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## Finite Element's Cerabase slimline



Finite Elemente's Cerabase slimline

# MAGIC FEET THANKS TO CERAMIC BALLS

By Hans von Draminski. Photography: Ingo Schulz

GOOD THINGS ENDURE, EVEN  
IN A WORLD UNDERGOING  
MASSIVE CHANGE. FINITE  
ELEMENTE FEELS LIKE IT'S  
BEEN AROUND AS LONG  
AS HIGH-END AUDIO  
ITSELF. AND THE COMPANY  
STANDS AS A BYWORD FOR  
DISTINCTLY AUDIBLE SOUND  
ENHANCEMENTS ACHIEVED  
THROUGH ITS RACKS, BASES  
AND COMPONENT FEET.





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Just one of many siblings: Finite Elemente's Cera family has six more members, coming in a wide range of sizes and models.



Say you're already using Finite Elemente's astonishingly effective equipment racks to augment audio appliances—be they sources, pre-amps or power amps—via highly effectual resonance transfer. Then might we suggest going one step further by rethinking your speaker set-up. Head developer Luis Fernandes is known to favor direct coupling for maximum efficiency when deflecting resonances harmful to the sound. So, assuming

that you don't have speaker cabinets weighing several tons or constructed from materials that even a tornado wouldn't shift, component feet made by Finite Elemente will absolutely benefit the sound.


These high-tech feet "made in Paderborn" were most recently drawn to our attention by the Berlin-based speaker engineer Michael Plessmann, who uses them for his Sound-Space Systems range. The Aidoni, his flagship



product, weighs approximately 350 kg. Even with such a hefty loudspeaker, Finite Elemente feet provide such a significant improvement that Plessmann now fits them to his products as standard. Simple though the principle may sound, the impact is astonishing.

The three ultra-hard ceramic balls in each foot (ideally tightly screwed on), in conjunction with direct coupling to the appliance, achieve almost complete resonance transfer.

**Finite Elemente Cerabase slimline:**  
 € 480 for a set of four component feet may sound somewhat steep. But take our word for it: once you've experienced the sound-enhancing qualities of the Cerabase slimline feet firsthand, it will seem like an absolute bargain!

EUPHONIC  
 SONOROUS  
 ANALYTICAL  
 DIMID



CHALLENGING =  A component is 100% intuitive if you can exploit its potential to the full intuitively.  
 INTUITIVE = 

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Finite Elemente's Cerabase feet effectively augment the sound when used on their own, but they work even better in combination with their manufacturer's rack systems. The products complement each other perfectly.



The Cerabase slimline feet provided for our test are intended primarily as replacements for components with original feet that are of a lower quality than the appliance itself. There are, of course, further models intended for many other purposes. The Cerabase slimline is composed of two round, precision-engineered, stainless steel elements. Three synthetically manufactured ceramic balls in between the two elements generate the direct coupling mentioned above. The feet are only

21.5 mm high and 45 mm in diameter. A set of three feet can support 375 kg, with a set of four capable of an impressive 500 kg. A set of four feet will cost you € 480.

For testing purposes, I used my already extremely stable Mark Levinson components and my trusty top-loading Sony CDP-X 5000—a particularly lightweight device despite its high-end character. I didn't expect to tease much more out of this

equipment—but I was wrong. Once the original hard rubber feet were replaced with Cerabase slimline feet, the sound instantly became sharper, more stable and better balanced. Yet it had nothing to do with wishful thinking. Even when it comes to components lacking any moving parts, such as the M1, Musical Fidelity's DAC converter, the Cerabase slimline feet work their magic. It's to do with how they eliminate impact and structure-borne noise – i.e., the component ►



no longer detrimentally affects itself. This is all further enhanced when adding one of Finite Elemente's top-notch hi-fi racks. Contour definition in particular was clearly more audible in our tests on the Pagode Edition MK II. But the Cerabase slimline feet are obviously not made explicitly for use with the Pagode system.

In the final event, my curiosity got the best of me. Finite Elemente states that the optimum component weight for Cerabase slimline sits

between 20 and 150 kg. This means I can also test my Infinity Kappa 7 II Series 2 speakers. So I removed the original (and already highly effective) spikes, and placed the unit on the Cerabase feet—not an easy job given the sizeable dimensions of these speakers. Due to the age and origin of these speakers (US-made, with imperial thread sizes), I was unable to screw the slimline feet onto the speakers. However, even without this, the rewards were palpable. Large ensembles like the San

Francisco Symphony Orchestra, seasoned veterans of the works of Gustav Mahler, had significantly clearer contours and, above all, a controlled exuberance. Chamber music developed a distinct three-dimensionality that the Kappa speakers had only ever hinted at beforehand.

But what exactly do the Cerabase slimline feet do better than the original spikes on my Kappa models (or the original feet on many other components)? For one example, they mitigate

THIS IMAGE PROVIDES AN INSIGHT INTO HOW THE FEET WORK: TWO PRECISION-ENGINEERED STEEL ELEMENTS COUPLE TOGETHER VIA THREE CERAMIC BALLS. SMALL RUBBER RINGS ARE UTILIZED ABOVE AND BELOW TO PROTECT BOTH RACK AND COMPONENT.



the upper bass range hump—something I had previously assumed was a permanent idiosyncrasy of the Infinity unit. I'd even thought it could be a “feature” intended by its developer, Arnie Nudell, revealing a taste comparable to the designers responsible for creating those gleaming, chrome-clad road cruisers and huge tail fins of the late 1950s. The slimline feet confine this outdated sonic quirkiness to the garbage heap of high-end history. And they do so elegantly, with minimal fuss, and without

robbing the Kappas of their vivid colors or warm, deep character. Clearly detox therapy of the most pleasurable kind. ■

**Component feet | Finite Elemente Cerabase slimline**  
**Material:** precision-engineered stainless steel, 3 high-tech ceramic balls | **Load capacity:** 500 kg (set of 4), 375 kg (set of 3) | **Versions:** set of 3, set of 4 | **Special features:** not height-adjustable, screw-on (M6 and M8 screws included), supplied in high-quality wooden box | **Dimensions:** Ø 45 mm, usable height 21.5 mm | **Warranty period:** 2 years | **Price:** approx. € 480 (set of 4)

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#### ACCOMPANYING EQUIPMENT

**CD players:** Mark Levinson No. 390S, Sony CDP-X5000 | **SACD player:** Sony SCD 333 ES | **Turntable:** artkustik Seismograph II Legend | **Cartridges:** Clearaudio Da Vinci and Jubilee MC, Denon DL-103R | **Integrated amplifiers:** Mark Levinson No. 580S, Aavik I-580 | **Preamplifiers:** Cambridge Audio Edge NQ, Mark Levinson No. 38S | **Power amplifier:** Mark Levinson No. 27 | **Converter:** Musical Fidelity M1 DAC | **Phono amplifier:** Musical Fidelity M-VNYL | **Loudspeakers:** Infinity Kappa 7 II Series 2, SoundSpace Systems Aidoni, Pirol | **Cables:** AudioQuest and Silnote Audio, among others