

## Paradigm MilleniaOne 5.1 speaker system review

A set of small speakers with a big heart

Our Score 4

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It looks like a router, but is in fact a subwoofer...

Reviewed here are the MilleniaOne 5.0 speakers and MilleniaSub products from Canadian brand Paradigm, sold as a money-no-object design, yet promoted as still costing way less than equivalent products for the level of [technology](#).

That said, the two and a half grand asking price is not peanuts. The MilleniaSub is priced so highly due to the sheer amount of cunning [design](#) that has gone into what is one of the most compact subwoofers around. It aims to offer a proper slice of lows from a truly unobtrusive unit.

### Cute quintet

First, though, let's look at the five speakers and their stands. The ovoid cabinets are rear-ported and can be fitted to a cast bracket so the speaker stands either upright (for the front and rear surrounds) or on its side as a centre enclosure.

You can use a decent size conductor speaker cable, as the squeeze posts open up a few millimetres, but the cable has to be of skinny insulation and without any plugs on the end, to enable threading your cables up through the stands.

The subwoofer has just three sockets underneath it. One is the mains, one the single phono input and one is a small USB. This can be used to take instructions from Paradigm's DSP system, called the PBK or Perfect Bass Kit.

It's shrouded in a 5mm thick aluminium extrusion and weighs a good bit. The foot system can go underneath it or on its flank, so you can mount this overgrown iPod-looking thing all sorts of ways, like under a sofa.

There are three knobs above the snazzy illuminated logo for gain adjustment, variable phase and crossover. I played some music with a nugget of prejudice in my heart that I was about to be underwhelmed by some titchy enclosures and a poncey designer product with no heart.

But my preconceptions came crashing down about my ears, for the Paradigm chaps have cleverly squeezed a quart into a pint pot.

### **Mini marvel**

First off, the tweeters in the small MilleniaOne boxes are no compromise. They're as sexy as if they had been in a full-size enclosure – the same 1-inch satin-anodised Aluminium dome S-PAL used elsewhere in this Reference line.

The Ferrite on the back of the piston below this tweeter is as big as the cone assembly itself, and the box has an internal port tube that is gas flowed-flared at the end inside. Acoustic miniaturisation at work!

Meanwhile, the drivers in the squashed-flat subwoofer are like sawn-off shotguns, truncated in design and with motor structures reconfigured to work in the space and a diaphragm to cope with it all on the front of each bipolar driver.

*Blade Runner* on Blu-ray, with its delicious new mastering, was delivered without compromise by the Paradigms, although the system was limited in sheer scale compared to my resident B&W 800 series. The sound was rich and detailed, with that synergy you get when all the surrounding channels are served by an identical enclosure.

The satellites' Mica-loaded 4-inch cones cope easily with amazing amounts of travel and sound creation. I used the same satellites to test the Velodyne 1,200W sub and while the latter was much harder to hide than the MilleniaSub, it did reveal that the MilleniaOnes can really cut the mustard, melding with a massive increase in the bass and making the whole system sound really large. So two or more MilleniaSubs would work well.

Easy with music and hard-hitting on explosions from the sub, this is a real option for space-strapped fans of cinema sound.

The [price](#) tag, of course, will fend off all but the most well-heeled customers, but your ears will know the difference between the Millenia package and the cheaper competition.

*(Reviewed by Adam Rayner - [Home Cinema Choice Issue 201](#))*