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Epos ES-28N

# “WHATEVER I ENJOY”



## AUDIO TEST

3.2026

### Reference Class

(upper class – 95,5%)

Epos ES-28N

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## What happens when loudspeaker luminary Karl-Heinz Fink releases a speaker about which he says: “I’m making this exactly the way I enjoy doing it”? You’ll find out in our review.

Thomas Kirsche

**W**e had to wait a long time, but in the autumn of 2025, the moment finally arrived – the Epos ES-28N made their way to Leipzig for the Mitteldeutsche HiFi-Tage show. And once we had them, we didn’t let these floorstanding speakers go. After all, we wanted to put them through a thorough testing process. But why, you might ask, are we only now presenting this review in the current issue of our magazine? Well, sometimes good things simply take time. Our reviewer didn’t want to merely squeeze the speakers in quickly between Component X and Speaker Y just to churn out a review. No – he knew that these speakers were something special, and that they deserved to be given the appropriate amount of time and attention. That is exactly what he did, and the result is the in-depth review you are reading now.

### Aesthetics

Are you perhaps familiar with the WM-4 or the Borg? Both are reference-class loudspeakers from the Fink Team – manufactured in Germany. Why do we men-

red in conjunction with the speaker’s sonic performance. For instance, the slight rearward tilt of the ES-28N is not merely stylish; it also serves to compensate for so-called „time-alignment errors” between the individual drivers.

As a refresher: Since tweeters and woofers – due to their inherent construction – do not sit on the exact same vertical plane, the sound from the tweeter typically reaches the listener’s ear a fraction of a second earlier than the sound from the woofer. These minute time discrepancies, measured in microseconds, can compromise spatial imaging. By tilting the cabinet backward, the loudspeaker is aligned such that the acoustic centers of the drivers coincide more precisely in time at the listening position. The result is more precise reproduction, a more stable soundstage, and an overall more coherent sonic impression. The elegant aspect of this method is that it functions purely mechanically.

Or consider the stylish chamfers on the baffle. These are particularly pronounced around the tweeter. Thanks to this design

The midrange driver resides in its own separate chamber featuring a triangular rear wall. This shape prevents standing waves and internal reflections—a design choice that particularly benefits the natural reproduction of voices and instruments. The crossover network is

## Doesn’t Karl-Heinz Fink only design 2-way systems?

tion them? The Epos ES-28N has definitely borrowed elements from their design language: the baffle mounted atop the cabinet, the rearward-sloping stance, and the chamfers on the front – all of which are highly reminiscent of those reference models. The difference, however, is that the Borg loudspeakers cost approximately 30,000 euros per pair, while the ES-28N costs „only” just under 8,000 euros. That is, of course, still a significant sum, but it is considerably more affordable than the Fink Team loudspeakers. And yet, for a lower price point, you receive – at least visually – the very DNA of those luxury speakers.

That said, aesthetics are rarely the sole deciding factor in a purchase; however, true connoisseurs of the field understand that a loudspeaker’s design is never an end in itself. It must always be consid-

ered, the frequency response becomes smoother, and the dispersion angle is widened.

### Drivers within the cabinet

First, we have the two woofers. They operate within a carefully braced bass-reflex enclosure featuring internal cross-bracing. This bracing prevents the cabinet walls from resonating sympathetically and thereby coloring the sound. Additionally, the entire cabinet features a sandwich construction consisting of two MDF panels separated by an intermediate layer of high-damping adhesive. This design reduces vibrations by dissipating vibrational energy between the layers. The 50-millimeter-thick front baffle is particularly robustly constructed to provide an absolutely stable foundation for the drivers.



*The slight backward tilt ensures precise driver time alignment*

housed in a separate compartment located behind this chamber. This specific placement within the cabinet shields the crossover components from significant fluctuations in sound pressure and from mechanical vibrations; after all, electronic components do not react well to strong mechanical stress.

The bass-reflex port is downward-firing, venting into the plinth. This „downfire“ configuration allows for a large port diameter and an optimal length, enabling the powerful yet controlled reproduction of low frequencies. Simultaneously, special internal pressure-equalization vents serve to mitigate unwanted port reso-

*Two 7-inch woofers, a dedicated midrange driver, and a 28mm tweeter – each driver operates within its optimal frequency range*



nances. The opening in the plinth is dimensioned such that bass reproduction remains uncompromised even when the loudspeaker is placed directly on the floor without the use of spikes.

In summary, the cabinet is meticulously engineered to minimize mechanical interference and to provide the drivers with the most precise and controlled operating environment possible.

### Can Fink do 3-Way?

As you may have already noticed, the Epos-28N are 3-way loudspeakers. „Doesn't Karl-Heinz Fink only design 2-way systems? Surely he isn't capable of building a 3-way system,“ some might say. But that is a misconception, the developer revealed to us during a phone conversation. In fact, he used to design only 3-way systems in the past, and is therefore certainly well-qualified to do so. However, Fink did not design the Epos-28N as a 3-way system simply to prove, „Hey, I can do this too.“ Rather, it was the best approach for these floorstanding speakers. A 2.5-way design – in which one woofer handles the entire bass and midrange spectrum, while a second operates only in the bass region and is rolled off in the lower midrange – would have worked just

sed with the result – the very result we now see before us in the form of the ES-28N.

He also spent a considerable amount of time fine-tuning the design to strike the ideal balance between frequency response and the Epos's available power output. To put it simply: A loudspeaker typically either possesses a smooth frequency response or is capable of delivering substantial power. The true art, therefore, lies in engineering the ES-28N to excel equally at both.

This is likely why Fink opted to reduce the loudspeaker's efficiency – specifically to allow for an extra boost in the bass region. We will reveal shortly whether this strategy pays off.

### From Woofers to Tweeters

For its two 7-inch woofers, the ES-28N relies on a proven foundation: the magnet system and basket are identical to those of the ES-14N compact loudspeakers, yet the cone here is deliberately designed as a straight cone. This shape is particularly well-suited for the pure bass range, as it facilitates controlled and stable piston motion. A large, inverted dust cap further enhances the rigidity of the cone.

To achieve further optimization, alumi-

## You can clearly sense the fun and joy in the music.

as well on paper. But there would have been a catch: with this type of construction, the main axis of dispersion in the midrange would have shifted downward. This would have meant that the acoustic energy in the critical vocal and presence regions would not have been optimally directed toward the listening position.

The logical solution, therefore, is a true 3-way system. Here, each frequency range is assigned its own dedicated driver. This allows for significantly better control over dispersion characteristics, power handling, and distortion – particularly in larger enclosures featuring two woofers. That said, Karl-Heinz also admits that it took five different design iterations for the 3-way system before he was finally satisfied. The challenge with such loudspeakers is that the midrange and bass regions can sometimes fail to integrate cohesively. To counteract this, Fink had to conduct extensive testing and experimentation until he was ultimately plea-

num demodulation rings are employed within the magnet system. These stabilize the voice coil's inductance, preventing it from fluctuating in a frequency-dependent manner – a crucial factor in avoiding distortion and unwanted interactions with the crossover network.

The midrange driver is structurally based on the unit found in the ES-7N, yet it has been specifically tuned for the critical midrange frequency band. Its cone is crafted from mica-filled, injection-molded polypropylene – a material that effectively balances rigidity with internal damping. A low-hysteresis rubber surround (minimizing material „memory“) and a robust Nomex spider ensure a particularly linear suspension system. As a result, the reproduction of vocals and instruments remains controlled and free of coloration, even at higher volume levels. The 30-millimeter voice coil is wound on a fiberglass/epoxy former and operates within a magnet system featuring a de-

## Bluehorizon – Spike Shoes Extreme

We highly recommend the Spike Shoes Extreme from Bluehorizon to get even more out of the Epos ES-28N. They are placed underneath the speakers' spikes and do more than just protect your flooring; they establish a resonance-controlling interface between the spikes and the room itself. Structure-borne sound and standing waves within the floor are reduced, and the energy of low-frequency transients is channeled more cleanly. The effect is clearly perceptible. The speakers gain a greater sense of airiness, the overall soundstage becomes more beautiful. One might dismiss this audio-tuning tool as esoteric mumbo-jumbo – until you experience them in action, at which point you are simply astonished.



modulation ring to minimize distortion and intermodulation artifacts. A dual-magnet assembly further boosts motor force while simultaneously reducing stray magnetic fields.

For the tweeter, the ES-28N utilizes the proven driver unit from the ES-14N. Here, a 28-millimeter voice coil drives a ceramic-coated aluminum-alloy dome. Combined with a powerful ferrite magnet and optimized airflow, this results in precise, dynamic high-frequency reproduction with high fine resolution. A noteworthy feature is the omission of ferrofluid in the air gap. As a result, thermal behavior remains stable, and less compression occurs at high levels – meaning the highs retain their openness and clarity even as volume increases.

### Sound check

We audition the Epos ES-28N with various amplifiers – including the Audionet Watt, the Roksan Caspian 4G, and the Advance Paris A12 Apex. Generally speaking, the ES-28N should be driven by more powerful amplifiers to unlock their full potential – though, admittedly, it is unlikely that anyone would pair a set of €8,000 loud-

speakers with a €300 amp. Since Prince's "Parade" is featured as our „Album of the Month" in this issue, we spin these tracks to gather our initial sonic impressions of the Epos speakers. And yes, we skip straight to „Kiss." The song is just so quintessentially Prince, and it immediately demonstrates what the ES-28N are capable of: truly brilliant bass. The track features a very direct mix; it practically jumps right out at the listener. The drums sound as if they were positioned just ten centimeters directly behind Prince. The kick drum hits with real impact – powerful and spot-on. Through the left speaker, the cymbals seem to dance to their own rhythm, yet they are rendered with such perfect definition that they appear to be physically present right here in our listening room. Prince's vocals are presented with substantial body and a palpable three-dimensionality. Magnificent. The studio recording session truly comes to life.

We switch gears to „Die Tänzerin" by Ulla Meinecke. Here, we encounter a wealth of beautiful reverb tails, giving the speakers an opportunity to demonstrate how they handle spaciousness and large acoustic environments. Once again, the vocals are presented flawlessly – full-bodied and simply authentic. The acoustic spaces are rendered with truly impressive definition, and the placement of instruments across the virtual soundstage is magnificent. The sense of vitality we noted earlier with Prince's music is immediately apparent here as well.

Finally, with Stravinsky's "The Firebird", we savor the ominous opening of the first movement and the vivid, „live" quality of the orchestral reproduction. And finally, we listen to the bass-challenging ren-

### SUMMARY

**The Epos ES-28N are not loudspeakers that strive to please; they simply do. Karl-Heinz Fink delivers here a masterpiece of sonic artistry – one that is, in the very best sense of the word, universally applicable. Whether it be bass power, richness of detail, soundstage, or vocal reproduction – everything is spot on. We are thrilled by this performance.**

### FEATURES

- physical compensation of time-alignment differences
- elaborate cabinet design

<b>Pros</b>	+ exceptionally precise and powerful bass + three-dimensional, lifelike vocal reproduction + large, stable soundstage
<b>Cons</b>	– requires a powerful amplifier

tion of „The Sound of Silence" by Geoff Castellucci. The woofers simply cannot afford to falter here – and they don't. What we experience is a veritable fireworks display of bass. Few floorstanding speakers released in recent years have likely demonstrated as much sheer musical exuberance in this frequency range as the Epos ES-28N. And now we also understand the remark Karl-Heinz Fink made during our phone conversation. He essentially said: „Epos speakers are Fink. With them, I simply do whatever I enjoy." We are very glad of this, for one can clearly sense that a passion for – and sheer joy in – music is precisely what led to this unequivocally outstanding Epos loudspeaker. ■

### FEATURES

General	
<b>Device class</b>	<b>Floorstanding speaker</b>
<b>Price band</b>	<b>Upper class</b>
<b>Manufacturer</b>	<b>Epos</b>
<b>Model</b>	<b>ES-28N</b>
Price (EIA)	7 990 Euro (pair)
Dimensions (H/W/D)	25 × 105 × 36 cm
Weight	36 kg
Information	epos-loudspeakers.com

### Technical Information (manufacturer)

Construction type	3 way bass reflex
Impedance	>6 Ohm
Efficiency	86 dB (2823V/1 m)
Frequency response	30 Hz – 25 kHz (in the room)
Capacity	not specified
Room recommendation	from 20 m² to 50 m²
Individual sound adjustment	No
Inputs	Banana

### EVALUATION

Bass reproduction		19,5/20
Middle reproduction		20/20
Treble reproduction		19,5/20
Spaciousness		10/10
Reproduction quality		69/70
Equipment/workmanship		8,5/10
User-friendliness		9/10
Appreciation/Depreciation		None
Interim result		86,5 of 90 points
Price-performance	Very Good	9/10
<b>Result</b>		<b>Reference Class 95,5%</b>