

**AXPONA 2016  
Show Wrapup  
April 15-17, 2016 · Chicago IL**

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**Studio Grand Reference Gold Amazes at Axpona 2016 Show**



Carl Marchisotto is the undisputed world champion when it comes to open baffle speakers and great open baffle speakers are world class and hard to better.

**WHY OPEN BAFFLE?**

Speaker boxes are expensive to make. The main reason Magicos are so expensive is the heavy advertising and reviewer "incentives" they do, as well as the expensive aluminum framework they make to reduce box resonances.

But what if you eliminate the box and all the resonances, phase distortions and other artifacts they induce? Why you'd have a less expensive, better sounding speaker, right? They might even have gorgeous, hand lacquered rosewood finishes and a live-sounding sound stage presentations that no enclosed speaker can match.

Then you would have a Nola.

The NOLA Studio Grand Reference Gold is a floor standing loudspeaker of compact proportions. They include the same Alnico magnesium woofers, Alnico dipole open baffle mid-range and our new true ribbon tweeter as the bigger more expensive models. This three-way, three-driver system is designed to provide edge of the art performance in smaller rooms, even though they sounded amazing in the large penthouse-size room at the show. Utilizing the same one square foot of floor space as the Metro Grand Reference Gold, its performance is also very user friendly. The system is supplied with a piano black finished base and four heavy-duty spikes. An optional ball bearing isolation platform is also available.

The 160 mm gold phase plug Alnico magnet bass driver provides deep bass with a clarity that is unusual at any price. It mates perfectly with the 120 mm Alnico open baffle mid-range. The latest version of the true ribbon tweeter incorporates components that NOLA is now manufacturing for even better performance. The NOLA Studio Grand Reference Gold is truly a smaller, but same ultimate quality implementation of the \$33,000/pair Metro Grand Reference Gold at the most attractive price ever offered for a Gold Collection product. The reproduction of a good deal of the "atmosphere of the recording venue" that the Metro Grand is famous for, combined with the grain-free instantaneous response of the new ribbon tweeter, make its presentation unique in this size and price point.

If you appreciate the sound of live music, these even make studio recordings sound live-in-concert and take authentic live recordings to a much higher level.

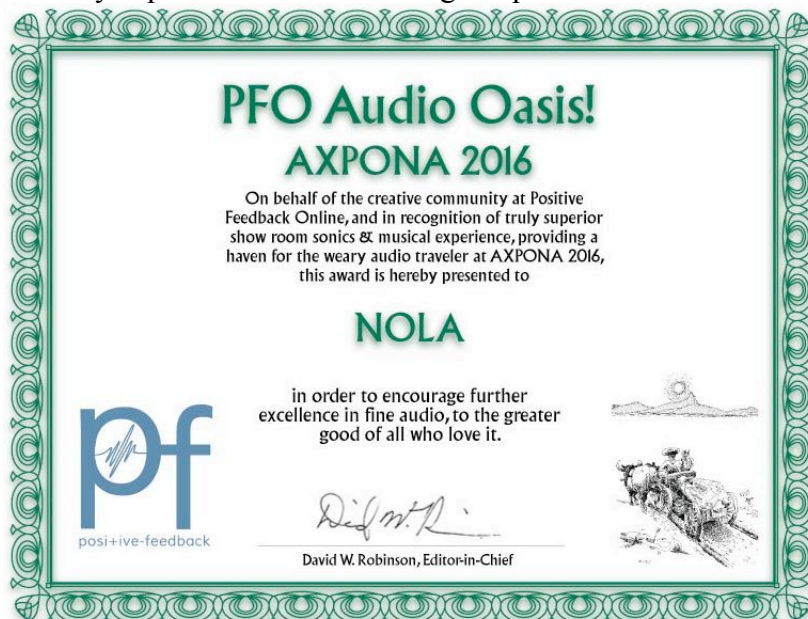
Easily one of the best sounding demos in Chicago.



**Dr. David W. Robinson, Editor-in-Chief of Positive Feedback magazine, awards Nola Studio Grand Reference Gold the Audio Oasis Award:**

"Congratulations again!

You really made my trip to AXPONA 2016 a great pleasure while I was in your space!"



**Axpona 2016 - Into The Mystic**  
**04-24-2016 | By Robert S. Youman | Issue 85**



A few comments about Carl Marchisotto of Nola Speakers. Simply stated, Carl is an industry icon. Without question, one of the all time great speaker designers. This was my first chance to personally meet him and he was an absolute delight.

Known for his firm commitment to midrange quality and multi driver open baffle designs, his legacy began with Dahlquist and then followed up with Alón -- two of my favorite speaker brands from back in the day. This design philosophy continues with his current Nola product line. My Father owned the classic Dahlquist DQ-10 and one of my best friends still has his Alón IV which he refuses to give up.

Carl mentioned that he still gets these models back for repair many decades later. Like my friend, current owners are extremely loyal and swear by the sound. Check out the Internet for pre-owned specials. You will be amazed at the used market pricing for both product lines.

Even beyond all of the technology and planning mentioned above, the system in the Playback Designs/Nola Room was absolutely outstanding. Please see the list below. Unfortunately, I was not able to stay long enough to check out the headphone gear which I hear is a must audition at these price points.

- \* NOLA-Studio Grand Reference Gold Speakers (\$19,800)
- \* Playback Designs IPS-3 Integrated Amplifier & DSD DAC (\$13,000)
- \* Playback Designs Syrah PCM/DXD/Quad DSD Server (\$6500)
- \* Playback Designs Merlot PCM/DXD/Native DSD DAC (\$6500)
- \* Playback Designs Pinot Quad DSD Analog/Digital Converter (\$7500)
- \* Studer-ReVox PR99 Reel to Reel
- \* Simaudio Moon 310LP Phono Preamp (\$1900)
- \* ReVox B791 Turntable & Sonus Blue-Gold Cartridge
- \* M2 Tech Marley - Class A Balanced Headphone Preamp (\$1699)
- \* Sbooster BOTW 15v Linear Power Supply (\$370)
- \* Mr Speakers Ether C Headphones (\$1599)
- \* Questyle QP1R Digital Audio Player (\$899)



Compared to the systems discussed earlier, this room provided something much more modest in terms of bottom line MSRP, yet was just as compelling and impressive. I was especially taken by the NOLA Grand Reference Gold speakers driven by the Playback Designs IPS-3 Integrated. Speaker design done right. Digital done right. I found the performance to be pure and effortless regardless of musical genre. During my stay, I had to check twice to make sure that the analog front end was not in play as I was so bewitched and bedazzled by the sound. Congrats to Andreas and Carl for these outstanding products!

One final note. Andreas feels strongly that there is a wonderful synergy between music and 'fine' wine (particularly of the Syrah grape variety). As an extra but appropriate perk for his customers, Andreas will include a bottle and wine glass with each product. Ya gotta love this hobby. It's all about life at its best.

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## *AV Showrooms*

### **Video from Audio Video Showrooms:**

