

The Vandersteen Seven

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A new speaker from Vandersteen Audio doesn't happen very often—Richard Vandersteen introduced his Model 2 in 1977 and the 2009 CES witnessed the debut of the Model 7, which, at \$45,000/pair is the most expensive speaker ever from the frugal Mr. V.

But for that price, you get a feast of loudspeaker technology: As well as the new midrange unit described in my other Vandersteen blog entry, the new speaker offers active, equalized woofers using the same carbon-fiber/balsa-cone material, a fully balanced crossover, and an enclosure based on a carbon-fiber shell, finished in high-gloss automotive lacquer.

Richard was demming the Model Sevens with the cost-no-object Clearaudio Statement turntable and, as Wes Phillips reports below, Jim White's Atlas amplification, which can also be seen in Jon Iverson's photo. I asked to hear, as I had in many other rooms, Steve Ray Vaughan's "Tin Pan Alley" from his *Couldn't Stand the Weather* LP. Aah...expensive the Model Seven may be by the standards of the Vandersteen heritage, but not when compared with speakers that offer sound as refined, as dynamic, and as uncolored as the Sevens did at CES.