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REVIEWS

Senna Sound Orca & Onyx
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GODINA
MAGAZINA

MUSIC & MOVIES

Angie Stone
Val Kilmer



DYNAUDIO
Black magic



EPOS
Expert for the shelf



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Family Sound

Although Senna Sound is a completely new name on both the domestic and global markets, it comes from a family-owned company already well-known among audiophiles.

Bojan Jović

Introducing the new Senna Sound brand would be impossible without first mentioning its parent company, Trafomatic Audio. This time, the term “parent company” can be taken quite literally: Senna Sound was born from the vision and dedication of Nemanja Čokić, son of Trafomatic founder Saša Čokić. As you might expect, Nemanja spent years learning the craft under his father’s guidance, gradually mastering the art of designing and building high-end hi-fi gear. Once confident in his own knowledge and skills, he decided to present his work to the audiophile world – and thus, Senna Sound came to life. In this review, we’ll take a close look at the

Orca line preamplifier and the Onyx stereo power amplifier. The brand’s lineup also includes the Phoenix phono stage.

Orca

Defying conventional norms, Senna Sound chose to make their components slightly more compact, giving every model a uniform width of 28 centimeters. Our very first encounter with the Orca preamplifier immediately sparked curiosity. The enclosure is free of flashy design gimmicks, yet its build material is far from ordinary. As we learned in conversation with the designer, the chassis is made of Kerrock, a composite material primarily consisting of aluminium

hydroxide with an acrylic polymer binder. Despite being assembled from multiple parts, the seams are completely invisible, and the overall fit and finish are outstanding – with gently rounded edges and a subtle black metallic sheen that lends the otherwise minimalist design a quiet elegance. The front panel is dominated by an aluminium faceplate with a central volume knob and a rotary input selector to its right. A small status LED completes the minimalist layout, while the left side is reserved for a large Senna Sound logo and model designation.

A clever detail worth mentioning is the power switch, which is discreetly positioned on the left side panel, preserving





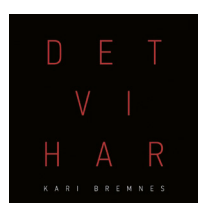
“The leading edges of notes were clear but never sharp, lending the sound a gentle, tube-like softness.”

the clean look of the front yet remaining easy to reach. Two elongated vents on the opposite side allow for airflow, their openings protected by a metal grille. True to its fully analog design, the rear panel offers three RCA line inputs, two variable-level RCA outputs, and one fixed-level output (ideal for recorders or home theater bypass). All connectors are high-quality, chassis-mounted types with clear labeling. An IEC power socket with a user-replaceable fuse completes the rear layout.

The Orca sits on unusually tall feet, made of several segments with rubberized bottoms for stability, while chrome accent rings provide just the right amount of contrast against the black body. Due to the unique construction of the chassis, the Orca is quite difficult to open, so instead of a look inside, we'll list its most relevant technical highlights: pure class-A operation, JFET input stage, and a toroidal power transformer. Frequency response is rated from 5 Hz (-1 dB) to 250 kHz (-3 dB), with a signal-to-noise ratio of 95 dB and 17 dB of gain. Despite its classic, purist design, the Orca is not without modern conveniences - it comes with a simple yet extremely sturdy remote control for volume adjustment.

We listened

Kari Bremnes on her last studio album "Det vi har" from 2017.



Key features

Preamplifier

- class A
- Number of line inputs
- 3 x RCA
- Power output
- 2 x 45 W, class AB

Onyx

The Onyx stereo power amplifier follows the same design language as the Orca, though its chassis is 40 mm taller. The most striking difference is the pair of large VU meters with pale-yellow backlighting, giving the amp an appealing retro touch. Aside from the logo and model name, the only other feature on the front is a single LED status light. The power switch is once again moved out of the way - this time positioned along the bottom-left edge. While still easy to reach, a slightly more front-facing position might have been even more convenient. On the rear panel, we find a single pair of RCA inputs and a set of robust, gold-plated speaker terminals with transparent housings. Though of excellent quality, a bit more spacing between them would have made handling heavy speaker cables easier. A small toggle switch is provided to turn off the VU meter illumination, and on the far right is the IEC power socket and fuse. The Onyx is generously vented, with two



large mesh-covered openings on the top panel and additional perforations on the bottom for optimal airflow. Inside, the right side houses massive heatsinks for the output transistors, while the left side contains the power supply section. Rated in class AB, the Onyx delivers 45 W per channel into 8 ohms, and 70 W per channel into 4 ohms. Input impedance is specified at 22 k Ω , with total harmonic distortion at just 0.03%. Both the Orca and Onyx come with exceptionally detailed and helpful user manuals - a thoughtful touch for beginners, even if experienced audiophiles may take such guidance for granted.

Match made in heaven

Our impressions of the Senna Sound duo were positive from the very first moment. Fresh out of the box and connected to the system, they delivered a delightfully natural tonal balance, with an overall presentation that was calm, unforced, and remarkably clear - in a way that felt almost physically tangible. This engaging quality is largely due to their expansive soundstage, which the Orca and Onyx turn into their playground, recreating a striking sense of depth and three-dimensional space. Individual instruments and voices are given just the right amount of air, making them easy to distinguish without being unnaturally isolated. This allows the presentation to stay natural and avoid the trap of sounding "hi-fi for hi-fi's sake." Microdynamics are excellent, revealing the finest details - the shimmer of air, the resonance of strings, the subtle wavering of a voice. Put on an album renowned for its spatial effects, such as *Amused to Death*, and you'll be rewarded with a convincing soundstage that occasionally seems to extend well beyond the speakers. Optimal seating is key to the experience, so finding the sweet spot is worth the effort.

Every Senna Sound component undergoes thorough testing at the factory,

followed by 24 hours of burn-in and re-testing, showing the manufacturer's dedication to delivering the devices in optimal condition. Still, they recommend at least 50 hours of additional break-in time at home, after which a 10-15-minute warm-up is enough to reach peak performance. During the first few days of listening, we noticed subtle refinements in the presentation - even though the system sounded great right from the start. The tonal texture gained extra layers of nuance, adding to the sense of naturalness. The leading edges of notes were clear but never sharp, lending the sound a gentle, tube-like softness that makes long listening sessions a pleasure. We were particularly impressed by how gracefully the system handled



Senna Sound Orca

- Frequency response: 5 Hz - 250 kHz
- THD: 0.03 %
- Input impedance: 47 k Ω
- Output impedance: 300 Ω
- Gain: 17 dB
- Signal-to-noise ratio: 95 dB
- Analog inputs: 3 \times RCA
- Analog outputs: 3 \times RCA
- Dimensions (WxHxD): 280 \times 85 \times 200 mm
- Weight: 6 kg
- Price: €2,750



less-than-perfect recordings. There was no trace of the snooty, “only-the-best-will-do” high-end attitude – instead, the Orca and Onyx treated every source with enthusiasm and musicality. Even a compressed internet radio stream playing in the background could suddenly turn into a full-blown listening session, grabbing our attention with unexpected detail and musical insight.

As the component most responsible for the system’s sonic character, the Orca preamplifier was the result of months of careful development, with countless trials of different components before the final voicing was achieved. Paired with the modestly specified Onyx power amplifier, it creates a combination that punches well above its rated numbers. In fact, we suspect the Onyx’s power ratings are quite conservative – it may be small in size, but its sound is robust and mature. The output stage shows exemplary stability, maintaining a solid and unwavering sound image even at high listening levels. Tonal balance is consistent across the frequency range, confirming that the preamp’s resolution and tonal virtues are passed on faithfully and without coloration through this little powerhouse. It’s hard to point to a single frequency range

where the Senna Sound combo excels, because its quality is so evenly balanced: the highs are open and airy, the mid-range is natural and full of life, and the lowest notes are solid, deep, and rock-steady under load. Most importantly, everything blends together into one fluid, musical whole – equally suitable for analytical listening or for simply sitting back and enjoying the music.

Conclusion

After several weeks of listening, our only minor complaint is the somewhat imprecise volume adjustment via the remote control, which becomes noticeable at very low listening levels. All things considered, the Orca and Onyx represent exceptional amplification components. They sit in the mid-price segment but deliver a genuinely high-end experience, thanks to their seductive combination of resolution, musical flow, and relaxed, natural presentation. Better still, they are easy to integrate into a wide variety of systems – you don’t need outrageously expensive gear to unlock their full potential. Simply choose source components and speakers to taste, and enjoy many years of musical pleasure with Senna Sound.

Plus

- ▲ Superb blend of resolution and fluidity.
- ▲ Stable and consistent performance.
- ▲ Natural, lifelike tonal balance.
- ▲ Proven design and meticulous build quality.

Minus

- ▼ Remote volume control could be more precise at low levels.

Equipment used

- Musical Fidelity M6x DAC
- ELAC Uni-Fi UB52
- FTA Thebe, Harmonic Tech cables

Senna Sound Onyx

- Continuous power: 2 × 45 W @ 8 Ω
- Frequency response: 5 Hz – 250 kHz
- THD: 0.03 %
- Input impedance: 22 kΩ
- Inputs: 1 × RCA
- Speaker outputs: 2
- Dimensions (WxHxD): 280 × 127 × 200 mm
- Weight: 6.5 kg
- Price: €3,200

📍 Senna Sound,
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