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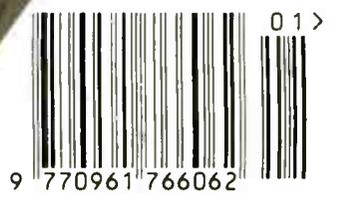
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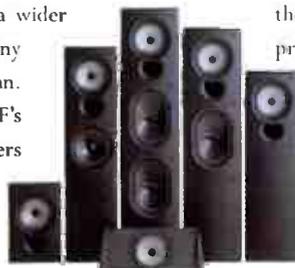
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From bookshelf to 3-way floorstander, the entire range is magnetically shielded its state-of-the-art technology, you'd expect the result to outperform the competition. And because aesthetics are integral to good design, the two largest models incorporate KEF's new 'racetrack' bass unit. With the performance of an 8 inch driver in the space of a 6 inch, it preserves the slim, elegant Q Series design.

With the new Q Series, the competition have been decisively out-classed.

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SERIES



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of sound



HAPPY CHRISTMAS FROM HI-FI WORLD



BIG WIN PAGE

As December 25th looms ever closer, and crowds of shoppers start to fill the streets, we offer you a chance to win the perfect Christmas present. In our special competition this festive month, everything we review can be won. All you have to do is turn to page 66 to find out how to enter.

Mission 752 Freedom loudspeakers	£578.00
Arcam Alpha 7 CD player	£319.90
Arcam Alpha 8 CD player	£519.90
Technics SU-A7000MK3 amplifier	£249.95
Roksan Xerxes X (turntable only with basic power supply)	£1615.00
Blue Room Minipod loudspeakers	£399.95
Monrio MJ amplifier	£695.00
UKD Opera Duetto loudspeakers	£395.00
TDL T-Line 2 loudspeakers	£549.95
QED Discsaver	£34.99
KAR Torino loudspeakers	£899.00
Kenwood KX-5080S cassette deck	£199.95
Interconnect cables	£184.96

Total £6641.55

For competition details and entry form see page 66



IN THE FEBRUARY ISSUE

Here are some of the products we hope to bring you in the next issue:

DAC CD PLAYER
Setting Digital Analogue Company's CDP CD player apart from the masses are its transformer-coupled valve output stage and HDCD compatibility. Will it bring a glow of satisfaction to your ears?

DPA 500s PRE/POWER
Freshly delivered just for Hi-Fi World is the new 500s pre/power combination from DPA Digital. Find out if it can live up to the reputation of its illustrious predecessors.

TECHNICS SL-1200 LTD
Since its introduction some 25 years ago,

Technics have made an astonishing 1.6 million SL1200/1210 turntables. To celebrate, and who wouldn't after selling that many, they're releasing a gloss-black-with-gold-plated-trimmings version, with a limited edition run of 10,000! But will it appeal to more than just German Techno DJs?

AURA CA200/PA100
Sitting pretty in their slimline casework are Aura's most recent arrivals, the CA200 pre and PA100 power amplifiers. Find out if this £1500 pair can charm our ears like the £280 VA-80 did.

PIONEER CT-95
After getting fine results from Pioneer's CT-S740S cassette deck in the June

issue, we headed to the top of the pile for the flagship CT-95.

MISSION 751 FREEDOM
Smallest of Mission's 75 series, these newly revised 751 Freedoms promise to pack some punch. Find out if they were a knock-out in the next issue.

SONY CDP-XE900E
Rescuing budget CD technology from its innovation doldrums is this new CD player from Sony. Instead of using a fixed transport and moving laser, Sony have opted for a stationary laser and a transport that moves. Find out if the music the CDP-XE900E makes is equally moving.

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THIS MONTH'S REVIEWS

AMPLIFIERS

TECHNICS SU-A700 MK3 30

Sporting bamboo dielectric capacitors for a more natural sound, Technics hope this integrated amplifier will bring a Yule-tide smile to Dominic Todd's face.



SYSTEM

MONRIO MJ AMPLIFIER AND UKD OPERA DUETTO LOUDSPEAKERS 36

More season's greetings from Italy, courtesy of Monrio's compact MJ integrated amplifier and UKD's solid Mahogany Opera loudspeakers.

COMPACT DISC

ARCAM ALPHA 7 & ALPHA 8 16

Two presents in one. If you get a £320 Alpha 7 CD player this year, you can upgrade it to the £520 Alpha 8 next Christmas. David Price is our man with the golden ears.



VINYL

ROKSAN XERXES X 23

Spinning merrily around the Christmas tree is Eric Braithwaite with Roksan's Xerxes X turntable, DSU and XPS 3.5 power supplies.

QED DISCAVER 39

What's the price of salvation for a record collection imprisoned by a low quality phono stage? £35 and a QED Discsaver from Santa, says Jon Marks.

LOUDSPEAKERS

MISSION 752 FREEDOM 13

If you want silk in your stocking, Nick Tate reckons a pair of Mission's 752 Freedom loudspeakers could be just the thing. Still relying on a High Definition Aerogel bass/midrange driver, the improved 752s now use a silk dome tweeter.

TDL T-LINE 2 32

Fresh in for Christmas is TDL's new T-Line series, ideal for those who like a healthy serving of bass. Taking over from the popular RTL range, the £550 T-Line 2s arrived for an audience with JonMarks.

KAR TORINO 49

If you're not one for turkey, perhaps a pizza, some Mozart and a pair of Torinos from Keswick Audio Research's Italia series will suffice, thinks Dominic Baker.

BLUE ROOM MINIPOD 34

Looking like they fell off the back of an intergalactic transport, Blue Room's Minipods have a style all their own. Jon Marks suspects Santa's little helpers will be delivering quite a few pairs of these loudspeakers over Christmas.



CASSETTE

KENWOOD KX-5080S 27

Bigger brother to the KX-3080 we took a shine to in the November issue, the new KX-5080S boasts Dolby S. Noel 'Claus' Keywood finds out if it's a worthy stocking filler.

WORLD VERDICT

★★★★

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

★★★

GOOD - Has strong merit. Well worth an audition.

★★

ADEQUATE - Mediocre in several areas. May be worth auditioning.

★

POOR - Seriously flawed. Not worth considering.

REGULARS

BIG WIN PAGE/NEXT ISSUE 3

Not only can you find out which goodies we'll be revealing in February's issue, but you'll be able to take a look at all the superb prizes on offer this month.

NEWS 7

If the news was any fresher than this we'd know of it before the manufacturers had designed it.

READERS' LETTERS 42

Wondering how to put a system together or where to turn for the perfect audiophile gift? Turn to the letters pages for inspiration.

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Standing on their snow-crested columns, Hi-Fi World's finest bring you the views from the top.

HI-FI WORLD LIBRARY 58

Stuck for a prezzie for a hi-fi buff pal? Save Rudolph a trip and invest in some high fidelity wisdom from Hi-Fi World's library.

WORLD BUYING GUIDE 69

Our listing of the best equipment we've heard over the years.

MEET YOUR MAKER 73

Hidden away in the depths of Lapland, a factory full of pixies turns out all that hi-fi gear. . . On the other hand, you might be better off talking to these people.

WORLD AUDIO DESIGN 74

Whether it's an amp to warm your hands and ears, or 'speakers for your sleigh, this is the right page.

SPECIALIST HI-FI DEALERS 78

Save yourself the disappointment of a duff delivery by Santa. Catch a sleigh down to your nearest expert and make the right choice.

DIAL-A-DEALER 89

Don't forget to call your dealer and wish him happy Christmas - he may even invite you in for mince pies and music.

MEASURED PERFORMANCE 103

Here's where we sort out the Christmas crackers from the puddings, with the help of our Hewlett-Packard spectrum analyser.

READERS' CLASSIFIED 118

There's no better time of year to pick up a hi-fi bargain, and there's certainly no better place to look.

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FEATURES

DAB FEATURE 20

Not a feature on dabbing sherbet with the kids at Christmas, but information about Digital Audio Broadcasting, a new form of radio

CHRISTMAS CABLES 41

Noel Keywood leads you through the Spaghetti Jungle to help you find the best sound with this bundle of affordable interconnects.

AUDIO FAIR 55

Look back on Christmases past and you'll find vintage hi-fis, like those at the October Audio Fair, supplying sweet Yule tunes.

FREE CHRISTMAS SUPPLEMENT

This month's free supplement celebrates Christmas with a round-up of the best hi-fi we've reviewed over the last year. You'll also find Christmas music reviews and a Christmas quiz for the hi-fi trivialists.

MUSIC

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REM - New Adventures in Hi-Fi.

DANCE/AMBIENT 84

RECORD OF THE MONTH:
Tricky - Pre-Millennium Tension.

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CLASSICAL REVIEWS 93

RECORD OF THE MONTH:
Alban Berg - Seven Early Songs/Der Wein/Three Pieces for Orchestra Op6.

COMPETITION - PAGE 66



A chance to win everything reviewed in this issue is before you this Christmas, so don't miss out. Turn to page 66 and make your choice.

S T I V E T H I N N O C

Is it **intelligent**
to sit here?



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At first glance, sitting in the path of a 2 mile high tornado isn't the smartest thing to do. Unless of course you're watching it on a Sharp SRS 3D Surround Sound T.V. Using the revolutionary 'Sound Retrieval System', the T.V. engulfs the room with vivid, 3D Surround Sound. And all from just two speakers. So, wherever you're sitting and whatever you're watching, the sound is so real it's like actually being there. There are 3 T.V.s with SRS available, each one providing an affordable alternative to home cinema systems. So do the intelligent thing. Surround yourself with sound, not speakers. Ask for a demo at any leading electrical store or call 0800 262 958 quoting SRS/HFW/T² for further information.

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PT IN THE PINK

It looks like Pink Triangle are now working in collaboration with a Mr Claus, bringing out a whole raft of new goodies for Christmas. Tidings of joy for those who find digital delectable come in the form of two CD players, the £2099 Litaural and £999 Numeral. While the former uses PT's own discrete 1-bit DAC to turn numbers into music, the latter relies on a pair of Philips Bitstream convertors. Common to both players, however, are a transport and DAC locked together by a synchronous clock signal to reduce jitter levels.

Audiophiles whose world revolves around vinyl can realise their Christmas wishes with two arms and a new turntable. The £549 LPT II, with its open triangular plinth, is a single speed deck which can be upgraded via a two-speed external supply. Arm options are PT's budget arm (based on the Rega RB300) or their new Brava or forthcoming Trax It.

The £599 Brava, like its more costly sibling the Trax It, is a parallel tracker, its carriage running on low friction knife edge guides. But where the Brava uses aluminium in its arm tube, the Trax It prefers carbon fibre. Also setting the Trax It apart is its remote control which allows the arm to be positioned and the stylus raised and lowered. A price has yet to be finalised, though.

Last present in Santa's bag is the Integral. Unusually for these days, this 100watt integrated amp comes with a phono stage catering for both MM and MC cartridges. And with pre and power sections split, a power amp can be added for bi-amping. Remote operation and a tone control module are optional extras on the standard price of £999.

Pink Triangle Projects

Invicta Works,
Elliott Road,
Bromley,
Kent BR2 9NT
Tel: 0181 460 7299



MAKING HEY

The latest bouncing baby loudspeaker to join Heybrook's hi-fi family is the Heylios. This ported standmounter features a 165mm mid/bass driver with a damped cone, chosen for its extended response. Dealing with frequencies above 3kHz is a 25mm soft dome tweeter. The drivers are fed their separate signals through a bi-wireable crossover built, of course, from audio grade components. With a sensitivity of 88dB, the Heylios will set you back £339.

Other new deliveries from Heybrook headquarters are the Signature II pre and power amplifiers, weighing in at a Christmas-friendly £1600 a set. The pre-amplifier possesses three outputs for tri-amping, while the job of moving voice coils falls to the 100watt Signature II power amp. Last, but by no means least, is a matching £989 CD player. CEC of Japan, famous for their belt-drive CD transports, supply the mechanism and Burr-Brown the DAC, in the form of a 1-bit/18-bit hybrid decoder.

Heybrook Hi-Fi

Clemo Road,
Liskeard,
Cornwall
PL14 3NH
Tel: 01579 342866



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We'd just like to say a big 'thank you' to all of the satisfied customers who have made Musical Images the UK's Number 1 Audio Visual dealer.

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WorldRadioHistory

DPA DELIVER

Continuing their pursuit of innovative technology, DPA have just released two new pre/power combos, the 500s and Enlightenment. Good news for couch potato audiophiles the world over is DPA's novel approach to remote control. This involves a pre-amp with variable gain, the signal passing through a single pair of resistors, as opposed to the FET switches and upwards of 60 resistors usually relied upon. Overall amplifier design is also simplified, fewer stages



meaning a cleaner, more transparent sound.

Not content to sit on their design laurels, DPA then started investigating power amplifiers and their associated problems. Sophisticated computer modelling led to the conclusion that traditional push-pull Class A output stages, regarded by many as the *sine qua non* of high fidelity reproduction, could be improved upon. DPA pin-pointed unnecessarily high crossover distortion and jitter as inherent problems. The solution is 'Cubed Class A'. This topology is claimed to reduce distortion by a factor of ten, and jitter by a not insignificant 10,000, leading to a more revealing and musically satisfying sound.

While the £3000 500s monoblock power amplifier, with its outboard Cubed Class A power supply, is capable of a voice-coil-cooking 250w, the £995 Enlightenment boasts a more modest 100watts. The Enlightenment (£695) and 500s (£2000) pre-amps are both line level, with optional phono stages on offer for lovers of the black disc.

DPA Digital
Willowbrook Technical Units,
Crickhowell Road,
St Mellons,
Cardiff CF3 0EI
Tel: 01222 795621

KESWICK BREAK THE MOULD

Dissatisfied with the performance of conventional loudspeakers, Keswick Audio have come up with their radical Zero 2 design. Taking a dim view of normal cabinet design and the standing waves it encourages, Keswick have built a non-parallel sided enclosure moulded from a Zirconia and ceramic loaded polymer. Crossovers and drivers have also been scrutinised and found wanting. Keswick's answer is a three-way system whose titanium tweeter and custom HDA midrange driver cross over passively, while the bass driver is actively driven and filtered. Convention is again shunned in the bass driver's cone which is



Keswick Audio
Ferrybridge Workspace,
Pontefract Road,
Ferrybridge,
W. Yorks. WF11 8PL
Tel: 01977 671823

STONE AGE SPEAKERS

Looking for the ultimate in inert cabinets, Picture The Sound hit upon Corian for their new Neolith range of loudspeakers. Manufactured by Du Pont, Corian is a mineral-loaded polymer that allows enclosures to be moulded for maximum strength. The Neo 1, 2 and 3 (available in 46 shades) all boast high sensitivity (88dB+) thanks to their custom drivers, and come in at a cool £3000, £4000 and £5000 respectively.



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

LEAN, GREEN BASS MACHINE

If you like the Environment and love deep bass, then REL brings you tidings of good cheer. The new £375 Q-50 subwoofer steps in to fill the shoes of its predecessor, the Q-bass. But nature-fans who own a Q-bass needn't despair because they can upgrade to Q-50 status for £75. And if 50watts doesn't suffice, then there's also the £475 Q-100 with a 12in. driver.

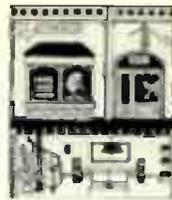
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DEF Q AGAIN

DEF's new Monitor Series, running to two 'speakers at the moment, is built around their well known Uni-Q technology.



Parting with £499 will buy you the diminutive RDM One, its 160mm mid/bass driver with centrally mounted soft dome tweeter firing into an eight litre

closed box. If a power handling of 125watt isn't enough however, then there's the RDM Two, with its larger, ported cabinet and 175watt rating. Bi-wireable and using OFC internal cabling and polypropylene capacitors, the Two will make a dent in your pocket the size of £699.

DEF Audio
 11000 Littleton Road,
 Covil,
 Maidstone,
 Kent ME15 6QP
 Tel: 01622 672261

PAST AND PRESENT FAIR

Silvernote, manufacturers of hand-crafted amps, 'speakers and cables, will be hosting the Herts. and North London Audio and Record Fair on Sunday 15th December. Situated in the Wolsey Hall, Windmill Lane, Cheshunt, the Fair brings together hi-fi both vintage and modern, as well as stalls catering to software hunters of LPs and CDs. And if you fancy a trip down Memory Lane, find out how laquers sounded in

the 1930s with a 'live' cutting of 78s on a vintage lathe.

A small Christmas tithe of £1.50 is levied, and doors will be open from 11am to 4pm.

For more information, call Steven Mann on 01992 620905.

SALVADOR SPEAKER?

Recently arrived on our shores from Denmark is the new DALI Grand Coupe loudspeaker. The 29mm silk dome tweeter has a rear chamber, and the 6.5in mid/bass driver a vented pole piece. According to DALI, these eliminate the compression effects caused by air trapped under the drive units' dust caps. With bi-wireable gold-plated sockets, you'll have to cross Santa's palm with silver to the value of £1999.99 if you're after a pair.



Audio Club
 401-405 Nether Street,
 London N3 1GQ
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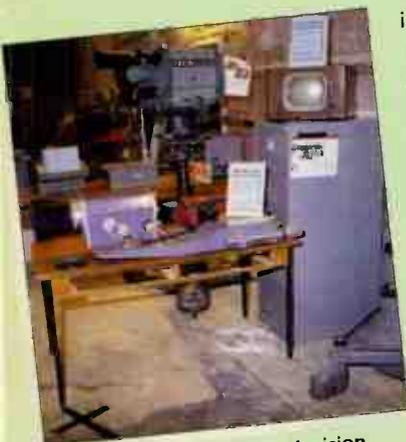
ALLY PALLY PARTY

The sixtieth anniversary of public service television broadcasting was celebrated on Saturday 2nd November, 1996, by the

Alexandra Palace Television Trust. In the original studio, now in tatty condition, Sylvia Peters, who restarted broadcasts in 1947, cut a palace-shaped cake to commemorate the event. She was watched by BBC executives, assorted luminaries and Dr Roger Driscoll, chairman of the trust and acoustics adviser to the Verity Group (Mission, Quad, Roksan, Wharfedale). With our interest in broadcasting issues, Hi-Fi World was there to record the event.

The first public television transmissions were made from Alexandra Palace, a huge Victorian 'leisure complex' situated atop a hill in 196 acres of park land in north London. The BBC leased the east wing in 1935, built a huge aerial which has since become a well-recognised symbol of broadcasting, and started transmitting at 3pm, 2nd November, 1936. War intervened soon after and transmissions were stopped. Now, the studios lie abandoned and derelict. The trust has been set up to restore the site and turn it into a museum.

For details contact trustee Robert Hawes on: 0181 808 2838



Early items used in television broadcasting - the camera is post-war. At present only models and pictures of the first Emitron cameras exist.



Dr Roger Driscoll and the Mayor of Haringey, the borough in which Alexandra Palace sits, start the celebration proceedings.

trade winds

77 Carbon



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World Radio History

1936
QUAD
1996

FREE
AT
LAST

review



With the new 752 Freedoms, Mission have finally improved upon their best loudspeaker, says Nick Tate.

It bores me rigid when hi-fi reviewers recommend the same 'fave rave' products month after month, but I fear it's a necessary evil. Take Mission's £500 752 loudspeaker for example - there are times when you can't turn a Hi-Fi World page without seeing one. The reason being that it's an extremely musical little design, so beguiling that you can still tap your feet when you've come from hearing the most expensive 'speakers around.

The 752's trump card is its HDA (High Definition Aerogel) mid/bass driver, which delivers the speed and sensitivity of paper cones without their associated distortion and break up problems. Normally HDA is too expensive for commercial loudspeakers but Mission feel the extra outlay is worth it and they're very, very right. But if there is one criticism to be levelled at this 'speaker, it's the slightly 'tizzy' metal dome tweeter that sits awkwardly with the smoothness of the mid/bass driver. So it wasn't a complete surprise to discover that its successor, the new £600 752 Freedom, retains the HDA driver but gets a smoother and more expensive silk dome tweeter.

But this isn't all. Far from being just a tweaked 752, designer Henry Azima says the Freedom is "effectively a completely new loudspeaker". Gone is the gently sloping upper front baffle and conventional driver geometry, and in comes a flat front baffle with Mission's favoured inverted driver layout. Inside, the Freedom features a new, patented DCTT (Double Chamber Triple Tuned) configuration, a complex arrangement of three front-firing ports feeding an upper chamber, ported to a lower chamber with its own rear-firing port. Henry says this arrangement eliminates boxy coloration which floorstanders usually suffer from. Happily, the Freedom retains the compact 88x20x25cm dimensions of its predecessor, along with its easy 'amp-friendly' electrical characteristics.

So what of the sound? Well, the Freedoms are a little more fussy than their forebears in the setting up

shots showed tremendous attack and decay, while cymbals were smooth and finely etched. Clearly capturing Mike Joyce's tight-skinned drum sound, they showed the subtle counterpoint between him and guitarist Johnny Marr's playing like few 'speakers I've heard at any price.

Moving to Miles Davis' 'So What' from Kind of Blue, Paul Chambers' double bass proved remarkably deep and unconstrained, the Missions accurately conveying the difference between a plucked and a struck string. As Chambers worked his way up and down the scale, very little boxiness was apparent, just deep, even bass. Further up the frequency range they continued to impress with their superb widescreen



"As I ran the gamut of my music collection, the Freedoms continued to delight with everything they played."

department. They need plenty of running in, spikes, biwiring and careful placement parallel to the rear wall. And while they're easy to drive, they don't suffer poor partnering equipment gladly. Properly set up they come on song in spectacular fashion. With the guitar pop of The Smiths' 'Girl Afraid', they made a direct line for the song's rhythms. Rim

soundstaging abilities. Images were accurately placed both in front of and behind the plane of the 'speakers and depth perspective was excellent, the boxes themselves simply dissolving into the recorded acoustic. Highly self-effacing by nature, they proved reticent to stamp their character on anything, allowing Davis's playing to come across with great emotion, while James Cob's hi-hat work was crisp, clear and commendably subtle.

Another fine performance then, so I moved to Steely Dan's 'Doctor Wu', a bright, toppy recording finishing with a powerful saxophone solo over crashing piano chords and heavy duty drumming. Always a good test of any 'speaker's ability to hold things together, the new Missions sailed through it. Where their

predecessors would grate on high sax notes, the Freedoms showed no sign of hardness or strain.

It was only on dance music that they proved fallible, sounding just a touch too polite on the Beatmasters' 'Rok da House'. Although the Freedoms' excellent dynamics and punch naturally predispose them to this kind of music, they ultimately lacked the Neanderthal 'thwack' of big paper-coned boom boxes such as those from JBL. Still, you can't reasonably expect thin, small-footprint floorstanders at this price level to move air like bigger boxes - that, Mission would doubtless point out, is what the 753 Freedoms are for.

As I ran the gamut of my music collection, the Freedoms continued to delight with everything they played.

Tonally very neutral, a little dry even, they lacked the euphonic warmth of their forebears, but made up for this with their ability to delve straight to the heart of the music. They're first rate in all 'hi-fi' respects, from imaging to coloration to bass extension, but you never notice because you're too busy listening to the music. So, if you thought the 752s have had enough media exposure, you're not going to like the

brouhaha surrounding their replacements. In my opinion they're the most accomplished all-rounders under a thousand pounds, and Mission's best product ever, to boot. I know it's boring to hear, but Mission have done it again'.

MISSION SAYS

The second movement of Vivaldi's Four Seasons flowed along gently, the Da Capo/8000CDM's

signal going through Aura's CA200/PA100 set-up before reaching the 'speakers. Mission's 752s did a nicely civilised job of relaying this piece, producing a tidy soundstage populated by tightly focused images. Tonal colour was also good but a little lighter than I prefer. This was at least partly due to the fact that, while the Missions certainly had lithe, punchy upper bass, their lower bass didn't have great extension. The old 752s had more weight when dealing with cello, for example, although the new Freedoms undeniably have better definition and insight to their bass.

The Largo of the second movement became the levity of the Danza Pastorale, which found the new 752s more than capable of handling rhythmic diversity. A combination of detail and cleanliness came to the fore again here, helping to reveal musical inflections.

Poles apart stylistically but every bit as enjoyable was Delos' all-digital recording of the steel bands of Trinidad and Tobago on the Carnival Jump Up CD. The 752 Freedoms jumped into the musical fray with a sizeable soundstage that extended from the front of the

enclosures back. While this recording usually projects further forward of the 'speakers, there was never any danger of orchestral scale being squashed by the Missions. Rhythmically adept, the 752s had this Carnivalist nodding happily along to bass lines, although the deep bass fan in me couldn't help but feel that more grunt in the lower octaves would have turned our listening room into a party zone.

So the Missions could groove, but could they funk? Skunkhour's Feed album slid into the Audiolab 8000CDM's drawer to provide the next test. 'Traacherous Head' showed the 762s were no dynamic slouch, the light HDA cones of their mid/bass drivers having no problems with either fast-plucked bass or frenetic drumming. Percussion, pushed to the front of the stage, sizzled appropriately as the drummer cranked himself up to overload on 'McSkunk', his timing coming through pin-sharp.

The new 752s are definitely out ahead of their predecessors in this respect - where the old 'speakers seemed to trade some of their timing for bass depth, the new Freedoms move in the opposite direction. Another plus point is the integration between drivers. The original metal dome tweeter could occasionally sound as though it was doing its own thing. The replacement silk dome unit Mission are now using does a much better job of harmonising with its HDA partner, although its contribution remains obvious ●

Mission 752 Freedom £578.00

**Mission Group,
Huntingdon,
Cambridgeshire PE18 6ED
Tel: 01480 451777**



WORLD VERDICT ●●●●
Dynamic, punchy, and musical yet refined like few others at the price. Bass lacks a little depth though and treble integration isn't perfect.

**Measured Performance
see p103**

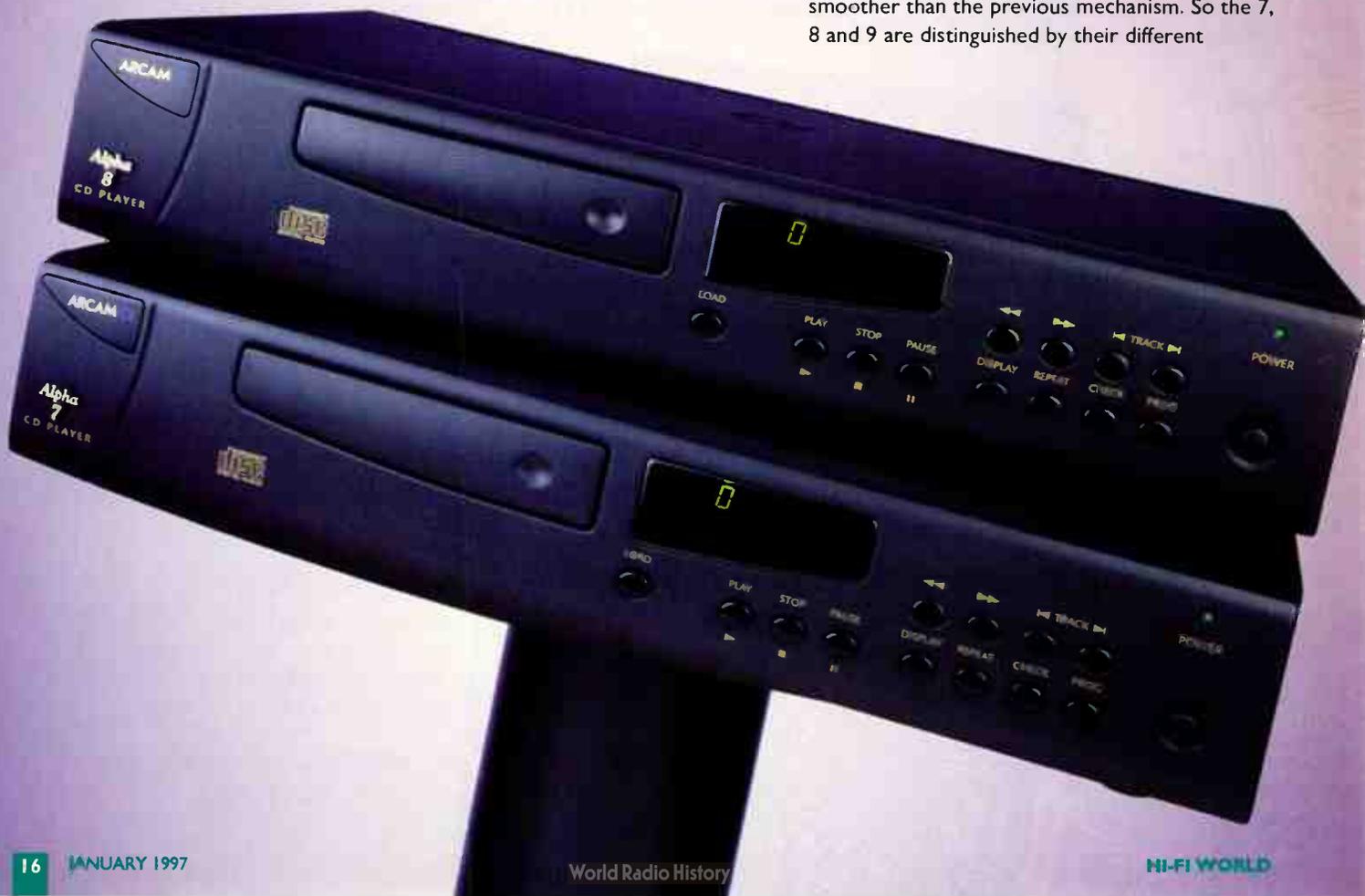
review

STEPPING UP

The ability to upgrade, plus real musicality, will make Arcam's latest Alpha CD players an instant hit, thinks David Price.

Thanks to Arcam's new Alpha CD players, budget CD player buyers need no longer fear the upgrade scrapheap. In the past, once you're ears had tired of your favourite disc-spinner, there was little other choice but to toss it in the bin or sell it second-hand. The outlook with Arcam's new 7 and 8 CD players is a lot brighter though.

These two machines, along with the flagship Alpha 9, all feature a Sony-sourced CDM-14 transport, which is considerably faster and smoother than the previous mechanism. So the 7, 8 and 9 are distinguished by their different

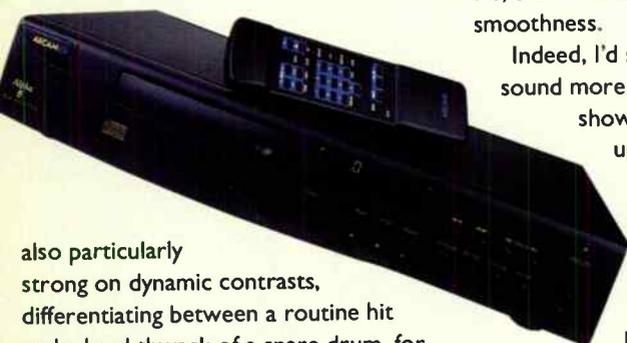


convertors. The 7 has Delta/Sigma conversion, while the 8 enjoys a Bitstream Pulse Width Modulation DAC with 20-bit digital filtering. For around £220 your Arcam dealer can upgrade your 7 to 8 status. Or for £250-£300 (prices hadn't been finalised as we went to press), you can go straight to Alpha 9 spec, with multi-bit DACs delivering 24-bit resolution.

Aesthetes will be glad the improvements are not only internal. Out go the anonymous eighties-style black boxes of yore, and in comes elegant, curvaceous casework with an 'alpha' legend in the middle of the top plate - a nice touch. Ergonomics and control arrangements are just as thoroughly thought out, with a green display which can be either dimmed or turned off altogether. The supplied remote control includes a volume control for Arcam amps, and the player understands both Philips and NEC (Sony) handsets.

Arcam don't supply interconnects, pointing out that the usual complementary bell wire is all but useless. So I used budget Van den Hul silver cable, and placed both players on little strips of sorbothane as Arcam recommend. As the Alpha 7 retails for just a little less than Marantz's CD63SE, I thought this would be a good starting point for comparisons

Fully burned-in, the 7 proved more upfront and rhythmic than the super-smooth Marantz. Ultra Vivid Scene's 'Lightning' was conveyed with greater speed and urgency than I'd expected, the 7 delivering a punchy bass line and surprisingly tight drum sounds. It was



also particularly strong on dynamic contrasts, differentiating between a routine hit and a hard thwack of a snare drum, for example, better than I'd expected.

Although the CD63SE wasn't as energetic and vivid as its British rival, it

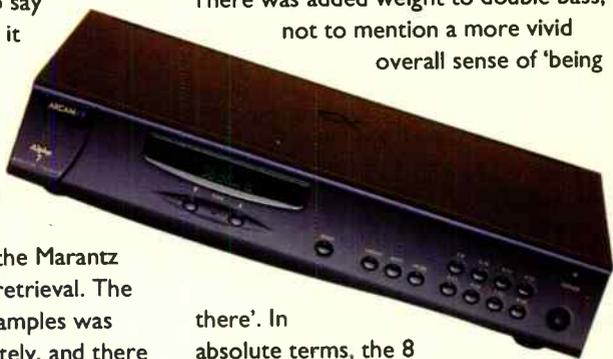
had refinement on its side. Treble was smoother and more incisive, midband cleaner and more detailed, and bass warmer. This isn't to say the Arcam was uncouth - it wasn't. It just had a bubblier, more lively presentation, as The Black Dog's 'Bytes' went to prove. With this sparse but rhythmically complex piece of music, the Marantz majored on information retrieval. The texture of the different samples was reproduced more accurately, and there was a greater sense of air and space to the acoustic.

The Arcam, on the other hand, failed to pick out the crispness of the cymbals quite as well but held together the rhythms with extra cohesion, giving a more natural, effusive sound to the music. As the most communicative player at the price, I suspect the Alpha 7 will win many friends.

The Alpha 8, with its £520 price tag, retains the strong, rhythmic capabilities of its baby brother. What the extra money buys, though, is a silky refinement similar to the CD63SE's - the best of both worlds, if you like. The differences between the two Arcam players were manifest from the first bar of Steely Dan's 'Do it Again'. First, the 8 is a good deal richer tonally than the 7, with considerably improved bass. Stronger, warmer and deeper, its low frequencies were impressive for such a modestly priced machine. Midband was smoother and soundstaging better, with a more enveloping recorded acoustic. Treble was also less artificial than the 7's, thanks to an added soft smoothness.

Indeed, I'd say the Alpha 7 might sound more impressive in busy showrooms, where its upfront, punchy sound would be more immediately appealing than the 8's sophisticated, subtle character. Techno and Rock work particularly well on the cheaper player, while Jazz or Classical fans will find the 8 is more their cup of tea.

Lee Morgan's 'The Rajah', a sweet vintage Blue Note recording, really benefitted from the 8's refinements. There was added weight to double bass, not to mention a more vivid overall sense of 'being



there'. In absolute terms, the 8 has a rich but slightly indistinct treble, almost as if Arcam have rolled it off slightly. It's also a little loose in the bass, but then so is every other player under a thousand pounds.

Arcam's budget CD players have always been a bit special, with a richer, more musical sound than most rivals. But not until now, with the arrival of the new Alpha 7 and 8, have Arcam made true class leaders. They're real music-makers that punch far above their weight in the sound quality stakes. And they possess a natural, beguiling sound that will be music to the ears of budget buyers who've had to suffer uninvolved players far too long. The 7 is the better value of the two and has just become my favourite entry-level machine. The 8, with its subtlety and sophistication, is an essential audition in a crowded area of the market ●

Arcam Alpha 7 £319.90
Arcam Alpha 8 £519.90

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WORLD VERDICT

Superbly designed, instinctively musical players which are surely destined for success.

Measured Performance
see p103

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DIGITAL AUDIO BROADCASTING

DAB now reaches 20% of households, the BBC say.

But you won't have heard it.

Noel Keywood reports.

At present you will probably have heard little about it, and stand even less chance of using it, but a new type of Radio network is coming

to the London region in September 1995. Trouble is, no one was listening - except themselves.

It's a chicken and egg situation, this.

the digital processing that lies at the heart of DAB.

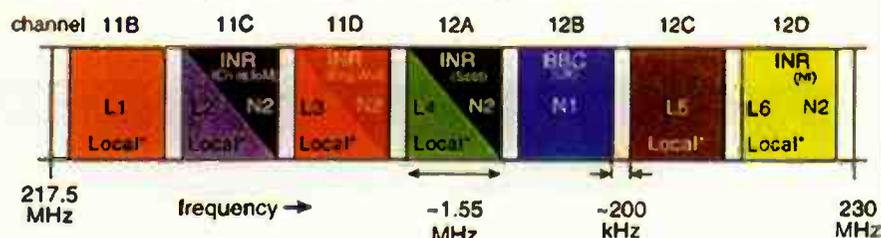
At present only Grundig, now a part of Philips, have a DAB car radio, the DCR 1000, priced at £2700. We were told by a spokesman that it's meant for system assessment purposes only, and isn't on offer to the general public; the chip-set inside will be obsolete and unserviceable by 1998. Less esoteric DAB car radios will become available 1998 at earliest, Grundig UK said.

Philips co-operated closely with the European Union Eureka 147 project that developed Digital Audio Broadcasting. So we dutifully contacted them about the availability of DAB radios and chips. Their consumer division told us that DAB radios were not currently available from Philips, and there was some confusion as to when they would go into production.

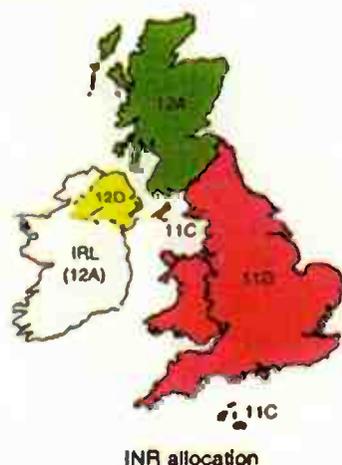
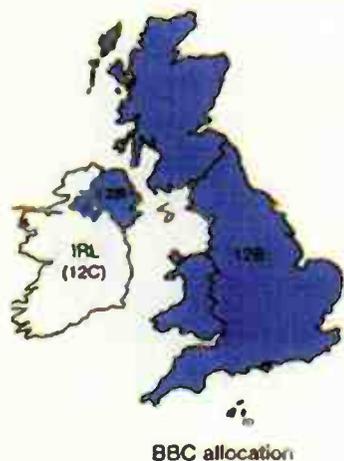
So it would seem that while the BBC are proud to announce their early entry into DAB, pointing to an unrivalled record in "developing broadcast technology", down at ground level the picture looks less rosy. DAB radios are unlikely to come off the production line for a few years yet, and when they do, will people rush to buy?

One observer, who has good inside knowledge of DAB from its European heartland, told us he thought the public will see little benefit against VHF/FM. Grundig, quoting consumer research carried out in Germany, confirm this view, saying 96% of people questioned

FREQUENCY ALLOCATIONS FOR DAB START UP SERVICES



Band III spectrum required = 12.5 MHz (start phase)
ie 7 x 1.55 MHz blocks + guard bands (-200 kHz)



to Britain. Called Digital Audio Broadcasting (DAB) it will, by March 1998, be broadcast from 27 transmitters the BBC aims to have installed, reaching 66% of the population. The Beeb has been quick to get into DAB, commencing transmission

Transmissions must start before anyone will have the confidence to actually build and offer suitable receivers to the public. However, it looks as if affordable receivers won't be available for some time. They're necessarily very complex, requiring a special chip-set to handle all

looked forward to interference-free reception, especially in the car, but were otherwise indifferent to the benefits of DAB.

Potential reluctance to trade up to DAB threatens the BBC's hopes that 40% of households will be receiving by 2006. An ambitious target like this means around six million sets have to be sold over the next ten years.

DAB is meant to provide consistent reception quality and eliminate the need to re-tune a set. One transmission delivers an 'ensemble' of around six programmes. So, having locked on (a comparatively simple process because there are few transmission frequencies), the user will simply select a programme. Each transmission will carry information about the programmes in other blocks, so re-tuning is automatic. If you want to move from, say, Radio 3 to Classic FM, the radio knows it must jump from block 12B at 225MHz to block 11C at 220MHz. The switch should be instantaneous and imperceptible. This, however, will appear no different to the way a conventional VHF/FM radio with pre-set tuning behaves, so there's no extra convenience.

DAB transmitters within range of each other can operate at the same frequency without mutual interference occurring. This means car drivers will not need to re-tune their sets as they move out of one transmitter's service area and into another's. Home users will also find 'ghosting' (caused by distant transmitters at frequencies close to a local signal) is no longer a problem. But as modern synthesiser auto-tune systems select the most powerful signal anyway, which is the nearest, only drivers will notice much difference.

One benefit of the absence of mutual interference between transmitters is that an area can be blanketed with transmissions, improving consistency of reception quality. So DAB will, when enough transmitters

have been installed, become more evenly available than current VHF/FM. For example, London will be served by transmitters at all points of the compass, giving better, more consistent coverage than is possible at present.

By transmitting at frequencies higher than VHF/FM, in slots now vacant since 405 line TV broadcasts ceased, aerials can be made shorter as well. DAB sets will have stub aerials, we are told. Sounds great, but not if sets must also receive VHF/FM, as the BBC suggest in one of their overviews, since this will



keep aerial size much as at present. To be compact and portable, sets for home and car need to be DAB-only.

Asked why DAB aerials will be so small when old outdoor TV aerials operating at this frequency were much larger, the BBC admitted it's because of the higher field strength provided by a larger number of transmitters. This allows DAB aerials to be low efficiency quarter-wave stubs. And while the higher frequency will actually make signal screening by buildings worse, not better, an absence of multipath and proliferation of transmitters should combat this potential weakness.

DAB excites broadcasters, that's for sure. It has a myriad data channels that can carry, in addition to the programmes themselves, information such as station identification (Radio 1, 2, music playing time, etc), set control

(where to find other programmes/transmissions), descrambling data, and even television.

Trouble is, any broadcast system, including satellite and telephone services, can do this. If DAB is viewed as no more than a competitive alternative, albeit blessed by public funding of its nation-wide transmission system, then it's difficult to find distinguishing features or strengths.

Portables especially will not suffer hiss, but it's disappointing to see simplistic, dated views about 'CD sound quality' popping up in BBC literature as a sales point. The world is already starting to move on from old 1970s' digital coding systems, of which CD is an example. Yet DAB sound quality will be barely comparable. The music recording business and others in audio accept that more sophisticated coding systems are needed, up to 24-bit at 96kHz sampling rate, for good audio

quality. But DAB mangles sound quality more than CD, using digital data removal schemes, as well as reduced data rates for mono, talk programmes and suchlike. An experienced BBC radio producer told us confidentially that in-house listening tests showed sound quality was dubious at times. So even the Beeb's own engineers are unhappy about this. "Trouble is", he moaned, "management think that anything digital is perfect".

Since DAB has been accepted world-wide (notable exceptions being America and Japan), and since Europe will have broad coverage by the year 2000, DAB is already established as the radio system of tomorrow. So Britain and the Beeb have no option to adopt it. But whether people will rush to the shops to buy receivers is another matter altogether. It's benefits are not very convincing ●



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ortofon 01753-889949

Command PERFORMANCE

Eric Braithwaite, fan of the old black stuff, is more than happy to track the progress of Roksan's Xerxes X turntable.



Watching Rhodes on the telly and the shenanigans that went into creating the de Beers diamond cartel is probably the best argument for giving up vinyl you could come across. Dropping a diamond into a groove cut into plastic suddenly looks very non-PC. On the other hand, Roksan's new Xerxes X turntable is one of the best reasons for sticking with the old LP I've come across for a long time.

Digital has made morons of us all. Plug the CD player in, press Play, sit back. All that's left for itchy fingers to do is crumple up the packaging. Where's the satisfaction in that? Vinyl users are really closet model makers. Addicts all, their noses twitch at the approach of a 12in. square of Clarifoil the way an Airfix kit builder's does at the first sweet whiff of an open tube of glue.

MICHELL GYRODEC AND QC POWER SUPPLY



A SYMBOL OF PRECISION



"THE MOST DESIRABLE DECK BELOW £1500"
Ken Kessler - Hi-Fi News & Record Review August '94

Michell Engineering, 2 Theobald Street, Borehamwood, Herts WD6 4SE
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undercover investigations into the Mystery
of the Lost Chord. He subsequently solved
the case by utilizing a pair of ORTOFON
SPK100 speaker cables.*

SPK100

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Not that the Xerxes X needs glueing together, or anywhere near as much construction work as a model of the Mary Rose. If it's bought with Roksan's own Tabriz, the deck is set up for you. But if you want to employ an arm like the SME 309, there are five socket-headed bolts to twiddle to set the suspension straight. Just enough to exercise the tendons in the fingers, to make you feel you've participated in your purchase instead of simply buying it, to put you in touch with your paleolithic tool-making ancestors again. (Excuse me while I have a quick word with my Jungian analyst.) And if the deck is dressed in black, the 309 has an air of contemporary low-slung bomber about it that makes it look downright mean and purposeful.

Like a stealth bomber on a radar screen, what's so good about this turntable is the fact that it doesn't appear to be there. What you hear (with perhaps one exception we'll come to later) is what's on the vinyl. What you don't hear is just as important. Like just a handful of recent new turntables, all the old banes of turntable-listening have been banished.

The Xerxes X (with the arm towing the excellent Ortofon MC 25FL) has excellent pitch stability for a start, aided and abetted no doubt by a new Swiss motor and separate electronic speed control with outboard power supply. Provided the grooves are in good condition (I unwrapped a mint copy of Monteverdi's Orfeo on Archiv to be sure) the underlying silence is almost as silky and midnight-black as the exceptional Michell Orbe. With a bearing manufactured to such tight tolerances it takes ten minutes for the inner platter to sink down to its proper level, there is no discernible rumble, either.

Mechanical integrity like this brings sonic integrity along with it. Rhythmically, it sneaks under the radar screen and delivers straight into the command centres that control the foot-tapping and singing-along ganglia. It couldn't be faulted, whether it was the part-electronic commotion of Andy Shepherd's In Co-motion band, the

scherzo from Schubert's 'Great' C Major symphony or the a cappella singing of Ladysmith Black Mambazo. To pick just a single example, it gave Beethoven's Spring sonata just that precisely-judged fluidity and perfection of tempo that makes the CRD collection by David Wilde and Erich Gruenberg with his Stradivarius such a delight.

If a turntable is to keep perfect time, then it's drumming that always gives the game away. Listening to the tips in Chabrier's Espana, it was noticeable that the Xerxes delivers a very tight, well-controlled bass. Its down-to-the-floor gravity had me gravitating swiftly to Little Feat's 'Sailin' Shoes', recorded in the days when there were real, live



drummers. That's important because the Roksan is a dab hand at instant response to dynamic changes, and proper drumming doesn't half show it up. The dual-damped plinth system, adapted from Roksan's flagship TMS Signature, is obviously eliminating resonances very effectively. Mind you, that album was also recorded in the days when vocal mics were not of the best, and the Roksan turned out to be analytical enough not to disguise the fact.

The Xerxes X must be one of the best three-dimensional turntables at the price. A quick spin of a classic EMI SXL, the Gwydion Brooke Mozart Bassoon Concerto, found a vividly laid-out orchestral image, with the bassoon perfectly placed and scaled within the semi-circle of strings and brass. Maybe the Michell Orbe has somewhat better depth, but the Xerxes was nonetheless very impressive in this aspect as well.

Only two minor reservations, which the overall top-quality performance of Roksan's new turntable makes nigh on irrelevant. At times, the upper strings in original-instrument bands like the OAE (Schubert) or the English Baroque Soloists (Orfeo) sounded just a touch wiry. Against that was the splendid purity and accuracy of tone - especially in counter-tenor and sopranos - and timbre everywhere else. The second is that my Gyro, fitted temporarily with the same arm and cartridge, was a smidgin superior in releasing the hall ambience.

Thoroughly excellent in all respects. That said, the Xerxes X will disappoint old-fashioned vinyl lovers for the very reason it should be top of the list for anyone looking for a £1600 turntable. Its very dry, sharp clarity, free from artificial bloom - especially in the bass - brings every LP closer to the master tape. (For which, too many stick-in-the-muds will read 'CD'.) So be it. But if you want seriously to reproduce treasured LPs at their very best, the Xerxes X is a definite 'best buy' at the price. If turntables get no better than this or the current run of 'super decks', and the best over £1000 represent better value for their price than ever before, the record companies will be flooding the world with black plastic again. Making de Beers' profits safe for a while yet ●

Roksan Xerxes X (motor unit) £1295
DSU power supply £150
XPS 3.5 speed control (33 and 45) £170

Roksan
Stonehill,
Huntingdon,
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Tel: 01480 433777

WORLD VERDICT 
 An undoubted bargain, and class-leader in all areas with a precise, confident and well-balanced sound.

Measured Performance
 see p103

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do it. The Mirage M1000 is a perfect case in point. This fully symmetrical, three-way Bipolar speaker has earned the acclaim and awards of audiophiles around the world. Its dual 8" subwoofers in individual chambers generate amazingly accurate bass down to 20Hz while proprietary tweeter and midrange designs ensure minimal distortion and optimal dispersion.

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"Since there aren't any faults that we can hear, the standard in loudspeaker design may well be at hand... the benchmark of modern engineering."

— THE INNER EAR REPORT

channels, subwoofers and satellite surrounds. No matter where you are in the room, with Mirage Bipolar you're utterly immersed in the most spacious, three-dimensional music and sound effects imaginable.

So you can put off purchasing until the next millennium, in hopes that the imitators will eventually catch up. Or you can learn to Mirage

"The holy grail of home theatre"

VH MAGAZINE

THE EAR REPORT

La Dolce Vita

To build better loudspeakers, you must first build better loudspeaker cabinets. So why do most manufacturers use MDF for their cabinets? The answer, in case you didn't know, is that MDF is cheap. But unfortunately, as acoustic materials go, it's also rather mediocre.

At UKD we do things differently. Every model in our Opera range is made by our own craftsmen from acoustically inert, beautiful hardwood. Take a look at two of our latest models, Duetto and Seconda. Compact two-way designs with one-inch thick solid mahogany* cabinets, their construction is as dense and resonance-free as you can get. That is the *right way* to build cabinets, and the *only way* to allow quality drive units to perform at their best.

But Opera loudspeakers are not just a pretty face. In the design of each model, sound basic principles are applied to top quality materials to give fine acoustic results. So as well as solid bass and excellent imaging, both Duetto and Seconda have all the grace and refinement you would expect from thoroughbred Italian loudspeakers.

You might expect to see a hefty price tag on this kind of luxury, but you'd be wrong. In fact, for the same price as an ordinary pair of loudspeakers, Opera give you something rare in the world of quality hi-fi: a bargain. But best of all, you get a real piece of *La Dolce Vita*.



OPERA DUETTO
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OPERA SECONDA
£595 the pair

*from sustainable sources, naturally

For more information on the Opera range of solid hardwood loudspeakers please contact:

UKD

23 RICHINGS WAY, IVER, SL0 9DA, BUCKS. ENGLAND TEL: 01753-652669 FAX: 01753-654531

GREAT S-PECTATIONS

Looking to join the sub-£200 Dolby S club is Kenwood's KX-5080S. Now Kenwood puts it through the membership test.

Just bear in mind that there are some trade-offs and this Kenwood starts to look like good value at £200. It's got Dolby S, which not only eliminates hiss completely but also prevents overload by compressing over-loud signals on recording before expanding them on replay to restore dynamic range. Because this process prevents the head overloading as well, manufacturers can use an inexpensive head. So Kenwood do.

That's the main trade-off. And the results are a recording level that can't be cranked past 0VU and, with ferric tape, less than startling sound quality. Chromes and metals, on the other hand, give the KX-5080S a chance to shine.

Joining Dolby S on the noise reduction roll call were Dolby B for prerecorded tapes and Dolby C. In an attempt to make the deck totally user-friendly, Kenwood fit a tape tuning system that retains its setting when the door is opened. It was slow and, like most, a bit approximate in tune accuracy. Ferrics ended up sounding bright, whilst chromes were dulled by treble roll-off. Metals, though, tuned flat, probably because the deck is factory adjusted to get the best results from this formulation.

All listening tests, except those with prerecorded cassettes, were carried out with Dolby S on. Recording levels were kept to 0VU on peaks to avoid overload.

As expected, TDK MA metal tape sounded very balanced tonally

after being tuned in and there was no sign of hiss either. Hard guitar transients cut out nicely, leading edges blessed with goodly amounts of incision - a sure sign of freedom from high frequency saturation. Down at the other end of the scale, bass lines came through without wallowing or slurring. Bleak, sustained piano notes at the start of Tori Amos' 'Beauty Queen' sounded perfectly stable, and Chopin's Opus 48 No 1, from the pitch steadiness of piano through to the reproduction of the crescendo, also failed to trip the KX-5080S up.

Chrome tape (TDK SA) gave a warm sound, but otherwise the Kenwood was smooth and even, delightfully devoid of both hiss and hum. Bass lines and brass from Gabrielle's latest CD were close to the original; I heard some coarseness, probably from flutter and mild treble saturation, but most people would be happy enough with the performance.

Ferric tapes turned out to be the least impressive of the three formulations, generally sounding rough and 'dirty', although basically correct in balance. I suspect Dolby S was working overtime and the strain showed. Where most S decks deliver great results from cheap ferrics, this one tunes badly,

saturates heavily and is none too wonderful on the ears.

The good strong beat, soaring horns and tight timing that James Brown demands showed the KX-5080S could certainly cut it with prerecorded tapes. It came over as smooth and accurate in its rendition, from Chopin Nocturnes through to the Waterboys' Dream Harder, where psychedelic guitar drove out of the 'speakers cleanly. Tidy bass lines, satisfactorily maintained treble with Dolby B engaged (due to correct head azimuth) plus good speed stability were enough to keep the Kenwood out of trouble.

The KX-5080S offers a good blend of useful facilities, without becoming gadget-laden and impenetrable. It's very capable with prerecordeds, sounds fine with chromes and metals, but can be a little rough with ferrics. As budget Dolby S decks go, this one's a goodie

Kenwood KX-5080S £199.95

Trio Kenwood
Dwight Road,
Watford,
Herts. WD1 8EB
Tel: 01923 816444



WORLDVERDICT 
Stable transport gives fine results with metals and chromes. Ferrics sound rather rough though.

Measured Performance
see p103

Five Stars

Does the best price always mean the best deal?

advertisement

“I thought I had this buying hi-fi business sorted out. I bought all the hi-fi magazines and read them thoroughly, because I reckoned their experts knew exactly what they were talking about - at least a lot more than I did! It was reassuring to see the same product names cropping up regularly and I figured the writers' experience and guidance would steer me straight to the system of my dreams. The trouble is I've ended up more confused than when I started.”



One reviewer said a product I fancied was absolutely brilliant but another said it was nothing special at all. How can that be? Surely one CD player is pretty much the same as another? And how can a loudspeaker that's one magazine's top recommendation not get so much as a mention in any of the others? And then there was the amplifier that was the best in the test six months ago, yet now I never see it mentioned. I don't mind admitting it, I'm completely lost.”

Plan B — I'm going for a deal

“So, I've decided to adopt plan B. I'm sure there can't be any really dramatic differences between all this gear and it's all bound to work together properly, so I'm going to check the price lists and the adverts and shop around for the best deal. I know getting the right hi-fi is important — hey, I'm as mad about music as anyone — but if I can get close to the mark and save a few quid, I'm sure I'll end up with a good system and be happy. I know there are specialist shops out there that do demonstrations and reckon they've got all the solutions but, to be honest, I'm a bit scared of going to one. I'd really welcome some advice and guidance but I don't know all the technical jargon and I'd feel daft sitting there trying to “hear the differences” if I couldn't. Anyway, a friend told me that these shops only sell the really expensive gear and that they're not interested if you don't have loads of money to spend.”

And so another hi-fi buyer starts his journey down the road to dissatisfaction, endless upgrades and a permanent overdraft.

There is only one way to buy a hi-fi system that will prove satisfying, reliable and deliver true value for money, and that's through a specialist hi-fi dealer. Let's face it, you wouldn't think about buying a car if you couldn't take it for a test drive. You wouldn't buy a house solely on the strength of seeing the estate agent's details and a photograph. Even if you're spending far less, say buying a jacket or a pair of shoes, you want to try them on to make sure they fit you.

Buying a hi-fi system is no different. It doesn't matter what the specifications say or what the “experts” think: if it doesn't measure up to what you want from a system, then it's not the right choice. Knowing that you've bought a room full of five-star favourites or best-buys is no consolation when you can't bear to listen to them for more than five minutes. Even that ten per cent discount on the price won't make them sound any better.

Buying or being sold to?

Mind you, most of us are easily suckered when it comes to buying hi-fi. Given the choice of venturing into the unknown territory of a specialist dealer's shop and exerting some influence over what we buy, or taking what looks like the easy route — having adverts and magazine reviews push us along a path sweetened with discounts and special offers — we opt for the latter. We don't buy a system, we allow ourselves to be sold one. We side-line our own ideas about quality and personal satisfaction and buy someone else's opinion of what's good for us and good value for our money.

Take control!

Now there's a group of long-established, independent specialist dealers who are totally committed to putting the customer back in the driving seat. They're encouraging the buyer to take control ... with a little help and guidance provided where required. They know how difficult it can be to establish the true quality and

For Value

Ask the UK's top twenty specialist hi-fi dealers.



worth of hi-fi and home cinema systems.

They know that without experiencing the performance of the systems they offer, you can't possibly assess the value of them. That's why their idea of "selling" is to play the systems for you and allow you to be the judge.

Listening to your choice of music in a peaceful, well organised demonstration room, you may be surprised and, almost certainly, relieved to discover how easy it is to hear the differences between components and between systems. With the dealer's help and advice you will be able to make a clear and informed decision about what to buy. It comes down to trusting your own judgement rather than the opinion of a reviewer you've never met ... and who won't refund your money if you're not satisfied or be at the end of a phone to sort out any problems you might encounter.

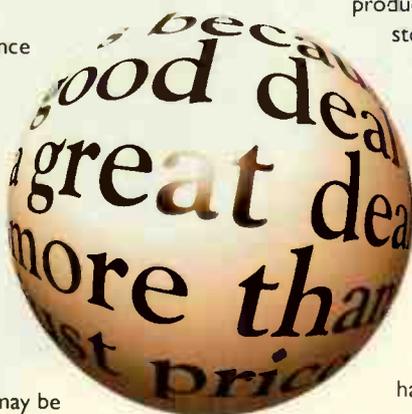
The story doesn't end there. These shops won't abandon you once you've put your hand into your pocket. They won't

leave you to set up the system you've selected as best you can. They'll install it in your home, make sure it sounds great, and make sure that you're entirely happy with the way it works.

Why bother?

There is, of course, one question that hasn't been answered: why should you and these dealers go to all this trouble? Well, from your point of view maybe it's because a good deal is about a great deal more than just price. Unless you've got money to burn, you'll be living with your new system for years — years during which most of those five star products will probably stop shining quite so brightly.

As far as the dealers are concerned, maybe they believe that taking care of their customers properly is a nicer way of doing business than just handing over boxes.



Listed on the right of this page are the best hi-fi shops in the country. They all have lots of stars. You'll find them on the shop floor: they're the people waiting to guide customers towards hi-fi for which the appeal won't fizzle out the next time you buy a hi-fi magazine.

Test results

value for money
service
facilities
verdict



World Radio History

THE 20 BEST HI-FI DEALERS IN THE UK

LONDON

N1
Grahams Hi-Fi
190a New North
Road
0171 226 5500

SW11

Oranges & Lemons
61/63 Webbs Road
Battersea
0171 924 2040

W4

Martin-Kleiser Ltd
108 Chiswick High
Road
0181 400 5555

SOUTH

Ashford, Kent
Soundcraft Hi-Fi
40 High Street
01233 624441

Chelmsford

Rayleigh Hi-Fi
216 Moulsham Street
01245 265245

East Grinstead

Audio Designs
26 High Street
01342 314569

Kingston-upon-Thames

Infidelity
9 High Street
Hampton Wick
0181 943 3530

Rayleigh, Essex

Rayleigh Hi-Fi
44a High Street
01268 779762

Southend-on-Sea

Rayleigh Hi-Fi
132/4 London Road
01702 435255

Uxbridge

Uxbridge Audio
278 High Street
01895 465444

MIDLANDS

Banbury
Overture
3 Church Lane
01295 272158

Birmingham

Sound Academy
152a High Street
Bloxwich
01922 493499

Leicester

Listen Inn
6 Hotel Street
0116 262 3754

Northampton

Listen Inn
32 Gold Street
01604 37871

Shrewsbury

Creative Audio
9 Dogpole
01743 241924

NORTH

Cheadle (Stockport)
Audio Counsel
14 Stockport Road
0161 428 7887

Oldham

Audio Counsel
12/14 Shaw Road
0161 633 2602

Sheffield

Moorgate Acoustics
184 Fitzwilliam St
0114 275 6048

SCOTLAND

Edinburgh
Russ Andrews Hi-Fi
34 Northumberland
Street
0131 557 1672

Glasgow

Stereo Stereo
260 St. Vincent Street
0141 248 4079

3rd Time Lucky



Dominic Todd samples Technics' new, specially tuned SUA-700MK3 integrated amplifier. Now in MK3 form, will Technics finally get lucky?

What is it that makes British ears so special? Do we hear higher treble than bats, or lower bass than elephants? Perhaps not. But there must be something that sets us as a nation apart aurally, something that has Japanese manufacturers racing to produce hi-fi tuned to British ears. So Technics find themselves the latest in a growing line to come up with a Brit amp in the shape of their new SUA-700MK3.

Technics have combined some special ingredients in the 700MK3's mix, hoping to produce a tasty sound. There's an anti-vibration base plate and R-core transformer, carried over from the successful MK2 version. There are also the curious Master Series reservoir capacitors which feature a unique Bamboo dielectric. This back-to-nature approach, say Technics, gives the SUA-700MK3 a more life-like sound. Traditional Technics fans haven't

been forgotten though. Unlike most other Japanese 'Audiophile' amps, the 700MK3 is far from minimalist. Remote control, multi-speaker switching, tone controls and (increasingly rare) a phono stage are all standard fare. Siting a pair of Eltax Symphony 6 loudspeakers at the Technics' outputs, I sat back to face the music.

Robert Miles on vinyl swiftly showed the phono stage to be adequate but not as good as competing NAD or Rotel

devices. The sound seemed veiled and lacked detail, especially in the treble. Having said that, the overall balance was smooth and unfatiguing, with a satisfactorily seamless integration across the spectrum. The hollow heart beat-style bass lines of this album were also

lack of definition and presence that afflicted key instruments like guitar, drums and percussion. I was left feeling the Technics was sacrificing vitality and detail retrieval in order to sound as smooth and unobtrusive as possible.

With Classical music the 700MK3 sounded slightly more at home, although its sonic footprint was still obviously imposed upon the

deep and generally well controlled bass and fine staging. But it fails to sing because musically it plays safe. The Technics doesn't really have what it takes to be a front runner in its class, especially when you consider the opposition. Amplifiers from NAD, Rotel, Arcam, Sony and Pioneer all offer greater insight into music. The SUA-700MK3 fails to communicate those vital and delicate nuances that make you actually listen to the music rather than just being aware of it.

Used in a shrill system the Technics might just work. And if you really need remote control and



tight enough to convey a good sense of timing. Although the soundstage had reasonable depth, that reticent treble prevented it being as spacious and expansive as it could have been.

Changing pace with Peter Gabriel's 'Mercy Street' found the 700MK3 showing similar strengths and weaknesses. Vocals, for example, had fine projection but weren't especially colourful or vivid. Despite Technic's claims, I found vocals rather grey and unnatural, in the manner of Japanese amplifiers of old. Treble detail was again blurred, reducing the soundstage's height. Bass, on the other hand, was deep and well sustained for an amplifier of this price, although some looseness made its presence felt. While this trait might be no bad thing with smaller, bass light 'speakers, it became annoying with larger floorstanders.

Looking to test the SUA-700MK3's handling of female vocals, I pressed Sheryl Crow's Tuesday Night Music Club album into service. Unfortunately, the Technics made Crow live up to her name. Vocals were boxy and shut-in at normal levels; upping the volume in search of a more spacious sound only hardened the music and emphasised sibilance. Part of the problem was the

sound. Violin strings on a Schubert quartet seemed to have been glossed over and there was some harshness in the upper midrange too. But this rarely detracted from what was otherwise a soothing and generally well portrayed performance. The difficult tests of instrumental separation and timbre were also passed. As far as scale and impact were concerned, the Technics had little problem conveying the full weight of larger orchestral pieces, no doubt due to its ample power output of 66 watts.

Finally, I returned to vinyl and Tom Wait's 'Strange Weather'. The Technics had a fair stab at creating the continental atmosphere of the piece but couldn't quite make it. Sax didn't breathe and lift the whole track as it should, sounding muted and constrained instead. Waits' clearly imaged vocals were suitably guttural though. But once again, finer detail in both the vocals and backing were subdued in favour of warmth.

The SUA-700MK3 comes up trumps in certain areas - it has good timing,

all the trappings then it could well be one of your first ports of call. But those after an amplifier to breathe new life into their music collection would be better off looking elsewhere.

Technics SUA-700MK3 £249.95

**Technics
Willoughby Road,
Bracknell,
Berks. RG12 4PF
Tel: 01344 862444**

WORLD VERDICT

A smooth, unassuming sound misses out on the subtlety that brings music to life.

**Measured Performance
see p103**

Tower of

P O W E R



**In his hunt for extended bass
from a diminutive loudspeaker,
Jon Marks lends an ear to
TDL's new T-Line 2.**

How can I get deep bass without having to buy a loudspeaker the size of a fridge?' is probably the one hi-fi question asked more often than all others. Unfortunately, the laws of physics dictate that big bass means big box. However, TDL, with a long history of transmission line loudspeaker design behind them, are attempting to bend the bass rules with the new T-Line 2.

Volume cranked in anticipation, I sat back as Grace Jones hurtled out of the T-Line 2s, propelled by the driving Pump Pop of Slave To The Rhythm. Hooked up to our Audiolab and Pink Triangle reference system, the mid/bass drivers were certainly having to pay their way, slamming back and forth, tracking the drum machine that gives this song its scale. Percussion was crisp and fast, well audible even alongside the musical explosions of the rest of the song. The T-Line 2s almost had me bouncing around the listening room to this song's tempestuous power, but not quite. They didn't have enough punch or control to their lower bass to catch the 'I'm cooler and sharper than a carefully sharpened ice cube' feeling of this number.

While soundstaging was rather compressed on this album's title track, I was more impressed by the spread of sound on offer from 'The Crossing (oooh the action...)' Percussion samples studded the soundstage, helping to increase stage width. Even with this relatively spartan track though, there still wasn't a great deal of depth to the sound. The T-Line 2s' strengths lay more with detailing and tonal colour. Wood blocks and soft-struck cymbals, for example, both displayed their characteristic resonances as they died away slowly.

Purple 26in. flares at the ready, I stepped back 30 years to savour Carlos Santana's eponymous album. Immediately obvious on this atmospheric recording were dynamics and stage width. Santana's guitar acrobatics were certainly not being

squashed coming through the TDLs, thanks to a powerful midrange. Percussion shared the same whip-crack leading edges. Lower bass was the one area to which this dynamic speed didn't extend. Instead, the T-Lines tended to put a brake on the proceedings here. Bass guitar and Hammond were both slurred and slowed, preventing the full

"The T-Line 2s' strengths lay more with detailing and tonal colour. Wood blocks and soft-struck cymbals, for example, both displayed their characteristic resonances as they died away slowly."

rhythm of the song pouring through. It was up to the rest of the frequency range to carry the message of this album's extreme funkiness.

The diminutive transmission lines managed to redeem themselves to some extent on the more relaxed strains of 'Evil Ways'. The manner in which tonal colour and separation were dealt with on this song had me raising an eyebrow, Roger Moore style. The vocals that work together on this song each had their own completely individual signatures. The TDLs impressed by steadfastly refusing to blur together the vocals, giving this song the vocal power it needs. However, I was left feeling Carlos wasn't quite able to shake off the shackles of a sluggish bass to achieve his full groove potential.

With the phrase 'tonal colour' uppermost in my mind, I decided to find out how the T-Lines would handle one of my favourite CDs, Magnificat's The Golden Age, Volume I. The TDLs' tonal clarity on the individual voices making up the choir made for an easily intelligible performance, proving they were more than adept at following the musical flow.

Joining Magnificat on the list of creditable performances courtesy of these 'speakers was Wagner's Traume

for violin and orchestra. Violin's open, woody character showed that detail was one of the T-Lines' fortes regardless of genre. More proof came in the form of numerous background clicks and pops as musicians fiddled with their instruments and moved around as their circulation slowed on hard seating. While the representation of violins might have put a smile on Wagner's face, he would have been less happy with the TDLs' version of cellos. Instead of being crisply defined and powerful, these slurred together into an amorphous whole, diminishing the scale of the piece. Brahms would have had no problems with the way his violin sonata No1, Op78 was handled though, the TDLs toeing the 'Vivace ma non troppo' line nicely.

The T-Line 2s are a bit of a mixed 'speaker bag. To their credit, they are capable of a tonal resolution and detail that works a treat with the upper registers. They're also sufficiently dynamic to reproduce music with a healthy dose of rhythmic pizzaz. Where they lose out is in bass quality, which at the lower end fails to keep up with the speed of the midrange. There was plenty of bass weight though, and for this the TDLs are likely to find favour with listeners who demand bottom end power.

TDL T-Line 2 £549.95

**TDL Electronics
Chiltern House,
Knave's Beach Business Centre,
High Wycombe,
Bucks. HP10 9QR
Tel: 01628 850111**

WORLD VERDICT

Midrange and treble have good tonal colour, detail and speed. Bass is slow and blurred.

**Measured Performance
see p103**

review

Close Encounters



Looking like they were styled by the team that put pointy ears on Vulcans, Blue Room's Minipods beam down to meet Jon Marks.

Disguised as something from another planet, the Minipods are actually a standard Earthling two-way design, with a reflex-loaded 4in. mid/bass driver with a Kevlar cone. Coming in a range of subtle shades from bright red to, er, bright blue via black and white, the enclosures are sculpted from GRP (Glass Reinforced Plastic) to give the unique peapod shape. But style like this also happens to have a useful sonic offshoot. Rounded edges reduce high frequency diffraction, giving cleaner treble and better imaging.

On paper and in the flesh the Minipods give the impression of moving at Warp 9. Would their sound be just as enterprising?

I fired them up gently with the Allegri Quartet and their rendition of Schubert's Quartettsatz in C Minor. Right from the start the little Minipods drew a 'Mmmm... ' of appreciation from me for the clarity of their imaging. Violins were crisply pictured in a broad soundstage, alongside viola and cello. A healthy dose of detail added to the music's realism, clearly revealing the bowing inflexions that help the music to flow along naturally. This meeting with the Minipods was turning out to be an enjoyably foot-tapping affair.

Moving on to Haydn's Quartet in C, Op33 No3, found me again tipping my hat to the dinky imaging of these dinky speakers. However, this piece underlined a couple of facets of the Minipods' character which were a little less attractive.

While clarity was impressive, a forward midrange (which tends to highlight detail) made its presence felt by pushing violins out towards the front of the soundstage. Lower down the spectrum, things also got a little overexuberant in the bass, with cello honking rather obviously at times, losing some of its definition and power in the process. That said, the overall balance made listening to the quartet easy and enjoyable, as the Minipods had sufficient bass extension not to sound thin and wiry.

Malicious grin on face, I thought it was probably time to give those little mid/bass drivers something more substantial to deal with. Jimi Hendrix' Kiss The Sky was duly brought to bear, and 'Voodoo Chile' put into action. The opening phasey guitar cleared those bright blue cabinets easily, pushing out into the room followed by

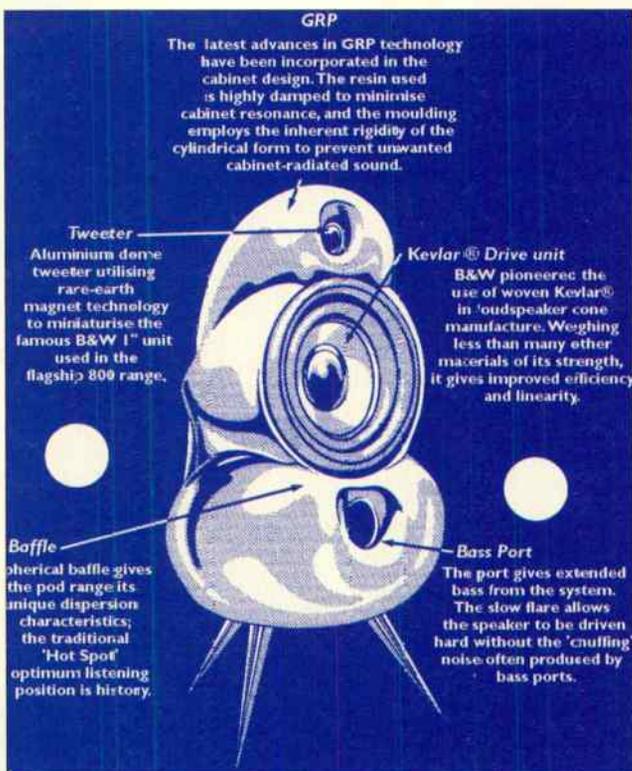
the sizeable spread of sound of the rest of the band. While Hendrix' guitar took up position at the front of the soundstage, the fact that his voice was

get me bouncing to the rhythm on the sofa. Aided and abetted by the Minipods' clarity in the upper ranges, the densely stacked samples were easy to listen in on.

Lubricating my ears with a drop of Midnight Oil and their 'Underwater' CD had the Minipods puffing away merrily through the ports, tracking the bass guitar, the music still engaging and enjoyable in spite of the bass amorphousness. Even Carnival Jump Up with its 'speaker-grilling heavy weight steel bass drums had enough get up and go to make me hanker after a hot day and a long line of floats in Notting Hill at Carnival time.

With their fresh, innovative styling the Minipods would make any house-proud music lover a fine pair of 'speakers. They work well as true, hi-fi loudspeakers, although there's a lot of standard

competition that would see them off sonically. But that's missing the point. If it's a combination of real style and sound you're after, then it's, "Beam me up, Blue Room."



located near the back of the soundstage meant that either Jimi had longer arms than I'd previously thought or the Minipod's midrange emphasis was coming into play again.

The Minipod's diminutive size and corresponding lack of real bass weight was more obvious here than it had been with the Allegri string quartet although, conversely, the bass honk kept a lower profile. A swift upper bass alongside this light overall balance meant the Minipods were a dab

hand with Rock rhythms, Jimi's 'Stepping Stone' bowling along frenetically.

The Chemical Brothers' 'Setting Sun' and 'Buzz Tracks' had those little Kevlar mid/bass drivers flapping gamely back and forth. In spite of their bass-light balance, these heavy tracks still had enough meat on their musical bones to



Blue Room Minipods £399.95

Blue Room
Marlborough Road,
Churchill Ind. Est.,
Lancing,
W. Sussex BN 15 8TR
Tel: 01903 750750

WORLD VERDICT

Arresting style allied to an engaging sound makes the Minipods an attractive offering. Best partnered by smooth amplification and source.

Measured Performance
see p103

VIVA ITALIA

Blending Italian style with British class, Jon Marks finds that Monrio's MJ integrated amplifier and UKD's Duetto loudspeakers make perfect partners.



Let's face it: your average hi-fi component is a box of standard dimensions, palmed a scabbling side of black. Take a look at my self-respecting midlife's rack and you'll find a whole stack of these exciting boxes to feast jaded eyes upon. But Italian manufacturer Monrio is beating a path away from component conformity with its MJ (Minimum Jazz, no less) amplifier, joining Monrio in their stylistic quest is Britain's own UKD. Their post-size Duetto loudspeakers use solid hardwood cabinets where most of the competition rely on MDF or chipboard. But are the Monrio and UKDs more than just a sight for sore eyes?

Bring up the illegal ghost of Jimi Hendrix, I was taken aback by the width and transparency of the soundstage that the MJ/Duetto combination produced. Even with a track like 'Are You Experienced?' whose chaotic mix can easily cause 'speakers problems, the Duettos spread cleanly defined images across a soundstage that stretched from far left to far right. This transparency also let through the subtle nuances that make for natural sounding music. Both the amp and 'speakers were doing particularly well in the 'barely a hint of artifice' stakes. The only area where confusion put in a slight appearance was the lower registers of the bass. Here, that little 4in. mid/bass driver started to sound slightly indistinct compared to the rest of the 'spoke's performance. Nonetheless, bass speed and drive were still impressive as that driver thrashed backward and forwards, pumping enough air out of the rear-firing ports to keep a skin-diving elephant happily underwater.

The MJ and Duetto were a fab find when it came to rhythm too. The whole of Hendrix's 'Kiss The Sky' funked along addictively, getting me



into the feel of the music. The way this pairing communicated the emotion in music never failed to capture and hold my attention. Skunkhour, with their Red Hot Chili Pepper style bass lines, had the Duettos blowing up a gale. That slightly indistinct bass was present again, contrasting with the clarity and solidity of the imaging which held lead and backing vocals clearly in position on the soundstage. Blistering percussion and guitar pyrotechnics failed to throw either the MJ or the UKDs off the musical scent. Part of the reason for this was doubtless the system's smooth, confident midrange and treble. Vocals in particular had power and projected well without ever thrusting towards the front of the soundstage, as happens with some in-your-face loudspeakers. The overall feeling was of unfussed, natural transparency, a transparency that laid different production techniques open to scrutiny. But the MJ/Duetto pair were never ruthless in their revelations, demonstrating insight rather than ear-searing detail brightly lit by excessive treble.

The Monrio and UKDs crossed from one genre to the next without difficulty. Schubert's Six Moments Musicaux, D780, set the stage for a fine show of subtlety and delicacy. All six Moments were demonstrations of gently decaying piano notes, followed clearly by the system as they died away into the recorded acoustic. Equally impressive was the flow of individual notes, the delicate but vital spacing that separates one from the other lending the performance a sense of natural, unmechanical progression. Air-baton in hand, I found myself conducting to the music. This isn't the kind of embarrassing behaviour I normally admit to, but it just goes to show how the system managed to get under the emotional skin of a recording and transmit its message to my ears.

As suspected, that diminutive driver couldn't quite fill in the lower registers

convincingly with Classical music. The result was a light tonal balance. This caused no problems with either violins or pianos, as Brahms' Violin Sonata No 1 in G major Op78 Regenlied confirmed. Being fussy by birth, however, I wouldn't have minded a little extra bass to balance the tonal picture perfectly. Beggars (as we poor hi-fi journalists are) can't be choosers though. Besides, any bass dryness was more than compensated for by the transparency and detail in the violinist's bowing.

As female vocals cause nearly all loudspeakers problems, I felt duty bound to try to trip up the Duettos in this area. I mustered the talents of Tori Amos, Karen Matheson (and her new CD, The Dreaming Sea), Alison Moyet and Oumou Sangare. The result? Just smooth, pure vocals, the 'speakers sailing through this test almost disdainfully. And even as I was listening in to the singing, I couldn't help but notice again the capacious soundstage.

The final test took the form of JDJ - Volume 12, a House compilation packed with drum machine rhythms and synthesiser backdrops. Where the Duettos had seemed rather dry in the bass with Classical music, House found them putting together a storming performance. OK, definition wasn't class-leading, but the quantity of bass from an enclosure of this size was an ear-opener.

Exchanging the Audiolab 8000S for the Monrio proved the MJ's mettle. The

Audiolab's soundstage was narrower and shallower than the Monrio's. Images were also smaller and denser, as though they had been shrunk to fit the soundstage. Musically as well, the Monrio was out ahead, leaving the Audiolab sounding rather lacklustre by comparison. Hooking the Monrio up to Castle's Avons had it sounding slightly less happy though. Here, it was struggling a little, lacking the grunt necessary to get these 'speakers really singing.

All in all, the Italian Monrio and homegrown UKDs left me with a lasting impression of musical capability. For their size, price and finish, the Duettos would make shelling out £395 a very pleasant experience. The Monrio MJ, at its £695 asking price, would also have me happily reaching for my wallet. Synergistic together, impressive partnering other equipment, these are two components well worth clapping ears on.

Monrio MJ £695
UKD Duetto £395

UKD
23 Richings Way,
Iver,
Bucks. SL0 9DA.
Tel: 01753 652669

WORLD VERDICT

MONRIO MJ 
An engaging, musical performance is allied to a sweet overall sound. Doesn't get on quite so well with difficult loudspeaker loads though.

UKD DUETTO 
Solid hardwood cabinet, superb build and a genuinely transparent and musical sound. A bargain at £395.

Measured Performance
see p103

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*Review of PASSION - Martin Colloms
HiFi News April '93 and November '94*

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SAVE OUR
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Jon Marks finds that rejuvenating your record collection with QED's £35 Discsaver makes uncommon sense.

Oh, all ye of little faith, who have forsaken the way of truth and own midi systems, rejoice. Raise your voices in praise also those small in wallet but large in record collection. Your plight goes unnoticed by QED. For they saw a distinct lack of cheap phono stages, and in their wisdom, they did create a little box of RIAA tricks. And its name was Discsaver.

Ahem. Excuse me while I climb down off my soap box. It's not too often a product as cheap as this makes such an impression on me. If you want to get the most from your record collection but don't fancy decimating your savings this Christmas, then QED have the solution: a mere £35 buys you their Discsaver. This is a small black plastic box (containing an NE5532 dual op-amp, 1% metal film resistors and polystyrene caps) that steps up and equalises the signal from your cartridge. And £35 really does buy proper fidelity.

Volume raised at the ready (the Discsaver doesn't have particularly high gain), I bounced through Bob Marley's Exodus album. The QED immediately started making its character clear with a generally relaxed, mellow presentation. 'Natural Mystic', for example, bobbed along with a funky dread pulse, its bass line throbbing throughout. The lower registers weren't absolutely pin-sharp, but had a great deal more power and pungency than the price tag would lead you to expect. The Discsaver also did well not to produce splashy hi-hats as most genuinely cheap electronics do.

Instead, it sounded cleanly controlled, even if it couldn't quite resolve the subtle sheen of a struck cymbal as it decayed.

Without drive and accurate timing, Reggae can easily sink into the mire of bloated, wobbling bass that removes any musicality from the recording. Through the Discsaver, Bob Marley never produced less than 100% pure Reggae rhythms, timing intact and precise. The soundstage stretched wide across the front of the 'speakers (Sextet IIs) and, although it wasn't particularly deep, it gave the images of the band members enough elbow-room for a good dread-shaking.

Enter Georg Solti conducting the LSO in Mahler's Symphony No.1. It was Brownie points for the QED again in the areas of soundstaging, image clarity and musicality. Brass sections and the upper reaches of strings pointed out how broad a tonal palette the Discsaver was working from, both sounding surprisingly realistic. Lagging slightly behind in terms of tonal definition and detail was the bass, where cellos and tympani tended to lose a little of their form and focus as they blurred.

In spite of its drawbacks (and they are very slight at the price), the QED painted a musical, engaging picture. In fact, the natural way music flowed along put to shame many more expensive disc stages. This was, no doubt, partly down to the sophisticated power supply I used - a single PP3 battery, costing £2-£3 from most newsagents.

Stepping forward to give the

Discsaver its sternest test yet was the Dave Brubeck Quartet, with Time Out. It was with this jazzy slice of vinyl that the QED provided undeniable proof of its one weakness - curtailed bass depth. Piano and plucked double bass both fell short on substance and body, sounding rather thin. But given the fact that the Discsaver will often find itself equalising the signal from a small plastic turntable swaying around on top of a midi system, dry bass and a little midrange and treble boost are no bad thing.

Leaving the most permanent impression in my mind was that cohesive, easy musical flow. And while this isn't one of the most detailed or revealing phono stages I've ever heard, it is, without doubt, one of the most entertaining. For just £35, the Discsaver is a bargain.

QED Discsaver £34.99

QED Audio
Ridgeway House,
Ridgeway Close,
Lightwater,
Surrey GU18 5XU
Tel: 01276 451166

WORLD VERDICT

Beguilingly musical presentation, with more than enough detail and power for a mere £35. Won't suit thin sounding systems though.

Measured Performance
see p103

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World Radio History

SHOW-DOWN AT SPAGHETTI JUNCTION

To help you get the sort of sound you want from your system, Noel Keyword reviews seven budget interconnects that add pizzazz without breaking the bank.

APOLLO MIDAS

£14.99/m

The Midas lit vocals quite brightly and pushed them forwards in the soundstage. Midrange could also 'shout' at times, but was clear and explicit all the same.



An unusually sweet and delicate treble possessed sufficient filligree detail to turn in an impressive performance.

Overall, a forward, upfront sound, but very listenable.

CHORD CO CHRYSALIS

£29.99/m

This Chord Co interconnect has a gentle, nicely balanced sound with smooth treble and slightly softened midrange transients. Surprising detail retrieval means this cable is easily able to communicate the



emotion in music. Its cohesive, well integrated sound makes for engaging listening. One of the best at the price for relaxed, long term listening.

APOLLO BLACK VELVET STD

£29.99/m

The Black Velvet's unusually atmospheric sound proved engrossing over the long term. There was great insight into performances, thanks to an uncanny retrieval of low level subtleties. Detailing was good as well.



While treble was definitely soft it was also very well integrated, keeping our Sextets' revealing Tonigen ribbon tweeters in line.

SONIC LINK BONUS

£15.00/m

Although it might look like uncooked wholemeal spaghetti, this is not a cable to dismiss lightly. The presentation is smooth



thanks to a sweet, delicate treble. With a large amount of detail on tap and quite emphatic deep bass, the Sonic Link Bonus is also superbly balanced and delightfully neutral. Very good value for a mere £15/m.

SONIC LINK SILVER PINK

£30 (0.5m)

The sound was obviously bright and forward with a rather hard, clanky treble. Low level detailing was limited, but the cable preserved high frequency transients well, giving strong attack. This Sonic Link may have deep, solid bass but it lacks subtlety.



VAN DEN HUL STORM

£29.99/m

Astonishingly loud and peculiarly megaphonic, the Storm seems to shout at you. The treble is vivid but mechanical and bass well defined. This cable is characterised most strongly by its sheer impact, but it is none too subtle and may be wearing. Heavy Rockers will choose it above others for its powerful dynamics and in-your-face presentation



SILVER TONE EX-STATIC

£35 (0.5m)

Smooth, graceful sounding interconnect with deep bass and attractively sonorous treble. This added up to a delightfully clear, wideband sound.

It only lacks the deep insight and sense of atmosphere preserved by more expensive cables.



THE SYSTEM

This month's interconnects were auditioned between our Pink Triangle Da Capo convertor and Aura CA200 pre-amp, as well as between the CA200 and PA100 power amplifier.

Valve amplification was also employed, with our own KLPI pre and K5881 power amps, to check the effect on the cables' sound of a change in source and load impedances. Heybrook's Sextet II 'speakers were used with Chord Co Rumour 'speaker cable.

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GATHERING MOTION

I read with great interest your article in the August supplement about Motional Feedback. This article was long awaited in my view. I have been an advocate of Motional Feedback for some years now, but have always been unsuccessful in finding out any information about it - countless journeys to libraries have yielded nothing.

The first time I heard Motional Feedback was at my aunt's house about seven years ago. She had a pair of Philips RH544s together with the tuner/pre-amp that partners them. The power amps are inside the speakers, making



Philips' 532 uses an accelerometer on the end of its voice coil former to provide motional feedback.

them active. One cable connects the pre-amp to one speaker, and from that first

speaker a second cable runs to the other speaker in a daisy chain fashion. There is even a switch that allows you to designate the channel left or right.

After a conversation with my uncle about the speakers, I was left with the following information: instead of having a bass unit with two voice coils, there is some sort of accelerometer or transducer mounted on the drive unit's cone. The signal from this is fed into a comparator and then corrected if different from the signal input.

I have also found out that as well as the RH544 there were two larger models in the range. Judging by the astounding bass quality of the 544s, I shudder to think what the larger ones sound like.

**M. Watchman
Dukinfield,
Manchester.**

LETTER OF THE MONTH

CABLE CONCERNS

I am a regular reader of your magazine and a real hi-fi and music addict. I have a number of different systems but am seeking to have one set up in a room dedicated to listening to music.

The system I will be using is a Linn LP12 with Grace G707 arm, Sony X55ES CD player and Aiwa XK009 cassette deck as source. I mainly listen to vinyl and CDs.

I have recently purchased a Musical Fidelity set-up consisting of two monoblock MA65 power amplifiers and a Pre 8 pre-amp. I have also invested in a pair of B&W Matrix 804 loudspeakers and

am very happy with their sound.

My question is a technical one. I have two methods of wiring up my system and would like your views on the pros and cons of each.

Arrangement 1: have the power amplifiers located as near as possible to the speakers and connected to the pre-amplifier with long (10 metre) phono leads. Bi-wire each monoblock to the loudspeakers with, say, Concert 2 cable (0.5 metres).

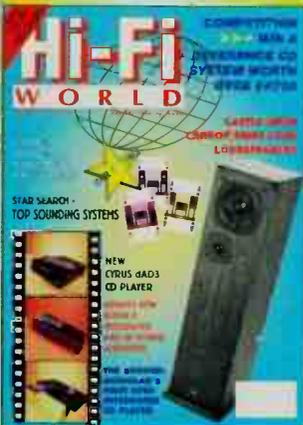
Arrangement 2: have the power amplifiers located near to the pre-amplifier and connected by phono leads



DPA's high-end power amplifiers include the loudspeaker cable in their feedback loop to increase damping factor and improve sound quality.

(1 metre) and then have the loudspeakers bi-wired with Concert 2 speaker cable (10 metres).

Which way is best? A short run of speaker cable or a short run of phono cable?



The writer of the
'Letter of the Month'
wins a free subscription
to Hi-Fi World

Welcome to the Philips Motional Feedback loudspeaker fan club, Mr Watchman. I've managed to pick up a couple of pairs of Philips' MF 'speakers, the 532 and 585 'Black Tulip', trawling through Loot. Like the other models, these 'speakers have an accelerometer attached to the end of the bass unit's voice coil former, which sits under the dust cap.

The output signal of the accelerometer is fed into the power amplifier's input as negative feedback to correct drive unit non-linearities and produce

deeper, cleaner bass than would normally be available from a given size of driver and cabinet.

While the 585s are a small, two-way active model, the three-way 532s (Philips' first MF loudspeaker into production) use a single 20w power amp followed by a passive crossover to feed the midrange and tweeter. The bass driver has its own 40w amplifier.

In terms of sound quality, the 585 is worth a listen if you're not paying more than about £100. Expect to pay more for the 532 though - it stands up

well to modern competition. Bass in particular is good, especially when it comes to control and detail, but I wouldn't expect to peel floorboards off of joists with seismic bass lines. JM

I've never forgotten hearing Motional Feedback in the late 1970s (I believe!) at a Philips press conference in their home town of Eindhoven, Holland. The bass quality was so much better than I had ever heard at that time. Motional Feedback has a lot of potential benefits and we will

continue with our interest in this subject. NK

Newnes Tel: 01865 310366



Find out about the problems that afflict normal loudspeakers with the Audio and Hi-Fi Engineer's Pocketbook.

LETTER OF THE MONTH (CONT.)

I look forward to your ideas with interest as I am sure there must be others with monoblocks that have asked themselves the same question.

Stephen Weigel
Bexley,
Kent.

We asked Rob Watts of DPA
Digital to comment:

Well over a decade ago, I conducted a number of investigations into the sound quality differences of loudspeaker and interconnect cables. I was interested in listening to lots of different cable constructions in order to discover why cables had such a huge impact on sound quality. Virtually every factor is important in the design of cables, and it was necessary to understand what makes cables sound the way they do. Increasing the understanding of the mechanisms behind cable sound allows performance to be improved in unexpected ways and takes the designer down avenues not opened by the traditional technique of trial and error.

One aberration I was particularly interested in was damping factor, or the output impedance of loudspeaker cables. Traditional wisdom has it that as long as you have a damping factor greater than 10, you needn't worry.

I had a prototype amplifier with a low output impedance which enabled me to test this assumption. I did this by adding very high quality resistors so that I could hear the effect of changing damping factor.

The results surprised me; damping factor had a huge effect on sound quality. Damping factors between 10 and 50 degraded pitch definition and rhythm. Increasing cable resistance made the bass softer and less precise with poorer pitch reproduction. What was really interesting though was that even the lowest cable resistance was audible. A 10 milliohm cable changes the music's sense of timing and dynamics. Putting in an additional 10 milliohms slows the tempo down slightly and reduces dynamics and bass tightness. For this reason we use feedback around the loudspeaker cable on our high-end power

amplifiers. This makes for amazing bass tightness and control.

So, from a definition and transparency point of view, it is much better to have a short loudspeaker cable and long interconnects. In terms of length, you can almost hear the effect of cutting one inch off a loudspeaker cable. You can only hear down to feet with interconnect cable.

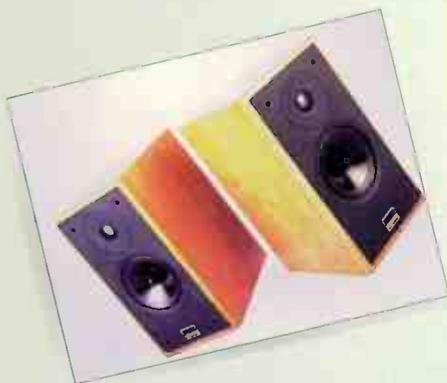
Noel says:

But you need to be aware that a long phono interconnect places a heavier capacitive load on the output driver of the pre-amp. At around 100pF/metre for most cables, according to our measurements, your 10m run will put 1000pF across the output, which represents 10kΩ at 20kHz. This is a relatively high load value so it should present no problem. But users need to be aware of this possibility, which could result in dull treble. For cable, Sonic Link's budget Bonus lead, which has a very low capacitance of 50pF/metre, would be a good bet in terms of value for money. NK

SYSTEM SORT OUT

My main system comprises a Philips CD960 CD player (used as a transport), Musical Fidelity PI70 power amp, QED passive pre-amp, Arcam Black Box 1 and B&W P5 'speakers. I have only recently bought the P5s - before that I was using a pair of Arcam Alpha 2+ 'speakers. The P5s are bi-wired using twisted copper cable about 2mm in diameter, and the Philips CD960 is connected to the Black Box by an Arcam coax cable (blue in colour).

My musical tastes are mainly Pop, FM Rock and easy listening (e.g., Celine Dion, Journey, Foreigner, etc), although I do like the occasional bit of Classical. Having dispensed with the preliminaries, I must confess that I think I've made a big boo boo!



The clarity and lucidity of Epos' ES12 loudspeakers will work well in your system once it's properly balanced.

I find the P5s a little too forward, particularly on vocals, compared to my old Arcams. When I switch back to the Arcams, I'm amazed at how much bass they really have considering that they were only £250 a few years ago and I've just shelled out over £700 for an ex-demo pair of P5s.

I'm prepared to spend about another £500 on new components. If I change the P5s, this gives me a total of about £800 to £900 to be spent on new 'speakers and

components, or £500 if you advise me to keep the P5s.

Colin J. Coles
Southall,
Middlesex.

Although at first it seems sensible to try and compensate for the P5s by re-balancing the rest of the system, I think at the end of the day you'll still have something you're basically unhappy with.

Therefore, with a budget of about £800, here's what I would do. The Black Box 1 is getting a little long in the tooth now. I think you'd get an appreciable improvement in sound quality by upgrading this to match the calibre of the rest of your system. Have a listen to DPA Digital's £300

Little Bit III. This is a discrete CD convertor, built from individual high quality components rather than 'off the shelf' chips. It has a very exciting sound, thoroughly detailed and musical. Use DPA's own recommended digital interconnect; I find that the digital cable recommended or used by the manufacturer of the DAC always works best. This is probably because it's the same cable used during the DAC's design and development stage.

You're now left with around £500 for a good pair of 'speakers. I'd start by auditioning Epos' ES12s, which I think will suit your system especially well. They are very clean and clear, but not too forward and have super bass for their size. Use the ES12s on Epos' dedicated open-frame stands to get the best out of them. This

is where I'd start your auditioning, but as you have found, 'speakers are a very personal choice - you'll need to invest some time having a careful listen. Good luck. DB



Chord Co. Tel: 01722 331674

You'll have one less component to track down thanks to this set of Chord Co. Cobra interconnects.

A CD TO MATCH LP

Our problem is probably the same one many of your readers have - we see, we like, we want, but unfortunately, we can't afford. Our main priorities are sound quality, longevity, and value for money.

Over the years, we have made gradual changes and improvements to our system. Currently it is: LP12 (Cirkused and Trampolined), Ittok LVIII, AT-OC5, Ariston CD 3 and Micromega Micro DAC, Naim 62/HICAP/140, Epos ES11, Sony tuner and Yamaha tape deck.

When we auditioned the Ariston, Jackie preferred its sound to all the others in its price range, but later we found the Micromega DAC improved clarity. Our next priority is to change the CD player.

Bob's primary source of listening pleasure is still the

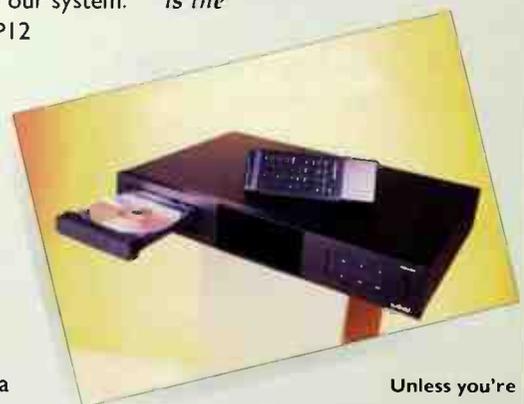
LP12, and he is seeking the same quality of sound from the intended CD upgrade purchase (or he won't let me have one!), so this narrows down the options somewhat.

We intend to spend around £1000 on either a CD transport (retaining the Micromega) or a stand-alone CD player and trade in the DAC. Our combined musical tastes range from Blues and Bob Marley to late '60s and '70s rock. So there you have it in the proverbial nutshell.

Bob and Jackie Walker
Rochester,
Kent.

If you want a £1000 CD player to sound as good as almost £2000-worth of LP front end, it really does narrow down the options - to a choice of none. There are some fine sounding players around under £1000 which do have a musical and enjoyable sound, but they're not going to rival LP.

The best we've come across in the last year or so are the Marantz CD-17 and Audiolab's new 8000CD. The Audiolab is the



Unless you're prepared to spend £2000 to £3000 on a DAC and transport, a one-box player like Audiolab's £1000 8000CD makes a lot of sense.

slightly warmer sounding of the two, with a highly musical sound. Where the Marantz scores is its greater insight and tighter bass though. I'd audition

both in your own set-up, giving yourselves a few days with each to become accustomed to the sound.

The one-box players around at the moment for under £1000 are so good that it's not really worth looking at separate DAC/transport CD systems unless you are prepared to go the whole hog and buy a proper dedicated transport and high quality convertor. If you are, then audition Teac's VRDS T1 transport with Pink's Ordinal DAC or DPA's Enlightenment drive and DAC. DB

go drastically wrong: scale, bass and depth are seriously diminished, making my system sound unconvincing.

I borrowed an 8000P power amp from a dealer. Using my 8000A as a pre-amp, I felt there wasn't significant improvement over the 8000A on its own. And I like the Kans for their fast, punchy sound and would like to keep them, although I will change them, if necessary.

Can you please advise on the following. Would a REL subwoofer give me the low-end detail I seek? Will it integrate with my Linn Kans?

I am a joiner. Would the KLS3 be a better solution as my 'speakers are low efficiency at 82dB? Any other help you can give me to solve this problem will be most appreciated.

**J. M. Willis
Streatham,
London.**

I knew the Kan MkI well, plus the controversy that surrounded it. It had a huge midrange peak in its frequency response and was tonally unbalanced. However, driven by a powerful amplifier and put close to a wall, this 'speaker certainly had punch and presence, plus a dedicated following. Subsequent Kans were more accurate but had less character, for want of a better word.

Recently though, I was taken aback by the Tannoy 631SE, which has tremendous impact; it immediately reminded me of the Kan. This 'speaker has a better magnet than the standard 631 and an upgraded crossover. Tannoy seem to excel with



If you're after a 'speaker with all the Kan's speed and punch as well as a more even tonal quality, try Tannoy's 631SE.

their 'specials', and this one is superb. It has a flat frequency response and should handle Classical music well too. Your Audiolab 8000A will be fine for driving it. At £170, this 'speaker is a real bargain.

The REL subwoofer works below 100Hz, covering only low bass frequencies. It should integrate with the Kan but it won't provide 'detail' as such. Our KLS3 loudspeaker is a different proposition altogether, being relatively large and more costly than the Tannoy. NK

FRONT END FROLICS

My system is a mix of Gaelic front end (LPI 2, Lingo, Ittok, Karma, Karik) and Yankee back end (Audio Research SP-9 MkIII with D-200 and Apogee Centaurus Minors). I find the American amps and 'speakers hard to live without for their wonderful soundstage and presence. The upgradability, robustness and long term service and corporate viability of the Linns (the bits with mechanical parts) is also important to me though.

I am delighted with the sound, but I face the inevitable replacement of the cartridge. I have auditioned the Ekos but cannot hear the advantage over my old LVII. So unless somebody



To balance its £840 price tag, the van den Hul MC 10 has a superbly smooth sound and a higher output than your Linn Karma.

convinces me otherwise, I intend to keep it.

My only slight concern is the barely sufficient volume level I get from vinyl replay. The SP-9 does not have separate MC/MM stages and, given the low output of the Karma (0.16mV), the gain control has to be turned very high to get reasonable levels (I have loaded the pre-amp optimally for the Karma, by the way).

The predictable Linn dealer response is to trash the American carbuncles and buy Klydes, Kairns, Klouts and Kabers, but I don't want to do this. Would the Ortofon Supremes (output - 0.5mV) or other slightly

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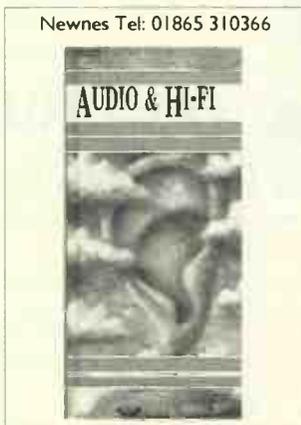
While you're looking for a new CD player, relax to the sounds of some quality vinyl from DCC Compact Classics.

KAN CAN!

System: Audiolab 8000A/Sony 77ES CD player/Linn Kan MkI 'speakers on stands/Goertz MI 'speaker cable/Campaign Audio Design silver interconnects and mains cables/Little Mead Mains Conditioner/Seismic Sink under the amp/standard Sink, 40lb Marble slab, and EXHD Sink under CD player.

I have put the above system together over a period of time and generally I'm pleased with its performance replaying Jazz fusion: Lee Ritenour, Dave Sanborn, Bob James.

My 'speakers deliver music as a large, illusory picture within the soundstage, resulting in a rich, powerful bass. When listening to Orchestral or Opera music though, things



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HI-FI NEWS & RECORD REVIEW



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Jimmy Hughes, Audiophile

"The result was music making without the Hi-Fi intruding."

Peter J Comeaux, HiFi News

"Spirolink I, Spirolink II and Digilink Copper"

HiFi Choice Recommended

"Airoflex, ★★★★★ rating" What HiFi

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Integrated Zero LE £800.00 LSB Linstage £2000.00
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Powerstage PAO £500.00 DAC D to A £2800.00



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higher output MCs solve my problems, or would I be better off with a Klyde and a transformer (if so which one)? I don't think I could live now with MMs, but would appreciate your opinions on this as well.

I know that I should audition the various options, but these days it is difficult to find dealers willing to set up esoteric systems to try cartridges out (certainly the Linn dealers will not). In any case, I am looking for some advice to narrow down the options.

Paul Johnson
Indianapolis,
USA.

It sounds as if the Audio Research pre-amplifier you are using doesn't have quite enough gain for the Linn's notoriously low output signal. You really need to look at alternatives with a more healthy output signal.

There are some superb cartridges around that will work well in your Linn LP12/Ittok and provide a stronger output for your SP-9 MkIII. We got superb results with an Ortofon MC 30 Supreme (0.7mV output) in an LP12 at a show we did, so this should definitely be on your short-list.

Others to try, all with output above 0.7mV, are: Ortofon's £225 MC 25FL which has superb detail thanks to its fine line stylus; the £350 MC 20 Supreme (which is very nearly as good as the MC 30 Supreme but £100 more affordable); and the vdH MC 10. This is the most expensive at £840, but sounds as smooth as silk and sweet as honey.

Another option, although not the most elegant, would be as follows. The Karma is a superb MC, so I certainly wouldn't bin it completely. Only the tip

will be worn, and this can be replaced. Van den Hul will re-tip your Karma with one of their superb styluses for £210. This still leaves you with the problem of not having enough gain in you SP9 though. You'll need a step-up device to raise the signal level.

A traditional step-up transformer is not appropriate because it is designed to step-up an MC's output to drive an MM phono stage, not an MC stage like the one in your SP-9. You need a 1:5 or 1:10 step-up between MC cartridge and MC phono stage. This is going to require a custom design. For around £500 Ben Duncan Research will build you a very professional, high performance solid-state step-up device. Alternatively, Audionote (Tel: 01273 220511) will design a custom, silver-wound step-up transformer for around £300.

Going down the transformer road will cost as much as a new MC cartridge. But with a vdH stylus, your Karma should sound as good as new, and the custom gain stage/transformer opens up your cartridge choice in the future. DB

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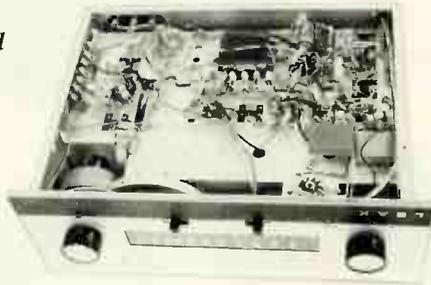
Once you've solved your cartridge problems, enjoy the results with a slice of DCC Compact Classic vinyl.

SHERMAN TANK

I have just bought a Troughline Mk II tuner from Paul Greenfield at Classique Sounds who, like yourselves, extols the virtues of vintage hi-fi.

Being vintage myself and having owned products from Messrs Quad, Leak, Thorens, etc, I decided to indulge myself in some musical nostalgia. It cost me £75, a small price to pay for hours of fun.

I decided before listening to clean and lubricate it - easy enough even for me. Whilst undertaking this task, I was reminded of why I bought a Mk III Troughline way back in '65. It's built like a Sherman tank in



Built like the proverbial tank, Leak's Troughline has stood the test of time extremely well.

comparison to today's offerings.

All done and dusted with 'new' Mullards, I split the signal into my KLPP1/Dynaco II/KLS3s - excellent!

This has spurred me on to greater heights. Question is, who can I trust to fully restore my little treasure? Is the TdP decoder the best unit to plug into the MPX?

Congratulations! You're the first magazine since the days of Percy Wilson (Gramophone) to convince me that a subscription to your pages is 'de rigueur'. I look forward to every new issue, you've hit the spot!! Only one thing - is the Audionote advert some sort of eye test before embarking on one of their kits?

Mr S. Horsburgh
Green Lane,
Coventry.

The best person to carry out Troughline restoration is Graham Tricker of GT Audio. He can be contacted on 01895-833099.

The Tim de Paravicini decoder is one of the best, being valve on the mono (sum) channel, and solid state (1310 IC decoder) in the stereo (difference) channel. It is not now available though, and needed pilot tone phase adjustment during set-up, which is a bit specialised. Graham can help you with a modern 1310 decoder that fits neatly into the Troughline, being designed specifically for this increasingly popular tuner.

The first requirement of any advertisement is that it gets seen. No use spending megadosh if everyone just turns the page. It's interesting how many people complain about the Audionote ad.; it obviously fulfils its primary requirement rather well. Next, they should tape a plastic magnifying glass onto the page. Or should they? We've politely pointed out that no one can read it, to which the reply comes: it's very successful the way it is. The moral is, don't become an optician in Britain. NK

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review

STYLISSIMO

Tall, dark and beautiful, Keswick Audio Research's Italian influenced Torino loudspeakers seduce Dominic Baker.

As most astute audiophiles will have noticed, the shape of hi-fi is a straight-sided box. Cheap to produce and easy to design, this kind of box gives shape to just about every component, including loudspeakers. But Keswick Audio have decided on a rather more adventurous option for their Torino loudspeakers.

perfect balance

The New Meridian 566

A DAC with the performance where it counts. Meridian's twin Phase-Lock Loop yields the lowest jitter whilst our 20 bit DAC offers a new benchmark in clarity and deep fulfilling bass.



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The New Meridian 502

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The Torino's pyramid-shaped cabinet helps to restrict standing waves. The result is lower coloration as well as a smaller baffle, especially at the top where midrange and treble drivers sit. As it's high frequency reflections around these drivers that can confuse imaging, this looks like a neat bit of design.

Keswick Audio Research, founded by ex-Wharfedale engineer Dean Hartley, have been around a couple of years now, carefully assembling a range of high performance loudspeakers. Probably their most complete line-up is the Italia series, comprising two floorstanders, a subwoofer and the obligatory centre channel 'speaker that every manufacturer carries these days.

As the name suggests, the Italia series is elegantly styled - just take a look at the sweeping lines and rich finish on the pair of £899 Torinos we treated our listening room to. They blend a hard wearing, black leather effect finish and user-replaceable wood veneer trim (available in light and dark Cherry as well as Walnut) to create a classy appearance.

Getting to grips technically with the 'speakers, I discovered a two-and-a-half-way design. The Torinos use a 6.5in. doped paper cone bass/midrange driver assisted by a second unit below 800Hz. Dealing with the highs is a 28mm soft dome tweeter. Sited in a free space position around 2ft. from rear and side walls, the 'speakers were driven both by Audiolab's 8000S integrated and Meridian's 502/557 pre/power amplifiers. Source material was provided by our trusty Garrard/SME/Goldring set-up and Audiolab 8000CDM transport and Da Capo convertor.

Briskly plucked acoustic guitar on Jam and Spoon's 12in. 'Right in the Night' had full, three dimensional body to it. Leading edges were sharp, carrying transients right the way through to their peak. Keswick have used a fine sounding fabric dome tweeter that gives a detailed and articulate sound allowing highs to soar naturally upwards without ringing unharmoniously.

Bass had good impact as well, which is sadly about as expressive as it gets on this track. Even though its electronic

'boof-boof' can become a little monotonous, the Torinos impressed with a slamming kick in the lower octaves.

Stone Roses' 'Straight to the Man' had vocals clearly separated in the rather grungy mix while bass strutted its stuff again with the deep, funky rhythms. Treble was also crisp and well defined, resolving the tonal character and form of each cymbal strike accurately enough to produce a convincing display.

With their high quality paper cone midrange driver and fabric dome tweeter, the Torinos have impressive tonal neutrality and colour. These drivers complement each other

"One impression reinforced by Classical pieces was the smoothness and fine sense of proportion these 'speakers possess."

effectively and are as much at home with Locatelli's soaring violins as their Italian links would have you suspect.

One impression reinforced by Classical pieces was the smoothness and fine sense of proportion these 'speakers possess. No one part of the musical spectrum was over-emphasised - bass, midrange and treble were all in perfect balance. That said, treble was a little limited in terms of extension. But where hi-hats weren't as sharp as they can be, lower down there was plenty of power, giving a solid, hard crack to cymbals.

Buzzing with harmonics and overtones, guitars sounded natural and easy on Pink Floyd's 'Fearless'. The similar tonal character and fine integration between midrange and treble drivers fully revealed the timbral shades and sonority of stringed instruments. The Torinos' imaging on this Mobile Fidelity Sound Lab Original Master Recording placed instruments with reassuring solidity across a wide stage.

From the same CD, Meddle, the powerfully swelling undertones of 'Echoes' had the Torinos rumbling and shaking the floorboards with deep bass. On the downside, lower frequencies could become a touch overblown in our modest 12x16ft. listening room at times, even with the Reflex Port Air Flow Restrictors (foam bungs to you and me) in place. That second 6.5in. driver rolling in below 800Hz gives nearly the same area as a single 10in. cone. So the Torinos may have near-subwoofer depth and power, as well good control, but they need space to perform at their best.

More cleanly recorded bass on The Cranberries' 'When You're Gone' gave the Torinos a chance to show off their dexterity, notes punching out from the cones fast and tight. Vocals and strings were once again smooth and balanced, possessing sufficient presence to push towards the front of the mix. The Torinos created a performance with real scale in terms of power as well as acoustic space.

I finished my audition of the Torinos as I'd started with some good, solid, trancey House courtesy of Encore's 12in. dub mix of 'Happiness'. Bass kicked, acid percussion sizzled, and synths powered out the bouncing melody. Musically, it may have been a long way from any Italian heritage the Torinos can lay claim to, but from their easy, controlled performance I knew they, like me, enjoyed it ●

Keswick Audio Research Torino

£899.00

**Keswick Audio Research
Ferrybridge Workspace,
Pontefract Road,
Ferrybridge,
West Yorkshire WF11 8PL
Tel: 01977 671823**

WORLD VERDICT

The Torinos' stylish and civilised sound won't shame any system. That powerful bass does need space to breathe properly though.

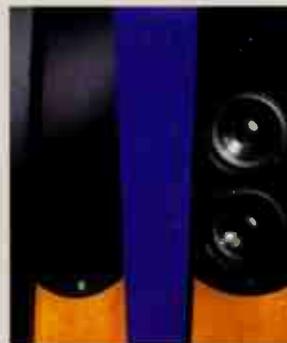
**Measured Performance
see p103**

Why Compromise?



Milano

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Torino



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Centrale

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I understand that DVD, the high capacity CD destined to carry films as well as music, has faltered in its progress to market. I was surprised it ever seemed a good idea, since the computer business is already using 1.3Gig and 2.7Gig recordable optical discs and CD-R is taking off. No one needs a non-recordable medium like this any more.

The success of CD would seem to prove otherwise, but that's only because the music industry has sought to keep high quality audio recording systems from reaching the market. Look at the stink they raised over DAT. They fear private copying and its commercial form, piracy, pose a threat to music sales. We receive regular IFPI updates which focus obsessively on this one issue. I would have more sympathy if music sales were suffering, but they aren't.

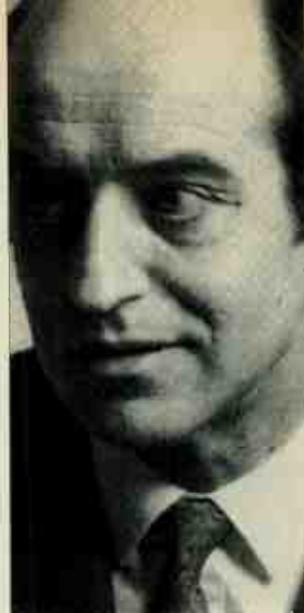
Whilst I am sensitive to the issue of Copyright, I do not believe it should extend to the censure of high performance recording technologies. Now, this issue is finally beginning to shake down. The era of the professionally recorded disc, like LP and CD, is coming to an end. In future, there will be more variety and less industry control - and lower prices will inevitably follow.

No matter how much the music biz might kick against it, high capacity recordable storage discs are coming. But isn't it a little peculiar there is no mention of them with regard to hi-fi and music? Unfortunately, no. The audio business turned its back on CD-E a long time ago. The fear is it would facilitate copying and pirating to CD quality standards.

What is CD-E? It is Erasable CD, once touted as the logical end product in the development of CD by Philips executives back in the old days, before the DAT furor. They predicted that CD would,

kaleidoscope

Mysteries from Noel Keywood



opinion

ultimately, end up as a recordable medium. And I suspect we are seeing a lunge in this direction.

Philips made the prediction because they were working on recordable optical disc technology at the time (mid-eighties) It's interesting, in view of

practices that shackle audio developments nowadays, the adoption of CD-R by the computer business has happened with lightning speed. A few years ago, recorders cost £5k-£10k; now they can be bought for well under £1000. You won't easily find CD-R discs in

to CD became quick and affordable. However, this idea evaporated when, doubtless under weight of demand and competition, recorder prices fell dramatically. You can now pick up a Yamaha CD Writer for £500.

But why bother? As Philips said long ago, CD-R is just a gap-filler on the path to CD-E. With the availability of 1.3Gig recordable optical drives, and now 2.6Gig versions, why bother with CD-R, which can only store a quarter as much data in non-erasable form?

It is hardly surprising that the optical drives are made by Philips. That's where CD-E went! Against this background, and the implications for consumers, CD-E might have become politically incorrect for audio use, but it's doing nicely elsewhere.

In the end, the recordable optical disc will find its way back into audio. I strongly suspect that in no more than three years or so we will see such a development. CD-E will arrive, albeit in a different form and from a different direction than we in audio currently imagine. If people take to it, prerecorded software will appear in the shops or it will be downloaded from cable or satellite.

Then DVD will start to look like the outdated animal it really is, an unrecordable old medium like LP and CD. That's not where the future lies ●

"I'm not sure DVD is worth worrying about. It's a high capacity, cheap, portable medium for the film and music business. That's all."

what is happening now, to recall that although CD-E was the logical end product, as an interim we were to get a Write Once medium called CD-R.

At the time, I couldn't see the attraction of a Write Once medium. If you made a mistake whilst recording, it meant throwing the disc away and starting again. At anything up to £30 per disc (the price at the time) this seemed a bit steep. Surely, I thought, no one used to buying a TDK D six-pack for £5.50 or so is going to take to this?

Well, they have. But not in audio of course. All the action these days is in computers, and this is where CD-R is beginning to take off. Free from the restrictive agreements and

the hi-fi mags, but you will find them plastered all over the computer mags.

The way CD-R has rocketed through the computer business, unhindered by copying issues and buoyed by healthy computer sales, has astonished me. It started off as a 'professional' carrier used only by those that could afford to access the technology. In this early guise, CD-R looked much like CD in its accessibility. Prices were commensurately high and popularity limited.

Once recorders became available at around £7k, bureaus started to offer CD archiving services. Suddenly, committing info

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audio fair 96

feature

“Will you be at Audio Fair 96 this weekend?”, I asked. “Do you mean Connect at the NEC in Birmingham?”, came the reply from a puzzled PR man. I’d already asked the question a few times and always got the same reply. Audio Fair might be the show the hi-fi business doesn’t know or care about, yet every year it gets a little bigger and more popular, unlike the mainstream commercial shows. They don’t know what they’re missing.

I left home late on Sunday 18th October and trundled gently through Hertfordshire’s leafy lanes, washed by rain and covered with gold and brown autumn leaves. It was a peaceful and relaxing drive, made serene by the gentle burble of the Range Rover’s lazy engine. Parking was easy with an abundance of free spaces right next to Watersmeet, the hall holding this year’s fair. Organiser Graham Tricker of GT Audio chose this spot because Rickmansworth is close to the M25 and there’s a good restaurant inside the hall itself. What a contrast to the usual pandemonium surrounding the big commercial shows.



A pair of original GEC KT88 output valves, worth around £60 apiece at least (more in the Far East) - hence the protective packing.

These Sunday-only Audio Fairs are invariably a good day out because manufacturers and magazines stay away (there’s little in the way of new products to be seen). Their absence keeps the events pleasantly low-key and

friendly. Yet although I arrived early afternoon, after most of the crowd had departed to the cosy local pubs, there were still plenty of interesting items to be seen.

The variety is extraordinary, with private individuals and dealers (65 this time) buying and selling used/old/vintage hi-fi, components, custom-built hi-fi, accessories, books and magazines. Every time I visit I see something new to me.

Dealers actually fly in for these shows. Why? The reason is obvious. “How much are you asking for that Triotron 450-25”, I asked John Howse. “I’m not”, came the reply, “it is too valuable to sell”. Foreign buyers don’t travel half way around the world just to buy a new Japanese mass-produced amplifier - there are plenty of them at home. Had any of the dealers seen this Triotron though, the heavens would have opened and rained down Yen, Deutschmarks, Ringgits or Dollars. For this is a desperately rare pre-war power triode valve which collectors around the world hanker after. Want a pair of original GEC KT88s, which are as rare as hens’ teeth? They were here, sitting cossetted in a box full of protective packing. Want a hi-fi for £160? I saw a beauty, and it wasn’t a Japanese mini-system either (although I did see even one of those!)

As always, beneath the first trestle table I came across, sat a pile of unloved Quad FM1 tuners. Difficult but not impossible to get working, these are a

There were beginners’ bargains, rarities, replacement styli and all sorts of other goodies to be found at Audio Fair 96. Noel Keyword went for a Sunday outing.



Happy man with rare 1934 Triotron 25W anode dissipation output valve. It’s going into his collection.

bargain for anyone with the knowledge to fix them. The table was manned by Classique Sounds (0116-283-5821) and they had more goodies besides. Like a pair of restored Leak TL-25+ valve power amplifiers in perfect working condition, price £560. Not only are these valuable in their own right, but they offer superb sound quality. Then I spotted a Garrard Zero-100 turntable in its original stainless steel base. This is another rarity able to give a good account of itself.

Not far away stood a lovely wooden radiogram complete with Rogers valve amplifiers and Garrard record deck, price just £160. It’s worth more for the valve amps alone. Close by sat a

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No Name Acoustics (NNA), a small Norfolk based company, have just launched a bright new range of Audio Equipment supports, the NNA 500 series. Constructed of bright mild steel sections, the stands are silk powder coated and fired at 200°C to produce a black sheen finish.

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Got a Quad 22/II? If you have, these high quality military 6L6 valves from Watford Valves might have been of interest, price £23 apiece.

gleaming McIntosh MC30 valve power amplifier. The owner (0171-591-0395) had a pair going for £1200.

Although these fairs are relaxed and lack the hustle of large-scale commercial events,

prices vary wildly.

Which is one of the wonders of course. Near to the Mac sat a Quad 33/303 pre/power combo with a single original electrostatic (ESL 57) - a more affordable proposition for most people.



Garrard's Zero-100 turntable, with fascinating zero tracking error arm. It's a satisfactory starter's turntable or collector's piece. Note also the Trio receiver, Leak valve power amp and valve tester, items brought along by Classique Sounds.

You never know what you'll find. I was surprised by a box of original Mullard and GEC GZ34 double-diode rectifier valves, priced at £8 each. Obscure, perhaps, but these originals are valuable because they offer higher performance than today's Russian and Chinese equivalents.

Most people would find the many Quad 22/II pre/power amplifiers and electrostatics more useful and attractive, I suspect. Unfortunately, Quad cannot at present repair the film of early '57s, which is why they may start to appear at very low prices. My advice is to get a pair cheap and put them in the loft as a new film may well be found soon.

Talking of loudspeakers, I also bumped into a pair of original Leak Sandwiches. Released in 1963 I believe, these were Leak's first proper cabinet loudspeakers, and I can't recall seeing a pair for the last twenty years.

But not all of what was on offer belonged in a museum. Loricraft, restorers of Garrard turntables, had on show their own 501 model turntable. This is a new design that draws from many sources to offer an up to date rim-drive turntable. Terry O'Sullivan is still trying to sort out the details of manufacture, but there's been plenty of interest, especially from the Far East. The 501 (not with Garrard's name, because that is still owned by telecoms company

Gradiente of Brazil and goes onto products made in Taiwan and sold in the USA) relies on a 301 motor and the same basic drive system, but all other parts are new. That includes the chassis, platter and, importantly, the bearing assembly. All are modelled on 301/401 lines, however, complete with eddy current brake. An external power supply is included, enabling use almost anywhere in the world.

Another exhibitor I'd been told about and looked up was Musonic. They're the last company left in Britain to make replacement stylus assemblies. This is a very specialised business and, as cartridge manufacturers

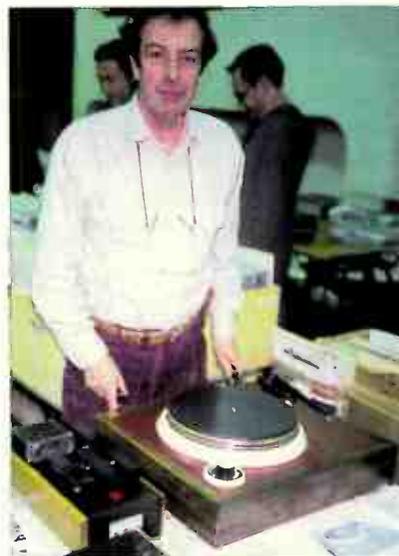


Loadsabits on the Kenzen stand, mainly for valve enthusiasts. Transformers, valves and high voltage paper capacitors were available in profusion.



A pair of Leak Sandwich loudspeakers. These were the company's first loudspeaker. They used a 13in bass driver with polystyrene/aluminium foil cone. Released 1963 and now very rare.

close up shop, one that is becoming progressively more important for those legions of turntable owners. I was pleased to find that Musonic are able to supply most types, all manufactured at their plant in North London.



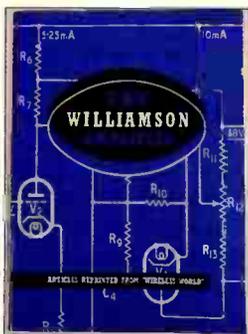
Loricraft show their prototype 501 turntable, based on the Garrard 301/401, but all-new except for its 301 motor.

Audio Fair 96 held all sorts of surprises, from the old to the new, the cheap to the priceless. That's the way these fairs are - great Sunday entertainment where you never know what you'll find ●

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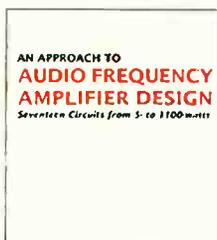


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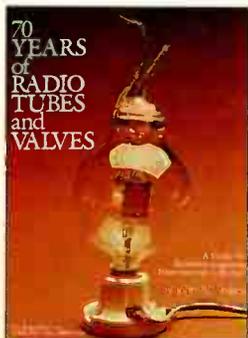
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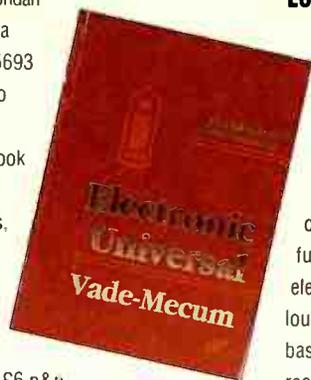
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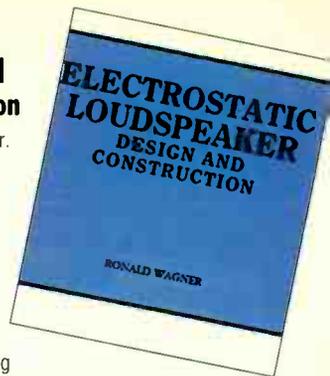
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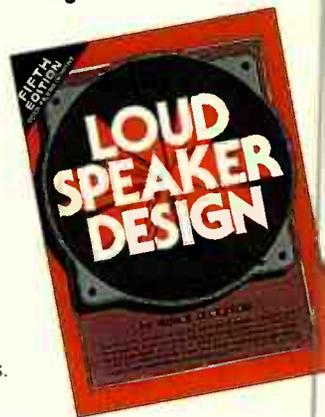
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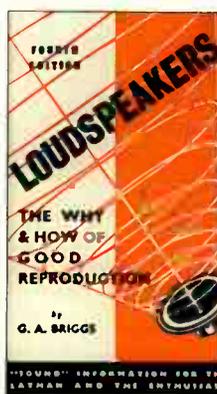
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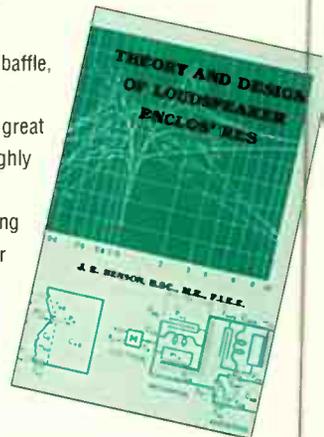
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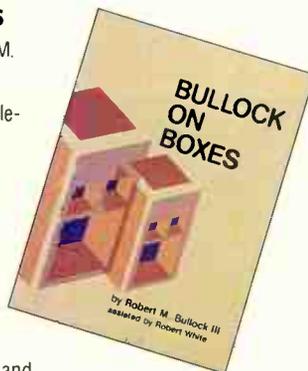
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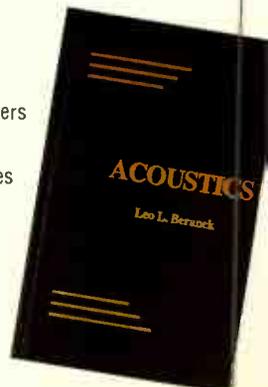
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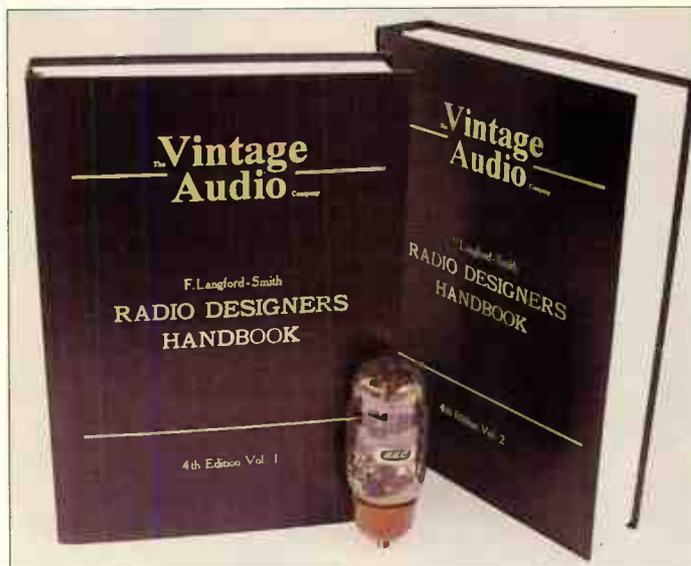
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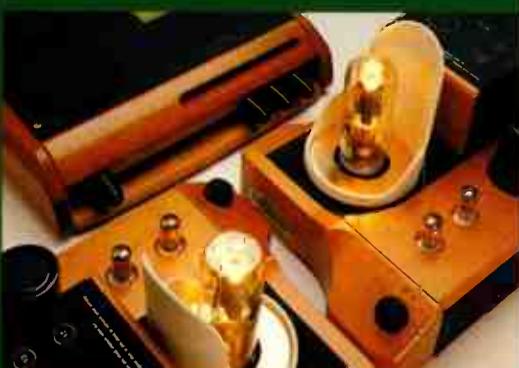
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This will be my last column for Hi-Fi World. I'm signing off as Editor to pursue a career in loudspeaker design at Tannoy. It's quite a move, both in terms of the distance between London and Glasgow where Tannoy are based, and swapping back from four years as a journalist to engineering.

I'm intrigued most though by how life is going to be 'on the other side'. Writing for a magazine gives you great influence with manufacturers, who are all only too willing to please. In return, journalists can often be cagey, awkward types, reluctant to disclose their thoughts or feelings. Yet their words, which go into print, are taken almost as gospel, something that must be a frightening prospect for any manufacturer.

There they are, having spent two years developing, testing, listening to and marketing their new product range, when some journalist tells their thousands of readers that it sounds rubbish. It may do, it may not; a lot will depend on the conditions of the review.

This must be pretty hard to stomach from a manufacturer's point of view. You've a team of highly qualified and dedicated engineers, most of whom get into audio engineering through a serious passion for music and audio. But you've just been informed, along with the masses, that your latest creation is a pile of tüt. And by a writer with little understanding, sometimes none, of how hi-fi actually works.

I see a purist argument along the lines of "You don't need to understand it to know whether it sounds right", raising its head here. I can sympathise with that to a certain extent. It's all very well for the person on the street to visit a hi-fi shop with a short-list formed from informative reviews and then pick the sound of their choice. But if you're the one who's writing

dB on the level

Dominic Baker



those reviews that are influencing other people's purchases, I feel it's only professional to have a reasonable understanding of the product.

At Hi-Fi World, our engineering background and in-house test equipment allow us to take a sensible and considered approach to what we review. An obvious example, and one

distortion set in. But there's also an impedance matching problem here. The load the Quads present to the amplifier varies from around 6Ω to 30Ω. The output impedance of your 300B amp is, say, 8Ω, so only at frequencies where the 'speaker presents an 8Ω load to the amplifier is maximum power transferred. Everywhere

be outstanding products, badly matched they could be the worst you've heard.

But manufacturers beware. It's all very well nodding in agreement that not all journalists know what they're talking about, but you have to remember that they are the best-equipped to promote your products to the people you want to reach - buyers.

There's also no use being well-versed in all the technical aspects if you have trouble stringing words together. A good writer is able to keep the reader interested in what he's saying and work within the discipline of publishing. There are few manufacturers who meet their product launch deadlines by a month, let alone by an hour.

I believe manufacturers need to explain, in as much detail as possible, exactly what the aims of a particular product are, and what type of system/equipment will make a suitable partner. It's not enough simply to say "Try it with a Pioneer A400 because it sounds really good". A little intelligent information really can make all the difference to both consumer and reviewer, allowing them an invaluable insight into how the product was designed and under what conditions it will perform best. At the moment, the British hi-fi industry is far too secretive for its own good ●

"I believe manufacturers need to explain, in as much detail as possible, exactly what the aims of a particular product are, and what type of system/equipment will make a suitable partner."

extremely relevant due to recent trends, is matching an amplifier to a suitable pair of 'speakers. If you're using a 9W 300B zero-feedback valve amplifier, there's little point expecting it to pin you to the wall with frightening dynamics when wired to a pair of Quad electrostatics.

I suspect there are few journalists out there who would know why. Sensitivity is the obvious one, where 9watts of power just isn't enough to drive an 82dB sensitive loudspeaker much louder than a whisper before compression and

else the amplifier will be delivering less power than it should, altering the frequency response and re-balancing the loudspeaker's sound, usually for the worse. It's a small point and something that is easily spotted, but only if you are aware that this is a potential problem.

There are so many variables like this in hi-fi that there's little point talking about retrieving minute detail and subtle nuances in a recording, if the amplifier and loudspeaker are poor partners. Properly matched they could both

Next time you glance in the mirror, take a good, hard look at those things that (if you're like me) hold your glasses on. You see, in the world of hi-fi, us Brits are renowned as having very special lugs indeed.

Our taste in hi-fi (especially amplifiers and 'speakers) is very different from that of our European counterparts. Americans and Japanese. Whilst the rest of the world would seem to prefer a more 'forward' and, some would say, brash sound, we generally go in for something rather more

polite and mellow. I believe this comes from a long tradition of valve amplifiers and a certain amount of BBC influence.

In terms of hi-fi, the Beeb have always had strong beliefs as to what is correct and what is not. This has filtered down into domestic hi-fi, with products such as the BBC-approved classic, the LS53/5a loudspeaker, finding their way into hi-fi enthusiasts' homes across the land.

We're obviously getting something right, however, as other nations have been taking an avid interest in the way we like things to sound. By others, I really mean the Far East, and especially Japan. Major companies such as Pioneer, Technics and Sony have been getting on to the bandwagon with minimalistic amplifiers and loudspeakers that are deliberately engineered to appeal to the British ear. In many cases, they've employed British design teams to do the job as well. And some of the final products are sold further afield than the UK, such is their sonic integrity.

But certain idiosyncrasies that can make British hi-fi sound so good are under fire; not from foreign competition, but from our own legislators. Without trying to appear a James Goldsmith groupie, I have to say EC legislation has recently come close to stifling much of what makes British hi-fi so



from
Dominic Todd,
our man in
retailing

Fair Views

unique in the first place.

In the early nineties we had strict RF leakage regulations that meant a few classic amplifiers had to be thoroughly revised or fall by the wayside. This had a similar effect to the tightening of car emission controls in that some models were never quite the same after the revisions.

companies have been working on alternatives to the erstwhile banana plug. Mission have come up with the idea of a 3mm plug and socket. This initially seems a fine idea, but it would reduce surface contact area, meaning a slight reduction in sound quality. It would also still fit, albeit loosely, into a continental mains socket.

inserted into mains sockets, and electrical plugs can't be connected to the amplifier. A further benefit is, again, the increased surface contact area. The plug and socket are slightly larger than usual, and come into contact on two surfaces - the usual outer circumference of the plug, and the inner pin too. It's one of those neat pieces of engineering that makes you wonder why on earth nobody came up with the idea before now.

Of course, it's all well and good being innovative, but standardising one of these designs (or even a different one) is another matter entirely. We have only recently seen different brands starting to come into the highstreet with a (fairly) standard width for full size hi-fi. NAD and Marantz have had to increase the size of all their units slightly to conform. So it could be years before a true successor to the universal 4mm banana plug surfaces.

One thing for sure though is that despite (in fact probably because of) such stringent legislation and tough competition, many specialist British hi-fi companies are in greater shape than ever. They're now efficient and flexible enough to meet changing demands. Which leaves us to sit back and enjoy our hi-fi systems with our treasured ears. Just remember - don't turn it up too loud or the noise-pollution police will be on to you!

"EC legislation has recently come close to stifling much of what makes British hi-fi so unique in the first place."

As you read this, another bastion of British hi-fi, the humble 4mm banana plug, has also been condemned. Because the plugs just happened to fit into European mains sockets they were deemed hazardous. Which I suppose is fair enough; unless you own a pair of electrostatic loudspeakers, it's not really a good idea to put mains voltage through your latest floorstanders.

Initially, we saw products fitted with banana sockets sporting plastic bungs. The idea, I think, was that you at least had time to ponder the effects of 230 volts on your bass cones whilst prising out the bungs.

But all is not yet lost. Determined not to be consigned to the jaws of the spring clip, specialist

A better bet is the offering from The Audio Partnership (Richer Sounds' sister company). This comprises a high quality 6mm plug and socket, giving improved sound quality through a larger contact area whilst simultaneously meeting safety regulations. A 5mm plug could still possibly be forced into a mains socket whereas a 6mm one couldn't.

But perhaps the most innovative idea of all comes from those boffins at Arcam. They suggest reversing the gender of plug and socket. Let me explain. Their plug features a hollow centre core and a plastic shield. The matching socket looks similar to the original 4mm type but features a pin at its centre. This ensures that the hi-fi plugs can't be

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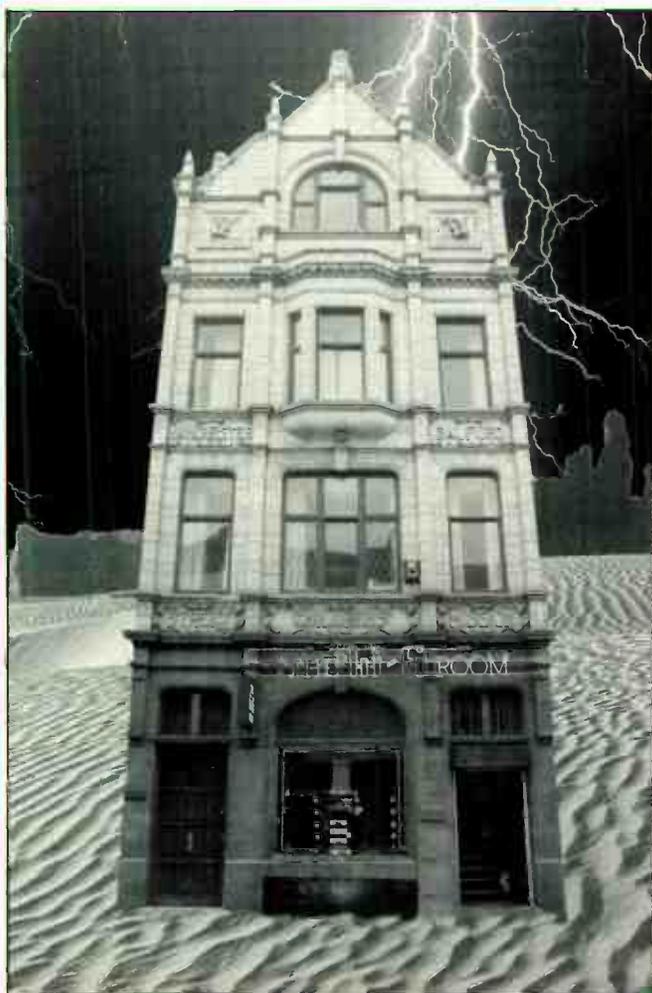
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competition

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WORTH OF PRIZES

GEO DISCOVER

If you're yearning for an audiophile stocking filler that would have Santa green with envy, take a look at our special competition this month. Our Christmas bonanza means absolutely everything reviewed in this issue can be won. That's twelve superb components and interconnects, adding up to a prize value of over £6500!

It's important you state your order of preference for the prizes as we will be grading the winners on the quality of their tie breaker and allocating the highest selected prize available. So Winner No1 will get their first choice, Winner No2 theirs and so on. Only if a prize has already been selected will a winner get a prize which isn't their first choice.

PREFERENCES:

- Mission 752 Freedom loudspeakers
- Arcam Alpha 7 CD player
- Arcam Alpha 8 CD player
- Technics SU-A700MK3 amplifier
- Roksan Xerxes X
- Blue Room Minipod loudspeakers
- Monrio Mj amplifier
- UKD Opera Duetto loudspeakers
- TDL T-Line 2 loudspeakers
- Keswick Audio Research Torino loudspeakers
- QED Discsaver
- Kenwood KX-5080S cassette deck
- Interconnect cables

To enter this fabulous festive competition all you have to do is answer the questions opposite and complete the tie breaker. Send in your entry form on the back of a sealed envelope or postcard to reach us before January 4th to:

Hi-Fi World Christmas Competition
 Hi-Fi World Magazine,
 64 Castellain Road,
 Maida Vale,
 London W9 1EX

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

COMPETITION ENTRY QUESTIONS

Cut out and affix to the back of a sealed envelope

- 1) How many prizes are on offer in our Christmas competition?
 A. 13 B. 14 C. 12 D. 16
- 2) Which is the closest figure to the total prize retail value?
 A. £5500 B. £6000 C. £6500 D. £7000
- 3) How many complete systems (a source, an amp and a pair of 'speakers) could you make from the prizes on offer?
 A. 1 B. 3 C. 2 D. 4
- 4) What is the most expensive prize on offer?
 A. QED Discsaver B. Mission 752 Freedom
 C. Roksan Xerxes X D. Arcam Alpha 8

TIE BREAKER (obligatory)

Complete the following in less than 30 words

Christmas will soon be upon us,
 So we've a comp. that's the business,
 Ring in the new year with a fabulous prize,
 Take a chance, you know it's wise,

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Please do not add my name to your mailing list.

COMPETITION WINNERS

**NOVEMBER ISSUE COMPETITION
 SPENDOR LOUDSPEAKERS**

In the November issue of Hi-Fi World, we gave you the chance to win one of three pairs of Spendor 2000 Series loudspeakers. The prizes go to these lucky winners:

- Ross Sargent of Folkestone wins Spendor 2040 loudspeakers.
- R. Charles of High Wycombe wins Spendor 2030 loudspeakers.
- Simon Filmore of Ulverston wins Spendor 2020 loudspeakers.

Congratulations!

COMPETITION RULES AND CONDITIONS

- [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.

If you would prefer *not* to receive details of new products or special offers please tick the box.
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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 7 £320

This British built player is extremely good value. An upfront, punchy nature suits Techno and Rock particularly well.

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.

MARANTZ CD-63MKII KI-SIGNATURE £500

Similar to the CD-63SE but more powerful 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. 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.

AUDIOLAB 8000CD £1000

Great presence and body through midrange along with good stage depth give this player a seductive and musical sound. A real charmer.

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 CD1 £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 111 £300

A lot more weight at frequency extremes than the 11 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 hardness. 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 rs1 £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. 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.

ROKSAN XERXES X £1295

DSU or XPS 3.5 power supply £150/170 extra. Excellent pitch stability from a new Swiss motor and outboard power supply. Very tight bass, fine dynamics and revealing clarity.

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.

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 tolerated 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.

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.

World favourites guide

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.

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 the tonal strengths and dynamo sound Ortofon have been putting into their 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 MC-10 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.

ROTEL RA-970BX £250

With its smooth and powerful sound, the Rotel sings a seductive song with all types of music. Powerful enough for most 'speakers too.

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 up-market competition.

ORELLE SA-100 £449

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

ARCAM ALPHA 9 £500

A detailed and open sound lends great atmosphere to music. Wide range of facilities too, including optional MM/MC phono stages.

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 performer.

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 pre-amp 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 pre-amp, greatly improves on 8000C with a more fluid, musical sound and greater grip. Remote control.

MERIDIAN 502 £1295

Transparent, detailed sound with good tonal range and a neutral presentation. Flexible and remote controlled too.

NAIM NAC82 £1945

This remote control pre-amp 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.

ARCAM ALPHA 9 £400

With 70watts on tap, the 9P will drive most loudspeakers with a spacious and detailed sound. Good bass drive too.

MISSION CYRUS POWER £450

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

ROSE RPI90 £495

Used with the partnering pre-amp 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 NAP180 £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.

MERIDIAN 557 £1400

Great control and dynamics allied to seductive smoothness. A rare combination of power and delicacy.

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.

TUNERS

LEAK TROUGHLINE second-hand

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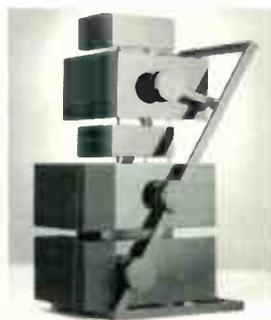
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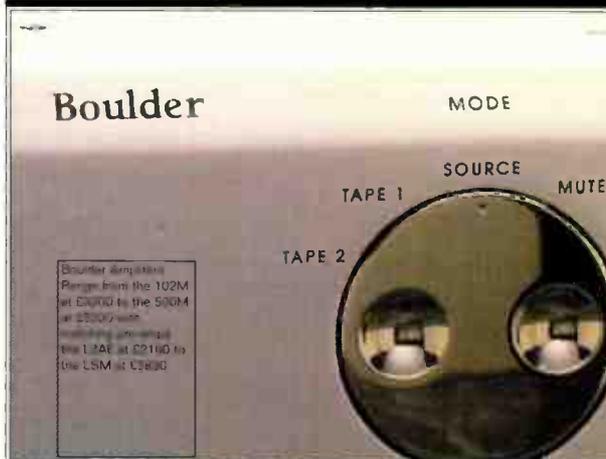
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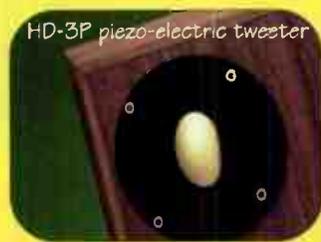
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even if he did commit the odd venal sin, as in that bit of 'Teen Spirit' that sounds like The Police. So what? He probably never even noticed it at the time, and Oasis do it (not that they don't own up to it) a heck of a lot more frequently.

Bassist Krist Novoselic and drummer Dave Grohl were the perfect complement for his unique talents. Men who could play with ease and passion and great ingenuity and inspiration. The songs span the band's career as both their popularity and creativity were rushing to their peak, namely from '89 to '94, so inevitably the songs are mainly from the better known studio albums. Again, so what? In fact, some of them are even better live.

Nirvana were first and foremost a live band, as Novoselic points out in his brief but useful sleeve notes. This disc is them at their best. Little matter if the recordings came from professional sources, or were taped straight through the mixing desk - they definitely work. A fitting epitaph to a tragic but nonetheless important talent in pop history. Exciting to the max, it really was the sound of a time and the marching anthem of a generation with nowhere to go. Like Novoselic, I wipe a tear from my eye and say (breathlessly of course - this is the music that makes you fly), "Thank you Kurt."

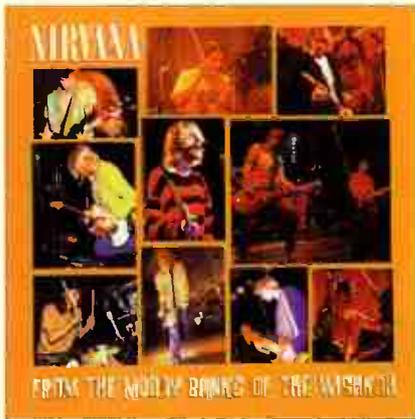
makes me sadder that I never got to see the group live. Not that me and my best friend didn't try. We trekked all the way across London to The Forum and paid thirty quid for a pair of forged tickets, but that's history.

And so is From The Muddy Banks. Whether it'll sell as much as Nevermind or In Utero will be interesting, but that doesn't really matter either. Without a shade of a doubt, the sixteen cuts here are a fitting tribute to what was one of the best live bands of their time at their peak, fronted by one of the most original writer/singers to have arrived in yonks.

But this isn't about Grunge, it's about Rock. This slab of recorded history contains some of the most awesome, thundering live music I've heard in ages, and that's for sure. Even the most familiar and popular item here - 'Smells Like Teen Spirit' - is as fired-up and scintillating as the first time you heard it. That primal scream introduction really says it all.

Be prepared then for an all-out assault on the senses, the sort of thing Heavy Metal writers go totally over the top trying to describe in words.

But the sawn-off volleys of pain and anger are by no means the whole story. 'Been A Son', 'Polly' or 'Lithium', say, are ample examples that Cobain could handle melody with deceptive ease,



NIRVANA

FROM THE MUDDY BANKS OF THE WISHKAH

GEFFEN GED 25105

It's been a long enough time since Kurt Cobain's tragic and horribly untimely death that nobody can accuse either Geffen or the remaining ex-band members of cashing in on the poor soul's departure from this world with the present selection of live recordings - they tastefully left that to the bootleggers. It's also been long enough for the Kurt legend to take on even greater status and popularity than when he was alive. I was gobsmacked about a year ago when my ten year-old cousin asked if I'd heard of Nirvana.

Hearing this set of live cuts only

rock & pop record of the month

R.E.M.

NEW ADVENTURES IN HI-FI

WARNER BROS 9632-46320-2

Much as I loathe using such an old but enduring cliché, it is actually possible that R.E.M. really are the best Rock group in the world. You may disagree but millions surely wouldn't.

Indubitably, it's been years since they've produced anything remotely like a clinker, apart from the unfabulous 'Fables Of The Reconstruction' perhaps. But I'm sure not everyone thought that it was exactly a flopperoonie. Anyway, this one certainly couldn't get knocked under the Trade Descriptions Act. Yes, it is new, it is adventurous and it is in Hi-Fi, or at least its modern equivalent.

What can I say that hasn't been said a thousand times before? My friend's ten year-old says it's boring, and so most of her pals would surely agree. For your average, broad-tongued music fan though, there are lashings of cream on this confection from the lads who put Athens, Georgia on the map.

From the opening 'How The West Was Won And Where It Got Us', Michael Stipe and company barely put a foot wrong until track 14, the bemusing 'Electrolite'. It sounds, yes, extremely R.E.M., and that may be a criticism if you don't like their other discs. But nobody's going to send the music police around to kick your door in and force you to listen.

Stipe's amiably emotive vocal drone hooks the ears, the band do dizzying things with guitars and all the rest of the musical machinery and so on. Not every track is a hit single,

sure, but maybe they aren't always aiming for that. I mean, could you imagine something called 'Binky The Doormat' being No 1? Yeah, you could and so could I, but I'm sure you catch my drift.

Now some people find R.E.M. depressing, and the aforementioned 'How The West. . . ' could easily be labelled that way. Stipe's lead has a bitter edge, the music underlining it with a sheer feeling of angst, despair or whatever. The fact remains that it moves and touches you in places few

contradicted by the title's humorous, even ironic quaintness. No mistaking it - this definitely isn't R.E.M. doing 'Low', but then they can afford to have their little joke. After all, Americans, as someone famous said, aren't exactly noted for their sense of irony. Mind you, that could equally be said of most Pop musicians anytime, anywhere.

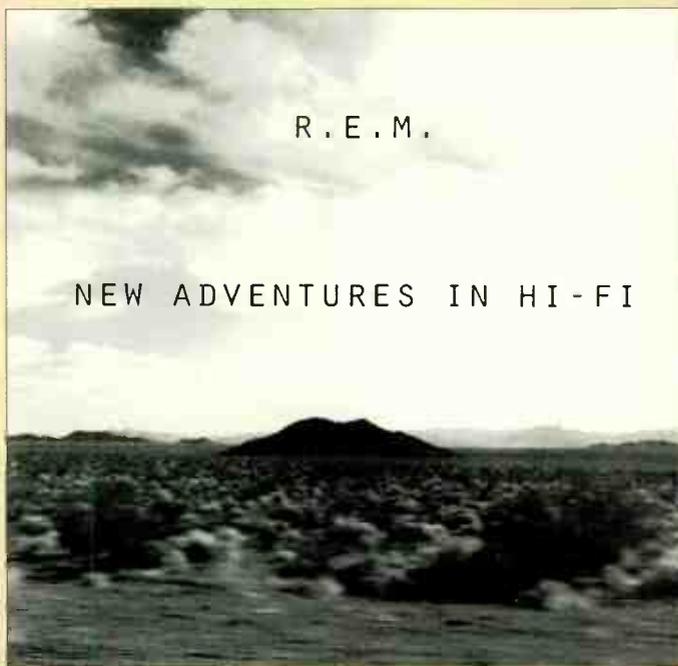
Of course, the words are generally unintelligible and quite often a title may not have any obvious connection to the song, but that's

nothing new. Whether Stipe is a poet or a verbal con-man remains neither here nor there - that's just another one of those old saws that's been around in Pop since at least early Bob Dylan. I'll leave it up to you. I like Stipe's way with words, from the weirdness of something called, say, 'E-Bow The Letter' or 'New Test Leper' to the mild distraction of 'So Fast, So Numb', with its hint of a pun (or at least I think it's a hint).

But the verbal quirkiness is only part of the whole picture as we all know. What is impressive is that so many years after I was

introduced to their very first album (thanks a million to Max Bell for that), they can still make my hair stand up, my ears tingle, my heart beat faster, and induce the proverbial shivers up my spine.

In short, this is a jolly good record brilliantly played. Millions will no doubt agree. It could even be their best work yet - it certainly lives up to the best of what they've done before and will sound just as good far beyond the end of the millenium. Today, for me at least, this really is the best band in the world. Isn't this where we came in. . ?



contemporaries have even thought about. But it's not all the Rock world's answer to Edward Munch or Woody Allen in his downer moods.

The succeeding 'The Wake-Up Bomb' lives up to its title alright. This is a sparkly, bubbly item that would certainly sound grand first thing in the morning; up-tempo, with those epochal jangling guitars - the full enchilada, as they say. Now this one could and probably will find its way onto an A Side sooner or later.

The cover (is it Ayers Rock shot from a train?) is a barren landscape shot in monochrome, its starkness

Jon Clarke



THE SHAMEN
HEMPTON MANOR
TPLP62CD

Experimental dance posse The Shamen make a welcome return with the predictably titled Hempton Manor (the altered stately home) album. And despite the band's unsubtle drug connections (remember Ebenezer Goode on TOTP, "E's are good" and all that) this is a surprisingly good release.

However, be prepared - the Shamen have not mellowed with age. Far from it. Turn the lights down, blacken the windows and fuse the washing machine, for Hempton Manor is a journey back to the warehouse. Returning to their roots and a sound not a million strobe lights away from their thrusting Synergy tours of the late '80s, Colin and Mr. C have used a pumping mix of electronic sounds and hectic beats. With no apparent track listing, the band - who saw one of their members die in a tragic drowning accident some years ago - have gone for the no compromise hard core return.

Apparently an offshoot of the band's latest venture - the Shamen Sound System - the album appears to be more of an advert for their new internet page than a clear and concise concept release. Unveiled on the same day as .P, the new website (<http://www.nemeton.com>), features a (yawn) resource centre for the three P's

of hemp - Plants, Politics and Prohibition. That's presumably something to do with a new American form of gardening.

In the words of the band, combining analogue synths with digital mixing, the Sound System "gives the duo the freedom to explore the realms of tripped out techno, spacey dub and frenetic drum 'n' bass". Who am I to argue?

Despite any great originality, the hour-long Hempton Manor rolls along with a confidence not often heard in dance and techno, and shows a musical know-how not to be argued with. Rave on!



REBIRTH OF COOL SIX
VARIOUS
BRCD 620

Number six and not a chance of ending up like And Now That's What I Call Music. Rebirth of Cool just keeps going on and on and on. Compiled by Kiss FM late night genius Patrick Forge and friends, it is a distinct improvement on their last offering too. Not that that was by any means bad.

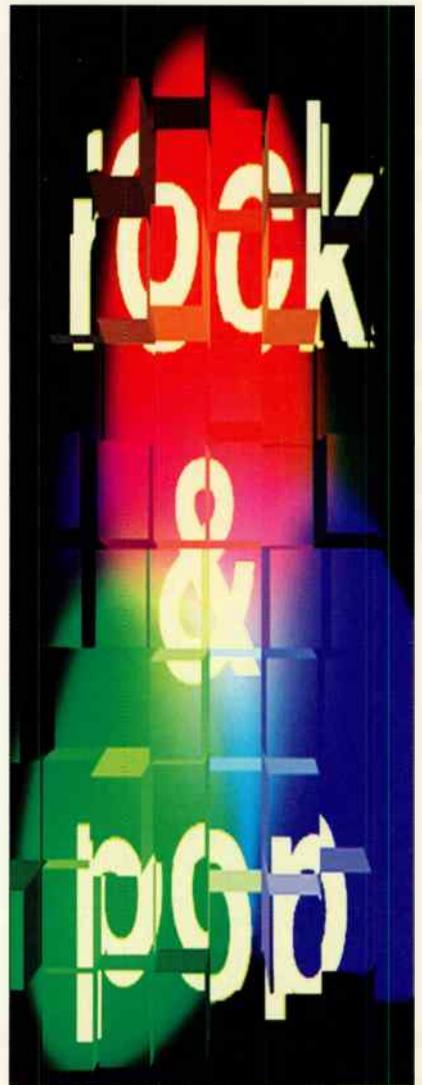
In a word Rebirth Six is 'educative'. Always looking to teach a music-loving public where the latest vogue for club music is going, the Rebirth boys have constantly had to adapt in time. Thus, where they began with predominantly rap fusions, they have now moved onto rare grooves and a distinct slice of drum 'n' bass. And tracks like Ernest Ranglin's 'Surfin' and the brilliant 'Horizons' by LTJ Bukem have that familiar hard core

rattling bass sound. But this is not mindless club rave - this is stylish drum 'n' bass and the highly-rated LTJ Bukem has a real belter of a track here.

Nicolette of course has her say and the only real surprise is no track from either Massive Attack, Tricky or MC Solaar. Promising and strongly-tipped Lamb have the inclusion of their excellent 'Cotton Wool', with its haunting chorus and classy junglish break, and Alex Reece of course had to be included with 'Feel The Sunshine'.

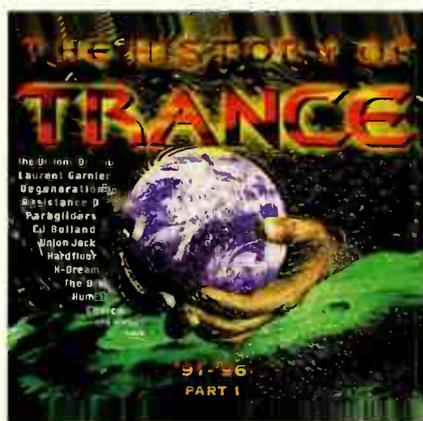
Things get all jazzed up in classic Rebirth style later on, when De Lata appear with their very Latino-flavoured 'Ponteio' and Akasha do the delicious 'Jazz Garage' - all pipes, flutes and beats combining in a kind of up-tempo Gil Scott Heron.

The perfect compilation for the car, work or play. But don't take my word for any of this, go out and buy it silly.



dance & ambient

*Viv
Craske*



VARIOUS
THE HISTORY OF TRANCE
SUBTERRANEAN SPV089-47062

Blimey, nostalgia seems to come around early in the dance scene. There have already been a good few compos of yesterday floating around, with Biology getting into the act recently. But a history of trance '91-'96 is a bit of a tall order. Who do you include? Who do you miss out? And more importantly, does it really matter? Surely 20 top tracks will do, coz who's to say who the definitive exponents of the genre are? So OK, we've all got our favourites - if I'd put this one together Josh Wink's 'Thoughts of a Tranced Love' would most certainly be up there with Sussex's 'Paranoia', but then that's just me.

The two CDs you do get are ample for any acid head, concocting a subtle blend of big names and semi-forgotten gems. There are a few obvious choices (LSG's 'Fragile', Union Jack's 'Two Full Moons and a Trout'), but these are balanced beautifully next to the likes of Hardfloor's 'Trancescript', The Vision Of Shiva's 'How Much Can You Take' and the rollocking Paragliders' 'Paraglide'. Plus if you're still in any doubt there are old favourites by CJ Bolland, Laurent Garnier and The Orb. In ten, even five years time, you'll wish

you'd bought this album. If I were you, I'd put it on my Christmas list now.



VARIOUS
JDJ VOL 12 MIXED BY FARLEY AND HELLER
MUSIC UNITES JDJ CD 12

Farley and Heller have always played fair and true, and so for all their hard work the people at Journeys By DJ have given them their extra value double CD to trail us through all that's righteous and good about house. As a superb mix team and DJ partners Terry and Pete have always delivered the goods. From eye-opening early remixes like Happy Monday's 'Stinkin' Think' and the dubbed out bliss of Degrees of Motion's 'Shine On', excellence has always been the goal (and pretty damn successful they've been).

With such a penchant for house that you can spot the roots (disco and funky stuff), the British scene has always had plenty to satisfy. But of course, a large chunk of this album centres around the US of A., from Louie Vega and Li'l Louis to new up-starts promising great things (Armand Van Helden, DJ Sneak). There's even an acappella cut of

Superstars of Rock's beautifully constructed 'Orange Sunshine'.

Big tracks come from all over the shop; F Communications' 'St. Germain in Paris' to Junior Boy's Own's Black Science Orchestra with their sumptuous cut 'Save Us' to CJ Bolland to Thelma Houston. If it's got a groove then it's on here somewhere.

Farley and Heller don't stop at a great selection of tracks either. The mixing is smooth without losing a minute of party-pumping funk. There's a host of specially cut acappellas and rare mixes from the duo's vaults. They've even chucked a load of special 3D effects onto the second CD, with dynamics that really kick in on decent equipment.

JDJ compos have always been synonymous with style and top mixing, and the next instalment in an indispensable collection is here.



EMMANUEL TOP
ASTEROID
NOVAMUTE NOMUSICD

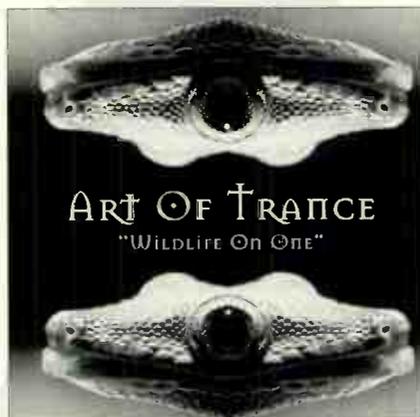
Emmanuel Top is one very happy man at the moment, I should think. Emmanuel who? I hear you crying. Would it help if

I mentioned BBE and the chart bashing single of the last couple of months 'Seven Days and One Week'. If you still haven't guessed it, Mr Top is the E in BBE. But of course most artists don't just have the one personality in their music. There's the matter of Emmanuel's acid stormers 'Acid Phase' and 'Ecsta Deal' on his own French label 'Attack'. There's the totally wired 'Lobotomie' on NovaMute. And there's the small fact that BBE collaborators - B + B are no less than Age of Love.

So with this calibre of musical discourse flowing down Emmanuel's stream, what's the water taste like? Are we talking chart-friendly house, or crazy acid excursions? Well, neither.

There's the bass squelches and turns of 'Asteroid', with itchy hi-hats and omnipresent bass lines that wander off into the realms of acid torture, before pulling back into a bass heavy haven once more. Then there are other tracks, notably 'Development' and 'Replay' that live in that dusky morning-after realm of being placed mid-way between dancefloor and chill-out room tappers. However, what the album gives away in tempo and predictability it gains in the ability to take you to an acid plane, bringing in heavy bass, using

percussion to its fullest potential, then adding that element of surprise. There are the anthemic undercurrents and builds that creep up on you. Perfect to take you on one long, warped, journey.



ART OF TRANCE
WILDLIFE ON ONE
PLATIPUS PLAT25CD

Platipus - cool name, cool label. They've trod just the right line in the trance arena, keeping their distance from commercialism, banging bass lines and anthemia. For those of you not too au

fait with all that label worship stuff, it helps to know that they're home to Union Jack, Universal State Of Mind, and let's not forget that it is they who brought Robert Miles' 'Children' into the home of every Phil Collins and Dire Straits fan. Still you can't blame them for that, it was just a top crossover track.

And now it's Platipus' head honcho bloke Simon Berry's turn to turn his hand to the Platipus formula for quality. No stranger to ethereal, life force-giving trance, he's got his hands dirty in the creative processes of Poltergeist and Union Jack.

Still, doesn't guarantee a wicked new album. But trust in Platipus for it doth trance verily like there's no tomorrow. Mr B does us proud with the singles so far: 'Octopus', 'Cambodia' and 'Gloria' and newie 'Kaleidoscope'. The rest of the album is totally Platipus. There are tracks like 'Mosquito' that are all fluffy and soft up top, but gripped to the earth with an intense machined bassline. There's 'Golden Rain' which is as it says, skippety synths and gloopy effects gliding through.

Yep, if your favourite tipples are relentless beats, riff-a-go-go and sensuous melodic dripping with emotion, then look no further. These guys deserve your appreciation ●

dance & ambient record of the month

TRICKY

PRE-MILLENNIUM TENSION FOURTH & BROADWAY

This man gives the scariest interviews known to man, has the scariest dope obsession, and the scariest twisted gravely voice, all pure velvet with sadist wishes tripping from his tongue. In combination with the bittersweet vocals of Martina and beats deconstructed, it's a recipe for paranoia and fear.

You see the thing with Tricky is that no one really knows who he is, but everyone's fascinated by his street days in Bristol, and his collaborations with Massive Attack, with Garbage, with Bush, and with Suggs (!!) Innovative album 'Maxinquaye' was a revelation, the furthest out-there music in years, a logical progression from Portishead's debut, the rawest, most urban product of the 90's. Then came along Nearly God, Tricky's pseudonym, a mash of half baked unlikely collaborations, of

blunted bass and messed up rhymes.

So where's Tricky's head at for this third album? Has he lost the plot completely or receded back into his own consciousness, or has he kept the



odd lighter moment, the odd flourish of pop tunefulness? Well, er, no. First track 'Vent' will put off the name droppers from listening any further.

Even fist single 'Christiansands' is deliberately twisted, the epitome of anti-pop.

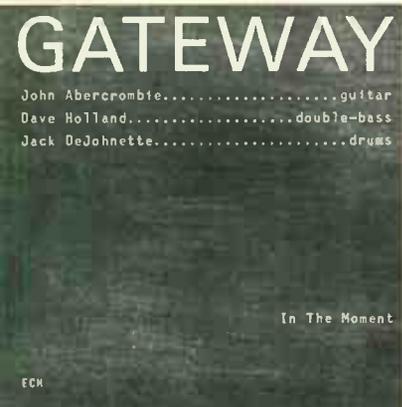
You see there are moments on the album where Tricky's vocals strip your nerves raw, expose your inner frightened child to the world without any apology. Then there are times when the song structure drips away, any concept of rhythm or pace totally lost in time.

But you see, it's an acquired taste and one, like the taste of money, people are willing to swallow as we reach the 21st century. But with suffering, comes respite in the form of 'Make Me Wanna Die' an oasis of jittery cosiness, of sweet lamenting vocals, of lost moments.

Pre-Millennium Tension is Tricky's vision of a future world, a scared man with reason to run. Or maybe he just read Brave New World once too often. Either way, you better start listening just in case ●

Jazz

Simon Hopkins



working). But it's DeJohnette's performance here that deserves special mention, I feel. DeJohnette has consistently been one of jazz's most creative drummers for the best part of three decades, sublimely fusing his free jazz and R'n'B background into a style full of propulsive dynamism which skirts precariously around strict time keeping. On *In The Moment* he makes incredible use not just of the kit, but of ethnic drums and drum synths, spinning out mesmerising, hugely seductive rhythms and textures. Stunning stuff.

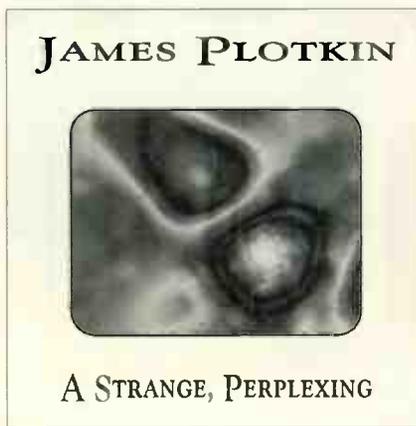
'illbient'. Plotkin's music though has an organic warmth often missing elsewhere. Whether this is as much to do with his methodology (the music is almost entirely performed on heavily signal processed electric guitar) as his vision, is a moot point. But this is well worth checking out, not least for those of you interested in what's being done at the limits of the world's most overplayed instrument.

**GATEWAY
 IN THE MOMENT
 ECM 1574**

After a collective absence of over a decade, the Gateway trio - guitarist John Abercrombie, drummer Jack DeJohnette and bassist Dave Holland - reformed last year to record once again for ECM. Their work in the 70s did as much to establish the German record label's elusive 'sound' as the records of say, Keith Jarrett or Jan Garbarek. Sure, they had at that point all performed in various groups for the label - and have all continued to do so since. But as a trio, their collective sound was pretty special, an at once earthy and yet sky-bound combination of folk music melodies, gritty grooves and searching improvisations.

In The Moment, I'd say, lives up to the 70s group's promise far more than their 're-debut' *Homecoming*. There's a delight in collective improvising here that's all too rare in contemporary jazz. Its range of compositional feels is much broader than one might expect elsewhere, from faux-middle Easternraga-rock grooves to implosive free jazz freak-outs.

Abercrombie and Holland are on their usual fine form (the latter remains, for my money, easily the greatest jazz double bassist currently



**JAMES PLOTKIN
 A STRANGE, PERPLEXING
 DISCREET/INDISCREET CREET005**

A brief mention for a couple of albums which really only touch jazz at the most oblique tangent, but deserve coverage and are unlikely to receive it elsewhere. Guitarist James Plotkin is perhaps best known - if at all - for his involvement with avant-rock power trios. But in his solo life, Plotkin creates minimalist electronica of distinct, if austere beauty.

There are, of course, many musicians currently performing what gets lumped together as 'dark ambient', 'isolationist' or even - get this -



**UNDARK
 UNDARK
 T:ME RECORDINGS EM:T3396**

Russell Mills has previously been known for his superb album sleeve design and installation work, but his debut album marks the emergence of a very serious musical proposition indeed. On *Undark*, Mills, along with T:me Recording's *Miasma*, has pasted together an incredibly lush and diverse canvas of textures and rhythms. They're formed from pieces contributed by musicians as diverse and renowned as My Bloody Valentine's Kevin Shields, David Sylvian, Brian Eno, The Edge and Bill Laswell. Easily the most impressive debut album I've personally heard in a long, long time.

Simon Cooke



ALAN BARNES and BRIAN LEMON
play HAROLD ARLEN



A SLEEPIN' BEE

ALAN BARNES AND BRIAN LEMON
A SLEEPIN' BEE
ZECD7

Released last August, this CD has just come to my attention as one of three new releases on the Zephyr label.

Brian Lemon's name may be well known in British jazz circles, but overseas readers may require an introduction. He has been described as a 'national treasure' (attributed to Warren Vaché) or 'world class' (an anonymous fan in the Bull's Head, Barnes.) In short, Lemon's talent is known and respected by many, from all walks of life, not least Zephyr's founder John Bune; a cursory glance at the Zephyr catalogue reveals Lemon's name on all fourteen CDs.

Alan Barnes probably requires less introduction, if only because alto saxophonists are probably more common and definitely more high-profile than pianists today. Nevertheless, with Lemon on the ivories they create a sound with a real WWII vibe.

You get thirteen tunes by Harold Arlen; 'Ill Wind', 'Come Rain or Shine', 'Don't Like Goodbyes', and the title

track. To talk about the technical side of a CD like this is probably pointless, but as far as it goes it's a crisp, clear recording which gives the players space without clipping their range. Enjoyable.

WARREN VACHÉ meets DEREK WATKINS
with the Brian Lemon Quartet



STARDUST

WARREN VACHÉ/DEREK WATKINS
STARDUST
ZECD9

The Vaché/Watkins axis provides cornet, trumpet and flugelhorn while Lemon's quartet consists of himself, Dave Cliff, Dave Green and Martin Drew playing piano, guitar, double bass and drums respectively.

This gives the technical chaps a bit more grist than the previous CD, but the players are adequately imaged in space and tonally defined.

This thirteen track CD lasts a few seconds under the hour and contains a whole set of mainstream favourites such as Gershwin's 'I Got Rhythm', Carmichael's 'Stardust', Styne/Cahn's 'Time After Time' and even a Vaché original, 'Blues For Bune'.

Sweet, stylish and vivacious, it's almost as good as being there.

THE BRIAN LEMON/ALAN BARNES OCTET



OLD HANDS - YOUNG MINDS

THE BRIAN LEMON/ALAN BARNES OCTET
OLD HANDS - YOUNG MINDS
ZECD12

Here the line-up begins to get complicated, but I'll try to keep things clear and simple. Lemon plays piano, Barnes, Iain Dixon and Andy Panayi constitute the reed section, Gerard Presencer plays trumpet and flugelhorn, Anthony Kerr vibraphone, Clark Tracy drums while Alec Dankworth along with Dave Green alternately take credit for bass.

Confused? You won't be because it's a straightforward feast of favourites such as Van Heusen/Burke's 'Polka Dots and Moonbeams', the Ellington/Bigard/Mills 'Moon Indigo', Strayhorn's 'Chelsea Bridge' and Porter's 'Just One Of Those Things'. What more can you ask for?

Well you could ask for a good, clear crisp recording with sweet tones and a solid soundstage. Enough said, it's here. And if you still want more after that you can keep looking forward to next year when 'Young Minds - Old Hands' will be released on Zephyr. Watch this space.

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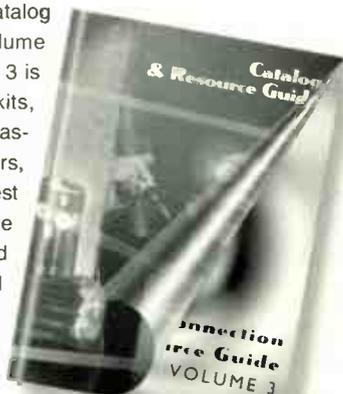
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Classical

Peter Herring

The solo challenge is on, for both voices and instruments. The songs of Berg and Mussorgsky bring out the best from Anne Sofie von Otter and Sergei Leiferkus, while Andrew Manze goes bravura in Biber. And clarinettist John Denman is simply splendid - in a very British sense.



but also the many, often bizarre effects which Biber introduces. All of which may give the impression that these sonatas are little more than virtuoso exercises. In fact, they are full to the brim with fine melodies, and the passages of pure display are always subservient to the line and rhythmic impetus. Indeed, their capacity to constantly surprise brings an invigorating element of improvisation, not to mention an 'edge of the seat' tension as the solo fiddle runs through its repertoire of seemingly impossible sonic gymnastics.

Andrew Manze, violinist with the trio Romanesca, clearly relishes the challenge these sonatas present. His is a true bravura performance, tackling the phenomenal technical complexities head-on and producing breathtaking playing. Yet, throughout, the style maintains an expressive, musical quality and the result is involving, stimulating and, ultimately, highly rewarding.

Inevitably, Manze's colleagues, lutenist Nigel North and keyboard player John Toll, play secondary roles here, but their contribution to the vitality of the music-making shines through. In addition to the eight Salzburg sonatas, Romanesca perform two passacaglias by Biber (one for solo violin and - somewhat less of a showcase for the performer's skills - one for solo lute) and the quirky Sonata Representiva, composed for Biber's first employer, the Count of Kromeriz in Moravia. It seems the Count had a fondness for programme music and Biber certainly supplies that with his

violinistic impressions of birds, frogs and cats! A fine recording, combining accuracy and good balance with a bright, airy acoustic that captures the solo violin at its most stratospheric, completes the attractions of this fascinating recording.



MODEST MUSSORGSKY
Songs and Dances of Death/The Nursery/The Puppet-Show/Forgotten/ The Seminarist/Darling Savishna/The He-Goat; a worldly story/ Mephistopheles' Song of the Flea
Sergei Leiferkus, baritone; Semion Skigin, piano
CONIFER CLASSICS 75605 51229 2
(DDD/66.03)

That the Russian-born baritone Sergei Leiferkus has one of the finest voices

HEINRICH IGNAZ FRANZ VON BIBER
Eight Sonatas for Solo Violin and Continuo/Sonata Representiva/Sonata "La Pastorella"/Two Passacaglias Romanesca
HARMONIA MUNDI 907134/35 (2 CD SET)
(DDD/127.01)

The much-travelled musical historian Charles Burney, writing in the eighteenth century, observed that, "Of all the violin players of the last century Biber seems to have been the best, and his solos are the most difficult and most fanciful of any I have seen of the period." The "solos" referred to were almost certainly the eight sonatas composed in Salzburg in 1681 and dedicated by Biber to his employer, Archbishop Maximilian Gandolph. In recalling their "difficulty" and "fancy", Burney was not only describing the striking innovation of these works and their extraordinary technical demands,

Classical Review

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Christopher Breunig, HI-FI NEWS & RECORD
REVIEW, April 1996

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Dominic Todd
HI-FI WORLD, August 1996

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Sam Tellig, STEREOPHILE,
Vol. 19 No. 11, November 1996

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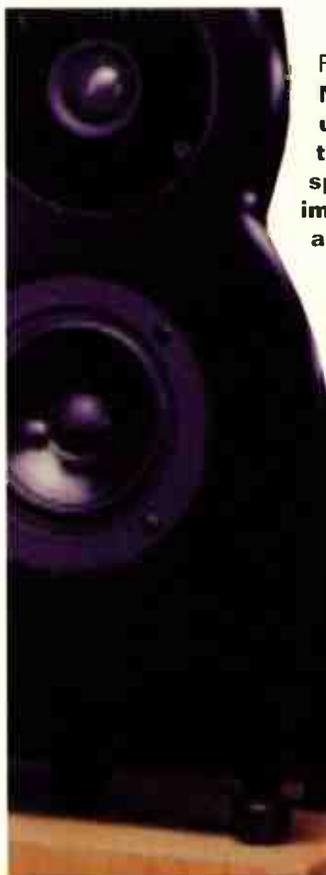
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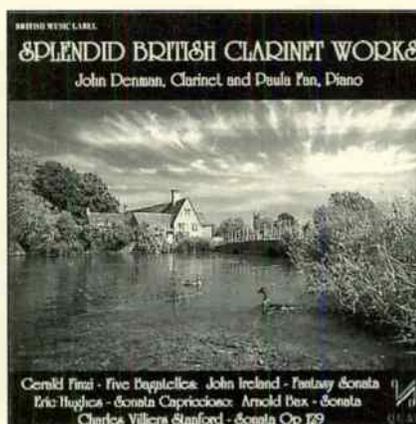
Classical

currently to be heard anywhere is beyond dispute. But he brings more than polish and power to these songs of Mussorgsky. Crucially, he also brings a memorably distinctive character to each one. Whether it be the impassioned declamations of The Field-Marshal (from Songs and Dances of Death) or the mischievous pleadings of the child in The Nursery, Leiferkus has the measure of what is required. He can be lofty or earthy, arrogant or doleful, drawing on an extraordinary range of vocal colours and, in every instance, be utterly compelling and convincing. There is nothing timid or restrained about Leiferkus's style, but it is harnessed to an impeccable technique and purity of tone. You are left in no doubt about Mussorgsky's quest for realism, both emotional and dramatic, in his songs.

This Conifer CD, the first of three from the label embracing all of Mussorgsky's songs, opens with the best-known cycle, the Songs and Dances of Death. All four songs are based on dialogues with Death, who speaks with a dying child's mother, a young girl, a drunken peasant and a field of dying soldiers. Seldom can the cycle have been performed more tellingly, with the accompanist, Semion Skigin, as commanding as his partner.

This standard is maintained through The Nursery, seven short songs in which Mussorgsky used his own texts and which display his ability to 'get inside' the mind of someone self-evidently very different from himself. This cycle also finds the composer at his most musically original, both harmonically and rhythmically. The Puppet-Show finds him, again in his own words, roundly lampooning his enemies in the musical world - "Our lords of music" as he describes them. There is pungent humour, too, in The Seminarist and The He-Goat, alongside the pathos of the moving Forgotten. The

recording, engineered by Tryggv Tryggvason in All Saints Church, Petersham, Surrey, is a model of transparency and balance, according to Leiferkus's voice the space and range it needs.



SPLENDID BRITISH CLARINET WORKS
**Music for clarinet and piano
by Arnold Bax, Gerald Finzi,
Eric Hughes, John Ireland and
Charles Villiers Stanford**
**John Denman, clarinet; Paula
Fan, piano**
BRITISH MUSIC LABEL BML009
(DDD/79.37)

The title doesn't exaggerate - these are splendid pieces, from the cheery tunefulness of Finzi's Five Bagatelles to the more profound appeal of Bax's Sonata of 1934, a work of notable invention and intensity. The harmonic language, as in so much of Bax's music, is both idiomatic and adventurous, and while there are no obvious references to Irish music, Bax's love-affair with Ireland and things Celtic is seldom far away.

The Bax sonata is not the only work here with more than a hint of Irishness. Although sometimes described as "the

English Brahms", Charles Villiers Stanford was born a Dubliner and wrote several works which reflected the musical heritage of his homeland - the Irish Rhapsodies, for example. The Clarinet Sonata of 1912, one of three works Stanford wrote for the instrument, carries no similar title, but does contain an elegaic middle movement entitled 'Caoine' (the mournful wailing heard at an Irish funeral or wake). Stanford employs the soulful tone of the clarinet to compelling effect in this fantasia-like movement, while paying homage in the outer movements of the sonata to his German classical models, and to Brahms in particular. (A subtle reference to the latter's Op120/2 clarinet sonata occurs at the end of the first movement).

Between the Bax and Stanford sonatas, clarinetist John Denman and his accompanist Paula Fan insert some lighter fare in the shape of Eric Hughes' rollicking Sonata Capriccioso. Hughes, better known by his nickname of Spike, and more famous as a jazz composer and performer, wrote this sprightly piece in 1964 especially for John Denman, who plays it here with sparkling dexterity.

The final work in the programme, the enjoyment of which is enhanced by Mike Skeet's warm, clear and truthful recording from the Music Hall of London's Guildhall School of Music and Drama, is the Fantasy Sonata of John Ireland. Composed in 1934 for the clarinetist Frederick Thurston, the Fantasy Sonata is considered by some to be the crowning glory of Ireland's chamber music. Certainly, its wealth of lyricism and tonal colour is fully evident here, thanks to both the quality of the recording and the committed playing of the performers. And those sentiments apply to all the works on this engaging CD, as splendid a production as its title suggests ●

Classical reviews

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ALBAN BERG

Seven Early Songs/Der Wein/Three Pieces for Orchestra Op6
Anne Sofie von Otter, mezzosoprano; Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra; conductor, Claudio Abbado
 DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 445 846-2
 (DDD/49.25)

In a way, these three works by the most approachable of the composing triumvirate of the Second Viennese School could all be described as apprentice pieces, although that may seem an odd description for a composition - Der Wein - dating from Alban Berg's forty-fourth year. The Seven Early Songs, however, are precisely that, the products of both an enduring love of literature and the tutelage of Arnold Schoenberg.

In his late teens, Berg produced over thirty settings of German poets, all firmly rooted in the Romantic tradition. These possessed sufficient individuality to impress Schoenberg, to whom Berg had shown the scores after answering the former's advertisement for composition pupils. Berg studied with Schoenberg for some six years between 1904 and 1910, and during that period composed a great many more songs, mainly in a style that hovered between Brahms and Hugo Wolf but with strong echoes of Schubert, Mahler and, in particular, Robert Schumann.

After 1912, however, Berg was drawn to composition on a larger scale, and the German lied lost its attraction for him. His portfolio of songs lay gathering dust until shortly before he began work on his second opera, Lulu, in 1928. He then selected a group of his favourite settings and published them as Seven Early Songs. They date from between 1905 and 1908 and use texts from a variety of German poets, the best-known being Nikolaus Lenau and Rainer Maria Rilke.

And what beautifully crafted pieces they prove to be, especially when entrusted to the angelic voice of Anne Sofie von Otter (recently voted Artist

of the Year in Gramophone magazine's annual awards). Although not arranged in their order of composition, these songs trace something of Berg's development during his time with Schoenberg. The overtly Brahmsian quality of Die Nachtigall and Im Zimmer give way to experiments in whole-tone harmony in Carl Hauptmann's Nacht (at over four minutes the longest of the seven settings) and to elements of Schoenbergian chromaticism in Lenau's Schilflied.

It was Schoenberg, too, who planted the idea for the Three Orchestral Pieces when he suggested that Berg should write a suite of character pieces for orchestra. When



the work was completed in 1915, Berg seems to have sought a mark of approval from his former teacher as evidence of his progress as a composer. Yet the most important influence in the Three Orchestral Pieces was not Schoenberg, but Mahler, whose Ninth Symphony had had such an overwhelming impact on Berg (he had attended the symphony's first performance in 1912, the year after Mahler's death).

The Three Orchestral pieces are written on a large scale and, with their elaborate thematic inter-relationships, constitute Berg's most complex score. Yet, while radical, the score is also in some respects very formal, displaying a debt to the pre-atonal works of Schoenberg, and being very strictly organised. Certainly, the range - both

dynamically and emotionally - and the impact of the work come over strongly in this outstanding recording. Claudio Abbado first recorded Berg's Op6 for DG a quarter of a century ago and it has been intriguing to compare the two readings. The newer version is more spacious and underlines the Mahlerian influence, but remains as powerful and immediate as its predecessor - the impact of the concluding March verges on the terrifying.

The final work here, again showcasing the voice of Anne Sofie von Otter, is Der Wein, settings of verses by the French poet Charles Baudelaire in translations by Stefan George. This was the product of a commission, in the spring of 1929, from the Czech-born soprano Ruzena Herlinger, who was then working in Vienna. Berg was attracted both by the fee on offer and by the chance of writing for the kind of light, flexible soprano voice that he envisaged taking the title role in his opera Lulu. In the event, this thirteen-minute concert aria, with its important roles for piano and saxophone, became an extended study for the opera. The orchestral scoring is light and delicate, never swamping the voice, and the atmosphere of hedonistic excess and gaiety is wonderfully sustained. Der Wein was destined to become Berg's last completed vocal work. He died in 1935 at the age of fifty, leaving his operatic masterpiece, Lulu, unfinished.

Anne Sofie von Otter is in magical voice here, if at times reluctant to explore the seedier nature of Baudelaire's poetry too deeply. Abbado's treatment of the orchestral accompaniment, though, is wholly idiomatic, the elusive dance rhythms allowed to insinuate themselves into the sound picture surely in just the way Berg intended. With immaculate and inspired playing from the Vienna Philharmonic and a 4D recording that really does live up to DG's claim for the system, this is a welcome addition to the Berg discography, even if by present standards it is not over-generous in terms of playing time ●

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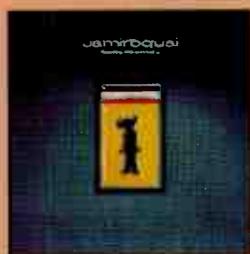
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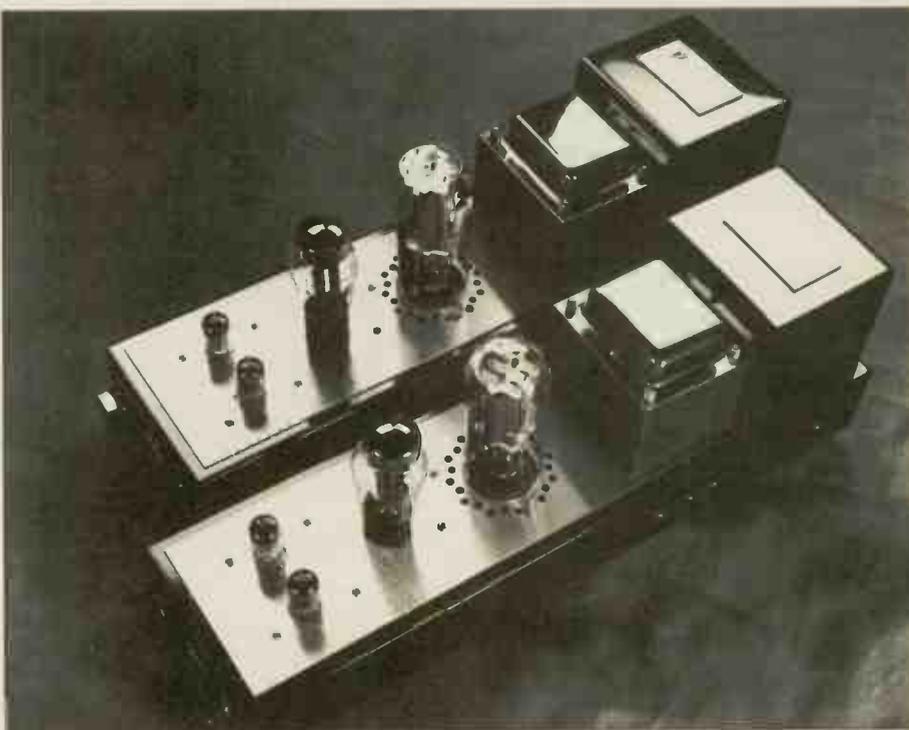
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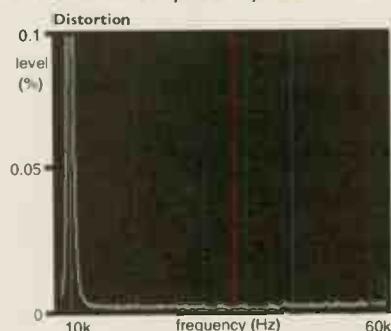
The A-700 Mk3 delivers a healthy 66watts per channel, making it suitable for general domestic use. This is enough to drive most loudspeakers to high level in a medium sized room. Its power supply had good regulation. There was little voltage drop delivering current into a low four ohm load, output going up healthily to 100watts per channel.

The CD input goes low, down to 4Hz. I was surprised, however, to find that the upper limit was volume control dependent, reaching just 14kHz at a high setting (2 o'clock) which will give a warm sound. Set at 11 o'clock, the normal position, it was alright. The tone controls gave very symmetrical lift/cut characteristics, affecting only their intended spectrum, but they must be switched out to obtain a flat response.

There was little distortion, as expected, since a lot of feedback can be

applied with MOSFETs. Odd order harmonics were present, which suggests some lack of smoothness might be perceptible. Noise was low and channel separation high via CD, whilst sensitivity was normal at 200mV.

The phono stage was more band limited than CD, reaching just 21kHz. This will add a little warmth. Equalisation proved accurate but there is no warp filter, so cone flap is likely with reflex



loudspeakers (as most are nowadays). Hiss was very low, sensitivity normal at 3.4mV and the overload ceiling high.

The Technics measured well, proving absolutely conventional, with the minor exception of some attempt at band limiting, possibly in an attempt to ensure clean treble. NK

Power 66watts

CD/tuner/aux.	
Frequency response	4Hz-30kHz
Separation	66dB
Noise	-95dB
Distortion	0.004%
Sensitivity	200mV
dc offset	1.8/2mV

Disc	
Frequency response	10Hz-21kHz
Separation	68dB
Noise	-80dB
Distortion	0.005%
Sensitivity	3.4mV
Overload	190mV

MONRIO AMPLIFIER

The Monrio turns out a useful 45watts per channel, enough to go loud with most loudspeakers, if not very loud. Output increases to a useful 72watts into a low 4ohm load, showing the power supply has good regulation, which bodes well for bass dynamics.

Frequency response was well extended downward, hitting 10Hz - low enough to reproduce most of what CD can produce. The amplifier has been band-limited to 20kHz at high frequencies, the idea of this being to provide clean treble, and a 'warm' sound too.

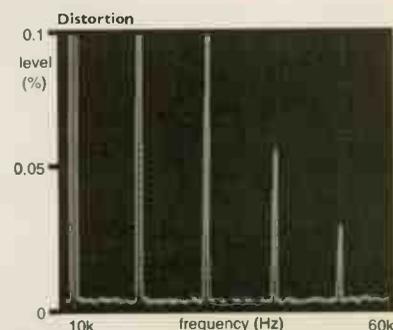
Unfortunately, this amplifier displayed significant treble distortion (10kHz) of 0.3%, with an extended harmonic structure. The figure rose to around 0.5% at full output, both values being high enough to add coarseness to the sound.

It's difficult to know these days whether designers are lowering feedback to gain space and dimensionality, trading this benefit off against low distortion, because solid state amps don't normally produce so much high frequency distortion.

In all other areas the Monrio measured well, exhibiting low noise, good channel separation and low DC offset at the output. NK

Power 45watts

CD/tuner/aux.	
Frequency response	10Hz-20kHz
Separation	57dB
Noise	-98dB
Distortion	0.03%
Sensitivity	280mV
dc offset	1.7/1.8mV



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CD PLAYERS

ARCAM ALPHA 7 CD

It's becoming a familiar trait of Arcam's affordable players, treble roll-off, that is. It is a sensible move too, removing some of the glare from CD and sweetening out that sting from the cheap tweeter in your budget 'speakers.

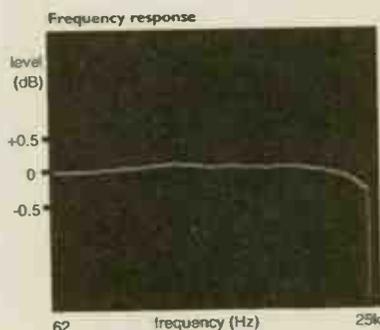
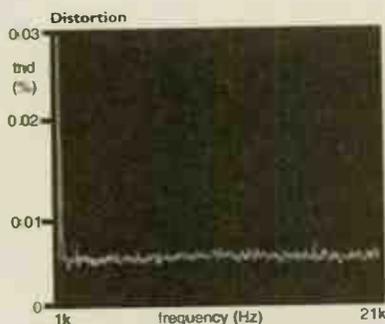
Unusually, bass level falls slightly too towards low frequencies, which may weaken bass.

Distortion stays low right across the board, with only slight 2nd harmonic visible at -30dB, a level picked to represent a typical music signal.

Output level was 2.4V, a touch above the 2V standard, but allowing useful extra headroom for passive preamplifiers. Separation was wide, around 100dB even at 20kHz suggesting good board layout. Noise was low at -107dB and dynamic range healthy at 108dB. DB

TEST RESULTS

Frequency response	4Hz-20.8kHz		Separation (dB)	left	right
			1kHz	116	112
			20kHz	102	98
Distortion (%)	left	right	Noise		
-6dB	0.005	0.006	with emphasis	-107dB	
-30dB	0.006	0.006		-107dB	
-60dB	0.51	0.47			
-90dB	31.3	30.5			
			Dynamic range	108dB	
			Output	2.4V	



ARCAM ALPHA 8 CD

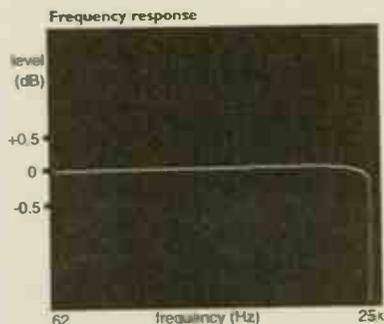
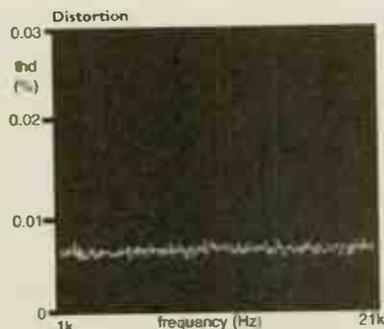
Unlike its more affordable sibling, the Alpha 8 has an extremely flat and extended frequency response. This flatter response up to 20kHz will reveal more detail and insight in a recording, giving a more open sound. If distortion stays low enough to be inaudible, this can be a good thing.

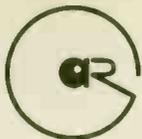
Luckily this is the case, with just the smallest amount of 2nd harmonic (deemed innocuous anyway, especially at such a low level) visible in our plot taken at -30dB. At -60dB distortion rises to 0.8%, giving a relatively low dynamic range figure of 102dB (EIAJ test).

Again, like the '7, the '8 has an output above the standard at 2.5V. Separation was wide and noise low. The '8 appears to be a competent player with a well balanced performance. DB

TEST RESULTS

Frequency response	4Hz-21.25kHz		Separation (dB)	left	right
			1kHz	103	102
			20kHz	83	97
Distortion (%)	left	right	Noise		
-6dB	0.008	0.007	with emphasis	-108dB	
-30dB	0.006	0.006		-108dB	
-60dB	0.80	0.77			
-90dB	29.2	29.0			
			Dynamic range	102dB	
			Output	2.5V	





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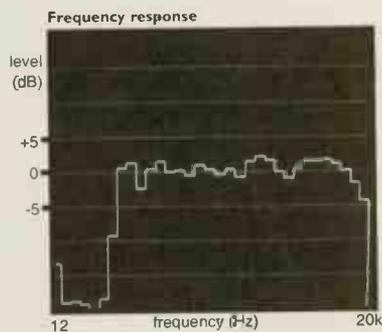
LOUDSPEAKERS

TDL T-Line 2

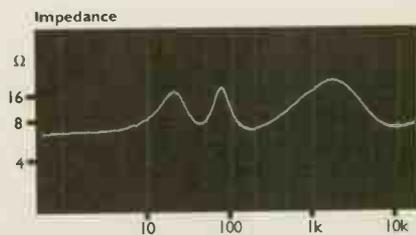
Although described as a transmission line the T-Lines are more a hybrid between this loading system and reflex. The impedance characteristic shows the twin peaks associated with reflex loading. Transmission lines are acoustically resistive, which reflects back into the impedance trace to give a near-flat response. Overall impedance was 9Ω , a high-ish figure that helped keep sensitivity down to a mediocre 86dB.

Frequency response was very flat, especially through the bass regions - a

good sign. The T-Line 2 should have plenty of bass. TDL have engineered in a smooth



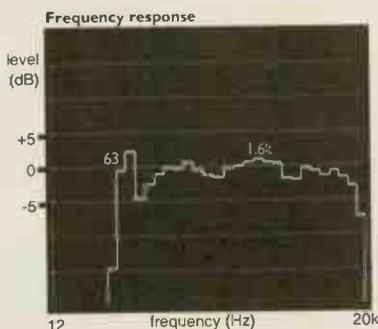
overall balance, but there is a peak around 1.6kHz, likely to add some brightness to the sound. This is a well balanced design, but conventional. NK



MISSION FREEDOM 752

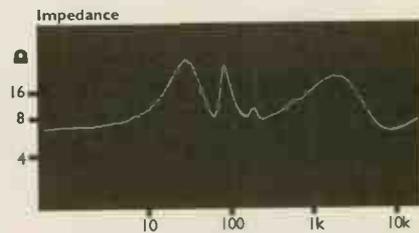
The tweeter on this speaker integrates on the bass/midrange axis and above, so listening (ear) height should be no lower, or a phase cancellation suckout will make the tweeter sound divorced and obvious. At this height and above response was broadly flat as our analysis shows, with some peaking between 1.6-2.5kHz, at the top end of the bass/mid's range. The 2dB dip in the crossover region around 3kHz is too small to mute detail rendition. Bass extends down to 63Hz in our analysis, wall and floor reinforcement acting to lift output.

Sensitivity was high at 89dB, especially considering the 752's overall impedance is high at 9.6Ω , hitting a minimum of 6Ω at



10kHz. These speakers are a light load and need little power, but they are also heavily reactive around 80Hz, which doesn't suit all amps.

A well engineered speaker, but sit high! NK

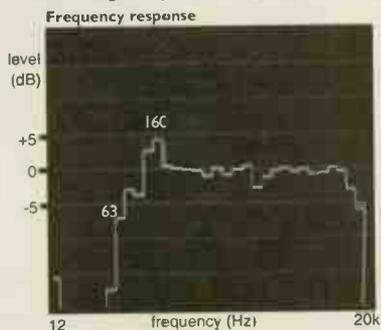


B&W Minipod

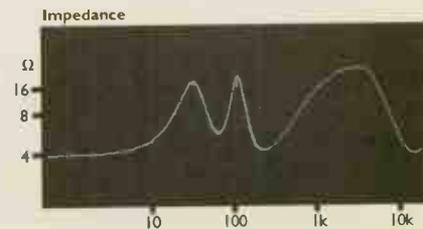
The Minipod demonstrates just how well, technically, a miniature can perform. It has a ruler flat response that was maintained over a wide frontal range, showing excellent drive unit integration. Bass output is limited; it peaks at 160Hz and drops rapidly below 80Hz due to limited cabinet volume.

Overall impedance measures 6.5Ω , a sensible value, but the impedance swings are wild (4Ω - 35Ω) and the

reactance high in places, making them an



awkward load. Sensitivity was good at 88dB for 2.8V input (nominal watt). They need a moderately powered (around 40W) solid-state amplifier. NK



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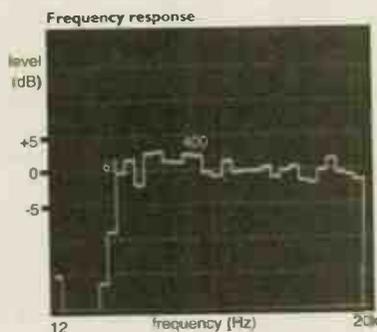
LOUDSPEAKERS

KAR Torino

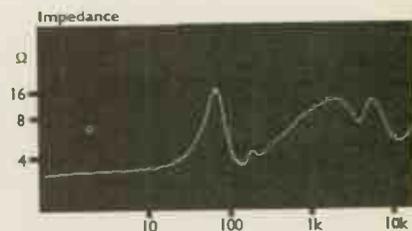
The Torino has raised lower bass, our analysis shows, a property that will give it good bass weight. Bass output was very smooth too. There's a small spike in the treble, a part of some peakiness in the tweeter. This may well detract from treble smoothness. Overall though, the Torino's response is well balanced and free from suckouts.

It was obvious during tests that this is a very sensitive loudspeaker - it delivered 91dB from a nominal 1 watt (2.8V), no less. However, this was due mainly to a low impedance of 5Ω overall, with inima of

3Ω. With steep rates of change, there's



plenty of reactance too, making the Torinos a difficult load. They should be matched with care. NK

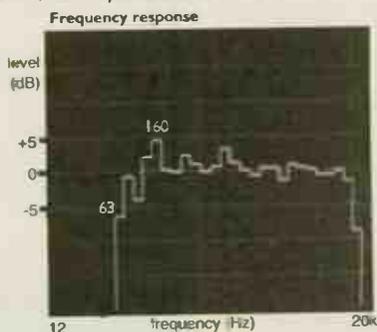


UKD Opera

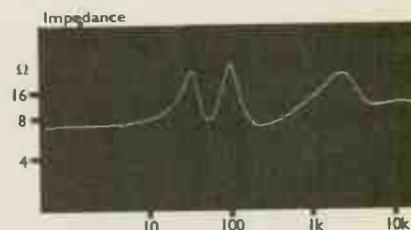
The Opera has some peaks in its response, notably at 160Hz, below which the bass rolls away slowly. All the same, it reaches down to 63Hz with ease, so it should give some good wallop. The upper bass emphasis will strengthen bass speed. Absence of a crossover suckout will ensure the Opera has a clear midrange and good vocal projection though.

Overall impedance is high at 9Ω and sensitivity correspondingly low at 85dB. There are some steep impedance changes around bass resonance, indicating

heavy reactance. Although an easy-ish load, the Opera needs a well rated



amplifier to swing volts, even though it will not actually draw much power, around 60watts being advisable. NK



CASSETTE

KENWOOD KX-5080S CASSETTE DECK

Carefully adjusted to possess correct head azimuth, the KX-5080S we reviewed performed well with prerecorded tapes. Frequency response measured flat to 16kHz, showing good basic replay equalisation accuracy. However, the head itself rolls off above 16kHz, due to head gap width. This affected recordings too. Replay amplifier noise was low at -60dB and speed accuracy good at +0.4% fast.

Frequency response when recording depended upon tape type and consistency of the tune system, which was so-so. Ferrics generally tuned with upper mid-range peak and high treble roll off. Chromes tuned fairly flat, metals flattest of all. However, the head overloaded at +1dB (ref. IEC0dB) with metals, a low value. Ferrics and chromes did better in the midband, but ferric was over-biased, giving early treble overload. This will result in soft, muddled treble.

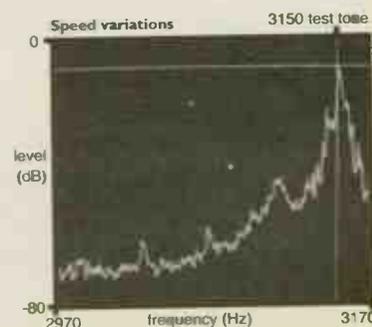
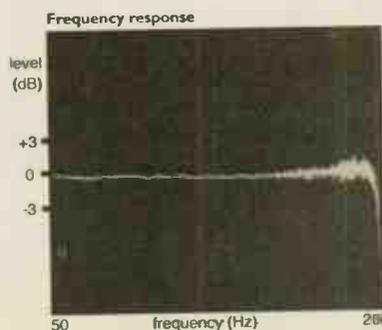
Dolby S has broadband overload prevention and will compensate for the Kenwood's mediocre overload performance to some degree.

The transport was satisfactorily speed stable, displaying just a little regular cyclic drift (wow below 1Hz). Hiss levels were as expected for Dolby B,C and S, but at 2.2% head distortion was double that normally encountered.

The KX-5080S offers a reasonable set of performance figures, being hampered by a head of very mediocre performance. NK

REPLAY (prerecorded tapes)
Frequency response (-2dB) 30Hz-18kHz
Speed accuracy +0.4% fast
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chrome (IECII) 25Hz-15kHz
metal (IECIV) 25Hz-19kHz
Separation (1kHz) 68dB
Distortion (315Hz) 2.2%
Hiss (70uS, Dolby out) -56dB
Speed variations (DIN total) 0.08%
Flutter energy (3-3.13kHz) -30dB
MOL/SAT (IEC Refs) 315/10k
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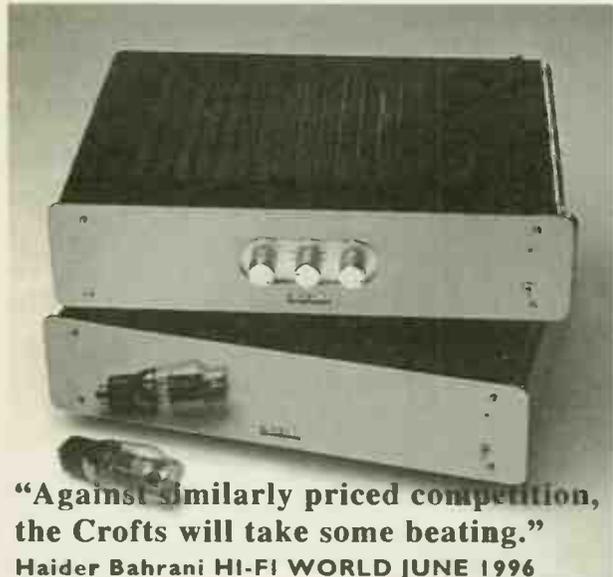
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Thorens 124 chassis. Various	EPOA Thorens TD160. Boxed £90
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Magneplaner SMGA. Boxed	E325 Castal Pembroke. Black £149
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MUSICAL FIDELITY F22 PRE	£1100	£ 900
REL Q50	£ 375	£ 299
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REL STRATA II	£ 575	£ 459
ROGERS LS2A/2	£ 250	£ 175
RUARK PALADIN	£1100	£ 699
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ROKSAN NEWS

With the launch of the new Caspian range we are hoping to have amplifiers by the end of November and CD players shortly after the amplifier which is remote controlled has six line level inputs and will sell for £695. The CD player will be around the same price. Ojan 3e 3x Owners will be pleased to note that the last phase of this phenomenal loudspeaker has now reached our hands. Available in rosewood only - they will be £995 per pair. Aretxerxes X - The new version of the phono stage will cost £395 + P.S.U. We also have a few slightly substandard items on special offer this month.

	WAS	NOW
Roksan Ojar 3 R/W	£995	£649
Roksan Ojar 3x R/W	£495	£995
Roksan Rok-One R/W	£650	£495
Roksan Rok-One Bk	£580	£450
Roksan Attezza DP2 MkII P	£1495	£895
Roksan L2.5 preamp	£995	£525
Roksan L2 preamp	£995	£450
Roksan L1 preamp	£2250	£925

OTHER NEWS

After the release of the Rega Planet and the rush for the first few players in stock, we now have more time to demonstrate this amazing CD player which truly outperforms many of its peers. If you've got a little more money to spend on a CD player why not listen to the DPA Renaissance CD player, our favourite at £950 inc remote. Now on to my favourite subject, analogue record players. MAX have noticed a growing interest in this underestimated format with vinyl becoming an easier format to obtain. (We ourselves have over 150 new titles on sale) I have listed our best top selling turntables.

Rega Planar 2 inc super bias	£273
Rega Planar 3 inc Elys	£395
Systemdek 2 X 2/Rega RB300/MC15S	£804
Project 6.1 SA/MC 30 Suprem	£995
Roksan Radius/Tabris/Corus/Black	£1070
Michell Gyrodecu/Rega RB300/MC20	£1524
Rega Planar 9 inc RB900/Exact	£1844
Roksan Xerxes X/Tabriz/Corus black	£2170

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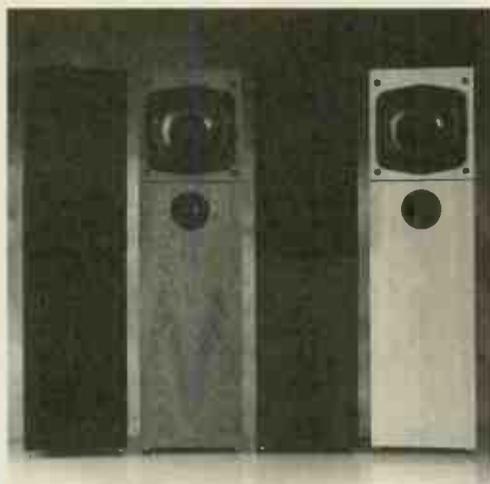
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Ex Demo/Secondhand Goods	WAS	NOW
Voyd Valdi/Helius/ATF5	£1300	£450
Manta Electronic/RB250/Bias	£650	£250
Thorens TD166/RB250	£300	£179
Rotel RCD 965 BK discrete CD player	£350	£199
Rotel RQ 970 BX phono stage	£139	£79
Roksan DP 1.5 transport	£1395	£599
Roksan Darius (Kenyan black) inc Xerxes	£1795	£850
Sonus Faber Minuetto	£898	£629
Martin Logan Aerius	£2100	£1495
Arcam Alpha 5+ CD player	£479	£295
B & W CDM 1 Red Ash Speakers	£599	£349
Orelle SA100 Amplifier	£449	£295
Project 0.5 turntable (cracked lid)	£149	£75
Project 1.2 turntable	£199	£95
Thorens TD 160 (no lid)	N/A	£65
Leak Troughline Mk1 (mono)	N/A	£40
Roksan Xerxes/Tabriz/K9	£1650	£795

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| MARTIN LOGAN AERIOUS boxed black | £1350 | MICHEL/TRANSCRIPTOR turntables always wanted and usually in stock | |
| QUAD 405 Mk1 just serviced | £175 | GARRARD 301/401 Ridiculously heavy Marine steel sandwich construction plint, if you've always fancied a tank but have nowhere to put one, buy one of these instead from GARRARD 301 serviced from £200 and yes that includes the deck! | £200 |
| ACOUSTIC ENERGY AEL metal cone speakers with posy stands £550 | | KINSHAW PERCEPTION two box DAC scruffy | £250 |
| MERIDIAN ARGENT, £1000 new yours for a misery | £450 | QUAD ESL 57 nice pair just serviced by QUAD with new V Black grilles another pair! | £700 boxed £225 |
| KROFT SUPERMICRO III | £275 | QUAD 100v old colour | £150 pair |
| BEARD BBA 1100 Line level integrated monster | £750 | LOWTHER ACOUSTAS with PM6A drivers | £250 |
| MARANTZ CD3 SE | £225 | BEARD CA35/P35 valve pre/power | £950 |
| VELLEMAN/KIT PRE AMP everything digitally controlled & remote cost £200 now its built only | £100 | PINK TRIANGLE DA CAPO DAC woth 18 bit and 1307 filters £1050 | |
| AUDION silver night single ended line level integrated | £750 | SONIC LINK VERMILLION Titanium interconnect £175 1/2m pair, its clean its fast its available on appro from the Emporium | |
| ELECTROCOMPANIE class A pre/power orig killer amp | £700 | A PAIR OF HULLARD 5-10 monoblocks Heathkit MA12 just serviced | £250 |
| ALBARRY PRE two box red fronted | £275 | RADFORD MA25 MkIII monoblocks | £560 |
| MELVIN LABS M30 class A monoblocks AND TWO BOX absolute zero pre amp MC stage | £550 | RADFORD K25 monoblocks as illustrated in Audio Audio book rare | £800 |
| TRESHAM FOUR BOX AMP 260 watts per channel blow away the neighbours | £450 | RADFORD STA25 reult | £375 |
| AUCOM weird AUSTRALIAN pre/power amp combo big black and ugly | £200 | LEAK TL12+ champagne, poor condition | £100 |
| AUDIO INNOVATIONS ALTO | £150 | LEAK TL12+ gold very good | £150 |
| CHROME PLATED LEAK STEREO 60 with groove tubes | £550 | QUAD ELECTROSTATICS good used pair | £450 |
| LINN/AXIS/AKITO | £300 | ALLBARRY two box preamp and m408 monoblocks | £675 |
| NAKAMICHI BX100 | £150 | ONIX FM tuner with separate power supply (soap) | £275 |
| MAGNEPLANAR SMGA | £300 | MISSION 753 speakers black boxed | £475 |
| ROCK TURNTABLE WITH EXCALIBUR ARM | £800 | RJARRK SWORDSMAN black | £175 |
| ORTOFON MC3000 MC TRANSFORMER!!!!!!! | £400 | MICROMEGA MINIMUM AMP | £200 |
| DECCA LONDON SUPER GOLD boxed | £150 | STEREOPETIC TUNER £40 ROGERS TUNER matches cadet III £40 | |
| LOADS of weird cartridges under £100 ring for details | | CUTE MEDIUM CORNER SPEAKER WORDEN PASONA uses PM6a | pair £500 |
| AUDIO RESEARCH SP11 MkII just serviced by Absolute Sounds mint and boxed | £1950 | GARRARD 301,401 turntables in stock + LEAK STEREO 30 no reasonable offer refused + LEAK TL12 I two pairs, TL10 one pair, TL12+ 3 pairs + some singles + LEAK STEREO 20 half a dozen in stock from £200 to £300 come and choose one + LOWTHER CABINETS, ACOUSTAS two pairs and three singles, TPI a one single wanted + PM6a & PM4a with silver voice coils available for export | |
| THORENS TURNTABLES TD124 MkII in nice wooden plinth with lid | £250 | TANNOY MONITOR REDS AND GOLDS USUALLY IN STOCK ring | |
| NAIM NAP 135 pair £1400 £600 trade in your 250 | | | |
| AR EB101 turntable black with smoked lid comes with arm and cartridge | £100 | | |
| MISSION 753 speakers boxed black | £475 | | |
| WWEIRD RUSSIAN AMPLIFIER WITH TRANSMITTING VALVES and C core transformers | £500 | | |
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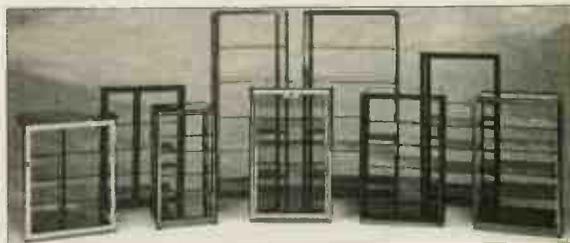
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World Audio K5881 Valve Power amp	£895	£545
Cyrus 2/PSX Graphite Model	£700	£425
Concordant Excelsior preamp/ groove/power supply	£1140	£795
Art Audio Vp1 valve preamp	£952	£595
McIntosh C712 Remote Preamp	£1479	£1095
Linn Kairn Pro Pre-amplifier	£1400	£1095
Linn Klout Power Amplifier	£2400	£1800
Arcam Delta 290 Amplifier	£500	£375
Audiolab 8000C/P Black Mint	£1300	£1075
Nakamichi Stasis PA7E 200w/200w	£1950	£675
Audjo Innovations 1000pre/200 Power	£1300	£695
Craft Series 5 Power	£750	£375
Nakamichi IA-3 Amplifier	£350	£250
Cyrus 2/PSX Late Black Model	£700	£495
Moth Passive Pre 2 x Monoblocks	£599	£399
Quad 77 amplifier (ex-dem mint)	£849	£649
Naim 160 x 3 power amps/Alps PSU	£7000	£2750
NAC42 Pre/Naxo/Linn Isoboriks		
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Arcam Delta 70 CD Player	£599	£235
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Systemdek 2XE/RB300	£500	£300
Thorens TD180 MKV/Stanton 500	£399	£199
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Spendor S20 Walnut Mint	£770	£500
Yamaha NS1000 Rare in Cherry	£1399	£700
Rega EL8 Black Mint	£300	£240
Quad ESL57	equivalent price	£495
Spendor BC3	equivalent price	£1500
IMF TLS80	equivalent price	£1800
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Rogers LS7	£550	£300
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PRIVATE

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TEL BOB 01382 819732

SOFT EPOCH Valve pre-amp (phono), black excellent sound £350. £550 new. IMF
 mestic monitor T/lines, size. 40 x 17 1/2 x 3/4 ins, vintage classic £350. Rogers T75/2 tuner, mint £65. Tel: 01273 541 462 (Brighton)

AUDIOLAB 8000C Preamps £375. Rogers det bi-amp mono block £300 (pair). Sugden 1a class-A amps (early 1970s) £275. Arcam 5+ amps £130. B&W DM 601 speakers 30. Kenwood KRV-6050 A/V receiver £175. Years must collect.
 Tel: 0121 326 8083 (Birmingham)

NAIM HI-CAP Old style, mint condition £250 o. Delivered. Tel: 00 3531 459 1432

LN LP12 Valhalla, Cirkus, Trampolin. Ittok 11. Ortofon MC20 Supreme (120hrs) excellent condition, with boxes. Dealer set-up service Sept 96. A true bargain £750. Wanted. Laserdiscs. Tel: 01977 732 458

FOR SALE: SBLs Mint condition £800. Naim 15/5Snaps/bi-amped 140s Avandale upgraded. At Naim you will ever hear £1000.
 Tel: 0141 942 8415 evenings.

ROGROGRAPH LOGIC Severn recorder heads and new, half track stereo type BR16Z and 16Z. One pair only £70. Also one only 16Z £35. Tel: 01386 553 942 evenings only

AVONDALE QUAD 44 Pre-amp with terminal psu. Excellent punchy sound £400. Ortofon T5 moving coil transformers, nice sound £30. Pye VHF/2D continental valve radio, vintage, GWO £35.
 Tel: 01273 541 462 (Brighton)

AUDIO INNOVATIONS Pre-amp £300. First audio amplifier £800 for sale. £1000 if purchased together. Will demonstrate
 Tel: 01923 282 129 (Herts)

LN KANS & MKII Lead filled stands £200 o. Tel: 01256 475 139 (Basingstoke)

FORENS TD160 II. Rega RB300. Solid mahogany plinth. AT450E0CC. Perspex top. In vgc + 50 LPs mixed. £300 ono.
 Tel: 0181 874 4484

NAIM 82/RC Pre amplifier £1250. Naim IBL loudspeakers latest spec £320. Sony 337 ESD CD player superb machine £250. All in mint condition and boxed. Tel: 01825 712960 (Sussex)

PAIR OF QUAD II Plus control unit. Plus pair original ESLs complete with manuals. Working order but needs some attention. £300 ono.
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AK EQUIPMENT. Stereo 20 £265. 2 x TL + £295. Troughline 3 Stereo £100. Garrard 1/8ME plinth/3009 II £150. Heathkit 8+8, Armstrong 222 £45 each. 2 x Pye HFS/8. Offers.
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AUDIO INNOVATIONS Series 300 integrated live amp £225. Cambridge Audio CD4 plus AC Magic 2 £250. JPW P1 plus Atacma 24" stands £150. Complete system with cables £50. Tel: 01455 558 426 (Leicester)

LN LP12 Trampolin, Cirkus, Lingo, Ittok 11/III, Klyde, wall table £1150. Naim 32.5 £200. Cap new style £400. Mk1 Kans new Mk2 receivers £150. Tel: 01977 730 939

WANTED URGENTLY. Epos ES11 loudspeakers with stands. Must be in good condition and boxed. Tel: Colin 01582 769 334

WANTED: ROKSAN Shiraz (Dead or Alive); Marantz 10B tuner; single Tannoy 15" monitor; Ortofon 12" arm. Sell: McIntosh MR-73 state-of-the-art tuner (was £1500) £550. Offers: 12 x orig 1948 VT4C/211 new £75 each; 2 x Gold Lion KT-88 new £150/pr; 8 x 4AL £20 each; 8 x early Valvo EL-34 new £30 ch.
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HI-FI WORLD

NAIM CD3 £500. Hi Cap £300 (old style). 72 pre-amp new style £300. LP12 with Aro arm and cartridge £650. All in very good condition. No offers. 0181 681 6849

SPENDOR SPI100 Monitor loudspeakers. One year old. As new £600.
 Tel: 0181 549 2948 (Kingston)

ORACLE PARIS turntable, piano black finish. External psu. Roksan Tabriz. Isoda Interconnects. Goldring 1042, spare 1042/1006 stylus, mint, boxed, 18 months old. Upgrading £500 ovno. Tel: 0181 658 4198 (Beckenham)

LN LK100 Power amps x 4 boxed, excellent condition £330 each. Wanted: Linn/Naim tuner, K400 cables. Tel: 01925 860 720

REVOX A77 with amplifiers £250. Akai 355 tape recorder £80. Audiotronic 6-pole Quadraphonic SQ-Decoder Records £25. Garrard Lab-80 record deck £20. Wearite tape deck £20. Quantity reel to reel tapes. Offers? Tel: 01483 573027 (Guildford)

ATC SCM 20 Loudspeakers, Rosewood, few months old, boxed as new £1100.
 Tel: 01355 264 586

ACOUSTAT SPECTRA 1100 electrostatic & bass cone speakers in Oak & grey 5'6" x 1'4" £600. Want Nakamichi 3 head, amps hifi etc. McIntosh 240 valve amp, superb £1600 cash. Want Nakamichi 3 head, amps hifi etc
 Tel: 01626 774 246

MONO BLOCK power amp system. Rotel RC 850 pre amp. Rotel RB 850 power amps x 2. Vgc, manuals, black £300 ono. 01273 707 647

WANTED: MISSION 777 power amplifier.
 Tel: Dave 01708 851 324 or 0831 499 610

SONUS FABER Extremas stands, boxed, mint £3900. Meridian 208 CD/pre-amp, c/w 209 £550. Naim 01 and 101 tuners £700 and £400. Linn LK1, Dirak, LK280 £525. 01895 820 191

NAIM 32.5 Preamp, Hi-Cap, 250 power amp £1100. Linn Kan II plus dedicated stands £275. Target Five shelf stand £45.
 TEL: 01777 700 066 (Notts)

HEYBROOK SEXTETS Walnut, AT450E0CC. Wanted: B+W CM2 loudspeakers and Acousticone sub woofer.
 Tel: 01892 536 919 (W. Kent)

Meridian 200 transport, 203 DAC £550, 201 preamp, 209 remote £295. M20 loudspeakers (walnut) £485. (Accept less for lot). Systemdek, Ittok, Elite GMail £200 ONO. Tel: 015242 41769 after 8pm.

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LN ISOBARRIC speakers, spiked speaker stands + Linn cable £650. Good condition.
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 Tel: 01925 752 396 (Cheshire)

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ATC SCM 50 Active speakers, rosewood, as new £4000. AVI S2000MC CD player, as new £750. REL Stentor II new model, rosewood, new and boxed £1500.
 Tel: 0181 870 3630 daytime

REGA XEL Speakers, as new, boxed £650 (£1040), 10 months old.
 Tel: 0181 773 3798 or 0850 421 475 (London SE)

MARTIN LOGAN Aeries loudspeakers. 1 year old, light Oak, perfect condition £1450.
 Tel: 0161 432 6120 (Stockport)

LN LP12 Walnut, Ekos MkII (£1500 new) Cirkus, Trampolin, Valhalla. 45 adapt. £1000 ono. Tel: 01933 626 170

MERIDIAN 501 Pre-amp + remote, boxed, vgc £525 ono. Linn LK100 power amp x 2, boxed vgc £850 ono. Denon TU-260L tuner, boxed vgc £75 ono. Tel: 01703 619 804

TRILOGY AUDIO 918 Pre-amplifier, one year old in mint condition (boxed) £1600 ono (£2750 new). Tel: 0181 291 1744

UNITY AUDIO Signature 3, EDC speakers, lovely looks and sound. Mint condition and boxed. List £2000 will accept £950.
 Tel: 01206 844 855

AUDIO INNOVATIONS Series 800C pre amp Series 800P power amp £450. Also Series 800 M/C step up transformer £75 or £500 the lot. Tel: 01642 566 180

DPA LITTLE BIT III £200 mint, boxed, manuals etc. DPA Renaissance CD player, absolutely mint condition, boxed, manuals etc. £700 inc delivery. Naim NAP 90, NAC 42 £380 boxed.
 Tel: Jules 01792 280 061

SPENDOR SP771 Rosewood speakers £1400. Yamaha 580 sound processor £250, Michell ISO £235. Castle Severn speakers, Yew, £440. Meridian 201 pre amp £325. Pioneer A400 amp £140. Equinox pre amp £650. Sony 555ES CD player £425. Tel: 01977 643 629

LN SONDEK Lingo £1100. Aro arm £600. Arkiv £500. Naim B2/HiCap/140 £1900. Naim SBLs £1100. Mana Ref Stand £200. Rotel 965BX CD £180. As new, will separate.
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REVOX B77 STEREO Tape recorder 1/2 track, 3.3/4, 7 1/2, remote control, good condition £425. Revox B150 amp, B160 tuner, remote control £425. Yamaha DSP E1000 surround sound processor £250. Yamaha rear speakers AST SE10 £50 pair. Tel: 01438 832 270

SILTECH HF-6 Digital + WBTs (0.5m) £90. Tara Labs Analogue standard 'S' gold phonos (2 x 1m pairs) £90 each, £170 both. Mission Isoplat £30. All vgc. Accept nearest offers.
 Tel: Martyn 01254 580 402

NAIM SBL Loudspeakers, black Ash, 4 years old, excellent condition. No bumps or scratches, original boxes and packing £750 ovno. Naim IBL loudspeakers, black Ash, good condition £350.
 Tel: 01524 381 389

ATC EC23 STEREO 3-Way electronic crossover, programmable frequencies, balanced inputs and outputs. For tri-amplified hi-fi or studio monitors. Boxed and unused, bargain £600 ono. Tel: David 0181 874 3123

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LEAK TROUGHLINE 3 FM Tuner and Stereo 30 Plus amplifier in cabinet £99. Tandberg TR2040 FM stereo receiver £40.
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MUSICAL FIDELITY MVX Pre amp. Moderate regular use £800. Tel: Jim 01925 635 159

SYSTEMDEK XE900 II. Acrylic platter, metal armband, RB300A/Tech ATFS Ltd/Ed £350 ono. Linn Akito tonearm, K9 cartridge on Linn armband. Mint condition £195 ono.
 Tel: 0114 272 7969 day or 0114 233 5413 eves

MERIDIAN 501 Preamp with MC phono board £525. LFD MCI phono stage £525. Audio Synthesis Pass on passive preamp £350. Audio Synthesis Passion BS £775. KEF 105 speakers £375. Tel: 01621 860 630 (Essex)

PINK TRIANGLE LPT Turntable, with GTI power supply, Iteok tonearm, MC15 Super II cartridge, superb sound, easily outperforms a Sondek. A vinyl bargain at £575.
 Tel: 0151 677 7386 (Merseyside)

ROCKSAN OJAN speakers, two years old, immaculate condition, cost £889. Sell £450.
 Tel: Julian 01970 623 816 (work)

IMPULSE LALs in Cherry, 4 months old, mint condition. For sale at £1350 ono.
 Tel: Mark 01423 561 861 (work) or 01765 677 639 (Home)

APOGEE STAGE speakers, excellent sound and condition. £1550. May p/x.
 Tel: 01225 337 821

REVOX A77 Mk4 High speed, two track, remote control, allowing timer operation. Original instruction book, NAB adaptors. £375. Tel: 01451 810 100

NAIM 42.5 Pre-amp, perfect condition £110. Tel: 01494 677 628 (Beaconsfield)

WANTED: ELCASET Machine in any condition. Also Elcaset service manual and test tapes. Tel: 01228 592 136 (Carlisle)

PAIR OF PHILIPS Digital active speakers + digital pre-amp. Original price £1700. Part exchange welcome.
 Tel: 01323 842 227 (E. Sussex)

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 Tel: 0181 427 1378 (Harrow)

LN LP12 (Black) Valhalla, Cirkus, Trampolin, Zeta conearm (Litz wired) £625. Linn Basik Plus arm £40.
 Tel: 01273 870 007 after 6pm (Brighton area)

UNISON RESEARCH Simply 2, 6 months old, as new. Breaks my heart to sell this beautiful sounding amp, but needs must, due to redundancy. Best offers around £700.
 Tel: 01780 64149 (Stamford, Lincs)

EPOS ESII Speakers black, Epos stands, mint condition £275 ono. NAD 4020B tuner, as new, boxed £40. Tel: 01743 232 959 work or 01743 821 298 eves.

WANTED: LOWTHER Cabinets, Fidelio or Bel Canto, without drive units.
 Tel: 01347 776 445

MARANTZ CD10 Trichord II modification £525. Aragon pre-amp 24K £450. Meridian 205 power amps £450. KEF 104/2 speakers and Kube 200 £495. Nakamichi DR 2 cassette £300. Musical Fidelity T2 MkII tuner £95. Dual CS505/4 turntable £95. Target AER/5 £85.
 Tel: 0181 502 5634

LN LK1 Pre-amplifier £175. Mission Cyrus One amplifier £110. Pair Tannoy 611 Mk2 speakers £250. Cambridge Audio digital converter £80. Naim NAC 32 pre amp £130. Sugden T48 tuner £60. Philips CDI with video cartridge £350 worth of accessories £350 vgc.
 Tel: 0181 406 4460 (Croydon)

STUDER REVOX B77 Mk II, domestic use only, mint condition, unmarked, serviced February, including 4 Ampex 456 spools, 2 leader tapes, 2 splicing tapes, cleaning kit, Can demo. £650. Tel: 01707 372 652

AXIOM 80 Goodmans 10" twin exponential P.M.L. loudspeakers with duplex cantilever suspension, 15 ohms, in original round wooden makers packing case. Offers.
 Tel: 01202 422 813

The Upgrade Path

Here are a few of the latest upgrades to look forward to:-

- ATC** (a) SCM20 SL which stands for 'Super Linear' and reduces third harmonic distortion by 10-15 dB but increases the price by about £100.
 (b) SPA 2-150, a200 WPC Power Amp to go with their SCA-2 Pre amp and obviously should be ideal for the SCM 10 and 20's.
 (c) New luxury cabinet finishes available for all models. Please ring for details.
- Ruark** Seen for the first time at Ramada, the new Templar II and Prologue I for both Hi-Fi and A/V (shielded).
- Alon** Main changes have been to cabinet build and we expect to have the Alon V in stock shortly for the first time (about £5k).
- Triangle** The new 'X' versions sound even better.

Electrocompaniet New remote controllable EC4.5 pre-amp and AW 60 power amp available shortly.

Ex-demo or P/E sale items

Impulse H2 speakers	£1100
Musical Fidelity FCD CD player	£800
Audio Research D200 power amp	£2000
Meridian 201 pre (+MM)	£300
TDL Studio I speakers (black)	£350
Quad complete 66 setup	£1800
ATC SCM 10 (teak or black)	£600
Chord SPM 800 power amp	£1400

V'audio Hi-Fi Consultants

36 Druid Hill, Stoke Bishop, Bristol BS9 1EJ
 Tel/Fax: 0117 9686005

VALVE AMPLIFIER POWER SUPPLY UPGRADE

Improve the Dynamics, Bass Control and Low level Resolution your valve power-amp/integrated with the addition of a Valve Rectified Choke Input Filter Power Supply. Uncover previously hidden detail in recordings together with greatly improved solidity and control. This conversion makes the amplifiers sound like significantly more powerful and expensive models.

Originally designed to work with Audio Innovations EL34 and 2A3 amplifiers the supply is suitable for a wide range of amplifiers from vintage Leaks to modern designs:- please call if you are unsure about the suitability for your amplifier.

The conversion is reversible, does not devalue your amplifier and is transferable to other models. The PSU is switched on and off from your existing amplifier and incorporates fail-safe circuitry to prevent damage to the valves and accidental electric shocks. The slow start characteristics of this supply will usefully increase valve life.

Priced at £595.00 (£1100.00 for mono-blocks) including fitting the conversion represents excellent value for money. For those competent in electrics/electronics the units are also available by mail order and comprehensive conversion instructions are provided. (If you have any doubt about your ability to do this modification safely, please consult us first.)

Agencies include:-

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 HORNING LIVING VOICE SME VOYD

definitive audio

Tel/Fax Brighton 01273 276716

IAN HARRISON HI-FI SALE

TEL: 01283

702875

9am-9pm

TDK	MAXELL	SALE, SPECIAL OFFERS
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AR 90 £1.10	XLIIS 90 £1.60	SENNHEISER HD580 £150
SA 90 P.O.A	METAL	SENNHEISER HD265 £110
SAX 90 £1.80	CD 90 £1.75	SENNHEISER HE60/V70 £830
MA 90 £1.85	MXS 90 £2.50	BEYER DT911 £185
MAXG 90 £7.90	DAT 120 £5.45	BEYER DT531 £107
DAT180 £7.75	UD 35/90 £6.75	BEYER IRS890 £175
TDK	XLI 35/180 £21.75	AUDIOQUEST QUARTZ 0.5M £75
ALKALINE BATTERIES		AUDIOQUEST LAPIS 0.5M £220
4AA £1.00		AUDIOQUEST DIAMOND 0.5M £285
4AAA £1.45		*TRADE IN 1 OLD M.C. £120
PP3 9V £1.45		GOLDRING 1042 £95
HD30		SHURE V15VXMR £235
DEMAGNETIZER £10.95		GRADO SR60 £71
		GRADO RS1 £635
		DENON DL304 £165
		SONY TCKA6ES £495
		SONY TCKE600S £275
		SONY TCK611S £275
		SONY MDSJA3ES £635
		SONY SCALA 1 £1275
		SONY SCALA 2 £805
		SONY SCALA 3 £725
		SONY DTC-ZE700 DAT £635
		SONY MDS-JE500 £280
		SONY TCDD8 DAT £535
		SONY WMD6C £300
		SONY D777 £290
		SONY WMEX1HG £185
		TASACM DA20 DAT £725
		TEAC R9 DAT £1100
		SPENDOR LS35A £620
		BI WIRED-ROSEWOOD £3300
		SPENDOR SP9/1 RSW £POA
		VAN DEN HUL MC1 £POA
		VAN DEN HUL MC SILVER IT £POA
		VAN DEN HUL GRASSHOPPER IV GLA £POA
		TEAC V8030S £590
TEST CD'S & CASSETTES; TEST RECORD		
HIFI NEWS TEST CD3 £11.00 HIFI NEWS TEST RECORD £14.50 CHESKY ULTIMATE DEMO CD £13.00 DENON AUDIO TECHNICAL TEST CD £15.00 HARRISON MULTI-PURPOSE TEST CASSETTE £20.00 HARRISON 20Hz-20KHz FREQUENCY SWEEP TEST CASSETTE £ 7.50 HARRISON AZIMUTH TEST CASSETTE £ 7.50 HARRISON SPEED TEST CASSETTE £ 7.50 TELARC 20BIT SURROUND SOUND DEMONSTRATION CD £12.50 DELOS SURROUND SOUND CD £12.50		
CARTRIDGE, TONEARMS &		
AUDIO TECHNICA, DENON, SHURE, ORTOFON, GOLDRING, ARCAM, AUDIOQUEST, VAN DEN HUL, TRANSFIGURATION, KOETSU, GRADO, B & O, TECHNICS, STANTON, ROKSAN, LONDON (DECCA) I CAN SUPPLY MANY OTHER PRODUCTS NOT ADVERTISED HERE; PLEASE PHONE FOR FURTHER SPECIFIC PRICES, REVIEWS, DETAILS OR ADVICE		
ALL GOODS ARE BRAND NEW & BOXED WITH FULL U.K. GUARANTEES; NO EX-DEM OR EX DISPLAY OR IMPORTED EQUIPMENT. **PLEASE PHONE TO CONFIRM PRICE & AVAILABILITY PRIOR TO ORDERING. POSTAGE; TEST CASSETTES/CD'S/RECORD/CARTRIDGES; FREE. ALL OTHER ITEMS; £5 OVERSEAS POSTAGE; £7.50 ON ALL ITEMS. IAN HARRISON HI-FI; MAIL ORDER ONLY FROM 7 MILL HILL, REPTON, DERBY, DE65 6GO. TEL: 01283 702875 9am-9pm		

Emelex Audio Enhancement Products

Rhythm Stage - Audio Equipment Table Top-Platform (Patent Pending)



Rhythm Stage reduces acoustic feedback reaching your equipment due to its unique glass & steel design.



Iso Lok - Audio Equipment Securing Device (Patent Pending)

Customised by Emelex to fit within your existing shelving system, Iso Lok mechanically secures your equipment to its support, reducing audio vibrations due to acoustic feedback. (Rhythm Stage and Iso Lok also incorporate sound deadening rubber & carbon fibre isolating discs).

For further information, please contact:

Emelex (UK)
 17 Wigmore Street
 London
 W1H 9LA
 Tel: 0171-580 5816 Fax: 0181-292 3410

PRIVATE

WANTED: REVOX Speakers 100wpc, also microphone, earphones, equaliser, W.H.Y. Tel: 01923 443 490

MERIDIAN DSP5000 Active digital loudspeakers, new £3300. Accept £1750. Meridian 500 Series CD transport. New £1200. Accept £650. Both items remote control. Vgc. Tel: 0468 865 788 day, 01205 722 000 eves

MUSICAL FIDELITY MC2 speakers, boxed £145. Tel: 01547 520 465

NAIM 62 PRE, 90 Power amp, old style £350. Mission 731 speakers £60. Mission 761 £80. Arcam Alpha 5 plus CD £300. Target stands £35. Gale bi-wired speaker cable 2x7m=£20. All in vgc. Genuine calls. Tel: 0865 559 737 anytime (Oxford)

MICROMEGA STAGE I CD player. Excellent condition, boxed with manual and newsletter £370 ono. Tel: 0181 810 0488 (West London)

TUBE TECHNOLOGY Unisils valve amplifier. Excellent sound and condition £1750 new. Accept £850 ono. Tel: 01903 716 275 (Sussex)

WANTED: MUSICAL Fidelity power amp P140 in good condition! Please write to: Paul Hartmann, D-45473 Mülheim, Boverstr. 4 B (BRD) (Germany)

LD MC2 PHONOSTAGE with external PSU £1500 new. One of the best £495. Van den Hul MC1 cartridge, perfect condition £295. Wanted: Monster Alpha Genesis 2000. Tel: 01242 231 766 (Cheltenham)

STILTECH MC4-24 5 Silver Interconnects with VBT plugs. 18' pair and 12' pair £160. New Sonic Link Titanium interconnects, metre pair cost £195 £95. MAS Powerchord £55. Post free. Tel: 00 3531 459 1432

GARRARD 401, SME 3009 Series II, Ortofon cartridge on Teak plinth with cover. Spare spindle for 401 and Shure cartridge. Excellent condition £170. also Leak Stereofetic tuner £20. Tel: 01244 679 388 (Chester)

ROGERS LS3/5A (Teak), 5 years old, vgc (11 ohm), lightly used £300 ono. Tel: 01233 662 502 (Ashford, Kent)

KRELL AMPLIFICATION KSP-7B balanced pre-amp, external power supply, adjustable 1C/MM options, KSA-200 200wpc Class A power amplifier, bi-wire outputs, both mint, boxed with instructions. Giveaway £3250. May split. Tel: 01449 676 335

WANTED: JBL S2600 or similar horn or horn hybrid speakers. Private enthusiasts. Tel: 01902 786 818 (Midlands)

ATC 20 SPEAKERS, black, boxed, mint £750. Target R1 stands £175. ATC 10 speakers £600. Target R2 stands £150. Chord 5PM 1200B power, 6 months old, boxed, mint £2500. CPA 2800 pre £2500. Wanted: Sonab speakers. Tel: 01226 710 605 (Yorkshire)

NAIM 42.5, MINT (Serviced and updated by Naim '95) £160. Naim MC boards, unused, cost £70, bargain £25. Can send anywhere. Linn K9, giveaway £25. Tel: Kevin 01202 342 72 day or 01202 523 319 eves

PI HW19 JUNIOR turntable with RB300 650. VDH MC2 cartridge, mint £625. Losquitto high end monitors with stands £225. Everything less than 12 months old and vgc. Tel: 01536 418 091

NAIM ALL New Style, ex-demo, immaculate, boxed, 5 months old. 250-£1200, 82-£1550, HiCap-£450, SBLs-£1000 ono. Can demonstrate. Tel: 0161 980 4374

INN LP12 Afrosomia, Ittok, Koetsu Black immaculate £500 ono. Elite MCP 555 £40. Coral 777E £20. All items original packaging, careful, low use. Tel: 01277 622 461 evenings.

PIONEER A400 amplifier in perfect condition, boxed with manual £150. Armstrong 521 amplifier, in excellent condition £50. Tel: 01252 622 403 evenings (NE Hampshire)

LEAK STEREO 20 New valves £300. Audio Innovations S200 power amp £300. First Audio mono amps, Choke PSU £600/pr. Hand built stereo amp £700. Assorted PX4 O/P tubes £10. Tel: 01305 784 050

HI-FI WORLD

HARBETH HL-COMPACT 7, Walnut. As reviewed in June issue of Hi-Fi World, vgc. Cost new £1329. £795 ono. Jeff 01302 781 387

MUSICAL FIDELITY F22 Pre-amp, phono stage, remote, immaculate condition with box (cost £1100) £650. 0181 800 5840 (London)

CASTLE CHESTER (natural Oak) £400. Arcam Alpha Plus CD £125. QED headphone amp £30. Castle Howards £750. Aura VA100 Evolution amplifier £200 + TU50 tuner £125 + CD50 £175. Tel: 01952 502 097

LINN KAIRN 'Brilliant' - phono £800. Klout power amp £1200. Both as new, boxed. KEF 104 Kube equaliser £50. Tel: 01295 780 363 or 0831 809 346

NAIM EQUIPMENT. CDI, 82, 180 x 2. Hi Caps x 2. Naxo 4/2, SBLs (new version) All items in mint condition with boxes, receipts etc. For details: Tel: 0181 270 9393 evenings

REL STENTOR Subwoofer, immaculate condition, as new, can demonstrate. £1150 ono. Tel: 01252 614 055

MERIDIAN 501V Preamp £400 (£785). S63 DAC £400 (£750) 6 months old. 601 preamp £900 (£2750). TDL Studio Ones, Stands £350 (£750). Tel: Bert 0181 853 4646 weekdays. 0181 473 4057 evenings.

PAIR OF TDL Studio 4 speakers with stands. Walnut ex con with boxes. Cost £1600, £950 ono. Pair of original KEF 105 silver wired £500 ono. Wharfedale DDI headphones in box £30. Tel: 0121 628 3423

EXPOSURE DUAL 7 pre amp plus two Exposure 6 power supplies. All three as new condition. £295. Tel: Andy 0171 729 5066 (Bethnal Green, London)

WANTED: BANG & OLUFSEN Beogram 2000/3000, other Dataline models considered. Sell after B&O CDX CD or similar! Tim: 01252 616 938

WOODSIDE/RADFORM MA-50 Class A valve 50w monoblocks, excellent condition, boxed £650 each. Nakamichi RX-505 auto reverse cassette deck, vgc £275. Tel: 01245 252 651 (Chelmsford)

MICHELL ARGO (new front panel) with Hera PSU £525. Michell ISO (MC) with Hera PSU £325. Both excellent condition. Also Doxa 5-2 speakers £250. Tel: 01344 21388 (Ascot)

NAIM AUDIO System comprising CDI, 82, Hi-Cap, 250. Will not split. All new style and boxed. £3650 (£6200 new) Matching (green) Soundstyle 4-shelf tripod support available. Tel: 01283 513 126 (Midlands)

MARANTZ CD-63 KI Signature, new £400. Loudspeaker cable: 6x6m Cable Talk 3, 2x7m Naim NACS, phono interconnects: 5xMonster M1000 (lots of bass), 3 x XLO Pro 150; 1x Chord Siren. Michael 0171 937 7935 evenings

MICHELL GYRODEC Complete with QC power supply. As new. Bereavement sale. Tel: Dennis 01905 25198 anytime (Worcs)

PINK TRIANGLE PT T00 with RB300/ATF5 £400 Target stand £25. Epos ES14 speakers with Epos stands £200. G 11 0171 503 5854

AUDIOLAB 8000C/P £800. B&W P-5 rosewood speakers £580 (both one year old, boxed. Also Rogers Cadet valve power amps £300 pair. Tel: 0121 326 8083 (Birmingham)

FOR SALE LINN LK100 power amps boxed excellent condition can dem if required £325 each. Wanted Linn/Naim tuner must be recent spec Tel: 01925 860720 (evenings/weekends)

KEF REFERENCE 107 Loudspeakers, active Kube Equaliser, floorstanding, black Ash, superb transparency and bass, mint condition, little used, boxed with instructions, 4 years old, bargain £1295 (£3600 new) Tel: (01449) 676335

E.C. AUDIO LECTERN power amplifier 40watts per channel superb sound. £450. Tel: 01395 255 323.

NAIM NAP 135 Mono Bloc power amplifier (one only). Perfect working order. 4 years old. Naim main dealer report available. Slight facial damage. Open to offers. Tel: 0191 416 1092 (ansaphone)

AUDIO NOTE M1 phono pre-amp £500. Stax Lambda Signature headphones SRM T1 valve mint £750. AVI Reference CD player, new £950. Lumley Reference LM2 loudspeakers £2800, new slight scratch £1250. Tel: 0121 784 8765

VANDERSTEEN 2CEs excellent full range Sterophile magazine favourite reference speakers. 2 years old, stands, boxed £1000 (or swap for Quad ESL 63s) Tel: 0181 741 3343

MERIDIAN 201 Preamp/Amplifier £350. Musical Fidelity pre-amp 3A £195. Audion Sterling valve amplifier £395. Quad FM4 £250. Quad 405-2 £200. Tannoy Cheviots £350. Harman Kardon Citation II preamplifier £150. Tel: 01403 251 587

Vd Hul MCI SPECIAL (unique), mint, unused since retip 9/96. RRP £1000. Best offer secures. Also HFV No.4 12/1995. Offers or swap for Trichord Digital turntable. Tel: 0171 412 7410 (w) or 0181 989 6434 (h)

IPL S3TLs Mahogany, just run in, £230. Goldring GL75 turntable. Leak Delta 75 receiver original with manuals £40 each. AKG K300 headphones, new, boxed £40. Leak Sandwich spares or repair, offers. Tel: 01494 874 381 (Bucks)

LINN LP12 Black, Valhalla, Ittok, Asaka, mint condition, boxed £495. Tel: 0181 523 1134

LEAK POINT One TL10 amp, with pre-amp in original condition £225. Also Nytech CP112 pre-amp with MM phono stage (vgc) only £175. Tel: 01462 678 158 (N.Herts)

AUDIO RESEARCH VT60 Stereo power amp. About 1 year old. Perfect condition £1700. For quick sale (£2650 new) Tel: 0181 688 6565

ART AUDIO Quintet valve power amplifier £450. Audio Synthesis Passion passive pre-amplifier (Vishay version) £320. QED phono amplifier plus external power supply £40. Tel: 01962 851 802 (Hampshire)

NAIM CDI £1100 ono. Naim NAC62, NAP140 c/w 3.5 bi-wire metres Linn K20 £550. Boxed & excellent condition, Marantz SP-50 s/s processor c/w KEF speakers £100. Tel: Michael 0131 657 3622 between 6-9pm

TANNOY BERKELEYS 15" Dual concentric drivers, excellent, rosewood £500. Garrard 401, SME 3009 £125. Leak Troughline Stereo £100. Connoisseur 3 speed transcription. Decca FF55 arm/head £75. Goldring G.88 £25. Tel: 01709 555 403

MERIDIAN 605 Mk2 monoblocks 150 wpc, mint £995. SD Acoustics SD1 Mk2 loudspeakers - latest drivers and tri-wireable, mint £585. Naim NAC 32.5 + external psu. Giveaway £195. Meridian 200 transport - mint, £395. Tel: 01394 460 281

QUAD 405-2 £195. Technics SU-A40 preamp £65. Yamaha T700 AM/FM tuner £50. Tel: 01788 810 179 (Rugby)

IMPULSE H6 horn speakers, piano black (£1400) £665 ono. Heybrook Sextet II speakers, Walnut, new £899. DPA Enlightenment DAC £460. Arcam Alpha 5 CD £250. LPs £2 each. Tel: 0171 268 6270 day or 01689 855063 eves.

NAD 304 AMP, as new £120. Pioneer A400 amp, as new £140. Cambridge P35 amp £50. Thorens TD150 £20. Ariston Maxim CD £150. Can Opener headphone adaptor £40. Tel: 0114 221 5271

ROTEL 965BX CD Player, winner of various Hi-Fi awards. Features include remote control, program, index, search and random. Also quality interconnect (cost £320 + £40) 2 1/2 years young, boxed as new £180 ono. Tel: 01245 224 024

BEARD CA35 Pre-amp and P35 Mk II power amp, boxed £675 ono. Tel: 01582 580 667

NAIM 32.5 £175, Naim 12S re-wired by Jimmy Hughes with tape monitor. Offers? Target wall shelf £25. Soundstyle tripod equipment support, five shelves Imit Naim, black £100. Tel: Terry 01376 349 210 evenings

RADFORD SCA 30 Stereo transistor amp £75. Radford SC2 valve preamp £75. Dynaco PAS 3 valve preamp £140. Dynaco PAT 4 transistor preamp £85. Nelson Jones preset tuner £40. Tel: 01372 467 264 (Esher)

VAN DEN HUL Carbon leads. Revelation 2 x 1 1/2 metre pair £350 new. Sell £150. The Second 0.8 metre pair £220 new. Sell £100. Thunder-Line Hybrid 3 x 0.6 metre pair £50. The Source Hybrid 2 x 0.8 metre pair £45. The Wind 2 x 1 1/2 metre pair £60. Selection of 102 MkIII £25. All terminated. Tel: 0181 502 5634

AUDIOLAB 8000S Integrated amp. Hardly used only £495. Save over £200 on current price. NAD 304 amp £90. Linn 400 speaker cables £40. Audio Alchemy Dac-In-The-Box £150. Tel: 0171 435 4365 (Hampstead)

QUAD FM4 3 months old, mint and boxed with instruction manual £250. Garrard 301 £100. Tel: 01302 724 384

MICHELL ISO + Hera. Rega RB300 (9 months old) Quad 22 with pots. Marantz SQA2B adaptor and CD 4003 Quadraphonic Demodulator. Wanted: Naim 135s. Target wall shelves/tables. Tel: 01843 593 958

APOGEE CENTAUR Minor speakers. Excellent condition £600 or swap for valve power amp. Amcron ES224. Rare American Electrostatics with dedicated sub-woofers. Very efficient, amazing sound quality £2000 Tel: 0121 459 9616

WADIA X32 DAC, Coaxial, AT&T optical inputs, DAT compatible, mint, boxed £650 (£2200 new). Alon II floorstanding monitors, rosewood, bi-wireable, Wilson Watu/Puppy performance, mint £1250 (£2600 new) 01449 676 335

NAIM 160/72 £650 ono. Naim 22 pre amp £55. Linn Saras, Walnut (with latest stands) mint £300 ono. Thorens TD 126/III (Electronic) £95. Deltec DAC (Little Bit) £95. Musical Fidelity (The Preamp) mint £75. Tel: 0191 422 3415

AUDIO INNOVATIONS S300 valve amp, phono stage £220. Magnephan SMGA speakers, spiked stands, silver wired upgraded X overs £360. Wanted: One BBC valve amp AM8/1/255, A+R P77MG any condition. Tel: 01209 219 483

LINN INDEX Loudspeakers on Ku-Stone stands. Three years old in black. Can demonstrate £150 ono. Tel: 01494 678 668 (Beaconsfield, Bucks)

MERIDIAN 506 CD player, mint condition, boxed, c/w manual £450. Quad ESL 63 speakers, comes with stands, excellent condition, c/w stands £1250 ono. Tel: 0117 973 1377

AUDIO NOTE 300B valve amp Kit 1 c/w chrome covers mint £725. Black Millennium 4-20 valve mono blocks c/w PSU mint £249. Tel: Paul Allen 0115 981 7814 work

REGA PLANAR 3 c/w RB300 arm Audio Technica AT-OC5 cartridge mint £349. 2 prs Celestion Ditton 25 speakers ex/cond £175 each. 1.5mt pr Transparent WAVE spk/cable c/w spades/plugs £69. Tel: Paul Allen 0115 981 7814 work

LOWTHER SPEAKERS pair of folded horn Teak veneered cabinets with PM7 drive units 825 high 465 wide 360 deep, beautiful sound, very good condition. Offers. Tel: 01977 703 663 office hours

ONE PAIR Van Den Hul Thunderline interconnects 6m RCAs £280. Two pairs Sonoran speaker cables (USA) 4ft spades £160 Tel: 01942 811 880

TRI-SONICS Class A 100w monoblocs and preamp, 2 line outs for bi-amping, 6 inputs, chrome polished with real Mahogany. Exquisite in sound and looks. zHalf price at £900. Tel: 01903 716 209

QUAD FM4 3 Months old, mint and boxed with instruction manual £250.00 Garrard 301 £100 Tel: 01302 724 384

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QUAD ESL63/GRADIENT SUBWOOFERS WILL SPLIT	£1795	SH
MICROMEGA LEADER CD PLAYER	£295.00	SH
THETA DATA 2 CD TRANSPORT	£1795.00	SH
AUDIO RESEARCH SP11 PREAMPLIFIER	£1295.00	SH
WILSON WITTS - OUR DEMONSTRATORS	£5995.00	XD
MERIDIAN 208 BRAND NEW LATEST VERSION	£1395.00	NEW
QLN QUBIC 313 LOUDSPEAKERS	£395.00	SH
KRELL MDA300 POWER AMPS	£4500.00	SH
AUDIO RESEARCH D200 POWER AMP	£1795.00	SH
AUDIO RESEARCH LS2B MKII	£2495.00	XD
PROCEED PDT3/ PDP3	£2495.00	SH
NAD 208 POWER AMP	£695.00	XD
ARAGON 24K PREAMPLIFIER - PHONO MC/MM & LINE:		
A BARGAIN AT THIS PRICE	£495.00	SH
DPA RENAISSANCE INTEGRATED AMP	£49.00	XD
KRELL KSA100S - REAL DRIVING ABILITY	£3495.00	SH
ORELLE CD10T - A VERY GOOD TRANSPORT	£395.00	XD
MICROMEGA DRIVE 2 CD TRANSPORT EX DEM	£695.00	(999.95)
MICROMEGA TEMPO 1 AMPLIFIER EX DEM	£499.00	(699.95)
CASTLE DURHAM 900 SPEAKERS	£225.00	(299.95)
SPENDOR LS3/5A WALNUT. NEW	£550.00	(699.95)
TANNOY 631 LOUDSPEAKERS. NEW	£99.95	(129.95)
PIONEER PDS703 CD PLAYER	£175.00	(249.95)
PIONEER CLD2950 LASERDISC PLAYER	£549.95	(699.95)
PIONEER PDS203 CD PLAYER	£119.95	(159.95)
PIONEER VSP200 A/V PROCESSOR. NEW	£199.95	(249.95)

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MARK LEVINSON MLI1 Preamp with circuit diagram, Garrard 301 (grey) grease bearing mint, Fisher valve monoblocks 80AZ, FM200B, Quad II x2, 22, FM2, AM2, manuals Leak TL12, I, Troughlines II, III. Tel: 01642 559 543

NAIM NAC72, NAC12, NAC32, NAPI10, NAPI20, Radford SC22 valve preamp with PSU. Leak Point One (stereo) preamp. Stereo Twenty, Lowther Acoustas PM6A, Grado Signature XTZ. Fidelity Research FR702, MC201. Tel: 01642 559 543

MERIDIAN 200 CD Transport, 4 years old, excellent condition £375. Meridian 209 remote control £40. Tel: 01604 410 726

LINN SARAs, boxed, stands, cables £225 ono. Crimson Elektrik, pre + power amps (CPRI + CE 1708) 170 watts £225 ono. Tel: 01296 22668

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TEKTRONIX 545A, 549 storage oscilloscopes and 575 transistor curve tracer, plus spare valves, plug in and some manuals. Heroic 1960's professional valve & hybrid technology. £100 the lot ono. Tel: 0181 317 8013

MISSION 75i mint, and Mission stands £250. Mission PCM2 CD player boxed etc £150. DPA 200/5 pre, power, immaculate 6 months new £700. DPA Little Bit III mint, boxed as new £200. Tel: Jules 01792 280 061

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ROGERS LS33/AB33. Used for home demo only £450 (£600). Rogers Studio 3s £300 (£600). Both pairs won in competitions in the best Hi-Fi magazine! Tel: 01705 568 155 day or 01489 577 014 eves (Hampshire)

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AUDIO SYNTHESIS Passion, passive attenuator and input selector. 1993 model, Holco/Vishay. Well run in. Current model is £695 new, this one will sell for £300. Tel: 0171 433 3083, e-mail: Wolf_Sandmann@msn.com

B+W 802 MONITOR speakers £600, Pink Triangle DAC Ordinal, HDCD+18bit decoder, boxed £700. Marantz CD23 top loader, top of the range Music Link CD player £2200 boxed, new £4000. All good condition. Tel: 0973 222 482 or 01737 555 647

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LINN KELTIK speakers black Ash unmarked £2350. Linn LK100 amps x four £1300. Two pairs of Tukans £250 each. Roksan Atessa CD DAC power supply. DP2P MkII. DP2T MkII. DA2DSSS £1150. Roksan OJAN 3 speakers £450. All 8 months old. Jerry 01702 353 777

PINK TRIANGLE Ordinal 22 bit £575. Audio Innovations P2 M/C phono amp £450. Tel: 01543 264 860 (Lichfield)

THETA TLC Jitter Buster, 1 year old £135. Quad 34 pre-amp £210, FM4 £210 or £400 the pair. Tel: 01530 831 357 (Leics)

ACOUSTIC ENERGY AE2 A's with stands £495. Robertson 40/10 monoblock power amps £380. Quad II's with GEC valves + spare set. GT Audio serviced £375. Will dem. Tel: 01895 252 007 (Uxbridge)

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QUAD 405/2 Avondale modified £300. System Audio speakers (Danish) Floor standing new boxed £750) £300. Revox G36 1/4 track, pristine £425. Spendor SPI (deflexed) + Target stands £200. Tel: 0181 393 4265 day or 0181 393 4147 eves.

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PRO-AC RESPONSE 3 Speakers, cost £3300, 3 years old, mahogany, mint, £1650, delivered. Tel: 00 3531 459 1432

NAIM NAC 82 with phono boards £1250. Pink Triangle DaCapo with 1307 chip £950. Both immaculate condition. Tel: 01565 733 525 (Cheshire)

Spendor SP9/1 Rosewood speakers £2000, Chord 1200 amp £1400, A.V.I. CD player £675, A.V.I. pre amp £460, Revox Tuner £400, A.V.I. Neutron speakers £350. Tel: 01977 643629

LEAK STEREO 20 for sale, rebuilt, full working order £200. Wanted: Naim O2 tuner (old style) Tel: 0181 991 1089

GARRARD 401, SME 3009, SME plinth, manuals, excellent £150, Garrard 401, sound £80. Thorens TDI45 II, no arm, spare cover £45. Connoisseur BD2, SAU2, M75EJ £20, Armstrong 226/7? valve receiver, manual, not working £25. Deram pickup arm, boxed £5. Tel: 01503 250 679 evenings/weekends

EAR 802 PREAMP and EAR 509 MkII mono blocks £1750. Pro-Ac Response 3 speakers, walnut £1750. Sugden SDDI and SDA1 Cd player £850. All mint, boxed. Tel: 01332 521 518

THORENS TCD 2000 CD Player. Three months old £680. Quad 77 integrated amplifier ten months old £420. Both as new. Tel: 01256 461 453 (Basingstoke)

MERIDIAN 541 surround sound processor (£1095), MSR system remote (£70) and M60C centre speaker (£1125). Immaculate, boxed, still under warranty. Stunning home cinema sound. All for £1400. Tel: 0181 675 6604

NAIM CD3. 18 months old, boxed, immaculate. For sale due to windfall generated upgrade! £600 ono. Tel: 01952 255 281 (Telford)

GARRARD 401, Little use, perfect £150. Pair Gold Leak TL12 plus monoblock valve amplifiers, superb £350. Four new, unused original boxed GEC KT88 valves. Offers. Original GEC KT66 valves. Good. £38. Tel: 01364 72153

REVOX A78 Amp. 80wpc, wood case, excellent condition £135 ono. Also Revox wanted. Tel: 01923 443 490

QUAD 44/303 £200. SME 3009 Mark 2 fitted with Shure V15 IV cartridge and new stylus £150. Quad 606 power amp £440 boxed with manuals. All in excellent condition. Tel: 01257 277 857 (Lancs)

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Theta Cobalt 307 DAC	Ex Demo	£ 700	£ 475
Audio Research LS3B Balanced Line Preamp	Ex Demo	£2250	£1495
Counterpoint SA 3.1. Tube Preamp MM/MC	S/Hand (Mint)		£ 595
Densen B100 Beat Integrated Amplifier 60w	Ex Demo	£ 600	£ 425
Graham 1.5T State of Art unipivot Tonearm - the best arm I've heard! Few hours use only - my own arm supplied boxed	As New	£3000	£2350
Audio Alchemy VAC in teh Box Phono Stage including upgraded Power Supply PS3	Ex Demo	£500	£ 325
Mirage:-			
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M-590j 2-way, 4-driver symmetrical Bipolar Radiator	Ex Demo	£800	£ 525
M-890j 2-way, 4-driver symmetrical Bipolar Radiator	Ex-Demo	£1000	£ 675
M-1090j 2-way, 4 driver symmetrical Bipolar Radiator	Ex-Demo	£1300	£ 950
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MBS the World's smallest symmetrical Bipolar Speaker includes matching stands - superb sound	Ex-Demo	£ 400	£ 285
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SD Acoustics SD2 Loudspeakers supplied with Origin Live Tripod Stands - silly price to clear	S/Hand (vgc)		£ 249
Magneplaner MG 1.4 Ribbon Loudspeakers - these were good value £1100 new, so if I tell you these are finished with oak frames and oatmeal cloth and in mint condition for £450 - what are you waiting for?	S/Hand (mint)	£1100	£ 450



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MAKE AND MODEL	TYPE		WAS	NOW
ARCAM ALPHA 6	CD PLAYER	NEW	£599.00	£450.00
ARCAM ALPHA ONE	CD PLAYER	EX DEM	£300.00	£249.00
ARCAM BLACK BOX 5	DAC	S HAND	£400.00	£125.00
AUDIOLAB 8000C	PREAMPLIFIER	EX DEM	£550.00	£450.00
CASTLE HOWARDS	LOUDSPEAKERSE	EX DEM	£1199.90	£899.00
CELESTION SL300s	LOUDSPEAKERS	NEW	£1100.00	£595.00
CELESTION 5000s	LOUDSPEAKERS	HAND	£899.00	£349.00
CELESTION CS 8is	LOUDSPEAKERS	NEW	£500.00	£300.00
DENON DCD 825	CD PLAYER	EX DEM	£240.00	£180.00
DENON DRA 565RD	RECEIVER	EX DEM	£330.00	£250.00
HEYBROOK HEYSTACK	LOUDSPEAKERS	NEW	£499.00	£375.00
KEF MODEL ONE	LOUDSPEAKER	EX DEM	£1299.00	£899.00
MARANTZ SP 50	PRO LOGIC AMP	S HAND	£220.00	£120.00
MERIDIAN 501 V	PRE AMPLIFIER	EX DEM	£875.00	£699.00
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MORDURANT SHORT MS 3.5	LOUDSPEAKERS	S HAND	£350.00	£200.00
PIONEER A 656	AMPLIFIER	S HAND	£400.00	£200.00
QUAD ESL 63	LOUDSPEAKERS	S HAND	£3449.00	£1700.00
QUAD 44	PRE AMPLIFIER	S HAND	£475.00	£195.00
ROTEL RCD 970 BX	CD PLAYER	NEW	£350.00	£300.00
ROTEL RCD 940 BX	CD PLAYER	EX DEM	£249.99	£150.00
RUARK SWORDSMAN	LOUDSPEAKERS	EX DEM	£329.00	£200.00
RUARK TALISMAN	LOUDSPEAKERS	EX DEM	£749.00	£599.00
TANNOY 633	LOUDSPEAKERS	EX DEM	£350.00	£250.00
TANNOY 636	LOUDSPEAKERS	EX DEM	£400.00	£299.00
TANNOY 625 ALF	SUBWOOFER	NEW	£500.00	£300.00
TDL NFL 2	LOUDSPEAKERS	EX DEM	£179.95	£129.95
TDL RTL 2	LOUDSPEAKERS	EX DEM	£299.90	£275.00
TDL RTL 3	LOUDSPEAKERS	EX DEM	£399.00	£275.00
SYSTEMDECK 165	LOUDSPEAKERS	EX DEM	£300.00	£250.00
TECHNICS SBM 500	LOUDSPEAKERS	EX DEM	£500.00	£350.00
YAMAHA DSPA 970	AV AMPLIFIER	EX DEM	£799.95	£550.00
YAMAHA DSP E 300	AV AMPLIFIER PROCESSOR	EX DEM	£1099.95	£799.00
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PRIVATE

LINN EKOS Tonearm. Mint & boxed £595. NVA P80/A60 passive pre/power amps with Phono 1 (MC). Excellent condition £395. Wanted: NVA TES CD player. Tel: 0181 871 0424 (SWLondon)

KRELL KSA 50S £2250. Krell KRC2 £2250. Theta Data Basic transport £1400. Theta Pro Prime 2 £1300. Monitor Audio Studio 50's piano ebony £3250 (£4950). All immaculate. Tel: 01797 253 073 (E. Sussex)

AUDIO ALCHEMY DDS III, DDE V3.0, DTI V2.0, Power Station 2, Datastream transceiver. Complete lot £1300 (£2300). Also DDE V1.0 with p.s.u. £200. Tel: 0181 449 8639

EXPOSURE XV Integrated amplifier MC phono, boxed as new £395. Michell Focus One 'S' turntable with Mission arm/Dynavector IOX3 cartridge £95. Tel: 01628 416 471 (Berks)

PINK TRIANGLE 'Ordinal' DAC with 1307 filter £400. (new cost £1060). Arcam Alpha Plus CD player £175. Exposure X amplifier £250. Tel: 01636 814 235

MAGNUM A40 Power amplifier 110 watts r.m.s. per channel £350. Arcam Delta 290P power amp £325. Audio-Pro sub woofer £250. Cambridge C100 Pre-amp £120. Can demonstrate. Tel: 01544 318 189 (Herefordshire)

THETA DATA Basic transport £900. Audio Synthesis DSM-X (equivalent to DAX), Ultra Analog D20400A module £500. Mod Squad Wonderlink digital interconnect £125. The lot for £1250. Tel: 00 3531 459 1432

NAIM NAC82, HiCap, NAT01, 2 months old, immaculate and boxed. Cost £4373 will accept £3850. Mortgage forces sale. Tel: Steve 0171 215 3924 day or 0181 558 4870 eves

WHO WOULD Like to swap Tannoy D-500, rswd + cash for Quad ESL-63. Tel: Michael 0171 937 7935 evenings

MARANTZ CD-63mkII KI Signature, new £400, XLO Phono Type 1 Ref. 1m and 2 x 0.5m £300. Seismic Sink £80. Tel: Michael 0171 937 7935 evenings

LINN SYSTEM Comprising of Majik-I amp, Mimic CD, Keilidh speakers with stands, LK100 amp. All on Audiontec table in excellent condition £2050 ovno. Tel: 01908 670 271 (Milton Keynes)

REGA 2 UNPACKED offer or p/exch Revox B77 1/4 track 3 3/4-7 1/2. Write: Johnson, 77 Bewick Court, Princess Square, Newcastle, Tyne NE1 8EQ

AUDIO INNOVATION 2nd Audio monoblocks (recent new valves) L2 pre amplifier (both boxed and in excellent condition) £900 & £400. Tel: Carl 01926 773 512

AUDIO SYNTHESIS DAX D/A converter, single co-ax input, multi-frequency option. Perfect sound and condition, hence £750 or offer. Reason for sale: upgrading (again!) Tel: 01603 593 185 daytime (Norwich). email: s.clegg@uea.ac.uk

DPA EQUIPMENT: T1 transport £395. PDM2 converter £1095. DSPS05/DPA S05 pre/power £1065. DPA50S power £585. Various DPA cables. Sony Tuners: STS700ES £100. STS730ES £140. VDH/ Naim cables. Tel: 01977 790 310

MUSICAL FIDELITY A1 Final edition amplifier. 40 watts/channel, luxury finish, seperate power supply, mm/mc, superb sound, mint, boxed £285 - no offers. Tel: 01234 853 959 (Bedford)

HELP! MOVING House, all must go, cheap! Mainly 1970's, 40 turntables, 35 cassette decks, tuners, amplifiers, receivers, Ferrograph/Wayne Kerr audio test equipment. Yamaha shop comparator, Grundig massive stereogram, (Garrard Model 'A'), 500 styli, miscellaneous items, cheap. Make an offer and take. Write, phone/fax for list. Roy Walker, 1, West Grange Green, Belle Isle, Leeds, LS10 3BB. Tel/Fax: 0113 277 8863

PROJECT 6.1S Jumiko arm. Ortofon MC30 Supreme cartridge only 20 hours use, boxed £700. Quad CD67 Trichord Clock2 £550 boxed. Audiolab 8000DAC £350 - 8000A £150. Monarchy DIP £150. Tel: 0181 655 2733

NAKAMICHI DR3 cassette deck, recently serviced, vgc £260. Tel: 01234 241 976

NAD 3130 Amplifier 30 watts per channel, recent refurbish with new electrolytic capacitors £85. Onkyo TX-810 quartz synthesised tuner amplifier 45 watts per channel, boxed £95. Tel: 01743 365 061 (Shrewsbury)

EPOS ES11 Loudspeakers plus dedicated stands. Excellent condition, boxed with manual £250. No offers. Tel: Carl 01245 263 222 (Chelmsford)

NAIM 82 Preamp + HiCap new shape, excellent condition. Can dem, boxed. £1500. Shahinian ARCS, black Mk2, biwired, boxed £1100. Tel: 01333 424 642 after 6pm

POWERSOUND 1600 HD DAC. USA designed and imported by Heybrook Hi-Fi. Superb sound excellent specification £1050 ono. A bargain for astute enthusiast, only 6 months old. Tel: 01208 872 316 (Cornwall)

LOWTHER ACOUSTAS £200. Beard P35 valve power amp, excellent condition, boxed £500. AR EB 101 record deck, Linn cartridge £120. Tel: 0181 898 8292

NORDOST SUPER Flatline bi-wire cable, three metre pair for the price of two metre pair £100. Boxed & unused. Tel: 01903 750 962 (West Sussex)

STAX CDP Quattro II integrated CD player (1991) Cost £2995. Mint condition £1250 ono. Tel: 0181 523 1134

METRIX U61B Valve analyzer £150. Rogers Cadet 3 £50. Troughline Stereo £55. Troughline 3 £50. SME Series 1, arms offers. HT/LT/choke transformer sets £45. Ion O/B psu £35. Tel/Fax: 01273 419 298

LINN ITTOCK LVII with Roksan Corus black cartridge. Excellent condition. Recently checked by 'Audio Excellence' of Preston (Linn Dealer). Upgrade forces sale. Tel: Lawrence 01772 621 337 (Preston)

GARRARD 301, SME 3009/2 (both with manuals), Shure V15 111, Sugden pre-amp C51, Quad Acoustical FM tuner, offers? Foundation Sterling stands, 21 and 23 inches, unopened boxes £40. Tel: 01323 728 118 (Eastbourne)

PAIR OF RUARK Crusaders Mk II speakers. 2 years old, as new, boxed £800. Tel: 0191 287 3365 after 6pm (Tyne+Wear)

B+O CLASSICS, 6000 receiver, 8002 turntable, 9000 cassette deck £750, might separate. Garrard 401 SME 3009/II arm. All excellent condition. Tel: 0181 852 1069

WANTED: AUDIOLAB 8000P, no more than 2 years old and in very good to mint condition only. Cash waiting. Can collect. Tel: 01229 431 607

MERIDIAN 200+203 DAC7 CD player £690. Quad FM4 tuner £200. Musical Fidelity The Pre-Amp + Dr. Thomas power (150 watts) amp £300. All mint, boxed. Tel: 01707 643 832 (Herts)

COUNTERPOINT Pre-amp SA-7 (lovely valve sound) £300. ModSquad passive pre-amp £199. Swap new Gortex Black Slink 0.75m for old style 1m. Silver Sounds 2 x 1.5m bi-wire £99. Wanted: Red speakers near to No. 61023. Tel: 0378 730 365

ARCAM ALPHA 5 Amp. Phono (MM), 4 line, tape and tape out. 2 speakers, switched, as new £110. Also Roksan Hot Cakes. Big sound. Discreet appearance. Piano black £90. Tel: 01553 840 973

B&W CDM1 Loudspeakers. Condition as new, walnut finish, worth £600 accept £380. Meridian 206 CD £599. Wanted: Musical Fidelity X10P valve add-on. Tel: 0171 289 1174

ATC SCM 50 Active speakers, rosewood £3900. AVI Reference S2000MC CD player £750. REL Stentor II new model, rosewood £1500. All boxed and as new. Tel: 0181 874 6262 daytime

MERIDIAN DSP 5000 £2200. DSP 5000 Centre £1150. 500 transport £850. 562V £650. 504 £475. 555 £495, A500 £495. S65 Processor £1650. 518 Master Processor £650. M60 actives £1600. All mint, boxes, cables etc. Tel: 0121 783 8227, mobile 0468 908 452

HI-FI YEAR Books complete set £250. Also random issues 1967-76 £12.50 each. HFC special A5 editions. Valve data books etc. Immaculate Quad system. Bronze ELS (27096/7) 405.2, 44, FM4, manuals £875. Fisher sixties 800C stereo FM/AM receiver (walnut) 800C £235. Leak Stereo 20 + Varioslope Stereo preamp + Troughline tuner umbilicals £265. Beam Echo Avantoico pair SPA II plus single SPA 21 £400. Mission 752's mint boxed £350. Teac X10R deck, serviced. Nabs reels. Remote £295. Thorens 125 SME, cover, plinth, arm, cart etc £165. Thorens 124, plinth + PR 64S arm £240. Sony MC cartridge XL 55 pro, boxed £80. Technics ST3500 tuner £35. Garrard 401, plinth, SME etc, mint £185. SME 3009 III boxed, unused. £85 Tel: 01392 860 182 evenings (Devon)

NAIM CD3, 4 months old and immaculate. Cost £970, bargain at £700. Upgrading. Tel: Chris 0181 943 1278

CELESTION SL65 Speakers (walnut) New bass units fitted by factory £160. Linn Ittock LVII arm £140. Meridian 104 tuner £80. Decca Gold cartridge £30. Wanted: Meridian 209 remote. Tel: Rod 0181 205 6778

4 x QUAD ESL57 speakers for sale. Can demonstrate £550. Tel: 01752 266 753

APOGEE CALIPER Ribbon speakers, colour taupe, boxed, full range ribbons, good condition (£2500) £525 or exchange for other quality speakers. Wanted: REL Strata subwoofer. Tel: 01604 584 630

DPA PDM ONE Bitstream decoder, excellent condition £195 ovno. Tel: 01983 291 257 (Isle Of Wight)

WANTED: PAIR OF QUAD II valve monoblock amplifiers, mint condition. Tel: 01483 565 241 evenings

LINN LPI2 Cirkus £300 (£1000) Linn Ekos tone arm £650 (£1500) Linn Lingo PS £370 (£750) Linn Kan Mk2 speakers + stands £250 (£625) Tel: 01904 490 796

NAIM NAC92 Remote Preamp, 4 months old, boxed, remote control unused, £400. Pink Triangle Ordinal, 1307 filter, £350. Tel: Doug 01923-857348 (home), 0171-775-6453 (work).

PHILIPS CD850 MKII top of the range FT5 CD player. Many facilities, good condition £200. Cambridge Audio DAC with QED interconnect £110. Can demonstrate. Ealing area. Call Phil, eves on 0181 723 0967.

RUARK TALISMAN 2 speakers walnut finish c/w soundbytes £480 Tel Brian Basingstoke 01256 461076

TO SELL recently upgraded Exposure VIII power amplifier £295 ono. Russ Andrews converted CLD 1750 Exel Plus CD player £1500 ono. Tel: Harrogate 01423 528256.

STYLI FROM THE PEOPLE WHO KNOW

Replacement for	Cartridge/Stylus No.	Price
A&R	C77/C78	£16.00
ADC	Q30/QLM30/32/RK8/9	£10.00
Akai	APM70	£20.00
Audio-Technica	ATS10/11/VM8-7D/ATN3710/3711/3712	£10.00
	ATN3400/3401/3412/3450/ATN90/91/3600/3601	£10.00
	ATN110E	£13.00
	ATN95E	£12.50
Dual	DN249	£18.00
Excel	ES70F/70S/70SH	£10.00
Goldring	G800	£ 9.00
	Elan	£10.00
JVC	DTZ1S	£10.00
	DT59/60	£13.00
Ortofon	D/F/FF/N/NF (All Series)	£12.00
	D/F/FF/N/NF/VMS (All E Series-Not SUPER)	£18.00
	CL/CONCORD/LM/OM/TM (All Series-Not PRO)	£10.00
	PRO (All Series)	£14.50
Panasonic	EPS52/53/56/270C/290C	£10.00
	EPS53/270ED	£16.00
	EPS23CS/24CS/25CS/30CS/51CS/53CS	£10.00
	EPS22ES/23ES/24ES/25ES	£16.00
Pioneer	PN12/110/150	£10.00
Sansui	SN60/SN80/SNP212	£10.00
Sanyo	STG9/10/11	£10.00
Sharp	STY104	£10.00
	STY146	£ 6.00
Shure	N75/6	£10.00
	N75ED	£18.00
	N75EJ	£17.00
	N95ED/E/J/G	£18.50
Sony	ND133G/134G	£10.00
	ND15G	£14.00
	ND142G/ND150G	£10.00
Stanton	500A Series (Disco)	£12.00

100's of different types available. If yours is not shown tel/fax/e-mail with the stylus / cartridge details and we shall quote you by return the price and/or your nearest stockists. Versions for 78rpm records can be supplied in most types. Quantity discounts, original styli and cartridges also available. Trade enquiries welcome.

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	Antistatic record cleaning cloth	£1.95
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news (letter)

There ought to be a recognised disease called "bestism". We are in its grip. All magazines - this one included - are in search of the "best" CD player, "best" amplifier, loud-speaker car, phone, dishwasher...

Am I getting bitter because of poor reviews for products that I stock? Nope. Well not completely, although they have been wonderfully inconsistent.

I'm just realising how misleading it all is. Sure enough we need some guidance and endless non-committal, vague, kindly reviews would make for pretty boring copy. On the other hand system synergy can easily be overlooked in the race for the "right" purchase.

Recent articles in this journal and others have tried to deal with this issue. I fear that too many people will simply buy the suggested packages without trusting their own judgement.

There is a very thin line between information for the masses and control, however unintended, by the press.

You cannot read yourself a successful hi-fi system but you can and must believe your own ears.

Now for the sales push:

arion audioquest audiovector audio synthesis
 beyer chord company densen ear grado
 graaf harbeth jecklin keswick research
 lyra michell morel moth nordost ortofon
 pierre lurne pro-ject qed rogers royd
 sennheiser sugden sme sumiko teac
 triangle trichord unison research and more

Special ex demo offers

Triangle Zephyr floor standing loudspeakers in textured black with curved tan fronts. Recipients of a five star review in What Hi-Fi? (but nevertheless quite good). Very valve / low power friendly with an easy load and 91dB efficiency. A slightly "soft" sound but light and quick with good bass extension. They look a little, well, plain next to, say, the (inferior in my opinion) Castle Harlech. They are much improved by placement on Something Solid stands so a pair are included in the price of **£500** instead of **£820**. Full warranty.

Audiovector 3x floor standing loudspeakers in black ash veneer. Original price **£1500**. As above, Something Solid stands effect a transformation - and they were good to start with. A new model (M3) is in the wings, so the demo pair is available for **£1050** including custom stands. Mint condition, were **£1560** full warranty.

Meridian 500 CD transport, 6 months old, second hand, current spec and absolutely mint. RRP **£1295** available for **£825**.

Unison Research Simply Two Single ended valve amp. Read the reviews? Got the Tee Shirt? Get the amplifier. Yours for **£750** (normally **£995**).



hi-fi for grown-ups

ipswich 01473 622 866

QUALITY EX-DEMONSTRATION EQUIPMENT & SPECIAL OFFERS NOVEMBER 1996

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ATC SCM50A Black Active Loudspeakers	£5000	£3950
AVI S2000MC CD Player	£1149	£ 750
AUDIOLAB 8000C Pre Amplifier	£ 550	£ 395
CYRUS 3 Integrated Amplifier	£ 500	£ 385
CYRUS Disc & Dac Master 2 Box CD Player	£1500	£1250
EPOS ES25 Walnut loudspeakers	£1655	£1250
KEF Model 100 Centre Speaker	£ 359	£ 235
HARMAN KARDON FL8450 Multi Play CD Player	£ 350	£ 250
MICROMEGA Tempo 1 Integrated Amplifier	£ 700	£ 475
RUARK Templar Rosewood	£ 500	£ 395
SENNHEISER HE60/HEV70 Electrostatic Headphones	£1000	£ 595
TRICHORD Genesis CD Player inc. base	£ 700	£ 595
YAMAHA DSP-A2070 Pro-Logic Amplifier	£1100	£ 895

NOW AVAILABLE FOR DEMONSTRATION

AUDIOLAB	NEW 8000CD CD Player The Best CD for £1000?
REGA	The AMAZING NEW PLANET CD Player
CYRUS	The NEW 3i amplifier and DAD3 CD Player
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nordost flatline, ortofon, qed, sonic link, trichord, van den hul, xlo

stands : alphason, apollo, atacama, heybrook, sound organisation, something solid, soundstyle, stands unlaque, target

headphones : beyer, earmax, grado, jecklin, sennheiser, stax

accessories : audioquest, bib, densen demagic, discwasher, goldring, hunt, ixos, kontak, michell, milty, monarchy, moth, pixall, qed, rms, rata, shure, trichord (including genesis & revelation players, pulsemaster, clock II + digital output board)



anti-static record sleeves similar to Nagaoka, not printed or boxed £12.00 for 50 (+ £1.50 p+p)



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PRIVATE

MUSICAL FIDELITY F22 preamp
pristine condition £695 ono. Acoustic
Energy AE1 mint, only £450. ATC10
mint finish excellent condition £595
ono. Tel: 01225 404431.

MPULSE HI mahogany Kimber re-
wired vgc £1,800, NAD 1000s/2700
HX Preprocessor boxed mint £450,
Synwood Mega mains conditioner £200.
Tel: Roshan 0171-242-9050 ext 3664
day, 0181-452-1394 eve.

P.R. DEVELOPMENTS 35w valve amp
Tomulus V3 integrated amplifier. Mint
condition, boxed, recent prize in
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5555 cassette £75, TA-AX500 amplifier
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X500L tuner £50, PS-LX4 turntable
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excellent condition with manuals.
Tel: 01702 470084 (Essex).

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£60, power amplifier £350. Celestion
SL600 speakers plus foundation stands
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LINN ISOBARIK speakers, unmarked
black finish, panelled stands, upgraded
Linn tweeters, active or passive use
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LINN KABER L500 speakers; black, in
perfect condition, boxed, plus two 6m
lengths Linn K600 cable. £950 ono. Linn
Kudos Am/Fm tuner £495 ono. Tel:
Nick 0161-429-0963.

TARGET AER2 5 tier rack, as new, £90
(£200 new). Hi-fi News 2 shelf wall
rack, as new, £30 (£60 new).
Silversounds 12/2 interconnects 1m £25.
Tel: 01780 64149, Stamford Links.

CHORD SPM800 AMP £975, AVI
S2000MP pre amp £395, Pink Triangle
DaCapo (1307 Filter) DAC £975 and
DC battery pack £975. All boxed
perfect
Tel: 01787 882038 (day) 371539 (eve).

QUAD ELECTROSTATIC
loudspeakers, lovely black late pair
(48645), boxed, perfect, £450.
Complete original Quad valve set, very
late (89000), lovely condition, £450.
SME original 3012 12" arm, mint, offers
Tel: 01364 72153.

CONRAD JOHNSON PV10AL preamp
very highly rated. £625 ono. TEAC
P700/D700 transport/dac £900 ono.
May split. Tel: 01843 584030.

CELESTION SL6s, £215. Jamo
Silhouettes, £225. Gradient subwoofers
for ESL63, £1,295. NAD 214, £240. AVI
S2000 MA, £350. All above boxed.
Target stands, £55. Soundstye tripod
XO58, £160
Tel: 01766-522098.

STAX SR-OMEGA Electrostatic
earspeakers and SRM-TIS Energiser.
Excellent £2000
Tel: Robert 01392 873 984 (Devon).

NAIM NAT 01 superb £800, Meridian
208 CD and pre-amp plus remote £800,
Radford STA 25 excellent £395,
Monitor Audio 12 as new £500,
Spendor BCI with built in power amp
offers. Orange valve pre-amp
immaculate £550, may px. Wanted
Pioneer 9500 tuner.
Tel: 01386 446756.

DPA - PDM 2 (two box DAC top of the
range costing £2495) Stunning sound,
mint £950. DPA - Little Bit 3, latest
sample, mint £195. Cambridge
DacMagic 1, boxed £90
Tel: 01279 629 708

PM COMPONENTS VAA-70 MkII valve
power amplifier, volume control allows
CD direct, 20w/channel. This kit
amplifier was built, test by PM
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PROAC MINI Towers natural oak,
excellent condition, original packaging
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Tel: Des 01280 850 074 evening only

ATC20T ROSEWOOD floor standing
speaker £1490. Infinity 2B oakwood
reference speaker £1300. Krel. KSA80
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LINN ISOBARIK active system. Kairn
preamp, three LK280 amps, three
sparks, active crossover with Dirak.
Naim CD1, Isobariks with stands. 6 X
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MERIDIAN 200 TRANSPORT
with DPA PDM one Series 2 DAC with
optical input. Boxed with all cables test
reports and reviews. New £1500,
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Tel: Peter 01480-457771 evenings.

AUDIOLAB 8000 CDM
transport as new £900. Mission 760i
speakers + Alphason Titan stands £90
may split.
Tel: 0141-649-2773.

ROTEL RA-840B AMP £100 ono.
Heybrook HB1s with stands £120 ono.
Reason for sale - upgrade.
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KEF 104.2 REFERENCE loudspeakers
superb sound, oiled walnut cabinets,
good condition £700 ono.
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VOYD "THE VOYD"
turntable natural ash, Rega RB300,
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deliver within reasonable distance. Cost
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recorder. VGC, usual refinements.
Manual and carrying case included.
£1200.
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PINK TRIANGLE LPT, Roksan Tabriz,
Corus black. Recent full overhaul. Boxed
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distance.
Tel: 0181 460 0914

NAIM NAC82, Hi-Cap X 3, boxed. MC/
straightboards for 62/72/82. Rega RB300
(9 months old), boxed + Gyro arm
board. WANTED: NACAS (2 X 10m
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Tel: 01843 593958

WANTED MUSICAL FIDELITY A1000
class A Pre-main amplifier. Must be in
good condition.
Tel: 01491 825534 Mr. Law (Oxford)

PAIR NEW Boxed VR40 (PX25) Balloon
valves £250, Garrard 301 strobe original
specification, plinth mounted with SME
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NAIM NAT101/HICAP, tuner, new style
cases, excellent condition and sound.
Offers over £650. Leak Troughline 3
stereo tuner, vgc lovely sound, £95 ono.
Sony WMDD33
cassette walkman, as new/mint, boxed,
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AUDIO INNOVATIONS Series 500.
Latest spec. Mint boxed £450
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CD TRANSPORT Kenwood DPX 9010
£200. Meridian 203 DAC £220. Mission
Cyru 2 amplifier £200. Akai 4000GS
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Tel: 01733 896581 after 6pm
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A LOVELY PAIR together! Linn LK280
power amp with separate Linn Spark
power supply. Very heavy! Fabulous
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Surrey

MERIDIAN 206 Delta Sigma CD player
three years old. Original manuals +
remote control. Immaculate condition.
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MUSICAL FIDELITY A1000 50w pure
class A 2 months old. Boxed, mint
£1500 (new) £900. Genuine reason for
sale. Tel: 0171 624 2777 daytime.

TECHNICS SLP840 CD player with
Tricord Clock 2, power board and BNC
coaxial output, under one year old,
excellent £525 (£825), Orelle DA188
DAC, was partnered with above, £295
(£445), Theta TLC Jitter Reducer
£150 (£235), Technics SAGX670 AV
receiver, was top of the range £275
(£449), Rock Solid unique tripod front
speakers with separate subwoofer and
JPW Sonata's (ash wood veneer) £375
(£565). The upgrading bug has caught
me.
Tel: 01734 344447

MUSICAL FIDELITY F22 preamp and
F15 power amp outstanding sound new
£3,700 sell for £1,800. Acoustic Energy
AE1 speakers new £800 bargain at £495
ono.
Tel: 01225 404431

THORENS TD160BC deck, SME 3009
Sill arm, Shure V15 MkV cartridge (new
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LINN ISOBARIK speakers black ash
with stands and Linn cables. Mint
condition £525.
Tel: 0141 956 1440

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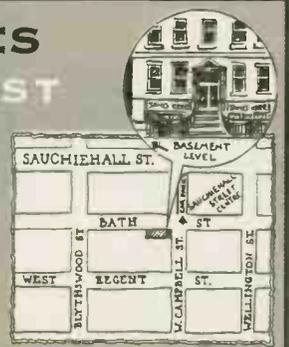
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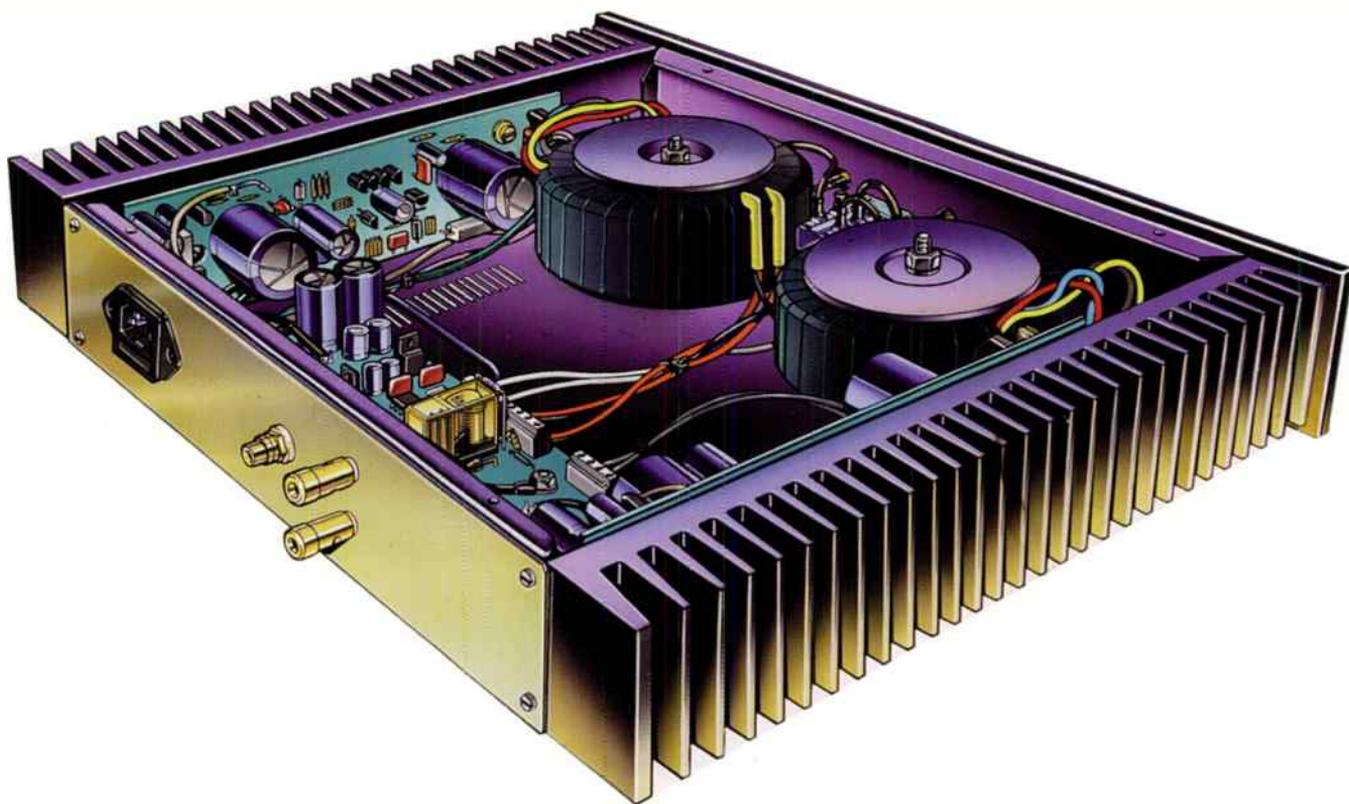
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