

**Jamo | D500 THX Select 2 | £1700**

## Slim Jamo package simply shines with movies

**Powerful home cinema systems usually demand significant reorganisations to your living room's feng shui.** It's hard to move serious amounts of air without similarly substantial speakers to do the shifting - unless, that is, you use a satellite/subwoofer speaker configuration.

A cornerstone of the THX concept (see Jargon Buster, p98) since its inception, this allows your main speakers to be liberated from the burden of reproducing the full frequency range; the subwoofer fills in the lower end of the bandwidth. Because they have less work to do - THX speakers simply ignore all frequencies from 80Hz down - they can be made smaller, which makes them easier to install in the best place.

### Slim, flexible and superb

Jamo's new D500 THX Select 2 package is, therefore, compact and domestically acceptable. And its fitted keyhole mounts make it about as easy to install as any system can be. In classic THX fashion, the front speakers are identical 'LCR' (left, centre, right) designs, with multiple drive units arranged in a specifically controlled dispersion pattern.



Designed to ensure optimum clarity and tonal consistency across the soundfield, this arrangement works beautifully with films, giving this package a cohesion few conventional designs can rival. It doesn't help stereo imaging or timing, though: the D500 plays music reasonably, but it wouldn't be our first choice if music was a priority.

But for films... that's another matter. For £1700 all in, this system is simply astonishing value. It goes loud with ease, retains its composure even under duress, and its SUB 650 subwoofer ensures formidable thunder for your money. To seal the deal, the D500 SUR rear speakers, based

### USE IT WITH Onkyo TX-NR808

Our class leader for £1000 is an ideal foil for the Jamos. This pair will deliver a simply brilliant cinematic sound.



on THX's favoured dipole principle, wrap audio around you in style, ensuring even older films and simpler TV soundtracks have outstanding ambience and spaciousness.

Of course, not everyone will like the idea of a system that's biased more towards film than music. But that's about the only notional compromise in this Jamo's make-up - and so long as you know what you're buying, it's one we're happy to accept.

### Rating ★★★★★

**FOR** Fabulous surround sound quality; compact; easy to install; fine value for money

**AGAINST** Some limitations with music, but not enough to merit losing a star

**VERDICT** For films, simply exceptional - you'll struggle to find better value right now

### Needs to beat

**Monitor Audio Silver RX6 AV12**  
**£2200 ★★★★★**



Our current Award winner sounds great, and will beat the Jamo in stereo - but for home cinema? That might well be another matter

**Sony | KDL-55NX813 | £3000**

## Big-screen Sony proves to be a bit of a 3D bargain

**Big, beautiful Sony Bravia TVs are hardly an endangered species.** Yet the Japanese giant clearly feels there's room within its labyrinthine range for another model. So here we have the KDL-55NX813, its specification, pricepoint and performance a carefully honed mix of the assets already found in other, similarly substantial Sonys.

You get built-in wi-fi for network access (like the LX-series) and provision for 3D via an external dongle (like the HX-series). LED backlighting is edge-lit rather than full-array, picture processing is 200Hz - and 55in for £3000 is enough to make the £4500, 60in LX903 seem a poor deal.

### Great with off-air HD and Blu-ray

And performance is very good indeed. With Freeview HD onboard, the Sony looks great fed with 1080i BBC and ITV services, and it's sufficiently assured with lower-quality standard-definition services to make even Dave worth watching.

It sounds a little thin, though - we'd certainly team it with a sound system.

Switch to Blu-ray, and the Sony's facility with motion is exemplary, its stability under duress first-rate. It copes with the dizzying action of *Kick-Ass* with ease, and is just as comfortable with the long, steady pan that

forms part of the opening sequence to *Watchmen*. Black level insight is up to par, although a murky movie can reveal some inconsistency with backlighting.

For 3D, meanwhile, there's an additional £150 outlay to purchase Sony's transmitter and glasses, plus around £100 for each additional pair of specs. Still, performance is decent enough, with vivid colours and respectable definition, although the KDL-52HX903 is less prone to crosstalk. On the other hand, the 55NX813 is both bigger and cheaper - and its built-in wi-fi makes its online streaming features easily accessible.

### USE IT WITH Sony PS3

A dedicated Blu-ray player is a good option, but the PS3's charms are hard to ignore. 3D *MotorStorm*? Bring it on...



Performance impresses here, too, despite the set's great size: an iPlayer stream of *Blade Runner* approached DVD levels of quality, testament to both the BBC's service and the potency of the Sony's scaling.

So, there you have it: yet another fine Sony. If you're chasing the best in performance, we'd recommend buying the HX903, even if it is smaller and more expensive - but the 55NX813's charms are persuasive just the same.

### Rating ★★★★★

**FOR** Strong performance with all sources; decent spec, with especially useful online features; elegant styling

**AGAINST** Some crosstalk issues with 3D; sound is thin; other Sonys perform even better

**VERDICT** An intriguing blend of size, spec and capability, the 55NX813 is niche, but appealing

### Also consider

**Sony KDL-52HX903**  
**£3500 ★★★★★**



This is the enthusiast's Sony of choice - even if it does cost more for slightly less screen

