

Bang & Olufsen translates cinematic audio experience to compact design

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Television with Beosound Stage mounted under it. Image credit: Bang & Olufsen

By STAFF REPORTS

Danish electronics and audio company Bang & Olufsen is seeking to blend powerful sound with a streamlined design in its latest speaker launch.

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For the brand's first soundbar, it worked with design firm NORM Architects to craft a speaker that is simultaneously functional and decorative, with the audio piece intended to act as another piece of furniture in owners' homes. Dubbed Beosound Stage, the soundbar is said to be reflective of Bang & Olufsen's humanistic approach to audio design.

"We created Beosound Stage as a powerful soundbar that doesn't rely on a subwoofer or satellites to create an immersive experience," said Christoffer stergaard Poulsen, vice president of product management at Bang & Olufsen, in a statement.

"The first time you hear Beosound Stage, the impact of the deep, powerful sound hits you immediately, and the simple minimalistic Scandinavian design makes it stand out like a piece of furniture," he said. "It is simply clean, elegant and powerful."

Audio alliance

Beosound Stage has 11 speaker drivers, all of which have a 50-watt amplifier. The speaker also incorporates Dolby Atmos, which gives the impression of surround sound through the single device.

For instance, the audio of a plane flying above would be positioned above the listener to give a more immersive sound experience.

Consumers can personalize their speaker through preset options, such as movie or music, and then further fine-tune their listening experience through an equalizer. In addition to use with a television, the speaker includes Bluetooth and Apple AirPlay 2 to enable owners to use it with other devices.

During a discussion with Bang & Olufsen America's public relations manager Christopher Devine at a launch event in New York, NORM architects partner Jonas Bjerre-Poulsen talked about the partnership and his company's

approach to design.

Mr. Bjerre-Poulsen explained that his firm blends geometric and human shapes. He also believes that everyday objects are differentiated by their details, which translated into his work with Bang & Olufsen.



Beosound Stage. Image credit: Bang & Olufsen

One of the challenges of the project was creating a seamless frame to go around the 11 speaker drivers.

"The best products are always a very close collaboration between the design company and their design approach, their strategy, their knowledge about production and the tech specs and all of that, and then the externalized of an external designer and architects," Mr. Bjerre-Poulsen said. "And I think that's also why a lot of companies don't necessarily have in-house design teams, but use external designers globally.

"If the chemistry is right, there's something really good happening about being naive going into an assignment and asking all the dumb questions and challenging the company, because sometimes they can't see the potential for innovation because they're just stuck in what they've been doing," he said. "So I think that's the power of collaboration."

The speaker is fashioned in aluminum, bronze and oak materials, with prices between \$1,750 and \$2,600.

Bang & Olufsen has entered into other recent design partnerships.

For instance, High-end luggage brand Rimowa is highlighting the connection between travel and audio through a collaboration with Bang & Olufsen.

The two released a limited-edition pair of wireless Beoplay H9i headphones in anodized aluminum and genuine leather that embodied the two brands. The high-tech product comes in a warm light gray color and features an innovative touch interface, along with active noise cancellation and is packaged in an aluminum case in Rimowa's luggage style ([see story](#)).