



# AXPONA

AUDIO EXPO NORTH AMERICA

**Julie Mullins, Managing Editor, The Absolute Sound Magazine:**  
**2018 AXPONA Show Report: Loudspeakers \$20k and Up**

**the absolute sound**

„MBL demos are a treat. This time MBL North America’s Jeremy Bryan and his wife Tara presented two systems in as many rooms, but alas I only had time to soak up some omnidirectional waves from those fab four-way German-made 101 E MKII Radialstrahlers(\$70.5k)—one of the high end’s most unique designs and sonic experiences—driven by the maker’s latest electronics. Jennifer Warnes’ version of “Bird on a Wire” was rendered with speed and impact combined with effortless bloom, detail, dimensionality, and musicality. A guy behind me said, “He always has a great-sounding room.” Yep.”

from: <http://www.theabsolutesound.com/articles/2018-axpona-show-report-loudspeakers-20k-and-up/>

**Greg Weaver, Senior Writer, The Absolute Sound Magazine:**  
**2018 AXPONA Show Report: Electronics**

**the absolute sound**

„MBL always has a fun room, and this year was certainly no different. With many new products introduced, the beautiful and authoritative Noble [sic] MBL N15 Mono power amplifiers (\$17,800/ea.) were given centerstage, biamplifying a pair of MBL 101 E MK II Radialstrahler loudspeakers. Incorporating LASA 2.0 amplifier topology, an MBL-developed technology that combines the advantages of different amplifier concepts, with two XLR inputs and one XLR pass-through (for daisy-chaining), developing 560 watts into 4 ohms at 36 Amps of peak output current, these amps were as powerful looking as they were sounding.”



from: <http://www.theabsolutesound.com/articles/2018-axpona-show-report-electronics/>



## John Atkinson, Editor in Chief, Stereophile Magazine:

### Sunday Morning at AXPONA with John

„LA dealer High End by Oz was driving a pair of MBL's 120 stand-mount speakers (\$21,500/pair) with the new Vitus RI1010 „entry-level“ integrated amplifier...all hooked up with Ansuz cables. A tonally neutral sound...”  
(Editor's Note: the graphs presented in this conversation do not show the N31's behavior but were chosen by JA from his measurements library to illustrate and clarify the points made.)



from: <https://www.stereophile.com/content/sunday-morning-axpona-john#jjXAKsXblZavd4UV.99>

## Jason Serinus, Stereophile Magazine:

### Jason Time-Travels to Day Three

„Of the two systems in the large MBL/Kyomi Audio room, I stuck with the bigger one, which was playing when I entered. So many things about this system struck me as wonderful. For starters, Carol Bach-y-Rita's rendition of „Nature Boy,“ on LP, sounded warm and lovely...the system exhibited absolute control, moved fast, rang not an iota, and was unfazed by deep percussion. It also nailed the brass edge of...trumpet...sterling system that many will love...what many would consider dream sound.”



from: <https://www.stereophile.com/content/jason-time-travels-day-three#piDzCivIetTdoGcH.99>



**Myles Astor, Senior Editor, Positive-Feedback.com:  
Administrator, Audionirvana.org:**



**AUDIONIRVANA.ORG**  
"WHERE SOUND MEETS MUSIC"

## Axpona Day 2: Reality Sets In

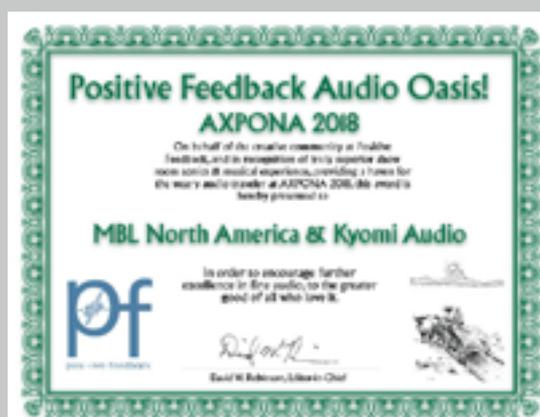
"MBL and Kyomi Audio took two rooms at Axpona. In room one were MBL 101 Mk 2s being driven by MBL Noble electronics line. Sources were either digital--or for the very first time--a turntable. The featured analog source here was an Air Force 3 turntable, Graham arm and Techdas cartridge combo. The system had the usual MBL strengths: speed, transparency and really impressive imaging. No speaker gets out of the way of the music like a well setup pair of 101s..."



from: <https://www.audionirvana.org/forum/title-to-be-added/audio-shows/axpona-2018/85262-axpona-day-2-reality-sets-in>

**David W. Robinson, Editor in Chief, Positive-Feedback.com:**

## Positive Feedback Audio Oasis! Axpona 2018





**Chris Martens, Publisher, HiFi+ Magazine**

**INSIGHTS FROM AXPONA 2018 PART ONE**



“Jeremy Bryan of MBL North America has turned trade show audio system set-up into an art form, as this year’s MBL room at AXPONA clearly demonstrated. At the heart of the system were a pair of MBL’s large Radialstrahler 101e MkII loudspeakers, powered by a suite of MBL electronics and fed, at times, by a beautifully equipped TechDAS turntable. One criticism some audio mavens direct at omnidirectional loudspeakers is their ostensible lack of imaging focus and precision, but in the AXPONA system the 101e MkII’s sounded extremely well-focused and yet spacious and full-bodied—all at the same time. In fact, I felt the system showed the 101e MkII’s many strengths more effectively than almost any prior MBL demonstration had done. With good reason, many listeners described the MBL room as a good place to go experience the audio equivalent of “shock and awe”.”



from: [http://www.hifiplus.com/articles/insights-from-axpona-2018-part-one/?utm\\_campaign=2e2e662c3d-EMAIL\\_CAM-PAIGN\\_2017\\_09\\_19&utm\\_medium=email&page=2&utm\\_source=Default+Hi-Fi%2B+List&utm\\_term=0\\_ffdfd0295-2e2e662c3d-162307549](http://www.hifiplus.com/articles/insights-from-axpona-2018-part-one/?utm_campaign=2e2e662c3d-EMAIL_CAM-PAIGN_2017_09_19&utm_medium=email&page=2&utm_source=Default+Hi-Fi%2B+List&utm_term=0_ffdfd0295-2e2e662c3d-162307549)



**Greg Weaver, Senior Editor, Enjoy The Music.com:**

**AXPONA 2018 At The Schaumburg Renaissance**

**This year’s Audio eXPO North America was utterly amazing, and on so many levels!**

„German powerhouse mbl had some new products to introduce in room 1528. Jeremy Bryan, CEO and president of mbl North America, never fails to turn in a winning performance. The big room featured an all Noble [sic] electronics series system with the mbl N31 DAC/CD Player (\$15,400), the mbl N11 Stereo Preamplifier (\$14,600), and four of the brand new mbl N15 monoblocks driving the full range, four-way, omnidirectional mbl 101 E MKII Radialstrahler loudspeakers (\$70,500/pr.). I got to hear several cuts from my sampler, including Dead Can Dance and Joël Grare, but the party really got going when Jeremy played the Cursor Minor cover of Van Halen’s „Ain’t Talking About Love!“ DAMN! This system had a spooky real feel to vocals. While it was vividly dynamic with see-through transparency, it conveyed an ethereal airiness, full of shimmer and sparkle, with get-up-and-walk-through space. Yet, it offered convincing texture, liquid tone, chesty body, and an inescapable sense of 3-D that only a handful of other systems can approach, let alone attempt to match.”



from: [http://www.enjoythemusic.com/AXPONA\\_2018/Weaver/page2.htm](http://www.enjoythemusic.com/AXPONA_2018/Weaver/page2.htm)



**@mtrot, user, avsforum.com**

## **AXPONA 2018 Audio Expo: Blog and Recap – Part 2**

AVS FORUM

“Having seen pictures of MBL speakers in audio publication websites for years now, I was glad to get to hear these odd looking speakers. All I can say is, wow, these may have produced the best vocal quality I’ve heard to date.

“To my ears, where many nice, expensive systems run into problems is with high volume, high frequency vocals, in that they can take on a “steely” or metallic character. With these MBLs, they played content with vocals of that nature and they remained very natural sounding, even though it was very loud.”



from: <http://www.avsforum.com/axpona-2018-audio-expo-blog-recap-part-2/>

**@pitdogg2, poster on the Polk Audio Forum**



„Another of the MBL Man those things sounded pretty darn good!”



from: <http://forum.polkaudio.com/discussion/179518/axpona-2018/p7>



**@tutetibiimperes, Audiogon forum user**

**AXPONA 2018**



„Big MBLs - Incredible volume output without losing coherency, and on an African chant and drum track they played the speakers demonstrated an absolutely chilling brutality - I could feel the beats of the drums in my bones, it was like standing in front of a marching band drum line playing at full-tilt, it was visceral and breathtaking (literally, almost hard to breath from the SPL they were producing at some points).“

from: <https://forum.audiogon.com/discussions/axpona-2018>

**@schubert, Audiogon forum user**

**AXPONA 2018**



„I hear you on the MBL's . In 50 years in audio by far the best Speakers I ever heard.“

from: <https://forum.audiogon.com/discussions/axpona-2018>

**Audio Bacon**

**AXPONA 2018 Show Report – Day 1**



“The CORONA LINE of MBL speakers: Speakers disappear and you’re enveloped in sound that just makes you smile. It’s compelling.”



from: <https://audiobacon.net/2018/04/18/axpona-2018-show-report-day-1/>



**user caesar, what's best forum user:  
AXPONA 2018**



"Baby MBLs with Vitus Integrated - Great Combo! Dynamics and Warmth!"



from: <http://www.whatsbestforum.com/showthread.php?25259-Some-2018-Axpona-Pics/page4>

**user caesar, what's best forum user:  
Some 2018 Axpona Pics**



"Hard to beat MBL for 3D open sound and SLAM!"



from: <https://forum.audiogon.com/discussions/axpona-2018>



**Greg Weaver, Senior Editor, Enjoy The Music.com:  
AXPONA 2018: MBL, the definition of "Made in Germany"**



I dropped in to check on what MBL is showing these days, and as always, they continue to dazzle me. Still on their worldwide tour, showcasing their newest MBL Noble Line of electronics, each hand built in their Berlin factory, I'm pleased to see the company focus hasn't deviated from the outright principle of generating the best musical performances ever recreated. Drawing on nearly four decades of high-end audio expertise, it is no surprise that the new class of Noble Line electronics come out swinging.



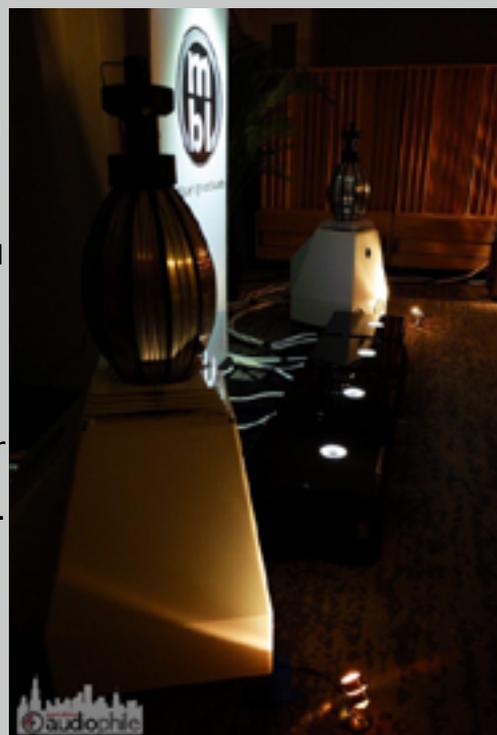
**The Story**

During the spring of 2017 MBL began the introduction tour of their new Noble Line of electronics. Starting with their N11 Preamplifier, N15 Mono Power-Amplifier, and N31 CD-DAC. All together they are a den of wolves in sheep's clothing; starting with the new N31 CD-DAC it reads more like a complete digital audio management system than just a single chassis CD player and DAC. With almost limitless connectivity and smart control of connected devices, the N31 bypasses where needed to incorporate all of digital your sources with the best analog conversion available.

The laundry list of features on the new N11 Preamplifier solidify its assured universal flexibility for many years to come. Also new in the Noble line, the new N15 Mono Power-Amplifier which doles out 560 watts of 4-ohm power with 36 amps of peak current output. Assuredly enough for a bedroom system. MBL isn't re-inventing itself with the new Noble Line, they are doing what they've always done — stay ahead of the curve.

**The Sound**

I stayed for a few tracks, and I wasn't worried about seating position as there wasn't really a bad seat in the house. The room stayed full, as the musical presentation was without equal in the show. Omnidirectional systems aren't as common in the industry and I don't fully understand why. There are many ways to skin the proverbial cat, so why not at least attempt?





The Radialstrahler 101 E Mk II loudspeakers have been around for five or six years now, and having heard them before at other shows on MBL's other equipment, I sense that what the new Noble Line has done well to maintain the reference level of control that the four-way speakers demand.

## The System

MBL

N31 CD-DAC player – (\$15,400 USD)

N11 Preamplifier – (\$14,600 USD)

N15 Mono Power-Amplifier – (\$17,800 ch. USD)

101 E Mk II Radialstrahler Loudspeaker – (\$70,500 pr USD)



from: <https://parttimeaudiophile.com/2018/05/30/axpona-2018-mbl-the-definition-of-made-in-germany/>



**Juan C. Ayllon, PRAIRIE AUDIO MAN CAVE:**

PRAIRIE AUDIO MAN CAVE

## **No Barbershop Quartet Act, Audio Expo North America Rocks the Northwest Suburbs with Its Exquisite Electronics Show**

I am most impressed were the MBL 101 E Mk II Radialstrahler loudspeakers (\$70,500), which are supported by a bank of four Noble MBL N15 Mono power amplifiers (\$17,800 each). They resemble a pair of five foot tall, white food processors, with the carafe portion a silvery, fluted oblong oval structure with a black, oversized lid.



“Onions -- that’s what they call them in Poland,” my friend, Sam, a speaker designer from Warsaw informed me later. But, oh, could they play! And in all directions; a voice coil below flexes the bulbous fluted sections in an even manner, providing an omni-directional dispersion of pure sound. (Fremer)

“Now, that’s what a trumpet should sound like!” exclaims my friend, Bob, who bumps into us Saturday afternoon and insists that we hear them. The articulation, the timbre of the horns, the decay of notes fading, the sense of air and space -- it is all done just right -- and loud. To me, that was the best I’ve heard all weekend.

from: <http://prairieaudiomancave.com/reviews--reports/no-barbershop-quartet-act-audio-expo-north-america-rocks-the-northwest-suburbs-with-its-exquisite-electronics-show>