But for this the response errors would be much lower than ± 4.6 dB and ± 4.7 dB respectively. Pair matching is slightly disappointing at ± 1.8 dB but the largest disparities occur above 15kHz. A bass extension of 63Hz (-6dB re. 200Hz) is also mildly disappointing given the cabinet size but the CSD waterfall shows fast initial decay and well suppressed breakup modes, even at the 7kHz response notch. KH



Sensitivity (SPL/1m/2.83Vrms - Mean/IEC/Music)	85.2dB / 85.3dB / 85.2dB
Impedance modulus min/max (20Hz-20kHz)	5.1ohm @ 182Hz 40.3ohm @ 2.3kHz
Impedance phase min/max (20Hz-20kHz)	-34° @ 103Hz 50° @ 1.1kHz
Pair matching (200Hz-20kHz)	± 1.8 dB
LF/HF extension (-6dB ref 200Hz/10kHz)	63Hz / 33.9kHz/32.6kHz
THD 100Hz/1kHz/10kHz (for 90dB SPL at 1m)	0.5% / 0.2% / 0.2%
Dimensions (HWD)	449x246x336mm

