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BassBoss Makara-MK3 Subwoofer

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BassBoss, known initially as BassMaxx, was founded in 1999 by David Lee and Johan van Zyl. The company, headquartered in Austin, Texas, has made a name for itself in the professional audio industry by producing high-performance loudspeakers and subwoofers. Lee, the chief designer and president, has a vast background in high-end home and car audio, significantly influencing his approach to creating sound systems that deliver clarity and power.

Lee's journey into the audio industry began at a young age, inspired by his father's meticulous craftsmanship and love for music. Growing up, he was surrounded by high-quality sound systems and developed a keen ear for precision and quality. At 17, he landed his first job in a high-end stereo store, where his knowledge and passion for audio quickly set him apart. This early exposure to home hi-fi and professional audio systems laid the foundation for his future endeavors.

Working on nightclub installations in the mid-1980s, Lee noticed a stark contrast between the refined sound of home audio systems and the often harsh, loud output of professional loudspeakers. This experience fueled his ambition to bridge the gap between audiophile-grade sound quality and the high-volume demands of nightclub and concert environments. Unable to find products that met his standards, he took matters into his own hands, designing and building loudspeakers.

Lee's philosophy centers around delivering powerful, immersive bass that enhances the overall listening experience without compromising clarity. He believes that strong low frequencies can transform music from a

mere auditory experience to a physical one, creating a sense of complete immersion. This dedication to quality and innovation has driven BassBoss to continuously push the limits of what is possible in professional audio, ensuring that its products are high-performing but also durable and reliable.

For 25 years, Lee has been at the forefront of subwoofer development with BassMaxx, later turning to the

BassBoss brand in 2014. As he previously told *Lighting&Sound America*, "Bass is my passion and the fundamental driving force of electronic music. With the growing popularity of bass-oriented and electronic dance music comes a greatly increased demand for the loudspeakers we build: products that can achieve higher output and lower frequencies, combined with extraordinary durability. The



A Makara-MK3 paired with a DV12-MK3 single 12" loudspeaker.



ControlBASS software.

name BassBoss was chosen because it better communicates the position of leadership [that] the products represent in the professional subwoofer market.

“BassBoss recognizes the producers, promoters, operators, and venue owners who desire to create musical experiences beyond the ordinary,” Lee continues. “Years of focus and dedication to subwoofers and bass reproduction has resulted in BassBoss being best able to create the ultimate sensation of electronic dance music.”

BassBoss states that its loudspeakers and subwoofers use only the finest quality components that produce professional performance and proven reliability when crafted together. This includes the Makara-MK3 double 21" sixth-order bandpass subwoofer. I enjoyed demoing a pair of these “monsters of the deep,” a valid description of this subwoofer when comparing its footprint, depth, and impact to that of the BassBoss Kraken series. Thankfully, since I had to move a pair of Makaras around, they are significantly smaller and more manageable than the Kraken Series. To get a true performance sound during my demo, I paired up the Makara-MK3s with a pair of DV12-MK3 single 12" loudspeakers.

Quality craftsmanship

The first thing I noticed when I unboxed the Makara-MK3 was the

large, vented volume and two short-horn sections crafted to enhance sensitivity in its upper range. This design delivered a powerful subwoofer experience with deep, effortless bass and a powerful punch. The two drivers are housed in a large acoustic volume tuned to low frequencies, each front-loaded onto a short horn. The vented section extends deep bass performance, while the horn section boosts upper-frequency sensitivity and improves transient response.

The quality of the craftsmanship isn't just for performance but also to ensure that MK3 cabinets would stand up to life on the road. They are crafted from durable birch plywood with precise dado joints, integrated bracing, and advanced adhesives for robust, rigid construction.

The enclosures include UHMW polyethylene sliders on the top and bottom, with corresponding side recesses for secure stacking. Transport carts also feature recesses for these sliders, ensuring safe and easy transportation. Sadly, I was not sent the transport carts, so I had to show off my boss-like muscles and power the subs around.

The cabinets are protected by a tough black polyurea coating that bonds well to wood. Amplifiers are recessed into the back of the cabinets to protect them from impact, with the recesses also serving as structural braces. Powder-coated, perforated

steel grilles safeguard the woofers. Every design aspect aims to provide a durable enclosure that can withstand rigorous use, ensuring years of reliable performance.

Big bass, big specs

The latest BassBoss MK3 Series represents a significant leap forward in professional audio technology, combining enhanced digital signal processing and powerful new amplifiers. The MK3 features an all-new 96kHz DSP, doubling the number of pushbutton presets from four to eight and offering storage for up to 100 presets that can be loaded via LAN. This comprehensive processing suite includes meticulously tuned equalization, high-pass and low-pass filters, and multiple protection systems and limiters to prevent driver overload.



Makara-MK3 side view.

The MK3 double 21" also features all-new amplifiers with increased total power, particularly enhancing the power allocated to woofers for greater impact. The higher output voltages provide more dynamic sound, while the universal input voltage compatibility (90V–250V) offers greater flexibility for various setups. Additionally, the waterproof connections provide reliability in diverse environments.



Makara-MK3 rear view.

Furthermore, on specs, this product offers a frequency response of 23Hz–100Hz with a maximum sustained output of 140dB and a peak SPL of 143dB. It features a 5,000W Class D amplification system (2 x 2500W) and

integrated comprehensive DSP with a 96kHz sampling rate. As mentioned, the subwoofer's robust construction includes CNC-machined 18mm birch plywood with extensive bracing, a high-pressure bonded polyurea coating for ruggedness and waterproofing, and perforated, powder-coated steel grilles for added protection.

I tried the eight-button press presets, which quickly helped improve and streamline the user experience. The immediate preset switching is performed with zero dropouts, clearing all worries if a change has to be made during a performance. As mentioned, you can have up to 100 presets, which can be accessed through the new feature of an Ethernet interface. I hooked up my laptop to the demo system via this connection and ran the ControlBASS software, which offers remote control and monitoring. Truly a powerful tool, I utilize ControlBASS to group cabinets via the integrated two-port network switch so I can adjust

and send commands quickly and efficiently. The software also cleanly lays out monitoring pages for signal levels and temperatures, a great tool to ensure proper performance.

Final thoughts

The MK3 21" subwoofer can complement various performance scenarios, from on-the-go DJs to touring bands. With the latest advancements, including the 96kHz DSP and enhanced amplification systems, the company's commitment to integrating fine-tuned technology with robust construction was clearly observed and proven during my time with the system. These "monsters of the deep" paired with two DV12-MK3 single 12" loudspeakers put on a clear, powerful, and enhanced private performance for my demonstration. It was a sad day when I had to pack them up and ship them on, but I am positive they will suit well when they land on the big stage. 📶