

# Hsu Research CCB-8 Speaker

By Jim Wilson (theJman)

## **What Have We Here?**

The subject of this review is the Hsu Research [CCB-8](#) speaker. Utilizing a concentric driver, the CCB-8 is fairly unique in the world of home audio. Wait, a concentric driver? What's that? Merriam Webster defines "concentric" as *something having a common axis*, which in this [case](#) means a speaker within a speaker. For some that description might evoke an image of the old-school coaxial speaker from the car audio world, but as you'll soon come to find that's far from the case here.

Featuring an 8" woofer and 1" aluminum diaphragm tweeter - which is cleverly hidden inside the woofer where the dustcap would normally be - this style of speaker is made by only a few companies.



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(picture courtesy of Hsu Research)

The reason concentric speakers are so rare is due to the fact they're very difficult to design. Hsu Research has never been afraid to go against the grain and buck convention though, so it shouldn't come as a surprise they would bring something like this to market. But did they pull it off? Read on to find out.

## **Ordering**

[Hsu Research](#) was one of the very first Internet Direct (ID) Company's, and more than a decade later they still sell all of their products directly to the consumer. The CCB-8 comes in two finishes; satin black and a real wood veneer called Rosenut.

Speakers finished in black are \$369 each, with a pair running \$699.



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*(picture courtesy of Hsu Research)*

Rosenut are \$449 for a single and \$859 for a pair.



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*(picture courtesy of Hsu Research)*

Shipping is \$50 for a single in either finish, \$65 if you get a pair. There is a very generous 7 year warranty standard.

## **Specifications**

### **Not Their First Rodeo**

It's well established that the two dominate package delivery companies are less concerned with your purchases than they should be. Thankfully Hsu Research understands this and has gone to great lengths to protect their products during shipping. The speakers were single boxed, which is sometimes a liability, but the cardboard itself was constructed from two dense layers so it was actually quite rigid. Cradling the speakers both top and bottom was custom molded 2" medium density foam. Each speaker was individually wrapped in a foam bag, so there was nothing to scratch the finish.

### **Back On Familiar Ground**

Although it requires a tremendous amount of time and effort to do correctly, evaluating products can be very rewarding. One of the greatest benefits is I've gotten to know quite a few of the industry luminaries, and along the way you come to understand who these folks are and why they engineer things the way they do. At some point you begin to notice their designs are a direct reflection of the person themselves.

Take Dr. Poh Hsu for example, the driving force behind his eponymous company, Hsu Research. He's a soft-spoken man of few words and seems to avoid the limelight,

preferring instead to stay in the background. The CCB-8 speakers may be the perfect example of how products can be an extension of the designer; they're appear understated, that is until you hear what they can do, then all of the sudden you find yourself exclaiming something like "wow, I sure didn't expect that!". If there's a theme for this review - and you know I like my themes - it would be "I didn't see that coming". Listen to these speakers and you'll know exactly what I mean. Visually there's nothing about them that suggests excellence, but your ears will surely tell you otherwise.

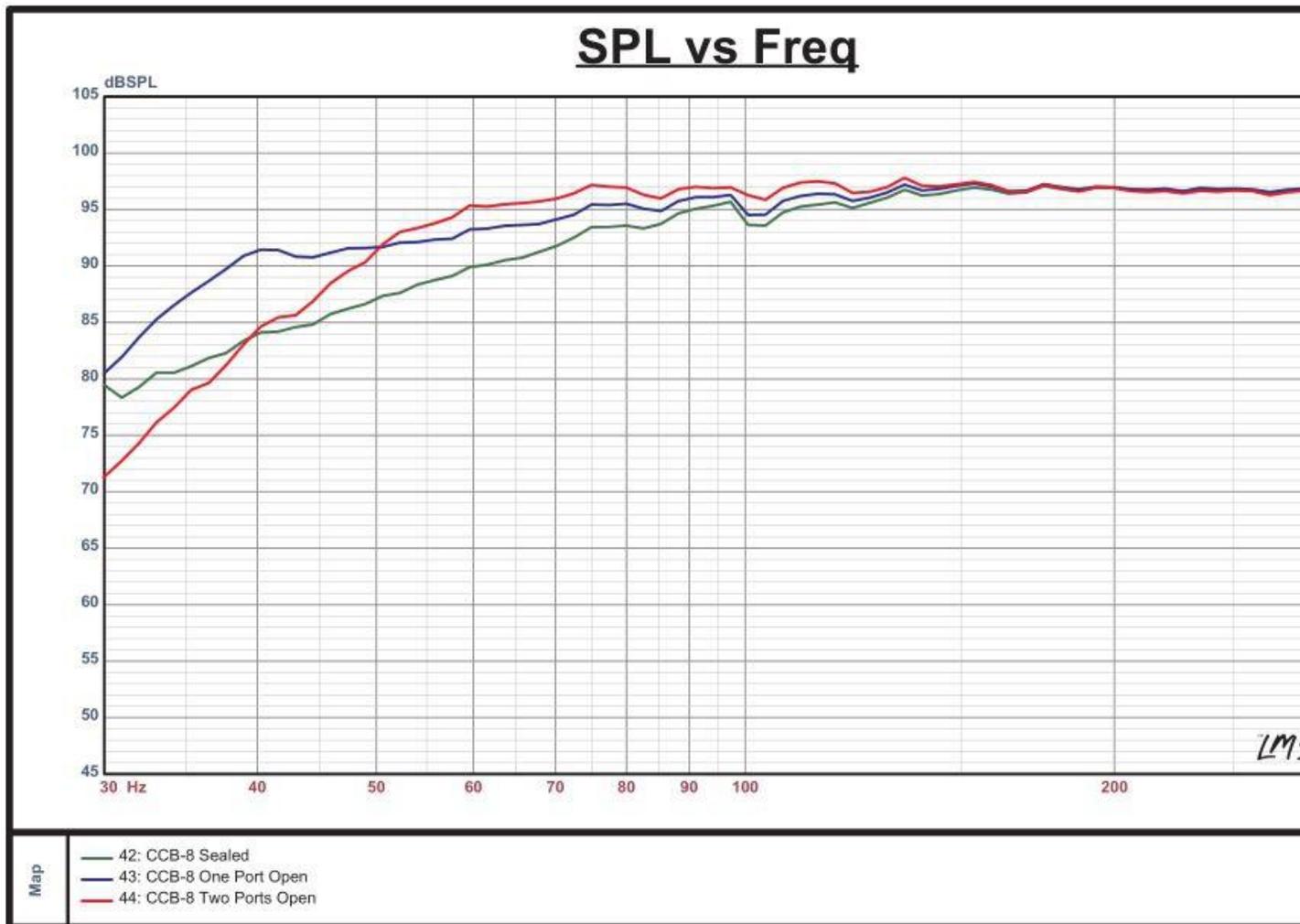
Similar to Hsu Research [subwoofers](#) I've reviewed in the past, the CCB-8 speakers came wearing matte black paint. Just like with the subs, it was applied flawlessly. Grills for the CCB-8 are round, perfectly matching the size of the driver. The frame is constructed from a heavy plastic material with ribs on the underside to increase rigidity. The portion of the grill that protects the driver is made from powder-coated metal. Large flat magnets are at the 12, 3, 6 and 9 o'clock positions and hold the grill firmly in place. They're covered by a soft felt material, ensuring they won't damage the paint finish. Nice touch.

Using the included foam port plugs the CCB-8 speakers can be configured 3 different ways; sealed, one port mode and two port mode.

Sealed - both ports plugged - is overdamped and provides the least amount of low frequency, rolling off early and very gradually. This configuration is the best choice if you have to place the speakers close to any walls. Leaving both ports open changes the tuning frequency to 66Hz. This way provides the most output and is clearly the way to go if you like it loud. One port open falls somewhere in the middle (surprise!). In this mode port tune is lowered to an impressive 47Hz.



This image has been resized. Click this bar to view the full image. The original image is sized %1%2.



In spite of the fact speakers with concentric drivers work equally well when positioned horizontally or vertically, Hsu Research took into account the center channel is likely to be placed on its side. To make sure everything remained tidy they clocked the terminal cup that houses the input connections 90 degrees relative to how it's installed when positioned vertically, another nice touch. This means there is actually a designated center channel. Not coincidentally that speaker came boxed separately, while the others are sold in pairs.



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It's not imperative you order the 'correct' speaker of course - as the connector orientation is the only difference between them - but it is something to be aware of. For me that type of forethought shows attention to detail and falls squarely into the *they thought of everything* category. Or, perhaps in this case, it fits into the "I didn't see that coming" motif.

The owner's manual is essential two US standard 8.5"x11" sheets of paper formed into

a booklet. It details placement, wiring, setup, troubleshooting, specifications and warranty information. It's written for the technically minded, so don't expect a lot of hand-holding here. Other than placement - more on that later - there's not much to hooking up a set of speakers though, so the documentation doesn't really need to be terribly elaborate. It's possibly the first manual I have seen that makes reference to WAF (Wife Acceptance Factor), so clearly somebody at Hsu Research has a good sense of humor.

## **Listening Impressions**

Most speaker enthusiasts fit into one of two categories; those that prefer detailed resolution and people who love it when the knob is cranked to 11.



It's very difficult for a speaker to provide acceptable performance for both groups, to satisfy the needs of each camp. Amazingly, the CCB-8 walks that tightrope without a single misstep. If shown restraint they reward you with exquisite detail, yet crank the volume and they open up beautifully. Concentric drivers have a tendency to 'beam' - constrain their soundfield - so if you aren't sitting in the correct location you may end up missing out. At no point did I experience that with the CCB-8 though, and I tested for it in all 3 of the main seating positions in my HT.

They do need some room to breathe, so don't hem them in. Almost all speakers benefit when positioned away from physical boundaries, but these enjoy it more than most. Kept away from walls depth increased noticeably, as did their ability to remain true at elevated volumes. Oh yea, and make sure you toe them in. Here is a direct quote from Dr. Hsu during an email exchange he and I had...

*"Our strong recommendation is to toe in so the tweeter axes cross several feet in front of the listener. My preference is to setup the speakers such that the listener and the left and right speakers form an equilateral triangle, and then toed in the left and right speakers at 45 degrees. That puts the listener at 15 degrees off axis with the tweeter*

*axes crossing a few feet in front of the listener."*

## **Movies**

As most of you probably already know, I tend to focus on voices when doing speaker reviews. Why? Because there is nothing the human ear knows better. Everything else in a soundtrack might be familiar, but it's voices we are most sensitive to. Dialog is the true acid test; no matter the accent, dialect or pitch, we all know voices better than anything else. If a set of speakers can't do voices justice then I have no use for them. Does that sound harsh? Perhaps, but it's still my number one criteria. Soundstage and separation are close behind, but voices are at the top.

One evening I went browsing through my collection of [blu-ray](#) discs to look for three good candidates to use in this review. As I checked over my final choices it dawned on me that every one of them was rather dark, movies with damaged people and/or depressing plot lines. I'm not really sure what made me choose what I did - it certainly wasn't deliberate - but since I'm a firm believer in themes I went with my gut and kept all of them. I'll start with perhaps the most unnerving of the three, and then lighten the load as we go. Although "lighten" is a somewhat relative term as none of them is particularly cheerful or heartwarming.

### ***The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* (Blu-ray, DTS-HD)**



In a memorable (haunting?) portrayal of a person whose life has gone horribly wrong, Rooney Mara hit it out of the park with her performance as the brooding and disturbed Lisbeth Salander. Lisbeth's violent temper resulted in her being institutionalized during childhood, and even as an adult is still a ward of the state. Intense and unstable, she's perpetually just a hairsbreadth from erupting. To make ends meet Lisbeth takes a job as a researcher/hacker at a security firm. She investigates people and digs deep into their personal lives to uncover all the skeletons in their closet.

Daniel Craig steps out of his James Bond guise to play Mikael Blomkvist, a disgraced journalist who lost a liable lawsuit and is now trying to piece his life back together.

Unbeknownst to him at the time, part of the reason he lost that [case](#) was because of the dirt Lisbeth had uncovered about him when she hacked into his private world. Mikael begrudgingly finds himself impressed by her work, so much so that he tracks down Lisbeth and hires her to help him with an assignment he's been given; to write the biography of a corporate billionaire's family. He assumes there isn't anything this girl can't uncover, so why not use that to his advantage? However, neither knows the real intention of this project is to investigate the disappearance of the man's niece decades earlier. The ultimate odd couple, they make an uneasy pairing as the two unravel the sordid past of a privileged family and attempt to decipher the events that lead to her vanishing.

*The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* can be pretty dark at times with mystery, intrigue, perversion and subterfuge in equal doses. It's not action packed, so I did what you probably assumed I would have - concentrated on the voices - but I also focused on something else I feel is routinely overlooked during many speaker evaluations; background sounds. Slight nuances that, when rendered correctly, add realism. Every day sounds which are often taken for granted, yet without them a soundtrack would lack realism. For those effects the Hsu CCB-8 speakers performed exceptionally well; the tapping of the keys on a [laptop](#) as someone was typing, rustling leaves when a gust of wind hit the trees, the clunk of a door as it was shut behind someone, shuffling of papers while Mikael and Lisbeth were doing research, the sound of traffic as it disappeared off into the distance. All those effects had a unique presence, great imaging and a true to life sense about them. The CCB-8 excelled to such a degree that this wouldn't be the last time I used subtle cues to test these speakers.

### ***The Hurt Locker* ([Blu-ray](#), DTS-HD)**



With a performance that earned him an Academy Award nomination, Jeremy Renner plays EOD (Explosive Ordnance Disposal) Staff Sergeant William James. He is a bomb disposal expert of legendary status, but the pressure from the job has affected his judgement and he's become increasingly reckless and unpredictable. Anthony Mackie and Brian Geraghty play Sergeant JT Sanborn and Specialist Owen Eldridge,

respectively. Those two comprise the security detail for Sergeant James, assigned to keep him safe while he focuses on disarming the bombs. Sanborn and Eldridge go strictly by the book, and due to that soon clash with the rogue ways of the man they're supposed to be protecting. Sanborn and Eldridge previously worked security for Sergeant Matt Thompson, but unfortunately he was killed when an IED (Improvised Explosive Device) went off unexpectedly. The three men had a long established working relationship, but with Sergeant James everything is new and decidedly different.

The bulk of the story centers around a 39 day period in time, which constitutes how long the 3 of them have before their deployment ends and the Company they are assigned to rotates out and heads stateside. 39 days is plenty of time for tensions to mount and things to go wrong however, and one foreboding clash takes place in scene 6.

The team is called out to defuse a car bomb inside a vehicle parked at an apartment complex. As Sergeant James goes over every inch of the car, trying to figure out the trigger mechanism on the bomb, you start to get a true sense of where the CCB-8 speakers excel. Every detail, every voice was clear, true to life and had substance. As Sargent James is opening the cars door you hear that old, beat-up vehicle creak you would expect. These speakers nailed the coffin-like sound the producers were surely going for.

Perhaps the best indication of what these speakers can do was how they made sound effects that were seemingly innocuous become anything but. The clicking of the cutter on the multi-tool James uses to clip wires, the scraping sound as he carefully inched the radio out of the dashboard, the squeal of the wipers as they dragged across the windshield. Even Sergeant James heavy breathing as he labored inside the bomb suit while baking under the brutal midday sun. All the minutiae suddenly became an integral part of the experience, yet none of it did so in a manner that drew undue attention. Balanced is the best way to describe it.

And then there were the voices. Have I mentioned those recently? You have but a few in this scene with James, Sanborn and Eldridge representing the bulk of them. They do a lot of talking however, and it's with varying degrees of volume, passion, intensity and angst. No matter who or what, the Hsu CCB-8 speakers did them justice; volume, tone of voice, anxiety level, nothing proved to be a challenge. Everything just sounded right.

***Tears of the Sun* (Blu-ray, DTS-HD)**



In spite of the upsetting subject matter, and the disturbing images it creates, I like this movie. Bruce Willis plays Navy SEAL Lieutenant A.K. Waters. He commands a team of elite tactical specialists who go deep into the Nigerian jungle to rescue Dr. Lena Kendricks, a member of Doctors Without Borders who is working at a refugee camp that is about to be overrun by a band of ruthless insurgents. Waters mission is to transport her - and only her - across the Cameroon border to safety. However, Dr. Kendricks refuses to leave the mission without dozens of indigenous people under her care. After witnessing first-hand the brutality of the rebels Waters finds himself in a predicament as he now has to choose between following orders and doing what his conscience tells him is right. Guess which option he picks?

I knew scene 13 was going to be where I went first even before dropping the [blu-ray](#) into my player. It's here that Waters team gets pinned down by the guerilla fighters as they try to escape with Dr. Kendricks and the other refugees (bet that's the option you guessed). They're in the lowlands which provides the ideal opportunity for the rebels to ambush them. It's might versus right at this point.

The intensity builds slowly until there's a sudden crescendo. The CCB-8's started off by layering in ominous music, helping create the perfect undertone to herald the impending doom. As if on cue there's an instantaneous shift and all hell breaks loose. Chaos is an excellent test for speakers, and the CCB-8 did not disappoint. Bullets whistled past me with a sharp tone, going from close to far in an instant. AK47's, pistols, mortars and RPG's were used during the battle, with each having a distinct sound and weight. Screams of anguish from the injured, shouting back and forth between people, bedlam all around, yet it wasn't anything these speakers couldn't handle. Even the trees that became collateral damage as a result of the relentless assault maintained their own space in the soundfield, crashing to earth with a thud while their leaves rustled upon impact. It felt as though you were right in the middle of the mayhem, which is realistically what you want to happen when watching a movie.

## **Music**

Unlike a **subwoofer**, speakers are frequently judged more for their ability to accurately reproduce music than HT soundtracks. I'm afraid that only represents the tip of the mountain Hsu Research had to climb for me during this part of the evaluation. Start with the fact I'm a music fanatic, toss in my fascination with concentric speakers, and you end up with a person who has very high expectations going in. Let me down here and it will get ugly. In hindsight I should have known better; **history has shown Hsu Research designs things my ears like, and the CCB-8 proved to be no exception.** I listened to *way* more than you see listed below - from simple songs to complex arrangements - so consider this is just a sampling of my playlist. I actually have music playing in the background as I type this sentence, but you probably already knew that.

**During the past few years I've come to realize Dr. Hsu is the master of minimalist engineering, a person who sees things from a different perspective. This man is able to create extraordinary products from what appears to be fairly nondescript components, the living embodiment of the phrase "greater than the sum of its parts". Every time his company sends me something to review I invariably end up shaking my head going "how is this even possible?". The CCB-8 speakers continued that trend by taking a fresh approach with their design, one that ultimately yields something very special.** This is the book you don't judge by its cover.

On paper these speakers might appear to be rather mundane and easy to dismiss, but spend a few hours listening to them and your opinion is likely to change. **Something seems different almost instantly, but you aren't quite sure what to make of them until you've had the chance to listen for a while. You want detail? It's there in spades. Fancy output instead? They've got you covered. Facets become evident that you probably hadn't heard before. You find yourself getting drawn in before you even know it's happening.**

From an engineering standpoint concentric speakers are tough to get right, which might explain why so few companies even bother to try. Too much time and effort I suppose, as maybe half a dozen are being produced today. When you consider how many speaker manufacturers there are that's an extremely low number.

Dr. Hsu included a CD of test tracks, personal favorites he likes to use when demoing these speakers, so how can I not listen? The disc contained jazz, opera and some rather unique music. It was playing in the background as I typed out my review when suddenly it dawned on me that his selections contained a lot of... wait for it... vocals! It seems the good doctor shares the same sentiment I do with regards to voices and speakers. I was almost at the end of the disc when I heard something that stopped me dead in my tracks; the theme song from the *Pink Panther* movies.

My father thought Peter Sellers was hysterical in the *Pink Panther* films. I can't say his

enthusiasm was shared - I'm not a fan of slapstick, so to me they were just a bit too goofy - but I fondly recall him being quite amused. Sadly my father is no longer with us, but a lot of memories of him certainly are. Even if you weren't a fan of this movie franchise you most certainly remember Henry Mancini's get-stuck-in-your-head theme song. In honor of my father when that came on I stopped writing, closed my [laptop](#) and proceeded to play it 3 or 4 times. In so doing I came to realize just how good a speaker test it is. There are horns, bass guitar, drums, [keyboard](#) and piano. A complex challenge for a set of speakers, especially when played at an elevated volume (which I may have done at some point in that listening session).

Want to have some fun? The next time you're at an audio show where Hsu Research has a booth try this; walk up to Dr. Hsu and ask if he'll play that song through his CCB-8 speakers. Suggest he forgo being polite with the volume though, and instead propose it be cranked. If he agrees, go find a seat and enjoy. You're likely to have the same reaction I did; "are you kidding me?!". The song literally explodes to life, sounding nothing short of amazing. You will soon come to forget these are relatively small speakers with but 2 drivers. **For sure they don't sound anything like they look. I could probably get away with using this one song to test these speakers, but that won't stop me from digging through my collection for other gems. It just sounds too good to stop now.**

### "Soul Sacrifice", Carlos Santana, *Santana* (CD)

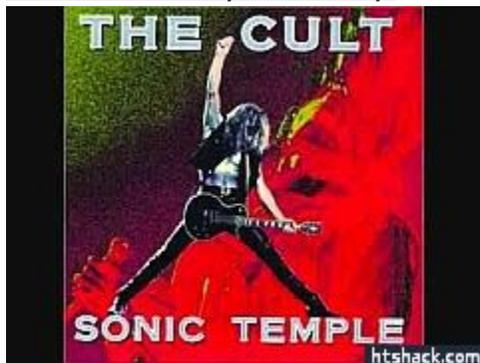


What can you honestly say about this song other than 'career defining'? Santana closed their Woodstock set with this one, and what an ending it was. They were nobodies at that point in time - so it would have been easy to dismiss them - but fate decided to lend a hand and ultimately thrust a lowly San Francisco bar band into national prominence even before they walked off the stage that day. Santana had just released their debut album a few months prior, so they were essentially an unknown entity. In a heartbeat they went from playing in front of maybe a few hundred people to a few hundred thousand people! No pressure there, eh? (*trivia fact: Michael Shrieve, the 19 year old Santana drummer who performed a 4 minute solo during Soul Sacrifice, was purported to have been the youngest musician to play at the festival*)

"Soul Sacrifice" is an instrumental, and as such it appears to run counter to one of the most significant things I judge speakers by; voices (or vocals in the [case](#) of music). That paradox notwithstanding, I chose this song because of the rhythm section. Carlos Santana was fond of using a lot of musicians in his band, and that means all kinds of work for a set of speakers, so for this one I traded vocals for instruments.

The song starts slowly, with just bongos initially. Before long you hear cymbals and the kick drum, the bass player then adds his contribution, Carlos starts playing his guitar and then suddenly the entire band kicks in the afterburners. Very cool way to start a song. As each instrument came in the intensity would build, and yet the CCB-8 speakers provided room for each to thrive. You never got the sense any were being subjugated as more and more was added to the mix. The complexity grew, but the speakers never seemed to mind. Of particular note was Gregg Rolie's [keyboard](#); on lesser speakers it can be somewhat nondescript, but it certainly wasn't this time. Everything was in sync and blended impeccably.

### "Fire Woman", The Cult, *Sonic Temple* (CD)



Get ready to get moving, because with this tune you aren't sitting still. Don't fight it as at some point your head is going to be bobbing back and forth.

"Fire Woman" was a single released from the bands 4th studio album, *Sonic Temple*. "Fire Woman" is rumored to be a variation of a term singer Ian Astbury used for his then girlfriend. Due to her intense personality she was sometimes referred to as the 'women of fire', which morphed into "Fire Woman" for this song. Just like "Soul Sacrifice" this one starts off slowly, introducing each instrument one at a time in a progressive manner. I'm beginning to wonder if there aren't three themes for this review; "I didn't see that coming" moments, depressing movies and songs that take their sweet time coming to life.

The opening is mostly a lazy guitar piece, courtesy of Billy Duffy. He uses a really cool effect for this part, but while he's doing his bit there's a separate undertone playing off his riff. Both of those instruments came across distinct, in their own space, but still blended somehow. If you reread the previous sentence it almost sounds like a

contradiction - and that's how it seemed to me even as I typed it - but there's really no other way to describe what I heard. I can't begin to tell you how many times I've listened to this song over the years, yet it was as if I was hearing it for the first time. Am I supposed to be finding unheard nuances in very familiar material?

**"Son of a Preacher Man", Dusty Springfield, *Dusty in Memphis* (CD)**



Are you kidding me, Dusty Springfield?! There's *no way* a metalhead would ever listen to that song! Actually this entire genre of music is near-and-dear to me. And don't be so quick to take away my man card as this one came about because I happened to be watching the movie Pulp Fiction recently. Try telling me that's not a real man's flick. Just look at Quentin Tarantino's directing resume; Reservoir Dogs, Kill Bill, From Dusk Till Dawn, Natural Born Killers, Desperado. Debate his cred and you'll lose, so when it comes to music I'm in good company here. Now gimme back that card before I go all Jules Winnfield on you!



Blame my parents - at least partially - for my insatiable love for music. They went their separate ways when I was just a lad, but one thing they had in common was a passion for music. With my father it was country and western, while my mother favored Motown and top 40 (AM radio in those days). As a small child there were always two things that happened in the car, be it my father's or mother's; you buckled your seatbelt before the engine was even started, at a time when most cars didn't even have seatbelts I might add, and then once the engine was started the radio was clicked on. Always. Just writing that causes memories of my childhood to come flooding back.

Similar with movies, I never acquired a taste for the music my father liked. The same can't be said for the type my mother favored however. To this day I can spend hours listening to Marvin Gaye, Four Tops, Gladys Night & The Pips, Isley Brothers, Diana Ross & the Supremes, The Temptations, Smokey Robinson, The Monkees, Otis Redding, Guess Who, Tommy James & The Shondells, Three Dog Night, Creedence Clearwater Revival, Monkees, Blood Sweat & Tears, Steppenwolf and countless others. "Son of a Preacher Man" fits right in with that group. It also ties directly into that one thing I will never ignore when writing a review, a theme, which this eval is starting to rack up quite a number of. Can the theme for a review be a review of themes? Get back on track Jim...

One evening I'm innocently jotting down notes on the CCB-8 speakers, with the [TV](#) merely providing background noise, when Pulp Fiction unexpectedly comes on. This movie is an acquired taste for sure, but I happen to enjoy it. Of course the last thing I need while trying to concentrate on writing is a distraction like this, but I simply couldn't resist watching. It's rather ironic I stumbled upon this flick while evaluating speakers because of my voices criteria; Pulp Fiction has a lot of them, so it's good

source material for me. The volume was low as I was trying to concentrate on writing, that is until the scene where Vincent Vega (John Travolta) walks into the house of Marsellus Wallace (Ving Rhames). I know "Son of a Preacher Man" starts then so I put the [laptop](#) aside and upped the [TV](#) volume. Almost instantly I was transported back to a bygone era, a far-away place I like to call my youth.

Stored on 2 shelves in the basement are several large boxes that collectively house hundreds of CD's, and I know for a fact there is a multi-disc compilation of 1960's songs in their someplace. I mute the TV and rush down the steps to see if Dusty's song is among them, and after maybe 20 minutes of rooting around I find it. I head upstairs with my new found treasure and proceed to play it a few times. Alright, who am I kidding; I played it about 10 times, which is easy to do when the tune is only 2:30 minutes long. Who's counting anyway?

The composition is fairly simple, with Dusty's voice front and center for the most part. Accompanying her are some brass instruments, with those underpinned by the typical rhythm section consisting of a bass guitar and drums. The CCB-8 speakers absolutely loved this combination as what I heard far exceeded anything my memory had to offer. When doesn't your memory make something better than it really was? Not here, not this time.

Although the arrangement is not overly complex, that doesn't necessarily mean it's easy to get right. You need space around the various elements in order to create a proper rendition, and I heard that in spades. I wasn't exaggerating about playing this song so many times back-to-back. I goosed the volume on a few passes, kept it low on others, but no matter the output level everything sounded wonderful. **If I closed my eyes it was easy to place each instrument into a physical location, almost as though you could see the individual players on stage. That was cool**

**I'll tell you what, start digging through your music collection now because you'll want to revisit an awful lot of it. I'm heading back downstairs to see what else I can uncover in that pile of CD's. Don't expect me back for a while. This is going to be fun...**

## **Conclusion**

**I'm willing to bet you've never heard a speaker this size sound this good. There are but two driver elements that comprise the Hsu Research CCB-8 - with the tweeter nestled in what would be the dustcap of the woofer in a conventional speaker - yet in spite of the somewhat unorthodox configuration the results achieved are incredible. You hear detail and precision that simply should not come from anything that costs what these speakers do, but it's there nonetheless. They do require some discipline with regards to placement and aiming, but with that taken care of you are rewarded with outstanding sound quality from something that's simply too small to be this full and rich.**

This is the 3rd product I have reviewed from Hsu Research, and each one has impressed with its performance and value. My interactions with everyone at Hsu have been completely painless. I truly don't have a negative thing to say, and that's definitely not the case very often. These people just get it, and while to some that might seem an irrelevant point to make in a product evaluation it's actually anything but. When you have a question - or in the off chance you do have a problem - what type of company would you prefer to deal with? I know for a fact the type I want to deal with, and it's folks just like those at Hsu Research. Great products, great company, great value. What else is there to say?