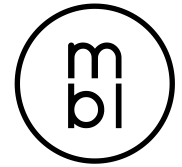


# Coverage of MBL



Axpona Audio Expo North America, April 22-24, 2022

## Best Sound of Show

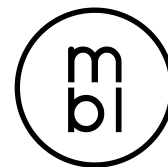
April 28, 22 by Jonathan Valin, The Absolute Sound



The four-way, \$84,500 **MBL 101 E MK II** Radialstrahler omni, driven by MBL's own phenomenal **Reference Line 9011** monoblocks and sourced by MBL digital, was simply terrific—as usual. How terrific? On Sonny Boy Williamson's "The Sky Is Crying" (a track I must have heard a hundred times, on analog and digital) Williamson's gravelly voice was the most natural and realistic I've heard it sound—so freed up from cones-in-a-box cabinet-noise, containment, and beaminess, so

freestandingly three-dimensional, so natural in tone color, so present! These classic omnis were just "not there" in a way that nothing else at this show could match. If you're looking for the opposite of hi-fi—for a facsimile of the real deal—I'm not sure where you'll find better.

from: <https://www.theabsolutesound.com/articles/axpona-2022-loudspeakers-30k-and-up>



### **"Best Sound (cost no object)"**

May 4, 22 by Robert Harley, The Absolute Sound Magazine

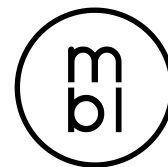
"...the MBL 101 E MK II and 126 were outstanding, but the \$13k 126 was mind-blowingly great for the size and price; ..."

from: <https://www.theabsolutesound.com/articles/axpona-2022-robert-harley-on-digital-sources-and-electronics>

### **Kyomi Audio's MBL Rooms**

April 26, 22 by Jason Victor Serinus, Stereophile





Warm, coherent, magical—all those descriptors came to mind as I listened to a system that, for me, defined the essence of the high-end experience. In the first of Kyomi Audio of Chicago's two stellar-sounding rooms, MBL's Jeremy Bryan ensured that MBL's imposing 101 E MKII full-range Radiastrahler omnidirectional loudspeaker system (\$84,500/pair) would perform their fabled disappearing act. Though the presentation lacked the ultra-wide, jaw-dropping soundstage that MBL can produce with ease in larger environments, it beautifully conveyed Ray Montagne's soft touch on his guitar. Sopranos sounded lovely, without an iota of stridency, on the chorus, "Let us Break Their Bonds Asunder," from The English Concert's recording of Handel's Messiah.



Lulled into closing my eyes, I experienced the pure pleasure of sinking deeply into Scala & Kolacny Brothers' "Nothing Else Matters." It was impossible to miss the hammy, strait-laced humor in a ridiculous track from the Cincinnati Pops Orchestra, nor the beautiful vocals on Jose James and Lalah Hathaway's "Lovely Day," Making it all possible: MBL's 1621 A CD transport (\$31,500), Roon-ready 1611 F D/A processor (\$32,250), 6010 D stereo preamplifier (\$30,000), and 9011 mono amplifier (\$120,000/pair). (The amplifier outputs 840Wpc into 4 ohms with a specified 50A current capability.) Cabling was WireWorld Eclipse, Series 8.

In a considerably smaller side room, MBL's 126 loudspeakers (\$12,900/pair) fronted by an N31 CD-DAC (\$17,400) and N51 integrated amplifier (\$19,900) took center stage. The balance was warm and the midrange lovely, with impressive image size and total top-to-bottom coherence. It takes an accurate system to confirm why, given the strident sound of the first violin on Mozart's Flute Quartet No.4, the Chester String Quartet is not held in the same high regard as the Guarneri, Budapest, Takacs, and Emerson String Quartets. Similarly, a recording of mezzo Denyce Graves singing John Denver confirmed why she was best known for her Carmen. The final track, The Impressions' classic "People Get Ready," affirmed this system's ability to convey spirit and joy without bounds.

from: <https://www.stereophile.com/content/kyomi-audios-mbl-rooms>

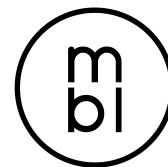
## Show Report

Greg Weaver, enjoythemusic.com



Just down the hall in 1527, I ran into my good friend, Keyboard Area Coordinator and Piano Performance professor at DePaul University, traveling, teaching, and recording pianist, George Vatchnadze. George also happens to own Kyomi audio, named after his wife, and recently opened a brick-and-mortar store in Chicago! Walking into the room, Jeremy Bryan of MBL North America greeted me.

The room was loaded for bear, with some of the best gear MBL has to offer. The MBL 1621 A CD Transport (\$31,500) – using a modified Philips DCM Pro laser mechanism – handed off to the MBL 1611 F DAC (\$32,250). The MBL 6010 D Stereo Preamplifier (\$30,000), sent audio to a pair of the massive MBL 9011 Mono Amplifiers (\$120,000/pr.), which were driving the full-range MBL 101 E MkII Loudspeakers (\$84,500/pr.). Cabling was Wireworld Eclipse, Series 8, throughout.



What a system! If you've not heard the unique German MBL Radialstrahler omnidirectional loudspeakers, not to mention its equally superb line of electronics, you really should go out of your way to have the experience. While I get that it is not for everyone, it is still one of the most amazing sounds you will ever likely hear, and one that is not likely to be like anything else you've ever heard.



What is a Radialstrahler you may ask? It is a free-standing – unenclosed - spherical driver, using a membrane made of bent segments that are fixed on one side, and connected to a voice coil on the other. Being omnidirectional radiators, they truly sound nothing like most conventional dynamic speaker systems, and have the ability to, when set up just right, completely vanish from the equation and leave only the apparent performance in the space

in front of you.

It can be a tricky thing to pull off, but DAMN, this year, in this room, we were all witness to the best MBL system performance I've heard at a show in recent memory! This system completely vanished leaving nothing but the music. EVERYONE in the room both times I stopped in was smiling and rocking out as Jeremy cued up cut after cut that really showed off this system's strengths.

from: [https://www.enjoythemusic.com/AXPONA\\_2022/Weaver/page3.htm](https://www.enjoythemusic.com/AXPONA_2022/Weaver/page3.htm)

## AXPONA 2022 Show Report

Rick Becker, [enjoythemusic.com](http://enjoythemusic.com)

MBL put up two systems at AXPONA. The larger one comes close to \$300k (plus the Wireworld Eclipse, Series 8 cabling) if the large 9011 monoblocks were indeed \$60k each, rather than \$60k per pair. This is the traditional high-end territory for mbl with large, separate components such as the 1621A CD transport (\$31.5k) and 1611F DAC (\$32.5k). And the omni-directional sound here once again falls into the Best Rooms category with its inviting ability to allow people throughout the room to enjoy high-quality music reproduction without having to be in a coveted listening chair. Pure, traditional approach here with large, heavy, and expensive components.

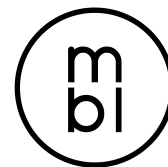


Their second system, while also top-shelf in quality and with a similar acoustic signature, addresses the need for people with less space, a desire for less equipment, and perhaps those with less money. This rig comes in a touch over \$50k plus fewer of the Wireworld Eclipse, Series 8 cables. The N31 CD-DAC (\$17.4k) handles PCM and DSD playback as well as having selectable digital filters. The N51 integrated amp (\$19.9k) is likewise a pretty traditional configuration.

The black and gold theme of their gear projects an image of wealth and tradition and appeals to those with traditional, conservative values. The SRA (Silent Running Audio) audio stand, as good as it may be, looked too informal for the upscale design of the mbl gear. While I find the mbl omni-directional presentation particularly appealing for classical music, one of the most outstanding presentations of any show I've attended was an mbl room pumping out a recording of a Rolling Stones live concert — at near concert-level volume with a much larger rig than shown here.



from: [http://up.com/AXPONA\\_2022/Becker/Part1/page3.htm](http://up.com/AXPONA_2022/Becker/Part1/page3.htm)



## Axpona 2022: MBL

Michael Lavana, Twittering Machines

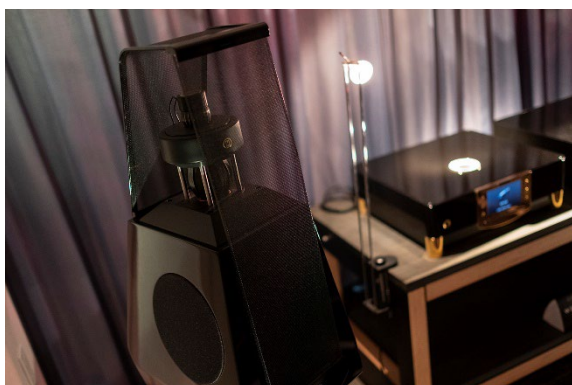
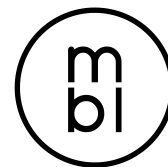
No HiFi show would be complete without a visit with MBL. MBL systems do not look like any other hifi nor do they sound like any other hifi.



Germany's MBL, presented by MBL North America, had two rooms at Axpona 2022—one big, one small—and they outfitted each with appropriately sized systems. The big system featured MBL's Radialstrahler 101 E MK II Loudspeakers (\$84,500/pair) and MBL 9011 Mono Amplifiers (\$120,000/pair) front and center.



The MBL 6010 D Preamplifier (\$30,000), MBL 1621 CD Transport (\$31,500) and 1611 F DAC (\$32,250) sat on a rack from Silent Running Audio (SRA).

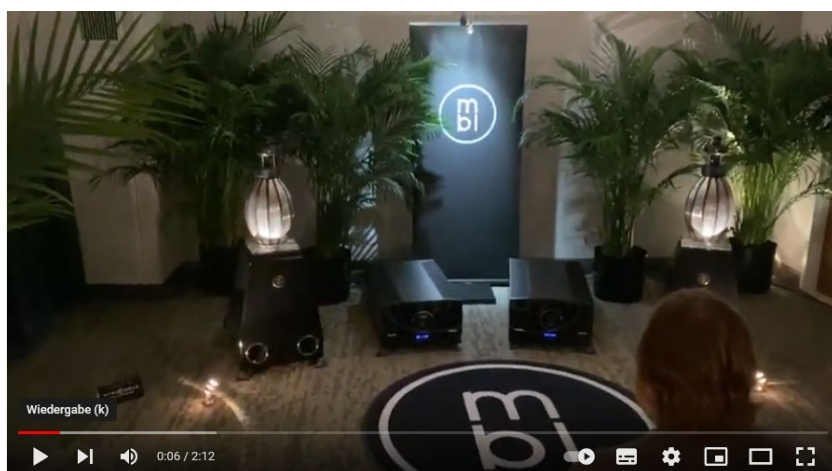


The smaller system saw MBL's Radialstrahler 126 Loudspeakers (\$12,900/pair) powered by the MBL N51 Integrated Amplifier (\$19,900), with the MBL N31 CD-DAC (\$17,400) taking care of front end duties.



These two systems shared many a sonic trait and I found myself locked in to the smaller system's room-filling sound. With MBL, music energizes the room in a unique manner that I find hypnotically engaging.

from: <https://twitteringmachines.com/axpona-2022-mbl/>



from: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_zoj7XEhvM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_zoj7XEhvM)