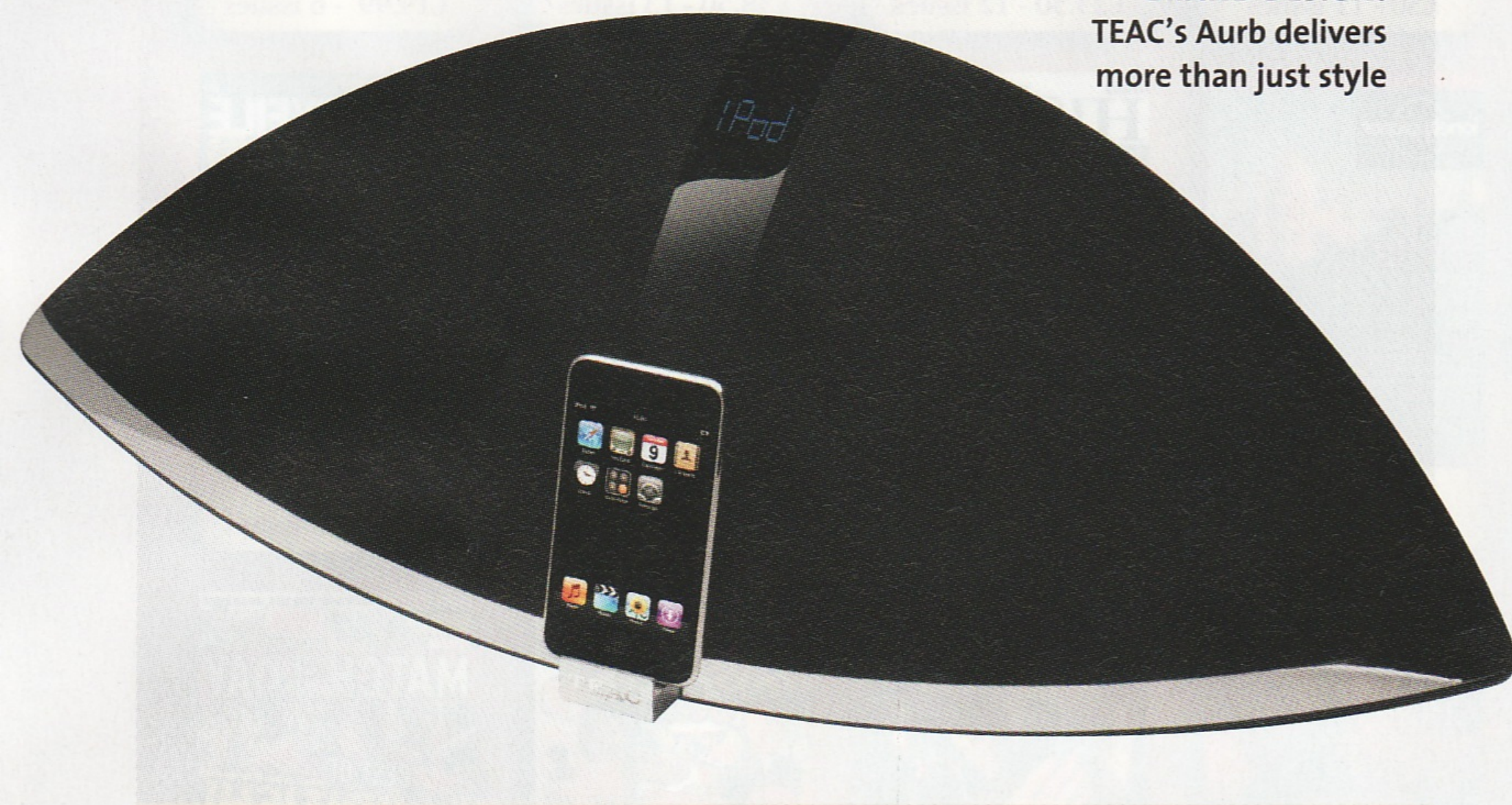


AUDIO ROUND-UP

Every issue, our audio expert *Nick Renshaw* takes a look at the best new audio and video products to help you get the most out of recorded classical music

BBC MUSIC CHOICE

GRAND DESIGN:
TEAC's Aurb delivers more than just style



iPOD DOCK

TEAC Aurb SR-100i £250

In terms of design the TEAC Aurb is clearly in thrall to the curves of the iconic Zeppelin from Bowers & Wilkins – but that's where the similarities end. Where B&W's premium audiophile dock caters solely for iPod playback, TEAC's system offers more functionality for a lot less money. At £150 cheaper than the Zeppelin, you also get a CD player, USB connectivity and built-in FM tuner to boot.

Although the whole chassis is reassuringly hefty, the Aurb's rear shell does feel overly plastic with the loose-fitting top buttons far from robust. More sturdy is the discreet top-mounted slot CD player mechanism and the neat spring-loaded retractable iPod docking station: press the front and it slowly slides out to accommodate all generations of iPod (although it doesn't recharge selected older models).

The surfboard-shaped remote is central to controlling the system,

allowing access and operation of your iPod's menu system, as well as activation of audio modes. Five equaliser presets, including 'Classic', are onboard plus a bass mode 'S.BASS' to bolster the low-end tones. Having an FM radio is a bonus and the signal remained strong throughout our test. Some may point to a lack of DAB but this system is selling worldwide in places where digital radio isn't supported. RCA stereo audio inputs sit around the back to hook-up your non-iPod MP3 player, while a USB

cable is supplied to connect a memory stick or other similar storage device to playback the music.

The Aurb pumps out an impressive 100W of sound through two 1.5-inch tweeters and two 3.5-inch woofers. I found that the S.BASS mode bolstered the low-end tones giving extra weight to an already rich and full-bodied audio. I'm stumped right now to think of another system that offers such extended functionality, striking design and ample sound at an affordable price point.

www.teac.co.uk ★★★★★

The Aurb offers more functionality than the Zeppelin for less cost