

Car hifi for daily driving in the Audi A5

Triumph of Reason

► It does not always have to be immensely complicated, as is shown by this straightforward installation in the Audi A5. ACR in Osnabrück has installed the new Monolith component speakers from Emphaser, and we will take a look at that now.



The Audi A5 is a classic daily driver, a vehicle that is used on the way to work and for everyday driving. Naturally, this does not stop you putting enormous effort into your audio system. But for a leased vehicle or if you will be driving the car for only a few years it is advisable to seek a hifi solution that will remain reasonable. And that is the case here, although the vehicle owner is sort of well placed to know. Maik Neumann is a man of conviction. He has been working as installation specialist at ACR Osnabrück for no less

than eleven years. That is impressive as Maik is not so old. He was just 16 when he started at ACR Osnabrück, so he mastered the technical side first and then did the driving test. It would therefore have been easy to install any amount of car entertainment for thousands of euros in the Audi. But that is not the point. The system should be one that makes you say „Oh!“ when you sit in the car, but does not cause you to fall out again upon hearing the price! So what's installed? Well, there are two amps, speaker systems fore and



There is space at the rear for a 16-cm two-way system

aft, and a small subwoofer. No more is needed to be happy. So we are looking at rather few components but at the right quality. Emphaser's EA-M4X features modern amplifier technology, where the X means that the top model of the new Monolith series is being installed. Here, at least for the front system, you could fall back on its little sister

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The center console display is for entertainment



The cockpit has been upgraded with an RS steering wheel, otherwise its original



The tweeters of the front system are installed in the original positions in the dashboard



The A5 from 2017 has a fine, large configurable driver display



The front doors accommodate the 16-cm woofers and have been sound-proofed with several layers of alubutyl



the M4 model without any tragic loss of sound quality. Naturally, both use modern Class D working and deliver more than enough power. In the case of the M4X there is an uncompromising 230 watts per channel, more than enough for a component speaker system. The component systems for front and rear are identical. They are the 16-cm sets ECP-M6. Like the amplifiers, these have already proved themselves in our tests. Of particular note are the separate crossovers for each individual speaker that enable bi-amping operation. So, we have the front tweeters attached

to the first EA-M4X unit over two channels, and the front woofers on the other channel pair. Each driver is provided with its own crossover, which offers the advantage of being able to influence the sound by individual settings to the passive crossover and power amp. The subwoofer from the Emphaser Monolith series is called EBR-M8DX and is still so new that we even had a preproduction model in the car. This is a finely made cased subwoofer, and although it is 'only' configured with an eight-inch chassis, it nevertheless packs an awesome punch. Emphaser places impor-

tance on bass tuning, as we are about to find out.

Installation

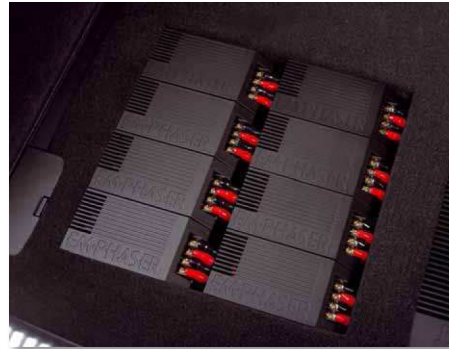
The Audi system is basically fairly straightforward to install. The front and rear systems both use the original mounting positions. One position for a tweeter in the A-pillar was dismissed as being unattractive — and quite rightly so by today's standards. However, a straightforward installation has long ceased to mean casual; even in the case of component speakers with a transparent price tag it pays to carry

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Perhaps a bit over-dimensioned: Two Emphaser ES-M4X with plenty of power



Not less than eight crossover housings for two speaker component systems, that has to be seen!



The new downfire sub is a real hit

out a careful installation. Therefore the doors have been more than adequately sound-proofed. Several layers of alu-butyl deaden them acoustically, which allows the speakers to unleash their peak performance. Most of the technology is located in the trunk, where there is space for the electronics under the cover of the false floor. For a good appearance, the crossover housings and the power amps are mounted with their top edges at the same height. This puts the trunk floor on a perfect level with the tailor made panel. That still leaves the subwoofer, which is presented as an eye-catcher in the middle of the trunk. It is located on a small pedestal, which also offsets the upward slope of the floor towards the rear seat.

Soundcheck

During the hearing test it emerged that this system can be fun with any style of music. And that means a lot of fun. If necessary the door speakers can hammer out thumping bass that is sure to set your trouser legs fluttering. It sounds extremely exhilarating and with super punchy detail. Crisp highs provide the

listener with loads of detail information — it plays pretty darn well. And it also has some good old fashioned spatiality which should suit just fine. The reason is that the music comes wonderfully from the speakers, singers do not get ‚choked‘ and a full and warm spatiality is established. Furthermore, really universal qualities can be attributed to the system. It also works without thumping bass tones, for example when Eric Clapton and JJ Cale take to the guitar live. That perhaps is what is most impressive about the subwoofer. It blends wonderfully into the sound texture without rumbling in the background. In addition it delivers enough level for pure musical enjoyment. What rather surprised us though is the enormous low end extension with which the bass driver at just 20 cm diameter spoils the listener. In the Audi the sub delivers a clean level down into the low bass, which is a real pleasure. With snappy recorded electronic music from Yello the typical grin that is so characteristic for good sound comes back on the face.



The everyday cover looks perfect as usual from ACR

Summary

With a clean, straightforward installation ACR Osnabrück shows that it can also conjure up a good in-car system without going crazy with the expense. This can be fun and is recommended as an example to follow!

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Audi A5 quattro

Price	1.700 Euro
Fitter	ACR Osnabrück
Hotline	0049 541 588810
Internet	www.acr-os.de

Summary

▶ Sound quality	70 %	1,1	■■■■■
Bass	14 %	1,0	■■■■■
Neutrality	14 %	1,0	■■■■■
Transparency	14 %	1,0	■■■■■
Soundstaging	14 %	1,5	■■■■■
Dynamics	14 %	1,0	■■■■■
▶ Practice	30 %	1,0	■■■■■
Installing	15 %	1,0	■■■■■
Features	7,5 %	1,0	■■■■■
Handling	7,5 %	1,0	■■■■■

Parts

Headunit	original	—
Amplifier		
2 x Emphaser EA-M4X		900 Euro
Front speakers		
Emphaser ECP-M6		250 Euro
Rear speakers		
Emphaser ECP-M6		250 Euro
Sunwoofer		
Emphaser EBR-M8DX		300 Euro

Audi A5 quattro

Upper-Class 1,1

CAR & HiFi 3/21

Price/performance: excellent

“Great system for daily driving with lively sound.”