



**John Atkinson, Editor in Chief, Stereophile Magazine:
JA's Best Sound at AXPONA: The Kyomi Audio/MBL Room
featuring MBL N31 DAC, N15 Monoblocks, 101E Mk.2 Speakers,
WireWorld Cables**



„The last room I visited at the 2019 AXPONA was the best-sounding: the big room shared by Kyomi Audio and MBL on the Renaissance Hotel's 15th floor. The system comprised MBL's Noble Line N31 CD player/DAC (\$15,400) that I reviewed in February 2018, the N11 preamplifier (\$14,600), four N15 monoblock amplifiers (\$35,600/pair) and the omnidirectional 101E Mk.2 loudspeakers (\$70,500/pair), all hooked up with WireWorld Eclipse Series 8 cables. The N31 is being updated to act as a Roon endpoint, so I hope to be writing a followup.

As luck would have it, Jürgen Reis's laptop crashed as I walked into the room, but once he had rebooted it and got the music playing—"Fit Song" from Japanese DJ Cornelius, which has superbly live sounding drum samples—I was blown away not only by the dynamics and the full-range sound but also by the enormous yet stable soundstage. I was sitting a couple of chairs away from the center seat but was reminded of the old adage: that when a system is optimized, you get a wide stereo stage even when sitting to one side..."



from: <https://www.stereophile.com/content/jas-best-sound-axpona-mbl-n31-dac-n15-mono-blocks-101e-mk2-speakers-wireworld-cables>



**Jim Austin, Editor, Stereophile Magazine:
AXPONA 2019: It's a Wrap**



„Of the rooms I visited at AXPONA, most sounded good. Some were outstanding. A lot of people obviously worked hard optimizing their systems...The best sound I heard—the room I most regret not making it back to after spending only a few minutes there—was shared by MBL and Kyomi Audio, with turntable by TechDas and loudspeakers and amplification from MBL, which John Atkinson also named best-in-show.“



from: <https://www.stereophile.com/content/axpona-2019-its-wrap>



Johnathan Valin, Editor in Chief, The Absolute Sound Magazine
AXPONA 2019: Loudspeakers \$20k and Up:

the absolute sound

„Perpetual best of show contenders, the \$70,500 four-way, omnidirectional MBL 101 E MKIIs, driven by MBL electronics...sourced by a TechDAS 3 turntable with Koetsu Coralstone cartridge...This unique "Radialstrahler" loudspeaker is an enduring classic if there ever was one, surviving (indeed, triumphing over) contender after contender with its richly colored, high-resolution, high-energy, three-dimensional sound.“



from: <https://www.theabsolutesound.com/articles/axpona-2019-loudspeakers-20k-and-up/>



Michael Lavorgna, Editor in Chief, Twittering Machines, Online Magazine
Axpona 2019: My Favorite Things



„There is nothing that sounds like an MBL system other than an MBL system. When an MBL system is hitting its stride, as it so often does at hifi shows because Jeremy Bryan, the President and CEO of MBL North America, is fastidious about everything, you are in for a treat second to none.



The system which included Kyomi Audio as co-exhibitor: 101E Mk.2 loudspeakers (\$70,500/pair), 4x N15 monoblock amplifiers (\$35,600/pair), N11 preamplifier (\$14,600), and the Noble Line N31 CD player/DAC (\$15,400).



Someone in attendance asked Jürgen Reis, the guy who designs everything, a question about the 101E Mk.2 loudspeaker, Jürgen went about taking off some cosmetic pieces of the speaker to help illustrate his explanation. I love when that happens.



Polaroid: Jürgen as Nikola Tesla

All enveloping, all consuming, nearly overwhelming, this MBL system grabbed every bit of me and didn't let go. I looked over at Jürgen who was controlling the iPad remote as he was about to change tracks and he had a devilish grin, the kind of grin I imagine Tesla grinned as he demonstrated his latest mind-blowing invention.



Music-induced amazement, delight, and near-delirium are a few more of my favorite things. Thanks Jürgen, thanks MBL."

from: <https://twitteringmachines.com/axpona-2019-my-favorite-things/>



Aaron Sherrick, Editor, *Twittering Machines*, Online Magazine

Axpona 2019: Some of My Favorite Things, with Aaron Sherrick



„This was my first time hearing MBL equipment, and the experience did not disappoint! Being an omnidirectional speaker I was expecting a large sound field, which I got, but I was impressed that the speakers imaged as well as they did. The bass was strong and tuneful without being boomy like many of the other rooms. This was one of the best-sounding rooms at the show. The all-MBL system was comprised of the 101E Mk.2 loudspeakers (\$70,500/pair), 4x N15 monoblock amplifiers (\$35,600/pair), N11 preamplifier (\$14,600), and the Noble Line N31 CD player/DAC (\$15,400).“



from: <https://twitteringmachines.com/axpona-2019-some-of-my-favorite-things-with-aaron-sherrick/>



Rick Becker, Editor, Enjoy the Music.com, online magazine

AXPONA 2019 Show Report -- Audio Expo North America

Enjoy the Music.com

„MBL, the renowned full-system German manufacturer had their typical excellent display with their omni-directional speakers. They are perennially one of the Best Rooms wherever they go and if you haven't spent time literally walking around the room to experience the three-dimensionality of their presentation, do so at your next opportunity. One of my most extraordinary experiences, ever, in audio was listening to a recording of a live rock concert on an MBL system at concert level a show in Brooklyn a few years ago..“



from: http://www.enjoythemusic.com/AXPONA_2019/Becker/Part2/page2.htm



**David W. Robinson, Editor in Chief, Positive-Feedback.com:
Positive Feedback Audio Oasis! Axpona 2019**



from: <https://positive-feedback.com/>



Show Attendees:

"MBL 101e mk2 with NOBLE electronics and Air Force turntable/Gryphon phonostage. Never one to take second fiddle to anyone, the MBL room once again was a standout performer. I have to say, I think this room evoked the most emotions from its listeners. Very engaging and just closing your eyes transforms you to the performance"

from: <https://www.audioshark.org/axpona-138/axpona-2019-best-16274.html>

"The MBL room was excellent as always..."

from: <https://www.audioshark.org/axpona-138/axpona-2019-best-16274-page3.html>

"I don't own MBL speakers but having heard them on numerous occasions and noting the incredible attention to detail and effort the MBL team make to optimize the systems and integrate them to the rooms at various shows, I have no trouble believing the best of show awards were well earned."

Congrats to Jeremy Bryan, President and CEO of MBL North America and Jürgen Reis, MBL's chief engineer.

from: <https://www.audioshark.org/axpona-138/axpona-2019-best-16274-page4.html>

"...some things are a given, consistent at every show, unless something really messes up... One consistent at each show I was at, MBL kicks a\$\$\$. They take the time to treat the room, they play music that don't put you to sleep and the gear just sounds good. It's like why does a certain model stay on a „Class A“ list in a magazine for several years."

from: <https://www.audioshark.org/axpona-138/axpona-2019-best-16274-page4.html>

"MBL's room was the one which invoked the deepest emotions. I own the little 120's at home in my family room with MBL noble electronics. But the 101e mk2's in the store are on another level and the Xtremes are on another planet. Best advise? Listen with your eyes closed. So much going on. Instruments and vocals floating in space. Absolutely amazing."

from: <https://www.audioshark.org/axpona-138/axpona-2019-best-16274-page5.html>

"I've not had a problem when listening to MBL with imaging or placement of instruments. I mean the cymbals are in one spot, imaging of drums or horns are easily in place. Vocals are centered in the sound stage.

In my opinion, I would not use „beautiful“ to describe MBL, to me, more „accurate“."

from: <https://www.audioshark.org/axpona-138/axpona-2019-best-16274-page5.html>



"I have also heard MBL systems at several shows and they never fail to impress - and I have no idea what they cost. Perhaps the simplest explanation is also the correct one - that these systems are simply very good!"

from: <https://www.audioshark.org/axpona-138/axpona-2019-best-16274-page5.html>

"MBL represent the ultimate In omnidirectional speakers. Having had the pleasure to live with their first entry into US back in the 90's that went for 68k, they were a startling revelation to me about the importance and desirability of an expansive soundstage. Unfortunately back then there was little else the speaker could do and they were not yet into the "system approach". Well things have obviously moved in leaps and bounds since then and kudos to MBL for perfecting one of the real time machines in audio.

Just my opinion and my liking, but once you get caught with the MBL bug and speakers similar to it with huge dispersion patterns it's hard to live with a box speaker. Again, it's a preference, but assuming accuracy is there these holographic soundstages that few are capable of are so unique and engaging it's hard to go back."

from: <https://www.audioshark.org/axpona-138/axpona-2019-best-16274-page5.html>

From Audiogon Forum: Best speaker at Axpona:

"They were all impressive. ..some more than others.....but 20 years ago at the Palmer house Chicago. ...my favorite speaker was the same as it was 2019....its not a rock n roll speaker per say.but its the only speaker that could bring me to tears...the MBL Radialstrahler 101E MKII..... there was were few empty seats in that room....maybe one day?....it was a great show ,first class. ..and all the people were very nice and friendly.probably the best crowd I've been around in a big event ever....."

from: <https://forum.audiogon.com/discussions/what-was-your-favorite-speaker-at-axpona-2019>

"Those MBL's were amazing. Such a powerful sound that just happened in the room. Fantastic! "

from: <https://forum.audiogon.com/discussions/what-was-your-favorite-speaker-at-axpona-2019>

"As usual, the MBL's were stellar."

from: <https://forum.audiogon.com/discussions/what-was-your-favorite-speaker-at-axpona-2019>

"The MBL room is killing it with their spacious, omni sound."

from: <https://www.avnirvana.com/threads/axpona-2019-discussion-thread.4423/>