Roger Quested’s nearfield monitor designs have carved out an extremely well-respected reputation over the years. Since the mid 1960s Roger has created countless monitor and studio designs for many world-renowned recording studios. The most notable to have benefited from Mr Quested’s design philosophies would be none other than Abbey Road Studios of London.

Roger Quested began his career when a band he had recorded was questioned by their record company as to where they recorded their demo. It was apparent that whoever had recorded the demo had truly captured the band’s essence. The band replied: ‘at Roger’s house’. Mr Quested had built a pair of monitors especially for the project. He had constructed those monitors using a pair of Wharfedale drivers. Not being the type of chap to let aesthetics stand in the way of pure function, and in order to achieve the most solid enclosure he could find, he used two old porcelain sinks as cabinets – one wonders how they were ported!

Soon afterward Roger was offered an assistant’s job at Olympic Studios when the same band recorded a single there the following year. At Olympic his first gig was for the Rolling Stones, recording Jumping Jack Flash. His first album session would be Led Zeppelin’s 1st – the one with the Zeppelin on it. Roger also engineered Pink Floyd’s Meddle – the album that moved the band from experimentation into the sonic kaleidoscope they became famous for. Around this time Roger dispensed with the Wharfedales and kitchen sinks in favour of Tannoy 111-LZ drivers and cabinets utilising solid marble as baffles. By the ‘80s he was designing monitoring and acoustics for many of Britain’s now legendary studios. Beginning with Gooseberry Studios – home of the Sex Pistols – and Dick James Music Studios. (Apparently Dick James Music was a shareholder in the Beatles’ publishing company Northern Songs.) By late 1984, Quested (the manufacturing company) had evolved, and Roger Quested-designed monitors were finding their way into studios such as Sarm, Alberts (of London) and Wisselord. Since that time Quested has pioneered the use of soft dome technology and developed the polypropylene hard dome – all the while sticking to the original philosophy that a monitor cabinet must offer high mass and utmost rigidity.

While the majority of Quested designs are large systems destined for big control rooms, they have more recently brought in smaller cabinet designs. These eight- and six-inch driver models have introduced Quested monitoring to smaller control rooms and post production environments. (Inevitably I must point out my preference for Quested monitoring – I have owned and used a pair of 2108s for a number of years.) To cater more effectively to these environments and the push toward multi-channel monitoring, Quested has released the S-series monitors. The S-series are designed as a family of monitors and consequently all share a uniform sonic imprint. All share similar imaging capabilities to the point where you can utilise differing models within an integrated system. This can greatly aid the design of surround systems that perhaps cannot use a uniform size monitor for all five (or indeed seven) points. In fact, according to the Quested philosophy they needn’t be. Rear and side positions are more than catered for a smaller monitor than the more critical left, right and centre positions. For the purposes of this review I’ve been sent a stereo pair of each in the line – and I’ve got to say I do love the smell of bass drivers filling the room. First off the rank – and I’ll go in order of size here – is the diminutive S6.

**S Expressed**

The starter of the pack – and the obvious choice for smaller rooms – is the S6. It uses a sealed cabinet design and offers a 130mm (five-inch) bass driver and the same 28mm soft dome high frequency driver as used across the range – a Morel device. Providing a maximum SPL of 104dB (@ 1m) the S6 is remarkably loud for its size (170 x 285 x 240mm). As with the entire range, connection is via an XLR/jack combo socket. Level sensitivity is adjustable in 10 steps from –12dBu to +6dBu. The crossover is set at 1.19kHz and does an admirable job of directing traffic to the two drivers. Low frequency amplification is rated at 65W with the
high frequency amp running 45W. Low and high filters can be brought into play via rear-panel dip switches. Up to 4dB of cut in 2dB increments at 82Hz and 2dB of boost/cut at 10kHz. This is the same filtering regime used across the range. Frequency response of the S6 is rated from 75Hz to 22kHz. The sizing reminded me somewhat of the NS-10 format. At a scant 7.5kg each, the S6s are a great option for the travelling engineer. Personally I’d love a pair to save lugging my hulking Quested 2108s around. At the more than reasonable asking price of a $1,000 each I think I know exactly what I’ll be ordering from Santa this year.

Moving into the middle ground of the series is the S7. Weighing in at 11.7kg, the S7 cabinet houses a 165mm (6.5-inch) bass driver and 28mm soft dome driver. Frequency response is from 65Hz to 22kHz with 120W of grunt driving the bottom and 70W for the top end. Again the same filtering and level sensitivity controls appear. Like the S6, the crossover point is set at 1.19kHz and provides a seamless transition between the drivers. Speaking of which, I’m quite surprised by the effectiveness of all the crossovers across the S-series – bringing any material up on the S monitors quickly showed the deficiencies in my 2108s’ crossovers. Unlike the little S6 design, the S7 is a front reflex dual port enclosure, tuned to bring reproduction down to the quoted 65Hz. The S7s will produce a hefty 115dB (@ 1m) and are streets ahead of most 6.5-inch monitors circulating the globe at the moment.

The big brothers of the series are the S8s. Again a dual front-ported box, the S8s provide 110dB SPL via the 200mm (8-inch) bass driver and 28mm high-end driver. A total of 370W of amplification (220W for the bottom and 150W) for the top make the S8 a biggish monitor to contain. Reaching into the ‘mid-field’ domain, the S8s could easily benefit from soffit mounting. The crossover system departs from smaller units’ specification and makes the transition at the 1.4kHz mark. Again I was very impressed with the crossover performance, witnessing extremely smooth transitions between high and low material.

**A ‘Q’ Tip**

During my tests it’s been striking how sonically similar these three models are. From the S6 through to the S8, all uphold the same high standards of imaging and un-hyped audio reproduction. In short, they’re ideal for multi-channel rooms. That said, any of the three models are fine examples of stereo monitors. They’re by no means fatiguing (largely thanks to the soft dome high frequency drivers) and the bottom end can be described as tight, precise and real – there’s not a single hint of ‘plastic’ to the sound at all. What is very exciting though is the pricing. At last I can recommend a monitor that I know I can trust without them laughing at all the zeros on the price tag. I’ve little doubt that the most popular model will be the S7 but I can see a lot of S6s making their way into smaller project studios as well as freelance engineers kits. Finally… Questeds for the masses. Honest monitors now at a great price point.

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**Price**

- S6: $999; S7: $1,699; S8: $2,699; SB10LF: $3,599 (prices per speaker)