

# audition

equipment review

## Legend Acoustics Kama 6 Floorstanding Loudspeakers

**T**he fresh air and tranquillity of Tasmania's Huon Valley must be agreeing with Dr. Rod Crawford. That is, if his latest version of the Kama loudspeaker is anything to go by. It must be a bit over a year ago now, that Rod and with him, Legend Acoustics upped sticks and left the mainland. Returning to his native isle, he's kindly invited me to come on over to see and hear what he's been up to - especially to hear the Legend flagships - the Kumbar Wirri, or 'Big Red' as these loudspeakers are translated and affectionately and also known. These

two piece modular speakers with active crossovers weigh in at 42kg a piece, so not surprisingly, it was logistically more accommodating for Legend to freight over something a little more manageable and the loudspeakers that made the trip over Bass Strait are a pair of his Kama 6 floorstanders. They duly arrived in cartons looking a bit worse off after their journey, but thankfully the contents were still intact.

The Kama 6s are no lightweights either at 20kg per loudspeaker, which is impressive for a slimish cabinet just under a metre tall. Visually the new models resemble the Kama 5s in many ways, but Rod has made several significant changes.

The baby of the range, the Joey, has also evolved into a series 6 version with similar improvements to its larger cousins.

Dr. Rod has been in the industry for some time and past employment included a four year stint as a designer at Linn Products in Scotland and its charismatic and often outspoken boss Ivor Tiefenbrun. Rod's first 'Ivor encounter' was when his new employer exclaimed to him that he thought Linn wasn't employing any more (censored) Australians. We need more characters like Mr. Tiefenbrun in this industry.

After leaving Linn, Rod returned to Australia and in 1995 he launched Legend Acoustics. The company's first loudspeaker was the Kantu and subsequent models also bear Aboriginal names for 'Kangaroo,' which he feels

### Vital Statistics

**Dimensions:**

900 x 180 x 300mm

**Weight:**

20kg (each)

**Price:**

\$1,990 (pair)

**Distributor:**

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**Legend  
Acoustics  
adds the  
'Series 6' tag to  
the Kama's**

By Nic Tatham

best represents the Legend Acoustic's sound - namely, fast, open and natural.

The main change to the Kama 6 is the use of a much improved silk dome tweeter. With a larger magnet structure it proves more efficient, has higher power handling capability and the frequency response extends beyond 30kHz. The tweeter now sits in a much larger back cavity which has allowed it to be crossed over at a lower frequency to the mid/bass drivers. These drivers remain doped paper cone types and popping one out of the front baffle, gave me a look at it and also the internal cabinet construction. There's plenty going on inside, which accounts for the substantial weight. There's plenty of bracing and I was able to see the tweeter cavity, that Rod had mentioned.

The top bass/midrange driver has a reflex port positioned directly behind it, while there's another port towards the base of the cabinet. Rear-firing ports normally gives the loudspeaker room to breathe and this is true of the Kama 6s, although the ports aren't that big, so some wall reinforcement isn't going to worry them.

If you're stretched for space and they have to go close to the rear wall, plug the ports (starting with the bottom one) and this will lessen the bass

reinforcement. Rod recommends at least half a metre from walls, particularly the sides and I gave them about double this. The tweeter is offset in the baffle, so the speakers are left and right and marked accordingly.

The review pair came in a Light Oak timber veneer finish and looked great. The cabinets are made for Legend Acoustics by JJ Cabinets in Sydney's south and are a nice piece of woodworking and construction. The cabinets come with a plinth base which screws to the bottom, then spikes screw into it.

The baffle also comes with Legend's removable grille 'sock.' To the uninitiated it might look like it's there to stay, but it does come off and I always find cone speakers sound best without any sort of grille.

About a week into having the Kama 6s hooked up and running-in, I retired the little Cambridge Audio Azur 340R AV receiver (also reviewed in this issue) and connected the Legends up to one of my permanent amps; firstly, the valve-based Cayin A-88T.

The Kama 6s are a 4 ohm load and 90dB efficient, so they'll like a decent bit of amplification. The Cayin's designed to handle 4 to 16 ohm loads and had no problems with the Legends, although like any valve amp, don't expect rave party volume levels. Things were sounding sweet and tactile with a Shanling SCD-T200 providing the



music. The pair took a bit of running-in but freed up nicely, shedding any 'out-of-the-boxness'.

What was immediately obvious was the Legend hallmark sound quality, these are indeed a fast, open and natural sounding pair of loudspeakers. Dynamics impress too and I tried out a bit of solo piano - a Listz *Sonata In B Minor* to try the speakers with what is one of the hardest classical instruments to faithfully replicate. A gorgeous piece of music, this is 'close your eyes and be transported there' kinda stuff and the Legends will happily take you on that journey. You can really lose yourself in this music and it sounded tremendously emotional on the Legends, just as it should do.

One thing I liked about the Kama 6s is their composure - the bass remained nicely focused and the piano sounded

## Technotalk

### Product Type:

Floorstanding loudspeaker

### Driver Complement:

2 x 130mm doped paper cone mid/bass drivers

1 x 30mm silk dome tweeter

### Cabinet Configuration:

2½-way, bass reflex rear ported, magnetically shielded

### Frequency Response:

40-30kHz (±3dB)

### Recommended Amplifier Power:

20-100 watts RMS

### Nominal Impedance:

4 ohms

### Sensitivity:

90dB/W @ 1m

### Speaker Connection:

Biwireable, gold-plated 4mm binding posts

### Finishes:

Light / Black Oak, Jarrah veneers

Technotalk specifications and recommended retail prices are supplied by the manufacturer

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as though it were being brought to life. They’ve got that added sense of sparkle and involvement too, which is another fine attribute.

Stepping up a gear, I switched to Jamiroquai’s *Dynamite* and the title track. The band keeps up the layers on this studio album and the Kama 6s dissect the musical strands well. They do so in a cohesive and seamless manner, allowing the track to flow, ensuring the rhythm’s super tight, while dynamics remain superbly handled.

The twin 130mm drivers generate generous bass, which is also tight and tuneful. The twin bass reflex port configuration works really well and there’s plenty of punch to suit and drive along this sort of bass-laden music. I wouldn’t describe the bass as subliminal - this isn’t that sort of loudspeaker, and if you were using them in an AV system a subwoofer would be called for, but these speakers certainly have a very pleasant fullness.

The treble and midrange offer outstanding detail and transparency and the new tweeter is so well behaved that it just helps highlight detail. Being offset helps with the soundstaging also and performers always sounded firmly focused and centre stage.

I thought I’d switch amps and try out the Kama 6s with my ME pre/power. This is a more neutral sounding amplifier and its got plenty of current delivery, so it’s a good amplifier to really push things along at higher volume levels. The Legends welcomed the extra power and I felt they actually sounded at their best at slightly higher levels, delivering that little extra impact and dynamic weight. Now I was truly hearing that fast and precise sound and there was no denying the Kama 6’s enthusiasm with a wide range of music.

These aren’t loudspeakers that you can easily pigeonhole; they’re equally happy with a big orchestral piece as they are some grungy rock. The Legends much preferred the MEs for this sort of music and driving them harder, which was to be expected. The Cayin amp sounds absolutely sweet and goes loud enough, but just doesn’t have the ‘balls’ of a decent transistor amplifier.

I did swap my usual KEF iQs for the Kama 6s and tried them out in my AV system also. This time they were being driven by a Yamaha RX-V2700,

itself quite a potent multichannel amplifier, but I immediately noticed that the Legends were harder to drive than the KEFs and some recalibration was needed. As such they make a fine AV front pairing and I’d especially like to hear an all Legend surround sound set up, as I imagine it would be quite an experience.

Dr. Rod Crawford has taken the Kama to a new level with some important tweaks and made an already talented speaker even more so. The price remains the same at \$1,990 a pair, which to me represents excellent value given the build and performance on offer. Match them up with the right electronics and they’re bound to impress. **AVL Ancillary Equipment:** Shanling SCD-T200 CD player, Cayin A-88T integrated valve amplifier, ME 24/550II pre/power amplifiers, BenQ W500 LCD projector, Concorde speaker stands, QED Silver Anniversary Biwire speaker cables, Belkin PureAV mains conditioner, Audioquest interconnects

## Opinion

The ‘Opinion’ expressed here is that of the reviewer, summarised in the form of a 5-star rating system, and should be considered as an integral part of the full contents of this Audition Equipment Review. As such, each category should be judged on its own merits and not necessarily used as a comparison with other equipment reviews in this, or other editions of Audio & Video Lifestyle magazine.

- ★ Shocker
- ★★ Average
- ★★★ Good
- ★★★★ Excellent
- ★★★★★ Perfection

**“What was immediately obvious was the Legend hallmark sound quality, these are indeed a fast, open and natural sounding pair of loudspeakers.”**

- Performance ★★★★★
- Build Quality ★★★★★
- Compatibility ★★★★★
- Value For Money ★★★★★