

Hi-Fi

WORLD

SEPTEMBER 1996 £2.30

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BARGAIN HI-FI

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FREEDOM 5

LOUDSPEAKERS

COMPETITION

WIN JBL'S £3500 HYBRID
HORN \$2600 LOUDSPEAKERS

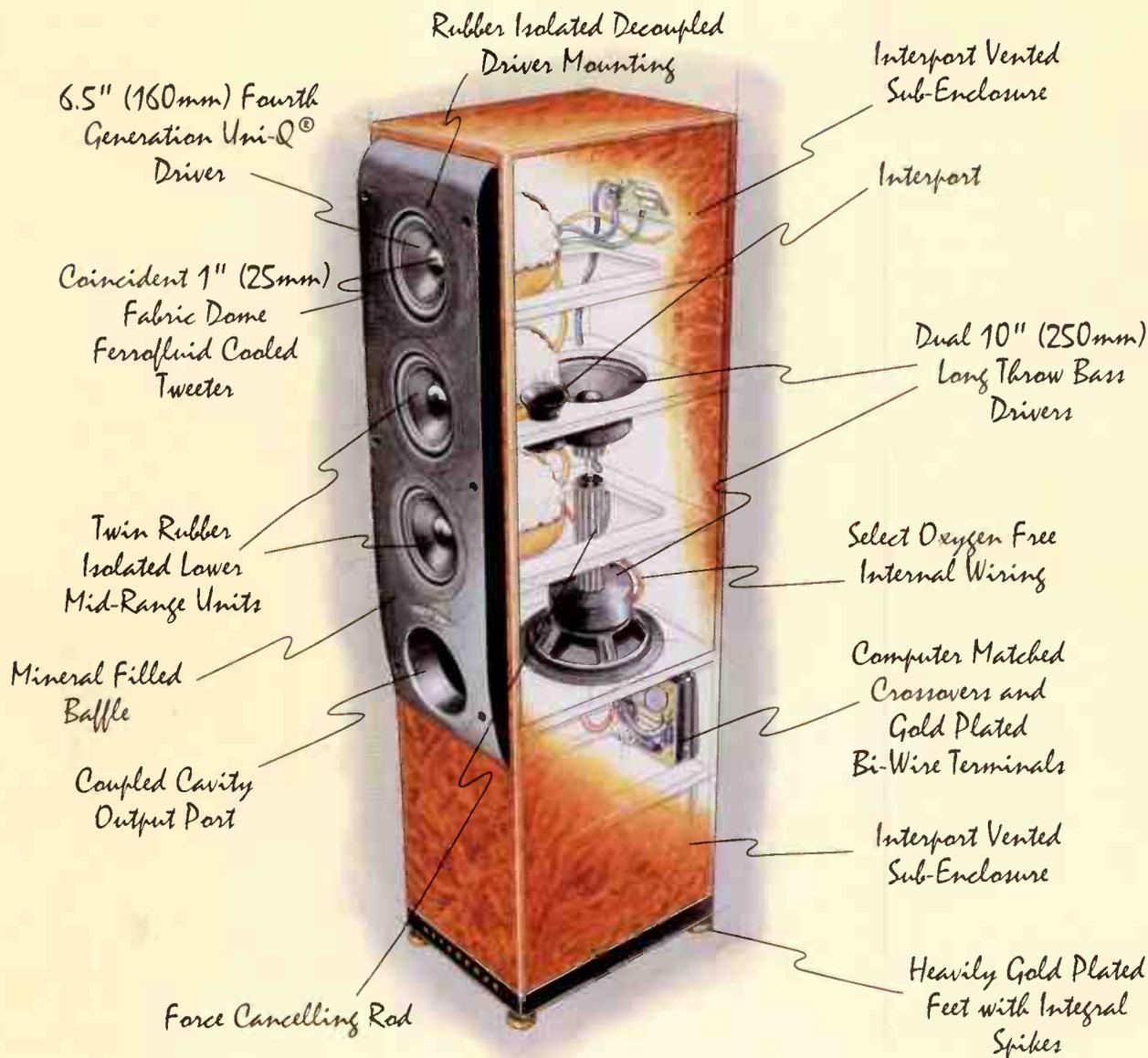
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CD CLEANER

SYSTEM
BUILDING
- FIVE CD
PLAYERS
TESTED



KEF REFERENCE SERIES MODEL FOUR

The Inside Story



Look inside the new KEF Reference Series Model Four and you'll understand why it has been hailed as one of the finest loudspeakers in the world. You'll find brilliantly innovative design, bristling with advanced features found on no other speaker. No wonder it has met with such critical acclaim.

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"...It'll play loud throughout the range, holding onto its fundamental inner balance, one which is recognisably truthful to the programme input..."

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Martin Colloms, Hi-Fi News



The experience of sound

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THIS MONTH'S WORLD

● First in an all-new line-up of 75 series loudspeakers from Mission is their 754 Freedom 5. Using a quality silk dome tweeter, High Definition Aerogel midrange and powerful 8in. bass, it promises much. Do these new Missions deliver? See page 14.

● This month's group test of £500 CD players sets us on the way to assembling a top sounding system. The winners make it through to the next rounds, where first amplifiers and then loudspeakers will be tested. It all starts on page 19.

● Fresh in from Denmark. Eltax's Symphony 6 loudspeakers certainly give the competition something to think about, so says Douglas Floyd-Douglass on page 30.

● And don't miss our competition this month, where there's a chance to win a pair of JBL's £3,500 S2600 hybrid horn loudspeakers; details on page 66.

Two years ago it was uncommon for us to measure a loudspeaker with above 87dB sensitivity. Now I'm coming across them all the time. A sensitive loudspeaker turns more of the signal from your amplifier into music. Reducing the load on an amplifier reduces its distortion, and the lighter cones needed for higher sensitivity respond better to small, low level signals responsible for a lot of the detail and ambience in a recording. This is good news for all of us.

At last we are also starting to see a wider range of cone materials, with better performance than commonly found paper and plastic. B&W pioneered the use of Kevlar and now Mission have unveiled their second model to use a High Definition Aerogel driver, the 754 Freedom 5. It's taken a while, but finally we are beginning to see a strong effort to improve loudspeaker fidelity, using synthetic materials with advanced properties.

Dominic Baker, Editor

TEST EQUIPMENT



● *Hi-Fi World* has its own advanced test laboratory and acoustically treated listening room. No other hi-fi magazine has the benefit of such facilities.

● *Hi-Fi World* has a dedicated in-house team of experienced listeners, and uses selected freelance professionals. We review thoroughly by extensive auditioning, rather than by quick-fire group listening tests.

● *Hi-Fi World's* engineering team designs a wide range of products in-house. No other hi-fi magazine is so expert and dedicated.

LISTENING ROOM

(TREATED BY RPG ACOUSTIC TOOLS)



IN THE OCTOBER ISSUE

Here's just some of what we hope to bring you to read as the evenings close in:

SUGDEN AUSIC/PHONO/SYMMETRA AMPLIFIERS

Dominic Baker has been living with some top flight amplifiers from Sugden. How did this preamplifier, phono stage and Class A monoblock power amplifier combination fair? Find out in October.

BUILD A SYSTEM - PART 2

Part two of our four part series continues with amplifiers, since the winning CD players have been picked in this issue. Then, in the November issue, we'll be testing a range of loudspeakers to match. In December we will be assembling the best system possible from the winning components.

HARBETH HL-S8

Harbeth have shied away from producing a floorstander in the past, feeling that they couldn't match the performance of their light but rigid Super Tuned Structure cabinet standmounters. So the S8, their first ever floorstander, is a big step. We are first in line for an audition.

KEF REFERENCE SERIES FOUR

'Flagship' only goes part of the way to describing these new KEF Reference Series loudspeakers. Towering high, they've a powerful sound to match. KEF have spent a long time perfecting the Reference Fours and are proud of them. Fingers crossed!

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MADAGALL,
LONDON W9 1EX

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AMPLIFIERS

JOHN SHEARNE PHASE 6 PRE-AMPLIFIER AND PHASE 3 POWER AMPLIFIERS 28

We wire up John Shearne's new Phase 6 pre-amplifier to a brace of Phase 3 power amps. Can this bi-amped system match its attractively marbled exterior?

DENON PMA-425R 65

Carrying a price tag of £230, Denon's PMA-425R 45watt integrated is set to enter the tooth and nail budget amplifier market. Haider Bahrani asks, can it better the competition?



COMPACT DISC

CD PLAYER GROUP TEST 19

Five of the best £500 CD players square up to each other in this group test. Find out with Jon Marks which one took the laurels.

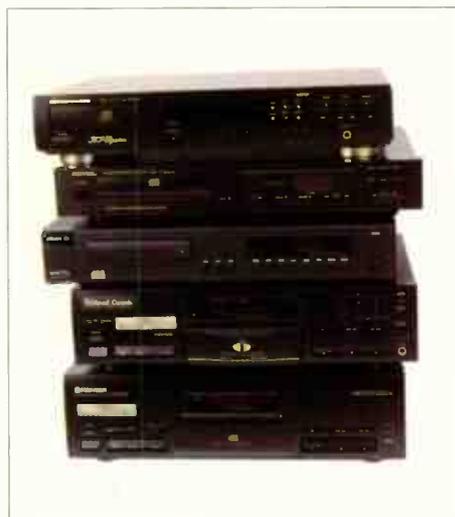
Trichord Genesis

Rotel RCD-975

Arcam Alpha 5+

Pioneer PD-S904

Marantz CD-63mkII KI-Signature



SYSTEM

RESTEK CHARISMA CD AND FANTASY AMPLIFIER 57

Douglas Floyd-Douglass polishes the silverware with Restek's Charisma CD player and Fantasy amplifier. Do they sound as polished as they look though?

LOUDSPEAKERS

MISSION 754 FREEDOM 5 14

Fresh from their unveiling at New York's Hi-Fi and Home Theater Specialty Show where they created a real commotion, Mission's new 754 Freedom 5 loudspeakers dazzle Dominic Baker.



ELTAX SYMPHONY 6 30

Following in the Danish footsteps of System Audio's 1005s from last month is Eltax's latest £240 floorstander, the two way Symphony 6. Douglas Floyd-Douglass is the man with the golden ears.

THOMAS TRANSDUCERS ACCELERANDO 33

Standing well over a metre tall, these corner horns from Thomas Transducers can only be described as imposing. Jon Marks plucked up the courage to put them through their paces.

CELESTION IMPACT 30 41

Can the Impact 30s emulate their siblings, the Impact 23s, which Dominic Baker concluded were a sonic bargain? Jon Marks places himself on the hot spot this time around.

WORLD VERDICT

★★★★ OUTSTANDING - Superb sound, something we'd use ourselves.

★★★ GOOD - Has strong merit. Well worth an audition.

★★ ADEQUATE - Mediocre in vital areas. May be worth auditioning.

★ POOR - Seriously flawed. Not worth considering.

REGULARS

NEXT ISSUE

A tantalising glimpse of what will be going into next month's Hi-Fi World.

NEWS

If you want to stay abreast of what's going on in the hi-fi industry, this is where to look.

READERS' LETTERS/Q&A

Avoid information distortion with the high feedback we provide to September's mailbag.

COLUMNS

56, 62, 63

Hi-Fi World's experts let you in on what makes the world of high fidelity tick.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Give your pet Doberman something to chew on next month - take out a subscription and let the postman do the walking.

SPECIALIST HI-FI DEALERS

Advice is what you need before parting company with your money; these dealers are the ones to provide it.

MEET YOUR MAKER

These are the manufacturers responsible for the high-tech boxes that sit in every music lover's listening room.

WORLD AUDIO DESIGN

Hi-fi nirvana is but a kit and soldering session away, thanks to World Audio Design.

WORLD BUYING GUIDE

The bee's knees, the cat's whiskers, the creme de la creme - it's all here.

HI-FI WORLD LIBRARY

Whether you're an old hand or a budding audiophile, you can broaden your hi-fi horizons with the information on offer in our library.

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DIAL-A-DEALER

Looking for that elusive component to complete your set-up? Look no further than the dealers on these pages.

89

MEASURED PERFORMANCE

Find out how the equipment that passed our ears fared on the test-bench.

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READERS' CLASSIFIED

Put your business acumen to use and assemble a system even your bank manager would be happy to pay for.

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THE FUTURE OF CD

Dominic Baker gazes into his crystal DAC to discover more about Digital Video Disc for audio, Sony's DSD and the Acoustic Renaissance for Audio's HQAD.

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CHOICE RADIO

Noel Keywood compares the joys of owning a vintage classic like the Leak Troughline with the convenience of a modern solid state tuner.

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COMPETITION

PAGE 66

In this first part of a two-part competition, you could be the lucky winner staggering home with a pair of JBL's superb £3500 \$2600 loudspeakers.



MUSIC

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DANCE/AMBIENT 84

RECORD OF THE MONTH:
Carl Cox: At the End of the Cliché

JAZZ REVIEWS 87

CLASSICAL REVIEWS 93

RECORD OF THE MONTH:
Mozart: Die Zauberflöte

STENZEL CO

DENON



BRITISH HI-FI AWARDS 5/96

DCD-825 CD Player DRS-640 Cassette deck
AVR-900 A/V Receiver



PRO-LOGIC AMPLIFIER OF THE YEAR AVC-1800 Amplifier



LA-2300 Laser Disc Player AVC-2800 A/V Amplifier



WHAT HI-FI 5 STAR REVIEWS

DCD-1015 CD Player 3/96 D-77 Mini System 8/95
D-C30 Mini System 3/96 D-C1 Micro System 6/96



WHAT HI-FI AWARDS 1995
RECOMMENDED BUY
AVC-2800 A/V Amplifier TU-260L Tuner



D-F10 Mini system



12/95

AVR-900 A/V Amplifier



HI-FI CHOICE RECOMMENDED
DCD-825 CD Player



BEST BUY
AVC-2800 Amplifier

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When you've read everything the press have to say, simply call 01234 741 200 for your free brochure and details of your nearest stockist.

HARBETH PLUG THE GAP

Fresh from the factory is Harbeth's HL-K6, a two way ported loudspeaker destined to fill the size gap between the HL-P3ES and HL Compact 7. The £975 HL-K6 borrows from its siblings not only in its construction, which features Harbeth's SuperTunedStructure cabinet and FramelessFrame grille design, but also in the drivers it uses. The 8" low coloration mid/bass unit comes from the Compact 7 while the HL-P3ES donates its 19mm dome tweeter, both being magnetically screened for use close to TVs.

Following hot on the heels of the HL-K6 is a range of three stands to match the HL loudspeakers. These are single column types veneered to match the Harbeths they support and retail for £199.

Harbeth Acoustics Ltd
Unit 1, Bridge Road,
Haywards Heath,
W. Sussex
RH16 1UA
Tel: 01444 440955
E-Mail CompuServe 100624,455



trade winds

CANADIAN FRONTIERS

Fresh in from Sonic Frontiers Incorporated of Canada is their new remote controlled SFCD-1 Compact Disc player. This £3495 player combines many of the attributes of Sonic Frontiers' separate transports and digital processors, like E88CC valves in the output stage and Pacific Microsonics' HDCD decoder, but it integrates them into one unit.

Equipped with three customised potted toroidal transformers and twelve separate voltage regulation stages, the SFCD-1 is designed to turn in a very low noise, low jitter performance.

MPI Electronic
13 Weston Road,
Guildford
GU2 6AU
Tel: 01483 454993



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E mail: info@roksan.co.uk

World Radio History

A NIGHT AT THE OPERA III

The £999 Terza (Italian for 'third') is the latest addition to UKD's Opera range. Where the Prima and Seconda were both medium-sized standmounters, the Terza is a slim three way floorstander. In keeping with UKD's fondness for the fruits of the rainforest, the Terza's cabinet is constructed from interlocking inch-thick mahogany panels, which provide strength and rigidity.



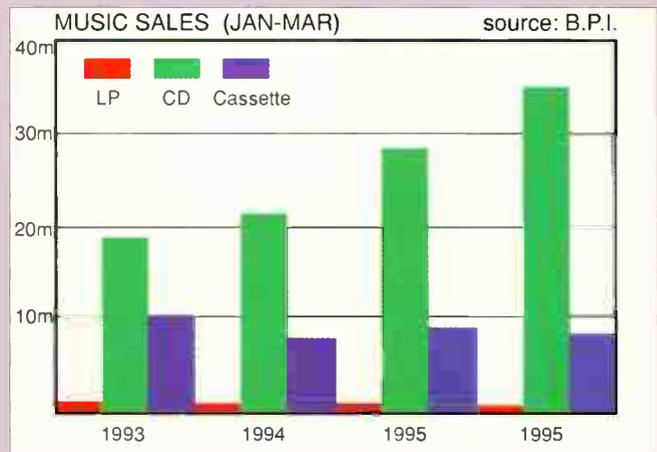
While one of the loudspeaker's two reflex loaded 130mm drivers covers mid as well as bass, the other only works up to about 150Hz, the idea being that two smaller drivers working in tandem produce faster bass with better extension than a single woofer. The rest of the frequency range is dealt with by a 25mm soft dome tweeter.

UK Distribution
 23 Richings Way,
 Iwer,
 Bucks. SL0 9DA
 Tel: 01753 652669

GOLDEN ERA FOR MUSIC SALES CONTINUES

The first three months of 1996 saw CD continuing to consolidate its domination of the album market. According to BPI figures, trade deliveries of CD albums rose a massive 23% to top 35 million,

finally allowing the album market (made up of CDs, cassettes and LPs) to break through the 200 million sales barrier.



This may be good news for the fans of digital, but cassette and LP purchasers have rather less to be happy about. While there were still over 8.5 million cassette albums sold between January and March of this year, cassette's market share slumped from 24% to 19%.

Showing a drop of just over half a percent, the LP might appear to have escaped lightly, but a market share of 1.6% is making vinyl look like an increasingly incidental statistic.

STEPPING OUT

Dissatisfied with the quality of standard volume controls, Rothwell have built their new £479 Indus passive pre-amplifier around two sets of stepped attenuators. These are assembled on hand made switches with silver-plated contacts to allow both coarse and fine adjustment of volume, adding up to a total of 132 volume settings.

The Indus can also be fitted with the £200 Rossane phono stage for listeners of the vinyl persuasion. Both the moving magnet and moving coil versions use discrete transistors in a Class A circuit, with capacitors selected for their low dielectric absorption.

The final link in Rothwell's amplification chain is the Rubicon power amplifier which weighs in at £799. The Rubicon is unusual in arranging four EL 84 output pentodes, strapped in triode mode, to give a parallel push-pull output





AUGUST CLEARANCE

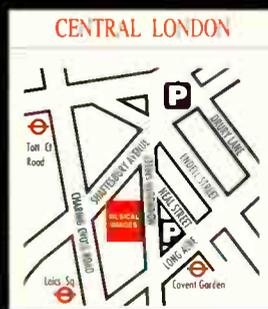
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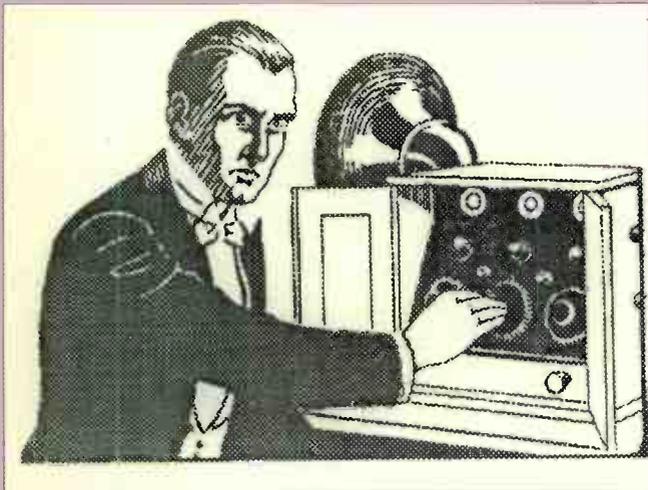
stage. This, claim Rothwell, gives a power output of 10watts per channel into either 4 or 8 ohm loudspeakers.

Audio Images
7 All Saints Road,
Pakefield,
Suffolk NR33 0JL
Tel: 01502 582853

VINTAGE HEAVEN

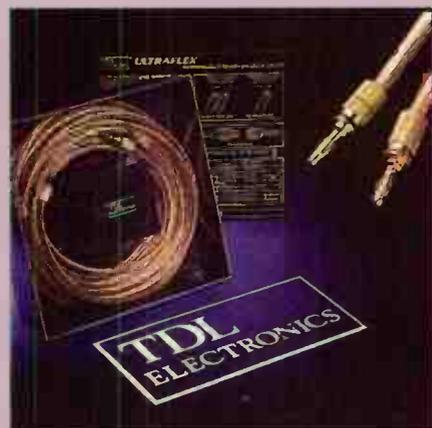
All hi-fi collectors and enthusiasts should make a note of Sunday 1st December 1996 in their diary as the day when the fifth National Vintage Communications Fair (NVCF) comes to Hall 3 of the Wembley Conference Centre. There will be thousands of items on offer from the 300 dealers and collectors specialising in areas like Classic Audio and Hi-Fi, Vintage and Early Broadcasting and Phonographs.

The NVCF will also be celebrating several landmark anniversaries, including the 100th anniversary of Marconi's



patent on the world's first practical wireless communication system.

Admission from 10.30am to 4pm costs only £5 (under-14s get in free) and includes a free copy of the NVCF Show Catalogue and Guide. For more information write to the NVCF at 2-4 Brook Street, Bampton, Devon, EX16 9LY or call Jonathan Hill on 01398 331532.



TDL TERMINATED
TDL Electronics have unveiled their new 'Ultraflex' loudspeaker cable. This is made of oxygen free copper, like many of its competitors, but unusually comes

fitted with 4mm gold-plated banana plugs at both ends.

Available in three different lengths and two gauges (the standard 551 strand and a heavier 770 strand reference grade), the cables range in price from £24.95 to £64.95 and can be bought from any TDL stockist.

TDL Electronics
Chiltern House,
Knaves Beech Bus. Centre,
High Wycombe,
Bucks. HP10 9QR
TEL: 01628 850111

REVOLVER RAVES ON

According to Revolver, their new £169.95 model 230 standmounting loudspeaker, with its ported enclosure and long throw bass driver, is designed to deliver the kind of solid bass that dance, rave and rock need to really thrive. They also claim that with its bi-wireability and a sensitivity of 88dB the 230 will suit quality amplifiers like those from Arcam, Denon and NAD. For maximum domestic compatibility two finishes, Black Ash and Bahia Rosewood, are available.

Revolver
77 Dane Road,
Sale,
Cheshire
M33 7BP
Tel: 0161 973 0505



trade winds

SIMPLY

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AMPLIFIERS

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	PM66sc Remate New	229
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	Cyrus Pre-amp	649
	Cyrus Power-amp	449
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	77 Power-amp	599
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	SU-A900 Mk2	449
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	AX-590 100wpc	299

COMPACT DISC

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	Alpha 8 New	519
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	DCD825	239
	DCM260 - 5 disc	299
	DCD1015	349
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	CD63 Signature	499
	CD17	799
Myryad	MC100 New	699
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	512	249
Quad	77 Bus Powered	595
	77 240v Powered	850
Rotel	RCD930AX	199
	RCD970BX	349
Technics	SL-P5570	169
	SL-P5670	199
Yamaha	CDX-390	129
	CDX-490	169
	CDX-590	229
Densen	DeMagic Demagnetiser Disc	10.95

CD DACs & TRANSPORTS

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	Delta 250 Transport	799
Audiolab	8000 DAC	899
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Cyrus	Discmaster	749
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SPEAKERS

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	Coda 8	189
	Coda 9 New	299
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THE GREAT ESCAPE



Making their escape from conventional cone materials, Mission's new 754 Freedom 5 loudspeakers use a High Definition Aerogel midrange driver. Dominic Baker tastes freedom.

When our reporter in New York first told me about a fabulous new loudspeaker he'd found at the Stereophile Specialty Audio Show, I must admit to having been a bit miffed. Why? Because the 'speaker in question was an all-new flagship model from UK residents Mission. So how come they were being launched to the US market first? Mission were surprised we'd found out about them so fast and, game up, provided a pair for review. This is how they shaped up.



I thought the contrast between the black and natural Oak wood finishes and the clean lines of the cabinets looked superb. They might be a shade too tall for some perhaps, but at least things are right in engineering terms with the inverted drive unit layout placing the acoustic centre between midrange and tweeter perfectly at ear level.

Simple and elegant they may be from the outside, but a lot of complex design has gone into the 754 Freedom 5s. Starting from the top, Mission's Managing Director and Chief loudspeaker Designer, Henry Azima, has chosen a high quality 1in. silk dome tweeter, ferrofluid cooled to improve linearity and power handling. This crosses over at 2kHz to a 6.5in. High Definition Aerogel (HDA) midrange driver. HDA is a composite material made from an acrylic polymer gel into which carbon and Kevlar fibres are embedded. These ingredients create an extremely light, stiff cone that possesses excellent internal damping properties.

To take best advantage of the 6.5in. HDA cone's properties, it comes fitted to a Kapton former which improves heat transfer away from the voice coil and thus increases power handling. The large magnet assembly that drives the cone is also fixed to a die-cast chassis for maximum rigidity. The driver is then

housed in a sealed enclosure and responds down to 110Hz below which the bass driver takes command.

This highly specified 8in. polypropylene bass unit is mounted inside the cabinet in a bandpass arrangement to deliver efficient and powerful bass from the downward firing reflex port. Again, there's little point in all this effort and complexity if it's let down in other areas. So, to provide a solid structure, Mission have chosen 25mm MDF for the cabinet which is rigidly constructed using their TFT Transverse Folded Technology. Inside, visco-elastic panel damping cuts down on the resonant energy produced and minimises coloration.

High quality components, including film signal capacitors, are used in the 12-element crossover. Because Mission have chosen a set of efficient drivers, the amount of power needed to drive the 754s is reduced. This means that ferrite core inductors, which have a lower resistance for a given wire gauge and allow more of the signal to pass, can be used in the crossover, again improving efficiency.

The crossover design itself is 2nd order throughout. In the bass, this works in tandem with the 2nd order roll-off characteristic of the bandpass enclosure to create a steep 4th order

filter. This helps to prevent any spurious harmonics making their way into the midband, keeping it clear and uncluttered.

SOUND QUALITY

Mission's 754s do a very complete job of addressing all of the 752s' weaknesses, small though they may be considering the £500 cost. The 752s are still one of the most enjoyable loudspeakers around at the price in my opinion. In fact, a pair have taken up permanent residence in our in-house listening room.

The metal dome tweeter of the 752s, although one of the best examples of its kind, can be a little obvious at times. The most discerning listeners can find its character somewhat at odds with that of the Aerogel midrange. In the 754s, the sweet and extended response of the silk dome tweeter marries more harmoniously with the HDA unit, and along with a well engineered and implemented crossover, makes for a near seamless tonal quality right across the frequency range. This endows the 754 Freedom 5s with greater transient speed on leading edges and more delicacy in their decay, producing a convincingly organic sound.

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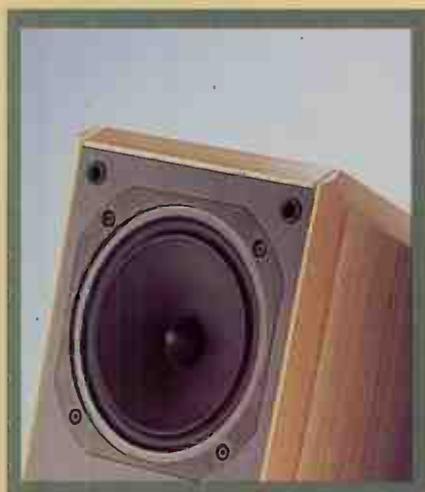
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The 752s could also be criticised for their slightly recessed midrange, which although giving them a pleasant warmth, fails to fully exploit the breathtaking openness and clarity of the Aerogel driver. In the 754s, vocals and strings alike benefit from a more neutral and spacious midband. They're still not as forward as some, but the slight cloudy softness of the 752s is replaced by a super-clear, clean midrange layered deep with delicious detail.

When I first heard about the driver line-up in the 754s, I reacted a little hesitantly. A silk dome tweeter, light, efficient HDA midrange and polypropylene drivers for the bass? I had a sonic vision (nightmare?) of fast, clear midrange and treble shackled to soft, slow, soggy bass. I should have known to expect rather more from Mission's Henry Azima. The 754s never sound slow and better still, they possess extremely well balanced bass. On first acquaintance, they come across as dry and tight, but with little real earth-shaking ability down below. This was no problem though, and I was more than happy, having been prepared for the worst.

It wasn't until a change of CD found Bjork's 'Violently Happy' playing that the 754s gave me a real taste of what they



could do. With little overhang or waffle, subsonics rumble nicely and deep, punchy bass lines higher up on this track were well portrayed, each note developing a clear form within a tight envelope.

Bjork's vocals were luscious, liquid and deep with emotion, although there was a smidgen of unnatural emphasis on lower notes. This manifested itself as a kind of thrum or hollow resonance that coloured, but didn't disturb the flow of the music. However, this is real nit-picking next to class-leading low-level detail resolution that described a hauntingly convincing atmosphere and acoustic space all around Bjork.

With Tricky's 'You Don't', the Missions certainly did, pumping out an electronic bass line that dived like a depth charge. It was easily deep and powerful enough to set the windows rattling, scattering a line of birds perched on the window sill. Control was maintained a long way around the volume control too, reaching a more than acceptable level before complaint was audible.

Hammond organ on the intro to the Lightning Seeds' 'Open Goals' was the next to capture my attention and highlight another area where the Missions perform particularly well. This track is recorded with a dry, sparse sound to give it a cold clarity, forward and strong. And that's exactly how it sounded on the 754s - super dry and detailed, pushing forcefully out from the soundstage until the solid, funky bass line took over, pushing up the tempo.

Shamen's 'Hear Me O My People', mixed by Orbital on vinyl, showed that the 754s could hold their own in the face of a real barrage of synthesisers and drum machines. 'Hyperreal' too exploited the speakers' top to bottom reach with deep, strong bass and powerfully extended treble emerging either side of Plavka's smooth vocal.

Swapping dance for classical had the crisply lit violin strings of Locatelli gliding in majestically from stage left, countered by cellos at far right. The Missions certainly know how to open up the layers within a recording, placing horns and bassoons further back and more centrally than cellos. Behind the violins, timpani and percussion could be clearly heard punctuating the score. There is only a handful of 'speakers around that are capable of presenting a recording as convincingly as this. Imaging, although not quite as

precise as Quad's ESL-63 electrostatics or JBL's S2600s, is firmly up there with the best. The 754s managed to create as convincing a sound spread with tightly located performers as any other direct radiator loudspeaker I've heard, including Harbeth's super-precise HL-P3s which, being a miniature, have size on their side, because small 'speakers display better imaging.

CONCLUSION

The 754 Freedom 5 is the first in a new generation of 75 series loudspeakers from Mission and is set to be the flagship of the range. Our current £500 favourites, the 752s, are already undergoing improvement; as I write; we've been promised a pair of the new £600 752 Freedoms within the next week or so. I'm happy to see that Mission have chosen to continue their use of the HDA cone midrange driver. They're real hi-tech, in a world of paper and plastic. With the Freedom's, Aerogel and silk are a treat for your ears ●

Mission 754 Freedom 5 £1,299
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WORLD VERDICT



Articulate and informative sound with fine imaging and tight, deep bass.

Measured Performance
see P103



This month sees Hi-Fi World setting out to find the components you need for a superb system. The first step on our journey finds the intrepid Jon Marks choosing the best £400-£600 CD player from amongst the top contenders on offer today. In the coming months we'll be testing matching amplifiers and loudspeakers. Just look for our STAR SEARCH sign.

group
test

BINARY STARS

The £400-£600 price bracket offers best value with CD players. There's enough in the development budget to engineer a very high performance player. Spend more and you'll hear diminishing returns; 16-bit CD technology is nowadays regarded by many engineers as barely adequate; high-end players are hitting its limits.

Super digital is on its way, but it will be a few years yet. In the meantime, tuned up designs are becoming a focus of attention within the industry, the way being pioneered (no pun intended) by Marantz. Their CD 63SE (Special Edition) tune-ups have sold well and rivals have taken note. This report sees Marantz bringing the personal touch to this process by attribution to their chief audio engineer, Ken Ishiwata (hence KI-Signature). Surprisingly, Trichord's tune-up of Pioneer's PD-S504, also in this report, comes with the Japanese company's blessing.

Representing Britain in this group of players we have Arcam with their Alpha 5+, the Trichord Research Genesis, a Pioneer PD-S504 modified with Trichord's own high precision Clock 2 and Class A biased output stage.

Flying the flag for Japan are the Marantz CD-63mkII KI-Signature, Rotel RCD-975 and Pioneer Legato Link Conversion S PD-S904.



OCTOBER ISSUE - Amplifiers
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Rotel RCD-975

Rotel's RCD-975 is a compact and neat looking player with a weighty build. It's probably the most unassuming in the test, but its exterior hides high quality mechanical and electrical parts inside.

It looks as though Philips' electronics and transports are the order of the day as far as most of the players in this group test go. The Rotel is no exception here, with its CDM-9 mechanism and TDA1305T DAC chips. A pair of these are used in dual differential configuration to cancel common mode distortion and so improve low level linearity, which should give a smoother sound and better retrieval of recorded ambience. Toeing the anti-jitter line, Rotel fit an external clock to improve the timing signal, even though the 1305 has its own clock in-built.

SOUND QUALITY

'1982-A' from the Sons of Champlin and their Loosen Up Naturally CD had a full-blooded delivery that really propelled the track along, the tight bass stopping the pace of the song from getting out of control. The drummer takes a large part of the credit here, with the Rotel's subtlety in lower midrange and bass highlighting his musical expression. Upper midrange, however, didn't quite have the detail or insight to match.

The RCD-975 gripped the rhythm of 'Rooftop' with equal conviction, emphasising just how tight the Champlins' playing can be. On the busier passage that makes up most of the finale of this song the Rotel did sometimes sound slightly confused because of an upper midrange and treble that needed a little sweetness (as opposed to euphony) and separation.

Mingus, Mingus. . . showed Charles Mingus really letting rip on his double bass. On tracks like 'Il B.S.' there was less confusion than on some of the Champlins' CD, although a slightly flat soundstage wasn't giving the musicians quite as much room to manoeuvre as they really needed. Changing down a gear from 'Il B.S.' to the gentler 'Celia' caused the Rotel no problems. There

was a lightening of tone with percussion and trumpets on this CD, but it wasn't enough to change the instruments' character.

It was only as '18 Wheels and a Crowbar' from BR5-49 wound down to its conclusion that I realised that my head had been bobbing and my foot tapping throughout. The RCD-975 has an ability to communicate the feeling of a song in an unobtrusive and even-handed way. In spite of this, the Rotel didn't manage to give cymbals their full metallic shimmer and a lightening of tone removed some of the substance from the atmosphere of the venue.

'Muhammad My Friend' from Tori Amos' Boys For Pele demonstrated that reproduction of piano and harpsichord is one of this player's fortés. Harpsichord on both this album and Vivaldi's Four Seasons was weighty without sounding overheavy,

powerful without jangling and possessed subtle detail that made it convincingly life-like.

CONCLUSION

Foot-tapping rhythm seekers and lovers of piano and harpsichord everywhere should push the Rotel towards the top of their shopping list - a tuneful, pungent bass allied to a generally neutral sonic balance doesn't come along very often at an asking price of £450. Those looking for upper registers possessing the same degree of insight and subtlety won't be quite so impressed with the Rotel. While there was never any harshness to the player's sound, its rather flat soundstage and lightening of tone in the upper midrange and treble meant that it could come a cropper on busier tracks.



The CD-63mkII KI-Signature is an even more highly tuned version of the CD-63 than the tweaked SE model. The tuning starts off in the power supply with a toroidal mains transformer wound with high grade copper wire and built with composite materials, aimed at improving bass punch and extension. It continues with copper-plating on the chassis and screws, to reduce eddy currents. This lowers noise levels in the player's circuitry, and hysteresis distortion.

The final touch is the use of Marantz's own copper shielded HDAMs (Hyper Dynamic Amplifier Modules) in the output stage, in place of the more common chip based op-amps. These HDAMs are claimed to respond to transients faster than op-amps and provide better sound quality.

SOUND QUALITY

On the first track of *Loosen Up Naturally* by the Sons of Champlin, vocals made an immediate impression. They sounded unprocessed, as though there wasn't a hi-fi system sitting between the Champlins' performance and my eardrums. 'Get High' revealed an electric bass that had a funky fluidity and well judged weight which put a smile of appreciation on my face as I followed the bass player's prestidigitations. Whereas the drummer usually seems to be relegated to the back of the soundstage and left to his own devices on this song, through the Marantz he was given a chance to make a proper rhythmic contribution, adding his own pace and drive.

A change of musical course brought me to Spring's *Pastoral dances* from Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*. Here, the KI-Signature demonstrated a poise and expressiveness that gave the dances a natural, cohesive flow. Solo violin on the build-up to Summer's *Thunderhead* also showed a host of tiny changes in tempo and volume. It revealed a depth to this piece which hadn't made it, intact, off the

CD with the other players. No one area, like treble purity or breadth of soundstage, stood out for particular recommendation, and for that alone the Marantz deserves praise. It has balance.

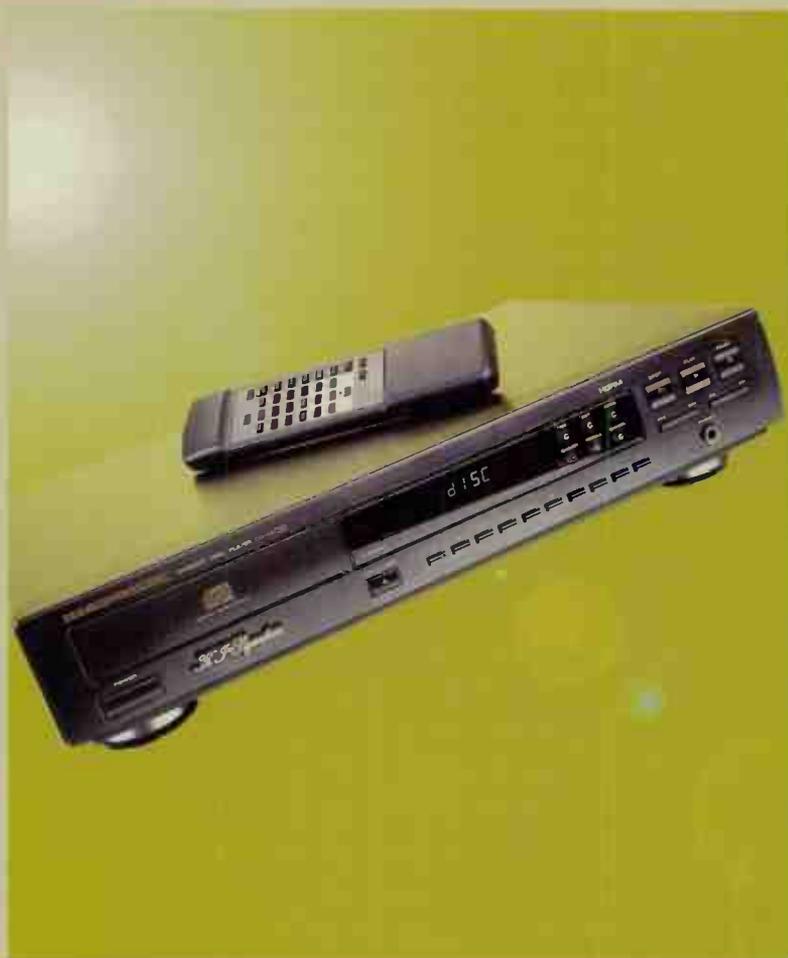
Tori Amos and her *Boys for Pele* album gave the KI-Signature a chance to flaunt its bass ability. 'Talula', with its combined kick drum and African percussion bass line normally ends up a recipe for waffles. But the Marantz had no trouble getting the floorboards twanging with deep, taut, detailed bass that packed all the punch of a boxing glove full of horseshoes.

Further up the frequency range, BR5-49 were proof that the Marantz wasn't adept with bass alone. 'Knoxville Girl' had a slide guitar smooth enough to set a cowboy's tears flowing at fifty paces, and the frenzied fiddling of 'Ole Slewfoot'

never sounded compressed or sour, even at its most powerful.

CONCLUSION

The Marantz is a rare CD player, putting together a performance which is greater than the sum of its parts. The combination of subtle detailing, an organic cohesion and great neutrality adds up to a presentation that never fails to draw the listener into the music. Technically, the KI-Signature handles the whole sound spectrum with ease, right from its impressively dynamic and detailed bass up to a naturally sweet and transparent treble, but what sets it apart from most of the competition is the way it communicates the emotion and purpose in a piece of music.



Marantz CD-63mkII KI-Signature £499.95

£479.90

Arcam Alpha 5+

The only British built player in this test, the Arcam Alpha 5+ is decidedly reserved in its appearance. Inside its smart black-dressed casework, Arcam, like Trichord, follow the road to reduced jitter with a discrete master clock. This clock, which runs off its own separately regulated power supply, improves on the standard on-chip clock to increase the accuracy of the timing signal fed to the Philips TDA1541 multi-bit DAC and so boost sound quality.

Philips also supply the transport, in this case the well-regarded CDM-9, which spins the discs in Rotel's RCD-975 as well. Just to make sure there aren't too many slips 'twixt disc and amplifier, separate regulated supplies feed the digital and analogue sections.

SOUND QUALITY

Faced with 'Mood Indigo' from the Charles Mingus CD, the Arcam Alpha 5+ came up trumps with its retrieval of the subtlety in Mingus' technique. The drummer's brushwork, which was delicate and refined, fitted the gently sombre mood of the piece well. Soundstage width and depth were also good, although saxophone tended to push toward the front of the stage because of a slight midrange emphasis.

'Better Get Hit in Yo' Soul' gave the Arcam a chance to demonstrate its control, with even powerful percussion and energetic trumpets failing to blur imaging. Although Mingus' playing was obvious under the rest of the band's work, bass didn't have quite the focused tunefulness of the Rotel and as a result produced rhythm with a little less drive.

The Alpha 5+ had no problem with the lilting feel of Spring's Pastoral dance from Vivaldi's Four Seasons, where smooth violins and powerful cellos combined to give the piece momentum. Here, the size of the soundstage lent the music scale - especially on crescendos like those of Summer which had real power and fury to them.



The bump and grind of Tori Amos' vitriolic 'Professional Widow' benefited from the same scale and power, particularly with the bone-crushing drum machine bass line. There was a hint of sibilance on the vocals which Tori Amos spits out on this track, but it remained just that, a hint. The sparser 'Marianne' possessed a flatter, narrower soundstage than some of the more densely orchestrated songs on 'Boys For Pele' like 'Talula' and 'In The Springtime of His Voodoo'.

Moving into Hillbilly territory, the feeling of space that the Arcam conjured up around the members of BR5-49 made it easy to pick out Guy Bennett's lead vocals against a backdrop of yodelling, beer-swilling truckers and cowboys. Smilin' Jay McDowell's double bass possessed a bloom that emphasised the CD player's rich presentation and

cymbals had that golden shimmer which the Rotel had missed out on.

CONCLUSION

With its ability to produce a sizeable soundstage full of clearly delineated images, the Arcam Alpha 5+ makes it easy to become immersed in the music. The sense of involvement is helped along by a bass richness and a generally warm sound. Like the Trichord, this doesn't constitute the last word in neutrality, but it is certainly preferable to the clinical presentation of many CD players at this price. The only problem this bass quality gave rise to was a slight lack of drive with more up-tempo tracks, but then, this is a difference of character rather than a short-coming.

The first thing I saw when I opened the Genesis' box was the Pioneer manual. In fact, the only external features which distinguish this Trichord version from the standard Pioneer PD-S504 are badges on the player's fascia and its remote control. The real differences lie inside the casework.

Here, Trichord have fitted their own Clock 2 masterclock to reduce the amount of jitter introduced into the digital signal. By tightening the timing, this should produce a cleaner, smoother sound. The clock modification comes with its own power supply regulator, to lower noise. The output stage has also seen some revision - it now works in Class A which many regard as a better biasing arrangement than the more common Class AB.

SOUND QUALITY

Using an Audiolab 8000S and our KLS3 loudspeakers, I couldn't resist treating myself to another listen of BR5-49's Live from Robert's CD to start putting the Trichord through its paces. The Genesis showed the band members and their instruments firmly located in a nicely transparent, open soundstage. It let the atmosphere of Robert's bar through into our listening room. Plucked double bass had the necessary transient speed and delicacy in its decay to sound convincingly organic, while good bass weight made it easy to picture the drummer pounding away.

With Vivaldi's Four Seasons the Trichord handled the abundant string energy of the first movement smoothly, avoiding any raucousness. Here, one note flowed into the next in an engaging and natural way, allowing the rhythm and drive of Spring to come through undiminished. The separation between different strands of music throughout this CD not only made following the various sections of the orchestra easy, but also helped to give the piece as a whole a cohesive feel. Another Brownie point the Genesis earned was for its ability to pass on the feeling and passion of

the music from the little silver disc to the amp's inputs.

Tori Amos' vocals on Boys for Pele showed the same smoothness as the violins of Vivaldi. From the inflections in Tori's voice it was easy to catch the mood of the track, although some of the clarity of this CD seemed to have been exchanged for extra warmth in the presentation. I was pleased to feel my eardrums taking a beating from the drum machine bass line of 'Caught a Light Sneeze', even though bass depth was slightly exaggerated.

The sense of the recorded acoustic was brought out well by the Trichord on the Sons of Champlin reissue CD, Loosen Up Naturally. It was obvious that 'The Thing To Do' and 'Misery Isn't Free' had both been recorded in a fairly small studio. Images were clearly placed in the soundstage too, with the drum kit back in the corner,

while powerful vocals took centre stage.

CONCLUSION

I was impressed by the natural integrity of the music that the Trichord Genesis produced. It may not have been strictly faithful to what was encoded on the CD - the music was imbued with extra warmth and bass weight was emphasised - but it made listening to music easy, CD after CD. The only slight reservation I have is an occasional inconsistency in its presentation, especially with vocals which could sound thick on certain tracks whilst coming through more clearly on others. That said, what with the soundstaging, insight and involvement the Trichord offers, it certainly looks as though an audition could lead to £549 well spent.



Trichord Genesis

£549.00

£399.95

Pioneer PD-S904

I'd been looking forward to listening to Pioneer's PD-S904 and its second generation Legato Link system for quite a while, sharing as I do Pioneer's feelings about the shortcomings of CD sound quality. Dissatisfied with CD's limited frequency response that only runs up as far as 22kHz, and feeling that this was the main reason for many people finding digital sound quality unappealing, Pioneer set about developing their Legato Link in an attempt to improve matters.

The system is designed to guess what's going on sonically above the cut-off of 22kHz and add this extra information to what is encoded on the disc in order to produce an output signal that extends as far as 30-40kHz. Even though this new information isn't actually recorded on the disc and cannot be heard directly, Pioneer believe that it has an effect on audible sounds and should, according to their theory, rid CD of its clinical edge.

SOUND QUALITY

Opening the proceedings with 'Muhammad My Friend' from Boys For Pele found Tori Amos' vocals projecting from the centre of the soundstage, easily intelligible by virtue of quite a light tone. Her piano playing sounded clear and fresh too, moving smoothly from one note to the next and giving this track real direction. Although George Parker Junior's bass didn't quite have its customary pungent and powerful extension, it still worked well with the piano to produce fleet of foot rhythm.

BR5-49's Live From Robert's yielded a slightly broader soundstage than had Boys For Pele, although here again images tended to congregate at the centre around Gary Bennett's vocals. Aiming to discover what the PD-S904's bass was made of, I homed in on 'Me 'n' Opie (Down By The Duck Pond)' with its drum roll intro. This sounded rather dry and didn't have sufficient depth or punch to it to really get this track fired up and ready to roll. Double bass fared much the same, unable to muster enough power to get the floorboards of our listening room jumping along with the audience

at Robert's. Vocals were a different story though, projecting clearly and powerfully on the melancholy 'tear in my beer' strains of 'Knoxville Girl'.

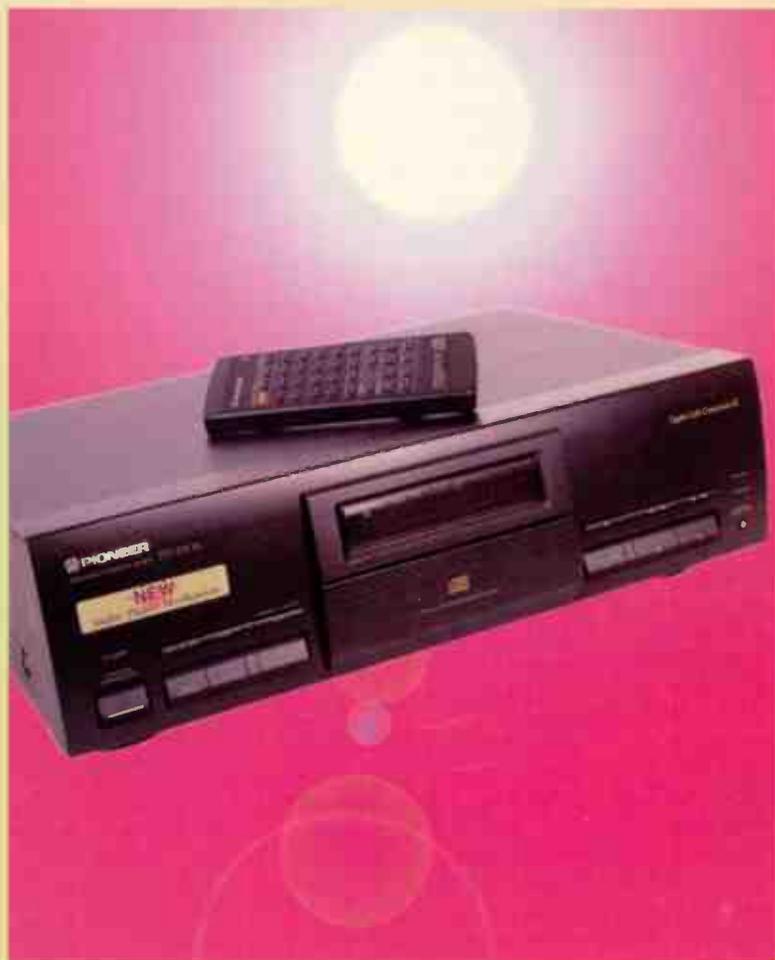
Swinging across from Nashville to California found the Sons of Champlin in fine voice on Loosen Up Naturally, the PD-S904 doing a sterling job with smooth, clear vocals and a saxophone that had a brassy reediness in place of the gritty, raucous edge some players add. Higher up the musical scale, the Pioneer's rendition of cymbal crashes was good if not exceptional, capturing the detail of the rivets in the rim, but missing out on their tonal colour. Bass was still rather dry, and while it took nothing away from the funkiness of the arrangements on this album, the feeling of raw drive that permeates this album was diminished.

While the Champlins retained their original funky character, at the hands of the PD-S904's dry bass and

limited tonal colour both Vivaldi's Four Seasons and Charles Mingus' Mingus, Mingus... CDs sounded rather thin, lacking the bass weight to balance the classical string sections and jazz trumpets.

CONCLUSION

From Gary Bennett's country warbling to the dulcet tones of Tori Amos, the Pioneer always allowed vocals to flow smoothly. Saxophone was another beneficiary of the PD-S904's midrange ability. Percussion and strings, however, could sound tonally divorced from the rest of the music, even though there was detail aplenty. Whilst it would be churlish to describe bass as lightweight, a little more extension and punch would help to open out the soundstage and give the music a more substantial feel.



CD GROUP TEST CONCLUSION

If I was left with one impression more than any other after spending time with these players, it was that £400-£600 can buy real audiophile sound quality. Any one of these players is reason enough to burn the midnight oil going through a CD collection. But what separates the best from the very good at this price are qualities like subtlety, low-level detail retrieval and a natural presentation that in combination can allow you to stop hearing the hi-fi and start listening to the music.

THE RESULTS

At £399.95, Pioneer's PD-S904 is the cheapest CD player in this group test. Considering its price tag, though, the Pioneer demonstrated that in certain areas it could stand alongside the best in this field. Pianos and vocals in particular sounded clear and fresh on the excellent recording of Tori Amos' Boys For Pele, and the saxophones that accompanied the Sons of Champlin and Charles Mingus were free from any roughness. It was the frequencies above and below the smooth, lucid midrange that started to show the Pioneer's limitations, with a slightly insubstantial bass and tonally limited upper register.

Next on the podium is Rotel's RCD-975. This player's taut bass grips

a track rhythmically and gives it a real feeling of impetus. It also has the weight and power to make harpsichord and piano sound surprisingly life-like. Upper midrange and treble, however, lacked the extra sweetness and insight that players like the Marantz, Trichord and Arcam are able to wring from the CD, and it could occasionally become confused on energetic passages.

It was thanks to its richness and ability to transmit the nuances in a piece of music that the Arcam Alpha 5+ came in ahead of the Rotel. Remaining unruffled by the powerful trumpets and percussion of Charles Mingus' 'Better Get Hit In Yo' Soul', the Arcam allowed the bandmembers to show just how expert their playing is on this virtuoso performance. BR5-49 took up their positions on the Live From Robert's album in a large soundstage populated by sharply focused images that made the music immediately accessible. The sole problem I had with the Alpha 5+ was that its bass richness could sometimes take a little of the drive out of more up-tempo tracks, but this is a character trait, not a fault.

Now we come to Trichord's Genesis. Here, the warmth of the player's presentation meant that the power of period violins on Vivaldi's Four Seasons avoided any sharp shrillness. Although bass figured rather

large in the proceedings, it still displayed impressive speed, insight and impact, hammering out the drum machine bass line of Tori Amos' 'Caught A Light Sneeze'. Where the Trichord really scored was in its ability to pass on the emotion captured in a recording, whether it was the vitriol of Boys For Pele or BR5-49's carefree irony. In this area at least, the Genesis was the Marantz's equal. What stopped it from taking the honours were its less than neutral balance and an inconsistency in the way it handled vocals, which could sound thick on some tracks while coming through clearly on others.

It was given a hard run for its money, but the Marantz CD-63mkII KI-Signature won through in the end. All of the players in this group test have individual strengths and weaknesses which give them their character. The Marantz is the victor here for the simple reason that it imposes less of its character on the music than any of the other players. It has a self-effacing transparency and neutrality across the whole of the frequency range, passing on the music in a natural and cohesive manner that never fails to engross. If you're lucky enough to have £500 lying around along with a spare shelf on your rack that's looking to house a CD player, you're in for a treat with the CD-63mkII KI-Signature.

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Cams. CB5 9PB
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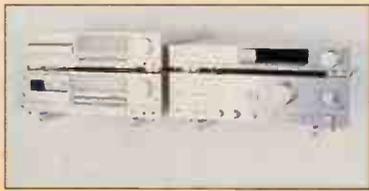
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Stacey Bushes,
Milton Keynes,
Bucks. MK12 6HR
Tel: 01908 317707

Pioneer
Hollybush Hill,
Stoke Poges,
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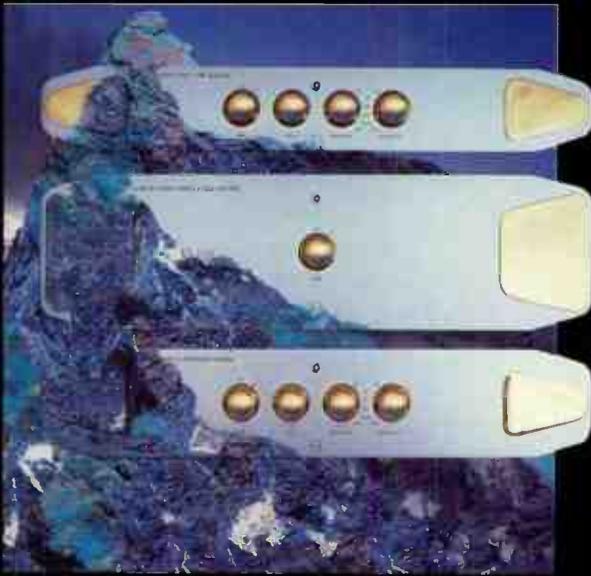
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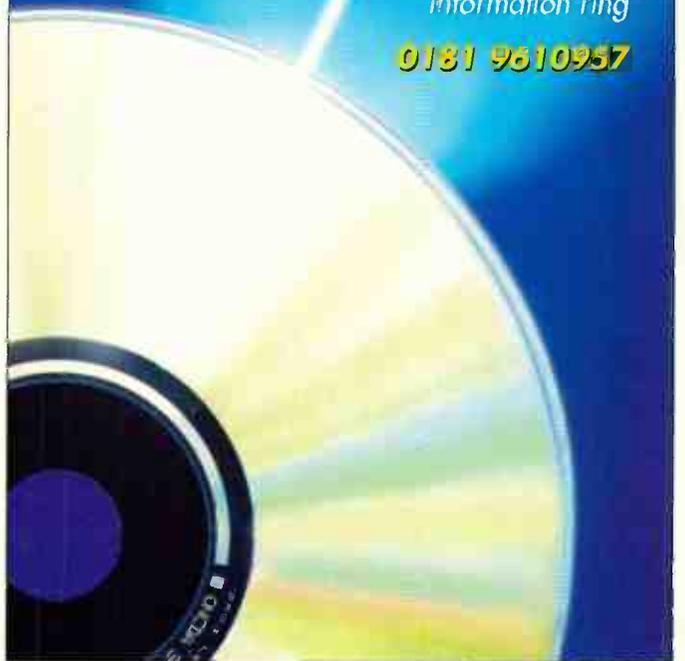
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PHASE UNFAZED

You might have thought that the British amplifier market was pretty well stitched up at the moment. There are the major players such as Arcam, Audiolab and Cyrus, a middle league consisting of companies like Naim, Linn and Sugden, and dozens of smaller companies specialising in both valve and transistor designs. It goes without saying that newer and

smaller companies are entering an extremely tough market indeed.

But occasionally such companies do

stand out from the masses. Shearne Audio may not have been around for long, but they have already received

Does Shearne Audio's latest £895 Phase 6 preamplifier have a clear head for detail?

Dominic Todd resolves all.

critical acclaim for their integrated and pre/power designs. The Phase 3 power amplifier has been reviewed within these pages before and impressed us enough to be listed in the 'World Favourites Guide'. So this time, we take a look at Shearne's latest pre-amp, the Phase 6.

A price tag of £895 may seem a little steep, especially when you consider the opposition (DPA DSP200S and Audiolab 8000Q amongst others), but the Phase 6 goes some way to justifying it with a carefully considered specification that includes two power supplies. The first cleans up the mains before passing it on to the second which feeds the pre-amp's active sections.

Although the circuit itself is fairly straight forward (you won't find the same level of technology here as in DNM and Audiolab's latest designs, for example), good quality, discrete components are used throughout. The enthusiast will also be pleased to see fully balanced XLR sockets

supplementing the standard phono outputs. Surprisingly though, both phono stage and headphone amp are optional at £195 and £95 respectively.

I tried the Phase 6 with my usual system as well as some Phase 3 power amps. The first track to hit the deck was Tricky's 'Suffocated Love'. With a single Shearne power amplifier the results were impressive. Vocals were expressive and projected clearly from the 'speakers, and the sleazy atmosphere of the track was well communicated.

The transparency of the pre-amp was more than capable of showing the benefits to be had when bi-amping. In this arrangement, the combination gave the genuine dynamic clout that only comes from the very best pre/power combinations. I was more aware of the quieter passages simply because the bass notes were kept under tight control and not allowed to wallow beyond their allotted stay. This control led to an impression of added space around individual instruments and made background detail more apparent too.

Bass power impressed once again

on 'Jah Wobble - More Like God'. With the right 'speakers (those with real bass control and extension) this track is strong enough to rattle windows without becoming overbearing. Rather like the power amps, the pre-amp seemed to strike a good balance between control and ambience. Whilst it may not be able to strip away layers of detail in quite the way some pre-amps manage, I felt it was more enjoyable for not being so ruthless.

Likewise, an occasional harshness in the treble would be shown up by the sweetest Class A and valve amps, but

“The transparency of the pre-amp was more than capable of showing the benefits to be had when bi-amping. In this arrangement, the combination gave the genuine dynamic clout that only comes from the very best pre/power combinations”

whether they could match the bass power and control of the Shearne is another matter. As well as a seamless response that didn't seem to favour any particular frequency, the pairing also gave the music excellent depth of soundstage. Which is just as well, as the stereo width wasn't all it could be, even though bi-amping had improved matters slightly.

The evenhanded nature of the Shearnes meant they handled acoustic and classical music equally well. Tom Waits' voice, for example, was suitably guttural, and backing piano and saxophone had a natural, unforced timbre. The bass didn't seem especially deep, but as it was produced acoustically, it wasn't meant to be.

A completely different atmosphere was created with Sibelius' Symphony No. 1. Here, the brass section had a vigorous attack that never became wearing, although partnering the Phase 6 with bright ancillaries could lead to an unpleasant hardening of the sound. Once again, the pre-amp's grip on the music produced the desired tension in the piece whilst allowing the solo flute its natural fluidity.

As a pairing, the Phase 3 and 6 make a strong case for themselves - they are dynamic, powerful and engagingly neutral. System integration seems to be fine too, the Shearnes working happily with a wide variety of components. The only slight problem was with their treble which could sound a little harsh and uninformative through some 'speakers.

Judging the pre-amp independently is a more difficult task. In my opinion, although the pre-amp is better than average, it's the poweramp(s) that are due the most credit. I suspect

Audiolab's 8000Q would partner the Phase 3s just as well, yet the very fact that the Phase 6 can at least be mentioned alongside the Audiolab (which is a highly developed product, remember) shows Shearne may well be able to show the major players a thing or two yet. If you've money burning a hole in your pocket, then the Shearnes deserve your attention ●

John Shearne Phase 6 £895
John Shearne Phase 3 £619

Shearne Audio
PO Box 22,
Stevenage,
Herts. SG2 8HF
Tel: 01438 740953

WORLD VERDICT



Matched with a smooth amp and 'speakers, the Phase 6 is capable of a transparent and rewarding performance.

Measured Performance
see P103

HOME-BRED HARMONY

Designed and built in Denmark; Eltax have crafted a fine loudspeaker in the Symphony 6, according to Douglas Floyd-Douglass.

Eltax's Symphony 6 is a substantial design of impressive finish, solid build and clean Danish lines. The realistic wood-grain veneer is unnervingly deceptive; something you might expect on the set of *Cold Lazarus* as the future apparition of real wood. Creepy, but convincing. Seldom am I this impressed by 'budget' loudspeakers. The necessary scales of economy dictate compromise, which inevitably

to achieve a targeted price point. Cabinets are often out-sourced, being manufactured in Europe, Scandinavia and as far afield as China. And drive units frequently come from the Middle and Far East, as well as our Viking pals up north. So it is something of a rarity to be greeted by a loudspeaker that hails from its own country of origin. . . well nearly. Although the bass driver is specified by Eltax, like so many others,

"Dance and synthesized music is extremely good fun played on the Symphonys."

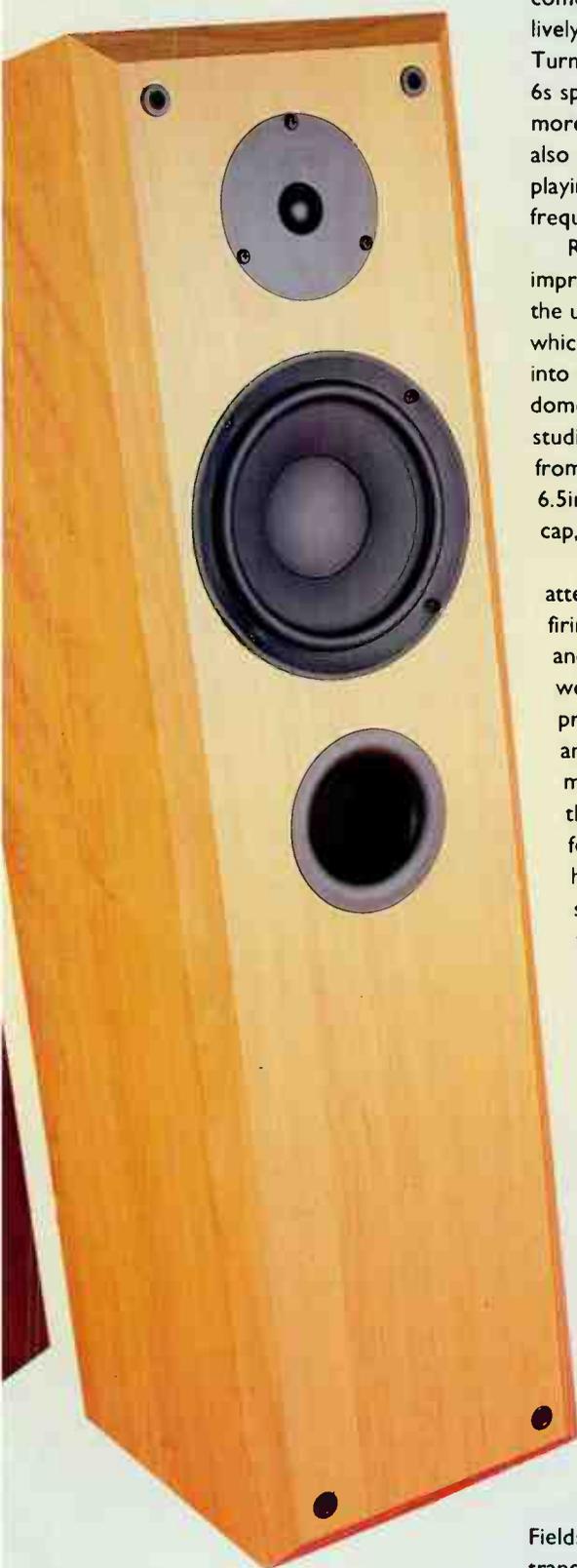
occurs in one of two areas; finish or components. Eltax appear to have defied this precursor.

In order to survive in the ferociously competitive entry level, manufacturers are forced to cut costs

it is built in the Far East.

The Eltax Symphony 6 is a thoroughbred Danish floorstander with flair. I began listening with the grilles on (partly because Dominic suggested not to) just to listen to the result, and to





give myself fewer clues as to what lay beneath the shroud of acoustic cloth. The initial clunk of David Byrne's guitar-come-footstomp in 'Psycho Killer' was lively and the guitar notably twangy. Turning the volume up, the Symphony 6s sprang to life saying "I'll have a bit more of that please" - although they also demonstrated their pleasure at playing loud by delivering ear frying high frequency lift.

Removing the grilles I was further impressed. The first thing I noticed was the ubiquitous Vifa 19mm tweeter which has successfully found its way into a number of more expensive domestic 'speakers and professional studio monitors alike - including models from Tannoy, KRK and Rogers. The 6.5inch bass driver has a concave dust-cap, giving a very smooth cone profile.

Removing the grilles didn't attenuate presence or alter the hard firing treble, but it did smoothen out and open up the presentation very well indeed, as Mr Baker himself had predicted. Grille-free, soundstaging and imaging deepened (as it would in most designs), but to a lesser extent than I'd expected as the voicing was forward, with notable attack. It is harder to perceive a deep soundstage when a lead guitar is flying at you a lot faster than the bass.

Mike and the Mechanics' 'Over My Shoulder' sounded lively and fresh with a wide dynamic. Bass was tight (not so deep though) and the fat, gated snare sounded punchy and quite toppy - in a clean, insightful sort of way. Vocals were smooth, but again with their presence forward in the upper midrange, which lends itself to a distinctive sound. Paul Carrack's fabulous voice needs oomph lower down and this showed up the Symphony 6s, where body and richness were lacking.

Jean Michel Jarre's 'Magnetic Fields', as with a number of white-label trancy-dancy mixes, really shone on this youthful loudspeaker. The dynamic response lent itself well to the lively colouration; dance and synthesized

music is extremely good fun played on the Symphonys.

Their cabinet has a large forward-firing reflex port situated just below the woofer. This gave a bass that was generally tight and sounded powerful, with fast attack and sharp decay due to the rigid material used in the driver. This proved great for dance music, but was death to Debussy. Music that required depth and sustain, for example cellos and piano, was not so well represented.

Integration between drivers was not quite as seamless as midrange fans might demand. This, along with bright treble, can be improved by firing the 'speakers straight down the room 'in the nude' though. There was still a thinness to vocals, but it's more a characteristic than a fault. If you like your music crisp and loud, you'll like the Symphony 6s.

I have to confess to being extremely impressed with the Eltax Symphonys; finish is top class and they have the best dynamic range in their class. They are reasonably efficient at 85.5dB (see page 103) and make the best of even modest amplification, delivering music with energy and pace. Whilst not the last word in refinement or accuracy, at £239 Eltax have set a new quality standard of entry level product that will be hard to match ●

Eltax Symphony 6

£239.99

**Eltax Electronic
4 Warren Yard,
Warren Farm,
Wolverton Mill,
Milton Keynes
MK12 5NW**

Tel: 01908 226464

WORLD VERDICT

A touch bright, but clean, open and lively sounding with it. Little else to fault at the price.

**Measured Performance
see P103**



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A TRIP AROUND THE HORN



Jon Marks sets sail to investigate the huge new Accelerando horns from Bravura.

I sat staring rather apprehensively across the room. Facing me were two very large cabinets (39x129x83cms), manfully hewn from MDF and veneered with American Cherry. They had the kind of purposeful look to them that suggested commonplace boxes would be forcefully swept to one side. And with a name like Accelerando, it'd probably all happen in an instant.

With a claimed 102dB sensitivity (verified by our own measurements) the Accelerandos are certainly capable of responding to transients in an instant too. Single cone horn loudspeakers like this also have the flat impedance characteristic that suits single-ended valve amps right down to the ground, so a Border Patrol 300B SE (a high-end purist off-spin of Audio Innovations) was wheeled in to do the honours. Out of a perverse sense of curiosity I also tried the Audiolab 8000S and Aura VA 80, but the Accelerandos were way too revealing for these to be successful marriages - considering the £6600

One thing the Lalis did that few other speakers do was make listening to music fun.
Chris Beeching, Hi-Fi News '95

Lali

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Inside the cabinet of 18mm MDF lurks a folded exponential horn with baffles of 12mm MDF, its mouth driving into a room's corner which acts as an extension of the horn, improving depth of bass response. At the throat of the horn sits a Lowther PM2A full range paper cone driver, intended specifically for use in rear-loaded horn applications such as this. The difference between this incarnation of the 'speakers and what has gone before is a redesigned chamber behind the driver - this now has non-parallel sides lined with Deflex panels to minimise standing waves.

It took quite a lot of manoeuvring to get the best balance from these 'speakers. I tried them firing almost straight down the room where the midrange and treble response was at its smoothest, but this didn't allow the bass its proper extension. Toed in with the axes of the drive units crossing about 6ft in front of my head seemed to give the best overall balance, with

dynamic, extended bass balancing a powerful upper mid. The high treble response decreased off axis, but reducing the toe-in over-emphasised the upper midrange.

First digits to arrive at the Pink Triangle Da Capo CD convertor made up 'Tangled and Dark' from Bonnie Raitt's Luck Of The Draw CD. On this track the weight of drums came across particularly well and a dry, tight upper bass gave them impressive punch. Bass guitar strode along cleanly - the lack of bass overhang here made a very pleasant change from the comparatively blurred waffle of normal direct radiator 'speakers. The lightness of the Lowther drivers' cones paid dividends on Bonnie's vocals, giving them free and easy expression, although they were set a little further back in the soundstage than normal.

Guitar strumming on the intro to 'No Business' had real conviction to it, and vocals had the same powerful expression as on the previous track. But there was a hint of emphasis in the upper mid which could occasionally make itself heard as a 'shouty' quality on energetic singing.

While soundstaging was wide and deep, it wasn't really up to the kind of standard I'd expect, considering the financial outlay involved. This might in part have been down to the fact that the speaker's bass response as a whole sounded rather uneven. Lower bass also seemed to lack the kind of subtlety necessary to transmit the aural cues that make up the shape of an acoustic.

In search of some more rhythm and a real bass pounding I enlisted

the help of the Chemical Brothers' album Exit Planet Dust. There was no doubt here about the punch and drive to the bass - listening to this album left me feeling I'd spent a couple of rounds in the ring with Mr Tyson, which is just how it should be.

Joni Mitchell's Turbulent Indigo CD provided the antidote to the Chemicals' aural fireworks. Here, the skin of the drum on the title track was easy to visualise, the leathery thwack and decay the Accelerandos produced made a strong impression. The woodiness of the guitar body sounded slightly tubby though. Unfortunately, Joni's vocals failed to really project, as had Bonnie's and soundstaging was still a little unimpressive.

Dynamically, the Accelerandos are very convincing, and when allied with an amp like the single-ended Border Patrol, which has real kick to its bottom end, they can produce slamming bass. Personally, I found their overall response a little too uneven and never really felt drawn into the music - John Lee Hooker, who usually has me metaphorically reaching for the bourbon, only got as far as an orange squash. But for anyone looking for sensitivity and dynamics above all else they could well be worth checking out.

Bravura Accelerando £6600

Thomas Transducers
White House Hall,
Hadlow Road,
Tonbridge,
Kent TN11 0AJ
Tel: 01732 850315

WORLD VERDICT

Very sensitive, easy load. Convey great dynamics, but uneven sound and rather uninvolved feel make them look expensive.

Measured Performance
see p103

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CD - WHAT'S THE FUTURE?

In future we are likely to see a higher resolution CD system for audio, but what form will it take? Dominic Baker investigates with the help of three industry experts.

Over the last few months there has been an increasing amount of debate about the future of CD. It is now widely recognised

WHAT IS DSD?

DSD was developed primarily for two track mastering, but there is also good potential for audio, multichannel and surround sound applications. The provisional specifications for DSD are far higher than the 16-bit CD system we use now. The sampling frequency is 64times higher, bandwidth is 100kHz compared to CD's 21kHz, and dynamic range 120dB (up to 20kHz). At a sampling rate 64times higher, DSD produces four times the digital data of CD.

amongst engineers and enthusiasts alike that CD in its current 16-bit form just isn't good enough for top notch sound quality. The resolution limit imposed by 16-bit digital leaves little scope for improvement of hardware.

But what's caused the sudden flurry of interest in a new high resolution audio CD? The answer: video. Not the bulky tape format we're used to at present, but a new system using a CD size Digital Video Disc. DVD video players are expected to hit the streets next spring. Using a finer laser beam and smaller pits on the silver disc, DVD discs can hold nearly eight times the information of a standard CD, enough to carry

a full length feature film and surround-sound soundtrack. It didn't take long for the audio world to start thinking about all of the extra information they could cram onto one of these discs to create a Super Audio CD.

At present there is one formal proposal for a Super Audio CD based on DVD discs, the Acoustic Renaissance for Audio's HQAD system. But Sony's DSD system, originally developed for archiving their music catalogue, is also a potential contender. We asked a number of industry experts to give us their views on these systems, as well as asking Sony to describe DSD in more detail. We first published a description of ARA's HQAD system in the September '95 issue of Hi-Fi World.

MISSION

"Thank you for giving me the opportunity to comment on DVD. Unfortunately I have not been one of the few to have heard either of the two audio formats (Sony's DSD and ARA's HQAD) in their current development stages. Having said that, both will offer a substantial perceived increase in sound quality.

Sony's DSD format has ready been described as a 'quantum leap' (by

Sony!) in audio performance over conventional CDs. Its 100kHz bandwidth and 120dB dynamic range are undoubtedly far better than any commercially available domestic digital system. It appears to offer only limited flexibility, in that it can only run at multiples of 44.1kHz and 48kHz sampling frequencies and be configured to run 74minutes of high quality multi-channel music. The inherent ultrasonic performance of single bit will help out-of-band filtering (as with today's 1 bit systems) but care has to be taken when

departing from a conventional linear PCM system so as not to introduce inter-modulation back into the audio band. Data compression using high data rates are not as efficient as linear PCM and are psychoacoustic type. Studio processing will be complicated if 1-bit is used, again deteriorating the sound quality.

The Acoustic Renaissance for Audio's (ARA) conventional linear PCM system will provide a higher quality two channel audio medium. I have had many respected audio

WHAT IS HQAD?

HQAD is a high quality audio-only specification proposed for DVD discs. It uses a 24-bit, 96kHz sampling PCM system. The body behind HQAD is the ARA - Acoustic Renaissance for Audio. Founded by Professor Hirokazu Negishi, Director of the Design and Development Centre of Canon Inc., Japan, their members include: Bob Stuart - Technical Director of Meridian, Professor Malcolm Hawksford - Dept. of Audio Engineering at Essex University and David Meares - R&D Manager of the BBC's Audio and Acoustics R&D department.

engineers tell me that high resolution (true 20-bit or greater) systems provide an ideal medium for audio storage. The high resolution pushes the quantisation noise below that of the analogue noise floor, masking digital artefacts. Frequencies past 48kHz (HQAD's upper frequency limit) are not encoded, but they are barely audible and may only comprise unwanted noise. HQAD's data compression techniques are similar to computer data compression i.e. data in equals data out. This is very important. By extending the

sampling frequency to 96kHz from 48kHz only requires approx. 30% increase in space as the HF program can be efficiently compressed without loss (this is not so with 1-bit). This can be further improved by pre-filtering to 30kHz, while still offering the advantages of the high sampling rate.

HQAD offers a great deal of flexibility to the disc producer. Depending upon program length and the required number of channels, it is possible to vary the number of channels from 2 to 8, sampling rates from 48 to

96kHz and between 16 and 24 bit resolution. This information is then embedded into the code. The maximum rate 2 x 24bit at 96kHz is better than current converter technology so it will ensure a continual improvement in sound as technology progresses. HQAD will also support backwards compatibility with current CD software, which will encourage consumer acceptability.™

Steve Sells, Verity Labs (Mission)



“Thank-you for allowing me to comment on the ARA proposal on the new standard for audio DVD and Sony's DSD.

Sony's DSD is a fairly conventional 1-bit 64 times oversampled delta-sigma ADC technology. I have for several years been researching the performance of delta-sigma ADCs with a view to producing our own Analogue to Digital converters for the professional market. Indeed, we have just been told that we have been successful in receiving a European Union grant (under FUSE) to develop and design the silicon needed to produce a radically new form of Analogue to Digital convertor for the professional market.

The research done to date includes computer simulations on the performance of different noise shapers. One of the models was a fifth order, 64 times oversampling noise shaper similar to the Sony DSD. This model used a 3-bit output, not 1-bit, and will perform to a better standard than DSD. However, in researching noise shapers, we uncovered a number of subjectively important errors that degrade sound quality. This is why on our 1024 convertor we use 8 dithered noise shapers running at 192 times oversampling to reduce this problem. The problem relates to the number of output pulses available to reconstruct the output; the limited number limits high frequency

resolution. I thought it might be interesting to see these results.

The plot below shows the filtered output from the noise shaper. This is 22.05kHz, at -40dB. It clearly shows considerable noise as the noise shaper hunts around trying to represent the output. Another test I did was a spectrum analysis at 22.05kHz 0dB output. In-band noise was at -135dB. Remember that this is a 3-bit output, not one bit. One bit would be about 15dB worse. This gives good agreement with the DSD figure of 120dB dynamic range. Note Actual signal-to-noise would be worse than -109B. This represents 18-bit performance.

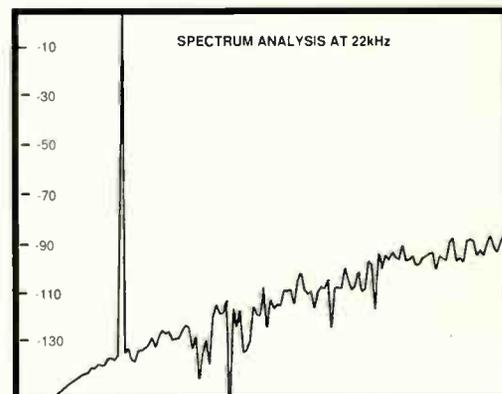
Much more worrying than signal-to-noise is high frequency resolution, as seen by the sine wave at -40dB. The fundamental resolution at 100dB is -2dB. For DSD, this figure would relate to -90dB. This is not even 16-bit performance for high frequency resolution.

The new structure I have developed (I can't give any details at present as patents have not been filed) gives theoretical signal-to-noise of 200dB, and can resolve -100dB 22.4 kHz to an accuracy of -0.001dB. Moreover a signal at -60dB 22.05kHz looks like a perfect sine wave. This exceeds 24-bit performance across the whole bandwidth.

The DSD system probably sounds

better than other ADCs at the moment. It is, however, severely limited and will be radically improved upon in a couple of years. On the other hand the ARA proposal, by being technology non-specific would allow improvements in ADC design in the future.

I cannot possibly recommend the DSD proposal; indeed it would be a



The plot above shows the filtered output from the noise shaper. This is 22.05kHz, at -40dB. It clearly shows considerable noise as the noise shaper hunts around trying to represent the output.

disaster if DVD was to be implemented in this way. The ARA proposal, 24-bit at 96kHz would, if perfectly implemented, be theoretically perfect. DSD is severely limited and would not be the ultimate performance. Indeed, we may find in the future with better ADCs that even conventional 16-bit CD could sound better.™

Rob Watts, DPA Digital

SONY®

“At this point, we are at the very early stage of developing a concept that we think will become a key enabling technology for the music industry. Sony hasn't officially proposed DSD as an encoding technology for DVD high density discs. While DVD has triggered a mad rush to fill up these 4.7GB discs with music, Sony is the only company in comprehensive talks with the people who make music - record labels, recording engineers, mastering engineers - to begin to describe a migration path for technology that will prepare our label and the industry for the future.

Sony has worked closely with its music label, Sony Music, to discuss its long-term needs. The result is DSD, a technology which we feel holds tremendous promise for addressing a the critical challenges facing our industry.

QUALITY AND ARCHIVAL STORAGE

In the US, Sony Music has approx. 300,000 analogue masters, 90,000 lacquers and tens of thousands of metal parts. The older material is reaching the limits of longevity. Sony Music has begun a monumental archiving project to transfer all this analogue material to a digital archive.

We needed a digital encoding technology that could capture all the information stored on the analogue master. DSD offers a solution at the A/D stage because of its tremendous

bandwidth (flat to 100kHz) and dynamic range (>120dB to 20kHz).

STABILITY AND MULTIFORMAT CONVERSION

DSD signals can be easily converted to a variety of bit-rates and sampling frequencies. Thus far, Sony has demonstrated prototype DSD recorders which operate at 64fs (fs=44.1kHz), a sampling rate of 2.8MHz. DSD can be easily down-converted by dividing by a whole number integer to produce a variety of “commonly used sampling rates”, including 24-bit, 96kHz.

FUTURE EXPANDABILITY

It should also be noted that DSD is not restricted to 64fs. Our demonstrations to date have used a prototype DSD recorder which operates at 64fs. However, there is nothing to rule out higher sampling rates such as 128fs or 256fs.

Besides the sampling rate, the other factor that affects quality will be noise-shaping. In this regard, the higher the order of the filter the better. Our prototype is currently using a fifth order filter, but again this does not preclude using higher order filters in the future.

In regards to noise shaping, University of York Professor James Angus in his paper 'The One-Bit Alternative for Audio Processing and Mastering' points out a much more significant strength of one-bit systems:

“...the noise shaping filter is a function of the encoding process. It does not affect the decoding, which is the same

irrespective of the noise shaping filter. This means that tapes recorded with different noise shapers can be interchanged providing the sampling rate is the same. This has some important consequences:

- The signal quality can be improved by changing the noise shaping filter without affecting the format.
- The recorder's performance can be optimised for different applications (e.g. higher bandwidth, same noise) by changing the noise shaping filter and not the format.

PRODUCTION

In speaking with record labels, there is far more interest in improving and adding value to the current Compact Disc than there is in introducing a new high density carrier. DSD can actually help achieve both.

It is expected that the first step DSD will take into the production environment will be in the mastering studio. By providing a better A/D stage which transfers more of the information from an analogue master to the digital domain, coupled with very precise decimation back to 16-bit 44.1kHz, higher quality, standard density CDs will be possible.

In terms of the possibility of future high density discs, DSD can help record companies to create a high quality archive from which they can draw once higher resolution carriers are available.” David Kawakami, Sony New Technology.

We asked David Kawakami to comment on a few important issues regarding the future of Super Audio CD.

1) If the DSD system is adopted as a future medium on DVD, will it be backward compatible?

Two weeks ago in Tokyo, an international music industry committee, put together expressly to explore the question of high density 'pure audio' DVD, issued its first 'wish list' to the DVD consortium of companies. On the subject of backwards compatibility, the committee was very clear by stipulating, "CD discs must play on

DVD machines" and "DVD audio discs must play on CD machines".

2) How do you think your system compares to the ARA's HQAD system, 24-bit/96kHz?

24-bit, 96kHz is another incremental step in the improvement of PCM audio. DSD is a more sweeping longer term proposal designed to meet a broader agenda of needs of the music industry for the next 10-20 years.

3) We heard a rumour that DSD had already been selected as the next high quality audio

system for DVD discs. Is this true?

Recommendations were issued by the Advanced Digital Audio (ADA, a subset of the Japan Audio Society) conference to the DVD Pure Audio Working Group. Although the recommendations did not mention DSD by name, it asked for many of the characteristics of DSD (100kHz bandwidth, scalability, etc).

In closing, David Kawakami said "although our approaches are different, Sony and the ARA seem to desire the same thing - better audio" ●

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SOFT IMPACT

Jon Marks lends an ear to Celestion's imposing new £430 Impact 30 floorstanders.

When Celestion's Impact 30 loudspeakers came through the door I heaved a sigh of relief. A pair of £430 floorstanders surely would not cause too much exertion. Wrong again! It was time for a work out as I moved these 'speakers around to get the best sound out of them.

Sitting down with thoughts of Zimmer frames crossing my mind, I relaxed briefly to the dance strains of Empirion's *Narcotic Influence* CD single. With the Da Capo/8000CDM and Audiolab 8000S the Impact 30s produced a big, beefy drum machine which suited this track well, even if it was more amorphous than I've come to expect. The rather loose bass did slow the rhythmic drive of the CD a little, but it still had enough gumption left to get me bobbing on the settee.

Looking for the spaciousness of a well recorded live set, I turned to BR5-49's *Live from Robert's*. This produced a better spread of sound than the heavily processed Empirion CD. Bass was also tauter and more focused, but still failed to render the organic resonance and leading edge twang of double bass notes. With 'Hillbilly Thang' a rather thick, dull midrange edited out most of the incidental details that this CD is teeming with; where there is usually the clinking of glass beer jugs, with the 30s it sounded as though the barman had decided on plastic jugs all round. By the same token, vocals and guitars emerged from behind the plane of the 'speakers, foreshortening the soundstage's perspective.

Elgar's violin concerto in B minor and Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* were pictures painted in much the same

way. The sound generally lacked detail and projection. At least this avoided the glassy sheen that many 'speakers add, but at the same time I would prefer to have been given rather more insight. However, the music did still flow along agreeably - bass related problems were less in evidence here, and on simpler passages most of the emotion of the piece was captured.

Switching to vinyl and the B-52s' eponymous album 'Planet Claire', its energetic midrange and treble helped to brighten the 30s' sound. It also revealed the upper register's shortcomings - cymbals lacked the harmonics that make their sound really shimmer and female vocals had a hardness to them. Swapping the B-52s for Tracy Chapman's *Crossroads* and Tina Turner's *Simply the Best* LPs resulted in much the same.

I have to say that for £429 the Celestion Impact 30s don't really deliver the kind of sonic goods you'd expect. While they produce a passable result with processed music like Empirion and Speedjack (reviewed in August by Viv Craske), they lack the control, subtlety and insight necessary for really getting to grips with music of a more acoustic nature ●

Celestion Impact 30
£429

Celestion International
Foxhall Road,
Ipswich
IP3 8JP
Tel: 01473 322222

WORLD VERDICT

Bass possesses insufficient control while midrange and treble lack detail and projection. Uninspiring.

Measured Performance
see p103

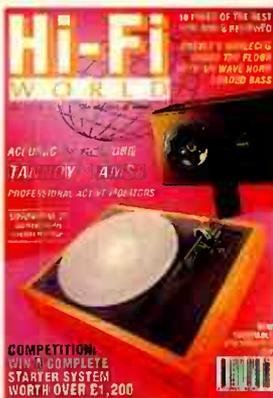
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LETTER OF THE MONTH

HELPFUL BURGLARS

My photographic studio was recently broken into and, as well as camera equipment, most of my hi-fi was taken. The burglars took anything that was fairly new and modern, that is anything black box natured.

Two recent purchases I had made were old battered 60s' gear - a Leak Troughline mono tuner and a Rogers Cadet II valve amplifier. The burglars had left these untouched on the hi-fi rack, obviously believing them to be of no use. I connected them to a small pair of budget speakers (Rogers LS1) which were left behind a couch and not seen by the burglars.

Quite frankly I was astounded at the result! Firstly it persuaded me to listen to the radio, which I rarely did before. As a result I found myself discovering a variety of new types of music I'd previously ignored, as well as several interesting stations I was not aware of. To me it was a whole new entertainment arena.

Secondly, it has led me to question my previous expensive purchases. Three thousand pounds worth of gear was stolen yet I'm now happily listening to a system costing only £300 (including £150 for the Rogers LS1s). The sound is full, warm, clear and detailed and very listenable. I find far less to criticise about this system than I did with my own reference system! I have not even had the Troughline or the Cadet serviced yet - my only input was to construct a home made aerial from an old chrome-tubed chair. My next purchase will be the Stereo Decoder that I expect will improve quality still further.

If we were to believe all that manufacturers and marketing men told us we would all assume that hi-fi was now of ultimately superior sound to its older predecessors. I have learnt otherwise - albeit the hard way. I think more people should be warned of the perils of forever expecting quality to rise in proportion to money spent. Don't believe the hype.

**Jonny Thompson
Branch Place,
London.**

At Hi-Fi World we are well aware that many older products were real goodies. That's why you'll find items like the Garrard 401 and Leak Troughline listed in World Favourites. I cannot emphasise enough however that our comments apply to properly serviced and aligned samples, used with care. Old valve based products often possess capacitors and resistors that are out of specification or just dud. Electrolytic capacitors in particular age and fail. Such components should be replaced, but with good quality modern items designed for audio use. The Troughline has a superb measured audio performance but is very insensitive. For best results (i.e. full quieting) it needs an aerial signal of 2mV or more, which in most areas means using an outdoor aerial. I suggest you give that chair on your chimney pot the push as soon as possible; a decent aerial costs little. In London, you need one, since its transmitters are a long way south, at Wrotham (BBC) and Crystal Palace (IBA).
NK



ROGERS WOOFERS

When Rogers announced the AB1 subwoofer for the legendary LS3/5A a couple of years back, I immediately 'phoned them to see if they planned a similar device to suit their Studio 3 (derived from the LS3/5A), which I have been using since I won a

Rogers' AB1 subwoofers add bass power and depth to the LS3/5as



stunningly simple and very welcome solution: "If you want AB3s that much we'll make you some", they said.

So, I recently picked up what I believe to be the world's only pair of AB3 subwoofers from the Rogers factory. I was also treated to a tour of the design, development and manufacturing facilities and a chinwag with designer Andy Whittle. The fact that car

problems caused me to arrive late on a Friday afternoon, when Godfearing folk are heading for home, or the pub, was brushed aside.

One or two cynics have told me that Rogers only needed to modify a pair of AB1s. This is to completely miss the point. Rogers could have said 'tough', but they didn't. Instead they went out of their way to produce a beautiful pair of subs, properly decked out with AB3 badges etc., all for the standard price of the AB1.

I now have a very nice sounding system and cannot thank Rogers enough for their contribution to it. So long as we have companies with this commitment to customers, Rogers slogan, 'Great British Hi-Fi', will continue to be more than just words.

Colin Berresford Billinge, Lancs.

Things aren't as bad for Britons as the gloom and doom reports of newspapers would have us believe. Our Japanese kit distributor said he wanted to offer "support for World Audio Design customers in Japan".

Taken aback that this seemed to be a novel idea to him, I mentioned it to colleagues who had lived there and was told that very little support is offered for old products; you're meant to buy the latest model instead.

This attitude works against the establishment of a worthy and valued brand image. Old Japanese product, to the Japanese, is tat. That's why they love to import our old gear, especially Garrard 301s, because it was genuinely built to last. This idea of intrinsic longevity is especially strong to the British and it is likely to be preserved by Quad, Rogers and others because it is recognised as a valuable part of their overall image. I think it unlikely such things will be junked so easily. NK

A SOUND DANCE

My system - Pioneer PD-S703 CD, Pioneer A400X amplifier, TDL RTL 3 loudspeakers, Cable Talk III cable in separate runs (bi-wired) and Tandy Gold interconnects.

Firstly allow me to congratulate you on a very informative magazine. Thanks for bringing back your World Favourites Guide; it might not be very technically informative, but I sure as hell know if World says "it's good", it damn well is.

This is my first ever separates system and as you

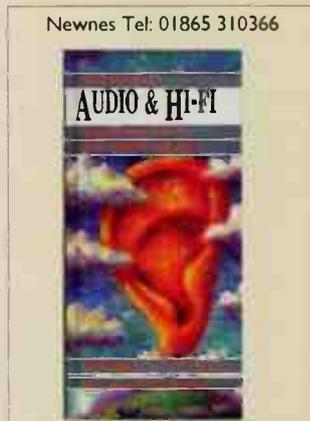


REL's powered Strata subwoofer will bring tight, deep bass to any system.

can imagine, after setting it up for the first time, I jumped up and down like a yo-yo; I even managed to rave to Pavarotti's Nessun Dorma. I wasn't on any medication, but I sure loved my new system.

However, after having lived with it for eight months, I usually sit and listen to Dorma rather than dance to it. I feel it really could be more musical and present better bass extension, especially with classical music and at lower listening levels. How can I achieve this without dumping any equipment. Would a DAC solve my problems? I was thinking along the lines of either the Arcam Delta Black Box 50 or Teac DT-1 or any

Newnes Tel: 01865 310366



This Engineers' pocket book makes an interesting read for hi-fi enthusiasts

DAC in this price range. I really don't want a cheapie DAC below £300 as I intend to upgrade to the Teac T-1 transport in a year or so. I would prefer a DAC with several digital inputs for my laser disc and other digital products I might purchase. Will the transport on the PD-S703 cope with the DACs mentioned?

Also, what's all this jitter business? I think it absurd that in 1996 you need a three box CD player to achieve an audiophile sound. What's so wrong with a one box player with, for example, two separate power supplies? It's all marketed at gullible audiophiles like myself who will spend any amount for a perfect sound.

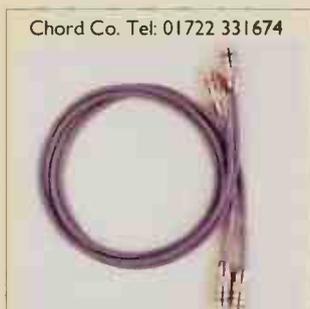
Thanks for your time and keep up the excellent work.
Christopher Bantar
Luton,
Bedfordshire.

Hmm. It's odd that you find bass extension limited. The A400X and the TDL RTL 3s especially are both known for their deep, full sounding bass quality. However, I don't know the Pioneer PD-S703 player you are using, so this may well be the culprit if it possesses weak bass. I think you are right to consider a DAC as your next upgrade, as the PD-S703 will make a good transport. Spending £500-£600 on a completely new CD player will only get you one rung up the ladder. The same spent on a high quality DAC will get you much further in sound quality stakes.

For musicality and detail I'd recommend you take a listen to DPA Digital's Enlightenment DAC. This is a discrete design DAC, rather than a chip-based product, offering superb performance and value. It should bring a

great improvement over the Pioneer; hopefully it'll have you dancing once again.

If you really want earth shaking bass, with very deep extension, your best bet is to go for one of the REL subwoofers. The £500 Strata is a powered sub, so won't effect any of the quality or transparency of your main 'speakers, and drives deep down to 20Hz. At low listening levels this will also allow you the flexibility to turn the bass up a touch, which is useful.
DB



Chord Co. Tel: 01722 331674

Get the best from your DAC upgrade with this Chrysalis interconnect

GOODBYE GOLDRING!

I am at the moment using a Goldring 1042 cartridge in an AR Legend, Rega 300 arm, Ringmat, Denon 350 II amp, JPW AP2 speakers. I have an Audiovector 10X high output cartridge from 1984 used only 6 months, it is one that Onelife Research produced before Dynavector took over and it weighs 9.5g.

I had it in a Focus One deck before I bought the Legend. I have been using a K9 since 1986 'till this year when I fitted the Goldring. I had forgotten about the 10X.

What I would like to know is if it is worthwhile changing the Goldring for the 10X. It will mean shimming up the arm as it is taller, also suspension would need slight alteration.

You will be wondering what is wrong with the 1042.

Nothing really, but it does dig into any muck at the bottom of



Ortofon's VMS2E has a smooth, warm sound - all for £10

the groove, which the K9 didn't. It is mostly records bought off markets etc secondhand. P.S. I can't remember what the 10X sounded like new. Having the records cleaned hasn't done any good.
D.C. Rayner
Glendale,
Truro.

Snap, crackle and pop comes from muck in the bottom of the groove, as you say, but also from groove damage. The 1042 stylus will certainly highlight groove damage and this is always a potential problem when upgrading from a stylus that was contemporary in the time of Stonehenge. However, the 1042 stylus should be little different from others when it comes to reading what lurks in the bottom of the groove. For record cleaners to be effective they must Hoover up muck, rather than washing it to the bottom of a groove; that's why most use a vacuum pump.

One other little mentioned problem you might care to consider is loss of lubricant from the vinyl. Believe it or not, records dry out and can get progressively noisier with age, even when unplayed. I've never tried this, but Rocket WD40, available in

car accessory shops, is supposed to provide a cure. I believe it is a silicone lubricant.

Quite which of these three potential ailments afflicts your records, I cannot be sure. What I can be sure about is that the 1042 is not meant for agricultural duty. When it comes to ploughing, you could swap the stylus for a 1012, which is more of a blunt instrument. Or, for real masking of such problems, try an Ortofon VMS2E. This extraordinary device tracks like crazy at 2gms, so it won't cause groove damage, yet it costs just £10 or so. Falling treble output in the frequency response gives it a warm, cossetting sound that helps disguise groove gunk and collision with boulders. Have fun. NK

Audiophile Int. Tel: 01276 855578



Try some new vinyl courtesy of Audiophile International.

FINDING A DREAM SYSTEM, NO MESSING

I'm only 24 years old, but not new to hi-fi. My dad had a separates system when I was in Junior school. I slowly got the drift of hearing good sound and bad over many years.

Unfortunately, I was in a bike accident three years ago and I am now disabled. I have been told I will very soon be receiving a large

amount of compensation. Hi-fi is my love and so I would like a state-of-the-art system.

I already have this system in my



Aura's VA-80 has a sweet, musical sound that belies its £250 price tag

bedroom. I only use it as a music room. Kenwood 1030 amplifier; Pioneer PD M603 CD; Jamo Classic 6 loudspeakers; Cable Talk - the flat one; Tandy Gold patchcords. My room is 12ft x 12ft. I only play CDs.

The sound of my system is quite good, but I want a lot better. Money isn't a problem, but if I am going to spend over £2,000 or even £3,000 and more, I need to know the best possible set-up for my room. There is a lot out there and I don't want to get in a mess.

**D Eckeshall
Warley,
W. Midlands.**

Beware of the acoustics of your twelve by twelve room, which will have a strong resonant mode up around 90Hz (high-ish bass) and is likely to boom noticeably. Keeping the speakers away from the walls reduces the drive into the room, but this is likely to be inconvenient.

If you choose small, quality wall standers, which I suspect is the best option, then tread carefully or you could end

up with strong one-note bass. Some small cabinets peak in this region, giving the impression of speedy, punchy bass, but in your room output in this frequency band may become overpowering, according to the furnishings and exact room geometry.

You need to consider wall standers with shelved bass output, specifically to cope with wall reinforcement. Try Rogers LS1s as a starter, or B&W DM302s.

One of the most remarkable CD players I have heard recently is the DPA Renaissance. I think you could well start at this point with CD and try other high quality sources against it, like the Marantz CD-16.

Quite which amplifier you use depends upon your tastes. The Aura VA-80 is exceptionally smooth as solid-state amps go. The Denon range have real muscle, if not as much subtlety. Above this price level you are starting to look at pre/power combos, but high power is likely to go unused in a small room. NK



Wire up your new system with Chord's Chrysalis interconnect.

SHORT WIRE SHORT-LIST

My system comprises a Micromega Solo CD. Audiolab 8000C/P and bi-wired Alphason Orpheus loudspeakers. Source interconnect is Audionote ANS and amplifier connection is made with Kimber 8TC. Treble speaker cable is Sonic Link Black, bass is Audionote ANB.

My problem is that I wish to purchase a reference-quality interconnect to use at the source and am unsure of which to buy. It must be available in 0.5m lengths, it must not introduce glare or brightness and it must retain the system's open, neutral quality.



Van den Hul's First and Second carbon interconnects.

Cables I have short-listed include: Audionote ANVx, Audionote ANV, Cogan Hall Intermezzo Reference, Mandrake Silver, Lieder, Silver Sounds, Kimber and XLO.

Which do you think would slot synergetically into my system? I intend to use the Audionote ANS to hook up the amps. The new interconnect must also represent a significant quality increase over the already excellent ANS. Finally, do you think any of

the aforementioned cables would be too over-specified for my system?

**Jennifer McNeill
Antrim,
N. Ireland.**

in your system you are right to recognise that any glare or brightness introduced by a cable is to be avoided. The Audiolab 8000C/P could be accused of being a touch clinical, although very clean with it. And the Ribbon tweeter in your Alphason Orpheus loudspeakers has flat and well extended treble, as well as good delivery of fine detail. It will very quickly highlight any sharpness, especially from a CD

source. Taking this into consideration, I'm going to err on the side of caution and recommend one of van den Hul's carbon interconnects, which I find work especially well between CD and amplifier, tempering any splashiness or sibilance without compromising detail and openness. There are three to try: First, Second and Thunderline. First is a pure carbon cable and the softest sounding one; Second uses a metal screen and I find it has better bass - tighter and stronger; Thunderline is a

... 47 >

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Rega Ela, black, immaculate but no boxes, £399.00
Spica TC50 unusual wedge shape, s/h, £249.00 **Sonus** Faber Minuetto, ex-dem, one pair only £650.00 **Ex-dem** items include most Castle models, Epos ES11, ES22, Heybrook Sextet, Martin Logan SL3, CLS3z, Naim SBL, Neat Critique.

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SHOULD AN UPGRADE BE DIGITAL?

My current system consists of - LPI2, Lingo, Trampolin, Cirkus, an Ittok arm with Goldring 1042 cartridge, Arcam Delta 70.3 with QED Digit, Naim 72 with Naim 180 and Linn Kabers tri-wired. There is also an NAD 6340 cassette deck.

The problem is how to upgrade. Do I wait until I can afford two 180s to tri-amp, do I add a Hi-Cap to the system, go for a moving-coil cartridge, or improve the CD side of things?

I have around 200 LPs and a slowly growing CD collection, but in view of potential changes to this

format I am reluctant to go too far down the digital road at present. Would the Ortofon MC25 recently reviewed be compatible with my Linn/Naim system?

Charles MacDonald Irvine, Ayrshire.

I shouldn't worry about any 'possible changes' to the CD format, assuming you are talking about ARA's proposals for high-quality audio on a super-density CD. These will in any case allow for the current CD standard two-channel audio to be played back on a current CD player. Apart from that, it will be a year or two at least before they appear, since the earliest examples will be dedicated to film or CD ROM. Meanwhile, there are more than a million recordings on CD out there, so choice is not exactly going to be limited.

Therefore, I urge you to improve the digital end. The Arcam Delta 70.3, although now discontinued, is fundamentally a good transport, though admittedly a little long in the tooth. QED's Digit is certainly a good little converter, but it is a budget one and the Arcam transport deserves better. The converter therefore needs attention. I suspect an Audiolab 8000DAC would be one to try in your system, since it might well balance out a degree of warmth in the transport. Otherwise, my own favourites are Meridian's 561, Sugden's SDD-1, and of course Pink Triangle's Da Capo. For a strongly forward, very punchy presentation, which I think you might find attractive, try a DPA Digital Little Bit Mk III converter. EB

Chord Co. Tel: 01722 331674



Try a new interconnect too. This Chord Chrysalis should do the trick.

DISC DOUBTS

I am interested in purchasing the KLPP1, but I want to ask whether you think it will be compatible with my turntable and CD, as I obviously don't want to buy it and find that it



The Audio Innovations' P2 Valve phono stage is one of the best we've heard

doesn't suit my equipment.

I have a Linn Sondek, with Lingo and Ekos, using a K18 II stylus (which at some stage I'd like to upgrade to a MC), a P700 transport and a Cobalt 307 DAC, with vdH 'The First' connected to my Creek 4140S2 amp. Can a vdH interconnect be used between the KLPP1 and power amp without problems? Similarly, vdH loudspeaker cable?

What are the dimensions of the KLPP1? I use Sonique speakers rated at 88dB into 8 ohms, so I suspect none of your power amps are powerful enough if I go down that road.

Paul Martin Park Holme, Australia.

Our KLPP1 preamplifier will work well with the Linn K18 moving magnet cartridge. When it comes to moving coils, no valve input stage can match the low noise of modern FETs, especially when they are paralleled up to noise cancel, a technique used in many of today's super quiet chips. However, KLPP1 is still quiet enough to work with most MCs having reasonable output, like Ortofons and van den Huls, to name two quality makes. Very low output types, like Lyras and Linns are best matched in using a quality step-up transformer. This approach eliminates hiss

completely. And dare I say it, a good valve preamplifier, like KLPP1 or Audio Innovations P2, is streets ahead of a solid state design, which commonly sound coarse, hard and bright by comparison. NK

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KICK OUT THE SPIDERS?



A vintage valve tuner or a modern solid-state design? Noel Keyword looks at the differences.



Think of it as buying an old Roller, tatty with neglect and careless use. Riding around with the engine spluttering and spiders still on board is surely not what you would have bought such a car for? Refurbish it and enjoy its charms.

In my view the Leak Troughline is one of the greats; paying £5 in a car boot sale and using a steel chair frame as an aerial isn't quite what I had in mind when recommending it. Troughlines might come cheap, relatively speaking, but they will in most cases need repair and realignment. Bear in mind that they are around 30 years old and will suffer the ravages of time. In my view, you'd be better off buying a new tuner, like a Denon TU-260L or a NAD 412 than running a Troughline as found.

Remember that Denon can sell you a TU-260L for just £120 - a bargain. NAD's super 412 costs £190 and leaves even expensive rivals standing. A restored Troughline will cost more than both, reflecting its real abilities.

Here's the difference between a Troughline, or any old valve tuner if it comes to that, and a NAD 412, in our

view its nearest modern rival and undoubtedly a fine design. My measurements underline some interesting facts about both old and new, and the importance of the aerial.

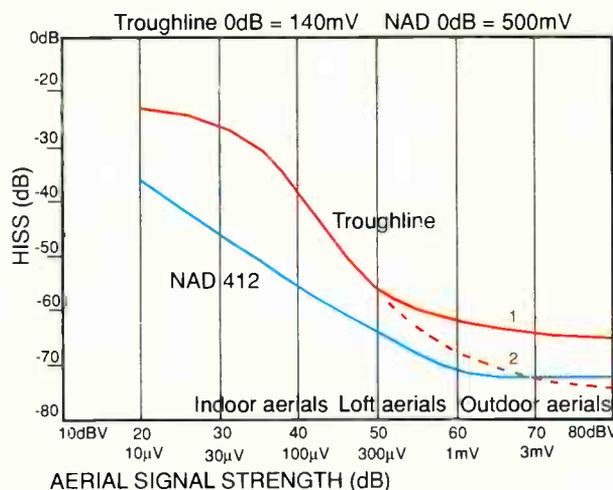
Dominic Baker, Hi-Fi World's editor, and I choose to use Troughlines, but they're both in slow failure mode. Restoration beckons - coming soon I hope. Like old cars, these tuners are frail and demand care and attention. Our experiences make me believe that buyers should beware.

AGEING

Unlike transistors, valves age, losing emission and gain. In a tuner, this means sensitivity will slowly decrease, noise rise and, in the end, limiting will fail. An old Quad FM1 I tested recently varied its audio output level as I varied the strength of signal input from a test generator. Its limiting wasn't working at all - and Troughlines are little different.

A valve change in a tuner will cost £20-£30 or so, hardly a fortune. Low power valves have a long life, but not an infinite one. Around 6,000-10,000 working hours can be expected.

A valve change isn't guaranteed to cure all sins though. My own Troughline isn't limiting properly and a valve change gave no improvement. This makes little difference to me, because I use a large outdoor aerial that delivers 2mV-6mV or so from the main stations (Wrotham and Crystal Palace) and, as my graph of quieting performance shows, at these levels my Troughline (2 - see graph), at -74dB, is quieter than NAD's 412, which measures a typical -72dB. It also gives full audio output, a not so massive 200mV from the original germanium transistor



Quieting graphs show how hiss decreases as aerial signal strength increases. Stereo sensitivity is quoted at -50dB hiss. Most tuners need at least 1mV to minimise hiss, a condition termed "full quieting". The NAD412 works well even with a mediocre aerial.



Like all electronic products of the time, the Troughline was hardwired, using discrete components. Many, like high value resistors, become noisy or fail.

stereo decoder. If my tuner was hooked up to a poor aerial though, it wouldn't do very well.

We discovered that Dominic's Troughline (1 - see graph) has started to become noisy (-65dB) and although a valve change helped, dropping noise to -70dB or so, it appears that a component is on its way out.

Old fashioned components, especially electrolytics and high value carbon resistors, age and fail. Thirty years is too much to expect from them. Today's components last much longer, with the exception of electrolytics, which last for ten years or so.

Dominic's tuner limits properly and he finds it very sensitive, pulling in pirates easily. Measurement confirmed its sensitivity, which was nearly as good as a modern tuner. But on the minus side he's always found it tune sensitive, unlike mine. That's an alignment problem and measurement showed that his did distort quite badly as it tuned into and out of a station, whilst mine did not (AFC doesn't help).

So although in many ways our Troughlines work very well (both have flat audio frequency response and low distortion), neither is quite right. But we both use good aerials and this ameliorates a lot of problems.

ALIGNMENT

Oh what a problem this is. It makes tuners very difficult animals to service. Like most tuners the Troughline has two tuned RF stages and a local oscillator. These tuned sections have to be

adjusted so that they track well, right across Band II, 88MHz-108MHz. There is a triode mixer, with tuned anode load, followed by a pentode IF stage. Both need to be tuned to match each other for correct passband shape.

The IF stage is followed by two pentode limiter stages and again both possess tuned IF transformers that must be in adjustment. In all, there are three IF transformers, each with two tuning slugs apiece, preceded by the RF stages. Leak warned that the Troughline could not be aligned without suitable test equipment and this still holds today.

Alignment equipment is expensive and RF (Radio Frequencies) is a difficult field. It is only realistic to pay a bit for the time, knowledge and test equipment needed to put a Troughline right and, if ours are any guide, there's a good chance alignment will be needed, after repair.

We do have all the necessary alignment equipment but I'm reluctant to tamper with mine until it becomes absolutely necessary. Also, I want some spare IF transformers, just in case a slug breaks (which they do).

TROUGHLINE OR NAD?

As my quieting graph shows, the Troughline only draws ahead of NAD's 412 when it is getting a very strong signal. Otherwise, the NAD is considerably more sensitive and works better with indoor aerials. It produces no less than -20dB less hiss than a Troughline when fed a meagre 30µV, which is what you'd get from an indoor aerial.

There is more to it than this of course. The Troughline is fundamentally as accurate but has a walk-in sound stage and the sort of silky smoothness, especially noticeable on strings, that only valves can give. Troughlines also have nuclear bass, showing solid-state jobbies to be anaemic. NAD's 412, however, gets very close to our Leak fave; its a great tuner. If you don't want to have an argument about ownership with a bunch of spiders, and aren't the sort to get excited about RF test equipment, I suggest NAD ●



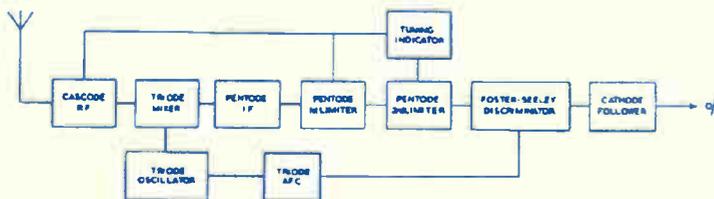
NAD's 412 VHF/FM silicon chips, plus their support circuits, are very well honed by the chip manufacturers. They offer a fine performance, with sufficient stability to need little alignment - and take up little room.

SERVICING

On no account should the pre-set trimmer capacitor C8 or the pre-set tuning slugs be tampered with or adjusted in any way.

It is not possible for an F.M. tuner of this calibre to be accurately aligned without using a double beam oscilloscope, F.M. signal generator complete with an accurate 'marker' oscillator and a D.C. valve voltmeter.

These requirements should be emphasised to a potential service engineer, and if all the above equipment is not available, work should not be started.



BLOCK CIRCUIT DIAGRAM OF 'TROUGH-LINE 3' F.M. TUNER



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AERIALS

The aerial is all important, even with modern tuners. Noel Keyword explains why.

Tuner sensitivity is quoted for -50dB hiss level, a mediocre figure that gives good intelligibility with speech - important when tuners were unknown as such and wireless reigned - but not high fidelity. There's a big difference between the two, shown by the **Quieting** graph I've drawn for this report. The term "quieting" refers to the way an FM tuner becomes progressively quieter (i.e. hiss free) as the aerial signal increases in strength.

The graph shows some interesting facts. You might be surprised to see that a creaky old valve tuner can be as quiet or quieter than most modern day solid-state wonders. Both suppress hiss to below -70dB if given enough aerial signal. And that's where the main difference between the two can be found. The Leak Troughline needs about 3mV to get below -70dB, against 1mV for a modern tuner like the NAD412 (modern tuners differ little in this area, so the NAD is representative).

Any good budget tuner will nowadays suppress hiss down to -50dB with just 25-40 millionths of a volt (25µV-40µV) from the aerial. In comparison the Troughline needs 60µV, which on paper appears a lot worse. What this amounts to though, in practical terms, is just another element on the aerial and for that you'll be stung another £10-£15. Adding an element provides around 3dB signal gain, or x1.4. All tuners, old and new, benefit from being fed by a proper aerial. Old tuners do need more, but modern ones still need a lot.

Giving a tuner the signal it needs has a greater impact than simple noise figures would suggest. You do get a lovely quiet back-

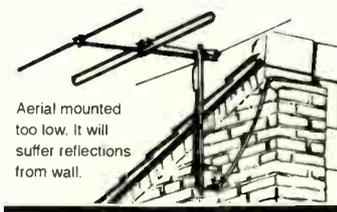
ground of course, but the apparent improvement in clarity and depth of soundstaging is more dramatic. An aerial, by reason of its directivity, also aids selectivity by cutting out off-axis stations. Point it at the local transmitter and signals off its directional "beam" are rejected.

HOW TO AIM IT

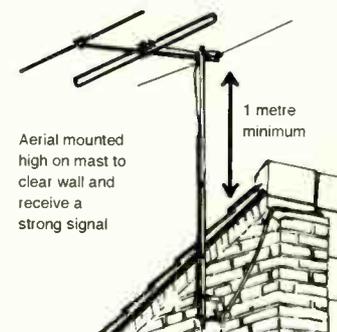
The one thing any aerial needs is height. Get it up as high as possible, but before fixing move it up/down 3ft or so to get maximum signal. Occasionally, a delayed reflection will cause local cancellations to occur, producing a null at one particular height, so experiment to avoid this possibility.

Similarly, swing the aerial around a bit laterally. Again, this is to ensure you are receiving as much as possible of the direct signal and as little as possible from local reflections off buildings.

If the two are close you may have to turn the aerial away from the compass heading of the transmitter. Britain has a network of large main trans-



BBC Engineering diagram



mitters (see map), originally erected by the BBC to provide carefully planned national coverage. Difficult dead spots, like deep valleys, are invariably served by a fill-in transmitter that relays output from the local transmitter; the map shows a forest of relays in Wales, for example. If you live in a valley you will probably have to point your aerial at a relay, not the main transmitter.

The BBC and IBA can provide service area maps that will identify the site of your local transmitter or relay. From this a compass and a piece of map reading will reveal which way to point the aerial - sort of. There are plenty of peculiarities. For example, Brightonians are served by a very local transmitter on a nearby hill, but a police station sits in the way, complete with its own transmitter. Half of Brighton's aerials point toward the local transmitter, but the other half point in exactly the opposite direction, to the Isle of Wight. It might be further away, but there's only water in between - no police transmitters. So be aware that quite a few options may face you. This is where it is handy to have a tuner with a signal strength meter. Have fun or, if your roof looks like no fun, get a professional aerial installer. It will cost £80-£150, but you won't regret it ●



I wasn't happy to see the Audio Engineering Society reiterating the industry's ingrained prejudices about reviewers and reviewing and putting them into print recently. They were published in a Standard on the subjective evaluation of loudspeakers.

The AES say reviews "contain biases or errors. Such errors may be serious when they cause a manufacturer to launch a new product, only to have it falter in the marketplace, or when biased opinions reach the general public through a product review in a magazine."

No evidence is offered in support of this assertion. The statement stands as a fact, when it is simply a prejudice. Let's look at this matter of listening tests and so called "objectivity" as the AES see it.

They demand that listening room dimensions shall be 20square metres minimum, with 2.1m minimum ceiling height. That is, roughly 5mx4m, or, say, a 16ft x 12ft living room. This is just big enough to prevent

"Anything other than a blind listening test is "to be deprecated" because it must exhibit bias. This is just plain absurd!"

low frequency room effects colouring a loudspeaker's bass performance

The simple truth is that many loudspeakers, possibly most, are used in rooms of smaller dimensions. Experienced and realistic designers, aware they must deliver a product that works well in real life situations, cleverly exploit small-room modes to add speed and punch to a 'speaker. The Linn Kan, Wharfedale Diamond, Tannoy 631 and a host of other contenders are wonderful in small rooms, because they are designed to excite small-room modes in the 80-120Hz region. Generations have marvelled at and have enjoyed 'speakers like this. Flat frequency response (above 180Hz or so) and superb imaging from what is nearly a near-point-

kaleidoscope

source are their particular strengths.

But they must not be judged in a large room, where bass will die and power input will be too great to fill the space. This condemns Britain's small speaker makers to suffering inaccurate reviews based upon unrealistic listening conditions, something the Standard purports to avoid.

I see more contradiction in their stipulation that "extensive use of commercial

sound absorbers or diffusers is not recommended" and then, further on, "efforts shall be made to damp and stagger low frequency room modes". There's so much energy in low frequency modes that to contro! them requires extensive use of sound absorbers, be it in the form of large padded settees (which do a great job) and/or tuned Helmholtz resonators. We use both in our room, by the way.

Similarly, the AES want "flutter echoes suppressed by diffusion or absorption", which is impossible unless diffusers or absorbers are used, which they don't recommend. Or are reviewers to use the traditional bookcase to achieve this end, because it isn't a diffuser even though it does diffuse? Oh what a muddle.

It's by using, in the past,

Mysteries from Noel Keywood



all the hoary old ideas the AES recommend in this paper that I have learnt how flawed they are.

Recognising that nearly all recordings are "inaccurate", simply because most microphones are inaccurate, the AES sail into another weirdo piece of unreality: reference recordings. By definition, such a recording (made with a perfect microphone in an anechoic chamber, no less) is completely unrepresentative

of anything commercially available. Yet here we are asked to judge a loudspeaker by it.

It goes on. Anything other than a blind listening test is "to be deprecated" because it must exhibit bias.

This is just plain absurd! At one point the AES in this standard try to ameliorate the influence of the curtain that a blind test requires, then later talk about retaining ceiling reflections because they "are an unavoidable condition of use". So is sighted listening.

By cataloguing the need to use a wide range of music programme, which I agree with, whilst at the same time imposing no time conditions, this "Standard" waves through the invidious practice of using quick fire music excerpts, during which listeners are expected to reach an informed view of a product. If ten loudspeakers are to be group tested in one day, as is usual because it's difficult to get experienced listeners to attend for longer, each loudspeaker gets 36 minutes. If six excerpts are

used, this gives 6 minutes per excerpt. Which is why so called "objective" group tests usually arrive at peculiar conclusions that go quite against the general view

No loudspeaker - or any product if it comes to that - must receive anything less than the sort of extended and relaxed auditioning that it would receive in real life. Contrived "objective" conditions are anything but, yet the AES fail to understand this.

At Hi-Fi World we long ago exceeded the abilities and conditions stipulated by the AES. We have a carefully treated listening room, but we also use smaller and larger rooms, for smaller and larger loudspeakers. We use many informed listeners, but rarely in a group. We use lengthy but relaxed listening sessions as a minimum. We also measure extensively and design and build our own loudspeakers, using the same software and suppliers as Britain's major manufacturers.

And there's the rub. We also know how little effort and investment some manufacturers put into their products and how flawed their engineering is. When, not unsurprisingly, they receive even mild criticism for quite blatant sins, like cheap metal dome tweeters, appalling load characteristics, honking cabinets and low quality drive units bought in for £1-£6 apiece, their reaction is to blame reviewers for what they hear and for the product "faltering in the marketplace". Methinks the problem lies elsewhere●



Silver Trophies

Restek's Charisma CD player and Fantasy amplifier have Douglas Floyd-Douglass thinking about polishing up his act.

Like solid silver bullion bars, the Restek Charisma CD player and Fantasy amplifier are weighty on the hand and glossy to the eye. They carry off that expensive feel too, with styling typically German; shiny stainless steel (in abundance) and minimalism in the button department.

In use though, the Resteks have their awkwardnesses. The CD player on/off button is positioned where

most players have their open/close function, so every time I tried to change music, I inadvertently switched the player off. Frustrating.

All rear connections, inputs and internal components are of impressive quality. Loudspeaker terminals are particularly good; you could easily wire the amplifier with solid 5mm cable if you had the inclination and budget. The package allures to a substantial performance.

Cosmetics aside, the polished silver wasn't really for me, the Resteks and I began to get along when the music played. On my trusty Stax headphones, the dynamic range and quietness of this CD player was quite evident. At points the noise floor of some recordings rose dramatically (in quiet passages it was most noticeable) indicating that the signal/noise ratio was quite exceptional.

For those of you that think
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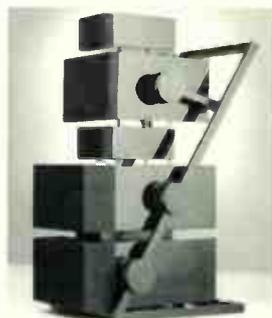
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Salif Keita, the African vocal magician, has tremendous power and the album Listen is a prime example of this. The Charisma CD player was smooth, obsessively clean and articulate. Plugging it into the amplifier, this was borne out in an exacting combination. Together, the two Resteks suit a fairly efficient loudspeaker best, as the 50 watt output is very clean (reminding me of a highly polished Japanese sound), but lacks balls. They need an engaging and excitingly balanced loudspeaker to bring them out of their shells. Sound is clinical, rather than captivating. This would suit 'speakers of character, the new JBL S2600 horns for example or larger Missions. Quads and QLNs need more transistor personality and power to

Trumpet was forward in the solo performances and a flawless midrange lent a spectacularly polished sound.

Simple Minds' 'Alive and Kicking' again displayed a superbly separated yet well integrated soundstage with snare drum tying the music together. Backing female vocals were rich, and the 'flat' midrange allowed the alto and soprano duet to embellish in harmony, with the two vocal parts clearly separable. At the bridge, where the sustained guitar plays out to welcome the solo piano, there was a great

This is a critical sounding combination that works in a deliberate fashion. Listen on your favourite loudspeakers, and if you like it, you'll get super clean and resolute delivery of detail. The combination could be accused of possessing little more character than a top end Japanese combo. But then, they're cleanly styled, nicely built and different enough from the norm. to make them an attractive alternative ●



balance their inherent neutrality and wake them up from their relative inefficiency.

Wynton Kelly's 'Temperance' is a moody, subtle and raspy recording with plenty of feel and subway-smoky emotion. The electronically 'silent' operational characteristics allowed the analogue recording to really shine, and I found myself enjoying the 'purist' accuracy a lot more than I had first imagined. Sax was deep, bubbly and all the salivant sounds were there in blatant reality. Upright bass - perfectly positioned in the soundstage - made the hairs on the back of my neck rise.

sense of anticipation followed by the Lillywhite bass and drum in unison with a magnificent vocal solo. . . it sent chills down my spine as the snare roll played out. I was really enjoying this.

On next to Elgar's Cello Concerto, the real timbre test. Not as impressive as the admittedly over engineered Simple Minds track (sorry, Steve), cellos did sound a bit dry due to their sparkling cleanliness. It was another one of those inevitable audio compromises - you can't have it both ways. Separation was again excellent and definition most impressive. Enigma variations sounded equally fine and was pleasantly devoid of dominant amplifier/source character. The timpanic crescendos never became distorted or compressed; the sound remained expansive and intact (albeit conservative) at all times.

Restek Charisma £979
Restek Fantasy £900

Restek UK
159 Dominion Road,
Worthing,
Sussex
BN14 8LD
Tel: 01903 207634

WORLD VERDICT

A clean and polished sound from this pairing makes them worth seeking out. Can be a little colourless though.

Measured Performance
see P103

"All I need is the right lead... "

- Sam Spade-Connector during his undercover investigations into the Mystery of the Lost Chord. He subsequently solved the case by utilizing a pair of ORTOFON SPK100 speaker cables.



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Dominic Baker

dB on the level

voice coil formers. It is vitally important that the tubular voice coil former, is perfectly round so that it aligns properly inside the magnet gap. It needs to be extremely stiff as well, so that it rigidly links the voice coil, where the driving force is developed, to the cone.

In cheaper drive units paper is often used as the former material. But this does a poor job of transferring heat away from the voice coil and prevents the use of Ferrofluid, which would soak into the former.

Aluminium is a common choice for higher performance drivers because it's light, more rigid than paper and efficient at drawing heat away from the coil.

Kapton, however, takes things a whole stage further. Kapton is a polyimide film that won't dent, crease, tear, melt or burn and isn't affected by humidity. Another feature is that it is non-conductive, so no eddy currents flow in the former (as they do in aluminium), giving a better extended high frequency response. It is also more efficient than aluminium (even black anodised aluminium) at dissipating heat in the voice coil, a useful ability considering that as the voice coil heats up its properties change and the frequency response of the driver is affected.

Kapton was once only available in a range of thin films, but can now be moulded and formed to produce complete cones, surrounds and spiders. Celestion use Kapton formers throughout their range of loudspeakers and many other high performance drivers also use Kapton, like the HDA midrange driver in Mission's 754 Freedom5s reviewed this month ●

FERROFLUID AND KAPTON

Although a bit of an obscure subject, I'd like to devote this month's column to loudspeaker voice coils. I was lucky enough to attend the Kensulat Voice Coil Symposium at the Heathrow Hilton a month or so back, and very interesting it was too. There were two core subjects discussed during the day: Kapton as a material for voice coil formers, and the use of Ferrofluid. I'm sure most readers will be familiar with the words 'Ferrofluid cooled tweeter' and maybe even 'Kapton voice coil former', but what exactly do they mean?

FERROFLUID

Ferrofluid, as the name implies, is a synthetic oil containing magnetic particles. This fluid is

injected into the magnet gap of a drive unit, where it is held in place by the strong magnetic field around the voice coil. Its presence enhances the performance of a drive unit in many ways.

Ferrofluid is around five times more thermally conductive than air, so heat is transferred away from the voice coil and into the magnet assembly and driver chassis more efficiently, improving power handling and linearity. For example, the voice coil of a large 2in. compression driver may reach 180°C with a power input of 15W over a three hour period. With Ferrofluid in the gap, this temperature would be reduced to around 80°C under the same conditions.

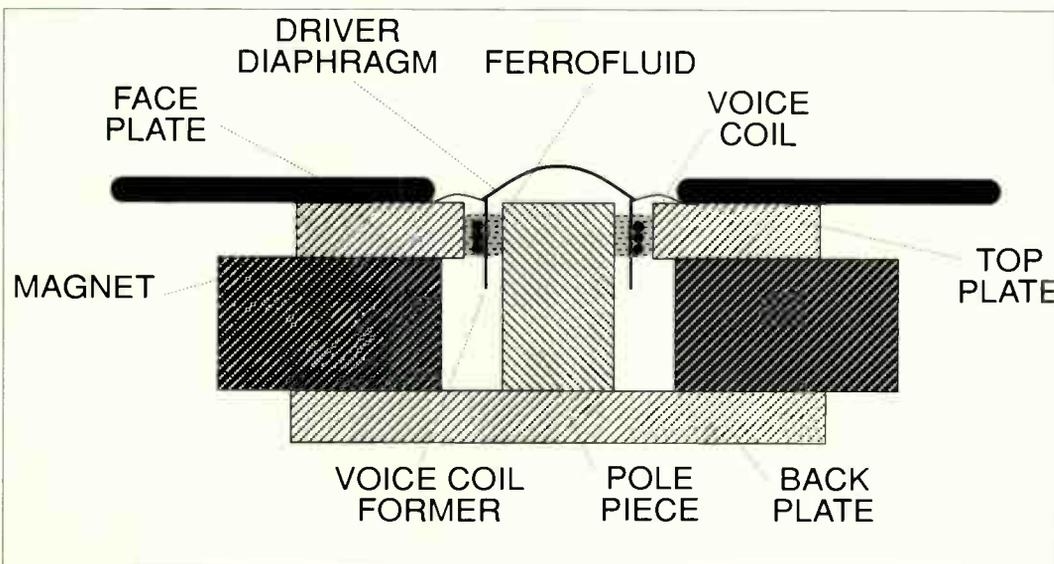
The fluid's damping properties can provide a degree of control over the driver's resonance

and high frequency break-up modes, which in turn may lead to simplified crossover design. If the voice coil is not perfectly aligned in the gap, Ferrofluid exerts a restoring force which centres the coil and reduces the chances of rubbing. This force also helps to lower distortion by reducing any sideways rocking motion.

Ferrofluid is most commonly found in tweeters nowadays, where the performance gains are large, but there are a couple of midrange units around that use it and you can expect to see bass drivers following suit in the near future.

KAPTON

Kapton is a high performance material designed as a replacement for the paper and aluminium traditionally used in



You know when the hi-fi bug has truly bitten. The sudden realisation comes when you consider that spending a few hundred pounds on wires is actually pretty good value. To the hi-fi illiterate, it seems like lunacy, but to those who've experienced the difference, good 'speaker cables and interconnects make rational sense. There are those who are die-hard cynics, but many more simply aren't aware of the differences to be had with quality cables, despite far greater promotion within the hi-fi press and trade.

I must confess to having twinges of doubt as to the real worth of some cables myself. Yet just when clouds of doubt begin to set in, I meet a customer, whilst working in the store, whose enthusiasm after having heard the differences good cables make for the first time, bowls me over. The enthusiasm is infectious too, with the hands on approach being one of the most rewarding parts of buying hi-fi (after listening to it of course).

The problem we face is that cables are still perceived very much as an accessory rather than an integral part of the system. It's now fairly widely recognised that cables improve a system's sound quality. But the fact that you can completely tune a system simply by the type of cables used isn't such common knowledge.

Cables come in a huge array of forms and materials, but generally you'll find there are two main types; multi-strand and solid-core. Multi-strand cables usually offer a deeper bass and a more euphonic response. They can sound a little too diffuse though, which is where solid-core cables score with their precision, detail and, in most cases, lack of glare and smear.

The type of material used also has a profound effect on the overall sound quality. Copper is the stock conductor used and comes in various forms of purity which, you've guessed it, all

have different effects on sound quality. Generally the more pure a copper is, the smoother the sound. Ortofon's 'speaker cable is a case in point with their ultra-high purity copper multi-strand cable almost passing for solid-core.

Next up the rung comes silver. More affordable cables will generally feature a silver coating over copper,

"If you've spent a pretty penny on 'speaker cable it seems a bit inconsistent to sandwich it between a 'speaker and amp' which are probably using something a couple of grades up from bell-wire."

whilst more expensive ones will advocate the use of solid silver. This is when it starts to get expensive. But all along there are improvements in purity of sound and detail analysis. Having said that, there is a blurring between the qualities of high purity copper cables and silver plated copper ones. Silver plating is no guarantee of superior quality.

Other materials have been tried, such as van den Hul's graphite, but copper and silver are still very much the order of the day. Personally I prefer the smooth, integrated sound of a good solid-core such as DNM's copper Reson, or Nordust's silver Blue Heaven. But I'd be the first to admit these won't suit all systems and musical tastes.

from
Dominic Todd,
our man in
retailing

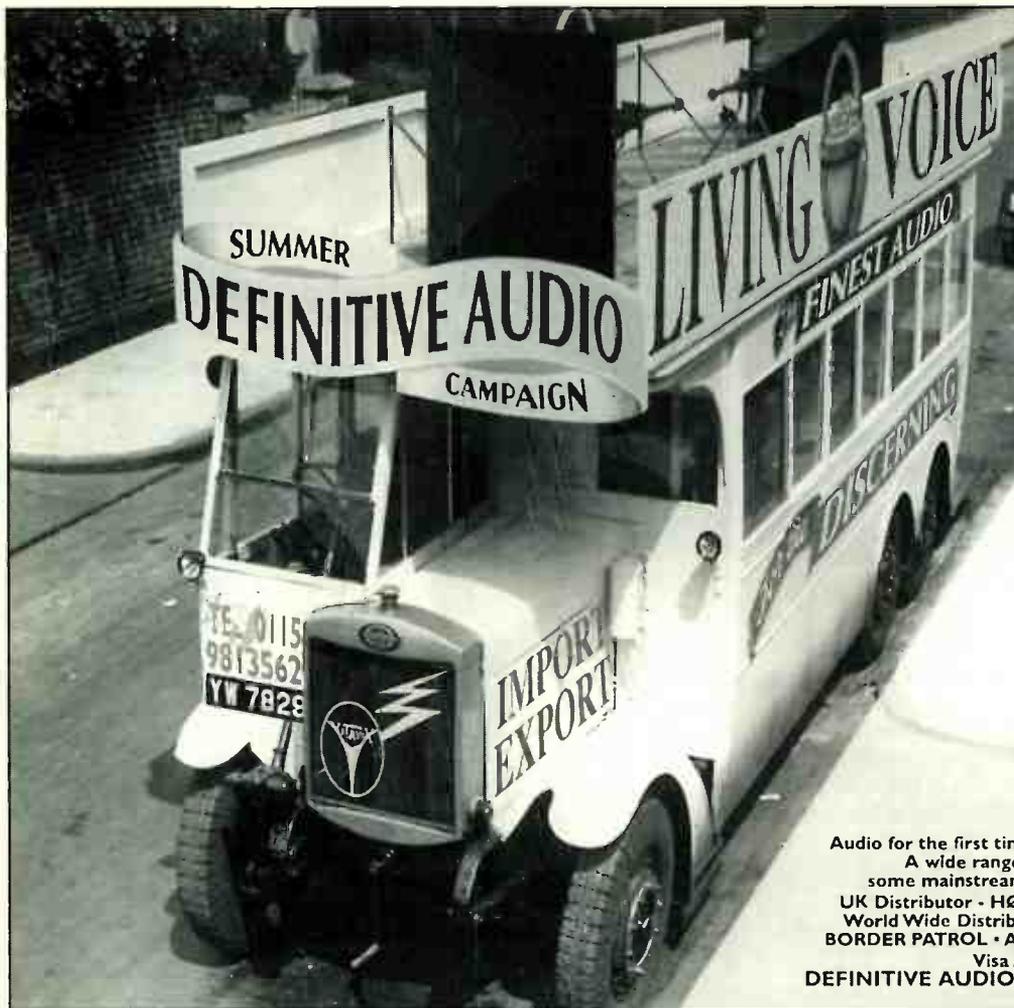


Good quality cabling needn't stop with external wiring either. Many hi-fi companies have long recognised the need for quality cables within their components. Turntable manufacturers have used quality silver cabling for tonearms. Good quality amplifiers often benefit from care taken with internal cabling, and many

cables and you've got equipment with decent spaghetti inside, so now what? Well, how about using the same cable through out the entire system, including the innards! There's actually a lot to be said for this. After all, if you've spent a pretty penny on 'speaker cable it seems a bit inconsistent to sandwich it between a 'speaker and amp' which are probably using something a couple of grades up from bell-wire. Re-wire the 'speakers and amplifier (provided it's not all on a circuit board), and if you're feeling really adventurous, why not try an interconnect made out of 'speaker cable. The purists may scoff, but I've had excellent results from Heybrook, DNM, and Audioquest leads used as such.

The stuff of lunacy? Well, I've just re-wired my SL600s with DNM (also used as the main 'speaker cable and interconnect) and found significant improvements in terms of integration and transparency over the previous (Ortofon 300) cabling. Although I was initially cynical of the idea, I have to admit an improvement to the overall cohesion of the system. It's a funny old world, and none more so than the world of hi-fi.

Warning. Modifying your own equipment is for the qualified only; it can be hazardous and will invalidate your warranty ●



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Border Patrol 300B SE (special)	£3000	£4500
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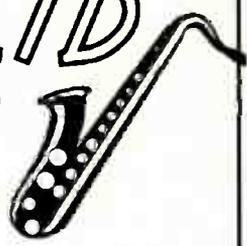
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"The most natural amp I've used." *Dean Jensen.*

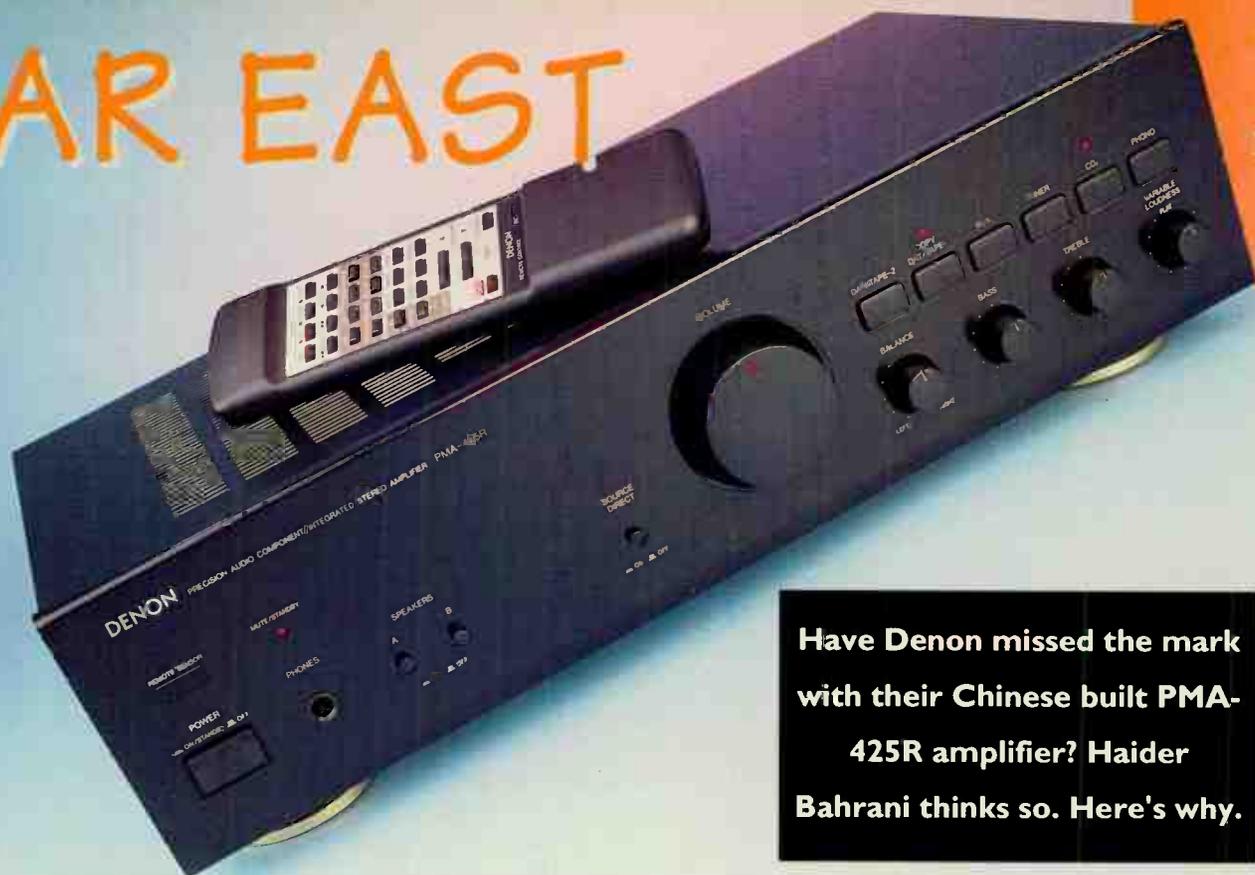
"The highs are smooth but not sweet the midrange was nothing short of remarkable. The 500 AE (M) has a superbly powerfull well defined and extended base." Highly recommended.

LL.SS, JGH would all argue for class A rating for the 500 AE (M).

But please don't take their word for it. Call us for details of your nearest dealer, listen and decide for yourselves.

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Have Denon missed the mark with their Chinese built PMA-425R amplifier? Haider Bahrani thinks so. Here's why.

Good, powerful integrated amplifiers with plenty of bells and whistles, and built to a budget, are really the hallmarks of a product from the land of the rising sun. The Denon 425R amplifier, though, is actually made in China.

Behind the black forest of function knobs and selector switches, this £230 amplifier packs a punch worth 45watts per channel. The selectors choose between six inputs, including an moving magnet (MM) phono stage. The knobs, apart from the volume control, can be bypassed via the Source Direct button. These include balance, tone and variable loudness.

Danny Wilson's 'Mary's Prayer' on CD was promptly slipped into the tray and pumped through to the amplifier. With Mission 752 loudspeakers the sound was big - very big - with a bass that edged on overfed. The soundstage was broad and had reasonable depth too. So far so good.

A bit of classic Yes gave a clearer picture though. The big, full sound also carried with it a somewhat jumbled centre stage. Despite this, 'Starship Trooper' demonstrated the PMA-425R's ability to handle attack and pace more than adequately. Here it showed timing that would normally be more representative of products in higher price brackets.

Do You Like My Tight Sweater?, a new album from a band called Moloko, reminds me of the sort of thing you can find on old Parliament or Funkadelic records, sprinkled with a little bit of

Portishead. On the Denon it was punchy, bass-heavy and loud, with a wide open soundstage and loads of pace, but these characteristics alone do not make a good amplifier. The mid-to-upper bands lacked substance, thinning out gradually as instruments travelled up the scales. Cymbals and high-hats were over-emphasised, but clearly at least, so they didn't inflict pain.

Vocals on tracks like 'I Can't Help Myself' and 'Lotus Eaters' tended to become recessed in their instrumentation, while drums spat rather than growled. More clearly on the Prince album, 'Love 2 The 9's' was too crisp at the top, with the rim shot searing out from the 'speakers, whilst the drums resided back stage. Strangely enough, none of these problems caused a real distraction, but they did add up to a misrepresentation of the music.

Putting the Moving Magnet phono stage to test was not a very fruitful exercise either. Playing at 33rpm I had ZZ-Top's Tres Hombres spinning on the deck. 'Waitin' For The Bus' didn't do much for me, and the bluesy 'Jesus Just Left Chicago' also failed to impress. The sound reproduction was also too thin across the whole spectrum, with little substance. Bruce Springsteen's 'Born to Run', off the LP of the same title was empty in the mid band and bright at the top, much the same as my findings on the line stage.

With remote control helping me switch back to CD, I reached out for my old faithful Ziggy Stardust album. The

panning drums on the introduction to 'Starman' still bounced between the speakers quite amiably, and David Bowie himself conjured up an inspired performance. The crescendo on 'Five Years' though, built up into confusion, predominantly at the top end where cymbals became messy.

As budget integrated hi-fi amplifiers go, the Denon PMA-425R certainly has a lot of toys to play with, including a handy remote control. I'm sure some will appreciate the punchy bass output and tone controls. This is an amplifier to liven up slow or dull 'speakers, but don't pair it with boom-an'-ting types. Subtlety is not its strong card ●

Denon PMA-425R £229.99

**Hayden Laboratories
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WORLD VERDICT

Good drive, punch and an open soundstage, but suffers from confusion plus a thin midrange and treble.

**Measured Performance
see p103**

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JBL'S S2600 HYBRID HORN LOUDSPEAKERS

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Here's a chance to get your hands on one of the best 'speakers we've come across, JBL's S2600, in this two-part competition.

If you don't normally enter our competition, break the habit this month. Why? Because we're offering a pair of one of the best loudspeakers we've heard as the prize. JBL's S2600 loudspeakers, reviewed in our July '96 issue, impressed Dominic Baker enough for him to declare "I have a new favourite loudspeaker. . . it will be difficult to live with anything else once they're gone".

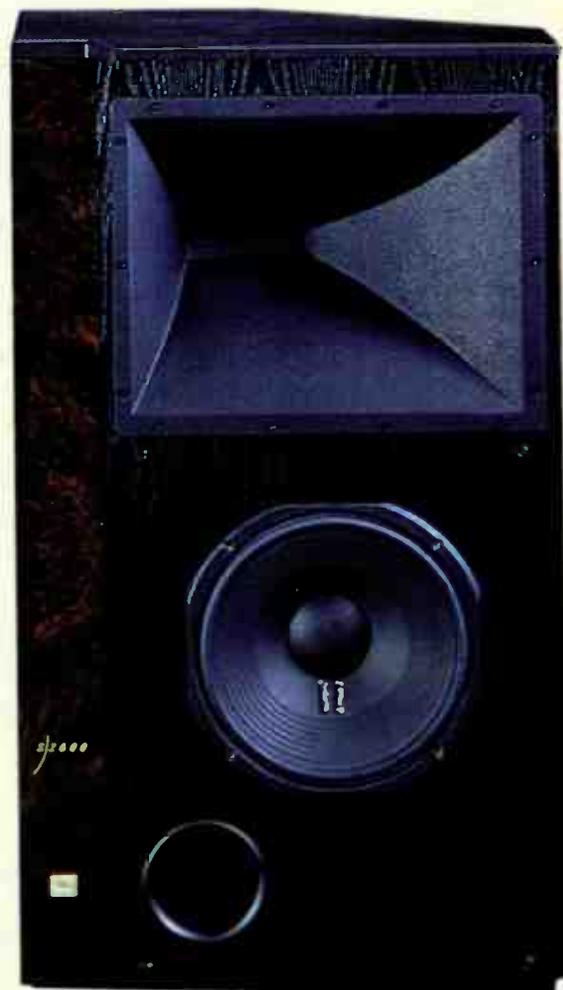
The S2600s are a hybrid. They use a horn for midrange and treble output. It works from 800Hz upward, so much of what the speakers produce is delivered with authority, thanks to the benefits of horn loading. A powerful 12" reflex loaded bass driver fills in the lower octaves.

JBL use their Stabilised Imaging Horn in this speaker. It has a profile that delivers equal sound pressure across a wide horizontal listening plane, creating a stable image over a broad range of listening positions. Supplying the horn throat is a highly efficient compression driver, a device normally

seen only in professional audio circles.

Using a horn and a 12" bass driver makes the S2600 very sensitive; we measured 90dB under test. So they need only a few watts to go loud; Dominic used a high quality 20W class A amplifier with remarkable results. Here's a big speaker that will do justice to specialist low power amplifiers. Producing an effortless, open and dynamic sound, the S2600s gave one of the most musical and enjoyable performances he'd come across.

If we haven't whetted your appetite yet, we'll leave you with these words from Dominic's review. "Lou Reed's 'Perfect Day' was an



absolute pleasure. Piano sounded pure and graceful, vocals intimate, strings smooth and rich in texture. Imaging was fantastic; I loved the way the JBLs painted a clear, stable and convincing picture that precisely pinpointed where everything was located on the stage."

To enter this month's competition, complete the questions and tie-breaker opposite, but don't send your entry yet. Next month, in the October '96 issue, there'll be a JBL token to fix to the entry form. Only then will your entry be valid.

Please put your entry on a postcard or the back of a sealed envelope. It must reach us, complete with the JBL token from next month's October '96 issue, no later than 4th October.

Send to:

JBL Competition
Hi-Fi World Magazine,
64 Castellain Road,
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London W9 1EX

Don't forget to include your name, address, and telephone number if possible, so we can contact winners promptly.

JULY ISSUE COMPETITION

CELESTION COMPETITION

In our July '96 issue, we gave you the chance to win one of four pairs of Celestion loudspeakers. Here are the lucky winners::

- Philip Edwards of Holland-on-Sea wins Impact 30s
- James Ahern of Brighton wins Impact 23s
- M. Chambers of Nottingham wins Impact 15s
- T. Tipton of Shropshire wins Impact 10s

Congratulations!

COMPETITION ENTRY QUESTIONS

Cut out and affix to the back of a sealed envelope

- 1) JBL's S2600s use their Stabilized Imaging Horn to -

A. Deafen anyone within 20yards	C. Place an image on the ceiling
B. Give a stable image over a wide area	D. Make them unfeasibly large

- 2) In the S2600s, the horn is driven by a -

A. Electrostatic driver	C. Mad driver
B. Ribbon driver	D. Compression driver

- 3) What size is the bass driver in JBL's S2600s?

A. 8"	C. 12"
B. 10"	D. 15"

- 4) What sort of bass system is used in the S2600s?

A. Reflex	C. Transmission Line
B. Sealed	D. Horn

- 5) How sensitive are the JBL S2600s?

A. 80dB	C. 100dB
B. 90dB	D. 110dB

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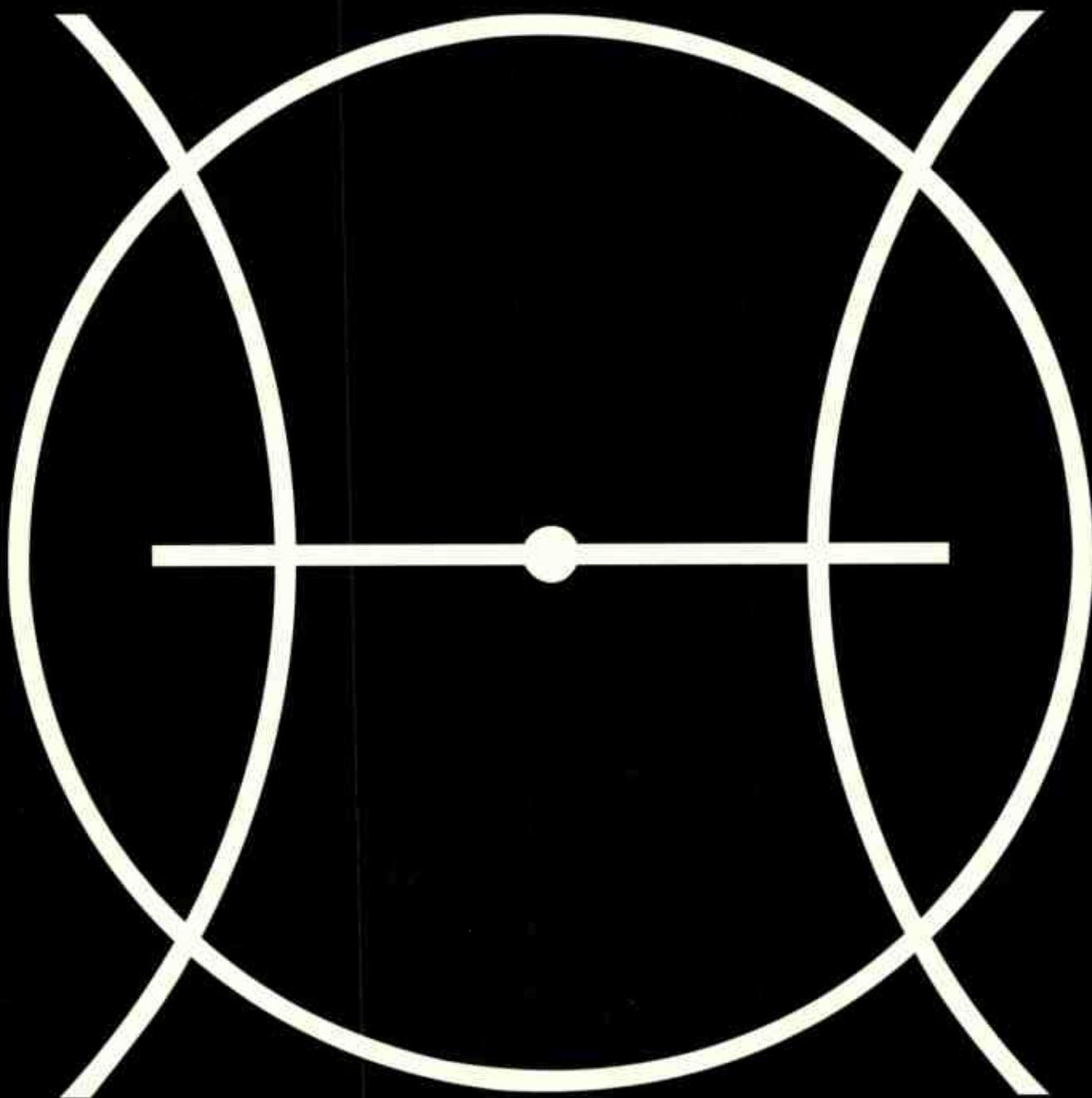
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COMPETITION RULES AND CONDITIONS OF ENTRY

- [1] Only one entry per household. Multiple entries will be automatically disqualified.
- [2] In the event of more than one entrant submitting all-correct answers, the winner will be picked from the tie-breaker by the Editor. We will endeavour to publish the results in the second issue following the closing date.
- [3] Purchase of the magazine is not a precondition of entry.
- [4] No correspondence will be entered into; the Editor's decision is final.
- [5] No employees of Audio Publishing Ltd. or of any companies associated with the production or distribution of the prizes may enter.

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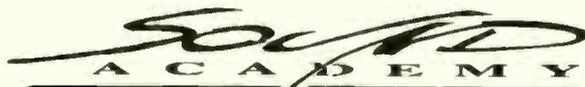
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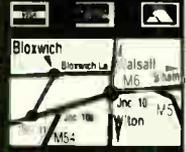
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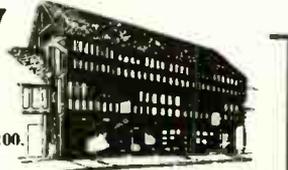
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KLPP1 VALVE PHONO PREAMPLIFIER £495

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Drive Unit & Crossover kit etc £230
 Drive Unit Pack £120

KLS6 ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY THREE WAY LOUDSPEAKER

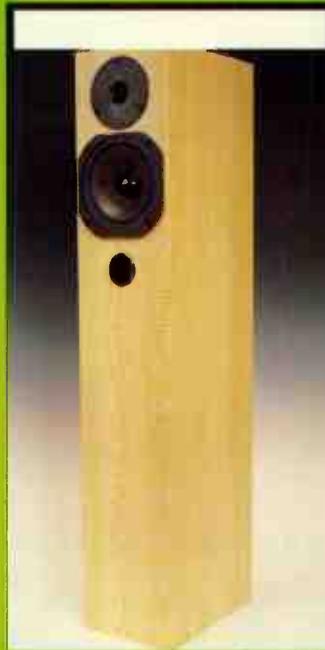
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A compact and affordable two way reflex loudspeaker. KLS7's slim dimensions make it easy to accomodate, but it uses light and fast carbon fibre drivers, so performance isn't compromised. An audiophile bargain.

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K5881 KIT £395

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An audiophile parallel-single-ended valve amplifier at an affordable price. K5881PSE uses the reliable Russian 5881 output valve in parallel-single-ended mode for outstanding detail and atmosphere. It produces 17watts, enough to drive most loudspeakers, making high-end sound quality and design available to everyone. Can be easily monoblocked to give 32watts



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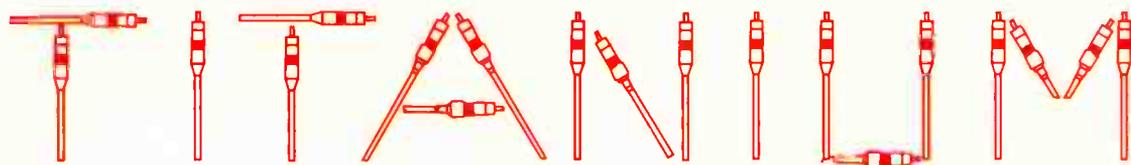
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K588I 20W push-pull valve power amplifier				
KIT	K588I-K240/120	<input type="text"/>	£395	£350
BUILT	K588I-B240/120	<input type="text"/>	£595	£550
K588IPSE 17W single-ended valve power amplifier				
KIT	K588IPSE-K240/120	<input type="text"/>	£650	£555
BUILT	K588IPSE-B240/120	<input type="text"/>	£850	£725
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KIT	KLPP1-K240/120	<input type="text"/>	£495	£425
BUILT	KLPP1-B240/120	<input type="text"/>	£695	£595
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KLS4 2-way carbon fibre driver standmounting loudspeaker				
Drive units + Crossover kit etc	KLS4-C	<input type="text"/>	£230	£200
KLS6 3-way HDA driver floorstanding loudspeaker				
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Drive Units	KLS6-D	<input type="text"/>	£640	£545
KLS7 2-way carbon fibre driver floorstanding loudspeaker				
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6.5inch bass/mid	HMI70Z0	<input type="text"/>	£50	£45
8inch bass	HM210Z0	<input type="text"/>	£60	£55
Carbon Fibre				
4inch midrange	HMI30C0	<input type="text"/>	£40	£35
6.5inch bass/mid	HMI70C0	<input type="text"/>	£45	£40
8inch bass	HM210C0	<input type="text"/>	£55	£50
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25mm 92dB for 3-way systems	TW025M1	<input type="text"/>	£16	£14
34mm 93dB - powerful sound	TW034X0	<input type="text"/>	£25	£22
Oval Gold Piezo electric dome tweeter	HD-3P	<input type="text"/>	£225	£195

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World favourites guide

COMPACT DISC PLAYERS

QUAD 67 second-hand

One of Quad's best products for a long time, the 67 is warmer and smoother than most, yet is highly musical and revealing. Good enough to frighten many rivals.

DENON DCD-315 £150

Real hi-fi and real music for a mere £150. Achieves a good semblance of orchestral dynamics and acoustic space.

NAD 510 £200

A competent all rounder with lifelike soundstaging and impressive treble clarity.

NAD 512 £250

Its smooth sound and fine treble extension make the 512 something of a rarity at the price. For the money rivals are few.

ARCAM ALPHA ONE £300

An excellent entry-level player from Arcam that's far better than equivalently priced Japanese machinery.

MARANTZ CD-63 Special Edition £350

A superb budget buy. Addressing the problems of the CD-52II SE, its detailed and musical sound embarrasses many expensive players.

NAD 514 £350

The 514 conveys deep bass notes with conviction and weight. A supremely relaxing player to listen to with fine build quality.

MARANTZ CD-63MKII KI-SIGNATURE £500

Similar to the CD-63SE but with more powerful and authoritative bass and an all-round smoother sound.

TRICHORD GENESIS £549

Conveys music in a powerful and dramatic fashion. Smooth and sweet, with a good sense of depth. Maybe a little soft sounding though.

DPA RENAISSANCE £895

Words cannot describe its infinite variety, but suffice to say you'll love it or hate it. Highly emotional, involving presentation with not a hint of self-doubt.

MARANTZ CD-16 £1399

An extremely neutral CD player, smooth and reserved in its performance. Beautifully built too.

LINN KARIK 3 £1600

Superb one-box player. Its supremely rhythmic, musical sound with delicacy and finesse puts it up with the best of the rest.

NAIM CDI £1600

This single box 16-bit player sounds very engaging compared to your average bitstreamer. Has that vital tingle factor of the larger, two-box CDS.

MCINTOSH CDM7009 £2635

A thoroughly inspiring machine. One of the most musical CD players around; sweet, open and detailed.

COMPACT DISC TRANSPORTS

TEAC VDRS-T1 £550

Not as substantially built as its chunky looks suggest, the T1 is nevertheless a good entry-level transport with a warm, expansive sound.

AUDIOLAB 8000CDM £1300

Beautifully built and finished, the CDM is packed with sensible features and performs superbly, day-in day-out.

CD CONVERTORS

DPA LITTLE BIT III £300

A lot more weight at frequency extremes than the II and far better control. For £300 there's nothing to beat it.

THORENS TDA2000 £700

Used with the TCD2000 as a transport, the TDA2000 produces a sound that is focused, detailed and spacious. Good value.

DPA ENLIGHTENMENT £795

Some believe this to be the best convertor around. A truly charismatic performer, it dives into rock music with rare passion.

PINK TRIANGLE ORDINAL £837

Pure, smooth sound free from harshness. One of the best at any price, losing little to the big guns.

PINK TRIANGLE DA CAPO £1450+

Offers a choice of filter modules, all up there with the best. The Da Capo is superb in many respects, but can sound a touch polite on rock.

DPA 1024 £6000

Proof positive that today's CDs needn't sound CD-like! Uses an in-house discrete convertor, and DPA haven't skimped on the build either!

TURNTABLES

GARRARD 401 second-hand

In a decent plinth with an arm of SME309 calibre, the 401 has a highly authoritative overall sound with the most solid, expressive bass in the business. Very musical, but treble isn't up to modern standards.

THORENS TD124 second-hand

One of Thorens' best-ever turntables. Needs a modern plinth to give of its best. Duly installed, it's good enough to face off the Garrard 401, swapping some of its bass power for a more delicate, incisive treble.

SYSTEMDEK IIX900/RB250 £330

A fine all rounder and easy to upgrade. Brings more depth and breadth than a Rega 3.

SYSTEMDEK 2X2 £499

Although tuneful, bass isn't as deep as some rivals. More than makes up for it though with neutral and precise midrange and treble.

RESON rsI £600

A lean, yet vibrant sound quality that really draws the listener in. With good detail and rhythmic integrity this is an impressive turntable package.

MICHELL GYRODEC £800

Stunning looks, build and engineering, and don't underestimate the sound. Standard PSU and Rega arm gives a detailed, architectural, if undynamic sound. With QC PSU and SME V, its scale and insight kills the competition at the price.

PRO-JECT 6.1SA £999

The Pro-ject places the listener in the best seat in the control room. Outrageous dynamics and a punchy, seriously deep bass. Comes with Sumiko arm and Ortofon MC30 Supreme.

LINN SONDEK LP12 £840 - £1530

Cirkus bearing puts it back up with the best. Superbly beguiling, rhythmic sound that plays jazz like few others, but lacks the Gyrodec's detail or imaging. With a Lingo PSU and EKOS tonearm, you'll forget CDs were ever invented.

PINK TRIANGLE ANNIVERSARY £1200

One of the finest-sounding turntables around, the Anniversary takes the listener nearer the recording studio than almost any other deck. Works with Rega, Linn and SME arms alike.

MICHELL ORBE £1950

The Darth Vader of analogue, the Orbe builds on the strengths of the Gyrodec. An ultra-tuneful, expansive sound.

SME MODEL 20 £2495

Including the excellent SME V tonearm, the Model 20 is possibly the last great turntable, unless you've got £11,000 for the Model 30, that is.

TO NEARMS

REGA RB300 £130

Supremely capable at the price, but not quite humankind's salvation as has been suggested. Detailed, tight, rhythmic sound but tonally rather grey and cold-sounding.

LINN AKITO £300

A well made entry-level tonearm which works especially well with the LP12, but struggles to match the RB300 on other decks.

SME 3009SII £375

This Paleolithic device doesn't bother with frequency extremes or detail, but its legendary serviceability makes it a cult in Japan. Oh death, where is thy sting?

SME309 £570

A down-market version of the IV and V with aluminium armtube and detachable headshell. Tight, neutral sound with good tonality, but lacks the IV's pace and precision.

SME IV £850

A Series V with lower toleranced bearings, cheaper cables and no damper. Still vastly over-engineered and almost capable of its bigger brother's sonic fireworks. SME's best value product.

SME V £1235

A masterpiece of precision engineering with a cohesive, ultra-transparent sound. A dream to set up and use.

LINN EKOS £1400

A thunderous battleship of an arm, with a very impressive sound, masses of detail and dynamics, but lacks the SME V's cohesion and musicality.

World favourites guide

CARTRIDGES

ORTOFON VMS-2E £10

Warm, full-bodied, punchy and fast. Not to be sniffed at for a tenner. Can be upgraded with a better stylus at a later date.

GOLDRING 1012GX £60

An accomplished MM with a solid bass, slightly forward midband and clean transients. £20 buys the faster, more dynamic 1022GX.

GOLDRING 1042 £100

The best moving magnet available. Has an extremely cohesive sound that's warm but highly involving. Deliciously delicate treble and strong, powerful bass.

ORTOFON MC15 SUPER II £110

An excellent budget moving coil with a smooth, polished, detailed sound. Tracks superbly but verges on the analytical at times. A bargain.

ORTOFON SUPREMES £225-£450

The MC10, MC20 and MC30 Supremes all offer superb sound and value for money, with a distinctively rich, smooth and detailed musical performance. The valve brigade love them.

LINN KLYDE £450

The Klyde's soft treble and prodigious bass mean it's tonally unbalanced, but it's still a real music-maker that many will love in the right system.

ORTOFON MC2000 £650

We came across this one in an SME IV on a Garrard 401; it duly gave one of the best results we've ever heard.

ORTOFON ROHMANN £1000

In a way it's MC2000 meets MC7500 with all the tonal strengths and dynamo sound Ortofon has been putting into its best moving-coil cartridges of late.

LYRA LYDIAN £649

A truly musical, sophisticated device that makes most other MCs sound frigid.

VAN DEN HUL MC-10 £840

Fluid bass, finely etched treble and highly tuneful in between. The MC10 is honey, pure and simple.

ORTOFON MC7500 £2000

Conclusive proof that there's hope for humankind. Makes music of enormous scale and vibrancy. CD lovers would die if they heard it.

INTEGRATED AMPLIFIERS

NAD 3020 second-hand

Classic sweet sounding, punchy budget super-amp with strong phono stage. Able to embarrass many modern budget amps.

NAD 310 £130

A real hi-fi amplifier at a bargain price. Forms the heart of a separates system that will murder any midi system at twenty paces. No phono stage, but you can't have everything at this price.

NAD 312 £200

Smooth, clear and dry. Fine detailing with little to complain about at the price. Good facilities.

ARCAM ALPHA 5 £230

A well-engineered budget amplifier with a bold, exciting presentation. Plenty of power and facilities, but lacks subtlety.

DENON PMA 450II SE £270

A solid, refined sound with plenty of power make this a good all rounder, but hard and steely with the wrong ancillaries. Mediocre phono stage.

AURA VA-80 £280

The VA-80 is superb for the price with a confident, powerful sound. One of the smoothest around, it is capable of embarrassing more upmarket competition.

ORELLE SA-100 £449

Clean, open, active sound. Smooth and detailed with good punch too. One of the best at the price.

AUDIOLAB 8000A £500

A jack-of-all-trades whose facilities, build, power and top-rate phono input make it a steal. Sound is good, but less involving than the Naim Nait 3.

NAIM NAIT 3 £500

A taste of high-end audio. The most involving, musical design at the price, but low power. Superb phono stage is £100 extra.

MISSION CYRUS 3 £500

Superb engineering, a solid cast chassis and a clear, spacious sound. Phono stage could be better.

SONNETEER CAMPION £579

An amplifier that delivers near studio definition along with exemplary timing. Utterly gripping.

DPA RENAISSANCE £595

Rich and smooth, the Renaissance is one of the sweetest amps around, if lightweight.

AUDION STERLING ETSE £600

Economically but well built single-ended valve amplifier. Wonderful clarity with vocals. £600 with 1 line input. £800 with 5.

SUGDEN A21a £640

Class A transistor amp. Rich, crisp, deep, tight sound and it images well too. Wonderful.

AUDIOLAB 8000S £650

Fast, clear, crisp sound with a wide-open sound stage. One of the best at the price.

MERIDIAN 551 £795

Beautifully-built integrated with a sweeter, clearer sound than mid-price alternatives. Plenty of facilities and remote controllable.

UNISON SIMPLY 2 £995

This single-ended valve amplifier is smooth, sweet and open. An extremely musical amplifier.

UNISON SIMPLY 4 £1495

Sonically similar to the Simply 2, but with more power and control.

AUDIONOTE OTO SE £1500

Ten watts of the sweetest sound around. Use sensitive speakers though, because it's unlikely to crack windows or trigger earthquakes.

McINTOSH MA6800 £3735

The MA6800 not so much plays music as takes control of it, with effortless bass drive and a three-dimensional sound stage.

PRE-AMPLIFIERS

NAIM NAC32.5 second-hand

Naim's one-time top preamp is still a force to be reckoned with thanks to its precise, fast sound and excellent phono stage.

ROTEL RQ-970BX £130

Superb value entry-level phono stage with audiophile quality components and clear sound.

DPA DSP200S £495

Not quite the 50S, but there's little to match it at this price if outright sound quality is your priority.

ROSE RV23-S £495

This interesting valve/transistor hybrid has a smooth, rich, spacious sound.

AUDIOLAB 8000C £520

Versatile with superb phono input. Can sound sterile, but latest version is much improved.

MICHELL ISO/HERA £530

This phono stage has fine midband and treble detail, with taut bass. The £850 ISO/HR brings more of everything, and for many people is the last word on the subject.

AUDIO INNOVATIONS P2 £749

Fantastic bass and super insight make this one of the best phono stages around. One for vinyl lovers.

AUDIOLAB 8000Q £995

Excellent line-level only preamp, greatly improves on 8000C with a more fluid, musical sound and greater grip. Remote control.

NAIM NAC82 £1945

This remote control preamp thrusts detail forth in true Naim fashion.

POWER AMPLIFIERS

QUAD II second-hand

Classic valve monoblock with many thousands still in use around the world. Archetypal warm, smooth valve sound, although not the last word in detail or dynamics.

LEAK STEREO 20 second-hand

The Stereo 20 can sound impressively up-to-date, although power and detail are ultimately limited.

QUAD 405II second-hand

Solidly built, but lifeless sounding, power amp which can be substantially improved by a Quad factory service.

MISSION CYRUS POWER £450

This power amplifier is a honey. Rich and smooth, but with a firm grip; a fine blend of properties.

ROSE RP190 £495

Used with the partnering preamp it gives 70watts of smooth, relaxing sound.

SUGDEN AU41P £530

Extremely competitive at the price with 100W of unusually smooth, full-bodied sound.

SHEARNE PHASE 3 £619

A neutral, highly dynamic and thoroughly exciting amplifier. A sonic bargain.

World favourites guide

QUAD 606II £675

Quad's latest 140W powerhouse is smooth and civilised, but engagingly musical. Legendary back-up service.

DPA DPA200S £750

Better than anything else at the price. Not as dry as the 50S.

NAIM NAPI80 £900

Partnered with a NAC82, this has classic Naim control, making for a superbly rhythmic presentation. A touch lean for some tastes.

MICHELL ALECTO STEREO £1300

A refined transistor amplifier with valve-like transparency and a full, warm, easy-going sound. The £1800 Alecto monoblocks have rare lucidity and three dimensional realism.

AUDIOLAB 8000M £1500

Beautifully built, powerful amps that will drive anything you care to throw at them. Detailed, analytical sound, but a touch grey compared to valve rivals.

CHORD SPM 1200 £2995

This is one of the best solid-state power amps around, with a massively powerful, dynamic and detailed sound.

TUNERS

LEAK TROUGHLINE second-hand

Our favourite way of listening to the wireless. A deliciously smooth, mellifluous sound that will have you junking your transistor radio in seconds. Ergonomics are crude, and you'll need a decent aerial and stereo decoder.

NAD 412 £190

The 412 is remarkably musical and natural sounding. Rich sound and full bass are a rarity. Unbeatable at the price

KENWOOD KT-6050L £300

Very, very tuneful and as clear and detailed as CD. Tuners like this have you sitting in your seat wondering at the sheer wealth of music out there.

MISSION CYRUS FM7 £300

Clear and lucid sound that puts it up with the best regardless of price. Superb build and superior ergonomics to the NAD.

ROTEL RT990BX £500

High quality Michi-based tuner with a sophisticated, forward sound with great imaging and soundstage. Sensible facilities and remote control.

NAIM NAT03 £500

The NAT03 is further proof of Naim's proficiency with tuners, with a warm, easy sound and a good sense of atmosphere.

FANFARE FT-1 £1350

In its native US the FT1 is no mere tuner but a 'broadcast monitor' no less, a task at which it acquits itself well, with a clear and powerful sound.

NAIM NAT01 £1380

The best solid-state tuner available. For better radio, live in the studio.

CASSETTE DECKS

AIWA AD-S750 £150

Sonically a very decent machine. For the price there's nothing better. With Dolby B, C and S

DENON DRM-650S £230

Forget metal tapes, but sound quality with ferrics and chromes makes it a bargain.

PHILIPS DCC 730 £250

Digital playback gives a good 'analogue' presentation and analogue playback is reasonable too. A DCC bargain.

AIWA AD-S950 £300

A stable transport, superb head and Dolby S make this an excellent recorder.

PIONEER CT-S740S £430

A great piece of engineering from Pioneer, a bit complex, but a first rate sound on playback and recording. Dolby S included.

NAKAMICHI DR2 £600

Where serious cassette decks start. The DR2 pushes recordings to the limit, remaining unflustered at all times.

NAKAMICHI DRI £850

Better still than the DR2, with manual head azimuth adjustment to boot.

NAKAMICHI CR7 £1500

Kills every other cassette deck and stamps on their graves.

LOUDSPEAKERS

MISSION 730iSE second-hand

Big clear sound and tuneful bass with plenty of punch. An audiophile bargain at a budget price.

KEF CODA 7 £129

Arguably the new king of budget standmounters, the 7 has a highly musical presentation.

MISSION 731 LE £149

An extensive reworking of Mission's entry level 'speaker, much tighter on transients and more refined treble. Neutral and revealing.

TANNOY 631 SE £170

Great bass extension, super open and focused midrange and fine detail up-top. Work best on filled dedicated stands; unmatched at the price.

B&W DM601 £200

Tight, solid and tuneful bass with a clean and pure tonal quality. Midrange is a little laid back, but sound stage is wide and open.

ELTAX SYMPHONY 6 £240

A touch bright, but clean, open and lively sounding with it. They're well built and use high quality drive units. Top value.

ROGERS LS33 £249

Big sound and a wonderful impressionist. Combine with matching AB33 subwoofers for extra bass depth.

TDL RTL 2 £300

Bass on a budget from one of TDL's best floorstanders. Solid, vibrant and spacious sound.

REL Q-BASS £350

Few subwoofers match the Q-Bass at the price. The tuning controls can be a bit of a fiddle, but once set up the rest is pleasure.

EPOS ES11 £445

Extremely refined, well engineered standmounters that need distinguished partnering equipment if they are not to sound over-polite.

REL STRATA £500

The Strata is not a toy. Offers superb, true hi-fi bass depth and power.

MISSION 752 £500

More capable than many twice the price. Using advanced High Definition Aerogel drivers, the 752s are clear, crisp and focused. Good sensitivity makes them easy to drive.

TANNOY D100 £650

This small dual-concentric loudspeaker produces believable three dimensional imaging.

PROAC STUDIO 100 £700

Excellent monitors with detailed, natural sound and plenty of atmosphere.

HARBETH HL-P3ES £799

A fine example of good loudspeaker engineering. The top of the mini-monitor league.

KEF REFERENCE SERIES ONE £995

The KEF's combine pin-point imagery and detail with a smooth and polite balance. Good, agile bass too.

HEYBROOK SEXTET 11 £1129

Heybrook have retained the strengths of the original Sextet, whilst improving on bass extension and smoothness. Treble and imaging still up with the very best.

MISSION 754 FREEDOM 5 £1299

Highly articulate and informative sound with fine imaging and tight, deep bass extension. Uses silk dome tweeter, High Definition Aerogel midrange and bandpass loadad 8" driver for bass.

HARBETH HL COMPACT 7 £1329

Dry and analytical, but truthful and uncoloured with it. A cohesive sounding top class monitor.

KEF REFERENCE SERIES TWO £1500

A truly endearing 'speaker, with clarity, cohesion and precise imaging. Bass has superb extension.

EPOS ES25 £1505

Epos' best. Combines near-uncoloured tonality with characteristic fireworks in the rhythm department. Superb by any other name.

SPENDOR SP7/1 £1970

This big Spendor is very appealing thanks to its lucid sound and valve-friendly load.

TANNOY AMS8 £2700

Bold sounding professional active monitor with solid bass, clearly focused midrange and delicious treble. Built-in amplification.

QUAD ESL-63 £2860

A reference against all other loudspeakers, with superb imaging qualities and genuine transparency. Earlier ESL model is an excellent second-hand buy; both enjoy legendary Quad service back-up.

JBL S2600 £3500

Smooth, detailed and spacious with great dynamics and fine imaging. Capable of producing a superb performance when used in a big room.

TANNOY WESTMINSTER ROYAL £10,000

An incredibly dynamic, detailed full-range horn design with a rich sound. Its high sensitivity predisposes it to valve amplification.

MUSIC REVIEWS

I N D E X

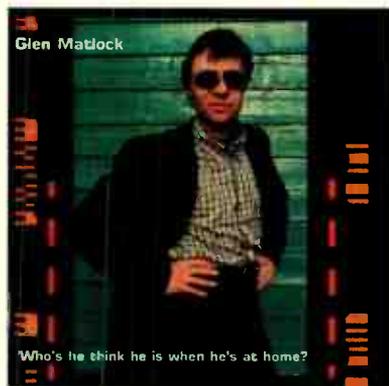
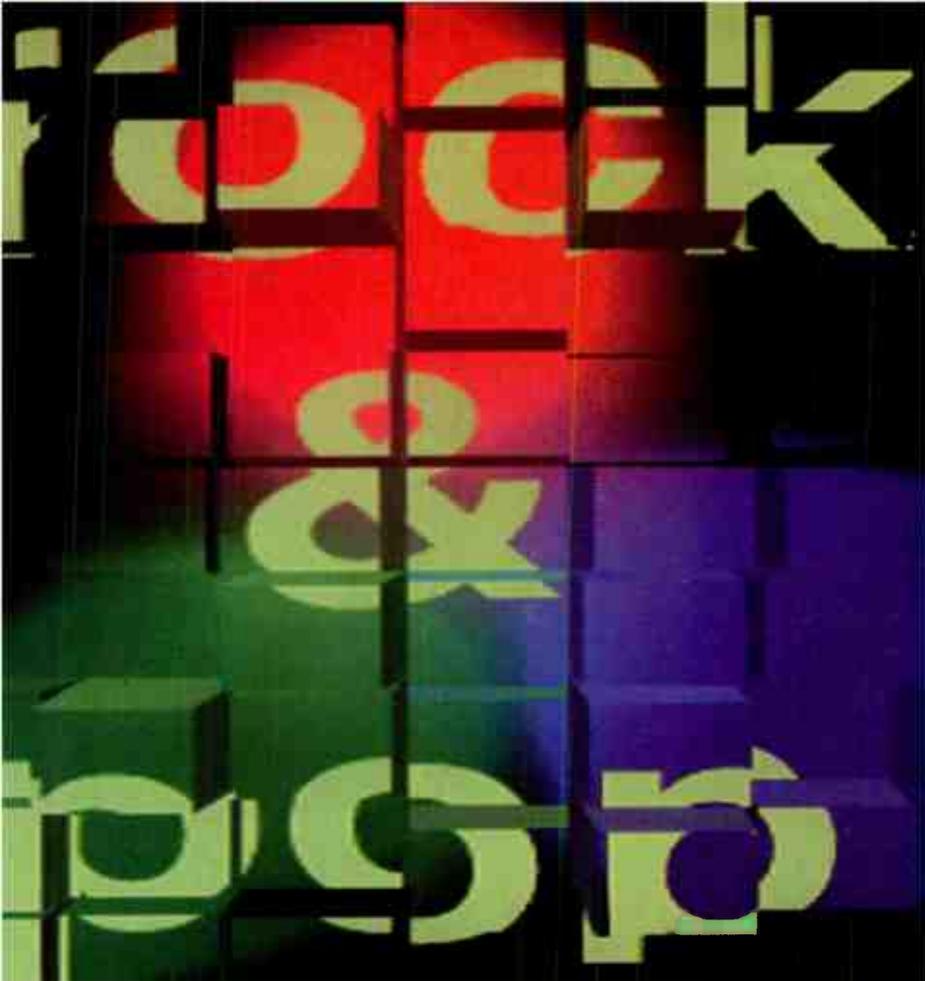
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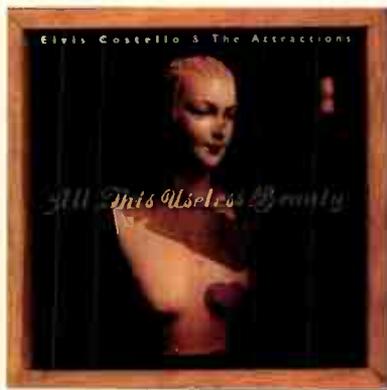


GLEN MATLOCK
WHO'S HE THINK HE IS WHEN HE'S AT HOME?
CREATION CRECD 191

I suppose you could call me one of the blessed, but I was actually around at the birth of the Sex Pistols. Now whatever the arguments are - and they'll no doubt go on forever - the truth of the matter is that Matlock (whether he was writing the hits or not) was an ace musician, whilst Sid, for all his death-wish charisma, wasn't (no point mincing words about this unless you want to take it outside).

For anyone who loves or loved rock 'n' roll's naughtiest boys, the spirit of the age is more than ably caught on this new disc of Glen's. True, his voice lacks the

mad mannerisms of Lydon's, but there is some brilliant guitar on the likes of 'Hot Water', the ironic (I wonder who this could be about now?) 'My Big Mouth', or the charmingly titled 'My Little Philistine'. Classic rock long-player, no argument. Or do you still wanna take it outside?



ELVIS COSTELLO AND THE ATTRactions
ALL THIS USELESS BEAUTY
WB 9362-46198-2

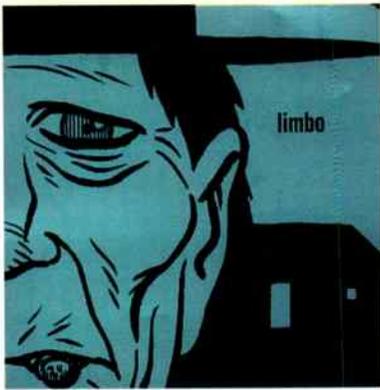
It's no secret to anyone except maybe Ray Charles and Stevie Wonder by now, but by far the biggest creative error of

Declan 'Elvis' Costello's 20 year-plus tenancy in the pop pantheon was growing That Beard. A clean shave and a reassembling of The Attractions put things back in kilter, and if there was any lurking doubt that EC had yet to get back into tip-top form then this latest disc dispels it once and forever.

Take the live, decidedly blatant evidence of 'Complicated Shadows', a song as vociferous and potent as anything the man's ever done. The band remains as punchy and articulate as any combo these grim isles ever spawned - check only the delicately awesome power of Steve Nieve's keyboard work on 'Distorted Angel' or the rhythm boys' work on any cut you care to flick to. Costello is in true King Kong form, from the sweet soulings of the aforementioned cut to the ensuing - and aptly sanguine - 'Shallow Grave'. I know it's 'Let's re-live the late Seventies' time right now, but if anyone can carry it off then it's EC and his boys. A stunner - disagree at your peril and loss.

THROWING MUSES
LIMBO
4AD CD 6014 CD

Confession - unlike a friend of mine, I was never a big Throwing Muses fan. But then I caught a hearing of Kirstin Hirsch's 'Hips And Makers' LP a couple of years



past and was completely captivated by her persuasively hypnotic vocal style and thrillingly oddball lyrics.

I've been a convert ever since and this, the Muses' seventh or eighth studio disc (press releases being, as ever, nothing if not obtuse) is a joy to the old lugs. I mean, it may not exactly be PC, but how many women singers can you imagine showing gratitude for being chained to a bed?

But then that could well be what I love most about La Hirsh - her distinct disavowal of received contemporary mores and a way of phrasing her far from orthodox responses in a way that is

as original as it is sexy. Her voice is gently seductive with a subtle undertone of dangerous menace. And this, to put it as bluntly as possible, is about as sexy as sexy gets. Marc Almond often gets away with the same sort of sexual ambiguity, which is probably why the two of them are among my faveest current vocalists.

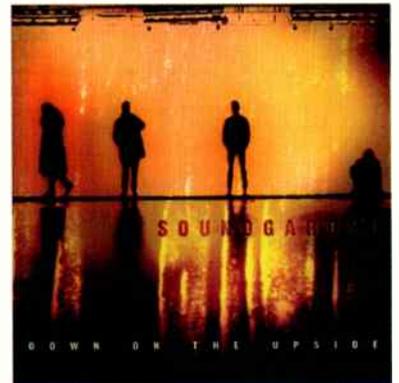
The production is as clean as a well sucked wishbone, the arrangements are as crisp as a white dress-shirt back from the dry cleaners and, as usual, Kirstin Hirsh delivers. By the bucketload.

SOUNDGARDEN
DOWN ON THE UPSIDE
A&M 540 526-2

You'll like this one. A couple of years ago I was in the Eye-talian countryside heading for my local hostelry and jiving to Soundgarden's 'Fell On Black Days', the song that made me a fan-plus of Seattle's finest. Suddenly the ground vanished and I fell twenty metres into a dry canal. I never saw my (t)rusty walkman again, but Soundgarden remained a firm favourite, and this latest instalment is no blot on a glowing copybook.

The tunes are strong, the music has a

hallmark all of its own, and the vocals are as unique and passionate as ever. 'Pretty Noose' (a truly astonishing single), 'Burden In My Hand' and the more adequately named 'Blow Up The Outside World' take their titles all the way to rocking Valhalla. Plus, there's a baker's dozen of wondrous moments and inventions galore, and more inspiration than anybody could possibly wish for. This album is proof, if it were needed (which it ain't), that Soundgarden are one of the most worthy, vital and essential combos currently ploughing the fields of contemporary US rock at its most golden.



rock & pop record of the month

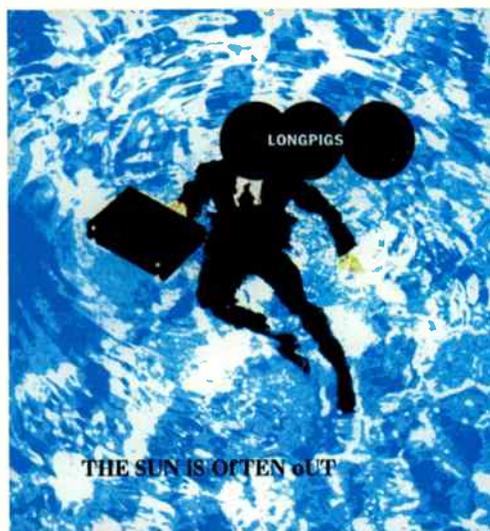
LONGPIGS
THE SUN IS OFTEN OUT
MUMCD 9602/551 542-2

No question about it - this is the most interesting, exciting and stimulating disc to have infiltrated my ears this past month or more.

The irony is that Long Pig is a cannibal euphemism for human flesh. Odd, because Longpigs' music is anything but avowedly carnivorous. It is more gentle and sensitive by a mile than, say, Tindersticks. (This is no criticism; I'm as large a Tindersticks fan as they come).

The group hail from Sheffield, a town which, over the years, has become as essential a creative nexus of British popular music as London, Liverpool, or Manchester. Think only of Human League and their various offspring or a score more.

For the record, Longpigs consist of



Crispin Hunt and Rich Hawley (guitar, vocals), Simon Stafford (bass, piano, Hammond organ, vocals) and the frequently ear-opening Dee Boyle (drums and vocals). Guitar power is never far from the band's door. Just

witness the strident intro to 'Lost Myself', with its wild, wild coda, or - by strong contrast - the gentle semi-folk rock of 'On And On'. The band's ability to change mood and feel are possibly best heard on 'Sally Dances', with its gently pained opener which suddenly explodes into pure fury. 'Elvis' has a grand vocal format and comes on like the Hezbollah on ice - need more be said?

Elsewhere there are respectful but far from derivative echoes of The Beatles circa Revolver, particularly in the deceptively simple guitar dynamics. The vocals are never less than

impassioned, the lyrics eye-opening wry, and the music is a constant and surprising joy, blending shades of history and bold new steps with equal alacrity, charm and imagination. One to treasure for sure.

Jon Clarke



FREAKPOWER
MORE OF EVERYTHING FOR EVERYBODY
BRCD619

The original graduates of the Levi's academy of musical excellence - the band that grooved the nation last year with 'Turn On, Tune In, Cop Out' - have made it to the second album stakes.

Like Jas Mann, with the irritating but catchy 'Spaceman', and Stiltskin with their one and only decent track 'Inside', Freakpower were launched to music stardom via the world-famous Levis advert.

It was the springboard that almost certainly carried their 'Turn On' single to number 3 in the charts in April 1995 and allowed the debut album Drive Thru Booty to hit the number 11 slot soon after.

A year on, with the dust settled and without the hype, we can judge Freakpower entirely on their musical ability.

And the truth is they do have real talent. While More of Everything for Everybody is not quite earth-shattering, it comprises a range of catchy, solid pop tunes, perfect for the summer ahead.

Like Jazzy Jeff's 'Summertime', Freakpower are easy on the ear. The music drifts along nicely, with decent soul and funk inspired riffs.

Sure, they are naff in many ways, but only when you compare them to the current vogue for laddism within music. They are not another Blur or Oasis, and are not about bashing drums and whacking the strings. Freakpower are about getting us back into the Disco.

Shades of James Brown, the madness of Funkadelic and George Clinton, a slice of Stevie Wonder, a flirtation with

Acid Jazz and a natural slant towards the likes of Galliano, Jamiroquai and The Young Disciples can all be found in here. This is a drive away from noise and beats.

Starting with the five-minute 'Trip Through Your Mind', the album gets off to a trippy start indeed. It then moves on nicely to 'Husband' and 'Can You Feel It' - a hard, garage, DIY sound. The catchy Clintonesque 'Government Drug' bursts onto the palate as the last bubble on this A side groove cocktail.

On side B things go decidedly pear shaped for a while though, with the appalling 'KK Nuns', followed by 'Song No6' - an extremely odd choice of song, it being the spitting image of that awful Bruce Springsteen track from the film Philadelphia.

But the band soon get back to their funky best with the ooh! ah!, almost too groovy by half, 'Let It Go'.

And the rest just keeps on rolling...

But these aren't generally tracks you can pigeonhole.

Flexistentialism has the same cutting-edge feel as the influential first few Rebirth of Cool compilations. In other words, it has a range of new sounds and styles, while at the same time not venturing too far off the beaten track.

Featuring tracks from the very excellent Up, Bustle and Out and Coldcut, the hour-plus album also contains a series of trippy vibes from DJ Food and the elusive 9 Lazy 9, and the wicked 'Shakatakadoodub' from the experimental Kruder and Dorfmeister.

This is a must for anyone looking for the ultimate compilation for the summer (and the year). As the label's catchphrase goes: "No one loves you like Ninja". You better believe it ●

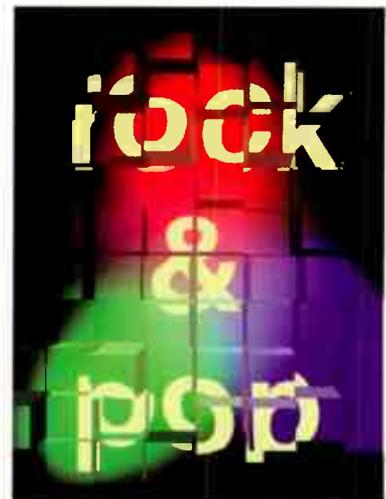


NINJA CUTS
FLEXISTENTIALISM
ZEN CD22

This little beauty should have been reviewed ages ago. But the anonymous looking compilation had sat around in my flat gathering dust with a pile of other dodgy looking new releases.

Hot on the heels of last month's excellent Up, Bustle and Out album comes this brilliant offering from the same forward-thinking label, Ninja Tunes, described by its mentor as "scratchmological waxploitation - the joy of dex".

With a front cover adorned by a series of DJ turntables, the 24 varied tracks loosely adhere to the realms of the dancefloor. But only just. Most of them are highly original tunes, largely influenced by Jazz and Rap, and many have the unmistakable strains of Spanish guitar running through them.



Viv Craske

dance & ambient



ROBERT MILES
DREAMLAND
DECONSTRUCTION 74321391262

I don't think there's anyone who hasn't heard 'Children'. And you've probably heard 'Fable' although you could be forgiven for thinking it was 'Children'. That's the thing about Miles' first album 'Dreamland', it's very samey. This, depending on your mood and how much you want an album to tax your brain can be a big fat plus or an even fatter minus.

If you take each track separately without any pre-prejudiced feelings, you've got a host of sleepy piano melodies and a range of basic and simple beats, driving beats. A whole cornucopia of sweeping orchestral movements awash with emotions.

But this is an album, and a whole album of beautiful, similar dance can wear a bit thin. The beats are alike, the piano melodies simplistic and the orchestral refrains become predictable. In fact there are moments when tracks like 'Princess of Light' start to sound like a selection of documentary signature tunes from the 80s.

So why do I keep listening to it again and again? Well for a start 'Children' (Miles' track about how many Italian

clubbers die in car crashes, having to commute the long distances between clubs) was an incredible tune when I first heard it, and it still is. The same goes for 'Fable'.

The feel is almost Balearic, the keyboards chime with melancholy and peace. 'Children' is also the biggest selling instrumental for 23 years. Listening pleasure for these vulnerable summer days. Just don't expect too much variation.



GRACE
IF I COULD FLY
PERFECTO 0630149472

'Not Over Yet' holds a special place in my heart. I first heard the track in a sweaty club at three in the morning around '91 or '92 when I was relatively untarnished by the lure of the dance culture. And this is one of a handful of tracks that changed everything for me. Like all the best music, the vocals and melody tip-toe a fine line between sadness and utter joy, the simple story of the lyrics yearning for your attention, lifting your dreams and feelings to a new level. But Grace's vocalist Dominique Atkins didn't actually sing on the single (although she's re-voiced the

track for the album).

Grace - a project of veteran house DJ Paul Oakenfold and Steve Osbourne - sees Dominique penning 4 tracks on this debut LP. The nuts and bolts of the production side are left in the capable hands of knob-twiddlers Paul and Steve, Dominique happy to front the band with her hushed dance-diva vocals.

Besides 'Not Over Yet', singles 'Down To Earth' and 'If I Could Fly' are present, the former a melodic house stomper, the latter an unusually effective drum n bass track.

'If I Could Fly' is pure, driving house-backed production with songs inconspicuously slapped over the top. Like Billy Ray Martin or Everything But The Girl this is house for people not smitten with the stuff.



VARIOUS
THE EPIC HOUSE EXPERIENCE
RUMOUR TRIPCD5

Oh great, another sub-genre of house you might think. But at least with Epic House you get an idea of what's in store. Pioneered by acts like Sasha, BT, Dave

Seaman (not the footballer) and Blue Amazon, Epic House takes all the elements of a classic, euphoric, hands-in-the-air tune and multiplies the thrill by a factor of ten. Many tracks hit the 6, 7, 8-minute mark with an intro, suspenseful build-up and heavy melodic pinnacle.

This isn't just eight tracks, it's a concept, a feeling, a collection of friends from every house emporium you've ever frequented man! So, OK the Sasha and Maria house single is obvious by its absence, but there's no disappointment for the Sasha fans, as Blue Amazon do a stonking mix of his 'Magic'.

But it's Blue Amazon's own 'No Other Love' that draws together the whole house ethic, while the 'Stonk' remix of Tenth Chapter's 'Wired' leaves crowds sweating like pigs on prozac.

The music for once really is inspirational, whether heard in the true context of clubland or not. A collection of the classiest, bassiest slabs of uplifting house and European trance around.

Then along comes the perfect ending, Van Basten's 'Uber Alley' with its squelchy beats and looped vocals, funky breaks and its pure electronic buzz. Rarely is a dance album title so fitting. An epic in eight parts.



**MOONDOG
FAT LOT OF GOOD
BETTER BETCD002**

You're never going to believe this but Moondog's head honcho and singer Liz Westwood and guitarist/songwriter Derwood Andrews used to be none other than Westwood, the 80s pop band responsible for 'Sonic Boom Boy'.

OK, so this is crap then. Well no! Westwood and Andrews had the sense to do a runner with the royalties of their one hit wonder,

disappearing to a place picked out on the map - Carefree, Arizona.

And here, as the story goes, Andrews learnt to play slide blues guitar while Westwood sang with the spirits. Before returning, a Navaho Indian blessed the band members with his name, Moondog. The final piece of the jigsaw falls into place on their return to England when they met Martin Lee Stephenson, a man heavily into the break-beat rhythms of drum n bass.

And so this CD is a simple amalgamation of these three parts. Slide guitar, drum n bass and vocals. An unusual combination you might well think, but for the most part it all glues together with ease and subtlety. Like the best in the drum n bass arena, the other instrumentation and vocals draw the attention of the listener away from the beat just enough to compliment the track perfectly.

There are songs in the rock/pop sense of the word, as well as jungly tracks laden with clean, but visceral guitar samples. But the luscious, adaptable vocals hinge the album together. From the 'Sonic Boom Boy' to sonic bloom. Enjoy.

dance & ambient record of the month

**CARL COX
AT THE END OF THE CLICHE
ULTIMATUM 0090752COX**

What can you say? Even his name sounds impressive. Everything this man touches seems to turn to gold. He's now been pioneering dance music and funky vibes for 18 years and few artists command as much respect as him. And the great thing is, it hasn't gone to his head. He still takes the time to shake the clubbers' hands and chat after he plays. He still has the most unnerving ability to feed off the energy of the crowd, understand how they feel and what they want to hear, and push it right back in their faces with his legendary 3-deck mixing skills.

Married and living in some sleepy part of Sussex, he remains one of the most

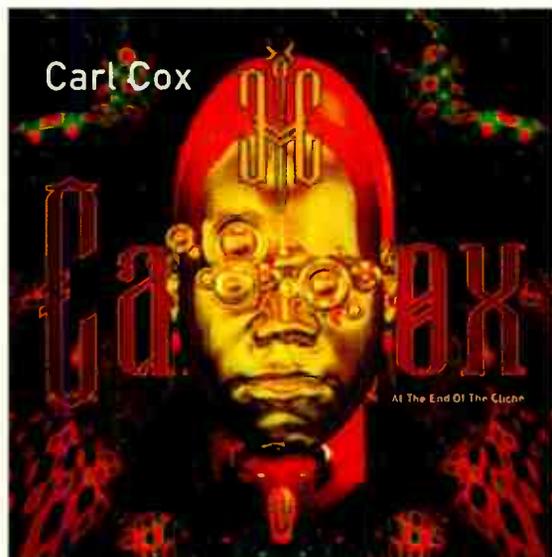
booked DJs with his own label, club and this, his first proper album. Riding on the back of the success of his mix album F.A.C.T., *At The End...* zooms into your cerebral cortex with its

funky beat-tastic electronica.

But on the first listen to this CD, it doesn't appear to be what you'd expect from banging hard house DJ Coxy. The tracks are centrally tuneful and slightly softer-edged than his superb mixing slots. And more noticeably, his own tracks are funkier.

Opening with the single 'Pheobus Apollo' with its whispered sample and crisp beat, the album sprints through single-to-be 'Tribal Jedi' and his recent 12" 'Sensual Sophis-ti-cat/The Player'. He says this album is for him, which is obvious by the tracks written for his record company and his wife ('Song For Rachel').

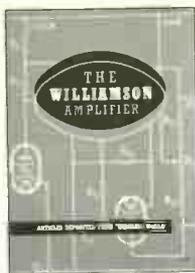
This set of unadulterated house and techno is verging on perfection, oozing Coxy through and through.



VALVE BOOKS

The Williamson Amplifier - D.T.N. Williamson

Offers practical advice on how to build and set up the amplifier for best results. £10.95 Code: 1040



Principles of Electron Tubes - Herbert J. Reich

A textbook for beginners starting with the basics of how a vacuum tube actually works and shows how a simple circuit is designed including amplifiers, transformers and power supplies. A must for both enthusiasts and hobbyists. £31.95 Code: 1010

An Approach to Audio Frequency Amplifier Design - Seventeen circuits from 5 to 1100watts - General Electric Co.

High quality amp. designs using KT66s, KT88s, DA100s etc. Includes two valve pre-amps complete with phono stages. £21.95 Code: 1020

Mullard Tube Circuits for Audio Amplifiers -

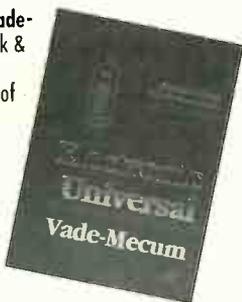
Includes full designs for eleven power and control amps, including 5-20, using valves. Begins with a four chapter tutorial on getting the best sound from valve amplifiers. £15.95 Code: 1030

70 Years of Radio Tubes & Valves - John W. Stokes

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Electronic Universal Vade-Mecum - Piotr Mikolajczyk & Bohdan Paszkowski

This Data book comprises of 5693 valves divided into 442 groups. A comprehensive book which contains connection details, operating parameters, load lines and example circuits. £55.95 Code: 1060



LOUDSPEAKER BOOKS

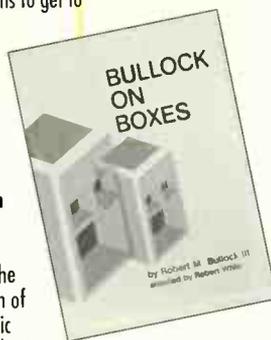
Quick & Easy Transmission Line Speaker Design - Larry D. Sharp.

Practical approach to designing and building your own transmission line loudspeaker. Includes design examples, equations and a computer disk (Lotus123) for the maths! £12.95 Code: 1130

Loudspeakers: The Why & How of Good Reproduction - G.A. Briggs

An easy to understand book on building loudspeakers, using empirical techniques that pre-date computer analysis. A strong recommendation for beginners. £11.95 Code: 1070

Bullock On Boxes - Robert M. Bullock III
Using Thiele-Small parameters clearly, it offers lots of helpful tables and graphs to get to grips with sizing the box and port of a reflex loudspeaker. £14.95 Code: 1100



Electrostatic Loudspeaker Design and Construction - Ronald Wagner

Step by step guide to the design and construction of a full range electrostatic loudspeaker, including basic operating principles. Strongly recommended for those wanting to either build, repair and restore or are just interested in electrostatics. £21.95 Code: 1080

The Loudspeaker Design Cookbook, 5th edition - Vance Dickason

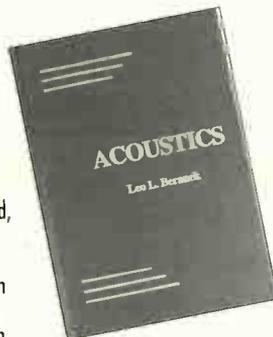
Best seller offers up-to-date design information for the home constructor. It uses modern Thiele-Small theory and parameters. £25.75 Code: 1090 (Spanish version available this summer)

Theory and Design of Loudspeaker Enclosures - J. E. Benson

Covers infinite baffle, reflex, passive radiator etc. in great detail with a highly mathematical approach making it unsuitable for beginners but highly authoritative to experienced designers. £27.95 Code: 1140

Acoustics - Leo L. Beranek

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Volume Five: Jan'58 to Dec'59

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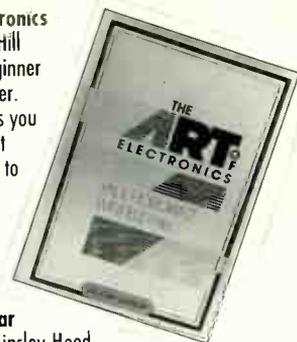
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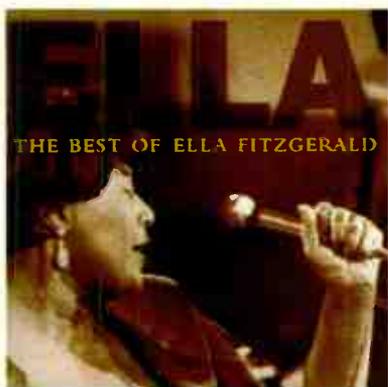
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Jazz

Simon Cooke



ELLA FITZGERALD
THE BEST OF ELLA FITZGERALD
GRP 16592

Ella Fitzgerald died on the fifteenth of June this year, and with her passed an era in Jazz. For myself, no great fan of the biggest names of Jazz - preferring smaller artists - this sad news was appropriately bracketed by the arrival of two re-issue compilations on the GRP label. 'The Best' was first to arrive and covers twenty tracks recorded with Chick Webb, The Ink Spots, Louis Jordan, Louis Armstrong, Bob Haggart, and Sy Oliver, among others.

The play list includes her signature 'A-ticket, A-tasket' on the first track and runs through 'Stone cold dead in the market', 'I'm just a lucky so and so', 'Oh, lady be good', 'Lullaby of Birdland' and 'Hard hearted Hannah' to name just five.

All twenty tracks - and also those on the next CD - were transferred from original acetates, metals and tapes into

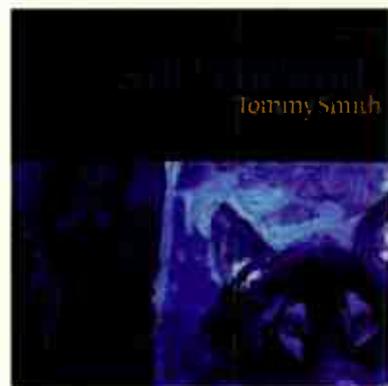
digital media by Steven Lasker and Erick Labson. Audio restoration is by Labson using the Sonic Solutions NoNoise system. Incidentally, this was the system used by these same people to re-master material for the 'Original American Decca Recordings' series which I reviewed over a period last year.

It would be nice to end this review on an upbeat note, but basically a decision on whether to buy these CDs rests on how well you like the re-mastering that's been done on the originals. Try before you buy.



ELLA FITZGERALD
ELLA AND FRIENDS
GRP 16632

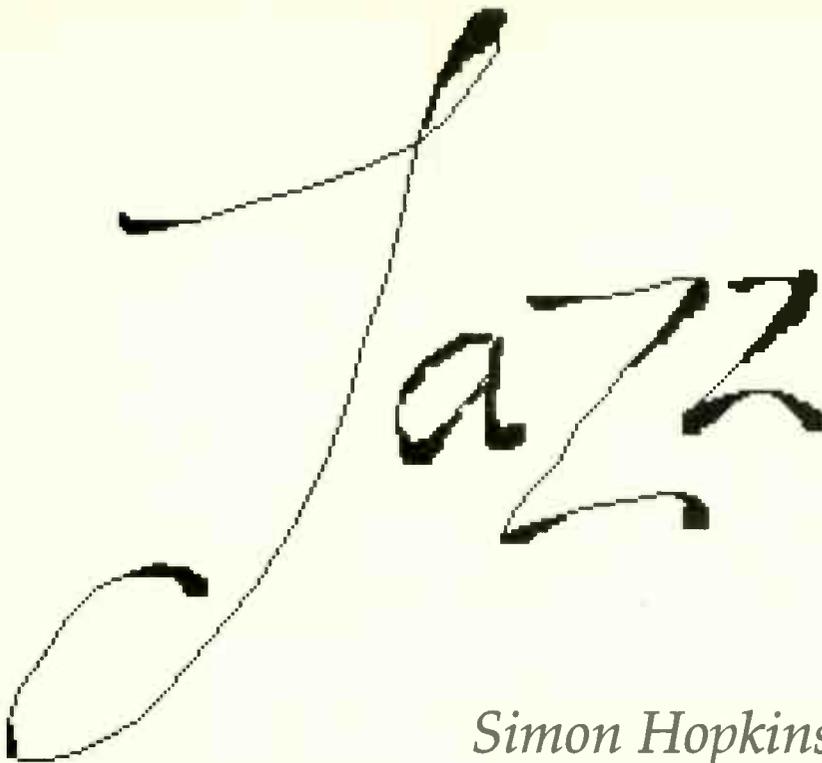
This CD arrived on my doormat just after Ella's demise, and covers twenty different tracks, arranged in a slightly different format; these tracks are grouped according to who they are recorded with. Louis Armstrong, The Ink Spots, Louis Jordan, The Delta Rhythm Boys and The Mills Brothers all appear. Tracks include 'The Frim Fram Sauce', 'Into each life some rain must fall', 'Petootie Pie', 'Ain't nobody's business but my own' and 'For sentimental reasons'.



TOMMY SMITH
BEASTS OF SCOTLAND
AKD 054

A few CDs which I've reviewed recently have been produced in association with, or by virtue of a commission from one branch of the Arts Council or other. 'Beasts of Scotland' is another such, commissioned by the Glasgow Jazz Festival in association with the Scottish Arts Council. Often it seems fulfilling that there is this beneficent body keeping an eye on the health of the British jazz scene, giving us works of outstanding beauty which might never have otherwise seen the light of day.

In the case of 'Beasts' the thanks might well be less effusive than it could

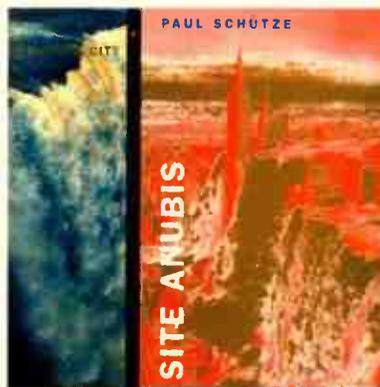


Jazz

Simon Hopkins

have been, however. The original concept was that the Glasgow International Jazz Festival commissioned poems from Edwin Morgan on the 'Beasts of Scotland' theme. Tommy Smith was also commissioned by the Festival and Arts Council to provide music on this theme. It seems to me that here the concept falters, because, while Morgan's words - reproduced in the booklet but not in the recording - succinctly capture the essence of the animals, Smith's music uncharacteristically takes longer, leaving this CD with just ten tracks in over seventy-seven minutes. This leaves us with tracks like 'Wolf', 'Conger eel' and 'Wild Cat' being nicely timed at three to six minutes, but leaves 'Midge' and 'Spider' interminably long at over ten minutes. I can't but feel that without the luxury of outside funding, this work would have been tighter, more driven and more effective. Altogether more like the Tommy Smith of earlier works.

Never mind, grouch over. Smith more than makes up for any compositional shortcomings in his playing. Aply abetted by Guy Barket on trumpet, Andy Panayi on flute and alto sax, Steve Hamilton on keyboards, Alec Dankworth on bass and Tom Gordon on drums, superbly translated into a characteristically robust Linn recording, this slightly over-fussy piece becomes an eminently recommendable slice of modern British Jazz. You might tire of it in parts, but you'll enjoy the whole wholeheartedly.



PAUL SCHÜTZE & PHANTOM CITY

SITE ANUBIS
BIG CAT ABB106CD

Almost certainly the most important - and, frankly, to these ears easily the most enjoyable - jazz album of the year has come in the unlikely form of a debut supergroup. They were formed under the auspices of ex-pat Australian film composer and ambient recording artist Paul Schütze.

Schütze has behind him a catalogue of at least a dozen albums scattered across at least half as many record labels. Yet despite the disparity of the musical styles they have drawn on, they have revealed a single-minded trajectory revealing one of the most consistently innovative musicians working in contemporary music.

Site Anubis is the final part of Schütze's "Pacific Unrest" trilogy. New

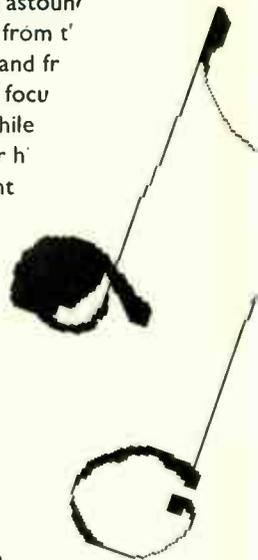
Maps of Hell and An Index of Metals - soon to be reissued here by Big Cat - presented a bird's eye view of a city in broiling turmoil. The music veered dramatically from New Maps' dense, foetid 70s Miles Davis-inspired jazz-rock to its successor's verdant and far-eastern minimalist serenity. But good as they are, neither approaches the sheer brilliance of this concluding album.

For this album Schütze has assembled an incredible international group of musicians from around the world: Finnish jazz rock guitarist Raoul Björkenheim, one of the few genuinely exciting jazz guitarists to have emerged in the last decade; Swiss bass clarinetist Alex Buess of anarchic avant-jazz cut-up thrashers 16-17; the veteran British jazz soprano sax virtuoso Lol Coxhill; the genre-busting New York bassist, producer, ambient soundscaper Bill Laswell; legendary trombonist Julian Priester and Belgian drummer Dirk Wachtelaer.

Eschewing the group-recording methods of most jazz dates, Schütze has opted to effectively form a 'virtual group'. Basic rhythm tracks are created and the other musicians add parts one by one in their respective locations around the world. Finally various acts of radical editing and post production are performed once all the parts are assembled. Hardly extraordinary working methods in the pop world, to be sure, but no-one ever over-estimated the luddite nature of jazz musicians.

The results are astounding and spring directly from the working methods, and from Schütze's intensely focused sense of sound. While virtuoso performer himself, Schütze has brought together these fabulous players' work and given them a context of a detailed brilliant contemporary music undeniably owes a great debt to the more extraordinary early 70s fusion - Herbie Hancock, Julian Priester and perhaps most essentially Miles Davis. It is explosive throughout, vividly illustrating Schütze's notion of some cataclysm in a city leading to the spontaneous appearance of a giant statue of Anubis at the city's heart.

Essential; an album which truly lives up to its bold and timely ambitions.



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Peter Herring



LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN
String Quartet No4 in C minor
Op18 No4/String Quartet
No15 in A minor Op132
Orford String Quartet
 DELOS DE3037 (DDD/68.21)

The combination of one of the earliest of the Beethoven quartets with one of the five towering masterpieces from his last years is unusual, but how well it works in the hands of the Canadian-based Orford Quartet. What emerges most strikingly is that the Op18 work from 1800, written when the composer was thirty, is by no means the poor relation of the A minor Op132. True, it owes much to Haydn and Mozart, but - as ever with Beethoven - it develops themes and structures in ways they would never have dreamt of.

For Beethoven, the key of C minor always possessed an element of demonic drama, witness the 'Pathetique' piano sonata, the Third Piano Concerto and, of course, the Fifth Symphony. That sense of drama characterises the Orfords' performance, with a powerful momentum to the opening allegro of Op18 No4 and an appropriately spirited response to the quicksilver rondo finale. But their playing, while full of colour

and subtlety, never lapses into artifice or exaggeration. They have also been supremely well recorded by Marc Aubort in the Emmanuel Presbyterian Church in Toronto. The sound is airy and detailed with a pleasing ambience, yet retains an essential intimacy.

The so-called 'Late Quartets', of which Op132 is numerically - but not chronologically - the penultimate, remain the great challenge for every string quartet, not least because of the 'intellectual baggage' which music scholarship has attached to them in the ensuing 170 years. There is no disputing - as every sleevenote writer tells you - that these works represent one of the pinnacles of western art, let alone music, but I do wonder if such lofty descriptions leave listeners convinced that the quartets belong to the realm of the unapproachable and incomprehensible. This is far from the truth as, for example, the lyrical finale of Op132 amply demonstrates.

Beethoven was working on this quartet when he was taken seriously ill in the spring of 1825. His recovery, towards the end of May of that year, inspired one of the greatest, most deeply-felt slow movements in all music, the 'Heiliger Dankgesang eines Genesenen an die Gottheit, in der lydischen Tonart' ('Song of thanksgiving to the Deity on recovery from an illness, in the Lydian mode') which forms the heart of the five-movement structure of Op132. The test for the players is to capture the timeless, heartfelt spirituality of this music, but without becoming excessively introspective, and in this the Orford Quartet is hugely successful. Their playing has a profound intensity and breadth of expression, but always avoids sentimentality. The approach, as in the rest of this many-layered work, is intelligent, tasteful and thoughtful - and, for that matter, very recommendable.



THE GOLDEN AGE:
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Choral music by Gregorio
Allegri; Francisco Guerrero;
Josquin Desprez; Carlo
Gesualdo; Orlandus Lassus;
Giovanni Pierluigi da
Palestrina; Joao Lourenco
Rebello and Tomas Luis da
Victoria. Ruth Holton, soprano;
Magnificat; director, Philip
Cave
 LINN RECORDS CKD052 (DDD/57.05)

As far as I am aware, this is Linn Records' first venture into the world of choral music. If so, it is a highly successful debut, and one that promises much for the future. The programme here could easily qualify as a 'primer' in the field of Renaissance polyphony, containing as it does works by five of the giants of the epoch, and at least three of its most enduring masterpieces: Victoria's Ave Maria, Palestrina's Stabat Mater, and the extraordinary Miserere of Gregorio Allegri, a work so jealously guarded by the clerics of the Sistine Chapel that - according to legend - not a single copy was seen beyond the Chapel's confines until the young Mozart, having heard the work there, wrote it out from memory.



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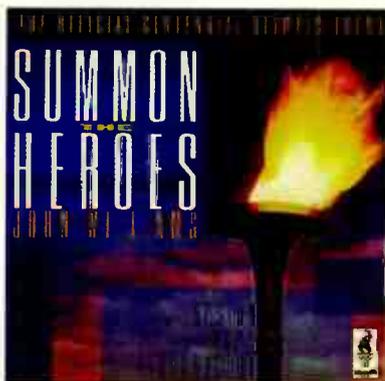
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It is well performed here, although not all of the ornamentation is to my taste. The Victoria and Palestrina are better served, the simple beauty of the former's Ave Maria being joyfully conveyed, and the stoical anguish of the latter's Stabat Mater coming across most movingly. The impact is further enhanced by the translucent and atmospheric recording, a Philip Hobbs/Ben Turner collaboration from St Jude's-on-the-Hill in London's Hampstead. Each soaring vocal line is captured with thrilling, shining clarity.

Now enjoying its fifth year of musical activity, Magnificat draws largely on young choral scholars from Oxford or Cambridge and on graduates from leading music conservatoires. It takes its name from the Virgin Mary's canticle in St Luke's Gospel: Magnificat anima mea dominum (My soul doth magnify the Lord), a song of joyful praise reflecting the spirit of the music that has played such a formative role in the artistic development of each choir member.

One of the most striking and heartening aspects of musical life in Britain today is the quite exceptional number of first-rate choral ensembles and the fact that they are exploring and bringing alive repertoire that not so long ago was largely the preserve of dry scholarship. Magnificat certainly belongs among that number, and its founder and conductor, Philip Cave, has put his experience with the likes of The Clerkes of Oxenford, The Sixteen, The Hilliard Ensemble and The Tallis Scholars to good use.

It is also encouraging to see Magnificat introducing works by such as the Portuguese, Joao Rebelo, and the Spaniard Francisco Guerrero alongside the more famous names, and they round off this representative selection of pieces with three motets by Orlandus Lassus, the last - Timor et Tremor - a real choral tour-de-force, with daring harmonies and imaginative rhythmic devices that reflect the fear and dread expressed in the text.



SUMMON THE HEROES

Music by John Williams, Carl Orff, Leo Arnaud, Mikis Theodorakis, Michael Torke, Leonard Bernstein, Vangelis, Dmitri Shostakovich, Josef Suk, Miklos Rosza.

Tanglewood Festival Chorus; Boston Pops Orchestra;

conductor, John Williams

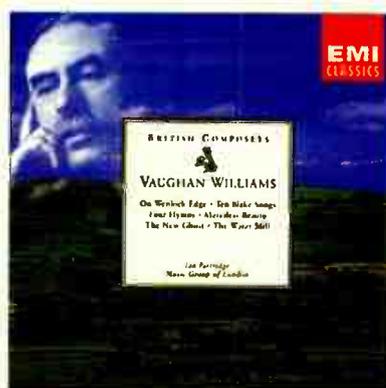
SONY CLASSICAL SK62622 (DDD/62.28)

Starring role in this 'souvenir' recording to mark the forthcoming Olympic Games in Atlanta goes to composer and conductor John Williams, who, having composed the noble Olympic Fanfare and Theme for the 1984 games in Los Angeles, has been invited to repeat the success twelve years later. First impressions, however, are that *Summon the Heroes* isn't quite in the same league as its predecessor.

Three other composers with, like John Williams, impressive cinema credentials are included here. Mikis Theodorakis's *Ode to Zeus* from his *Canto Olimpico*, written for the Barcelona games in 1992, is lusty, stirring stuff, and Miklos Rosza's *Parade of Charioteers* from *Ben Hur* is a movie music classic, but Vangelis's famous theme for *Chariots of Fire*, to me, simply doesn't suit the full orchestral treatment. And Leonard Bernstein's syrupy and pretentious *Olympic Hymn* should surely have remained in the obscurity to which it was consigned after composition in 1981.

However, there are two gems on offer here. Michael Torke's *Javelin* is a new commission for the Atlanta games and for the fiftieth anniversary of the Atlanta

Symphony Orchestra, and its lightness, elegance and understatement are a refreshing antidote to the mood of much of the other music on this disc. Finally, though, the gold medal here goes to Josef Suk's *Toward a New Life*, a charming, smiling piece from the 1932 games in Los Angeles. With its unmistakable Czech flavour and absence of bombast, it is a worthy winner. I should add that the recording, made with Sony's Super Bit Mapping system, is outstanding.



RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS

Four Hymns/Merciless Beauty/The Water Mill/The New Ghost/Ten Blake Songs/On Wenlock Edge
Ian Partridge, tenor; Janet Craxton, oboe; Jennifer Partridge, piano; The Music Group of London
EMI Classics 'British Composers'

CDM 5 65589 2 (ADD/69.44)

This year marks the centenary of the first printing of A.E. Housman's collection of poems entitled 'A Shropshire Lad', so the reissue of one of the finest ever recordings of Housman settings - Vaughan Williams's 'On Wenlock Edge' - is especially welcome.

In 'On Wenlock Edge', composed in 1909, Vaughan Williams - for whom the melancholy aspect of Housman would have had little appeal - selected six texts from the collection with evident care. He then set them with both sensitivity and, in accompanying the voice with string quartet and piano, an arresting imagination. In fact, the description 'accompanying' does less than justice to the contribution of the five

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tenor; Anton Scharinger,
baritone; Reinhard Hagen,
Willard White, basses; The
Children's
Choir of the Opera de Lyon; Les
Arts Florissants; conductor,
William Christie**

ERATO 0630-12705-2 (DDD/150.23)

Mozart's last, and most enigmatic opera has been a lucky work on record, with several fine versions currently available: Solti on Decca, Haitink and Beecham on EMI, Bohm on DG to name four. In the field of 'period' performance, however, Arnold Ostman's Drottningholm production on Decca's L'Oiseau-Lyre label has been the clear leader. Now, though, the American-born conductor, William Christie, offers a production from his adopted France which even more than Ostman challenges the traditional, heavyweight Germanic approach to this work, epitomised by the likes of Herbert von Karajan.

This Erato set, recorded in Paris by Radio France, is of the immensely successful 1994/1995 staging by Robert Carsen for the Festival d'Aix-en-Provence, and from the very first bars it

is evident that the spontaneity and electricity of those concert performances has been transferred undiluted to the recording studio. The freshness and vivacity are captivating, and Christie's brisk tempos ensure the momentum never flags.

He benefits from a very fine team of soloists, with Rosa Mannion an enchanting Pamina, Natalie Dessay commanding as The Queen of the Night and Linda Kitchen a delightful Papageno. The male voices are no less impressive, with Hans Peter Blochwitz



an excellent Tamino and Anton Scharinger completely at home in the role of Papageno the birdcatcher. Reinhard Hagen is an imposing Sarastro, and Willard White brings an appropriate gravity to the role of the Speaker.

Above all, though, it is the overall approach to vocal technique adopted by William Christie that distinguishes

this production. As he argues in the accompanying booklet, the opera would have been written for light, youthful voices and this is how best to capture its air of fairytale-like fantasy. To give it the Italian 'verismo', or even Wagnerian treatment is to miss the point.

The result, with crisp, fluent playing from the period instruments of Les Arts Florissants is wholly persuasive and compelling, and Christie, a conductor best-known for his work in the Baroque repertoire, displays a firm understanding both of Mozart and of this strange, multi-layered work whose subtexts and symbolism have been the subject of debate since the first performance in Emanuel Schikaneder's Freyhaus-Theater on September 30, 1791.

Less than three months later, on December 5, the dying Mozart expressed the wish to hear once more some of his own music. It was not a movement from one of the string quartets or piano concertos, or one of the great operatic arias or choruses, but Papageno's simple but beguiling little song, 'Der Vogelfänger bin ich ja' ('A merry birdcatcher am I'). Perhaps more than any of the scholarly analyses to which this opera has been subjected, this moment conveys what the work meant for its composer.

This Aix-en-Provence production of Die Zauberflöte simply sparkles with wit, humour and colour, yet never seems superficial. William Christie displays a keen awareness of dramatic timing, and the 20-bit recording is from the top drawer.

instrumentalists; it is every bit as evocative as that of the tenor soloist.

Ian Partridge's interpretation of 'On Wenlock Edge', recorded in 1971 with the Music Group of London, led by that fine violinist, Hugh Bean, was rightly lauded at the time and, a quarter of a century later, it remains unsurpassed. And the artistry, understanding and wonderful tonal colours which characterise the Housman settings are employed to similar telling effect in a much later song cycle, the Ten Blake Songs composed in 1957 and first performed shortly after the composer's death in October 1958.

Vaughan Williams was more attracted to William Blake the artist than the poet - Blake's illustrations for the Book of Job were the inspiration for one of VW's greatest orchestral works. Nevertheless, for the final time, Vaughan Williams proved what a master songwriter he was. Where the piano quintet was such an inspired choice for 'On Wenlock Edge', so the surprising combination of voice and oboe is utterly right here. Janet Craxton is outstanding in accompanying Ian Partridge's fine performances.

The other works here - Four Hymns, Merciless Beauty (three rondels

attributed to Chaucer), The Water Mill and The New Ghost - merely reinforce the claims of this CD to be arguably the best anthology of Vaughan Williams's songs currently available. It also comes at mid-price, in EMI's treasurable 'British Composers' series. The recordings, made at Abbey Road by the reliable team of Christopher Bishop and Neville Boyling, have also stood the test of time remarkably well; they want for nothing in terms of warmth, presence and clarity. An essential purchase for any lover of the works of Vaughan Williams, and of English music in general for that matter ●

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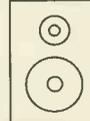


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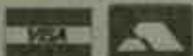
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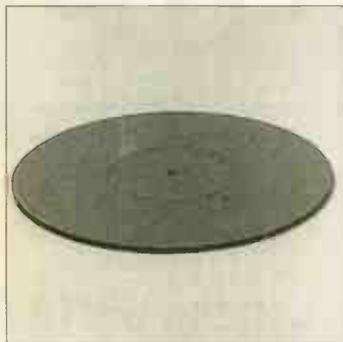
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Measuring the Alpha 5+ reminded me of the original Alpha player. It had treble roll-off, which was partly responsible for the sweet sound that made it so popular. The 5+ is very similar, but just before the treble roll-off, which starts gently from 7kHz upwards, there is a subtle lift around 3kHz. This will help project detail forwards and should give the 5+ an exciting balance. There's some bass lift too, which should give weight to bass lines.

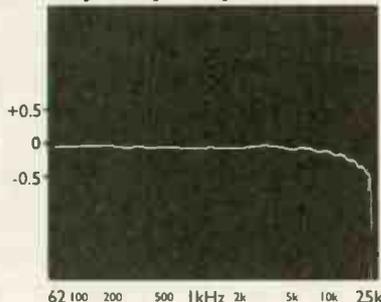
The Alpha 5+ exhibits strong distortion though. At -30dB, a level chosen to represent a typical music signal, distortion levels were fifteen times higher than the best; the wide spread of harmonics can clearly be seen in the distortion analysis below.

High distortion at -60dB corresponds to an unimpressive 101.5dB of dynamic range. Output was high at 2.36V, which gives a little extra headroom when using a passive pre-amp. Noise was curiously high at -92dB, but low enough to be inaudible in practice. **DB**

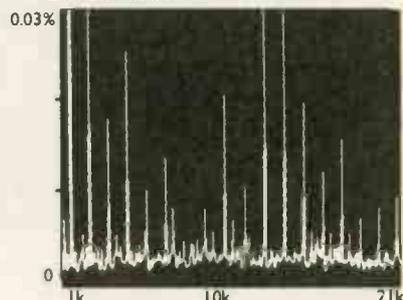
Frequency response	4Hz-20.75kHz	
Distortion (%)		
-6dB	0.009	0.009
-30dB	0.10	0.09
-60dB	1.01	0.90
-90dB	49.3	44.5

Separation (dB)	left	right
1kHz	93	96
20kHz	93	96
Noise		-92dB
with emphasis		-92dB
Dynamic range		101.5dB
Output		2.36V

Frequency Response



Distortion



PIONEER PD-S904

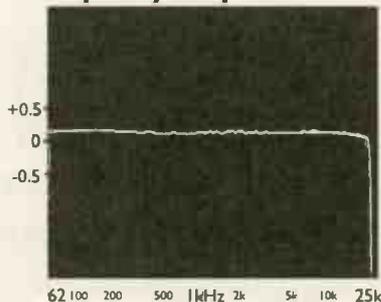
Unlike Pioneer's previous Legato Link CD players, the PD-S904, sporting Legato Link Conversion S, doesn't have a rolled-off high frequency response. It's very flat in fact, flatter than most. This I would expect to give a neutral sound with fine treble extension. There is some gentle bass lift lower down which will add power and solidity to the bass, subjectively a good thing I find.

Distortion was low at all levels; in the plot taken at -30dB, a level picked to represent a typical music signal, only the slightest 2nd harmonic is visible. At -60dB, distortion was as low as the best, giving rise to a dynamic range figure of 110dB (EIAJ test). Elsewhere the Pioneer continued to turn in a fine set of measured figures, with wide separation, low noise and output just above the Philips standard at 2.5V, providing useful extra headroom for those using passive pre-amps. **DB**

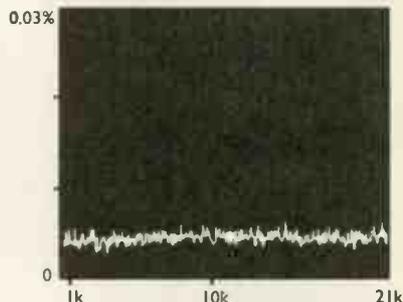
Frequency response	4Hz-21.75kHz	
Distortion (%)		
-6dB	0.005	0.005
-30dB	0.005	0.005
-60dB	0.35	0.34
-90dB	28.5	28.4

Separation (dB)	left	right
1kHz	135	134
20kHz	123	121
Noise		-117dB
with emphasis		-119dB
Dynamic range		110dB
Output		2.5V

Frequency Response



Distortion



ROTEL RCD-975

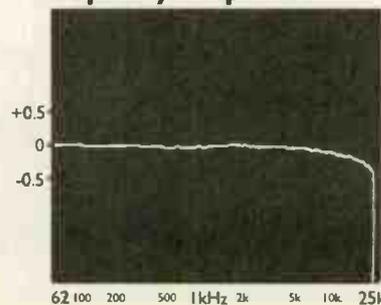
The RCD-975 is a nicely engineered player. Frequency response is very smooth so I'd expect a balanced sound as a result. Treble starts to roll-off gently from 5kHz upwards, being 0.36dB down by 20kHz. This is enough to soften the sound a little, but shouldn't unbalance it too strongly. There is also a very slight lift in the bass so I'd expect solid bass lines too.

At -30dB, a level picked to represent a typical music signal, distortion was very low. There are no low-order harmonics visible, just 5th and 9th higher up. I'd expect a smooth sound as a result. In all other areas the RCD-975 measured well; separation was wide, dynamic range a healthy 115dB echoing the low distortion at -60dB (EIAJ test), and output a touch above the Philips standard at 2.2V. **DB**

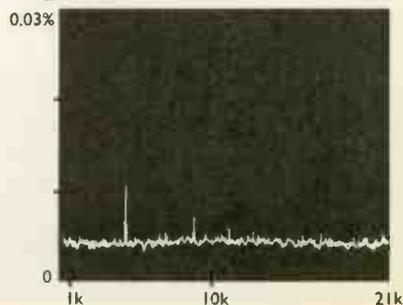
Frequency response	4Hz-21.1kHz	
Distortion (%)		
-6dB	0.008	0.008
-30dB	0.015	0.015
-60dB	0.23	0.22
-90dB	29.4	29.6

Separation (dB)	left	right
1kHz	126	126
20kHz	112	114
Noise		-109dB
with emphasis		-109dB
Dynamic range		115dB
Output		2.2V

Frequency Response



Distortion



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CD PLAYERS

MARANTZ CD-63mkII KI-Signature

On the test bench the Marantz measured well. Frequency response was smooth and flat, but with a subtle plateau lift around 5kHz, I'd expect detail to be pushed well forwards.

Distortion figures were around average at all signal levels. There was just the smallest amount of 2nd order poking through the noise floor, but even order distortion tends to be innocuous anyway.

Separation was very wide, being above 125dB at 1kHz and 20kHz. Dynamic range exceeded the 100dB barrier and noise was very low indeed.

Compared to the 63SE reviewed in the May '95 issue most of these results are virtually identical, with the exception of distortion which appeared slightly worse. **HB**

Frequency response

4Hz-21kHz

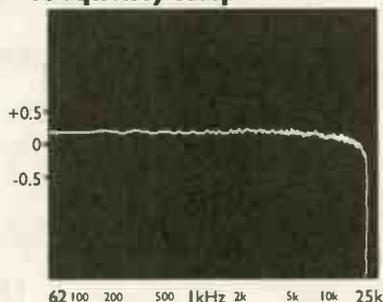
Distortion (%)

-6dB	0.006	0.006
-30dB	0.027	0.028
-60dB	0.8	0.7
-90dB	47.6	41.9

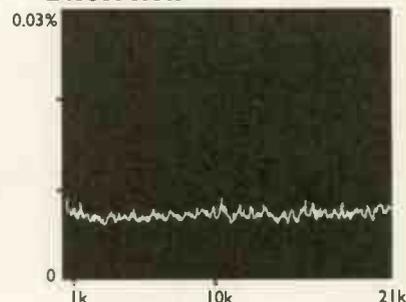
Separation (dB)

	left	right
1kHz	132	137
20kHz	126	127
Noise		-123dB
with emphasis		-123dB
Dynamic range		103dB
Output		2.3V

Frequency Response



Distortion



TRICHORD GENESIS

The Genesis player is based on the Pioneer PD-S504, but modified by Trichord. Its frequency response shows strong treble roll-off, 1dB down at 15.2kHz with both channels displaying virtually identical characteristics. This I would expect to give a soft, warm sound.

Distortion levels were low right across the board. At -30dB, a level picked to represent a typical music signal, there's only a small amount of 2nd harmonic visible. As even order distortion is generally innocuous, especially at such a low level, I'd expect a smooth sound from the Genesis. Separation remained above 90dB even at 20kHz. No noise figure could be obtained because the Genesis mutes under test.

The dynamic range figure of 105.9dB is very good echoing the low distortion at -60dB. Output voltage was above standard, the Genesis providing 2.4volts rms. Apart from the discrepancy in the frequency response the

Trichord Pioneer fares well. **HB**

Frequency response 4Hz-15.5kHz

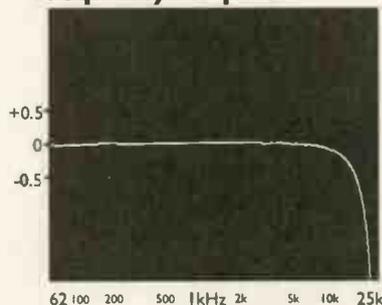
Distortion (%)

-6dB	0.006	0.006
-30dB	0.020	0.019
-60dB	0.56	0.62
-90dB	30.1	31.5

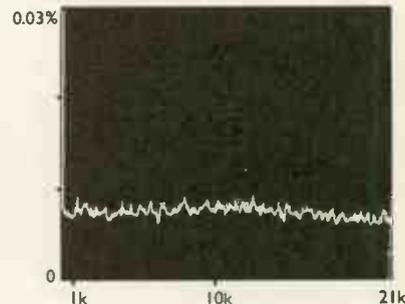
Separation (dB)

	left	right
1kHz	122	124
20kHz	96	99
Noise		N/A
with emphasis		N/A
Dynamic range		105.9dB
Output		2.4V

Frequency Response



Distortion



RESTEK CHARISMA

In frequency response terms, the Restek Charisma CD player was pretty much run of the mill, displaying a -1dB high frequency roll-off at 21kHz. There's a slight peak before this which could give an impression of greater detail - but only subjective tests will tell.

Distortion figures were a little below par giving an average dynamic range figure of 102dB. Separation over midband frequencies was fairly wide at 106dB, narrowing to 85dB at the top end.

Noise was low, but output lower than standard at 1.8V (Philips set 2V). The Charisma is well enough engineered. **HB**

Frequency response 4Hz-21kHz

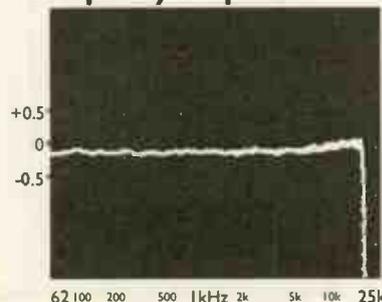
Distortion (%)

-6dB	0.004	0.005
-30dB	0.026	0.030
-60dB	0.80	0.88
-90dB	32.7	33.4

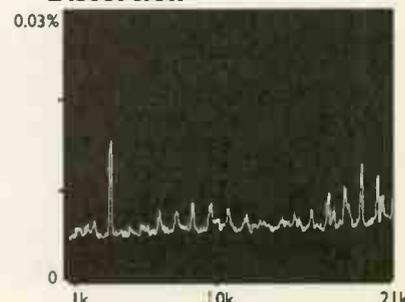
Separation (dB)

	left	right
1kHz	105	106.2
20kHz	85	85.6
Noise		-109dB
with emphasis		-109dB
Dynamic range		102dB
Output		1.8V

Frequency Response



Distortion



LOUDSPEAKERS

MISSION 754

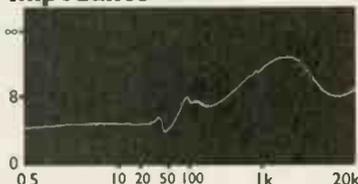
With a commendably wide and flat frequency response the Missions look set to produce a balanced, full range sound. Treble is impressively smooth, a gentle lift around 8-10kHz being certain to add some incision at the top end. There's a bit of a lift between 600-800Hz in the lower midrange, but even this I wouldn't expect to colour the sound severely. Bass extended impressively far downward too, but wasn't boosted above the rest of the response too strongly. I'd expect dry, deep bass as a result - the best kind.

So what are they like to drive? Sadly, and quite unlike Missions of the past, the 754s aren't the easiest of loads. Their 86dB

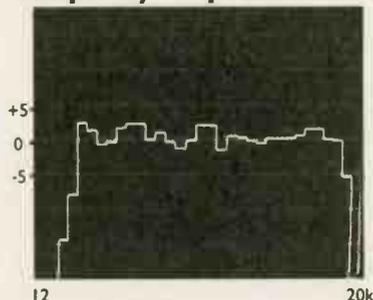
sensitivity isn't too bad, about average these days. But the impedance curve shows they will draw strong current in the bass, staying below 5Ω under 250Hz. Above this, impedance rises back above 8Ω, giving an overall figure of 6Ω. The 754s demand a good amplifier; look for power amplifiers of

around 60watts output and with the ability to drive low impedance loads. DB

Impedance



Frequency Response



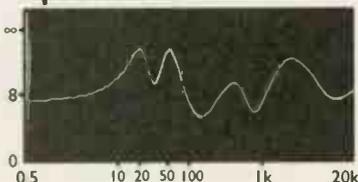
CELESTION IMPACT 30

The Impact 30s are a three way design - rare at this price point. They appear to have been successfully engineered too, having a smooth, even response. There is a little ripple around 3-4kHz where the midrange driver crosses over to the tweeter, but it is small enough not to colour the sound noticeably. Below 400Hz bass level starts to rise, peaking at 160Hz by 5dB or so. This should give them a strong punch, but perhaps an over-full sounding bass too, although this will depend as much on the room they are used in.

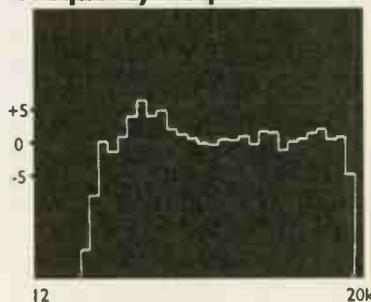
With just above average sensitivity at 87dB, and an overall impedance figure of 7Ω, they are easy enough to drive. The

impedance curve shows some sharp changes though, indicating that the Impact 30s are a reactive load, which can affect amplifier performance. I'd recommend 40-50watt amplifiers to be on the safe side. DB

Impedance



Frequency Response



THOMAS TRANSDUCERS ACCELERANDO

Being a large folded horn design, the Accelerandos had to be measured in two stages. First, the microphone was placed in front of the main driver for midrange and treble measurement. Bass was then added to the analysis with the mic. placed at the mouth of the horn. On-axis they have a strong peak at 2kHz which tends to add either harshness or shout. A wider lift between 6-8kHz may add some detail and insight, but as at 2kHz, the peak is so strong (+8dB) I suspect that it will be too much.

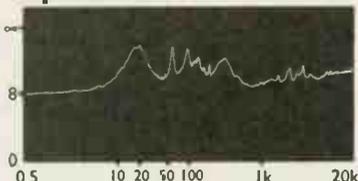
10-15° off-axis things looked a lot better, at least in the high treble where the 6-8kHz lift flattened out to give a much better

balanced response. The peak at 2kHz remained, but dropped to around +5dB so will be less obvious. Bass extension is very good, stretching well down, but I'd expect a dry quality as it stays flat too.

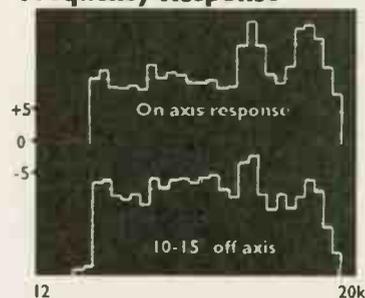
Driving the Accelerandos isn't a problem; at 102dB at 1m for a watt of pink noise, and with a smooth impedance curve

of 12.8Ω overall, they need little power. I'd recommend amplifiers in the region of 5-25watts. DB

Impedance



Frequency Response



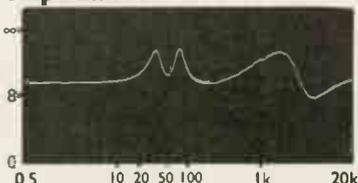
ELTAX SYMPHONY 6

With their thick MDF grilles in place the Eltax Symphony 6s suffered. The tall, hard walls the grilles place around the drivers cause reflections resulting in a strong peak at 1kHz and a dip just above. Removing the grilles removed much of this problem and luckily treble level stayed the same; I was worried that it might have increased even further. As it is, they are still going to sound bright due to the plateau lift in the treble. Best results are likely to be with them firing straight down the room - slightly off-axis upper treble will roll-off. Bass went deep and was tuned low, so I'd expect impressive depth from these mid-size floorstanders.

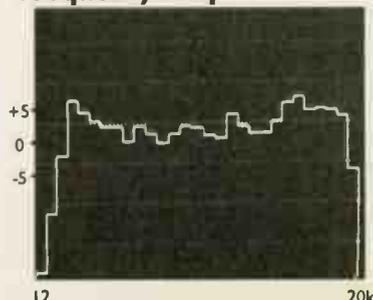
At 85.5dB sensitivity the Symphony 6s are about average, and a high overall impedance means they won't place too demanding a load on partnering amplifiers. The sharp changes in the impedance curve indicate they are a reactive load, but nothing most modern amplifiers shouldn't be able to

cope with. I'd recommend amplifiers in the region of 30-50watts. DB

Impedance



Frequency Response



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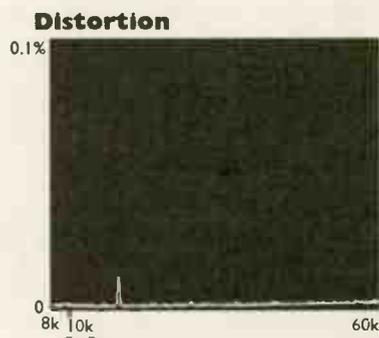
Hailing from Germany, the Restek Fantasy line-level integrated amplifier proved capable of delivering 98watts into an 8Ω resistive load and a thundering 156watts into 4Ω.

The Fantasy is a DC coupled amplifier with reasonably wide bandwidth, DC-69kHz at 1dB limits. I'd expect deep bass and an open and insightful treble as a result. Distortion figures were excellent too, barely increasing with power or frequency. The midband low power (1W) result of 0.008% THD is exceptional.

Two things niggle though: an input overload of 2V and a lowish separation figure of 61dB. The former could lead to transient

intermodulation and slew induced distortion when faced with signals at or beyond this level - typical in CD, where some players deliver 3.5V. The separation isn't so much of a worry as only 25dB or so of separation is needed for good stereo. HB

Power	98watts
CD/tuner/aux.	
Frequency response	0Hz-69kHz
Separation	61dB
Noise	-106dB
Distortion	0.013%
Sensitivity	200mV
dc offset	-0.5/-2.9mV



JOHN SHEARNE PHASE 6/PHASE 3

John Shearne amplifiers have always been designed to mimic valve amps. As a result, some of their measured parameters are unusual. Output impedance is high, and power line regulation low, causing the amplifier to deliver less power into a low load (30W into 4Ω) than a normal load (50W into 8Ω). Whilst this might mimic a valve amp, it is a simulacrum, not an exact copy.

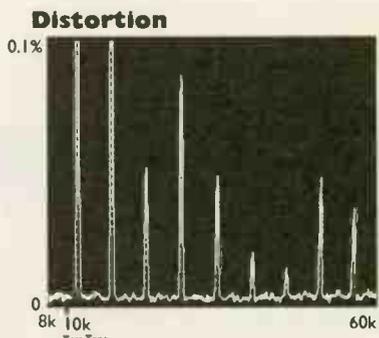
Distortion rises at high frequencies and our analysis clearly shows extended odd order harmonics, probably due to low feedback. This is crossover distortion, but at 0.2% at 10kHz it may not be intrusive.

Bandwidth has been reigned back to 27kHz, usually a good idea in solid-state as well as valve. Bass reaches down to 5Hz.

Input sensitivity was normal enough at 220mV and noise adequately low at -89dB. I was happy to see low DC offset too.

I don't believe valves can be mimicked by solid-state; the two are radically different and superficial similarities in measured performance are not enough to bring them together. All the same, John Shearne amps have attractive properties of their own and it is on these that they can be judged. NK

Power	45watts
CD/tuner/aux.	
Frequency response	5Hz-27kHz
Separation	51dB
Noise	-89dB
Distortion	0.03%
Sensitivity	220mV
dc offset	1.5/3.7mV



DENON PMA-425R

On the test bench the Denon managed to deliver 66watts into an 8Ω load and a massive 90watts into 4Ω. This amplifier shouldn't struggle with any of the loudspeakers on today's market. Its frequency response to a sinewave sweep was good too, going down to 7Hz with a -1dB roll off point of 25kHz.

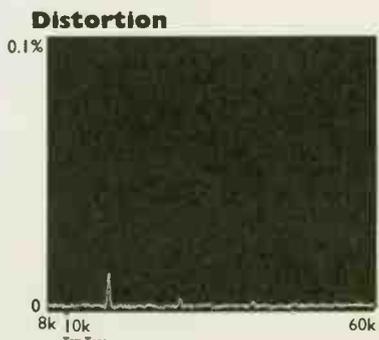
I would assume that this curtailed band pass response contributed to the harmonic distortion figures which were very good indeed (as low as 0.003% 1kHz @ 1W) and predominantly second order in nature. Sensitivity was a bit higher than usual at 140mV, but this isn't a problem.

The moving magnet phono stage did slightly less well, with a frequency response limited at the bottom end, running from 95Hz to 23kHz. This is excessive warp filtering and I would expect a less than substantial bass performance.

Sensitivity of this stage was normal at

3.5mV, with the input overloading at 150mV. Input impedance was measured at 27kΩ at both low and high frequencies. HB

Power	66watts
CD/tuner/aux.	
Frequency response	7Hz-25kHz
Separation	61.9dB
Noise	-97.3dB
Distortion	0.015%
Sensitivity	140mV
dc offset	-0.5/0.0mV



Disc	
Frequency response	95Hz-23kHz
Separation	51.32dB
Noise	-81.6dB
Sensitivity	3.5mV
Overload	150mV

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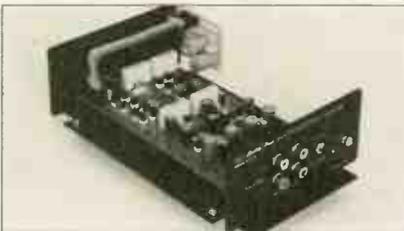
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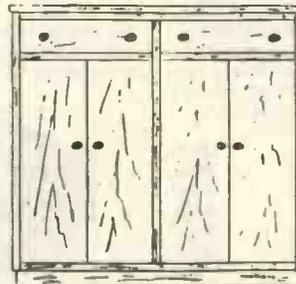
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This new gold CD release heralds the triumphant return of an original singer/songwriter with a voice of gold. Having co-wrote the number 1 Grammy Award winning hit, "Killing Me Softly With His Song", Lori adds 13 more "Songs For The Asking", weaving a multitude of moods into an album you will fall in love with. A thousand dreams is an all acoustic recording engineered by audiophile legend Mark Levinson using only two microphones. In the words of Joseph Cali, executive producer, "Lie down, sit down or put your car in drive. She will take you to the places in your heart that only Lori's music can find." 'GOLDEN NOTE NOMINATION'

HQ 24kt Gold CD **£25**
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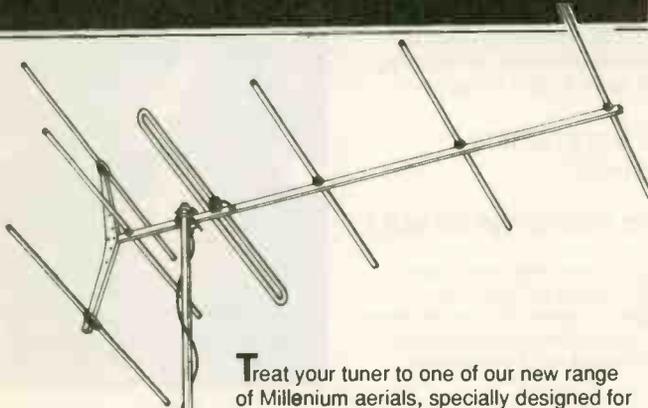
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Aura VAB0 Integrated amp ex dem	£279	£275
Quad 44 Pre-amp	£575	£495
Quad 606	£718	£250
Quad FM4 Tuner	£429	£180
Cyrus One Amplifier	£270	£395
Cyrus II Amplifier/PSX	£595	£195
Quad 34 Pre	£395	£269
Pioneer F91 Tuner (mint)	£399	£399
Math Passive Pre 2 x Monoblocks	£549	£349
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Yamaha DSPA1000 A/V Amplifier	£899	£239
Kenwood KRVA050 (AV Receiver)	£399	£649
Quad 77 amplifier(ex-dem mint)	£849	
Naim 160x3 power amps/Alps PSU) Phone for NAC42 Pre/Naxo/Linn Isobariks } full system spec.	£7000	£2750

**CAREFULLY USED HI-FI WANTED
CASH READY, WE'LL COLLECT**

CD PLAYERS/CASSETTES/REEL TO REEL

	Today's RRP	S/H
AVI S2000 MCII CD Player ex dem	£800	£650
Quad 77 CD Player (ex dem)	£899	£699
Revax B77 1/2 track reel to reel	£1399	£699
Meridian 500/563 (new)	£1990	£1490
Philips DCC600	£349	£149
Rotel RCD965 Discreet	£425	£249

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TURNTABLES

	Today's RRP	S/H
Technics SL110/SME 3009/Shure 97	£599	£250
Linn LP12/Basil/K9	£995	£449
Linn LP12/mok/AT05/Cirkus/Trampolin	£2000	£895
Linn LP12/Symix P2, Koetsu Rosewood	£2250	£575
Thorens TD180 MKV/Stanton 500	£399	£199
Mission/Nagaoka MP20	£249	£149
Rega Planar 3/RB300	£300	£200
Roksan Artemiz/Xenex/Goldring 1020 (Mint)	£1500	£795
Systemdek Mission Arm Grado	£350	£245

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TOP BRANDS WE STOCK**

LOUDSPEAKERS

	Today's RRP	S/H
Roksan System P37 (ex dem)	£600	£480
Acoustic Energy (ex dem)	£1175	£875
Celestion 300 (B' Grade)	£1099	£799
Castle 900 walnut (ex dem)	£300	£200
Jamo 507 (ex dem)	£800	£600
DAU 450 (ex dem)	£700	£575
Celestion SL4	£399	£220
Yamaha NS1000 (rare in black)	£1395	£875
Monitor Audio MA800	£795	£495
Magnaplanar 3.3 (ex-dem)	£3200	£1750
Meridian DSP5000 Digital (ex-dem)	£3350	£2499
Rogers LS7	£550	£300
Magnaplanar ME1.4 Black mint	£999	£599
SD Acoustics Monitors	£1800	£599
Time Window 1A	£999	£499

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Classified Ads

For details on how to place a Classified Advertisement, please see page 129

PRIVATE

NAIM/LINN BUY/SELL. 52, CDS, 250, 135, 140, HICAP, ARO, 72, 82, ETC
TEL BOB 01382 819732

LINN AXIS, BASIC PLUS, K9 (new stylus fitted) £325. Audiolab 8000A £175; Musical Fidelity MC2s £125; Foundation spiked stands £30. Target turntable stand £15. All immaculate.
 Tel: Tim 01625 613 404.

WANTED: SUGDEN A21 Class A integrated amp from late 1960s, early 70s.
 Tel: 0181 508 3343 (eves, London/Essex)

McIntosh MCD 7009 £2150. Musical Fidelity, FIS, power amp, awesome sound, only three weeks old, reason for sale.
 Tel: 01424 431 536 (E. Sussex)

MARANTZ CD94, J.F. Le Tallec heavyweight turntable, Garrard 401. Leak Sandwich speakers and tuner. Lowther drive units. Nakamichi/Ferrograph. Mordaunt Short Festivals. May swap p/x. Wanted: Linn Ittock, Naim, pre/power etc.
 Tel: 0114 248 6493

M&K V125 ACTIVE subwoofers. Mint very little use. Many rave/best buy reviews. Cost £1600. Bargain £1000 pair or £550 each.
 Tel: 01945 463077

NAIM J. PLANE £1275, Hi Cap 2 (150watts) (2x mono) amps £1900. All speakers new.
 Tel: 01773 846 330 (eves)

REGA PLANAR 3, RB300, K9, Target wall shelf £195. Exposure 10 (MM) + Exposure cables £225. All boxed, excellent.
 Tel: Martin 01491 671 735 (eves)

WANTED: NAIM NAC 32.5 Linn Lingo and Ekos tonearm, DPA Little Bit CD converter. Write to: B Kuhn, Gregor-Mendelstr 3, 1180 Vienna, Austria.

SONY PROFESSIONAL Walkman WM-D6C with headphones, mains adaptor and leads, mint condition £200. Technics SL-PGS20A CD player, boxed, excellent condition £80.
 Tel: 01744 894787

PAIR LOWTHER ACOUSTICA. Teak cabinets, FM. Bargain £200.
 Tel: 01752 300 222 or 01752 363 072

AUDIOLAB 8000C & 8000P Pristine condition £750 ono.
 Tel: 01926 885316 (Leam Spa)

MERIDIAN 206B CD player, mint condition £350 ono. Will demonstrate.
 Tel: 0181 889 6457

QUAD COMPACT disc player 67 for sale £550.
 Tel: 01462 677 662 (Herts)

300B SINGLE ENDED Audionote Kit 1. The sound can only be described as luxurious. Built £1130 only £600. EL34 based amp in attractive copper box, outboard PSU £400.
 Tel: Nick 01925 245 323

REVOX B77 Half track 3 3/4 and 7 1/2 ips with remote control, good condition £95. Also offers please for Garrard 301 turntable and Nakamichi 580 cassette deck.
 Tel: 01222 754 900

SD1 LOUDSPEAKERS. Early model refurbished by manufacturer with up-rated crossovers, slightly reduced cabinets and attractive Oak veneer. Super large scale sound £550. Marantz 94 DAC mint £175. Fidelity Research 64 FX tonearm, spare headshells £150.
 Tel: 0181 686 3640 (eves) 0181 889 5788 (w/ands)

MISSION 752 SPEAKERS, Rosewood, as new, boxed 10 months old guaranteed £400
 Tel: 0151 924 4286 (Liverpool)

LINN KEILIDHS Black with ceramic stands, as new boxed £430. Musical Fidelity P140 power amp £160.
 Tel: 01263 512 815

MUSICAL FIDELITY 2x pre amp, Quad 303 power, Quad FM1 tuner £335
 Tel: Mike 0181 207 2044 (evenings)

ALPHASON HR100S MCS tone arm, Van Den Hul wired, excellent condition, boxed £195. Wanted: Denon DCD 3250, DCD 3650, DCD 3300 or Pioneer PD 91 CD player.
 Tel: 01634 387 686

WANTED: LINN KARIK MkII CD player.
 Tel: 01222 830 127

LINN ISOBARIKS BLACK (9/88) latest stands, active or passive use, mint £800. Linn Keilidh (1995) granite stands, mint £550. Naim Nait £120. Delivery possible. Wanted: LK400 speaker cable.
 Tel: 01622 858 085

ARISTON RD40, RB300, ATF3-OCC amazing looks £180. Hi-Fi News Flutterbuster £40. Blackhead £30. Bellini Wedge cassette £50. Wilmslow Digital 90 speakers, alloy stands £200. Tannoy 609DC speakers £130.
 Tel: 01903 751 326

NAIM 62/90/Hi-CAP (Black Box), Linn Kans I, rosewood plus stands. Denon DCD 1500 MkII CD player, absolutely mint £600.
 Tel: 01344 775 769 (eves, Berkshire)

WANTED: MULLARD ELECTRO-voice glass D-cortes, glass printed Made in Holland, LK 83 Midland short black base, glass printed British Made.
 Tel: Andy 01527 577 280

AVI 2000 MC, mint, boxed, 12 months old, little use. Van Hul Den 1st digital 0.6m, 6 Kable jackets (USA) Offers.
 Tel: Andy 01527 577 280 (answer machine)

MATCHING PAIR BTH Vintage valve monoblocks 20 watts p/c spare valves and transformers. Mike Pointer serviced, excellent £450 ono. Pair Quad ESL S7s bronze + stereo set spare panels & transformers £550 ono.
 Tel: 01322 384 074

LINN LP12 WITH ITTOK arm and K19 cart. plus Lingo power supply, all in A1 condition £999. Aurex tuner £150, Linn LK1 + 280 pre/power £450. Mission 780SE in black £160.
 Tel: Andy 0161 860 7393

TARGET R1 LOUDSPEAKER stands £150. Audioquest Laps (1m) Interconnect two phono to five pin din £150. Audioquest Video Z (1m) phono to BNC £30. Audioquest Opt Z (1m) £20. Chord company interconnect (1m) two phono to five pin din £15.
 Tel: 01565 632 796 (Cheshire)

AUDIO RESEARCH 688 valve pre-amp upgraded to NII spec, mint condition, can demonstrate £750
 Tel: 01246 209 578 (day) or 01246 288 735 (eves)

YAMAHA NS1000M speakers on stands £400. Linn Sondek Model with Basik arm, K7 cartridge £200. Large open reel tape deck Tandberg 3600XD £100. Leak Stereo 70 in wooden sleeve £50.
 Tel: 01279 435 194

PAIR PROAC RESPONSE 3 loudspeakers, black Ash, excellent condition £1,650. Audio Innovations First power amplifier £800.
 Tel: 0141 959 4134

PAIR MERIDIAN 605 power amps, Sony TAE 1000 ESB, Digital Pro-Logic surround pre-amp, Sony TAN 220 four channel power amp, Target TTSTSA rack £1975.
 Tel/Fax: 01908 376 966 (North Bucks)

ATC SCM20 in Yew boxed as new £950. ATC SCM10 in Walnut brand new £800. Equinox low level battery pre amp, six inputs superb £1750 (new) bargain £850. Garrard 304 MF phono SBL 3001 arm original manual £165.
 Tel: 01924 359 603

QUAD 606 MK1 upgraded to MkII spec in July 95, still guaranteed £400 ono.
 Tel: 0181 508 8932

SONIC FRONTIERS SFD1 DAC (Balanced) HDCD compatible, amazing sound, boxed as new, 1 yr old - 4 yrs warranty remains, bargain at £1795 or will sell together with Theta Data Basic, 1 yr old £3450. A fabulous combination.
 Tel: 01623 871 950

REGA ELA SPEAKERS £240.
 Tel: 01525 374 652 (eves, Beds)

LYRA LYDIAN CARTRIDGE, low hours £295. Linn Trampolin base £70, Linn K9 cartridge £50, Linn Akito arm, boxed, slight fault £65, Ortofon SPK-200 speaker cable, 6m bi-wire with Michell plugs £60. Micromega co-ax digital cable 0.5m £20.
 Tel: Richard 0973 751 264 (NW London)

MARANTZ CD-17 AS NEW, black £625 reviewed 03/96. CD-63 £135. Classic 1970s cassette decks both require attention. Technics RS2799S adjustable Dolby top loader. Yamaha TC800GL Wedge £125 each.
 Tel: 01273 325 901

NAIM 5BLs WALNUT PASSIVE £900, NAC 32.5 (75 boards) Hi Cap NAP 250 silver edged £900. Meridian 200/203 transport DAC, power combination £500 all positive.
 Tel: Neil 01483 462 012 (day) 01274 473 512 (eves)

MISSION CYRUS 2 and PSX power supply. Highly reviewed latest type with flip switch, balance control and alloy casing. Good condition £300 ono.
 Tel: 01228 514 966 (Cumbria)

MERIDIAN D600B digital active speakers (walnut) (remote, analogue/digital pre-amp, separate D/A converters, 225w active power) quite superb, unfortunately neighbours don't like them. Cost £2995, bargain £1300.
 Tel: Kevin 01923 490 297

MAGNEPLANAR 2.5 R panel speakers, excellent condition £950.
 Tel: 01302 539 469 (S.Yorks)

ABSOLUTE GAINMAIN LUMLEY 5140 power amp £775, also matching PVI pre amp with phono stage £850. Only few months old, mint, boxed £1500 for both or sell separate.
 Tel: 0115 929 4060 after 5pm No time wasters please.

WANTED: MISSION CYRUS TUNER mint, excellent condition please and working order with remote control and manual. Cash paid.
 Tel: Steve 01208 75231

ROKSAN XERXES, Black, Xerxes stand, XPS II Artemiz £650. Monitor Audio 852 loudspeakers with stands £275. Linn Lingo PSU £325. all as new. Dalquist DQ10 loudspeakers with stands £225.
 Tel: 0161 432 6120 (Stockport)

ORELLE CD-10T/DA 180 transport DAC mint boxed instructions Silver Digital Interconnect £700 ono. First to hear will buy. Sound Research Tube pre/amp mint boxed. Crimson Elektrik 100w power amp £175 each ono.
 Tel: 01689 600 258

DIAMOND ACOUSTICS REFERENCE 3 speakers, light Oak finish, three way, Volts, Audax, Bando metal drive units. cost £2250. Excellent condition, original packaging available. Offers around £995. KEF Centre 100 Pro Logic speaker, mint condition. £250.
 Tel: 01709 851 993

FD FAIM pre-amp, power amps, £4500, £2000, £1000, £500.
 Tel: 01524 746 74

WANTED: MARANTZ SX72 Signal Conditioner recently sold by Richar Sounds. Good price paid.
 Tel: Mr Troop 01203 445 880 or 01203 412 193

ARCAM DELTA 170 transport upgraded 170.3 BBS (50 spec) Video Y Interconnect £570. B83 E100 All boxed Armstrong 521 amp 523 tuner Ferrograph 5 mono tape recorder.
 Offers
 Tel: 01293 784 693

MUSICAL FIDELITY E100 integrated £400, E200/300 pre/power £800. E CD player £400. Meridian 201 pre - 209 remote control, pair of 205 100w monoblocks - (cost new £2500) £975. Radford CP player £450. All ono.
 Tel: 01323 846 410 (eves - East Sussex)

MISSION 752 LOUDSPEAKERS, excellent condition, superb sound £375. Wanted: Naim Nait 3 or Cyrus 3 amplifier.
 Tel: 01886 888 772

NAIM NAP 140 POWER AMP. Mint condition. Boxed. £350 ono.
 Tel: 01980 625 319 or 01264 710 536 (weekday)

QUAD 405-2. Recent example, boxed £150. JPVV sub-woofer mint, boxed £70. Mission speakers and heavy target stands £500. Linn K9 and KS bodies £5 each.
 Tel: 01432 359 265

WANTED: SPENDOR SPI or SP2/2 speakers. Quad 34 or 66 pre/606 power amps/67 CD/FM4 tuner. Gradient subwoofers.
 Tel: 01384 273 051 (evenings)

CASTLE HOWARD SII speakers, Mahogany finish, 4 months old only £800. Genuine reason for sale.
 Tel: 0161 928 2889



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REL ● ROGERS ● RUARK ● SONY ● SYSTEMDEK ●
TEAC ● TDL ● TECHNICS ● TUBE TECHNOLOGY ●

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CLEARANCE BARGAINS

	WAS	NOW
ALCHEMIST APD15 INT AMP	£900	£720
ATC SCM20T ROSEWOOD	£2650	£1999
AVI S2000M1	£800	£680
B+W HTM	£500	£375
B+W P5	£875	£699
B+W CDM1	£600	£480
CASTLE DURHAM 900	£300	£199
EXPOSURE XX AMP	£625	£450
MICHELL GYRODEC C/W QC	£1214	£869
MARANTZ PM 44 SE MKII	£200	£129
MARANTZ CD 72 SE	£600	£420
MARANTZ CD 17	£800	£640
McINTOSH C712 PRE-AMP	£1500	£POA
McINTOSH C40 PRE-AMP	£3500	£POA
McINTOSH MC150 PWR	£3200	£POA
McINTOSH MC500 PWR	£7000	£POA
McINTOSH MC7100 PWR	£1400	£POA
MUSICAL FIDELITY F22 PRE;MM.	£1100	£799
MUSICAL FIDELITY FX PWR AMP	£1100	£799
MUSICAL FIDELITY FCD CD PLAYER	£1500	£999
MUSICAL FIDELITY E200 PRE-AMP	£600	£480
MUSICAL FIDELITY E300 PWR-AMP	£700	£560
MUSICAL FIDELITY E600 CD	£600	£450
MUSICAL FIDELITY A1000	£1500	£1120
NAKAMICHI ST3s	£350	£250
NAKAMICHI MB2 CD PLAYER	£850	£550
NAKAMICHI IA4S AMP	£200	£140
PROJECT 6.1	£450	£360
REL Q BASS	£350	£280
REL STRATA II	£545	£439
REL STORM	£695	£550
ROGERS LS2A	£250	£175
ROGERS LS1	£150	£109
RUARK TALISMAN II	£750	£499
RUARK PALADIN	£1100	£699
SYSTEMDEK SYSTEM 165	£300	£240
TDL RTL 2	£300	£199
TDL RTL 3	£400	£299
TDL RTL 4	£650	£499
TECHNICS SBM300	£350	£280
TUBE TECHNOLOGY UNISIS(P)	£1750	£1099

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PRIVATE

AMPLIFIERS OR SPEAKERS WANTED. Unison, Audion, DPA, Exposure, Naim. Any small quality speakers. Sonus Faber, Callas Opera Gold in exchange for Spondor SPI/2 speakers + MAF stands (£1500)
Tel: 0181 531 5979

HI-FI WORLD 4 WATT Single ended integrated amplifier. Expertly built by BBC engineer. Mint condition. Re-advertised due to time waster. Any audition welcome £430 ono.
Tel: 01732 35 88 96 (Tonebridge)

MERIDIAN 200 TRANSPORT 203 DAC £595 201 pre amp £295, 209 remote £20 M20 loudspeakers £485 Systemdek, Linn Ittok, Elite Grail £250 ono, Denon DR-M07 £35
Tel: 015242 41769 (after 8pm)

QUAD ESL-63 ELECTROSTATIC speakers £800. Quad FM4 tuner £200. Quad 34 control unit £150. Quad 40S-2 £150. Marantz CD75 offers. Luxman PD-300 turntable offers. Collectors items KEF Carlton A6048 speakers offers.
Tel: 01892 834 662 (evenings)

QUAD ESL57 (PAIR) BRONZE Serviced by Quad 1995: New tweeters, dust covers and clamp boards. Less than 10 hours use, hence £475.
Tel: 0116 279 2430 (Leics)

VAN DEN HUL The Wind II. Silver/Carbon speaker cable. 8 x 6 metre bi-amp/bi-wire set. Cost £17.50 per mono metre (£840) sell (£480)
Tel: 0802 872 016 (London)

WANTED: WADIA DAC, AUDIO Research poweramp, will consider Kröll, Counterpoint etc. For Sale: Deltec PDMI S2 DAC £245, Apogee Schneilla ribbon panel speakers, 4 ohm, grey, £1295 (£5000 new)
Tel: 01449 676 335

NAIM CDS £2500 (New £3600) Naim NAP 140, 90s facia £350. KEF Q60 black, boxed etc. £280. Naim CDI recent service etc £1400.
Tel: Jules 01792 280 061

ROGERS LS3/SA SPEAKERS and AB-1 subwoofers wanted. Must be bi-wireable and in mint condition. Also Audiolab 8000S amplifier. Reasonable prices please. Willing to travel.
Tel: 0121 326 8083 (Birmingham)

MUSICAL FIDELITY E100 Amplifier, only 7 months old, as new, boxed, cost £600, bargain at £350.
Tel: 01702 556 116 (Essex)

LINN LP12 WALNUT. Full specification Lingo, Ekos. Main dealer serviced in March. £1,195. Ortofon MC1S Super 2. 2 months old £65.
Tel: Brian 01904 490 796 (York)

DPA ENLIGHTENMENT DAC with DPA digital Interconnect. Superb sound, excellent condition, only one year old. Owner upgrading, £445 (£825 new)
Tel: 01623 798 210

LINN KANS PLUS STANDS £155. Linn K9 + extra stylus £60. Naim 110 power amp £120. Wanted: Troika mint, Naim 72 and 250.
Tel: Kevin 01202 342 072 (day) 01202 523 319

AUDIONOTE ANV SILVER Interconnect £75.
Tel: 01323 841 472 or 01323 764 065

DYNACO U.S.A. STEREO valve tuner £130. Dynaco PAS valve preamp £150. Dynaco transistor preamp £75. Armstrong S21 amp £30. Leak stereo 30 plus amp £30. All excellent.
Tel: 01372 467 264 (Esher)

TROUGHLINE 3 VALVE Stereo tuner £130. SME 2009 Series II improved, brand new £120. Leak Stereo 70 amp £65. Quad MC module for 34 preamp £15. Brand new.
Tel: 01372 467 264 (Esher)

QUAD 34 PRE/306 POWER/FM4 tuner, stand £650. Transcriptors hydraulic reference table, all accessories £440. Thorens TD124/II, SME3009/II £290 (Hi-Fi World referred to Garrard)
Tel: 0181 991 0762, day 0181 810 7018

MICROMEGA 3.1 TRANSPORT 1 month old, immaculate with Microdac £950. Marantz CD10 Trichord, solid high end sound £675. Michell Iso/Hera £325. AEI speaker stands £120. Hellos tonearm £75.
Tel: 01603 633 451

AUDIO INNOVATIONS P2 phono pre amplifier, moving magnet version, little use £450 ono.
Tel: Gary 01242 236 981

WANTED DYNAUDIO MIRAGE Kit speakers: cabs must be well constructed, also Musical Fidelity A370 Mk I. Required for research, no silly prices please. May swap, p/x Emerald Horns.
Tel: 01226 764 272 (Yorkshire)

LINN LP12, BASIK PL, K9, Sony CDP 303, S CD, Naim Neo 62/Hicap/250, Naim IBL, Target Delta S, make excellent condition. Offers around £2100.
Tel: 0116 291 7726

LINN KAN Mk2 (Kustone) One of the last pairs made with Kustone inserts (Bi-wire) walnut £275. Wall brackets £25. Wanted: Nakamichi CR5E.
Tel: 01422 372 063 (answerphone, Halifax)

AIR TANGENT 1B air bearing tonearm, Hi-Blow pump, excellent condition. Recently silver rewired, can demonstrate £1500 ono (£3000)
Tel: 01628 476 836

HEYBROOK SEXTETS, Walnut, mint £620. Meridian 101 pre amp. 10S monobloc power amps (100w) £240, also second 103 preamp £85. Technics SL120 D/D turntable unit £125.
Tel: 01892 536 919 (W. Kent)

GOODSELL GW12 MONO amp KT66 Williamson circuit with preamp and FM tuner, offers please. Wanted: Quad FM4 tuner (grey) and Spondor BCI speakers.
Tel: 01245 381 961

RICHARD ALLEN RA 8 II Black ash 19" stands 91dB, good reviews (What HiFi) £200. Leak TL12+ pair in bits. Good transformers £100. Early Linn LP12 and Gale 401s chrome, offers.
Tel: 01268 455 966

SLATE AUDIO 1S" LOUDSPEAKER stands, cost new £360 accept £200 ono. Genuine reason for sale. JPW AP2 bi-wire loudspeakers cost new £200 accept £100 ono.
Tel: 0171 265 0155

NAIM HICAP new style £400. Old style £350. Special NAC 72 £400. Naxo (SBL) £250. Wanted: Prefix S.
Tel: 0121 553 1121

QUAD S7s BRONZE £190; Black £190. Leak stereo 20 needs rebuilding - offers. Leak Troughline III ST tuner £85. 200 used audio valves ? £45. Spondor BCI £150, QED passive pre £15. ProAc Super Tablette £165.
Tel: 01304 813 572 (Canterbury)

LEAK STEREO 20 with Varislope pre amp. Some new components and valves £275 ono.
Tel: 01625 260 903 (Stockport area)

VALVE AND TRANSISTOR kits built and tested by professionally trained engineer and hi-fi enthusiast. Also Hardwood panels made and fitted to equipment.
Tel: 01424 715 692 (South East area)

ROGERS LS3/SA, Good condition, superb sound £400. Spondor BCI BBC designed studio monitor, cabinets fair, new grilles, excellent all round performer £300.
Tel: 01553 765 400

AUDIOLAB 8000 DAC £450/8000T £450. Quad CD87 Clock 2 adapted £550. Mitsubishi B82 S VHS £350. Sony Pre-Walkman £150. Sony D303 CD. Walkman £150. Cambridge DAC Magic I £100. Audioquest Ruby Hyperlitz £50.
Tel: 0181 655 2733

HARBETH BBC LSS/12A mini monitor loudspeakers in Mahogany, very little use, genuine reason for sale, cost £1200 new, accept £750.
Tel: 01293 786 912 (Surrey)

LORICRAFT-GARRARD 301 with light Oak plinth, SME 3009 arm and Audio-Technica ML170 cartridge. Perfect condition £750 ono.
Tel: 0181 882 8218 (North London)

LEAK STEREO 20, rebuilt, superb sound, mint, c/w manuals £295. Leak Varislope Stereo, mint £50. Leak Troughline II mono £65. Goldring Lenco GL75 turntable, boxed with manuals £75.
Tel: 01978 780 580

LEAK 2200 AMPLIFIER £50, Ferrograph F307 amplifier £50, Leak 2001 turntable £50, Armstrong 400 Series tuner £40. Immaculate order, seen working. AR 77XB turntable, noisy motor £20.
Tel: Milton Keynes 674 193 after 7pm.

ART AUDIO VPI valve preamp £350. Quintet valve amp (new valves) £700. Both 4 years old, latest specs. Kinshaw Perception phono stage £240. All boxed, excellent condition.
Tel: 01509 231 254

ARCAM 150 NICAM stereo tuner £180. Arcam Alpha 6 CD £480. Arcam Delta 80 tuner £240. Orelle 180 DAC £260. Akai open reel tape deck 4000DB Dolby £60.
Tel: 01229 470 259

QUAD ESL63 SPEAKER stands £80. Uher CR160 portable (cassette) stereo tape recorder £350. Armstrong 623 receiver Rosewood £130. Straightwire Maestro interconnect 0.9m £90. All in excellent condition
Tel: 0181 801 5053

KAYLPSO BY CR Developments - 18wpc valve amp - 14kg - £295. Michaelson Audio Odyseus - valve class A - 45wpc - "stunning sound - beautiful balance and control - What HiFi", "Here was something special - HiFi News" £599 (£1200)
Tel: 0181 372 2584

N.V.A. POWER SUPPLY £80. Rogers T75 Series 2 tuner £175.
Tel: 01432 264 567 (Hereford)

NEW BOXED UNUSED. Musical Fidelity Elektra E10 amp £290. Elektra E50 tuner £210. TDL 3 speakers £300. Technics SL-1200 Mk 2 turntable £320. Mint condition Impulse H2 speakers £1350. Passion passive pre-amp £350. Good condition Sony Tuner S30 ES FM £60.
Tel: 01452 611 917

AUDIO INNOVATIONS Series 500 vgc. (cassette) boxed £430. Concordant Exultant (Quad II based) 37 watt monoblocks £450. Wanted: QC power supply, REL monitor, Pro Logic Decoder. Private enthusiast
Tel: 01773 609 104

SPICA TCS0 QUALITY speakers including stands £200. Ruark Tallman II speakers £450. Ariston Maxim tuner, performance for £100. Pioneer S901 CD player £200.
Tel: 01377 257 084

CASTLE HOWARDS Mahogany £595. Alchemist Forseti integrated £650. Aura TU50 FM tuner mirror black £95.
Tel: 0121 628 9247

PINK TRIANGLE CARDINAL transport approx 7000 Excellent condition £550 ono
Tel: 0181 248 3607

MISSION DCD 5 CD player mint boxed with instructions £150 ono. Garrard DD450 semi auto turntable £40. Mission spiked speaker stands £30.
Tel: 01274 789 631

NVA P80/A60 passive pre/power amps with Phono I (MC). Mint condition £525. NVA AP35 integrated amp with MM phono £125. Wanted: Soundpipe speaker cable NVA power supply unit/DAC on or TES CD player.
Tel: 0181 871 0424 (SW London)

MICROMEGA LOGIC CD player £300. Aura VA100 Evolution amplifier £200. Both mint and boxed.
Tel: 01862 810 645 (Huddersfield)

CROFT MICRO PRE-AMP with pair of EAR 509 Mk I monoblock valve power amps. 100 wpc, black and chrome finish, all items mint £950.
Tel: 01622 764 780 (Kent)

MISSION 751 hardly used £300, will sell £199 mint condition. Mission 731 mint £129 sell £79. Mission 761I approx 3 months old £180 sell £109, no offers. Boxed, demo.
Tel: 0865 59737 anytime

AUDIO INNOVATIONS SERIES 1000 pre amp and mono blocks "Rare" unmarked in excellent condition. Hardly used. Can demonstrate. Bargain, all three for £995.
Tel: 01252 614 055

NAIM 62/90 PRE-POWER amps + Flatcap power supply £550. May split. Acoustic Energy AE1 speakers in rosewood + stand £550 ono.
Tel: 0171 278 6291

DELTC DPA50S four box pre phono stage, power amp, PSU including speaker and interconnect cables plus The Power mains filter. Boxed, manuals, mint, see review HFV April '91 £995
Tel: 01703 223 065

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The traditional single-ended qualities of sweetness, fluidity and integration are combined with wide bandwidth, strong bass performance and uniform dynamics. They are compatible with a wide range of loudspeakers from Horns to Quad EL5 and are equally suited to all types of program material.

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*HORNING Agathon Loudspeakers

Two-way lowther based Horn speakers with huge dynamics and fine resolution. High efficiency (96dB/watt), wide bandwidth designs with low colouration and excellent timbre reproduction. An ideal compliment to low powered valve amplification.

Price: £3555.00.

*BRAVURA Loudspeakers

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Price: £5950 and £6600.

*DEFINITIVE AUDIO Power Supplies

Off-board valve rectified, choke-input power-supply upgrade for Audio Innovations EL34 and 2A3 based amplifiers. Developed in conjunction with Border Patrol Power Amplifiers, this upgrade reduces distortion, increases resolution and dynamic range and strengthens bass performance.

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*SECONDHAND EQUIPMENT FOR SALE (New price in brackets)

Audio Innovations P1 phono stage	£250	(£350)
Audio Innovations Series 200 pre-amp	£250	(£350)
Audio Innovations Series 700 line integrated	£650	(£1199)
Audio Innovations 2nd Audio Amplifier triode power amps	£1200	(£3300)

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EX-DEMONSTRATION and SECONDHAND BARGAINS:

Arcam Delta 70.3 CD Player (£700).....	S/Hand	Mint	£325
Audio Research LS3B Line Preamp (£2250).....	Ex.Demo		£1650
Audio Research LS7 Preamp (£1600).....	S/Hand	Mint	£1150
Audio Research SP14 Preamp.....	S/Hand	Mint	£1495
Classe 70 Power Amp (£1400).....	S/Hand	Mint	£850
Counterpoint 3.1 Preamp.....	S/Hand	Mint	£795
Densen B100 Beat Integrated Amp. (£600).....	S/Hand	Mint	£475
Densen DM10 Integrated Amplifier 70w (£1,300).....	Ex.Demo		£850
EAD CD-1000 Series III with HDCD (£2000).....	Ex.Demo		£1595
Magnaplanar MG 1.4 Panel Loudspeakers.....	S/Hand	Mint	£450
Mirage M-190i Audiophile Monitor (£299).....	Ex.Demo		£165
Mirage M-290 Audiophile Monitor (£399).....	Ex.Demo		£250
Mirage MBS Bipolar Satellite Spks+Stand (£450).....	Ex.Demo		£315
Mirage M-5ai Bipolar Loudspeakers (£2000).....	Ex.Demo		£1595
Ortofon MC2000 Cartridge (10hrs)(£650).....	Ex.Demo		£395
Musical Fidelity Pre 3A Preamp.....	S/Hand	Mint	£175
REL Stadium Subwoofer (£800).....	S/Hand	Mint	£450
Theta TLC Jitter Buster (£229).....	New (2)		£175

CD Players, Transports and DACs

Last month we referred to the deservedly popular **Trichord Genesis**, and are pleased to report that we also now have in stock another favourite of ours, the **Parasound CDP-1000**, retailing at £750. Not quite as open as the **Genesis**, the **Parasound** is very beguiling, and possibly more suitable for anyone who finds the CD medium a trifle harsh! Above these two of course, we have the **AVI Reference Player** and our top two box combo, the **Audlomeca Mephisto**, with either **Trichord Pulsar** or **Pink Triangle Dacapo**. However, there is no doubt that the general improvement in integrated players has knocked the Transport/DAC market, even though there is nothing like a really good Transport+DAC, to get as close as possible to that good old analogue sound.

Trichord Pulsemaster

This could be about to change however, with devices such as the **Trichord Pulsemaster** (£349), which is a jitter reduction device which fits between Transport and DAC, and with the sound improvement this achieves, could re-instate the Transport/DAC back to popularity. As it is claimed that all transports capture the same digital data, and that it is the time domain discrepancies in the data which accounts for the differing performances, then it is with great interest that we await longer evaluations with the **Pulsemaster**, including it's effect on cheaper one box



players when using an outboard DAC. It is still amazing to find how many systems really don't like the CD medium, which is why we always attempt to produce well balanced systems that are almost as happy with CD's as Vinyl. That is why our personal home demonstration service is so vital in enabling us to hear exactly how our system reacts to a piece of equipment we have recommended or you have asked to hear. If we stock it, it has to be good, but that doesn't mean it will suit your system and if it doesn't we'll say so, even if you like it! We can probably recommend another unit that will work and then we'll both be happy.

P/E BARGAINS

- a) TRILOGY 902 LINE LEVEL PRE+ 958 100w MONOBLOCKS £1750
- b) EAR 509 MkII VALVE 100w MONOBLOCKS £900
- c) QUAD 77 CD+INT. AMP+R/C (5 months old) £950
- d) NAIM CDI PLAYER (Immaculate) £1100

V'audio Hi-Fi Consultants
36 Druid Hill, Stoke Bishop, Bristol BS9 1EJ
Tel/Fax: 0117 9686005

LFD MONO BLOCKS + LS2 line stage £1,650 (will separate). Also MC2 phono stage (silver wired) £560. Stunning sound and in as new condition. One owner from new.
Tel: 01255 436 876 (Essex)

WANTED: LINN LK280 and LK1 Pre. Cash paid, call anytime.
Tel: 01628 485 996

AUDIO RESEARCH VT60 Perfect condition. 1 1/2 years old. Little used due to absense. Just about run in. £1800 (£2650)
Tel: 01628 476 836

QED DIGIT AND POSITRON power supply, including Sonic Link Green digital interconnect. Mint condition cost new £270 sell for £100 ono.
Tel: 0121 605 5218 (Birmingham)

WANTED: CELESTION DITTON 66 or Ditton 88 or Ditton 662.
Tel: 0181 980 8149

MERIDIAN S01 PRE-AMP, system remote control, phono module, sale due to digital upgrade, mint boxed £475. Nakamichi cassette deck, rarely used, superb quality, boxed as new £275.
Tel: 0151 677 7386 (Merseyside)

WANTED MINT CONDITION Michell Gyrodec (branz), with RB300 or better & quality MC cartridge. London based chap will travel reasonable distance for demo.
Tel: Adrian 0181 675 6004

NAIM 72 HICAP 180 new type 12 months old mint condition & boxed. Can split £1500. Also Mission 753s (black) mint and boxed cost £700+, accept £475 ono.
Tel: 01598 760 247

DELTEC/DPA 'The Little Bit' DAC, 'The Power' mains filter and 'Digilink' digital interconnect £150.
Tel: 01978 750 151

NAIM NAP 250 old style. Naim NAP 72 (MM & MC) new style. Sony STS730ES tuner. All perfect. Wanted: Naim '82 (K) & 135. Target wall shelves. May p/x.
Tel: 01843 593 958

NAIM 62 PRE AMP, Naim Hi Cap power supply, Naim 250 power amplifier £1650.
Tel: 01444 248 424

KEF 107.2 £1895 ono. Ray Lumley Ref pre amp £3000 only £950 ono. Boxed as new, may p/x. Acoustic Energy AE3 £795.
Tel: 01225 480 990

EPOSURE ANNIVERSARY pre amp, Exposure VI dual supply, Exposure IV power amp £1200. Arcam Delta 270 CD £350. Linn Intek £250. Linn kabers £650. Castle Howards (Rosewood) £800. Epos ES22 £750.
Tel: 01952 502 097 (Telford)

AUDIO INNOVATIONS S1000 Mk3 valve mono blocks £675; Set of eight EL34 Groove Tube valves £75; 1m Audio Synthesis Silver Blue Interconnect cable £50.
Tel: Peter 01960 372 845

LEAK TLS0 +, pair renovated by GT Audio, absolute quality build and sound quality from these GEC KT88 amps. Leak Stereo 20, Leak export model, 110w Leak mains transformer. Rebuilt to spec. £800 ono for both.
Tel: 0181 881 3790

QUAD 67CD/34 pre/306 pwr/FM4. excellent condition £1195.
Tel: 0153 527 3461

KRELL KSP-7B PRE-AMP. Unused and boxed cost over £2000 will accept £995 ono. Also Stax SR Lambda Pro headphones with SRM1 driver amp. Unused and boxed £450 ono.
Tel: Mark 01202 875 069

NAIM 32.5/HI-CAP/250. Old style cases, Karma boards. All mint and boxed £900.
Tel: 01299 401 939 (Worcs)

REVOX B710 MKII cassette deck vgc £550. Revox B77 MKII HS £700.
Tel: 01246 275 479 (evenings)

AUDION SILVER NIGHTS 300B valve monoblocks. Stunning sound mint condition £1350. Sonus Faber Electa speakers. Gorgeous walnut and leather finish. Superb sounding £900.
Tel: 0117 9736 586 (ansphone)

NAIM 135 MONOBLOCS old case style but immaculate, boxed £1395. Naim hi-Cap old case vgc, boxed £335. Linn Troika. Some wear, but usable (or re-tippable) boxed £185.
Tel: 0161 928 8464

LINN KAIRN PRE-AMP MM/MC "Brilliant" £795. Pink Triangle Ordinal DAC 1307 filter £575. Theta TLC 'Jitter Buster' £95. Epos ES11 speakers own stands black £275. All vgc, boxed.
Tel: Barry 01256 882 607 (Basingstoke)

BRYSTON 4B-NRB, Canadian Hi-End stereo/mono power amp, 300w per channel, 20 months old, mint, cost new £1700, accept £1025 ono. Meridian 506 CD player, remote control, mint £580.
Tel: 0171 268 6270 day or 01689 855 063 eves

SONUS FABER MINIMA Amator loudspeakers. Superb sound only 2 months old. As new, 22 months unexpired warranty £895
Tel: 01628 789 360 (Berkshire)

ROSE RV23S PREAMP Quad 606 power amp £550, may separate. Proac Tablette speakers £120. Sound Organisation table £20. All excellent condition. Wanted: Counterpoint pre amplifier.
Tel: 01277 659 650

ORELLE ORATOR loudspeakers with Heybrook stands and 4x6 metres of Cyrus solid core cable for bi-wiring £300 (will split) Musical Fidelity B200 amplifier £110.
Tel: 0171 289 0568 (home) or 0181 214 3336 (work)

MILLENNIUM ULTRALINEAR Stereo valve amplifier, 30 watts per channel, uprated PSU, Sovtek valves plus spare set, superb sound, can demonstrate, unused except for specification testing £450 ono.
Tel: 0181 427 1378 (Harrow)

SYSTEM COMPRISING ROTEL RCD96SBX player, Exposure X amplifier, Monitor Audio 852 Gold speakers on Something solid stands. Yamaha K340 cassette deck, Target rack, new condition, original packing £1100.
Tel: 01252 623 674 (Fleet)

TECHNICS 520A CD Player, £110 ono. "Can Opener" for connecting headphones to Naim amps £40.
Tel: Matlock 01629 583673

LEAK TROUGHLINE STEREO, serviced by GT Audio and complete with latest Studio 12 decoder, £180 or swap for NAD402/412 + cash (need the sensitivity). 300B single-ended amplifier. Home built, but very professional - finished in chrome and brass. High level of components: Black gates, Shinkoh, silver plated wiring, choke input/polypropylene capacitor PSU etc. Absolute bargain at £600; the components alone cost more. Selling to fund next project. Wanted: Nakamichi RX-202 or RX-505 auto-reverse cassette decks in mint condition.
Tel: 0181 830 7214

NAIM WANTED 2 x 135s in mint condition and latest spec. Also Naxo 2-4 in mint condition and latest model, reasonable price given. Willing to meet halfway.
Tel: 0151 493 2429 (call after 6pm)

MISSION 752 SPEAKERS. Black, only 3 months old, as new, boxed £350. Marantz PM44SE amp, 50 wpc, black, mint £85. Ortofon T10 MC Step-Up £35. Cambridge DacMagic 1 DAC, mint, excellent £100. Radford T90 'Tristar' speakers, 3-way classic design. A lot of speaker for only £100 inc. stands. Teak finish, excellent condition. NVA P50 pre amp, MM phono, separate power supply £100
Tel: 01706 345 418

GARRARD 401, SME Plinth, SME 3009II, Elite 700 £195. Mission 774 damped arm £50. Radford SC22 £30. ETI system A preamp (MC & MM boards) £60.
Tel: 01503 250 679 (eves or w/ends)

LFD MC2 Phonostage with external power supply. £775 (Retail price £1500)
Tel: Cheltenham 01242 231766

ROYD MINSTREL Loudspeakers, real walnut veneer. Only light use. Mint condition and still boxed £200
Tel: 01986 895685 eves (Suffolk)

KRELL KSA100 MK2 £1395, Mark Levinson JC-2 preamp, separate power supply £695, Audio Research LS1 preamp, classic 60 poweramp £2400, Alon II reference monitors, rosewood £1395, all mint
Tel: 01449 676335

LEAK TROUGHLINE MKIII Stereo tuner £150. Copland valve amp CTA40 £500. Revox G36 tape deck £350. Michell Gyrodec Ext. PSU Rega RB300 Shure VST-V £450. Croft Micro preamp £120
Tel: 01702 291592

AVI 2000 MC 20-bit CD player and AVI pre amp. Boxed mint £1050, may split. Alchemist Forsetti 100w integrated £595. AE Aegis loudspeakers on Atacama stands £350.
Tel: 01226 710 605 (Yorkshire)

PIONEER VALVE RECEIVER 40 w.p.c. excellent condition with instructions £200 ono. Roksan Xerxes/RB 300 £350. Rotel RCD96SBX £150. Sanyo reel-to-reel deck £40. Wanted: Meridian 500/506
Tel: 01621 772884.

1991 XERXES/PSU (matt black) and Ardimiz arm with ATOCS MC. Excellent condition £530. Also Nakamichi BX300E cassette, regularly and just serviced £325. Boxes and set-up manuals.
Tel: 0181 668 7459 (Purley, Surrey.)

NAKAMICHI DR3 cassette deck. Features Dolby B+C, logic controls, variable bias, vgc. "Outstanding recording quality" What Hi-Fi, £440 new - accept £260 ono.
01234 241 976 (near Bedford, Milton Keynes, Northampton)

WANTED: Technics SL1210 turntable and Nakamichi RX-505 in mint condition.
Tel: 0181 830 7214

CABLES - HIGH QUALITY - Ortofon 7-9s I/Connects 1m £75 - Keswick Audio T1 I/Connects 1m £30, Sonic Link Care speaker cable 1.75m bi-wire £60.
Tel: Neil 0121 353 1593

GARRARD 401/SME 3009 II, Shure V15 in SME plinth. £225 ono. Decca London arm/FFSS cartridge £75 ono.
Tel: 01442 392 368

MAGNEPLANAR MG 2.5 panel loudspeakers. Light Oatmeal grilles and Teak surrounds. Excellent condition and superb, natural sound. £1,175.
Tel: 0161 432 6120 (Stockport)

NAIM 32.5, SNAPS power supply, Naim 140 power amp £495. Linn Kabers (passive), including stands £650. Linn Sondek LP 12, ittok arm, brand new AT-OC9 cartridge £495. Naim 101 FM tuner with dedicated power supply £395. Naim 32.5 pre-amp (72 upgrade), Hi-Cap power supply £550. All above immaculate and boxed.
Tel: 01142 454 601

AURA HI-FI EQUIPMENT WANTED.
Tel: 0171 284 2823

WANTED: SONY PRO Walkman for cash or will exchange for Sony ICF SW1, superb miniature short wave/FM radio.
Tel: Alistair 0141 942 8415 (Glasgow)

REVOX B77 MkII Reel to Reel 4 track, hardly used. Offers around £350
Tel: 01293 654 444 office hours or 01293 426 008 evenings.

LINN KARIK 3 CD player, two years old £1150. Linn Kabers, one year old, save £950 on new ones, yours for £850, American cherry.
Tel: Mr H. Lancaster 01344 488 342 home or 01628 604 455 ex 385 works.

MUSICAL FIDELITY A100 amplifier, 50 watts per channel, Class A, good condition, bargain at £150.
Tel: 01202 482 110 (Christchurch)

BILL BEARD BB100 Mk2 integrated valve amplifier. Dual mono design. 50 wpc. 18 valves set in mirrored chrome finish. Superb construction and sound £750 ono.
Tel: David 0161 969 7119 anytime (Sale, South Manchester)

WELMAR UPRIGHT PIANO (1876) in solid Mahogany. Restored to pristine condition by Reidy's of Blackburn. An investment in real fidelity and a beautiful piece of furniture £2,200 ono.
Tel: 0161 969 7119

SD ACOUSTICS SD1 New model (2000) £650, Beard P100Mk2 (Gold Lions) £700. Audionote OTO SE (1250) £700 mint. Pro-Passion unbalanced (400) £200. Wanted: Maggies - Blown tweeters O.K. Wanted: Quality record deck.
Tel: Andy 01993 883 822

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AUDIO RESEARCH Y140 monoblocks	mint s/h	£4995	INFINITY IRS BETA	mint s/h	£4995
KRELL KMA 100 monoblocks	mint s/h	£1895	ENSEMBLE PAI Reference	mint s/h	£1895
AUDIO RESEARCH D125 (balanced)	mint s/h	£1995	APOGEE SCINTILA	mint s/h	£895
MERIDIAN 605 monoblocks	mint s/h	£1395	THIEL CS 1.2	mint s/h	£1195
KRELL KSA 100S	mint s/h	£3495	ALON 0.5	mint s/h	£750
KRELL KSA 50S	mint s/h	£2250	SONUS FABER MINIMA AMATOR	as new	£1095
GRYPHON S100	mint s/h	£3200	SONUS FABER GUARNENI	mint s/h	£4495
JADIS JA 500 monoblocks	mint s/h	£8995	MERIDIAN MI	mint s/h	£595
EXPOSURE XVIII/XIX pre/power	mint s/h	£995	REL STENTOR ACTIVE SUBWOOFER	mint s/h	£1095
KRELL KSA 250	mint s/h	£3250	SONUS FABER CONCERTINO	as new	£450
NESTOROVIC ALPHA 1 monoblocks	mint s/h	£1495	DUNTECH Crown Prince	mint s/h	£2495
TRILOGY 958 monoblocks	mint s/h	£1795	RUARK TALISMAN II	mint s/h	£450
QUAD 306	mint s/h	£245	LINN KABERS	mint s/h	£1095
LFD PAI/LS1 pre/pwr	mint s/h	£895	CASTLE DURHAM 900	mint s/h	£175
JADIS JA 80 monoblocks	mint s/h	£4995	MARTIN LOGAN AERIUS	mint s/h	£1495
AUDIO INNOVATIONS 3500	mint s/h	£325	HARK LEVINSON NO 36/37	mint s/h	£3995
AUDIO RESEARCH D200	mint s/h	£1995	THETA DATA / GEN III	mint s/h	£3995
AUDIO RESEARCH V70 balanced	mint s/h	£1895	HARK LEVINSON 30/31	mint s/h	£9995
YVES COCHET AL3 (Valve 75wpc)	mint s/h	£1295	as new	£3995	
3x LINN KLOUT	mint s/h	£1295 each	MICROMEGA STAGE 3	mint s/h	£650
LINN KABER ACTIVE CARDS	mint s/h	£450	EAD T7000 / D7000 trans/dac	mint s/h	£2250
LUMLEY REF 120 monoblocks	mint s/h	£1395	ACCUPHASE DP80	mint s/h	£2495
TUBE TECHNOLOGY PROPHET	mint s/h	£795	WADIA 22/26	as new	£3650
KRELL KSA 200S	mint s/h	£4995	TEAC VRDS 10	mint s/h	£350
LJNN KAJAN phono pre-amp	mint s/h	£995	MERIDIAN 508 MkIII	as new	£1295
ROWLAND CONSOMATE	mint s/h	£2995	MERIDIAN 506 MkII	as new	£695
MARK LEVINSON ML 2	mint s/h	£2495	ONELLE DA180 dac	mint s/h	£295
GRYPHON BEL CANTO	mint s/h	£2495	P.S. AUDIO ULTRALINK	mint s/h	£895
MICHELL ANGO/HEBA	mint s/h	£395	DENON DCD51	mint s/h	£2995
AUDIO INNOVATIONS L2	mint s/h	£495	McCORMACK DAC-1	mint s/h	£795
KRELL KRC2	mint s/h	£2495	KENWOOD DP-X9010 transport	mint s/h	£350
MARK LEVINSON No 38	mint s/h	£2200	MICROMEGA MICRODRIVE/DAC	mint s/h	£995
McCORMACK ALD-1 Line/phono	as new	£995	HARK LEVINSON 30.5/31	mint s/h	£13995
McCORMACK MICRO	as new	£395	THETA DATA IU/PRO. GEN III		
AUDIO RESEARCH SP8	mint s/h	£795	AT+T - BALANCED		£4995
EXPOSURE XIV + IX	mint s/h	£1495	COPELAND CDA 288 cd player	as new	£1295
HEYBROOK SIGNATURE	mint s/h	£350	LJNN KARUK/NUMERIK	mint s/h	£1495
JADIS JP80mc	mint s/h	£3995	PINK TRIANGLE ANNIVERSARY/SMEV	mint s/h	£1895
CONRAD JOHNSON PREM 78	mint s/h	£6500	LJNN LP12/EKOSI/CIRKUS/		
BURMESTER 808	mint s/h	£1795	LJNGO/TROIKA	mint s/h	£1995
EXPOSURE XI + XII	mint s/h	£795	LJNN LP12/EKOSI/CIRKUS/LJNGO/	mint s/h	£1495
TESSERAC TALA	mint s/h	£795	YPI TNT mkIII	new	EP.O.A.
CHRONOS pre-amp	mint s/h	£1495	PIERE LURNE JU/SLS	mint s/h	£2495
MUSICAL FIDELITY MVX	mint s/h	£995	ROETSU RED K. SIGNATURE	mint s/h	£1295
McCORMACK TLC-1	as new	£795	LYNA LYDIAN	mint s/h	£395
AUDIO RESEARCH BL1	mint s/h	£495	MONSTER SIGMA GENESIS 2000	mint s/h	£195
APOGEE MINI GRAND	mint s/h	£3995	ORTOFON MC10 supreme	mint s/h	£150
B+W SILVER SIGNATURES + stds	mint s/h	£2995	TESSERAC TAMA		
MARTIN LOGAN CLS 112/ARCCICI	mint s/h	£2995	Phono stage mm/mc	mint s/h	£895
KINERGETIC SUB-WOOFER	mint s/h	£2750	JADIS JPP200 Head amp	mint s/h	£2495
WILSON WATT 3 PUPPY 2+paws	mint s/h	£3995	EXPRESSIVE TECHNOLOGY Head amp	mint s/h	£1995
ALON Y	mint s/h	£2995	QUICKSILVER HEAD AMP	mint s/h	£150
SONUS FABER AMATOR	as new	£2250	LYNX TUNER	mint s/h	£295
MERIDIAN AS00	mint s/h	£4950	ACCUPHASE T108 tuner	mint s/h	£995
REF 103.4	mint s/h	£695	LJNN LJNGO	mint s/h	£395
SONUS FABER EXTREMA + STDs	mint s/h	£4395	STAX SR GAMMA + SRD	mint s/h	£295
NEAT CINTIQUE	mint s/h	£225			

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The Riverside 4040 is our integrated amplifier. It features dual mono construction and has five line level inputs and both 4Ω and 8Ω outputs. The output stage is configured in the classic McIntosh connection, which gives stable, wide-band operation even with difficult loudspeaker loads. The stainless steel chassis and transformer cover are hand polished to a mirror finish, and come with a semi-matt black valve cover. 4xEL34, 4xECC83, 2xECC82. A full description, including circuit diagram, is given in the 4040 reference manual, £8.50. Kit £780, fully assembled £995.

Technical specification: dual mono construction, 40W/channel, 12Hz to 25kHz power bandwidth, distortion <0.1%, five line level inputs, tape output, 230/240V mains input.

Stereo amplifier circuit board: £49.50; component pack (including valve bases), add £85; populated board £125; full valve set, add £45. Power supply board: £44; populated board £86. Input board: £15.50; component pack, add £16; populated board £33.

The output transformers are configured for the McIntosh connection and have excellent low frequency response and a primary reflected impedance of 3800Ω. Full connection instructions provided. Price £70. The mains transformer is wound for dual mono construction, as this gives superior isolation between channels which sharpens imaging and eliminates inter-channel ground loops in the amplifier. Primary 0-230-240V. Secondaries 2x295V@0.25A (0.4A Int.), 2x70V@30mA, 2x6.3V@5A. Price £80. Other primary voltages can be supplied to special order. Data sheets giving connection diagrams, specifications, as well as circuits for using each transformer, £2.50 each.

The chassis, comprising main chassis and transformer cover, is hand polished, welded 1/16" stainless steel - NC machine tooled for a perfect fit and clean finish. Each kit also includes a mesh valve cover and baseplate, finished in

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Stereo circuit board: board only £25; component pack, add £37.50; populated board £70; full valve set £20.

The mains transformer is wound for dual mono construction and is toroidal for low leakage flux. Primary 0-230-240V. Secondaries 2x295V@20mA, 2x6.3V@0.45A, 18V@1A. Price £30. Other primary voltages can be supplied to special order. These transformers are also suitable for power supplies in preamplifiers and other line level valve circuits - see data sheet for details, £2.50.

The chassis (main chassis and transformer cover) is made from mild steel. Each kit comes complete with a mesh valve cover and baseplate, finished in black. Price £110. For those who wish to use a high quality chassis for their own projects, details of the chassis are given in the P2 manual, £8.50.

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ROKSAN TMS £1375 (new £2750), DS1 £395 (new £695), SME V £850 (new £1391), Total £2620 (new £4836) 2 1/2 years old, 400 hours use, very fussy owner, immaculate, also Shiraz 300 hours £150, Naim Hi-Cap old case £350. all original boxes.
Tel: 01743 860 671 (after 6pm)

ALCANTARA Active Preamp. Top of the range. Cost new over £6,000. Ultimate sound and build quality. Unmarked condition £2,350 for quick sale. Can demonstrate.
Tel: 0161 904 8081

ROBARKS (PASSIVE DTS) Eight years old, very little used. With stands and 3m cable. Can demonstrate £500 for quick sale.
Tel: 01294 771 083

AUDIOLAB 8000 DAC MkII £400 (digital lead included)
Tel: 0141 649 2773

NAIM CD3, 90.3/92 AMS; Spendor SP3/1; Stands, cable, table. 6 months old £1,995. Will split.
Tel: 01932 345 241

DPA RENNASANCE CD Player mint condition, boxed, manuals etc. 8 months old £700 inc p&p. REL Stadium Sub 1 year old, rosewood, boxed etc £550. DPA Enlightenment DAC, 8 months old, immaculate etc £470 inc p&p.
Tel: Jules 01792 280 061 (anytime)

ROGERS LS3/5 (15 ohm) £220 ono. Thorens TD 126/II (3 speed) £185 ono. Lux 309V int amp (75wpc) with matching tuner (T3004). Both in rosewood cases £200 ono. Arcam Alpha CD player with Black Box 2 £235 ono.
Tel: 0191 422 3415

REL CD DSP P/B Top loader with clear acrylic lid, angle ended and balanced outputs and 3 inputs. Not just a CD player. Mint condition boxed with manuals, probably the last time I will advertise. List £5,000. Incredible bargain £1,995 (please no offers)
Tel: Jim 0171 509 4646 or 0171 584 5784

WANTED: NAIM 32.5 PRE-AMP. For Sale: Naim 42.5 pre-amp mint £125.
Tel: 01302 865 282 (evenings & weekends)

LINN KAIRN £800, Linn Klout £1300. Boxed as new. Speakers kit built by Audio Pro. KEF C59 (105.1), Dynaudio Twin, well finished. Offers.
Tel: 01295 780 363 or 0831 809 346

WANTED: TRIO/KENWOOD Turntable model No. KD850 or KD770 or KD990 or KDS100, also Hi-Fi year books 1958-1960-1968/69-1981.
Tel: Malcolm 01837 546 83 (evenings)

MCINTOSH VALVE MONOBLOCKS MC30 £1,600. McIntosh valve monoblocks MC60 £2,200. Krell integrated CD DSP, boxed £2,200. Magna Planars Tynnis Electro-Statics speakers price £1,500. Also vintage 1930-40s hi-fi equipment; Leaks, Lowther, EMI, RCA, Vitavox, Sound Sales, Lowther Audiovectors PM2Cs etc.
Tel: 0171 591 0395 Fax: 0171 460 6538

WANTED: PAIR OF QUAD 405-2s. Recent models with phono inputs to swap for my Quad II valve monoblocs with gold phonos mint condition.
Tel: 0181 980 8149

A.V.I. PRE £440 A.V.I. MONO Amps £580 A.T.C. 10s £650, Quad 66 Pre £550, 606 power £375. A.E. Aegis speakers with stands £325, Arcam Alpha 6 CD £350, Alpha 6 amp £225, Teac VRDS10 CD player £400, Quad 34 pre 306 power £350.
Tel: 01977 643 629

LINN LP12 BLACK Valhalla Akito, K9 immaculate £415; Celestion 5L6Si speakers black £190, Harbeth HL-P3 walnut £325, B&W CM2 (minatures plus subwoofers) £285, Thorens TD125 £95.
Tel: 01257 263 403 (Lancs)

MISSION 752, NEW 28/12/95 £375. Musical Fidelity MC2, bi-wireable £160. Quad 33 pre £65, Legend C10, P300 pre, power, 180wpc £400, Royd Abbots £325. Wanted: Nakamichi decks.
Tel: 01926 831 388

ARCAM A60 AMP. Very good condition £65. Wanted: Pioneer SA 606 amp.
Tel: 01228 745 37 (Cumbria)

LINN SARA's, ISOBARK speakers, boxed, vgc, spiked stands, Force-4 flat cables £380. Wanted: pair Meridian floor standing speakers with built in power amps.
Tel: Tom 0181 360 4610 (evenings & weekends)

MERIDIAN D.A.C. 263 Delta Sigma. As new, boxed, three years old £175 ono.
Tel: 01530 261 468 (after 6pm, Leic)

SONIC FRONTIERS 5FD1 DAC (balanced) HDCD compatible, amazing sound, boxed as new, 18 months old, 3 1/2 year warranty. Bargain at £1,695 or will sell together with Theta Data Basic. Fabulous combination.
Tel: 01623 871 950

PINK TRIANGLE ORDINAL, 22-Bit + Monarchy DIP + 2 x XLO digital type 4, new £1300 for £600, Yamaha DSP 390 Dolby Surr Proc, £200, Naim Nac 5 loudspeaker cable, 4 x 8m, £100.
Tel: Michael 0171 937 7935 (evenings)

RUARK TALISMANS MK1 in rosewood. Immaculate and boxed £395 ono. 2 x Rogers Cadet valve stereo power amps (currently used as monoblocks but will separate) £75 each.
Tel: 01480 460 502 (Cambridge area)

PIONEER A-400X £150. Sony TCK730ES, (Nakamichi quality cassette deck) £200. Sony TC399 open reel, needs service £50. All mint, boxed. Wanted: Old Hi-Fi mags.
Tel: 016974 785 37 (Cumbria)

CROFT SERIES 5 VALVE amplifier as new condition 30+30 watts £300. Stereo valve amplifier, Sowter transformers, VT46 outputs, 6SN7 driver, black chassis £500.
Tel: 01698 264 698 (Scotland)

LIMITED EDITION REL CD £1950 Dorec Drive turntable with cast resin concrete plinth for low noise performance. Comes with an SBE combi and Series III tone arm £110 ono. Arcam CD deck, needs a simple DC power supply and cartridge £25 ono. Sony CDP 5555D remote control C/D player. A bit of a back breaker at 14kg. 114hrs most CD players look and feel like but not time stuffed full of LUNA caps and copper, along with two high quality point to point transformers in the rear. 110 version but step down transformer is provided £900 2 years ago, will accept £300. All are in excellent condition.
Tel: Jan C. 01255 3978

PAIR CD'S CD PLAYER, NAC 52 preamp with remote, NAC 250 amplifier, all brand new. Cas 1995, absolutely mint with packaging, manuals and warranty, change of circumstances forces very reluctant sale. Also Plans 5 turn table (March 1996), Hebrook Sosted II, walnut (March 1995), chord Pathline hi wire 2 x 5m. Telephone for special price.
Tel: 01460 543 72

POWER GROUND 1600 HD DAC Only two months old, with 4 parts including balanced in and out. Excellent sound with first class specifications. Genuine reason for sale £1,150.
Tel: 01294 772 083 (mobile)

NAIM CDI, PRISTINE, 6 Months, NAC92, Flatcap, immaculate, 3 months, NAP90, RTL2, mint, all boxed. New £3,600, sell £2,400 ono. Reason serious upgrades. May split.
Tel: Naneed 01642 249 035

B&W 801 SPEAKERS With wood Teak finish in superb condition £1,100.
Tel: 01823 277 289 or car phone 0585 652 557

OPTICOD MP2000 with £120 P/B 2 transformer. The best for MP2000 hence £300 for leads can then within 30 mins of P/B 4.
Tel: 01294 772 083 (mobile)

SME SERIES TWO 3069R arm, brand new, unused, still sealed in makers box. SME current list price inc VAT £488, £200 plus p&p.
Tel: 01273 583 675 (Brighton)

QUAD 66 PREAMP & CONTROL 14 months old £550; Quad 33 preamp £90; Leak Sandwich speakers £100 pr. Marantz 104 tuners £30. Or sensible offers.
Tel: 01789 205 191 (Stratford Upon Avon)

CARVER LOUDSPEAKERS, Forsell reference transport and DAC, OCM preamp/mono amps, Sunfire 5 channel amp, Audio Artistry Dvorak loudspeakers, variety of cables.
Tel: 01232 319 148 for details and prices 6pm-10pm.

NAIM IBL BLACK ASH Loudspeakers in immaculate condition with original packaging £450 ono.
Tel: 01273 772 379 early evenings or weekends

PINK TRIANGLE PT T00 with Linn Ekos/Karma. Mint condition £750. Koetsu Urushi low usage, boxed £800. Ruark Swordsman Plus (Mahogany) boxed unused. Receipt for £315, accept £230.
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MERIDIAN ARGENT 3 SPEAKERS, ROSEWOOD - MINT	£995	NEW	£1495
BELL A3 SPEAKERS WALNUT, V.G.C.	£4495	S/HAND	£6995
CABASSE IROISE MC SPEAKERS CHERRYWOOD, MINT	£1995	EX/DEMO	£2700
REBTEK CHALLENGER INTEGRATED AMP - MINT NEW	£799		
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GRYPHON EDITION PREAMP BALANCED - MINT	£3995	S/HAND	£8000
MERIDIAN 808 DAC - MINT	£795	E/D	£1450
AUDIO RESEARCH V70 HYBRID VALVE AMP - MINT	£2495	S/H	£4480
KRELL KRSPB REFERENCE PREAMP, BALANCED, MINT	£4995	S/HAND	£11500
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TANDBERG TPA 3009A MU2 MONO POWER AMP MINT	£1095	S/HAND	£2195
MARK LEVINSON ML12A PREAMP PLS124 POWER SUP.	£995	S/H	£2400
CAT SL1 SIGNATURE PREAMP 7, PHONO MINT	£2995	S/H	£8000
MARK LEVINSON ML2 POWER AMP, MINT	£995	S/H	£2700
LUMLEY REFERENCE M120 VALVE MONOS, MINT	£1795	E/D	£3200
SONY 337 ESD CD PLAYER, MINT	£295	S/H	£600
JADIS DEFY 7 Mk3 VALVE POWER AMP MINT	£3495	S/H	£5290
KEF 102.2 SPEAKERS, ROSEWOOD + KUBE + STANDS	£595	S/H	£1150
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ACOUSTIC ENERGY AE3 SPEAKERS & STANDS, MINT	£995	E/D	
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MARANTZ CD65 MK2 SE CD PLAYER, MINT	£175	S/H	£350
MARK LEVINSON NO20 REF MONO AMPS BALANCED, MINT	£4995	S/H	
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ALPHASON SYMPHONY TURNTABLE & ARM PLUS ATLAS SUPPLY, PIANO FINISH, MINT	£1295	S/H	£2700
MERIDIAN 808 MK2 CD PLAYER, MINT	£750	E/D	£950
MERIDIAN 808 MK3 CD PLAYER, BALANCED, MINT	£1395	E/D	£1885
MERIDIAN 500 TRANSPORT & 683 DAC, BALANCED, MINT	£1595	E/D	£1990
AUDIO RESEARCH SP9 PREAMP, SILVER, MINT	£995	S/H	£1700
MERIDIAN 501 PREAMP & MSR, MINT	£575	E/D	£675
MERIDIAN 551 INTEGRATED AMP, MINT	£595	E/D	£695
MERIDIAN 555 POWER MINT	£550	E/D	£950
MARK LEVINSON NO20.5 MONO POWER AMPS, BLACK, BALANCED, MINT	£8995	S/H	£12500
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SUMO ARIA PANEL SPKRS, OAK, VGC	£795	S/H	£3000
GENESIS 8300 SPEAKERS & STANDS, PIANO BLACK, MINT	£995	E/D	£1895
CONRAD JOHNSON SYNTHESIS REFERENCE 4 TOWER SPEAKERS SYSTEM, OAK	£2995	S/H	£8000
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FORSEL AIR REFERENCE LTD EDITION TURNTABLE & ARM			
AIR BEARINGB SUPERB INC CARTRIDGE ETC MINT	£5995	S/H	£13262
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AUDIO RESEARCH ODT1 CD TRANSPORT MINT	£1995	S/H	£3290
ACCUPHASE DP70 CD PLAYER BALANCED AT&T MINT	£2250	S/H	£6000
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PRIMARE 928 SERIES PREAMP & MONO AMPS BAL MINT	£3995	S/H	£9750
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ALON IV SPEAKERS BLACK MINT	£1895	S/H	£3800
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