



# 'I am a Berlina'

Why should you spend a lot of money for a giant tower loudspeaker? Especially if you can invest the same amount of money in the purchase of a truly premium compact speaker. Such a speaker could be the exquisitely refined Gauder Berlina RC 3 with its closed bass chamber.

This speaker has the makings of a reference. It brings together and rolls into one all the virtues of compact speakers; and in fact does so in such a way that you'd have to put it in the super seller family of loudspeakers. Perhaps this is already the case. And we have not mentioned two important facts—the Berlina is a closed chamber loudspeaker and it is brand new. Most designers oddly enough regard the bass reflex design approach as an unavoidable truth. This isn't the case, according to master designer Dr. Roland Gauder, and in fact he offers a long list of why you should avoid using a bass port. Basically, a bass reflex port in a small 6 liter enclosure can extend the speaker's bass response by an extra octave. But the ducted port not only affects the low frequencies, but also the midrange. In the worst but widespread case, the speaker is often positioned near a wall and on a shelf, which opens the door and provides fertile ground for coloration. But without the port tube the common belief is that you would lose bass presence. 'Not necessarily', suggests Dr.

Gauder. He thinks and designs differently. Gauder utilizes a high-pass second order filter before the bass driver.

What you're listening to in this case is to a fourth order loudspeaker. And with the Berlina RC 3, the extra octave of bass is really pulled from the amplifier, which has to work a little harder to provide an additional three decibels in the bass region. Not a problem for most modern amplifiers, but a huge gain for compact closed chamber loudspeakers. **Naming a Classic Limousine**

The statement 'I am a Berlina' is actually an allusion to Germany's capitol. But it is also the name used by Italians for the body shape of a classic limousine. Berlina is an incredibly fast car with fine leather seats, large displacement, and well cushioned shock absorbers. Not a lowered, uncomfortable sports car. This description also applies to the sister three models in the Berlina series. They are all closed box designs, but also very tall floor standing loudspeakers. No need to even ask about bass response! The Berlina 11, the leader of the

pack, is an extremely tall tower loudspeaker, with a two meter height and a weight of 212 kilograms. The RC 3 comes in at 16 kilograms. For a compact loudspeaker these are interesting numbers, but very gutsy for a closed box design. This leads to the question—how small can you make a classic limousine?

If we continue the automotive comparison, we eventually have to come to the engine; and it is quite an exceptional engine in the Berlina RC 3! Insiders will quickly recognize the drivers—a smorgasbord of Accuton branded ceramic woofers and tweeters by Thiel & Partner. A diamond tweeter is an option for those who want to improve their high frequency performance and are not averse to investing 6,000 EUROS more for the pair. Since both the ceramic and diamond tweeters have the same mechanical dimensions, Gauder simply drops the diamond tweeter in upon request. The crossover doesn't need to be replaced, since it controls both the ceramic and diamond tweeters identically. A word about crossovers: if the drivers are the pistons of ►



**Noble Purchase:** Gauder trusts the ceramic drivers made by Accuton, and integrates them in a unique manner, decoupled from the amplifier ground. He uses extremely steep 50 dB slopes, and employs a subsonic filter which works from 20 Hz down.

the engine, then the crossover could be looked at as performing the dual role of clutch and gearbox. Gauder builds the crossover from over twenty separate parts, crosses the drivers over at 3400 Hz, and utilizes extremely steep 50 dB per octave slopes. By allowing the smallest possible driver overlap, phase precision is maintained. Many near-field studio monitors should be envious.

**The power decides**

In arriving at a description of the sound, you can either let the excitement build slowly—or just come right out with a superlative. This is one of the best compact monitors that we’ve ever heard in our listening room! Absolutely great in terms of its relaxed naturalness. Nothing seemed too difficult for the large-format presentation - both in the panoramic ima-

ging as well as in the inner harmonic structure. With „Kisses On The Bottom“ Paul McCartney has released a complicated album. On most loudspeakers it sounds classy, but sometimes a little rigid. All the songs admired by the young McCartney on the radio represent music he now wants to interpret himself, and to which he wants to add his own sense of swing. The CD is good, but the double LP

(Concord / Universal) is better. If the high-end chain of components adds too much gloss, the upper bass drive fades. If there is too much bass emphasis, the area important to tempo and pacing collapses. It is the interaction between amplifier and speaker that is the deciding factor. In our test, the approach taken in the RC 3 seemed to restrict its harmony with tube amps. Tempo and drive when matched with two large mono transistor amps clearly proved them to be a better choice. Interestingly, what wasn’t there; not even a whisper in the highest treble region. But there was always physicality and space. The position of the voice far to the front of the drivers created what was almost an acoustic illusion. This seemed to be reflected in the measurements; the more withdrawn the presence of the highs, the more focus on the relaxed mids.

**Transducer harmony**

We cross compared the RC 3 once again with the almost equally large, but simply constructed Arcona 40 from the Gauder catalog. Dealing with the harmonic spectrum is obviously a Gauder corporate ideal, but the masterful unity of the RC 3’s spatial presentation sim-

**Construction Principle—Thick Ribs**

The adjacent photo provides a look at the complex structural construction of the RC 3. Gauder follows the ideal of the teardrop shape and utilizes what looks like individual ribs to form the sides of the enclosure. They are in fact just that—individual ribs, with six steel trusses threading them together in a stack one above the other. Each individual rib consists of milled MDF, and as

damping elements four millimeter thin pieces wood fiber board are used along with silicone between the ribs. The whole cabinet is extremely rigid and resistant to vibrations. A front panel made of MDF with genuine, three millimeter thick stone slate completes the concept. The crossover is built by Gauder with more than 20 individual components.





Whoever wants can exchange/replace the ceramic tweeter with a diamond HF driver. The cost is an extra 6,000 EURO.

ply could not be matched by the Arcona. This is due to the perfect interplay of driver characteristics in the Berlina RC 3. There wasn't even the slightest timing irritation—the closed box driver sounded so harmonious, it was as fine in this regard as the best coaxial speakers. In celebration of May Day (German Labor Day), we brought out a classical silver disc: Shostakovich, Seventh Symphony, newly recorded by the Russian National Orchestra under Paavo Järvi (SACD, Pentatone). On dynamic peaks, even larger floor standing speakers began to break out in a sweat and compress (and in the worst case even screaming). The Berlina remained on course—large in size, wide, exciting. This is one of the strongest talking points for this compact design, and shows it can do all this without a bass reflex port. Why spend so much money for a man-sized floor standing speaker, when for the same amount of money you can get this kind of performance from a classy compact loudspeaker?

Andreas Günther ■

## stereoplay Highlight

### Gauder Berlina RC3

9000 Euro (Manufacturer Information)

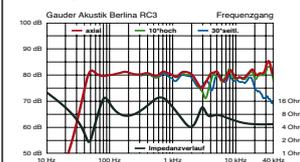
Sales: Acoustic Consulting  
Gauder & Knapp GbR  
Tel. +49 (0) 7159-920161  
www.gauderakustik.com

Measurements: B: 23 x H: 43 x T: 33 cm  
Weight: 16 kg

Installation tip: free standing or from 50 cm to the wall, listening distance from 2 m; medium / well damped rooms 15-35 square meters.

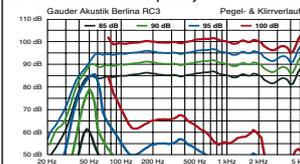
#### Measured Data

Frequency Response and Impedance curve

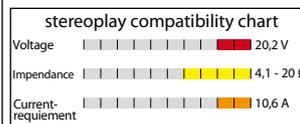


Balanced, very deep, with slight dip in the transition area.

Level & Distortion-Frequency 85-100 dB SPL

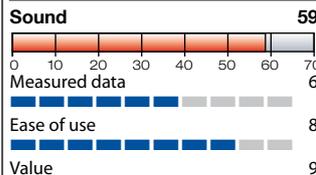
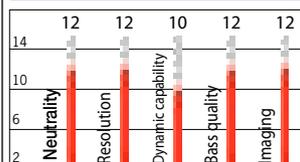


Midrange extremely clean, but quickly overloads in the deep bass



High power requirement, low impedance only in the deep bass.  
LF extension / roll off: -3/-6 dB 42/39 Hz  
Maximum level: (> 80 Hz: 100,5 dB) 88dB

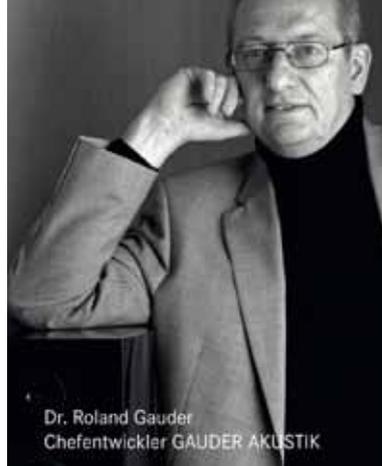
#### EVALUATION



Holiday spirit in all categories: perfectly finished, brilliantly devised, outstandingly homogeneous, and spatial. These amazing speakers are masterful in the bass. The right amp brings about control, speed, and fine resolution. Untrained even at high levels

#### stereoplay Test Results

Sound	Absolute top class	59 points
Gesamturteil	Very Good	82 points
Price/Value		outstanding



Made in Germany.

TESTSIEGER  
ALLER KLASSEN  
9 X ABSOLUTE  
SPITZENKLASSE

Dr. Roland Gauder  
Chefentwickler GAUDER AKUSTIK



## TESTSIEGER AUS TRADITION.

BERLINA RC 9 - DIE NEUE NUMMER 1 BEI AUDIO.

AUDIO 1/2015 »ÜBERIRDISCH SOUVERÄN, dass jegliche Gedanken an die Technik in den Hintergrund treten. GLOCKENREIN UND HOCHGRADIG UNVERSCHLEIERT, nie aber harsch oder gar aggressiv.«

Erleben Sie das neue Meisterstück von Dr. Roland Gauder, (ehemals isophon) und vereinbaren Sie einen Termin zur Hörprobe. Telefon: 0 71 59 / 92 01 61.  
Besuchen Sie uns auf der HighEnd, Atrium 4, E 104 / 105

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