



# CIVIC PRIDE

Audio Sales Manager Steve Wall built this car to tempt others to do the same.





Steve Wall has always felt compelled to upgrade the audio in all of the cars he has owned. When at college he supplemented his meagre grant by DJing, his home systems were based on decks and a PA system. No wonder then that factory fitted systems in his cars have always failed to engage him.

Steve studied auto electrics and as well as spinning the “wheels of steel” to get through college he would install car audio components for his mates and himself. These would comprise of basic systems that would provide plenty of bass. However, his experience gave him a taste for fulltime employment in this area and so it was that 13 years ago, he joined FOUR MASTER Cambridge Car Audio. Currently, Steve holds the position of Audio Sales Manager, which is a role that draws on all of his knowledge and experience.

amplifier. Steve reflects; “My taste is extremely eclectic and I was convinced that the Voce speakers would allow me more scope for variety. I had heard them before and knew that the result would have an extremely open sound which I felt would work well in the Civic. What I wasn’t quite so prepared for was the link up between the luggage compartment-mounted 10inch subwoofer and the front speakers which is virtually seamless.

My decision to go with the Civic in the first place meant that I could use the factory mounting positions for the front speakers. The woofer positions are not as low as in some cars and I was able to direct them upwards towards the driving position by around 10 degrees using a pair of specially fabricated MDF rings without having to modify the car at all. The tweeter positions on the mirror pads are pretty much on-axis as they are and so no

“ ...I can select between **two** very different set ups ”

In 2012, Steve was looking for a car change and this took him to the local Honda dealership. “I went with a view to not buying a Civic but when I sat in it, I could tell that the car would make a fantastic basis for a good audio installation. I was particularly taken with the clear open dashboard which I felt would allow a great stereo image to be achieved” Steve told us. Other than that, the car drove well, it is a Diesel and achieves a good balance between performance and economy,” he continues.

When it came to equipment, Steve looked toward Hertz as he was familiar with the range and had managed to achieve great results for customers with it. However, a discussion with Brian Parton from UK distributor FOUR changed his mind and he decided to push the boat out and go for an Audison Voce speaker system driven by an Audison SR 5

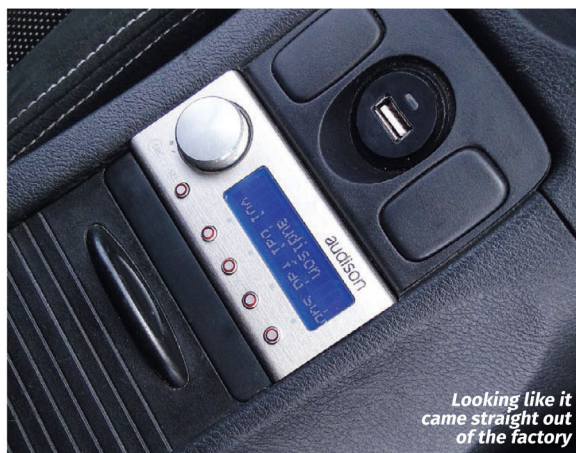
further modification was necessary there although some judicious time alignment during set-up would be required to achieve perfection. The greatest challenge was finding space for the amplifier and Bit 10D. I was keen that the car looked as standard as possible as this is what most of our customers are looking for and so in the end, I fabricated an amp rack which fits neatly behind the rear nearside quarter panel. This accommodates both amp and Bit 10 processor, which offers an additional advantage that I can’t habitually tweak and fiddle with the controls, as installers are often wont to do. I installed a Bit 10D remote controller so that I can select between two very different set ups for demonstration purposes. I can also use its large rotary control to nudge the bass level upwards when travelling at motorway speeds.”

We asked Steve to try and pin down his musical influences. He was reluctant to do this although he did offer specific mentions including Prodigy and Dream Frequency. Steve explained; “During my 90’s DJ days, music was going through a bit of a revolution. Acts were flooding out of the woodwork with way too many to remember. They were fun times and were quickly followed by an excursion into the skate/snowboard scene, which had a slightly heavier feel about it.” When pushed to compare this system against his previous one, Steve claims it is ten times better – that is quite an improvement don’t you think?

We have learnt from previous auditions that it is important to listen



Standard door card sits over the top - neat



Looking like it came straight out of the factory

> to a car owner's music first of all (see Ballroom Bentley in issue 3!). This will often dictate the set up of a vehicle and Steve's car is a case in point. He has two settings, one for his own pleasure, which is also the one he uses when demonstrating to the younger customer with similar genre preferences. It puts the listener in mind of those old school

As an experiment, I put my own first choice track on with Steve's default setting. The track was Peter Gabriel's 'Solsbury Hill' from his first solo album. I was listening specifically for the natty triangle playing that kicks in at the end of the second verse (2m19s) and missed its entry although I could hear it in the background



## “ This system practically walks you through the record's production ”

dance tunes with kicking mid bass punctuated with the aforementioned low bass seemingly co-joined in audio terms. As anticipated, the image was wide and deep and played at exactly ear height for me even though I am a bit shorter than Steve. The energy of the mid-bass coupled with the smooth detail in the high-end makes listening to dance tunes a very enjoyable experience and although not a natural choice for me, I can definitely see the attraction of hearing them in this car rather than on a kitchen radio or even in a club, but then that has never been my natural environment.

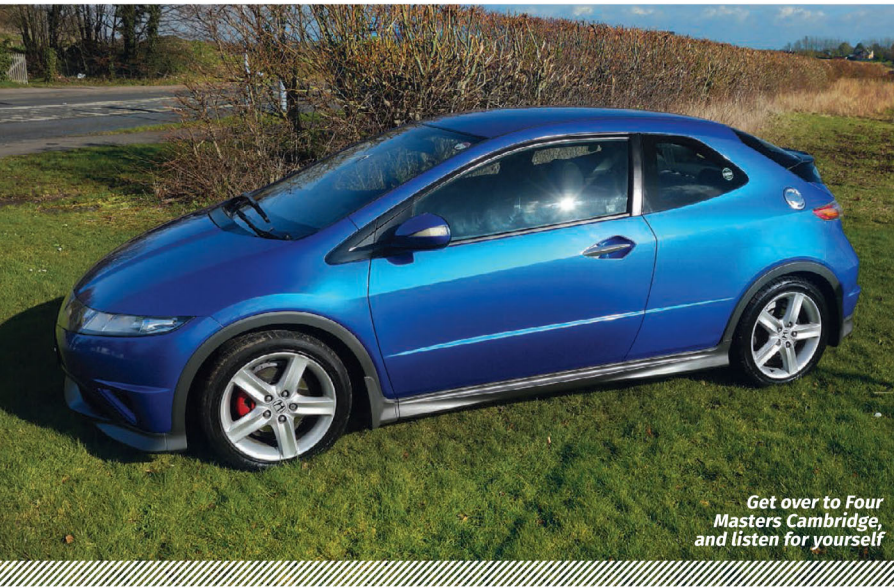
when I concentrated. The drum entry was a little heavy also on the "dance" setting, which is pretty much as I expected. I listened again on Steve's Bit Tune setting and the track I have to say, exploded into life with way more articulation in the high-end and man, that triangle playing really is fabulous as is the vocal nonsense which accompanies the outro!

My next track was 'The Curse' by Agnes Obel from her Aventine album. This features pizzicato (plucked) Cello and Viola underneath some tear-inducing mournful bowing of the same instruments and a minimal piano

track and to-die-for vocals on top. Every single element was beautifully reproduced and I am certain that a good string player could probably tell you the brand of rosin being used on the bows it is all that clear.

For balance and to prove to myself that even with this relatively flat setting, a good time could be had by those who enjoy high-energy music, I put 'Crazy' by Seal on. Regular readers may have picked up that I am a huge fan of Trevor Horn's production and this system practically walks you through his thinking when making this recording. Every element is laid bare but integrates beautifully to create the perfect listening experience, a trademark of his particular genius when it comes to taking a simple theme and adding multiple contrapuntal layers over the top and underneath.

In all, this is an overwhelmingly pleasurable system to listen to and the really neat thing is that anyone can go along to FOUR MASTER Cambridge Car Audio and have a listen. If you are in the area, I strongly recommend that you do – Call first to make sure Steve and his car are in residence and do take some of your own favourite tunes with you. □



Get over to Four Masters Cambridge, and listen for yourself



**Tab Benoit**  
The blues is here to stay

**Ayo**  
Down on my knees

**Awol Nation**  
Sail

**Swedish House Mafia**  
Ladi Dadi

**Soundmouse**  
Phaeleh  
Ft, Afterglow

### The Equipment:

- Audison Voce K6 – 6inch 2-way component speakers with crossover
- Audison Voce AV10 – 10inch Subwoofer in custom enclosure
- Audison Voce Quattro – 4-channel amplifier, running in 3-channel mode
- Audison Bit 10D – Signal processor
- Audison Bit DRC – Wired remote controller
- Skinz Expert Sound Deadening
- Skinz Wave Diffuser
- Skinz Panel Liner
- Connection cables and interconnects

Approximate Equipment Cost £2,200

