

# Studio Pro 3 speakers

I got the M-Audio Studio Pro 3 speakers the other day (actually, I received them three months ago and have been procrastinating) to review. While thinking about how to make this an interesting review for myself and you all, I began reminiscing about different amusing scenarios involving speakers in studios I have worked in for the past 20-odd years.

The one occurrence that beats all happened during the making of the *Deaf, Dumb, and Blond* record by Deborah Harry with producer Micheal Chapman at Sunset Sound Studio 3 in Hollywood, where I witnessed an astonishing event: Micheal Chapman would monitor the music at such loud volumes that the control room glass would shake and rattle for hours nonstop. Amazingly enough, he never blew out any speakers.

Late one night, after hours of turbo loud monitoring, flames and smoke began spewing from the soffeted speakers. The speaker voice coils had worked so hard that they were heated to the point where they caught the speaker paper on fire. Michael Chapman nearly burned down Sunset Sound Studio 3 from cranking the music too loud!

How could I ever top that?

I can't and won't, but I thought I would go into this review trying to blow up these speakers in an unusual way.

So I called up my partner in crime (the king of doom, mayhem, destruction, the bull in the china shop, all of the above), the

illustrious Zakk Wylde, to see if he was up to the task. Well, I really didn't have to call him since I am already neck deep in a Black Label Society (Zakk's band) record that has to be done pronto so Zakk can start the new Ozzy record. I brought these

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speakers in for some comic relief in an already stressed environment.

As I am walking into Ameraycan Studios with the speakers, there is Matt Hyde outside taking a break from mixing SX 10 (Senn Dog's, of Cypress Hill, new project) in the other studio. He asks me "Whatchew carrying?" I said, "These are some speakers I am going to blow up." Then Matt goes on about some

great speakers he has been using with his laptop. And I ask him, "You gonna blow them up?" I was on a mission.

What means of destruction would Zakk choose though?

Was it going to be a power chord annihilation delivered by "the Grail" (possibly Zakk's first love) guitar. How about the speakers crushed by Zakk's double dualie truck? What about a death by Minimoog meltdown? Or maybe give the speakers to Ozzy and Zakk as a sacrifice at the annual charity rock star television throwdown held in Paris on the 40th floor of the famous 5 star hotel Chateau Gardez L'eau.

As I was fantasizing about the fate of the speakers, I plugged them in next to some **Yamaha NS10s**. Hey, these powered and bass reflex ported desktop speakers don't sound too bad. I really like the master volume adjust knob on the left speaker. There's also a stereo auxillary input to plug in a secondary audio source on the left speaker. The speakers include a headphone out that mutes the speakers when using headphones. Another nice feature is the magnetic shielding of the speakers for desktop use.

The Studio Pro 3s project some really nice definition. Even the bass sounds clear. They definitely have more clarity than the Yamahas, yet the M-Audio 3s lack the bottom-end thump of the NS10s (and NS10s aren't known for their bottom-end thump).

Matt Hyde came in the studio the other day, saw the M-Audio speakers, and asked if I had blown them up yet. I had to confess that I liked these speakers and might have to commute their sentence.

I finally asked Zakk Wylde what we should do to these speakers and he said "Let's put them through a Black Label beating." We have been "beating" them for the last three weeks and they have been working great. Sure we *could* blow them up in about a second, but we haven't because they've been useful by giving us a different perspective from the usual studio speaker fare.

Though these speakers are billed as "professional desktop speakers," I decided to bring them into a professional studio environment to see if they could (as Zakk would say) "hang with the big boys." They did and were quite useful in this situation. I am sure they would work great at your workstation or with your computer. —Barry Conley

