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It is a long-established fact about Austria that, as Julie Andrews correctly sang, the hills are alive with the sound of music. Mozart, Schubert, both Strausses, Mahler, Haydn, von Karajan — all Austrian. So, for heaven's sake, is the Eurovision Song Contest 2014 winner, the splendidly bearded Conchita Wurst.

This exceptional, new, one-box hi-fi system, the Poet Audio Pandoretta, is 100-per cent Austrian too. And both audibly and physically,

it is an absolute beauty, a sizeable (45cm x 16cm x 30cm) box of precision-built wood and brushed stainless steel, packing seven speakers (a 17.5cm subwoofer, two 8cm mid-range speakers and four tweeters), and a 170-watt amplifier, for 360-degree radiation of sound horizontally and vertically. You will notice I don't mention "stereo" here, and indeed, Pandoretta is mono insofar as it doesn't split music into left and right channels. But the way the glorious sound it produces is distributed through 360 degrees, you won't notice. Indeed, you may well swear that it's as spatial as stereo, and possibly more so.

It receives music either wirelessly by Airplay, by aptX Bluetooth from your computer, phone or tablet, or by wired connection, and can be configured to work with Sonos multiroom setups. There is, of course, an unwritten rule with mainland European gadgetry that it has to be quirky in some way, and if the dramatic, spotty look of the Pandoretta doesn't satisfy your need for Euro-quirk, the fact that (if you're like me) you may need to phone the supplier to find out how to switch it on should do it. Pandoretta's controls are also cute and idiosyncratic, but it's refreshing not to need to mess around with a special app to run the machine.

Pandoretta looks startling, even more so if you buy the specially designed wooden base (not shown here, but it can be seen at www.poetaudio.com) to go with it.

But it's the magnificent Austrian sound of the music that's the real clincher for me. The bass is terrifying, and in the best way. It hits some kind of resonance, I fancy, within your chest cavity and if you'll excuse me becoming a bit poetic, it expands your soul. It's simply joyous.

Like a car that needs to be driven fast, though, Pandoretta needs to be LOUD. Using it for quiet, background sound only is just wrong.

£2,990; base from £1,700.

<http://howtospendit.ft.com/audiovisual/62581-poet-audio-pandoretta>