



By Andrew Hutchison in Loudspeakers, Reviews

REGA KYTE – NOTHING LIKE EVERYTHING ELSE.

Not your average speaker – in any way.

Just as you thought there was nothing really new under the sun (that shines on the HiFi loudspeaker world), Rega launches the Kyte. Does the world need another quality but affordable bookshelf sized loudspeaker I wonder? The answer from Roy Gandy at Rega is an enthusiastic, yes! His early exploits in audio manufacturing were in loudspeaker manufacturing and sales not turntables as you might expect. Rega has nearly always offered a range of loudspeakers, although this new model is unlike anything that has gone before. For that matter, they are unlike anything and other HiFi loudspeaker manufacturer is offering either. Let me explain.

A new take on how a great loudspeaker at sensible cost might be –

The ‘unusual’ starts with the plastic enclosure. Rega would probably prefer I call it “Phenolic Resin”, but it’s sort of the same thing and for me ‘PR’ is historically connected to Bakelite. If I suggested this new speaker from Rega was crafted from Bakelite, Mr Gandy could well pay me a visit and steal my keyboard. The fact is lots of parts in the Kyte are made from a plastic of one variety or another with a key exception being the

Performance	<div><div style="width: 95%;"></div></div>	95
Ease of Set Up	<div><div style="width: 89%;"></div></div>	89
Ease of use	<div><div style="width: 89%;"></div></div>	89
Aesthetics	<div><div style="width: 84%;"></div></div>	84
Build Quality	<div><div style="width: 90%;"></div></div>	90
Value for Money	<div><div style="width: 95%;"></div></div>	95
The new Rega Kyte bookshelf loudspeakers are fresh and unusual in their design. Their performance I feel, a genuine step up at the price. Their appearance I will leave the beholder to decide		
SUMMARY		90.3

internal “Ceramic Brace”. This arrangement no doubt aids in getting this Phenolic Resin enclosure to sound quite inert. Indeed, the result when rapped with ones knuckles is not dissimilar to a traditional well designed MDF box. This results in a dull sound that decays rapidly. Ceramic plates and a plastic enclosure are not the only shifts towards ‘unusual’ here. The shape of the enclosure itself is somewhat different in that it is a little ‘icecream-container-like’ in shape and one guesses at the factory the enclosures are ‘stacked’ ready for assembly. No grille is supplied to hide the loudspeakers modesty and the input terminals are vertically aligned. The Kytes are made in Rega’s own factory in the UK. Not only are they assembled there but the bass unit is made by them in their Southend-on-Sea facility. These are things we don’t normally expect at a \$1099 retail price point. In fact I’m not sure there are any UK built loudspeakers available in Australia for under \$2000 a pair. The bass unit looks like a quality piece too. I assume savings made from avoiding real wood veneers and MDF, have been fed back in to areas of design that matter more in regard to sound. Perhaps also avoiding timber has helped with keeping the retail price down. This design ethic all makes sense to me from a performance per dollar point of view.



But how do they sound, these ‘function over form’ loudspeakers?

Fresh from their carton I was reminded loudspeakers don’t always sound at their best when brand spanking new. I set them aside and played them for a few hours at a decent level. Enough that the drivers would get a bit of a work out and hopefully provide a more accurate picture of their ultimate performance. Sure enough, my second attempt to listen to them provided a very enjoyable, well balanced and honest sound. To my ear, there was an immediately familiar Rega family sound in the form of a slightly dry top end and a taut but quite full bottom. Much listening on and off over the following days allowed me to realise just how honest a sound these little speakers offer. A real lack of ‘HiFi’ (you know all shiny top end and faux detail) and much more “music”.

Initially I missed the apparent extra detail available from other loudspeakers I had on hand. An hour later the almost complete lack of listener fatigue from the Regas convinced me of their ‘rightness’.

They don’t start bugging you with any unnecessary ‘tizz’ when using them as background music speakers. Maybe when listening to them with more care, sitting right in front of them there is just a smidge less ex-

citement in the mid and top than my preference. But the bass! Its not so much that there is more than any other loudspeaker of a similar size, but what is there is extended and super tuneful. It lacks any woodiness or other aspect of performance in that region that might be caused by enclosure resonance. Rega have definitely struck gold with the performance of their unusual enclosure design. So balanced is the overall sound quality I struggle to point to or mention any particular example of either their excellence or lack there of. Perhaps to sum up I will employ the much over used term – musical. But they are! The timing in the bottom, the reality in the mid, and the lack of bling added to the sound makes for a very enjoyable fatigue-free listen. They are very competitive at this price level. They will embarrass much more expensive loudspeaker with some of their skills.

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What they won't embarrass others with unfortunately is style/ finish...

Sure they give a lot of performance at the price but is this at the cost of a classy finish? They are somewhat industrial looking and for me just a smidge plasticky. Not in a cheap and nasty, poorly built kind of way. It's more that they just aren't speakers in the tradition of being made from MDF and cloaked in some thin veneer of real wood. The lack of a grille, the almost sharp edge of the front baffle extremity and the irregular shape messes with my head a bit. There is also the fact that there has to be a little, slightly flimsy, rear 'leg' to allow them to sit vertically. These points may slow interest from those who place as much import on the furniture aspects of HiFi equipment as the performance.

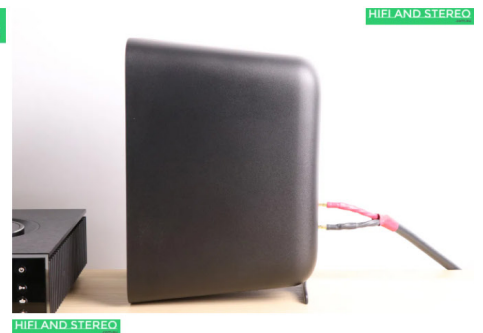
But after a week –

However after a week I was swinging quite hard for the really enjoyable easy to listen to sounds of the Kytex. I was now far less hung up on their less than typical appearance. I still was not in love with the look but I was starting to fall heavily for the sound. My opinion of the appearance is sort of irrelevant, its just my taste. Go to your nearest Rega dealer and take a look for yourself. While there, enjoy a listen to them. If your current loudspeakers are a bit obvious in the upper registers and a bit hard to listen to after an hour or so now is the time to audition the new Kytex. Highly recommended!

- > For – An obvious 'function over form' design which does indeed deliver more performance and less 'style'.
- > For – Clean, balanced sounding loudspeaker with very good bass performance.
- > For – Non fatiguing to listen to long term.
- > For – Rega 'Made in England' build quality and the longevity likely to come with that.
- > For – Maximum points to Rega for trying something new in the speaker design world.
- > Against – Appearance may not be to everyone's taste or to their priorities when buying equipment.
- > Against – Some bass reflex port noise/chuffing subtly apparent with some bass heavy music.
- > Against – Not having a flat bottom surface may make siting on some stands difficult.
- > Price – \$1099
- > Dimensions – 325mm High x 188mm Wide x 232mm Deep (with rear foot fitted)
- > Warranty – Lifetime
- > Imported by – [Synergy Audio, Melbourne, Australia](#)
- > Tested with [Naim Star](#)



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