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# REVIEW



## Amphion One18x

*Refined depth in an already spacious passive monitor*

### REVIEW BY PAUL VNUK JR.

The Amphion One18x is the latest addition to the Amphion passive studio monitor lineup. Building on the foundation of the original One18, the One18x introduces a redesigned tweeter and an updated crossover network to further improve translation, stereo imaging and long-session listenability.

### Finish Made

Amphion Loudspeakers was founded in Kuopio, Finland, in 1998 by Anssi Hyvönen. While the company originally focused on the boutique hi-fi world, Amphion expanded into the professional studio market in 2013, and today the visually distinctive white waveguide-equipped monitors can be found in studios across the globe.

The current pro-audio lineup includes passive monitors such as the One12, One15, One18, One18x, Two15, Two18 and Two18x, as well as the active One25A. Low-frequency support comes from the FlexBase25 and BaseTwo25 bass extension systems, while amplification options include the Amp700 and Amp400, the latter designed specifically for immersive audio setups.

Beginning with my review of the original One18 in March 2015, I have used and reviewed nearly every subsequent model in the lineup, most recently the active One25A in June 2024.

### X Marks the Spot

The One18x retains the familiar appearance and overall design of the original One18. It remains a two-way passive monitor featuring a 6.5" aluminum woofer paired with a 1" titanium tweeter, housed in the same compact rectangular cabinet measuring 14.96" (h) x 7.51" (w) x 12" (d) and weighing just under 22 lbs.

The MDF cabinet now features an updated textured matte black finish with improved durability and resistance to scratches and scuffs. Like the other passive monitors in the lineup, the One18x uses a sealed cabinet design with a rear-mounted passive aluminum radiator instead of traditional bass ports. This approach helps maintain tight, articulate low-frequency response while also contributing to the excellent low-mid clarity Amphion monitors are known for.

Combined with the sealed enclosure design, the One18x works particularly well in smaller studios or setups where monitors must be positioned closer to walls and boundaries.

### Waveguide

Perhaps the most recognizable design element of any Amphion monitor is the oversized CNC-machined white Corian waveguide that frames the tweeter. Beyond its distinctive appearance, the waveguide plays a critical role in the speaker's performance. By recessing the tweeter into the waveguide so it aligns on the same acoustic plane as the woofer, the design achieves exceptionally precise time alignment, allowing information from both drivers to reach the listener simultaneously.

The result is improved imaging accuracy, tighter focus and remarkably even dispersion across the frequency spectrum. In practice, this translates into a surprisingly wide sweet spot with consistent tonal balance and stereo presentation, even when moving around the listening position.

### Amped Up

As noted in past reviews, all passive Amphion monitor designs remain entirely analog and DSP-free. As such, the One18x requires an external power amplifier. Both Amphion and I recommend pairing the monitors with either the stereo Amp700 (2 x 350 W @ 8 ohms; 2 x 700 W @ 4 ohms) or the multichannel Amp400.

Connections are made via a pair of traditional rear-panel binding posts that support bare wire, spade connectors or banana plugs.

Power-wise, the One18x is rated for a recommended 100-350W per channel at 8Ω.

### New Tweeter and Crossover

As mentioned, the "x" in the model name denotes the inclusion of a newly designed 1" titanium tweeter along with a re-engineered crossover network set at 1,600 Hz. This updated tweeter design first appeared in the active Amphion One25A. According to Amphion, the combined result of the new tweeter and crossover is improved clarity, greater resolution and enhanced transient precision.

### In the Studio

As mentioned, I have extensive experience not only with Amphion monitors in general, but specifically with the original One18, having completed countless mixes on a pair over the past decade. For this review, Amphion supplied a set of the new One18x monitors along with an Amp700 power amplifier.

Although I was unable to perform a direct side-by-side comparison, the One18x immediately felt familiar. Rather than presenting itself as an entirely new monitor, the One18x feels more like a carefully refined evolution of the original design—and that is a compliment. The first-generation One18 remains an excellent-sounding monitor, but improvements in clarity, transient detail and reduced distortion always add up in a critical listening environment.

The One18x monitor delivers the spacious, dimensional presentation that Amphion monitors are known for. Stereo imaging feels exceptionally wide and open, creating a soundstage that extends well beyond the physical boundaries of the cabinets themselves—my favorite trait of the original One18 as well.

The new tweeter design delivers high frequencies that are crisp, airy, and highly detailed without becoming harsh or fatiguing. Cymbals and hi-hats in particular possess a startling sense of realism, and what I would describe as transient precision and articulation is stunning.

The midrange remains one of the strongest aspects of the design. Vocals, guitars, pianos, and acoustic instruments are presented with

an almost microscope-like level of detail, making EQ decisions and placement of elements within a dense arrangement remarkably easy. The overall presentation is neutral and transparent in a way that encourages confident mix decisions rather than flattering the source material.

Low-frequency performance is full, controlled and articulate, though much like the original One18, the emphasis is clearly on clarity and translation rather than exaggerated impact or room-shaking extension. Bass instruments and kick drums possess excellent definition and depth, but these are not monitors designed to overwhelm a room with sheer low-end energy. Engineers seeking larger-scale full-range extension for immersive playback or bass-heavy production styles would likely benefit from pairing the One18x with one of the Amphion bass extension systems.

One of my longtime low-end reference albums is Massive Attack's *Mezzanine*, and while the One18x did not rattle the floorboards, I was deeply impressed by how clearly it revealed the intricate layers, textures and movement within the bass content of the song "Angel." It was less

about sheer physical impact and more about hearing exactly what was happening. And most importantly, the One18x presented said low end without breakup or "farting" out.

From roughly 72dB up through healthy monitoring levels around 92dB, tonal balance and imaging remain impressively consistent. This allows the monitors to function equally well for low-volume detail work or louder playback sessions without the tonal shifts many speakers exhibit as volume changes.

## Wrap Up

Ultimately, the Amphion One18x feels less like an entirely new monitor and more like the return of a trusted old friend—only now with slightly more refined tastes. That feels like a wise decision on Amphion's part: do not reinvent what already works exceptionally well, but instead refine and improve upon it. The result is a precision mixing tool that retains the familiar musicality and translation of the original while offering noticeable gains in depth and overall clarity. ➡

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