



Potent Perlisten sub plays hard and fast

Whoever said the best things come in small packages likely hadn't met this 2 x 15in, 92kg subwoofer, reckons **Mark Craven** – and the D215s is a brilliant blend of brains and brawn

AV INFO

PRODUCT: Dual 15in sealed subwoofer, certified THX Dominus

POSITION: Perlisten's flagship bassmaker, above 2 x 12in version

PEERS: M&K Sound X15+; JL Audio Fathom V2

PERLISTEN AUDIO CERTAINLY knows how to make an entrance. A new brand out of Wisconsin in the US, it debuted with its S Series loudspeaker range (HCC #331), which culminates in the £16,000 S7t floorstanders, and to avoid the trap of only appealing to music lovers, it delivered a range of subwoofers to match. The biggest of the bunch is the D215s, auditioned here.

And, yes, this woofer really is big. It's certified THX Dominus for use in largescale home theatres, but that alone doesn't necessitate its portly dimensions – Perlisten does, after all, sell smaller Dominus-flavoured subs. What also contributes to its size (approximately 80cm high and half a metre wide) is its dual 15in driver complement.

These carbon fibre woofers operate in a sealed, push-pull configuration – one front facing and the other firing *into* the D215s' cavernous enclosure. Rated power is a monstrous 3,000W 'short term RMS'.

On the inside is a Texas Instruments 'floating point' DSP engine, and an ARM processor. The latter monitors the amp power rails, input voltage and thermal characteristics, and handles fault detection and distortion limiting.

While the sub has the expected rear-panel in and outputs (on RCA and XLR connection) there's no physical dial for crossover, phase or gain – setup is via either the sub's top-panel LCD touchscreen, or more detailed Android/iOS app with full control over crossover, phase and trim, access to three preset EQs (THX, Large Room and Small Room), plus multiband parametric EQ. Distributor Karma AV says those who buy a D215s from a licensed dealer should expect them to offer to setup and EQ the sub, using a third-party measurement system such as REW.

Unlike some of Perlisten's loudspeakers, the D215s is only available in a black finish. This is understandable, as I doubt there'd be much of a market for a glam piano white

or walnut veneer version. However, a few design flourishes, included the curved edges of the front baffle, and Perlisten's bronze-effect logo, means the D215s looks like home audio equipment and not something that's been left behind by the festival PA crew.

It seems immaculately put together too. Both the front baffle and cabinet are made from HDF, reaching a thickness of 80mm at the front and 30mm elsewhere. Chunky horizontal and vertical bracing inside aims to keep it rigid and vibration-free. Positioning the sub might be a bit of a chore, because it's so heavy, so unbox it as close to what you hope is the optimum position...

Gunning for trouble

Chapter 9 in *Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows* (4K Blu-ray) marks the appearance of the ironically named 'Little Hansel' artillery cannon. It's a brilliant sequence, replete with director Guy Ritchie's favoured slow-mo photography, and some bass-rich sound design that's tailor-made for subwoofer lovers – even before the big gun makes its appearance.

What the D215s brought to this sequence was a presence across the low-frequencies that felt both utterly natural and occasionally terrifying. For example, Hans Zimmer's score oozed from the speaker array with an extra sense of scale and weight to the low brass instruments, putting you right in front of an orchestra pit. Meanwhile, the German troops' rifles and machine guns offered blistering retorts, short and snappy to the point I began wondering how the sub's 15in driver pairing was being kept on such a tight leash.

There follows some common or garden mortars, shells hitting with a robust punch to accompany the high-frequency sprays of mud and bark. Then it's time to 'introduce Little Hansel', and Perlisten's sub puts in a shift as Ritchie's camera dives inside its mechanism, the pure-sounding lows giving the gun a physical presence in the room. The ensuing blasts are as deep and forceful as you could wish for.

The LFE is even more riotous in the opening scene of war/horror caper *Overlord* (4K Blu-ray), the sound team using it to turn the inside of the plane cabin into a living, moving space. There's all sorts of localised and steered effects here, and the ambience of the surround speakers is matched by a physical feeling of air and movement from low-end rumbles.

What's remarkable is how cohesive it all sounds, and how much control Perlisten has brought to its two 15-inchers. Arguably, this makes the D215s less immediately exciting, as there's none of the overblown, insistently boisterous bass that some models can showcase; the impression instead is of supreme accuracy. The UHD Alliance likes to say its Filmmaker Mode is all about giving the viewer what the director intended, and this woofer appears aimed at giving the listener what the sound designer intended. There's hard-hitting, carpet-flattening

SPECIFICATIONS

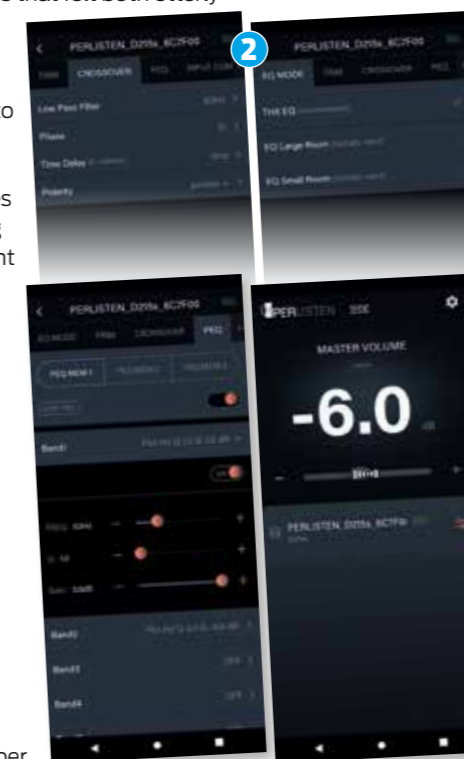
DRIVE UNITS: 2 x 15in long-excursion carbon fibre woofers **ENCLOSURE:** Sealed, push-pull configuration **ONBOARD POWER (CLAIMED):** 3,000W ('short-term RMS') Class D **FREQUENCY RESPONSE (CLAIMED):** 13Hz-210Hz (-10dB, Boost EQ) **REMOTE CONTROL:** No. Smart device app instead **DIMENSIONS:** 805(h) x 500(w) x 650.5(d) mm **WEIGHT:** 92kg

FEATURES: Stereo/LFE line-level on both unbalanced RCA and balanced XLR; RCA and XLR line-level output; 0-270-degree variable phase; 30Hz-160Hz low-pass filter; 32-bit ARM Cortex M4 processor; 48-bit TI DSP engine; 2.4in LCD touchscreen display; iOS and Android app with preset EQs (THX, Boost and Cut) and 10-band parametric EQ; Certified THX Dominus; 12V trigger; auto-on

TESTED WITH



SHERLOCK HOLMES: A GAME OF SHADOWS: Arguably a more fun ride than its predecessor, Guy Ritchie's 2011 detective sequel sends Robert Downey Jr across Europe to spoil Professor Moriarty's latest scheme. Although the 4K Blu-ray release sticks with the BD's earlier DTS-HD MA 5.1 mix, it remains an absolute delight.



bass when required, subtler details at other times. The D215s becomes as invisible as a 92kg, 80cm-high cabinet can possibly be.

There's also the feeling that it has plenty in reserve. So, when the guns start in *Overlord*, the sound is distant at first. Yet these effects become more distinct and threatening as the plane heads further into enemy territory, and are accompanied by a voluminous, textured roar of engines as it rolls and yaws. The scene reaches fever pitch when the vehicle's door is blown off, and the D215s leaps into this effect with a startling level of slam.

Other material shows off a thrilling all-round ability. Demo fave *U-571* (Blu-ray) elicits deep, room-shaking rumbles as the depth charges go off, while the songs of *The Greatest Showman* require a tuneful, tonal touch in the upper-range bass, not to mention an even decay of those stomping feet in Chapter 1.

Boss-level bass

Bigger than most home cinema subs, and better than them too, Perlisten's D215s matches its premium price point with a performance that's about depth, slam and output, but also balance and articulation. This is a grown-up woofer destined for high-end systems and with the tools to be properly integrated within one. Simply brilliant ■

HCC VERDICT



Perlisten D215s
→ £8,100 → www.perlistenaudio.com

WE SAY: An obvious partner for the brand's biggest S Series speakers, or any largescale AV setup, Perlisten's D215s is a real treat of a subwoofer. Performance is immaculate.

1. One 15in driver faces front, another is mounted – inverted – at the base of cabinet

2. Perlisten's app includes crossover, preset EQ and parametric EQ controls, the latter with Q factor adjustment and three memory slots