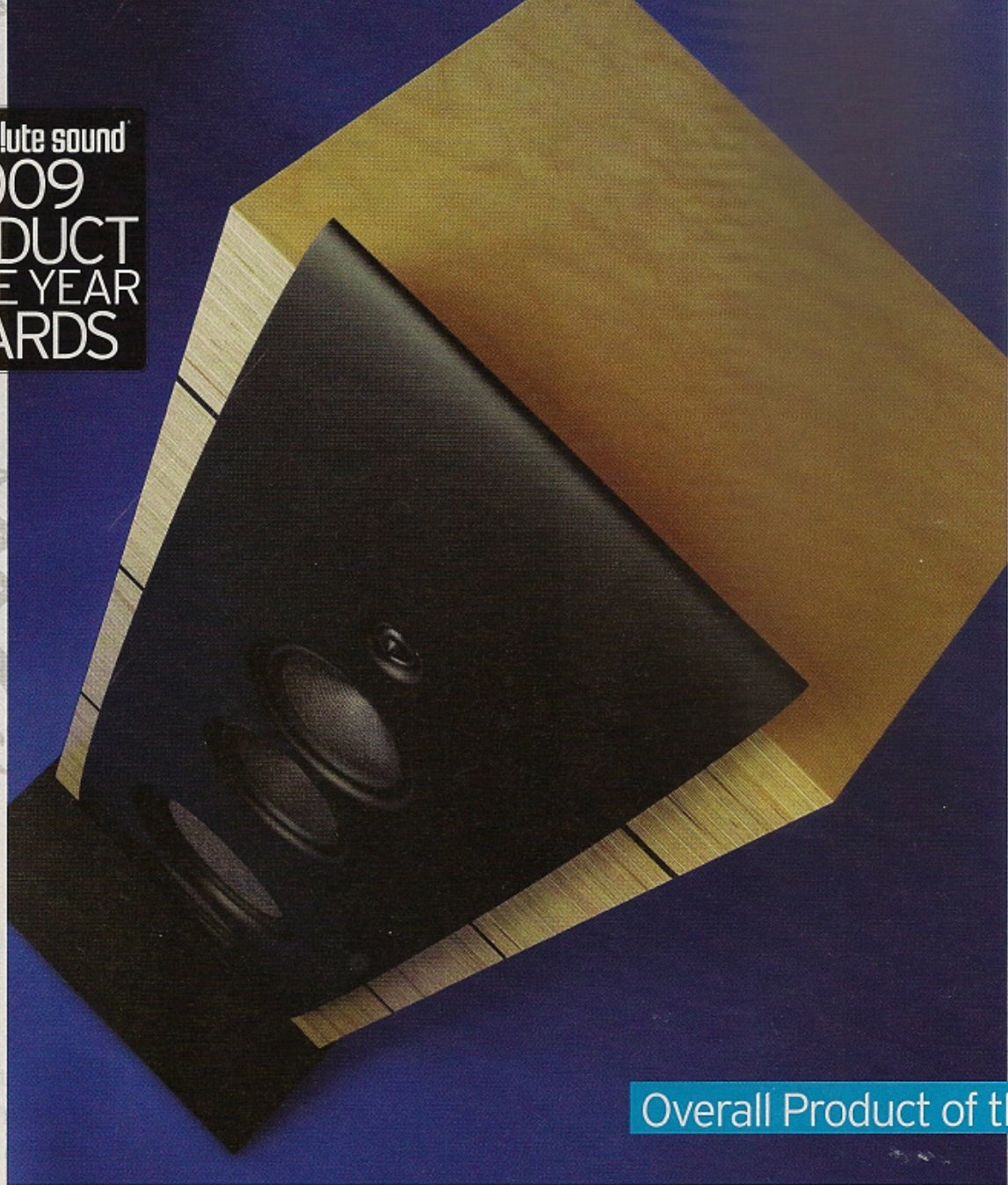


the absolute sound
2009
PRODUCT
OF THE YEAR
AWARDS



Overall Product of the Year

Magico M5 Loudspeaker

\$89,000

The words “the best” have been bandied about quite a bit in our magazine and on our Web site (avguide.com)—and there is legitimate concern that they are being overused. Unfortunately, no other words will do to describe how JV feels about Magico’s new four-way, five-driver dynamic loudspeaker, the M5. It is the best loudspeaker he’s heard. Not only did the M5 redefine an entire genre of speakers (large multiway dynamic-driver floorstanders) for him, it carried him substantially closer to the absolute sound. So close, in fact, that, for the first time, he could imagine the possibility of someday achieving a genuine facsimile of the real thing—not merely parts of it, not merely midrange or treble, voices and violins, but the whole thing from the lowest notes to the highest, from the least dynamic utterance to the most. That is how natural—how complete—the M5 sounds to his ears. It is, in fact, the most complete loudspeaker he’s auditioned. Phenomenally low in distortion, phenomenally high in resolution, phenomenally extended at the extremes, and phenomenally neutral and natural in overall balance, here for once is a big dynamic speaker that disappears like a little one, that resolves like a virtual electrostat, that does large-scale dynamics with the speed, weigh, and impact of a horn-loaded transducer and small-scale ones with the whisper softness and superfine resolution of a ribbon, that soundstages almost as three-dimensionally as the best omnis. There may be other loudspeakers on the market or on the horizon that will outperform the M5s overall—the absolute sound is, after all, a rapidly moving target. If there are such speakers, JV simply haven’t heard them, which is why this instant classic and standard-setter truly deserves *The Absolute Sound’s* highest honor—Overall Product of the Year. (Issue 196) tas