

Hi-Fi

WORLD

MARCH 1997 SUPPLEMENT

Reviews
on all three
loudspeakers
7.1, 7.2, 7.3

Wharfedale's NEW diamonds



Plus - The
Technology
and
Wharfedale
History

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Supplement

Contents

INTRODUCTION

Excited by their new three-model Diamond range, Wharfedale were hoping for extensive coverage in Hi-Fi World, knowing that we not only measure loudspeakers using industry-standard techniques, but also design and build them for our DIY Supplement. But the magazine was full. So, in conjunction with Wharfedale, we decided to give them space in a Supplement of their own, where a more comprehensive look was possible. I do hope you like it.

You might be intrigued to know that Wharfedale's founder, Gilbert Briggs, was a great writer. He produced a whole string of books on loudspeakers, hi-fi and musical instruments. Today, the company is run by another writer and engineer, Stan Curtis. Like Gilbert, Stan has been in hi-fi all his life and knows a thing or two about it. In fact, he's famed for his extensive knowledge, having designed many Cambridge products, for example. I'm sure Gilbert would have approved.

Noel Keywood Editor

Diamond 7.1

First time buyer? Student? Here's a quality miniature for under £100!

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Diamond 7.2

Visually almost identical to the 7.1s, but different drive units upgrade the sound for only a few dollars more.

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The jewel in the crown. Larger and more complex in their cabinets, the new 7.3s give real audiophile performance.

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Wharfedale history

Started by Gilbert Briggs in 1933, Wharfedale is one of Britain's oldest loudspeaker manufacturers.

9

diamond 7.1

£99.95

It's hard to make a serious hi-fi 'speaker for a gnat's whisker under £100, but this is Wharfedale's territory. They've turned out millions of budget Lintons, Dentons - and Diamonds of course - building a reputation on them. The company is out to protect its name in this field, one reason the Diamonds now straddle a relatively wide market segment in terms of sales volume. Price-wise the new Diamond 7.1 enters at the bottom of this segment, aimed at the first-time buyer. So does it offer high fidelity?

Definitely, is our answer. The 7.1 uses a bass/midrange unit with a treated fabric cone and polymer dust cap to reach up to 3kHz. Above this a polymer dome tweeter cuts in to continue output to 20kHz. Together the two cover the audio band with an evenness that disgraces many larger 'speakers. So although it costs a paltry £99.95, Wharfedale have managed to make the 7.1 a fundamentally accurate loudspeaker.

Small 'speakers are invariably designed to work close to a rear wall for bass reinforcement. This includes the Diamond 7.1s, but with a rear-mounted port, they should be kept at least a few inches forward. For review, ours were mounted on tall stands, close to a rear wall, and driven by an Audiolab 8000S.

With 'Trick Bag' the plucked steel strings of John Lee Hooker's guitar cut out from the 7.1s, making us aware of how strongly they can project. Whilst they didn't emphasise his low growls, they did make lyrics like "shoppin' for my tombstone" very explicit. Hooker



was out in front of the tiny boxes, croakin' in the room. This sort of projection is the sign of a good 'speaker, not box-bound but able to 'throw' images so they are seemingly divorced from the hardware.

Some of the softness of Gabrielle's crooning tones was bleached away by the tweeter, which is a little forward. It keeps the 7.1s sounding bright and clear, with ringing treble from metallic percussion instruments, but that wasn't all. Whilst Gabrielle's voice was prised out of the mix and thrown forward, sibilants hissed a little. There's a choice to be made here between clarity and smoothness; Wharfedale have aimed for clarity. To get both requires a more expensive fabric dome tweeter, used in the 7.2 and 7.3.

The cabinet could be heard contributing a little boxiness to vocals at times, but the effect was minor. It is

the sheer midrange clarity of the 7.1s that is most striking.

Down at the bass end the 7.1s are dry, controlled and tuneful. They play bass lines lightly, that's for sure, but are devoid of boom or one-note bass. Instead, Wharfedale have gone for a firm sense of control, with clean fundamentals from bass guitar. This was obvious on the opening track of Hooker's Boom Boom album, quite a feat since the track gets complex and there's strong bass in there. With albums of a lighter balance, like Kula Shaker's K, the 7.1s sounded light although delightfully clean.

Wharfedale's new Diamond 7.1s are basically accurate, clear and clean sounding. They project performances strongly into the room and display tuneful, if not heavy bass. The tweeter is a little forward, aiding clarity. They do a fine job for £99.95 ●

diamond 7 7.2



£139.95

structure of the Concertgebouw behind Ashkenazy. His left hand commanded real weight, and kettle drum thundered convincingly during the final crescendo. For a small loudspeaker the Diamond 7.2s go low, producing a convincing impression of orchestral power. Yet vitally, strings ebbed and flowed with silky smoothness; 'speakers with an extra zero on their price often don't manage as well in this area.

All of which showed just how well these minis spanned the full audio band. For £139.95 it isn't easy to find a loudspeaker that displays such ability, all the time maintaining sufficient composure to allow it to communicate the hall ambience and depth perspectives of a live recording clearly. String sections didn't fall into one another, nor clash with brass and woodwind, no matter how hard they played.

As with the 7.1s, Wharfedale have kept the 7.2s well damped, clean sounding and controlled. That's why they didn't lapse into confusion when the Concertgebouw was in full flight behind Ashkenazy and - a world away - it's also why Skin shouted, yelled and, perhaps, sung her way so forcefully through 'We Love Your Apathy'. Again, these 'speakers push vocals forward very strongly. Doubtless the small midrange peak we measured around 800Hz helped in this respect, but the 7.2s have enough low-end power to give Rock plenty of drive.

Lead guitar and drums sounded clean and tight, the 7.2s demonstrating they could hold together and keep up with a band like Skunk Anansie. They proved equally smooth and confident with a whole range of recordings, from Alanis Morissette through to the Upsetters. Our measurements showed just how accurate they were too. There's little to criticise here; the 7.2 is a great budget 'speaker ●

For a few dollars more than the 7.1s, the Diamond 7.2s come with a completely different set of parts, although visually you'd hardly know it. Both models share the same dedicated plastic front mouldings, so the driver apertures are identical. But Wharfedale slot into the 7.2 an entirely different bass/midrange driver. This possesses a low coloration, mineral-loaded, homopolymer plastic cone and a stronger magnet assembly. The reflex cabinet extends rearward by an extra 50mm to increase its internal volume and, unsurprisingly, the rear port increases in diameter.

These differences are barely visible from the front, apparently adding little to the cabinet's size, but they make quite a difference to the bass loading and overall bass performance.

The tweeter changes too, from a plastic dome unit to a larger, better damped fabric dome. Wharfedale say

little about this, but our measurements picked up big differences. The unit has an unusually flat frequency response from 3kHz up to 18kHz, holding out a promise of smooth, unfatiguing treble.

A single pair of rear terminals obviates bi-wiring, but that's no real loss at this level. Like the 7.1s, the Diamond 7.2s are best used close to a rear wall to bring bass level up. They are relatively well damped in the bass department, in anticipation of this. As with the 7.1s, we drove them with a powerful solid-state amplifier, the Audiolab 8000S. In practice, a budget design with muscle, like a Denon PMA-350SE, would be a good choice because the Diamonds are not sensitive - they need power.

If any one performance summed up these new Diamonds effectively, it was Ashkenazy with Rachmaninov's magnificent Piano Concerto No2, where they fully conveyed the scale and

diamond 7.3

£199.95

The Diamond 7.3 is a floorstander and that alone makes it look a lot different to its stablemates. But looks deceive. It uses the same fabric dome tweeter and bass/midrange unit. It is similar in basic sonic character too, but there are subtle but important differences.

Most people not incorrectly imagine that a bigger loudspeaker gives a bigger sound. Cabinet volume is the crucial parameter, and as it goes up then so should bass go down - to a lower frequency that is. This assumes that the drive unit changes its parameters accordingly; if it doesn't, then bass is just as likely to get weaker. Doubtless this is why Wharfedale only use a little more volume in the 7.3 than the 7.2, not the entire cabinet volume.

A peek into the hollow lower chamber reveals a partition roughly half way down. The upper chamber provides reflex-loading for the bass/midrange unit with a rear-firing port. The lower chamber can be filled with kiln-dried silver sand (not wet builder's sand), or with material like Sound Bytes. The idea is to stabilise the cabinet by adding mass, as well as damping down its panel resonances. This tightens bass, making it sound firmer. Without it, strong bass induces a little box boom.

The 7.3s also accept floor spikes, again to improve bass quality. And finally these 'speakers can be bi-wired, which lessens muddle. We used them bi-wired, with Sound Bytes, and on their spiked plinths.

Experiment showed they sounded



best when about one foot from a rear wall. Like their smaller siblings, the 7.3s sound and measure as if they are a little overdamped. This means they go low and play bass tunes well, as our listening tests confirmed. But bass fundamentals sounded a little light without a modicum of wall reinforcement.

Guessing the 7.3s would play a bass tune, I pulled out a few. One was Robbie Shakespeare backing Grace Jones singing 'Use Me', from her Nightclubbing LP. There was no doubt about that walking bass line; the 7.3s resolved it clearly, although it lacked a little substance. Wharfedale have opted for control and agility in the bass performance of the 7.3s rather than weight.

Whether it was attributable to sample differences I don't know, but our 7.3s were distinctly brighter than the 7.2s and measurement showed why. They have a smooth treble lift of around 1dB or so from 4kHz up to

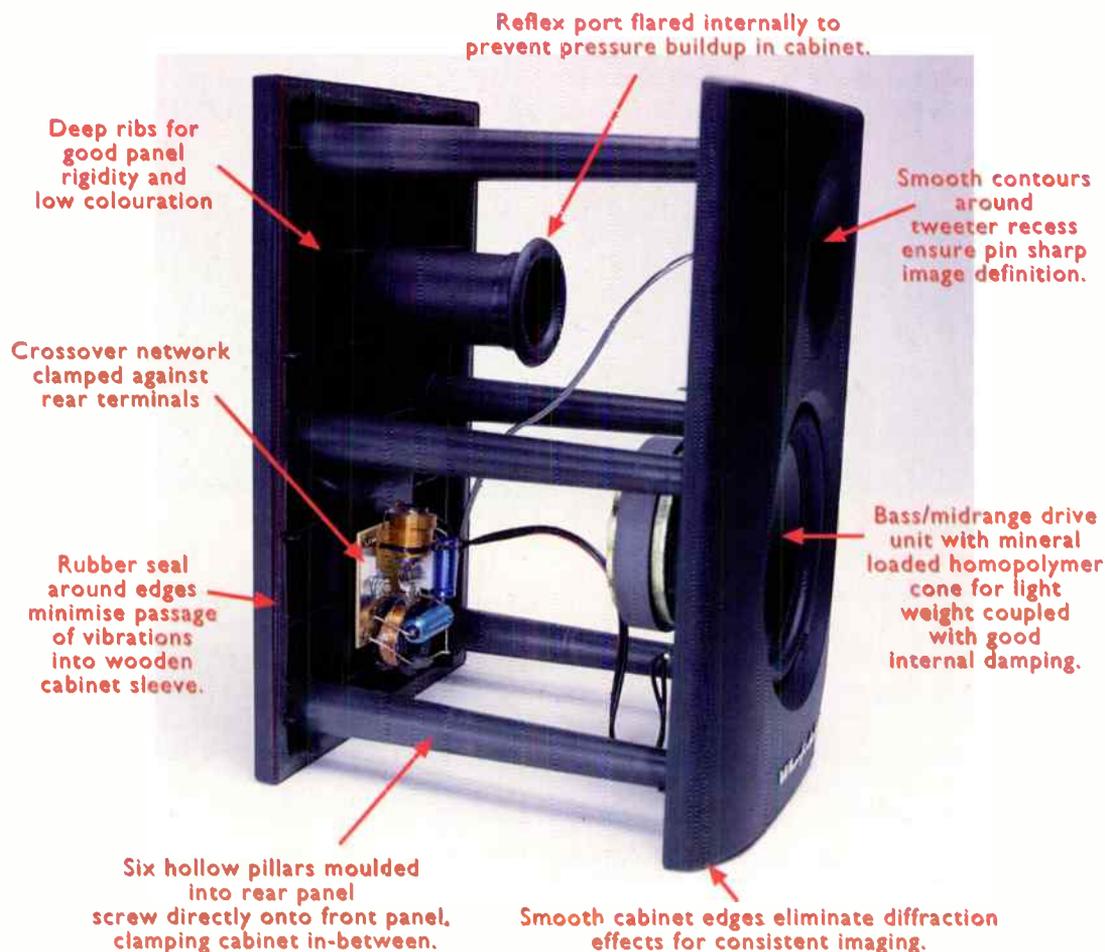
20kHz that brought cymbals forward, for example.

Other subtleties made themselves known. These 'speakers displayed great insight into performances, retrieving low-level ambient information especially well. Clean studio recordings, like Moseley Shoals (CD) from Ocean Colour Scene, were almost rudely close and very real.

This property goes down especially well when there's the acoustic of a big hall just waiting to be mapped out. The Diamond 7.3s captured the Chicago Symphony Orchestra playing Scheherazade beautifully, proving they could keep their composure in the face of a large, complex performance.

The 7.3s are a tidier and more sophisticated version of the 7.2. They demand a little more in terms of spiking, sand-loading and positioning. But bass goes lower, the midband has more insight, and there's a touch more treble. A £199.95 bargain ●

THE TECHNOLOGY BEHIND THE DIAMONDS



Always a large volume manufacturer and subject to the same sort of model-dependent fortunes that car manufacturers experience, Wharfedale have striven to keep ahead. The first Diamond loudspeaker, launched in 1982, showed that miniatures had a serious role to play in high fidelity. They were a great success, one that Wharfedale have carefully built upon over the years, as competitors jumped in with alternatives. That hasn't stopped Wharfedale producing millions of Diamonds.

Now in its seventh generation, the Diamond concept of a super-high quality, affordable miniature has been

built into three variants. All use the same specialised front and rear mouldings, smoothly curved to eliminate diffraction effects and enhance the potential small speakers possess to image very clearly. This applies especially to the tweeter, which shouldn't 'see' even small discontinuities around it. Consequently, Wharfedale have placed it into a smoothly profiled recess, with no sign of face plates, fixing screws or suchlike.

The front and rear mouldings are made of an acoustically inert combination of ground rock and co-polymer Wharfedale dub 'Audio Stealth'. They are bolted together through no fewer than six tubes that

form a part of the rear moulding. The cabinet is sandwiched between front and rear panels in a unique arrangement where, isolated by rubber gaskets, cabinet coloration is minimised.

All Diamonds are reflex-loaded with a rear-firing port. This technique gives maximum downward extension of bass output, the port being tuned by computer to match the driver and box parameters of each model. Wharfedale flare both ends of the 7.2 and 7.3 port to ensure symmetrical air movement and point it rearward to ensure it cannot be heard.

Bass and treble sections of the 7.3's crossover can be split to allow bi-wiring, which lessens muddle ●

Wharfedale

test
results

diamond 7.1

diamond 7.2

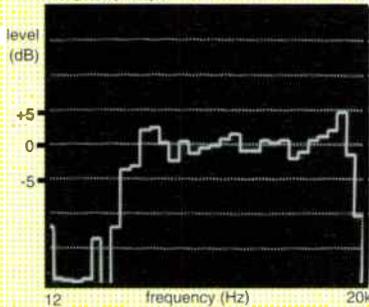
diamond 7.3

Frequency response of the 7.1 was basically flat, as our analysis shows. The random ups and downs are characteristic of a budget drive unit, in this case treated fibre. The good point is that output extends smoothly right up to the crossover point at 3kHz,

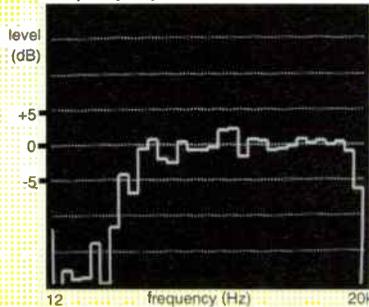
Frequency response of the 7.2 was unusually smooth and flat, not just through the crossover region at 3kHz but up through the treble too, demonstrating superb tweeter quality. A small amount of peaking around 1kHz is likely to enhance intelligibility

Extra box volume gives the 7.3 stronger deep bass. It measured +4dB up at 40Hz in comparison to the 7.2. This represents a useful gain at a very low frequency and will give low bass notes from the 7.3s more power. Further up the frequency band the 7.3s lack the small 800Hz-1kHz

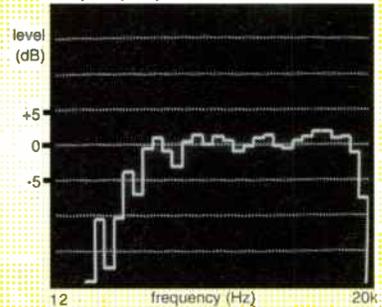
Frequency response



Frequency response



Frequency response



eliminating the common midrange dip. This imparts clarity to vocals and strengthens image projection.

There's a little bass boost around 130Hz to add speed and punch and bass extends down to 70Hz or so, good for a mini. Wall placement will improve this result.

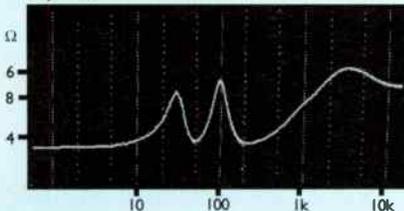
The tweeter is a bit enthusiastic, peaking +5dB at 12kHz, enough to put a little sting into high treble.

mildly.

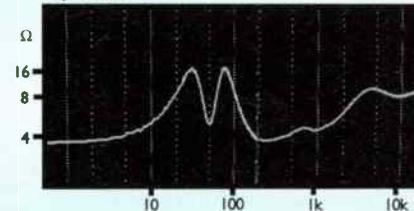
The low frequency limit appears set around 70Hz and there's a surprising lack of peaking at low frequencies. Manufacturers usually peak their 'speakers a little to add punch. The 7.2 should play a bass line more smoothly as a result. It will gain some bass boost, improving upon these figures, by being mounted close to a wall, which is doubtless why it is

mid-band peak of the 7.2s and they also have around +2dB more treble from 6kHz-8kHz. This gives a little less midband forwardness than the 7.2s, but also brighter treble, which listening tests confirmed. By any standards the 7.3s have a very flat frequency response and a performance worth exploiting fully through the use of bi-wiring and a lower cabinet chamber damped and stabilised by sand or Sound Bytes.

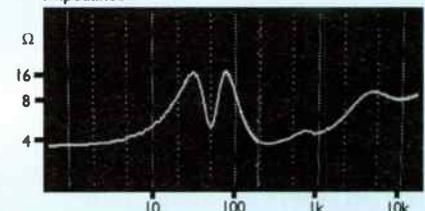
Impedance



Impedance



Impedance



Sensitivity was average at 85dB sound pressure level from a nominal watt (2.84V) of input power. Below 500Hz this is a 4Ω loudspeaker, above it an 8Ω 'speaker, giving 6Ω overall, which is what we measured. The 7.1 therefore needs current and should be driven by a chunky solid-state amplifier of at least 40watts. Although demanding in current draw, at least the 7.1 was not very reactive. NK

well damped in the first place.

Sensitivity was average at 86dB for a nominal watt input (2.84V) and impedance on the low side, being 4Ω below 1kHz where most music energy lies, rising smoothly to 8Ω at high frequencies. This gave an overall figure of 6Ω, confirmed by measurement. The 'speaker is best driven by a good solid-state amplifier of at least 40watts. NK

Strangely, the impedance curve of the 7.3s was identical to that of the 7.2s. This parameter usually reflects bass loading differences, but not in this case. Sensitivity was on the low side at 85dB, meaning the 7.3s will need a fairly powerful solid-state amplifier if they are to go loud. However, overall impedance measured a normal 8.6Ω and the curve is a smooth one, so the 7.3s will not upset amplifiers. NK



Gilbert Briggs



Gilbert Briggs in his Bradford office.

A brief history of Wharfedale, from Gilbert Briggs to Stan Curtis.

“I was kicked out, but I can truthfully say no one ever received a more valuable kick in the pants”. That’s how Gilbert Briggs describes the event that set him on course to establish the Wharfedale Wireless Works. It was 1933 and the fabrics company in which he was a co-director was struggling. Just a year earlier, Gilbert had become interested in how moving coil loudspeakers worked and had started experiments, certain he could do better.



Wharfedale’s first product.

Unfortunately, commercial one-piece cones bought from a Sheffield company proved to be three times more sensitive - and sensitivity was the issue of the day, since power was limited.

Then “a sort of little miracle happened”. In 1932 two Wharfedale

drive units won a contest held by the Bradford Radio Society. They were the only two loudspeakers that happened to match the amplifier properly, but

it gave Gilbert the opportunity he needed. An investor put £2000 into the business and he was off.

Of his own admission, Gilbert knew little about loudspeakers, and not so much about business either. The first three years’ accounts showed small losses. The fourth year was better; a profit of £57 was recorded. Business picked up with the Gem, priced competitively at just over £1. It was the forerunner of the many small, inexpensive ‘speakers Wharfedale was to make later, upon which it built its reputation.

The company produced transformers for the Admiralty during the war and then went back to loudspeaker production in 1947 with a technically ambitious two-way corner loudspeaker with crossover network.

Production increased after the war. A new factory was built at Idle, Bradford, where the company remained until 1990, producing everything on-site, including cabinets. Gilbert, born 1890, sold the company to Rank in 1958, when he was 68 years old.

Throughout the busy 1970s Wharfedale thrived, producing millions of loudspeakers from a huge automated cabinet plant employing 1100 people.

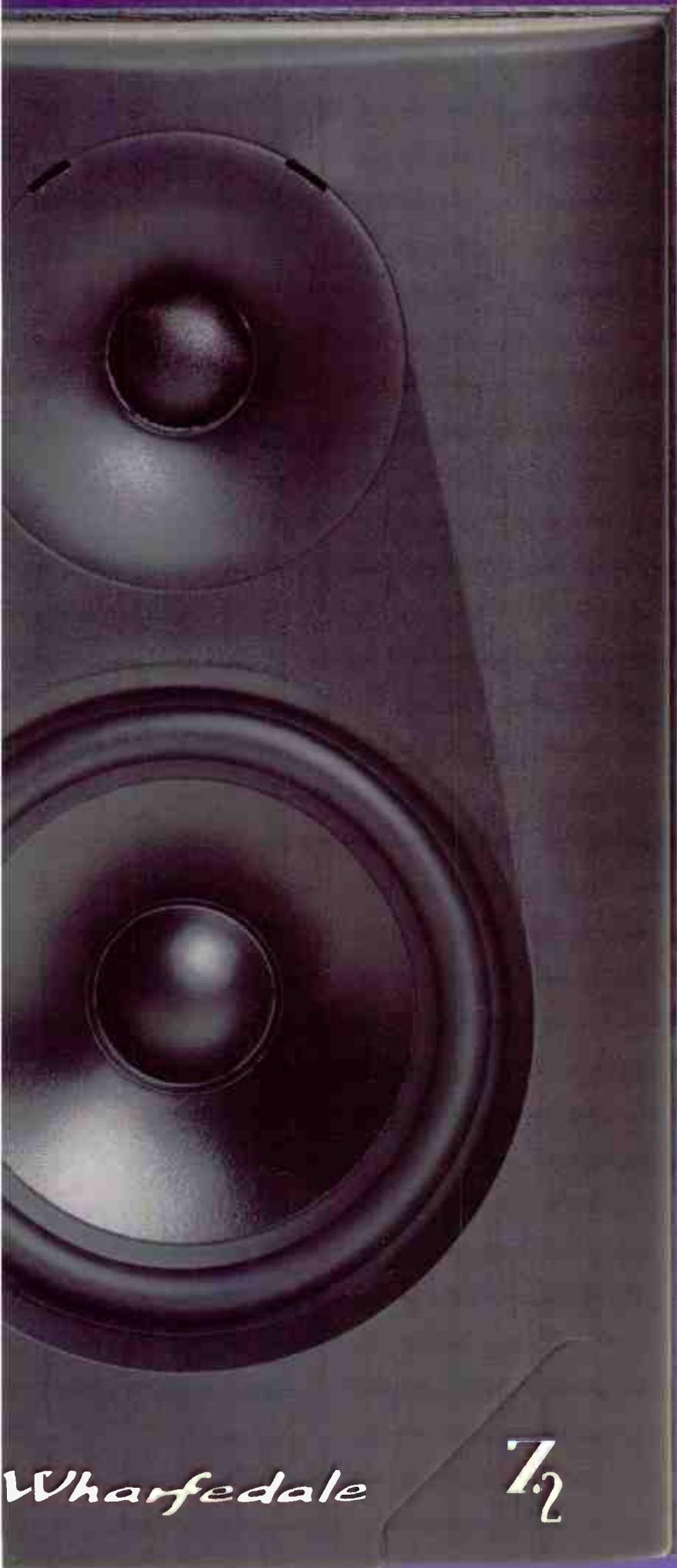
Rank decided to leave consumer electronics and sold Wharfedale in 1982. The company’s fortunes varied until it merged ten years later with Verity Group, owners of Mission. The company is now based in Huntingdon, home of British hi-fi, alongside other Verity Group businesses.

Neither Verity nor Wharfedale



Super sensitive E Series loudspeakers, 1978-1985.

make much of the fact that Wharfedale’s Managing Director is Stan Curtis, renown ex-reviewer and audio engineer, famous as the designer of many Cambridge products, including the CD1. He brings back to the company the sort of deep understanding of audio design and marketing that left when Gilbert finally called it a day in 1958 ●



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loyal friend since I bought it second-hand 14 years ago, but progress is progress and I've got to stop being sentimental about it.

My own idea is to proceed in three steps. First, buy the EAR 834P phono stage. Then get a line level integrated like a Shearne or Stemfoort (these choices are based on what I've read). The last thing on my list would be a new cartridge, and I was thinking along the lines of an Ortofon MC 20 Supreme or the new MC 25FL.

I have no plans to change the arm or turntable, and my main concern is whether these are good enough to do justice to my proposed upgrade. If not, then I would

prefer to set my sights on a lesser amp and cartridge. I have no aversion to buying second-hand and am quite capable of knocking a kit together, so how would your own valve pre-amp compare with this set-up?

**Craig Story
Linthorpe,
Middlesborough.**

I suspect that whilst an upgrade to cartridge and amplifier would make a lot of sense, upgrading as far as an EAR 834P phono stage and a Shearne or Stemfoort integrated is going to be a little too revealing of the LPT and Tabriz combination.

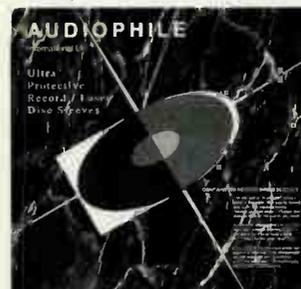
I'd go for something

that's easier on your budget but no less sonically satisfying. Try replacing your 33/303 with an Aura VA-80SEx (£249.95 in black, £269.95 in chrome). This amplifier's line stage is superbly dynamic and revealing but also pleasantly warm, avoiding the slightly sterile presentation that a lot of budget solid-state amps have. As well as this, it possesses an excellent disc stage which impressed us in the March 1996 issue.

As for cartridges, you already have the Corus Blue whose body will happily take a Goldring stylus - surprisingly enough, the 1042 we're so

fond of would be a fine choice. You could also upgrade your Tabriz to zi specification with its intelligent counterweight for £170. JM

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LETTER OF THE MONTH (CONT.)

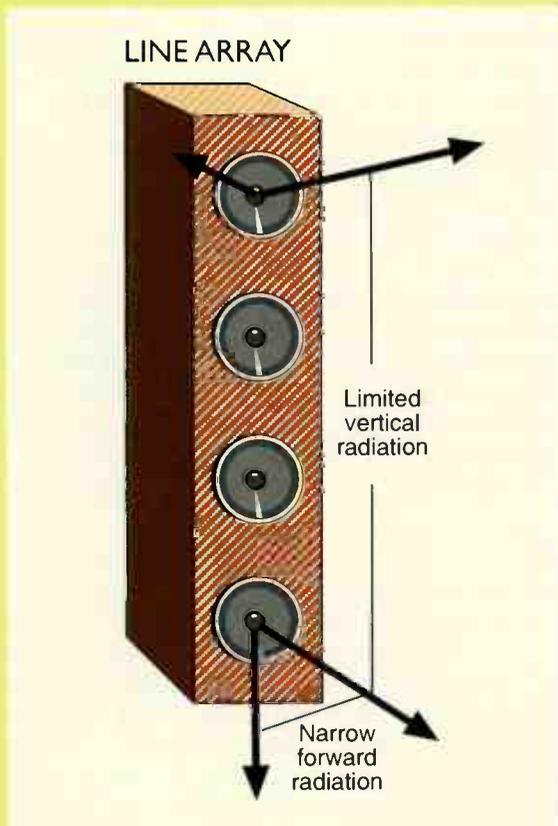
moved to become narrow, vertical arrays.

He also considers that reflex-loaded bass designs are best, and gives full justification for this. Again, I note that modern 'speakers are almost all of this design. Not so 15 to 20 years ago. One of his designs involved two small 'speakers with separate bass boxes, again something that has been taken up more recently.

Mr. Lefebure should try re-siting his 'speakers further apart and pointing inwards somewhat, and see what happens to the image when he moves. It should not take long to find the best arrangement. He may have it already, but it's always worth experimenting.

I would like to refer you to the following articles and books, all by E. J. Jordan.

- 1. Loudspeaker Enclosures, Wireless World, Jan. 1971.
- 2. Hexagonal Loudspeaker, Hi-Fi News, April 1979.
- 3. The Jordan Manual, published by himself, date unknown (probably late 1970s).



4. Loudspeakers, Focal Press, 1961. This, sadly, is long out of print, but it does give the formulae and application of the Theile-Small parameters before they were called by those names. He also shows how to measure some of these on actual 'speaker units.

5. Finally, he wrote a typically enigmatic article in Hi-Fi News, July 1996, called The Parameter Game. This is difficult but worth reading. Here he points out that the T-S parameters given by manufacturers of units may well not be very accurate.

He also suggests that, like the present trend to the more linear thermionic valve, developing more linear response in 'speaker units should be a priority. He, of course, has designed and manufactured such units.

2. and 3. are most relevant to the stereo image discussion.

Chris Wigzell
106201.666@Compuserve.com

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MORE SPEED

I am writing to you in the hope that you can advise me what I can do to improve my hi-fi for the best in a certain area.



They may not 'Rock' in unassisted form, but with the help of a subwoofer like REL's Q Bass Quad's ESL 63s are capable of real sonic pyrotechnics.

Currently I use: Theta Data Basic with Sonic Frontiers SFD 1 DAC, Audio Research LS 2B Mk2 pre with a Krell KSA 250 power amp through Quad ESL 63s. My room is 13 feet by 24 feet but I may move to a larger house in due course.

I love the sound I get with most types of music. The sound stage is broad and fairly deep, and the effect of 'being there' can be wonderful. However, I also listen to Rock and Pop music, and in this area my system is

lacking a lot of rhythmic drive. To be honest, I get more enjoyment listening to a 'cheap' Naim system in this particular case.

I know Wilson 'speakers

have a good name for playing all types of music well, and the brief auditions I've had show potential in this area. Unfortunately, I am not in the market yet for new Wilsons. I might soon, however, be in a position to afford either a nearly new pair of Witts or else Watt/Puppy III's.

Please would you suggest which of these or any other 'speakers may best address my problem with lack of rhythm and pace. Perhaps I might benefit more from different amplification,

without spending too much money!! I do adore my combination for its potential to re-create a believable sound stage, though, which I believe a pair of Wilsons could enhance.

In time I will change the front end to a livelier CD source so long as I don't end up with my system sounding too fatiguing.

Additionally, what sort of 'speaker cables do you think I should aspire to, to do this sort of set up justice? I know Transparent are good but what else will give that wonderful scale of sound stage with pace? Do the more expensive Transparent cables give much of an improvement over the cheaper ones? And if so, what do they do differently?

The problem is, in England we cannot test everything out very easily, and as helpful as Absolute Sounds have been, this enquiry of mine has not yet been solved. So I'm writing directly to the people who ought to know best.

**Mike Thornewill
Bilsthorpe,
Notts.**

There's nothing in your system lacking the drive you require except those Quad ESL63s. Having lived with them myself for so long, alongside box loudspeakers, I know how difficult it is to choose between the two. In my

case I chose to subwoofer the ESL-63s with Celestion SL-6000 open dipole subwoofers, matching the two through a dedicated crossover. We published all the details, including the crossover circuit, in Supplement No 19, which accompanied the December 1995 issue.

This little caboodle appeared in response to many readers' requests. It isn't the easiest route to follow, however, partly because the SL-6000s aren't made any more. An easier alternative is to partner the '63s with a REL subwoofer. I've done this too and it works incredibly well, providing you get the subwoofer set up properly. If you don't it can boom badly and give you bass that sounds divorced from the rest of a performance.

I have to admit I set up my REL quickly by ear first and got it wrong. Had I spent more time, this approach might have been successful, but there was no need: our measuring mic. and spectrum analyser sorted out the problem quickly and assuredly. Then, the REL and Quad in combination worked from around 8Hz smoothly up to 20kHz, room modes apart. The Quads really seemed to thunder and had tremendous power with Rock and Classical.

LETTER OF THE MONTH (CONT.)

Loudspeaker dispersion, like room acoustics, isn't a hot topic amongst the industry loudspeaker engineers I talk to. My impression is that smooth off-axis dispersion is generally aimed for, on the grounds that reflected sound from ceiling and side walls will then be much like the direct sound reaching a listener.

But this is not the case. In practice reflected sound is dirtied by suckouts and peaks, as measurement reveals. Reflected sound never mimics direct

sound, as Canon found with their omnidirectional mushroom.

Since nothing can be done about this acoustically inconvenient fact I rather agree with Ted Jordan's view that it's better to narrow down the radiation pattern of a speaker to minimise 'dirty' reflected energy. This makes the speaker less room dependent.

Ted Jordan's vertical array is most commonly found in Public Address work, where confusing delayed

reflections must be minimised. The drive units interact to produce a narrow forward beam pattern possessing restricted vertical dispersion as well. It's not an approach that has received much favour in the British domestic loudspeaker market as yet, but it is another interesting option facing home DIYers. The drawback is that it limits the range of listening positions, producing a small 'sweet spot'. NK

However, some listeners still felt that a hard Rock Linn/Naim system was 'faster'. That's true, but you need to be aware of the various trade-offs here.

For a start, there's enormous energy in low bass signals and decay times are long, being inversely proportional to frequency. If you want really fast, punchy bass then it's best to cut out frequencies below 30Hz or so and add a little emphasis around the 60Hz-120Hz region, according to taste and room conditions. This will give you the sort of breathtaking bass punch and speed so beloved by UK Rockers, although it isn't strictly accurate.

Since the REL crosses over at 100Hz it is possible with careful tuning to put a peak into the combined system response here, giving a similar effect, but this would need measuring equipment. Otherwise, box loudspeakers are your bag, since by their very nature they cut off below 40Hz or so (at -6dB/octave with a sealed box; at -12dB/octave with a port) and can easily be given enhanced slam with a bit of 80Hz lift.

It strikes me that your room dimensions are ideal for Quads. I hope I am not being presumptuous in pointing out that the optimum position is roughly two thirds of the way down the room, with the 'speakers close to the side walls. This uses the side walls as extensions to the total panel area, lessening the rate and amount of bass roll-off, due to cancellation around the panel. It also allows the rear out-of-phase signal to dissipate down the room behind the 'speaker, lessening cancellation from this

source. I hope you are getting the best out of them before turning back to conventional boxes.

If you want to go to Wilson loudspeakers, with which we have had little experience, then you are into considerable expense. Be sure to listen carefully first to make up your mind. NK

Newnes Tel: 01865 310366



Have a look at how electrostatics work and how they react with rooms in The Audio and Hi-Fi Engineer's Pocket Book.

POWER PROBLEMS

My system comprises Linn LP12 with all the latest mods, an MAV MB6 power supply, MAV motor rebuild, Manticore Magician arm and Ortofon MC 20 cartridge.

CD is catered for by a Teac P700 plus a custom built Burr-Brown 20-Bit DAC of

exceptional performance (superior to the top of the range PT DAC!)

Radio comes through a well-aligned Troughline with Hi-Fi World decoder. Speakers are Ruark Talisman 2s with silver internal wiring and Kimber caps.

The MC head amp is based on your valve design and is a stand-alone unit built with the highest quality components and uprated power supply incorporating RATA HT regulators. This is an excellent unit that makes the MC section of my heavily modified Naim NAC 12 sound slightly 'dirty' for want of a better word. The main pre-amp is a Michel Argo with a Hydra, and 'speaker cable is NAC A5.

My query relates to the power amp which I am looking to replace after twenty years of good service. This is a Naim NAP 160, once again rebuilt with the highest quality components and dual mono power supplies. Interconnects are Kimber PSB.

Basically the sound is excellent but it does lack some spaciousness, depth and precision of imaging. I recently borrowed a Meridian 555 power amp which, whilst lacking my Naim's purity of high frequency resolution hinted at potential improvements.

Should I take the easy route and purchase a Michell Alecto(s) or is it worth building a valve kit (the 300B design)? My listening room is 25ft. x 17ft. and my musical tastes are entirely Classical with a preference for Mahler, Mozart and Wagner.

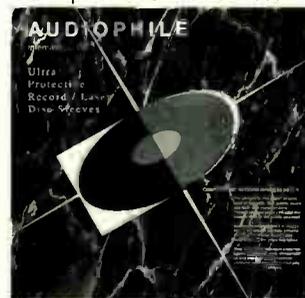
**Anthony C. Parkin
Ward End,
Birmingham.**

That's one interesting system - I hope you have a good aerial for the Troughline by the way. With the valve stereo decoder, this combo is untouched by any other tuner.

Your Ruark Talismans, in what is a fairly large room, are probably best driven by a solid-state amplifier if you want highish levels. Few amps are as spacious as 300B, especially when its feedback is switched off, and solid-states are not as silky smooth, rich or vibrant with violins. However, they are very practical propositions and Michell Alectos are the most spacious sounding of all - to quite an amazing degree in my experience. Eric Braithwaite loves them.

A good Naim has extraordinary grip and detail of course, whilst a good DPA amplifier pips them all in terms of sheer civility and transparent clarity. These are names to conjure with and consider. Lastly, don't forget Meridian's new 557, which has gone down very well in Hi-Fi World towers. I hope these suggestions are useful guidance for you. As always I'll sign off by saying that at this level personal choice decides it. NK

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CHEW UP

Could you please help me choose a replacement for my cassette deck, which is a Denon DRM 44HX. This has served me well for the past eight years, but is now starting to show its age by chewing tapes. I intend to send it back to Denon for a service, but I think a replacement is required.

I have been trying to get a Nakamichi DR1 or DR2, but I think I have missed my opportunity, as new ones are rarer than hens' teeth! I have been trawling through my magazine library for reviews on other cassette decks that might fit the bill, such as the



It doesn't have to be a Nakamichi to solve problems of mismatched azimuth. Pioneer's CT-S740S is a worthy alternative that sounds impressive.

Teac V8030-S, and Pioneer CT-S830S, which both seem to be likely candidates, but I have some reservations on each (build quality on the Pioneer, and Dolby C replay on the Teac), as I have amassed quite a collection of tapes over the years recorded on four different decks.

I suspect that the main problem I will encounter will be the variations in azimuth alignments. I am content with the rest of my system at the moment, which consists of the following components; Roksan Xerxes, Artemiz, ATF5 (Stilton body) on Mana Reference three-tier table, Ion Nexus SPI pre-amp, FMT2 tuner, X-PAK2 power supply, MA240 power amp, Arcam Delta 170/BB3 CD transport and DAC and Epos ES14 'speakers.

(Name and address withheld by request)

I suspect you are right - namely that matching head azimuth to recorded azimuth on the tape will be a problem. The Nakamichi DR-1 has adjustable head azimuth. But, alas, these mechanical marvels are no more, unless you can get one second-hand and then get it fully serviced by B&W.

Otherwise, you either get a NAD or Yamaha with Play Trim to compensate for the treble loss caused by azimuth error, or perhaps a Pioneer

CT-S740S with FLEX, which

does the same thing, but automatically. It's probably best to take some tapes with you, one sample recorded on each of your previous decks, and play them on any machine you intend to purchase, to make sure it can cope with any errors that may exist.
NK

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Find out about the inner workings of cassette with The Audio and Hi-Fi Engineer's Pocket Book.

SAVILLE SEEKER

My neighbour recently gave me an item "to play with": a SAVILLE "Double 6" stereo integrated amp, made by Period Hi-Fidelity Ltd. of 14 Mount St., London W1.

Their name would lead one to think that perhaps it's a re-build of an earlier design. The front panel styling suggests 1970s: a very solid slab of cast aluminium, sprayed in black & white. Other aspects of the amp's functions, though, are typical of 1950s or early '60s equipment.

The input selector, for example, offers a choice of RIAA or 78 EE equalization from magnetic or crystal sources. The chassis is heavy and well built, with a case finished in dark grey hammered paintwork.

Would you, or any of my fellow readers, recognise such a beast? I would imagine that even in its day it was a pretty obscure item.

Whether or not the thing rings any bells, I have a technical query about it which I'm hoping you may be able to help me with. The "Double 6" uses a valve rectifier, but it's missing and I've no idea what type would be correct for the circuit.

The pre-amp uses an EF86 per channel, with a single ECC83 for both channels of the magnetic cartridge input. The power amp, which I guess is meant to provide 6 watts per channel, uses pairs of ECL83s in (I assume) Class B push-pull. I enclose a diagram of the rectifier base wiring to give you a better idea of things. All the smoothing capacitors seem to be 275VDC.

I have tried using an EZ81 just to see what would happen, but I'm not at all sure it enjoyed the experience. Any ideas as to the identity of this creature or advice on



The Saville Double 6 is a late 1950s integrated on a par with Rogers' Cadet, for example.

which rectifier to use would be gratefully received.

By the way, thanks for that power supply circuit for the QUAD FM tuner: I'm going to use it to power my QUAD AM II.

Ken Cumberlidge
Leytonstone,
London.

According to Nick Besley at The Emporium (01379 650744), The Saville Double 6 is a design that first saw the light of day in the late 1960s. Assuming that yours is in good condition, it would produce the same kind of sound quality as the Rogers Cadet.

Apparently, the EZ81 you fitted as a replacement rectifier is in fact the correct valve. If it didn't look happy when you switched on, and started producing sparks, this could well be down to a duff capacitor shorting out the rectifier. Check the power supply caps for short circuits and replace any that don't work properly. JM

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CANS CAN

review

Jon Marks discovers that £20 and a pair of Sennheiser's HD433 headphones is a recipe for budget hi-fi fun.

Headphones make great ear warmers and have a funny habit of putting instruments into your head - dramatic in the case of a kettle drum. That's fine if you like the sound stage to appear between your ears instead of in front of you.

That's what I used to think. Now, a mere £20 has helped me realise that headphones can make for great listening too. With the 3m OFC cable of Sennheiser's new HD 433 budget 'phones trailing across the floor to hook up with our Audiolab 8000S amplifier, I warmed my ears to the bitter and twisted strains of Alanis Morissette and her Jagged Little Pill album.

It was only as the last few seconds of the final track were fading from the HD 433's open-back drivers (featuring neodymium-iron magnets for high sensitivity) that I remembered I was supposed to be scribbling copious notes on these 'phones' every characteristic. All my notes showed for the Sennheisers' treatment of this album was the word "fun". Oh well, I thought, I'd better just listen to that CD one more time. Tough job reviewing these headphones. . .

'Hand In My Pocket' showed off the HD 433's midrange clarity. Vocals were clearly detailed and delineated, fixed securely in the sound stage thanks to a decent sense of space around them. The same detail manifested itself on percussion and the impassioned wheezings of the harmonica, which had

the correct dose of metallic tonality.

Down in the bass department, this album's overweight drum machine sounded as though it needed to head off for a musical health farm, which is



just as it should be. This didn't stop the inherently

rhythmic drive of the song coming through, the '433s pulling out the stops in this area. The only thing preventing me cutting a rug was the knowledge that I was bound to get tangled up in the lead and concuss myself on the nearest piece of furniture.

Upping the ante in the sound quality stakes was Officium Defunctorum (Tomas Luis de Victoria) sung by Magnificat. Considering the wallet damage adds up to only £20, the delicacy and tonal range shown here by the Sennheisers was rather special. Where other 'phones can fizz, grate and boom, the '433s were commendably smooth and subtle. OK, so the bass wasn't perfect, sounding rather woolly

and soft-edged compared to the midrange, but then a lot of the competition at this price would have turned Magnificat into a bunch of rappers with chest colds.

Orchestral music found the HD 433s equally enjoyable. As ever, this genre provided the real acid test, proving once again the midband and treble subtlety of these 'phones.

Cellos found the weak spot of bass insight and resolution, the lower octaves tending to blur and waffle slightly. This never caused any major listening problems though, and was more than outweighed by the aforementioned pros. Music's sense of direction, scale and flow remains undiluted through the '433s, which helps to make them a bit of a bargain in my book ●

Sennheiser HD 433

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WORLD VERDICT



Whatever genre tickles your fancy, the HD 433s will reproduce it with an ability which belies their price tag.

**Measured Performance
see p103**

REVIEW

PIONEERING

SPIRIT



Pioneer's CT-S740S cassette deck wowed Noel Keyword in the June 1996 issue. Can the flagship £1 000 CT-95 now set his heart fluttering?

Around £300. If you wanted a quality cassette deck, a Nakamichi used to be a pretty safe bet. Then, as a Mill, others eventually made a dog's dinner out of cassette. The harder they tried to inject quality and value price. But Nakamichi has been gone, leaving a vacuum in the quality class field. So Pioneer have their sights squarely set on taking over the top slot with their £1 000 CT-95 cassette deck.

It might not be a spring chicken any more, having been on the market for a few years, but the CT-95 still looks very good. Like with its Dolby B noise

reduction, it also has Dolby HX Pro treble overload prevention, which can be switched out by those suspicious of such signal manipulations. Whilst enthusiasts generally prefer to use as little signal processing as possible, it's only realistic to expect Dolby B to be included these days. Effective in suppressing hiss and preventing overload, Dolby B allows quality tapes, like TDK AD or Maxell XLII, to turn in excellent results. The sound from tapes like these is more than satisfactory for general and in-car use, if not for critical headphones listening.

Also being impressed by FLX on

the CT-S740S (June 1995 issue), which did wondrous things with professional tapes, I was disappointed to find nothing in its replacement like the Firm or a genuine head assembly to help out in the area of anyone wanting to get the best from a collection of professional tapes will be disappointed. Those with a recording agenda that differs from this machine's will also discover that standard tapes won't do it and using Dubs II will maximize the effect.

I was surprised to measure very low noise in the noisy cassette. The

lower than usual - and this translated into a 5dB reduction in hiss from tapes whether Dolby B was engaged or not. However, the benefit wasn't maintained with Dolby C or Dolby S, where the CT-95 was no different from usual. That's a pity, because the CT-95 would otherwise have been a class leader in the apparent dynamic range it offers.

It goes without saying that a machine of this quality has independent record and playback heads, siamesed together on an extremely solid cast alloy head-block. These heads have a very flat measured frequency response which produces a smooth, natural balance with recordings, all other things being equal. The automatic tape-tuning system is comprehensive and correctly adjusts bias and record equalisation separately to differing parameters (bias to balance MOL/SAT overload ceilings and equalisation to provide a flat frequency response). Tests proved the system was not only successful in getting response flat but was consistent in the process as well. Pioneer also provide incremental adjustment of bias for those who wish to manually alter the tune system's result.

One problem with decks like this is that they present a bewildering range of options to users. I found that, to a significant degree, the sound of the CT-95 depended upon how I tuned it and what noise reduction systems I chose. As per usual, there was audible hiss with Dolby out, minimal hiss with Dolby B, and just about no hiss with C and S. Dolby C has a less than subtle effect on sound quality though, softening and muddling music - this is why Dolby S replaced it. Unfortunately, Dolby S on this deck pushed higher frequencies forward in the soundstage while pulling lows back. In spite of extra tuning and manual adjustment of bias, I couldn't stop Scheherazade's violins coming forward at me when using TDK MA metal tape.

As always, Dolby B affected the sound least, allowing it to maintain its atmosphere, although violins still

sounded a little hard. Curiously, with Rock music, where metal tape usually excels, MA sounded a little soft on transients. Rim shots and background percussion at the start of Steve Earle's *The Hard Way* were strangely muted.

Violins fared a lot better with TDK SA-X chrome tape, but sounded smoothest and closest to the original with TDK AR. It was only AR with Dolby B that captured the soaring violins and glorious atmosphere of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's

"I found that, to a significant degree, the sound of the CT-95 depended upon how I tuned it and what noise reduction systems I chose."

Scheherazade. Plucked double basses grumbled satisfyingly and there was an abundance of hall acoustic.

Rock music of course didn't fare as well - hard percussive transients were softened, as they always are with ferrics and chromes. All the same, there was little sign of confusion and the Pioneer never sounded anything less than smooth, natural and open. In fact, this neutrality highlighted the problems of noise reduction.

At the end of the day I was a little disappointed that I couldn't get better results from metal tape. My Nakamichi ZX-9 with Dolby B was, I have to say, on a higher plane altogether in this respect. But then Naks always are. The Pioneer was impressive with chromes and ferrics, however, sounding unusually smooth and fulsome.

My experiences with prerecorded tapes were similarly mixed. Measurement told me one channel was down at high frequencies, probably due to replay equalisation error (this parameter is normally adjustable). All my prerecordeds imaged toward the left of the soundstage on the CT-95 whilst sounding correctly balanced on

the ZX-9. The Pioneer obviously didn't have the treble extension of the ZX-9, but I was aware that it was supremely smooth, stable and detailed. I was left puzzling over how the CT-95 with its inconsistencies could sound more engaging and less mechanical than the Nakamichi.

The mist cleared when I realised that, during subdued spells of a Chopin Nocturne, Opus 32, No2, when Ashkenazy's hand was barely brushing the keys, the Pioneer was producing little hiss. Furthermore, what little there was had a warm quality to it - the ZX-9 was fiercer and more shrill in its hiss. So whilst piano sounded clearer and better described on the Nak, which quite obviously had better treble extension, it was smoother and more natural on the Pioneer.

With so many variables, plus points and minus points, it's hard to come to a conclusion about Pioneer's CT-95. It lacks

the functional elegance of a Nakamichi, sporting instead a myriad buttons and lights, none really necessary. Behind all the gimmickry lies a very good deck, but it isn't easily accessible and my sample had some foibles. Impressive engineering, but it needs to be better organised into the final product, especially at the price.

Pioneer CT-95

£999.95

**Pioneer
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WORLD VERDICT

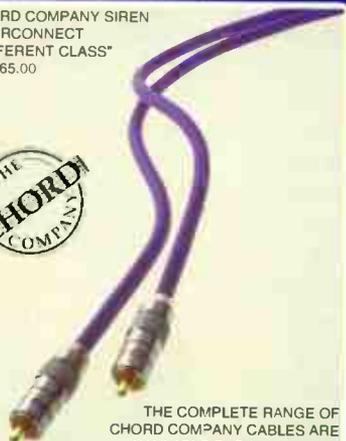
At its best with chrome and ferric tapes, the CT-95 is smooth and natural. Lack of azimuth adjustment and mediocre performance with metals are a disappointment.

**Measured Performance
see p103**

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Ken Kessler - Hi-Fi News & Record Review August '94

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It was getting embarrassing. Every man and his dog seemed to be on the World Wide Web, except us. Perhaps if we were running a drain clearing service or something low-tech, it would be excusable. But this magazine is hardly that. In line with the way publishing is going, it is mostly electronic, like the subject matter. So under a certain amount of pressure (wot, you aren't on the Internet yet?) we've taken another step down the electronic road and can be found at www.hi-fiworld.co.uk.

There are some interesting features behind a Web site that are very good news for you - and us. All the information on it is free, apart from the cost of a telephone call. And because maintaining a Web site is far less costly than putting ink onto ten tons of paper, distributing it through fleets of lorries, ships and aircraft to thousands of news outlets around the world, it opens up some interesting and, I hope, valuable possibilities.

Think of our Web site as a free extension to the magazine if you like. We are making most of our DIY projects permanently available on it, for example, so anyone anywhere in the world can access the information entirely at their convenience. It would be impossible to print all this data every month in the magazine, even though there is a healthy demand for it.

The Web site offers much more than a free electronic reprint service though. We will be progressively loading on useful guidance and design information for loudspeakers especially, and this illustrates what we hope the benefits of the Web will be. Loudspeaker design intrigues people around the world, particularly in the USA and Germany it seems, where dedicated magazines like *Speaker Builder* and *Klang & Ton* exist. The British are every bit as interested too;

Britain is known world-wide for loudspeaker design and manufacture.

We have long wanted to put guidance on loudspeaker design into the DIY Supplement, but it would be gone after a few weeks on newsagents' bookshelves. It's too ephemeral a channel for valuable guidance and reference info. The alternative is to write a book and that has also been considered in *Hi-Fi World* towers, but I suspect it would have to take an unusual form to offer what people really need, in order to justify its existence.

"Think of our Web site as a free extension to the magazine if you like. We are making most of our DIY projects permanently available on it"

The problem here is that loudspeakers constitute a subject that is almost limitless in terms of the information generated about it. And most of it is highly specific as well. To give a book broad enough coverage to appeal to a usefully wide cross section of those interested, it would need to be very large. And that means costly, which immediately starts to exclude the very

Mysteries from Noel Keywood

readers to whom it would appeal.

The Loudspeaker Design Cookbook by Dickason pitches in at a usefully practical level, is low-priced and very popular. But even though uncomplicated by loudspeaker design standards, it is founded on Thiele/Small parameters and, judging by the requests for help we get, is beyond the level most people expect or are able to cope with. A simpler approach is required and I suspect look-up tables offer one solution, together with nomograms and other easy-to-use

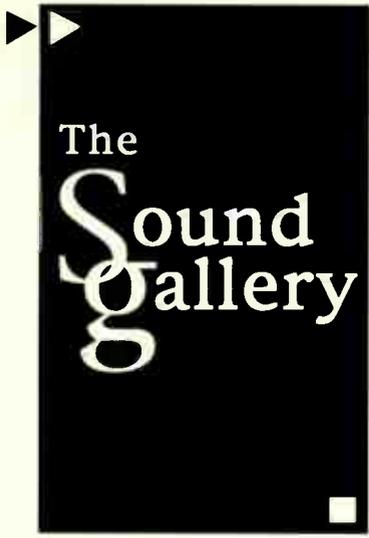
devices. I hope we can make progress with this in the coming months. It isn't the most scientific or exact way of designing a loudspeaker, but if useful approximations are possible then it is better than nothing.

In spite of all that is said about computers and the information superhighway, books are as popular as ever. They're cheaper than a computer,

consume no power, fit in the back pocket more easily, don't go out of date in one year and don't crash. Again, space in the magazine is strictly limited, so we will be putting longer descriptions and a more comprehensive listing on our Web site. Hopefully we will be able to include some of the highly specialised publications we receive on valves and suchlike. A good book is worth its weight in gold and the Web is a great place to find out about them.

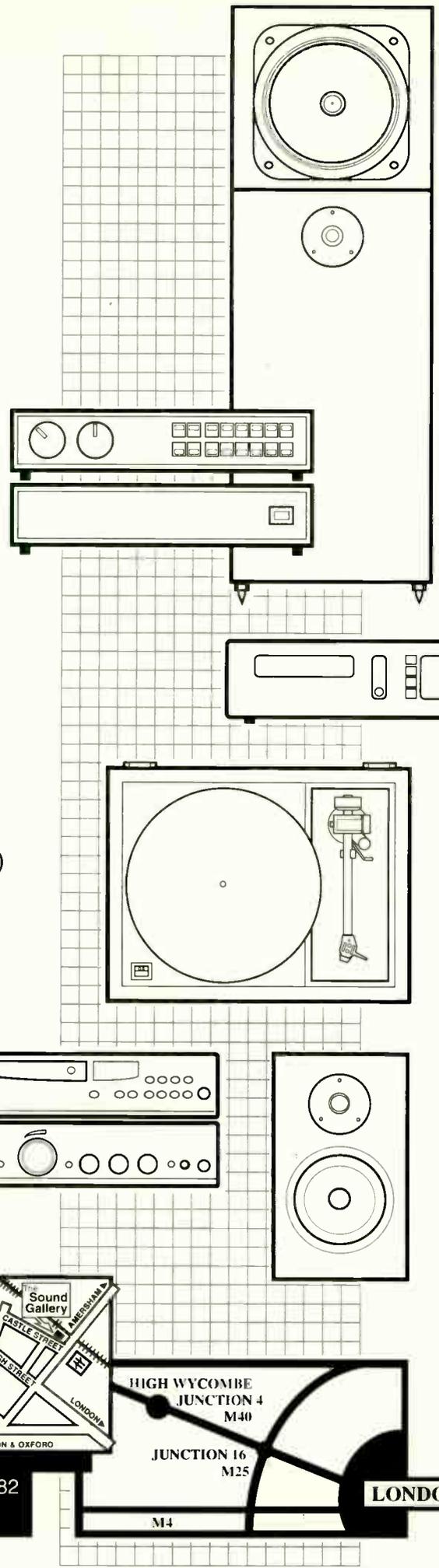
Net statistics are so dramatic that people from Bill Gates at Microsoft through to Rupert Murdoch at News International have decided it's the place to be. At present something like 40 million computers are connected together globally, through telephone lines, to form the Internet. Estimates are that 20-60 million people are using this network and the number of users is doubling every year. Britain alone has around 800,000 dial-up accounts and many more people access the Net from work, school or college. By way of contrast magazine readerships vary from 10,000-150,000 per issue, whilst newspapers run from 300,000-1,000,000 or so. The Internet dwarfs such figures - and there's a few billion people still to come! I hope our site will offer useful information and guidance, making its own small contribution ●





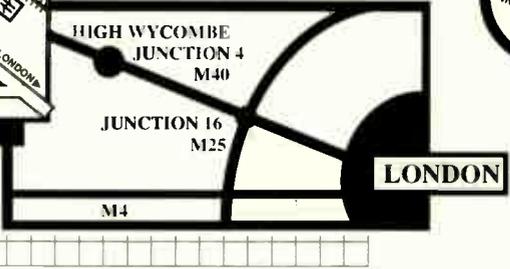
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THIN END OF THE WEDGE

Fitted with B&W's Prism technology, the new DM305 floorstanders find a fan in Jon Marks.

B&W's loudspeaker boffins have taken a leaf out of their testing book and incorporated it into their DM305. How? Well, the new DM305 features their Prism technology, designed to work along similar lines to an anechoic chamber. A chamber like this has its walls, floors and ceilings lined with sponge 'wedges' which scatter and absorb sound waves instead of merely reflecting them, which is what happens in a common or garden listening room. Sitting behind the DM305's drivers is a plastic panel with wedges moulded into it, the rationale being that this should scatter the rear radiation from the mid/bass unit, reduce the likelihood of standing waves and give a cleaner, clearer sound.

That's the theory, but what about the practice? In a phrase, Prism works - the 305s have an obvious midrange clarity and transparency. Female vocals, for instance, lacked the kind of wooden, boxy coloration that so often afflicts them, and this in spite of the B&W's cabinets weighing about as much as a fully laden biscuit box.

This lucidity meant that sound staging was deeper and more realistic than I've come to expect from 'speakers at this kind of price. Magnificat's polyphony was particularly strong proof of this, the choir's voices unblurred and possessing a convincing tonal realism. Latin Scholars out there will be pleased to know that this clarity made lyrics easily intelligible, so following your favourite choral work is a piece of cake.

It was with Magnificat, though, that one of the 305's other sonic traits started to make its presence felt. Lower vocal registers sounded slightly thick, lacking in detail, compared to the 'see-through' airiness of the midrange. While this didn't stop me from enjoying the music, it came as a disappointment - I



had been hoping Prism's Effects might extend across the

mid/bass driver's whole frequency range.

A spell with Marvin Gaye (*What's Going On?*) showed these 'speakers can certainly play a tune, mixing up funky rhythms (thanks to good bass power) and precise timing (courtesy of cleanly defined percussion) to produce a foot-tapping sonic brew. Helping give percussion some of its crispness was a slightly sharp treble that made cymbals sound more incisive than they would naturally be.

What all this pointed to is a loudspeaker in three fairly distinct parts, bass, midrange and treble. Each seems

to be doing its own thing in the DM305s, although the end result is still a 'speaker that makes for enjoyable listening.

Bass has impressive power and depth which suits Rock tracks and lends Classical music a welcome scale, but it can't muster the kind of lucidity which characterises the midrange. And treble lacks a little insight; for example it homogenises the various sounds made by a cymbal struck at different points on its surface.

Mozart's *Haffner March* for orchestra in D major, K249, demonstrated just how enjoyable the 305s are though, the piece striding along with great gusto. *Kula Shaker* with K provided more evidence, tracks like 'Hey Dude' registering a dangerously high groovy content.

Like any loudspeaker, the DM305s possess their own cocktail of sonic characteristics. But if you don't mind the rather distinct bass, midrange and treble, and you love music relayed with passion, then these B&Ws are well worth a listen.

B&W DM305 £349.95

**B&W Loudspeakers
Marlborough Road,
Churchill Ind. Est.,
Lancing,
W. Sussex BN15 8TR
Tel: 01903 750750**

WORLD VERDICT



All the ingredients for listening fun are mixed into the DM305. Overall presentation could be more cohesive though.

**Measured Performance
see p103**



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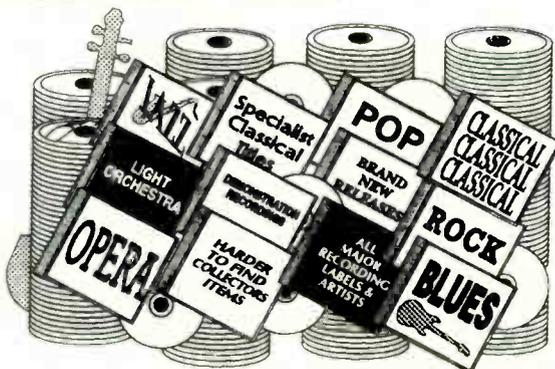
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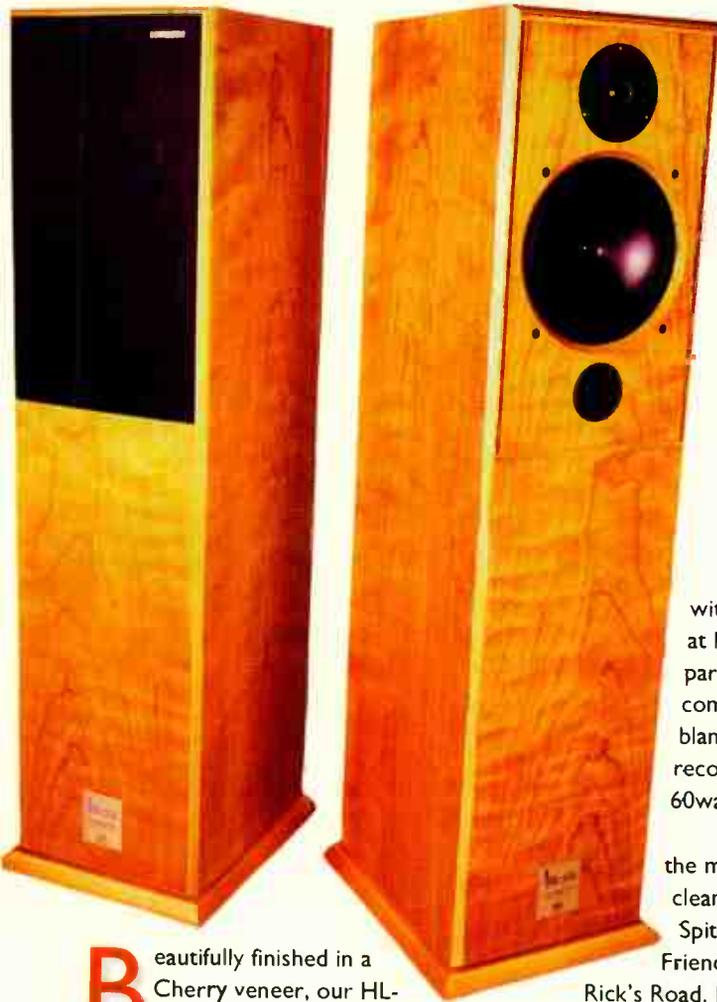
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Cherry Cherry

Putting the HL-K6 into a larger two-part cabinet, Harbeth have produced the tweakable HL-S8. Noel Keywood gets out the Sound Bytes.



Beautifully finished in a Cherry veneer, our HL-S8s looked absolutely superb. They stand tall at 1000mm (39in.) but present a neat face to the world, thanks to their frameless flush grille and quality finish. This two-way design uses Harbeth's own 200mm (8in.) bass/midrange unit accompanied by a 19mm aluminium dome tweeter, ferrofluid damped, like the stand-mounting HL-K6. Only the upper half of the Harbeth's cabinet acts to reflex-load the bass/midrange unit. The lower half is an empty chamber.

To suppress cabinet resonance Harbeth fit a removable rear panel and internal shelves. The idea is to use a damping material like silver-sand, lead shot or Sound Bytes to stabilise and damp the lower cabinet chamber. We dutifully packed Sound Bytes into strong plastic bags and placed them inside, one bag per shelf.

The HL-S8s were bi-wired and run from, variously, Audiolab 8000M monoblocks, a KLPI/K5881 MkII and the Marantz Model 7/9 reviewed in this issue. Being a fairly normal 8Ω load according to our measurements, and of average sensitivity, they worked well

with all three. However, at low levels, their bass in particular went a bit flat, coming over as a little bland. So generally I'd recommend a good 60watts, used plentifully.

A glassy clarity across the midrange painted a clean outline of Charleen Spiteri singing 'So Called Friend', from the Texas LP Rick's Road. Robbie Shakespeare's bassline, though, came over as indistinct until volume was wound, when it knitted in better with the rest of the band. Whilst bass sounded clean and firm, there wasn't so much inner detail or character. A degree of boxiness coloured low frequencies, ameliorated by adding Sound Bytes, but not entirely cleared.

I started off using LP, courtesy of Shure's VI5VxMR, which has muted high treble that nicely counterbalanced the Harbeth's upper-treble lift. Only in bass power did LP sometimes catch these 'speakers out. The hard-hitting drum strikes on 'Pull Up To The Bumper' (Grace Jones, Nightclubbing) excited a plasticity 'boomp' from the bass/midrange unit. Otherwise, the HL-S8s have fine midrange clarity and ringingly clear treble.

There were times when the 'S8s sounded muscular and supple in their bass reproduction, but they did need to be pushed with a fair bit of power to come alive. Tracks like Billy Idol's 'Prodigal Blues' brought forth good low-end power, if not a great deal of insight. But this was CD and the tweeter was

quite obviously 'spitty', contrasting strongly with LP courtesy of the Shure VI5VxMR. This is what I'd expect looking at our test results, because the tweeter's response rises upward toward 20kHz. This is a characteristic which, I find from practice, the ear is very sensitive to.

The dryness and control of the HL-S8s made for a clean, ordered sound. They offer good insight and analysis across the midband and treble, but fall into boxiness and a somewhat vague rendition of events down at lower frequencies unless given a lot of power.

This makes the HL-S8s a bit of a mixed bag in my estimation. They have some notable strengths, but also some characteristics listeners will either love or hate, according to taste and, as always, partnering items. Used enthusiastically with a powerful but smooth amplifier, these 'speakers can impress.

Harbeth HL-S8

£1999

**Harbeth Acoustics
Unit 1,
Bridge Road,
Haywards Heath,
W. Sussex RH16 1UA
Tel: 01444 440955**

WORLD VERDICT

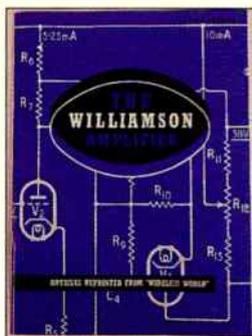
Glassy clarity, bright treble, with bass that comes alive when given welly. Expensive though.

**Measured Performance
see p103**

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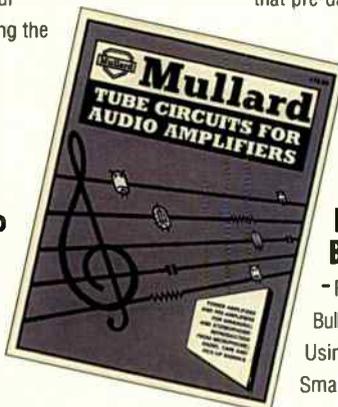
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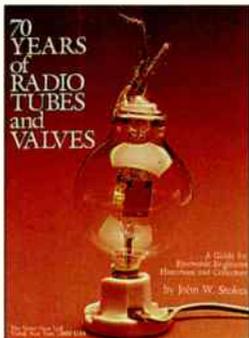


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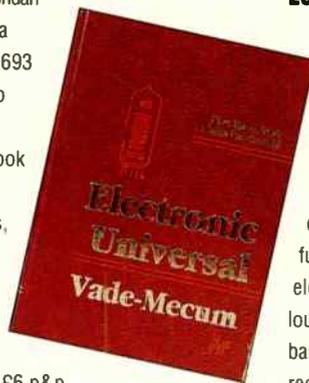
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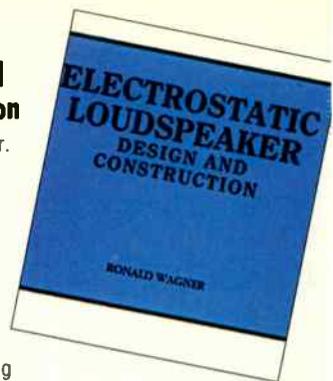
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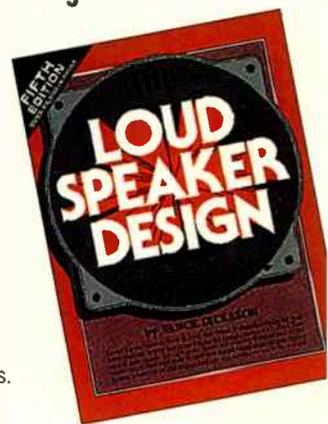
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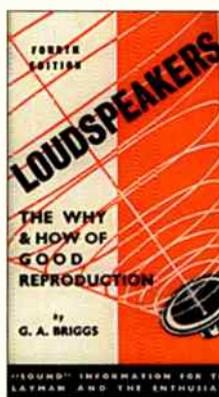
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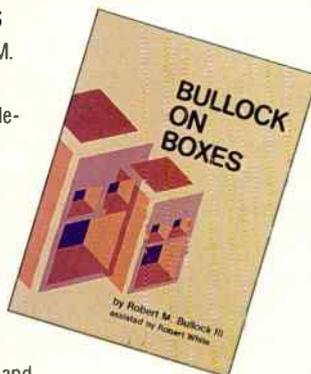
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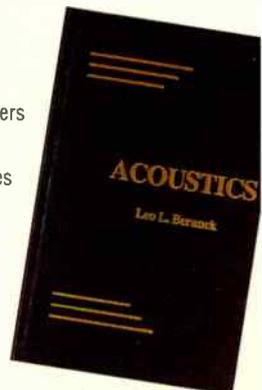
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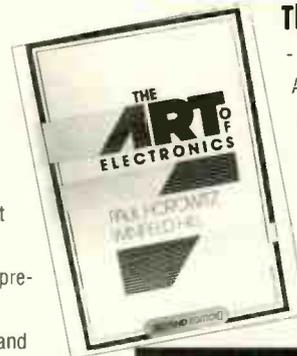
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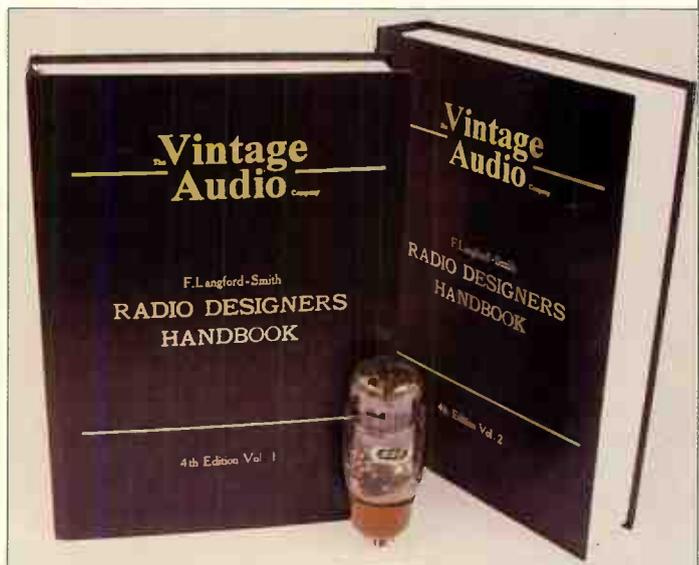
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One of my first pieces of audio exotica was a mono open reel tape recorder, an old teak-clad Philips complete with clear plastic spools of rusty BASF ferric tape. Apart from its smooth, clear sound, the real delight of open reel was the way it felt to use. There's little like the feeling of threading quarter-inch tape through the guides, securing it in the take-up spool groove and pressing a Play key to the sound of a finely aligned mechanical 'kerr-lunk'.

Vinyl junkies understand this too. Because hi-fi is, or used to be at least, a tactile as well as an aural experience. There are many people who are mightily glad that they'll never have to cue a stylus or thread a tape again in their lives. But some, me included, feel that just pressing a button to play music is a strangely alienating experience.

You can always tell hardened vinyl users by the way they handle a record - deftly slipping it from the inner, sliding it on to the platter spindle, and cueing the stylus without resort to the cueing lever. They'll lower the needle so gently that you'll barely hear the slightest click from the 'speakers. And if they're any good, the whole process will have taken less than a couple of seconds.

By comparison, CDs are a chore. With a little silver disc in one hand and the machine's remote in the other, vinyl users feel disorientated. They'll scrabble round for the anonymous plastic Open button, often identical in size and shape to all the others, and then watch as a rather tacky disc tray wobbles out. Dropping the disc on the tray they'll press Play and wait several seconds to the sound of various whirring and grating noises 'til the track finally starts. Although it's easy enough, it's hardly as sensuous as cueing vinyl.

"Followers of ye olde black plastic know

something that CD users maybe don't - the importance of things feeling right as well as sounding the part." Try using super-arms like the Linn Ekos or SME V. They've a sense of immense solidity but still work with supreme smoothness and delicacy.

"Followers of ye olde black plastic know something that CD users maybe don't - the importance of things feeling right as well as sounding the part."

Leica camera users or Ducati bike riders know this too - the satisfaction of a machine designed to respond to your every input, instantly. So why do so many purveyors of digital audio overlook this?

Part of what makes using CD generally such an empty experience is the lack of attention to detail paid to the players' mechanics. However tasty the electronics inside expensive players are, many seem to suffer from slow, noisy and wobbly transports. Frankly, the way the disc trays of the likes of DPA's Renaissance, Audiolab's 8000CDM or Pink Triangle's Cardinal whir out to greet you aren't becoming of players of their sonic calibre, or their price for that matter. Although superbly engineered, when they feel

little better than the fifty quid computer CD-ROM drives, you do begin to wonder.

Of course, top-loading players don't suffer this, making the likes of Naim's CD1 and Mission's DAD7 far quicker and more tactile in use. Even Philips' old CD100 was elegantly

simple to use. But there is a few manufacturers who care how their products feel. Take Linn for example.

Despite the two players looking almost the same, buyers of the £1800 Karik know how much better screwed together it is than Linn's 'budget' Mimik. Although both players are beautifully finished, the cheaper player feels like a box with air in, while the Karik seems to have been sculpted from a metal ingot. Press the Open button and instead of a plastic drawer sliding out to meet you, an immaculately hewn metal affair zips out, silent but ultra-fast - it feels gorgeous.

Japanese manufacturers know this. With a great tradition of delicate art and design from origami paper

sculpture to ukiyo-e wood block painting, their culture makes them all too conscious of the subtle interplay between look and feel.

Now, their latest generation MiniDisc machines are reaping the benefits. Using an MD simply involves slotting the disc into the machine, as you would an Apple Mac floppy disc. It feels very immediate, and because there's no exposed surface, the disc is perfectly easy to handle. Better still, it loads far faster than CD and has superior track access times too. It has the speed and

directness of manually cued vinyl, but none of the stylus-bouncing potential. It's recordable, yet vastly simpler to use than any previous recording media.

So, if you're a 'hands on' sort of person, stick with the black plastic and reels of BASF LH-Pro. But if you like life simple, you now have an alternative to consider in MiniDisc. With all the operational advantages of CD but none of the drawbacks it's much more satisfying to use. It's just a shame it doesn't sound as good as open reel, or make glorious clunking noises either. Whichever way you look at it, pressing little rubber buttons on a remote controller will never be the same as the feel of a decent tonearm or well oiled tape transport. But that's 'progress', I suppose. ●

audiophilia

David Price



They say that moving house is, after death and divorce, the third most-stressful event that can happen to you. Well, let me tell you, it isn't! Moving is, in fact, THE most stressful event, especially when it comes to the hi-fi. You see, I've just moved house and after spending months perfecting the ideal listening environment in my old house, I now have to start all over again.

Like all self-respecting hi-fi (and music) nutters, once the best room has been found, the furniture has to fit in around the hi-fi. If this means dodgy aesthetics and the odd door that doesn't open fully, then so be it.

The desired room really chose itself because of the fact that my new house has only four usable rooms. Two of these are bedrooms, and one a kitchen. One of the bedrooms was considered, but was ruled out through minor domestic considerations such as not having anywhere for guests to sleep. And it would have meant trudging up and down stairs to get beers and nibbles when relaxing to a favourite album.

So, we've got the room, now what? Well, when viewing any dormant room, there are two things that need to be noted. Where are the 'speakers going to go? And where are the mains sockets? The latter isn't too much of a problem, as sockets can easily be moved to suit requirements. In my case, the room had sockets on three of the walls, and it was quite easy to utilise two of them without too much spaghetti to trip over. Siting the 'speakers, however, proved more troublesome.

The criteria I had were as follows. Speaker leads have to be as short as possible and of equal length. My speakers need to be about 50cm from a rear wall and about 2m apart. Like nearly all 'speakers, they dislike being placed in a corner



from
Dominic Todd,
our man in
retailing

Fair Views

or against any other surface than a thick external wall. Ideally, they also need to fire widthways across the room, and

'speaker-stand platform.

The answer was to be found in a bag of the most vicious screws I could find, and concrete.

Of course, it's not only 'speakers that are sensitive to an unstable floor. My hi-fi tables are well catered for with isolation aids, but just for good measure I slipped some delicate slabs of marble under them as well. These were bought for the princely sum of ten pounds each from a fireplace warehouse (essentially, they are the cut-outs from where the fire goes into a surround).

The turntable, however, was best lifted from this hostile environment altogether. A Sound Organisation frame wall-bracket with Ruark isolation shelf did the trick. Putting the turntable up on the wall also meant I didn't have to creep around the room on tip-toes to avoid unsettling the cartridge.

Finally I used a soft fabric blind to cover the window. Hung over this, and the door, were light muslin curtains which dampen the harsh, reflective glass surfaces. The room was then arranged so that fabric and carpet (soft) balanced wood and rows of books (harsh).

So, with a little thought and a lot of experimenting, it is possible to find as near-perfect a position for your hi-fi as you can expect in a domestic situation. Oh, and before you ask, yes I can still open and shut all my doors and cupboards, so there's a bonus!

"I can't tell you how many sleepless nights were spent shifting furniture around from here to there, only to see perfect visions of hi-fi nirvana fail at the final sofa.."

the furnishing needs to be balanced, symmetrically, in density to achieve the best sound. Oh, and there still has to be space for me to sit facing the 'speakers in the usual 'hot spot' position.

I can't tell you how many sleepless nights were spent shifting furniture around from here to there, only to see perfect visions of hi-fi nirvana fail at the final sofa. But as those of you who have been in a similar situation will know, there is an end. I finally managed to meet all my criteria with the added bonus of there being absolutely nothing but thin air between the 'speakers.

But this was just the beginning. The broad, stripped pine floorboards that had initially proved attractive became Public Enemy Number One. Their loose and bouncy nature didn't suggest a stable

The screws tightened down any offending floorboards. The 'bounce' proved rather more difficult to cure. Short of filling the cellar with builder's rumble and concreting under the floor, there was little I could do. Then I remembered the old trick of concrete slabs.

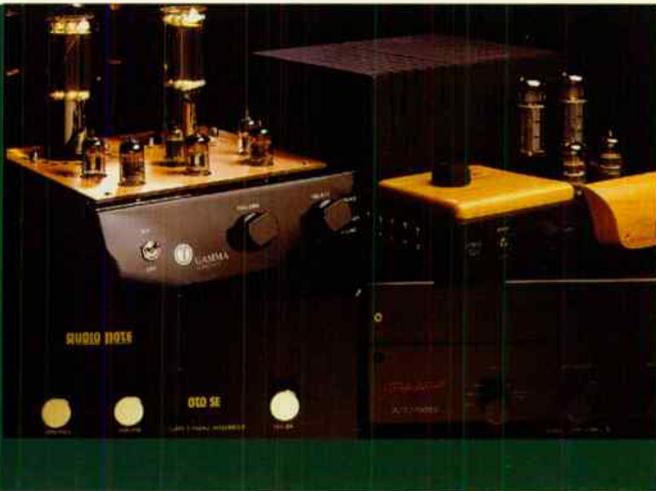
One of these placed under each stand tightened things up in the bass department no end. And whilst I realise it's no substitute for a full, low resonance concrete floor, it's an acceptable compromise. Domestically, the visual impact can be sweetened too. By choosing slabs with bevelled edges and adding a splash of paint, the slabs become almost invisible. A final finishing touch is to add three or four height-adjustable cones to the bottom of each slab, for the ultimate in stand stability!

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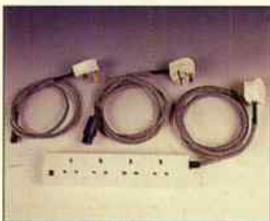
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March finds us with a rather special digital prize to give away. The £1000 Audiolab 8000CD integrated player awaits one winner while the other will receive the £1400 8000CDM transport and £900 8000DAC convertor.

Audiolab was born in 1983 when Philip Swift and Derek Scotland came together to produce the integrated amplifier that went on to fame and fortune as the original 8000A. Following in 1991, the 8000T FM tuner took the company into the ether while the 8000DAC laid claim to digital territory. Later to emerge from the same stables were the innovative

8000PPA phono stage and 8000Q pre-amplifier. These two components shared Audiolab's Zq technology, three years in the making, which freed the signal path from the sonic degradations of capacitors through Direct Coupling.

More recently Audiolab has unveiled new, updated versions of the 8000P power amp, 8000M monoblocks, 8000DAC and 8000CDM transport. It

was this pairing that so impressed Jon Marks back in our October 1996 issue, leading him to conclude, "As a combination, the 8000CDM and DAC go hand in glove to put together a clean, detailed and lively view of music." As a result, the CDM transport has now taken up permanent residence in our reference system here at Hi-Fi World.

Setting the CDM apart from its predecessor is a new Philips mechanism, the CDM 12.4, designed for use in CD-ROM drives where accurate reading of the disc's contents is of the utmost importance. The DAC on the other hand benefits from a new 20-bit filter, simplified analogue output stages and improved data re-clocking to reduce jitter.

Most recent member to join the Audiolab family is the £1000 8000CD. According to Dominic Baker in December 1996's edition, where the 8000CD scores over its rivals is not only with its sweet treble and full midrange but also in the sound staging stakes - "But what had really made me sit up was that the 8000CD had proper depth to its soundstage. . . it's something I've only heard a



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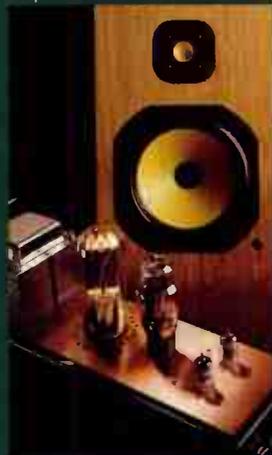
Valve amplifiers based on the 211, 845 and Vaic 30B triodes can deliver the transparency and holographic imaging normally associated with single-ended designs, but these valves can also produce real dynamics and deep, detailed bass.

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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**

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NAIM CDI **£1600**

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

MCINTOSH CDM7009 **£2635**

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

COMPACT DISC TRANSPORTS

TEAC VDRS-T1 **£550**

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

AUDIOLAB 8000CDM **£1300**

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

CD CONVERTORS

DPA LITTLE BIT III **£300**

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

THORENS TDA2000 **£700**

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

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

DPA 1024 **£6000**

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

TURNTABLES

GARRARD 401 **second-hand**

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

THORENS TD124 **second-hand**

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

SYSTEMDEK IIX900/RB250 **£330**

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

SYSTEMDEK 2X2 **£499**

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

RESON rsI **£600**

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

MICHELL GYRODEC **£800**

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

PRO-JECT 6.1SA **£999**

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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.

TONEARMS

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

SME V **£1235**

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

LINN EKOS **£1400**

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

CARTRIDGES

ORTOFON VMS-2E **£110**

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.

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

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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

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AUDIOLAB 8000Q £995

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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.

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

MISSION CYRUS POWER £450

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ROSE RP190 £495

Used with the partnering pre-amp it gives 70watts of smooth, relaxing sound.

SUGDEN AU41P £530

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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 £1750

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

NAIM NAP180 £900

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MICHELL ALECTO STEREO £1300

A refined transistor amplifier with valve-like transparency and a full, warm, easy-going sound. The £1800 Alelecto 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.

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NAD 412 £190

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KENWOOD KT-6050L £300

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

MISSION CYRUS FM7 £300

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ROTEL RT990BX £500

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FANFARE FT-1 £1350

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NAIM NAT01 £1380

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CASSETTE DECKS

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KENWOOD KX-3080 £160

A simple deck, but high quality head and transport give an unusually high level of performance at this price. Not to be missed.

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AIWA AD-S950 £300

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PIONEER CT-S740S £430

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NAKAMICHI DR1 £850

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HEYBROOK HB1 S3 £269

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CELESTION IMPACT 23 £299

Smooth and even handed. Clear and well extended treble and deep, tight bass. Midrange is focused and pure with plenty of detail and speed.

B&W DM 602 £300

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REL Q-BASS £350

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CASTLE AVON £700

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EPOS ES25 £1505

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SPENDOR SP7/I £1970

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TANNOY AMS8 £2700

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

QUAD ESL-63 £2860

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

KEF REFERENCE SERIES FOUR £3099

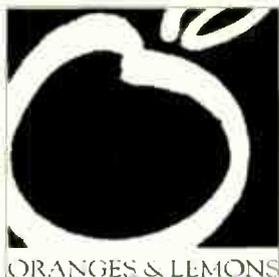
Superb bass and near-electrostatic soundstaging make these involving loudspeakers a reference to others. Need a strong amplifier though.

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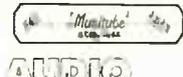
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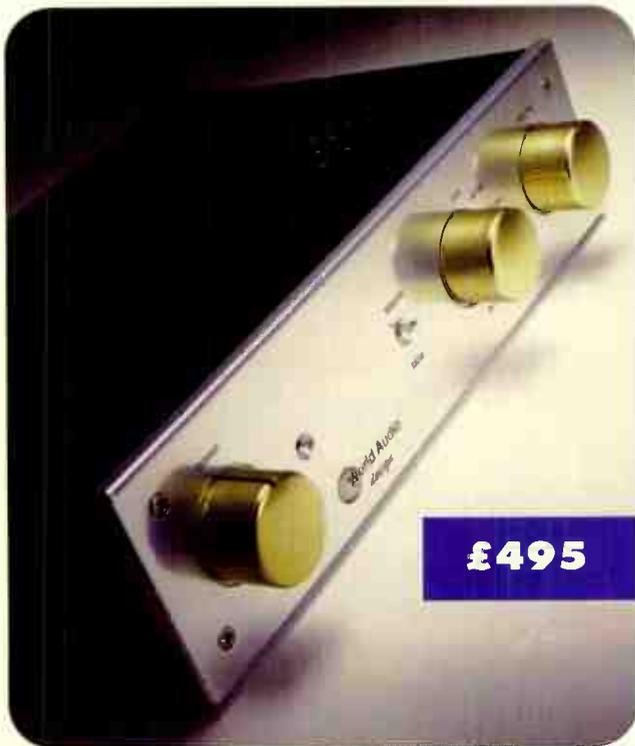
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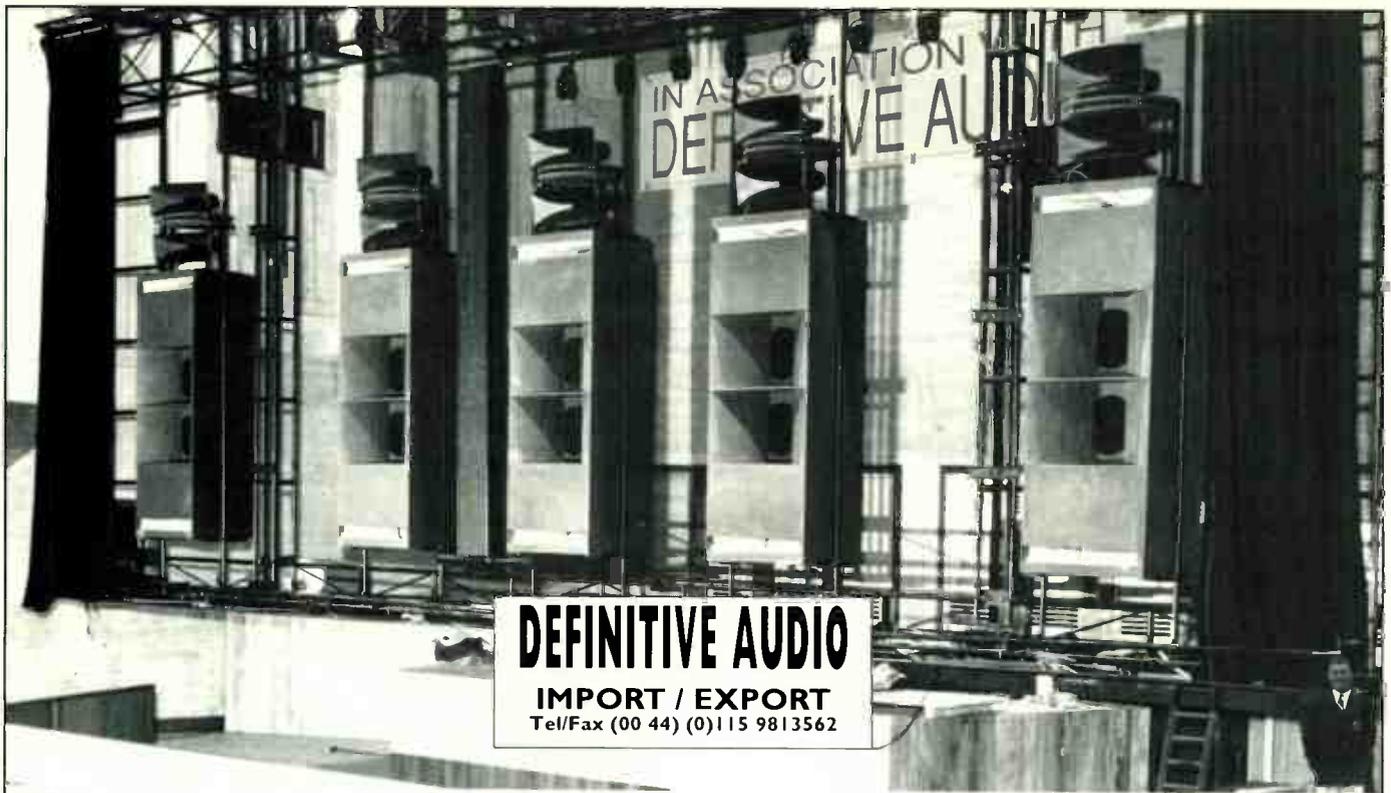
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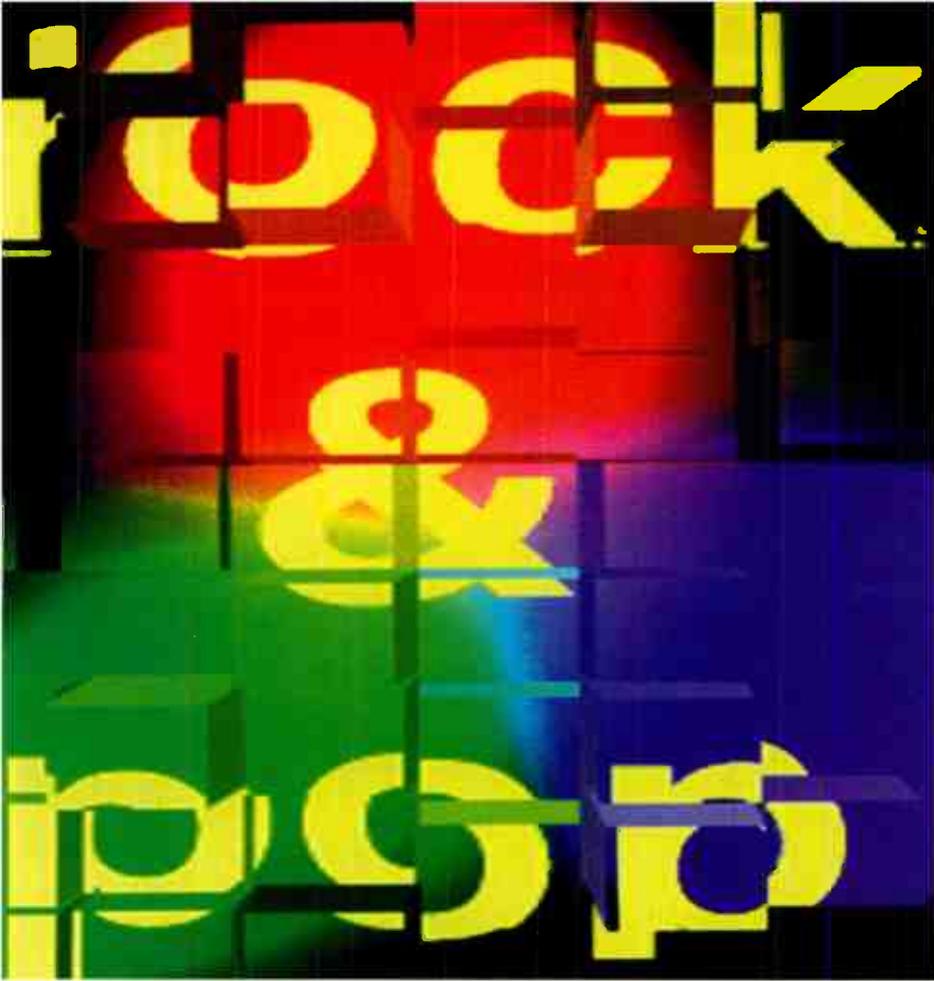
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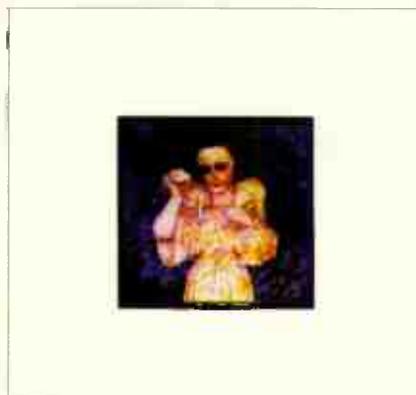
CLASSICAL93
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Giovanni Dadomo

are now, if not attracted to all manner of things, intergalactic and the music more than bears this out.

Which is not to say this is a mere early Floyd/Hawkwind re-run. Heavy rhythms, congas, graffiti-hip lyricism all bop you in the bot from the off. Cuts like the junglebeat 'Blood and Bones' - all kalimbas, birdsong and firm yet gentle keyboards - are persuasively hard-hitting while laced with consistent tinges of delicacy and seductiveness. 'Almost Sleeping' is aptly named, skeletally minimal in just the right way, while something like 'Starry Night' is a perkily rhythmic blend of kalimba, conga and flute - very South Of The Border. A refreshingly different blend of sounds.

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LAIKA SOUNDS OF THE SATELLITES TOO PURE CD 95



You're probably too young to recall the original Laika, but she was the first dog in orbit. Laika turned out to be far luckier than Yuri Gagarin and lived to a ripe old age. Yuri, on the other hand, died in a run-of-the-mill flying accident and got a song written about him by P. J. Harvey, whereas Laika got an entire group named after her.

Laika consist primarily of Guy Fixsen and Margaret Fiedler plus three or four others who will probably coalesce into a live combo later in the year.

This is Laika's second album - their first, Silver Apples of the Moon, received ample acclaim a year or so ago. As you've possibly gathered, the group

It's been an age since I've heard anything of this talented American song writer, and a welcome return it proves to be.

Kihn first appeared on the late-Seventies US Indie Beserkely Records, alongside popsters The Rubinoos, metal-heads Earthquake and the inimitably eccentric Jonathan Richman and his Modern Lovers.

Run by the suitably crazed Matthew 'King' Kaufman, Beserkely were both contemporaries and trailblazers alongside our very own Stiff Records, and in Kihn they had their own Nick Lowe.

This is no facile comparison as this excellent new collection more than makes plain. Here too is a deft talent for crafting catchy melodies onto a variety of styles and in a dazzling selection of arrangements. 'Noa Noa' is all perkily keyboards behind grizzly Country vocalising and evokes a tropical paradise that has a hellish underbelly. 'Kay Is The Month Of May' manages to fuse Country, Samba and even a hint of Caribbean in a surprising, nay delightful, cocktail.

The title cut is another welcome touch of irony - "Karloff's gone/and as I look to the Horror Show/I wonder how to carry on", muses Kihn. I don't think he's worried just about the state of the movies somehow, do you? A moving, melodic, splendidly provocative recording, and a welcome return to a much neglected talent.

DRAWN TO THE DEEP END

POLYDOR 5371042

Gene are one of those bands everyone's heard of but nobody can sing a song by. Is this a problem? Not necessarily.

This latest LP provides abundant evidence that these are gentlemen of no mean musical capability, able to mix a plethora of guitar styles in a fashion seldom heard since Rod Stewart was at his early best. There are also some



striking and equally subtle keyboard skills, all talents held in low esteem in the so-snotty '90s. This is a pity, as the likes of 'We Could Be Kings' are among several royal flushes to be heard on this album.

Gene are worthy of a great deal more than memories of that disgusting single about getting yer blue denim keks on - I shall not even give it a name beyond this. It was probably the worst record ever made. But this one definitely isn't.

rock & pop record of the month

ELVIS PRESLEY

GREAT COUNTRY SONGS

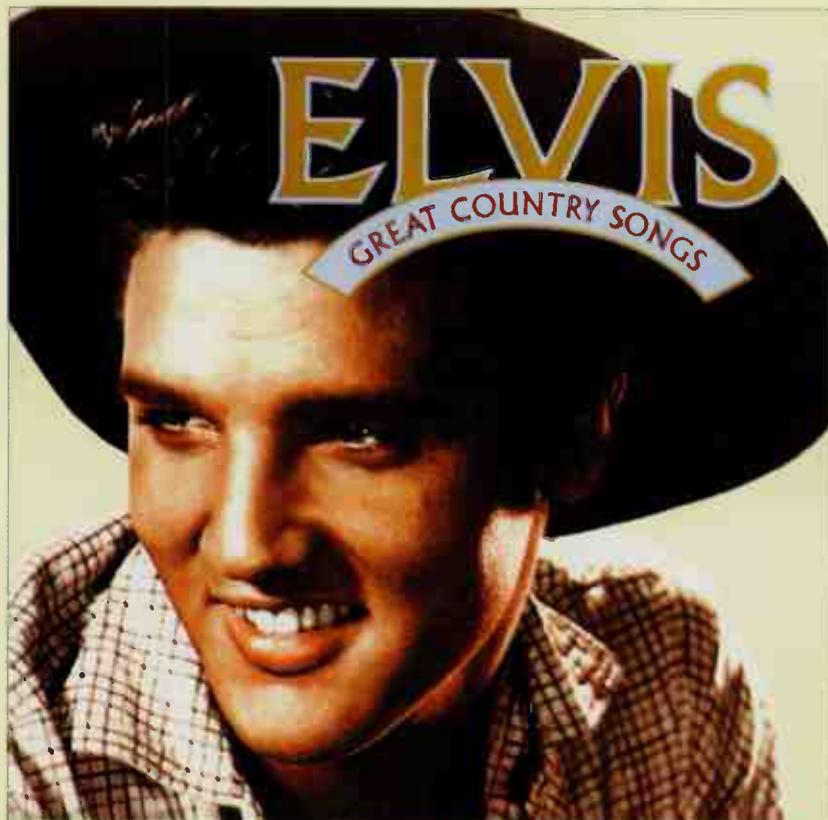
RCA BMG IC 0316

He sure as hell wore a mean stetson, but the boy from Memphis sounded even better in one. The theory that Rock came out of a marriage of Blues and Country is tried and tested. Young Presley was reared on both, as this exhaustive selection of Country standards makes more than evident for the sagebrush and spurs side of the musical equation.

There are 24 generous cuts here, many of them alternate takes (collectors take note) and they span the entire breadth of the Country spectrum, from crooners like 'Green, Green Grass Of Home', 'I Forgot To Remember To Forget' or 'There Goes My Everything', to bouncier old faves like 'Blue Moon Of Kentucky', the rocking 'Guitar Man' and even seasoned tearjerkers such as the eternally popular 'Old Shep' or 'From A Jack To A King'.

There are copious and highly

informative sleeve notes from one Charles Wolfe. For example, it's fascinating to discover how Elvis went crazy trying to get exactly the right guitar sound for his cover of Jerry Reed's 'Guitar Man'. Eventually Reed himself was located, unshaven and filthy on a fishing trip in the



Felton Jarvis took Reed back into the studio and updated all the instrumental parts. Ironically, this proved to be an even bigger hit than the original.

Mister Wolfe is not only thorough but honest too, plainly admitting that Presley wasted most of the Sixties churning out mediocre movies with

soundtracks to match. Small surprise, therefore, that the material here dates largely from the earliest and latest periods of Elvis' career, which is no bad thing.

It may well be true there's the odd bit of shlock here and there ('When My Blue Moon Turns To Gold Again' was apparently a favourite of his mom's - ain't that sweet?) But then Country and a spot of saccharine go together like the proverbial.

This won't be replacing my hallowed Sun

boondocks. He duly came in and did a perfect recording.

Sadly, business complications meant it was yonks before the track could be released. Then, in 1980, three years after The King's death, producer

Sessions recordings by any means - those are solid gold, no mistake - but it's a fascinating addition to a catalogue you'd think had been plumbed dry years ago. Wonders never cease, and this here's the proof ♥

Jon Clarke

TO HAVE AND TO HOLD
**NICK CAVE, BLIXA BARGELD
AND MICK HARVEY**

IONIC 15



Has the walking stick replaced the whisky bottle as Nick Cave's crutch? On the face of it, apparently so. In *To Have and to Hold*, the weird one himself has written *The Piano, Part Two*.

While retaining the core of the Bad Seeds, Cave, for his latest project (an orchestral film score for long-time friend, director Tony 'Ghosts of the Civil Dead' Hillhead), might as well have hired the Royal Philharmonic.

Quite what possessed Nick to go off on a Michael Nyman trajectory we shall never know, but this effort bears few of the musical maestro's usual hallmarks. With visions of *The Mission* and shades of Ennio Morricone, *To Have and to Hold* is a largely sombre and mournful album. Comprising a series of stirring string and piano arrangements - even a touch of harp and didgeridoo - it contains several interesting flurries here and there. But it is all too similar to be a major achievement.

The collaborative ventures fare a little better, with Nick trading in the frail vocals of Kylie Minogue for the caterwauling tones of an aboriginal theatre group in 'Mourning Song'. Scott Walker gets a look in as well, crooning a competent if kitsch rendition of Dylan's classic 'I Threw It All Away'. This highlight of the album has Scott 'out-Caving' Cave himself. And at last we hear a bassline. But where are the customary drunken swagger, the murder, mayhem and rambling tales of the gutter?

Even stranger is the inclusion of 'Gangster Bone' as the final track, a rampaging Ragga stomper that has nothing to do with anything. Perhaps a belated attempt to salvage the album with a sense of humour. "Ever get the feeling you've been cheated?" a leering Johnny Rotten once scoffed. Well, Laughing Nick has just updated us.

Murder Ballads: The Sequel, it ain't. Only the track titles ('Murder', 'Noah's Funeral', etc) serve to show what Old Nick is really capable of. *To Have and to Hold* is nothing more than a curious keepsake for Cave's duped fans.

BEST OF BB
BRIGITTE BARDOT



Tantalising, teasing and tailor-made, the *Best of BB* comprises a range of musical styles as varied as the great one's boyfriends.

In fact, this cute little album is an offering as interesting as a proposition from the sexy one herself. While it would be easy to say, "Pouf! Au Revoir" without a listen, there is a historic and classic strain of Pop running through *Best of BB*. And a surprising number of contemporary releases have taken unashamedly from the music of Brigitte Bardot.

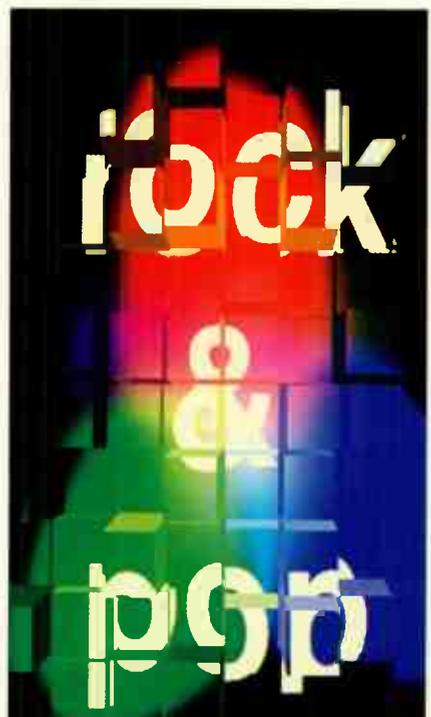
The Madonna of her era, Bardot did just about everything her modern-day counterpart has tried with the exception of taking her clothes off for a tacky photo book. She didn't need to: she got all the attention she needed. She was the real McCoy, the best looking femme of a decade. What we didn't know was that she could sing.

Most people's best memory of the

sex symbol's singing career will be her sitting astride a silver Electraglide crooning 'Harley Davidson' like a latter-day Lady Godiva. Many will be more familiar with 'Bonnie and Clyde', a song more recently ripped off by rapper MC Solaar.

Much of Brigitte Bardot's style was what could best be termed 'Cool'. This is Parisian saunter and cheek, almost a forerunner at times to Rap music. Early tracks show a 'chanteuse' tradition that Charles Aznavour would have been proud of. From the soft, intimate 'La Madrugue' to 'Le Soleil', there is a distinct old-fashioned French vein to it, although British-style Pop is also mixed in.

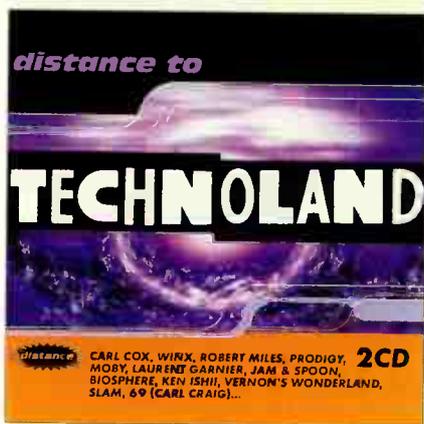
Summer-in-Cannes numbers like 'Bubble Gum' and the brilliant 'Je T'aime', written by Serge Gainsbourg and so cruelly commercialised by Jane Birkin three years later, are excellent. The album begins with 'L'appareil a Sous', a twist number. Chubby Checker was popular at the time so we can forgive BB this. But there is a lot going on here, and some of it is really very good; worth a listen even though it is bound to annoy some. Think of fast cars, the sun setting on the Riviera, casinos, James Bond, and Campari. And you are there. Bon Appetit ♥



rock & pop reviews

dance & ambient

*Viv
Craske*



VAPORS
DISTANCE TO TECHNOLAND

DISTANCE SUB4817-9

If someone comes round your house and utters some kind of blasphemous lie along the lines of, "All Techno is rubbish, it just goes bang, bang, bang", then there are two ways of dealing with them. The first is to play them CD No 1 of this unmixed compo. Option 2, although not recommended, is to chloroform them, tie 'em up, and beat some sense into them. Err, sorry, I don't know what came over me. . .

Anyway (deep breath, count to 10), the point being that there's a hell of a lot of the best Techno from the last three or four years here. Kicking off somewhat disappointingly with The Prodigy's 'Firestarter', this first CD improves with second track, elephant-on-stimulants-in-your-bass-bins 'Novelty Waves' by Biosphere (the bounding, scary music at the start of Killing Zoe, fab factsters). From there on in, it's classics all the way; Kenny Larkin's 'Chasers', Ken Ishii's 'Extra', and ditties from Slam, Carl Cox, Laurent Garnier and Carl Craig. There's even Capricorn's luscious re-working of the Police's 'Walking On The Moon'. Basically, it's the best fun and frolics to be had outside a bouncy castle, I guess.

Then the second CD tries to butt your brain back together again with an equally admirable Trance selection. There are the obvious choices for the beginner's market - Robert Miles, Moby, Jam and Spoon and Vernon's Wonderland. Then there follow the little gems, the tunes that will always sound great and never age - Hallucinogen's 'LSD' and Humate's 'Love Stimulation'. Marvellous.

So, if you want to avoid having to kidnap Techno unbelievers to make them see the light, this CD is a good place to start. And remember, physical violence is neither big nor clever. Techno and Trance, however, are.



JB3
CLOSE GRIND

NOVAMUTE NOMU50CD

Now I wonder what JB3 could stand for? Hmm, could it be Joey Beltram? Let's check the first track, 'Time', and find out. Aha. Snares. Menacing, twisted beats. Oh yeah. Funky loops. Of course it's Beltram.

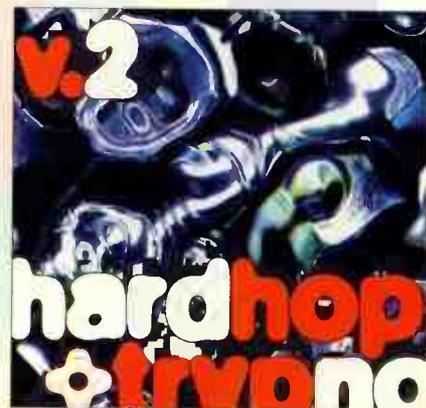
What can you say about Beltram that hasn't already been said? The man behind the scene-changing 'Energy Flash' and the harsh 'Mentasm'; Beltram, early

exponent of the hoover sample; Beltram, man of literally dozens of minimal, blissed-out tracks, of kick drums and snares on every beat.

One thing you could say is, "Well, well, well, Joey's built a Disco track". Sort of. 'Curb' has the same kicks, the same minimalism, but there's also a little baby guitar sample inching its way in. Funky stuff.

But hang on a minute, it's OK. 'Back Porch' has got a hooveresque loop in it - hurrah for the oasis of sanity that is Beltram. Then there's 'The View', a liquid type of sound, built over precise percussion, that chucks you from left channel to right, forcing you to strut your stuff in the living room.

Oh yes, Joey's back, complete with NovaMute singles 'Believer' and 'Forklift' if you missed them. Joey's not everyone's cup of tea, but he's funky and original, and he loves his percussion. And so do I. Now, where's that hoover?



VAPORS
HARDHOP AND TRYPNO VOL.2

MOONSHINE MM80058-2

Daft name that. I hope it's an ironic, chin-stroking, coffee table, philosophical/rhetorical thing going on. If not, then please will everyone stop

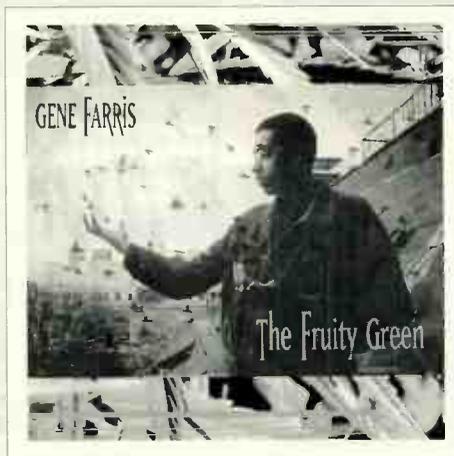
inventing sub-genres of sub-genres. I'm only a simple fool who likes a good dance, not a database of who's Trip Hop and who's Hardstep, etc. Still, enough whinging there; no one will take a blind bit of notice anyway.

All I know is that the first track on this album is absolutely kicking. Those samples, that bass. Blimey, what a tune! I defy anyone not to chuck themselves around a club like a voodoo spirit charmer to Hard Knox's 'Fire Like Dis'. And then, oh yes, more of that lovely Hoover sample with Tales From The Hardside's 'Chemical Meltdown'. Good month for it, eh? Two tracks in and the sample shouts "Make some goddamn noise". No problem mate, I'm already waking the neighbours (and the dead).

Very few compilations that come my way are this good. Hardhop and Trypno is making the same impression that the Dope On Plastic series did. Imagine the likes of Red Snapper, sped up, layered with samples and then given to some squatter to mess with. And this is what you end up with, dance floor action on a par with the Heavenly Social on proper drugs. Real underground music, music to pull you to pieces. Hip Hop in a moshpit.

Look, you know what I'm getting at,

and if you don't, then you're missing out. Dance music's second coming? I don't know. I just want more beer, then I'm off for another dance. Anyone for jumping up and down then falling over?



GENE FARRIS
THE FRUITY GREEN
FORCE INC FIM120

Gene is in good company on Force Inc, with Ian Pooley, Tonka and Mike Ink,

who between them manage to cook up some pretty mean House. Gene Farris' specialist subject? Funky, Disco-orientated House.

In the last couple of years, Disco has reared its (sometimes ugly) head in Dance music. From funky licks and breaks to straightforward sample nicking, the results have been interesting to say the least. I mean, what about Stretch 'n' Vern sailing up the charts with the 'Boogie Wonderland', pilfering 'I'm Alive'? What's going on there then?

Still, back to the present. The Fruity Green is a delicious mixed bag, from the funky Disco clash of 'Magic Potion' to the slow groove-locking of 'Perfect Size' to the deep, banging House of 'Supreme Victory'. Gene keeps the formula simple, however. Instead of messing with the samples, he goes for the loop-it, stick-it-on approach, with vocals, brass licks and guitar samples.

The influences of Chicago (Gene's hometown) are still present in the production, but the funk is chucked about with wild abandon, making this one of the tastiest Disco-ish House products around.

dance & ambient record of the month

VARIOUS
RENAISSANCE - THE MIX COLLECTION PART 4
SIX6/AVEX RENMIX4CD

If any of you can cast your mind back to the October issue, then you'll remember my review of the Mix Collection Part 3. Released around the same time as Cream Live 2, it was a battle of the corporate giants. Unfortunately, The Fathers of Sound mixing up soulful Garage and House felt just a little flaccid compared with the earlier stonking Renaissance releases. No doubt Part 3 sold by the bucket load on product association alone, but this triple CD set will definitely not disappoint if you're into sweeping melodic (I will not say 'epic') House, that is.

Kicking off with Ian Ossia's little journey are the totally gorgeous club classic 'Land of the Living' by Rob D., Rollo and Kristine W., and Shiva's 'Let There Be Love', both on offer as particularly banging mixes, before those hands-in-the-air vocals kick in.

The great thing here is the choice

of tunes. Not one to go for those obscure tracks just to make a point, Ossia opts instead for Universal State of Mind, Keoki, Blue Amazon, Way Out West and early Leftfield exploits as Djum Djum. And the mixes are just so smooth the next track is battering your ears before you can say, "Intros".



Then it's over to Dave Seaman. Once again there are the string

arrangements, vocals and old Balearic vibe creeping in over the two-CD mix - you can almost see that cropped, dark hair bobbing between the decks. The evidence that he's one of the best DJs in the country can be found by checking out the track listing. Anyone who can mix between System 7,

Garbage, Sasha and D Note in one CD set is either an arrogant moron or a deck-wizard of ultimate party vibes. And anyone who managed to blag the Mixmag editor's chair and become one half of Brothers in Rhythm is no one's fool.

Seaman's second mix-up carries on in the same you-don't-get-many-tunes-like-that-to-the-pound vein with Peter Lazonby, Lucky Monkeys (aka Fluke), Bjork and Incognito's 'I Hear Your Name'.

Lovely stuff! If the Mix Collection Part 3 was a little watery for you, then Part 4 is almost certainly a Special Brew injection to your brain. If only those nice guys at Renaissance would buy me a CD multiplayer, so I don't have to change CDs mid-boogie.

Simon Cooke

Jazz



ORANJ SYMPHONETTE
**ORANJ SYMPHONETTE
PLAYS MANCINI**
GCD 79515

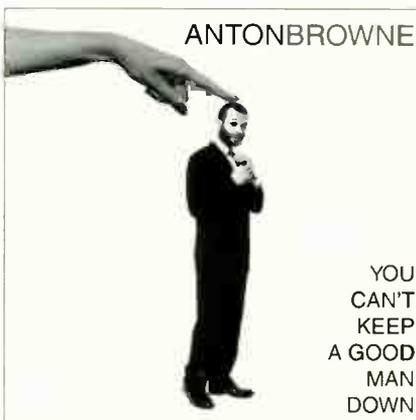
For around twenty years there has been a movement (or maybe just a sort of subconscious gestalt group evolution) among a fragment of America's West Coast musicians, to undermine the time-honoured and ultimately cheesy 'easy listening' of movie theme music which attained its zenith in the work of Henry Mancini.

This subversion has coloured much of the recent work of, for example, Tom Waits, who has reciprocally influenced some of the members of this band. In fact, three of them have past credits on Waits' albums and all have tendencies towards the trashcan orchestra sound exhibited on his 'Black Rider' and 'Bone Machine' albums.

The group consists of Matt (Son of Dave) Brubeck on cello and bass, Ralph Carney on horns (and with a neat sideline in duck calls, talking dolls and 'Noh' vocals), Joe Gore on guitars and Scott Amendola on drums and percussion. Rob Burger, Pete Scaturro and Matt Brubeck share the organ credit and Diarmid Campbell provides

zither and bird calls. That should give you the feeling of the piece, an improvisational hash linked and identified by twelve of Mancini's tunes.

The twelve include 'A Shot In The Dark', 'The Pink Panther Theme', 'Moon River', 'Charade', and 'Peter Gunn'. It's less a collection of tunes than a signature for a generation of films, and those who remember and cherish the originals may well find this freestyle reading of them hard to take. Younger generations who grew up with Mancini as muzak may well, in contrast, better appreciate this technically excellent and artistically exuberant homage to the maestro.



ANTON BROWNE
**YOU CAN'T KEEP A GOOD
MAN DOWN**
ABCD 001

Jazz music is a broad and catholic school where the well crafted, slick kind of soulful Jazz languishes in something of a brown study currently in Britain. This may partly explain why Anton Browne has had to produce his album independently, which restricts its

publicity exclusively to word-of-mouth and possibly damages its sales potential.

Browne has created an album of funky, soulful and mildly retro Jazz sounds with undertones of a more mainstream Tom Jones or Engelbert Humperdinck style. Eight of the eleven tracks here were written by Browne, but he pulls the same trick even on such a typecast old chestnut as Leiber and Stoller's 'Houndog', among the remaining three. It's a much softer take on the tune than others, but avoids emasculating the essential gutsy quality of the original; a difficult feat in itself, and one to which I found Browne's vocals adequately suited.

Unfortunately, some of his own tunes seem to have been written with a greater vocal compass than his own in mind, and he occasionally lacks the power required to do his writing justice. This fact is sometimes accentuated by the mix, which is otherwise able to deliver a deep, melodic and well separated sound stage which should be the envy of quite a few other small labels.

The band consists of Browne on vocals and guitar, Colin Woolway on drums and Lee Pomeroy on bass guitar. Dave O'Higgins does sax duty and Mark Adelman keyboards while Andra Sparks and Melanie Curwood-Moss take care of backing vocals.

While this isn't Browne's first appearance on disc, since he has entered Jazz from a Funk-band background, *You Can't Keep A Good Man Down* has the feel of a debut album and promises much for the future. It's available from Beano's of Croydon and the Jazz FM Music Store by mail order, so now you know, there's no reason not to buy it and support a British artiste of commendable potential ■

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OLIVIER MESSIAEN

Vingt Regards sur l'enfant Jésus

Joanna MacGregor, piano
COLLINS CLASSICS 70332 (2 CD SET)
(DDD/I28.08)

Alert, incisive and technically outstanding playing and a first-rate recording make this new Collins Classics set the undisputed first choice in this Twentieth century musical landmark. This despite stiff competition from such as Michel Beroff, David Hill, and the composer's widow, Yvonne Loriod.

What distinguishes Joanna MacGregor's performance, along with her profound understanding of this two-hour cycle and grasp of its structure, is the brilliant keyboard colouring which she deploys, bringing the score luminously to life. The rapt intensity that characterises the meditative, contemplative episodes is vividly contrasted with the exuberance and passion she brings to the more extrovert of these twenty, highly personal testaments of faith.

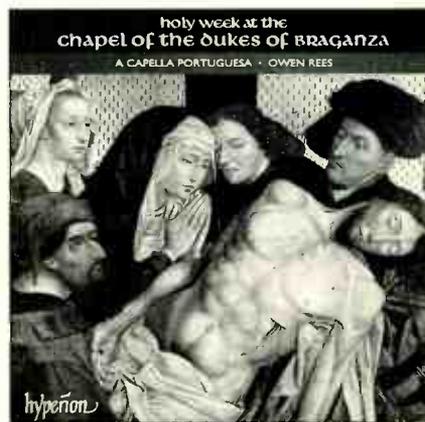
Almost from the first, Messiaen's compositions had been underpinned by his unshakeable, unquestioning

Catholic belief, but the experience of the Second World War seems to have brought an even greater intensity and spirituality to that belief. It manifested itself in four remarkable works, beginning with the Quartet For The End Of Time (Quator Pour la Fin du Temps), written while Messiaen was a prisoner-of-war in Stalag VIII A at Gorlitz in eastern Germany.

Repatriated to France, he continued to explore the theologically meditative world of the Quartet, first in the cycle Visions de l'Amen for two pianos, then in the Trois Petites Liturgies de la Presence Divine, and finally in the Vingt Regards sur l'enfant Jésus, first performed by Yvonne Loriod in Paris on March 26, 1945.

It is the work of someone confident in his ability to organise and sustain such an immense musical canvas, and equally confident of what he wishes to communicate. The variety contained in the score is astonishing, as the mood changes from the sombre to the ecstatic, and from the inwardly mysterious to the dazzlingly joyful. It is a variety that the ever-responsive Joanna MacGregor communicates to the full.

Every aspect of the score has been thought through and the result, all two hours and eight minutes' worth, is utterly compelling. Enhanced by a stunningly clear, open and full-bodied recording from Snape Maltings (James Mallinson the producer, Mike Hatch and Mike Clements the engineers), I earnestly hope that Joanna MacGregor's considerable achievement will reap the acclaim it so thoroughly deserves.



HOLY WEEK AT THE CHAPEL OF THE DUKES OF BRAGANZA

Choral works by Manuel Mendes, Gabriel Diaz Besson, Tomas Luis de Victoria, et al.

A Capella Portuguesa; directors, Bernadette Nelson and Owen Rees

HYPERION CDA66867 (DDD/73.28)

This is the third selection of sacred polyphony from Portugal to be recorded by these forces for the Hyperion label and anyone anticipating a lessening in the quality of the music on offer would be well wide of the mark. Many of the composers here may be comparatively obscure figures - several were new to me - but the consistency, and for that matter the intensity, of their inspiration is astounding.

The ducal palace of the Braganza family in the town of Vila Vicosa was a great centre of artistic activity during the Sixteenth and Seventeenth centuries. Between 1583 and 1626, a retinue of over one hundred musicians was maintained, a greater number than in any of the country's cathedrals.



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Liturgical services in the ducal chapel were distinguished by the richness of their musical accompaniments, and Vila Vicosa attracted several of the most notable musicians of the Iberian peninsula, Cardoso and Rebelo among them. The patronage of the Duke, Dom Joao, saw the publication of a number of important volumes of polyphonic music and the establishment of a vast library of manuscripts and books.

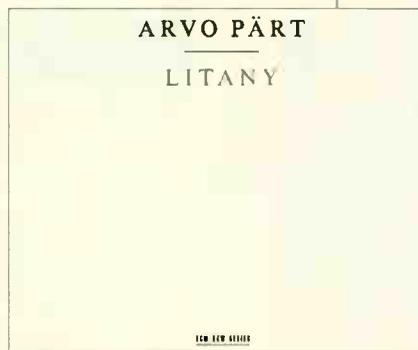
When Dom Joao ascended to the Portuguese throne in 1640, he arranged for his collection to be transferred to a magnificent new library in Lisbon, and there continued to enlarge it. Tragically, the library and most of its contents were to be destroyed in the Lisbon earthquake of 1755: a surviving index gives a tantalising glimpse of the riches it contained.

Thankfully, a number of choirbooks were retained at the Vila Vicosa and, although musical life there declined for a time during the second half of the Seventeenth century, the reign of Joao V (1705-1750) saw a renewed interest. Particular emphasis was placed on music to accompany the services of Holy Week, and it is this that A Capella Portuguesa so successfully capture in their 'reconstruction' which seeks to present this most important liturgy of the Christian year as it might have been sung at Vila Vicosa around 1736. Evidence exists to suggest that the services would have used a combination of both older works and new music written in the Sixteenth-century style, the latter in defiance of the strong Italian influence which had crept into Portuguese music.

A characteristic of the music for the Holy Week services, with their predisposition towards the plaintive and the penitential, written by Iberian composers such as Victoria, Lobo and Cardoso, was its highly-charged emotional intensity. And that intensity is brought to the fore here, in choral singing of soaring purity and plangent luminosity.

Bernadette Nelson's booklet notes provide a detailed and revealing background to the recording, both historical and musical, and she and Owen Rees are to be congratulated on

bringing these jewels of the Vila Vicosa collection so vividly and rewardingly to life. Rebelo's Panis Angelicus and Morata's Cum Descendentibus are examples of what awaits discovery here, and also typify the splendour of Tony Faulkner's atmospheric recording.



ARVO PÄRT

Litany/Psalom/Trisagion
David James, counter-tenor;
Rogers Covey-Crump, tenor;
John Potter, tenor; Gordon
Jones, bass
Tallinn Chamber Orchestra;
Estonian Philharmonic
Chamber Choir; conductor,
Tonu Kaljuste; Lithuanian
Chamber Orchestra; conductor,
Saulius Sondeckis

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They have been described, rather glibly it must be said, as the 'spiritual minimalists' and there are several links, both musical and philosophical, between the English composer, John Tavener, the Pole, Henryk Gorecki, and the Estonian, Arvo Part. But it is the last of the three whose music - for me - has proven the most enduring in its appeal.

These three compositions, all completed within the last three years, may not attain the heights of Part's finest works (the St John Passion is arguably the pinnacle of his sacred music) but they possess many strengths nonetheless, above all an unquestionable integrity.

The longest of the three, occupying over half the running time at twenty-two minutes, is Litany. This is settings, in English, of the prayers of St John Chrysostom, one of the key figures of Russian Orthodoxy, the religion embraced by both Part and his English

counterpart, Tavener. Written to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Oregon Bach Festival in 1994, it is wholly characteristic of Part at his most intense and affecting.

The work consists of two sections, each centred around a different minor mode, and the modulation which bridges the sections - the apex of the work - is nothing short of magical. As ever in Part's music, the sonorities of medieval plainchant and Renaissance polyphony are palpable, as is the incense-laden atmosphere of Byzantium and the Eastern church. Yet, unlike say Langlais, Part is not indulging in pastiche: this is music of remarkable and often strange originality and, dare I venture, mystical presence.

Litany is granted a resplendent and gripping performance here, with the Tallinn Chamber Orchestra and Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir augmented by four vocal soloists drawn from the Hilliard Ensemble (the choir which has done more than any other to champion the music of Arvo Part). The conducting of Tonu Kaljuste possesses an electrifying edge and a commanding authority, and the sound from the Niguliste Church in Tallinn is richly evocative with its resonant depth and scale.

Both the forces employed and the recording venue change for the other two works on this ECM CD. The Lithuanian Chamber Orchestra under Saulius Sondeckis was taped by Tonmeister Peter Laenger, in the Mozart-Saal of the Liederhalle in Stuttgart. There is little audible difference in the acoustic presentation and these players are clearly as committed to Part's music as their Estonian counterparts.

At just under seven minutes, Psalom is a miniature of disarmingly beautiful simplicity and pathos. Its basis is a sequence of repeated string figures in minor modes and this is also the basis of the final work.

Trisagion, as with Litany, bears a dedication marking the five hundredth anniversary of the Parish of Prophet Elias in Ilomantsi (which, according to the atlas, lies east of the Finnish city of Joensuu, almost on the border with Russia). As in so much of Part's music, the fusing of clarity and austerity with a powerful emotional charge works to great dramatic effect.

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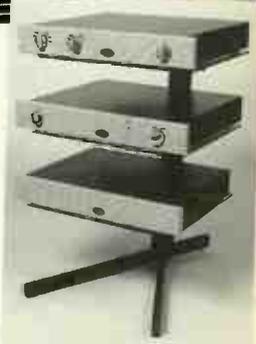
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Astonishingly, there are over thirty recordings currently available of Mozart's tragi-comic telling of the story of the arrogant, defiant seducer and his ultimate comeuppance (and comeuppances do not come more ultimate than being dragged into Hell!) Given this, the appearance of yet another Don Giovanni on disc might be adjudged superfluous: what can it conceivably offer that has not been embraced by previous versions? The answer, in the case of this 1995 Telarc production directed by Sir Charles Mackerras, is a great deal.

Both technically and musically, this is a recording of significance and stature. Using 20-bit encoding, the Telarc team has engineered a sound of spectacular impact and accuracy. Balances are exemplary, and the acoustic of the Usher Hall in Edinburgh (the recording was made during the 1995 Edinburgh Festival) is employed to thrilling effect: weight and depth are wedded to a pleasing translucency of texture and accuracy of timbre. Musically, too, there is much to savour.

The opera was first produced in Prague, in October 1787. The citizens of the Bohemian capital had consistently shown a greater appreciation of Mozart's music than their less enlightened cousins in Vienna - witness the earlier success of *The Marriage of Figaro*. *Don Giovanni* was similarly well received in Prague, but Mozart was apprehensive about the

Viennese premiere scheduled for the following May and elected to undertake some reworking of the score.

Some of the changes were decidedly ill-advised: the insertion of a farcical duet between the coquettish Zerlina and the Don's servant, Leporello, being a prime example. Elsewhere, though, there were benefits; two fine new arias were added, for instance. For those wishing to compare and contrast the Prague and Vienna versions, this Telarc set is ideal, with the differences clearly delineated for programming into the CD player.



Of equal, if not greater importance, however, is the style of Mackerras's performance. He is a conductor well acquainted with 'authentic' interpretation and while the Scottish Chamber Orchestra players do not use period instruments, Mackerras adopts many of the tenets of period performance practice. And hugely successful it proves.

Speeds, phrasing and ornamentation are beautifully judged: the strings play with a minimum of vibrato and with crisply alert accentuation, while woodwinds have a delicious piquancy; small, s'kin-headed timpani are deployed and played with hard wooden sticks; the keyboard

continuo is played on a fortepiano, following the example of Mozart himself; narrow-bore trombones give a chillingly menacing growl; and the incisive brashness of the natural (valveless) trumpets and horns is very effective, not least when Hell's demons claim the Don.

The cast has been well chosen, with the Dane, Bo Skovhus, compelling in the title role. He captures the ambivalence of the character very well indeed - we know the Don is an unrepentant villain, an incorrigible deceiver and seducer, but how charming, intriguing and amusing he can be, too. It's difficult not to feel a certain sympathy for him, especially when faced with the priggish moralising of the likes of Don Ottavio.

Equally fine is Alessandro Corbelli as Leporello, a richly characterised performance which brings out the sharp, often cruel wit of the Don's much put-upon servant.

The other principals sing uniformly well. Nuccia Focile is a delightful Zerlina, sweet-voiced but with a spicy edge when needed.

American soprano Christine Brewer has all the imposing grandeur required of Donna Anna. Felicity Lott may not be everyone's ideal as Donna Elvira, the voice perhaps just a little too smooth and sumptuous, missing the element of vulnerability necessary to this role, but there is no denying the beguiling beauty and intensity of her singing.

Most of all though, this *Don Giovanni* is Mackerras's triumph, a performance of pace, precision and perception that holds the attention throughout. Seldom have I been so gripped by the dramatic power of an operatic production. Recording number thirty-something it may be, but this is one of the greatest ●



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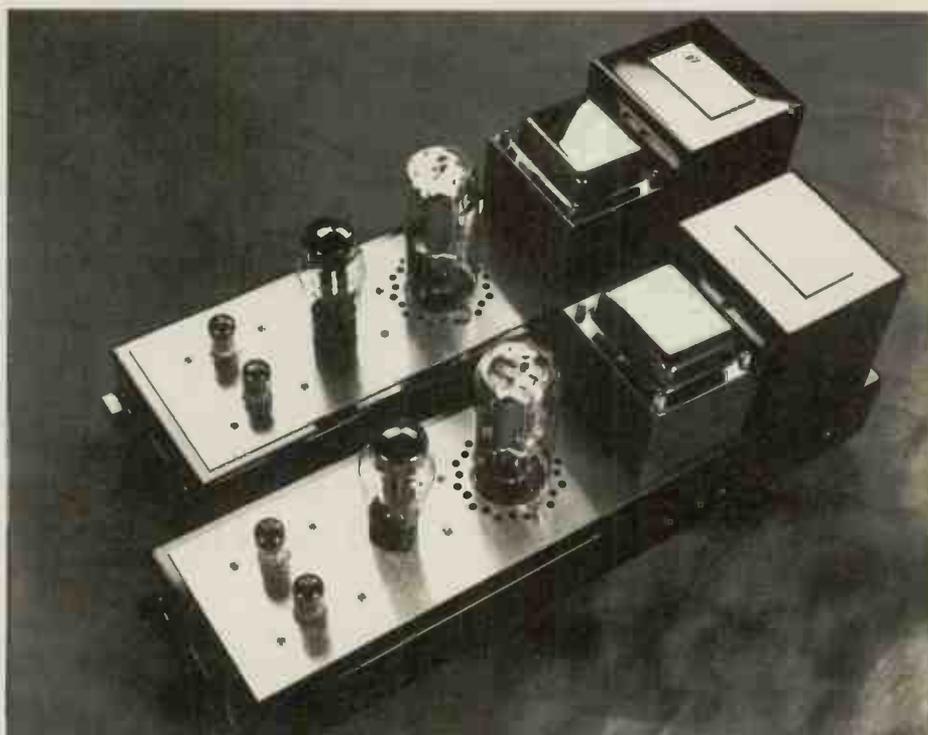
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MEASURED PERFORMANCE

AMPLIFIERS

AURA CA200/PA100 AMPLIFIER

The Aura PA100 power amplifier has more than enough power to cope with large rooms and insensitive loudspeakers. As its title suggests it offers a nominal 100watts, more specifically 128watts into 8ohms according to our measurements. Into a low 4ohm load the power increase was better maintained than in Aura amplifiers of yore, hitting no less than 196watts. Power supply regulation has been improved, probably through use of mains transformers with improved specification. The PA100 rivals the best in the field now.

Distortion was very low, right across the audio band and at all power levels, a good sign. Aura's MOSFET designs consistently behave like this and equally consistently I know from experience they sound smooth and free of harshness. At high frequencies (10kHz) the distortion component remained innocuous sounding second harmonic right up to high signal levels, a good sign also.

Sensitivity was unusually low at 500mV on all inputs (except phono). Since most amplifiers measure 200mV and, nowadays, many are following Naim down to 70mV, I can't see why Aura are moving in the other direction, lessening their products' compatibility. Since some budget cassette deck and tuners produce just 300mV of output, this combo won't be compatible with them. High frequency response has been rolled off above 20kHz, which contributes to the warm balance.

Phono sensitivity was normal enough however, measuring 3mV. Overload was high at 80mV and hiss low at -76dB. However, there's a warp filter and it rolled down low frequency response across a wide band, as these things often do. This will result in a slightly lean tonal balance from LP. Input capacitance was high at 400pF, enough to modify the treble response of MM cartridges.

The Aura combo was a little odd in places. Its phono stage was rudimentary and it has unusually low sensitivity. Otherwise it measures well all round. **NK**

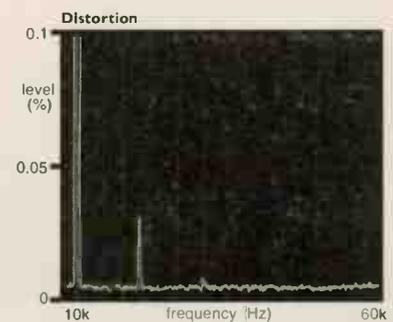
Power 128watts

CD/tuner/aux.

Frequency response 10Hz-26kHz
Separation 78dB
Noise -93dB
Distortion 0.004%
Sensitivity 500mV
dc offset 1.7/1.8mV

Disc

Frequency response 25Hz-25kHz
Separation 68dB
Noise -76dB
Distortion 0.005%
Sensitivity 3mV
Overload 80mV



MARANTZ MODEL 7 PREAMP./ MODEL 9 POWER AMP.

The Model 9 power amplifier produced 60watts prior to clip, and 32watts in Triode mode. Being a load matched device, power delivery was the same into low and high loads.

Marantz have managed to get distortion right down to just 0.008%, second harmonic, at 1 watt output in the midband with this design - an impressive result for valves. Just below full output this figure rose to 0.03%. with some third harmonic appearing as well. It is still a very good result though.

Even better was high frequency linearity. At 1 watt output, 10kHz, distortion measured 0.04%, a very low value. It rose to 0.2% at full output, which is again very good for a valve amp. Marantz's use of multiple nested feedback

paths certainly has effect, although the impact upon sound quality is debatable.

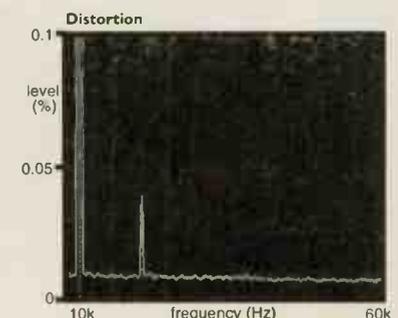
Bandwidth measured a good 18Hz-33kHz via the line (Aux/TV) inputs, but a warp filter acts on the disc input limiting the low end to 40Hz (-1 dB). Although the -60dB disc hiss (CCIR wtd.) figure looks poor, in fact there's a lot of gain, giving 1mV input sensitivity for phono, and also making equivalent input noise little worse than normal. So in use the preamp wasn't hiss. There was negligible hum too.

The Model 7/9 measured well in all areas, but the 70watt claimed output is not met unless pushed into clipping. **NK**

Distortion 0.01%
Sensitivity 110mV
dc offset none

Disc

Frequency response 40Hz-50kHz
Separation 60dB
Noise -60dB
Distortion 0.02%
Sensitivity 1mV
Overload 200mV



Power (triode) 60watts (32watts)

CD/tuner/aux.

Frequency response 18Hz-33kHz
Separation 78dB
Noise -77dB

Campion

by



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CARTRIDGE

SHURE VI 5Vx-MR

Frequency response of the VI5VxMR shows falling treble, becoming -3dB down at 10kHz, as our response analysis shows. There is no treble peak from tip mass resonance, an unusual but useful feature that ensures freedom from spittiness. The VI5Vx will sound 'warm' in tonal balance, and this is how Shure describe the sound. There was little (1.5dB) treble loss on inner grooves, a fine result confirming good stylus profile.

Tracking was mediocre, surprising for any Shure, let alone a VI5. Since low frequency tracking was as much affected as midband tracking the constraint was not frequency related and therefore must have been down to the amount of resistive damping within the cantilever hinge. This has likely been set by sound quality criteria. The VI5 tracked adequately well,

but may let go occasionally on loud vocals.

Distortion was low on lateral modulation but high on vertical modulation (left and right stereo images), measuring 4% second harmonic. This was down to a high vertical tracking angle of 30degrees. The influence upon sound quality is minor.

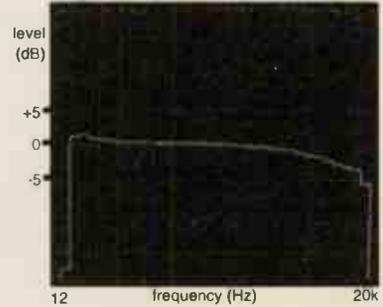
Channel separation was high at 36dB overall and output adequate at 4mV at 3.54cms/sec rms (4.2mV @ 5cms/sec rms).

All in all, the VI5VxMR did not measure especially well, but it was satisfactory. It should be tracked at maximum downforce. We used 1.3gms in an SME312 (12in) arm. **NK**

Tracking force	0.75-1.25gms
Weight	6.6gms
Vertical tracking angle	30degrees
Frequency response	20-10k
Channel separation	36dB

Tracking ability (300Hz)	
lateral	63µm
vertical	45µm
lateral (1kHz)	16cms/sec.
Distortion (45µm)	
lateral	0.5%
vertical	6.5%
Output (5cms/sec rms)	4.2mV

Frequency response



TUNER

ARCAM ALPHA 7

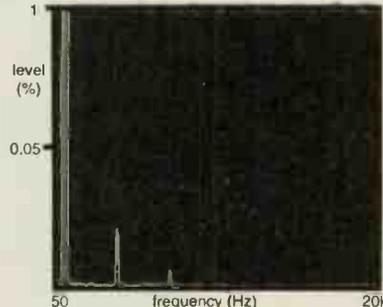
The Arcam had a mediocre RF performance, possessing a selectivity of 58dB (70-85dB is common) and a sensitivity on stereo of 63µV (30µV is common). As signal level fell on the mono sensitivity test a heterodyne whistle started, dependent upon the difference between the internal local oscillator and the external generator. By tuning the latter it could be zeroed, but this would be happenstance in practice. Best to say the Arcam needs a strong signal and should be connected to a good aerial. It is not suitable for long distance/weak signal work.

The audio section was satisfactory, displaying flat frequency response from 6Hz up to 13.7kHz, moderately low distortion of 0.2% second harmonic and

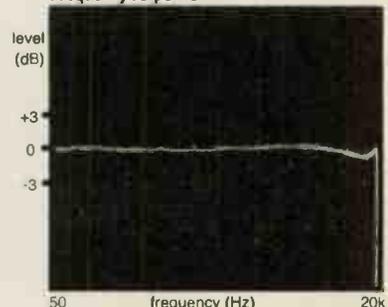
adequately low hiss of -70dB from an aerial signal of 1.6mV or more. These aren't class leading figures, but they are respectable. Audio output was high at 600mV, so there will not be matching problems. The Alpha 7 will offer satisfactory results, but plenty of rivals manage better. **NK**

Frequency response	6Hz-13.7kHz
Stereo separation	40dB
Distortion (50% mod.)	0.2%
Hiss (CCIR)	-70dB
Signal for minimum hiss	1.6mV
Selectivity (at 0.4MHz)	58dB
Sensitivity	
mono	6µV
stereo	63µV
signal strength meter	none

Distortion



Frequency response



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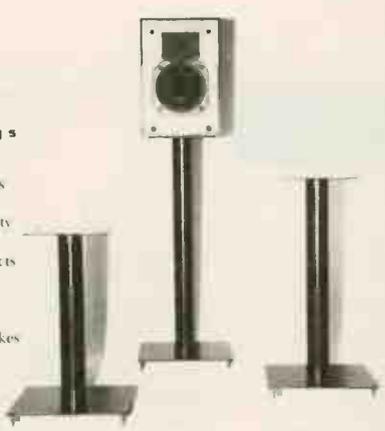
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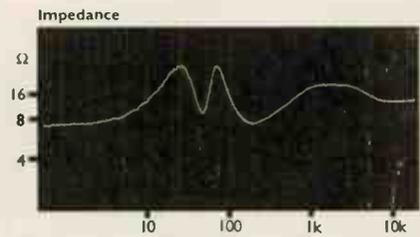
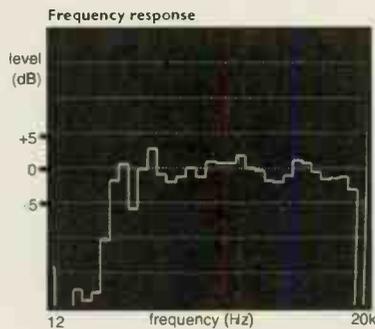
CASTLE EDEN

I was a little disappointed that the Eden displayed a crossover suckout when measured above the mid-range unit's axis. This means it's best to listen no higher than the speaker itself, meaning tall stands may be needed (according to seating height). On-axis and lower (tweeter axis) the speaker measured pretty flat, however, as our analysis shows. There's a gentle down trend at high frequencies, which is wise since it avoids sharpness in the sound. Castle tweeters aren't the sweetest in the business, so this is even more necessary. But the carbon-fibre bass/midrange unit was smooth enough

and bass output from it extends healthily right down to 55Hz, showing that the cabinet is an optimised reflex design.

Overall impedance measured 9Ω and our impedance modulus analysis shows a very flat characteristic has been achieved.

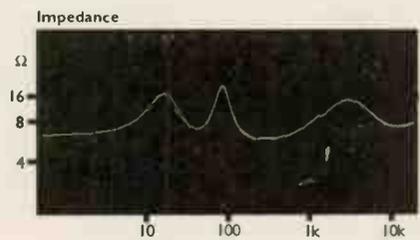
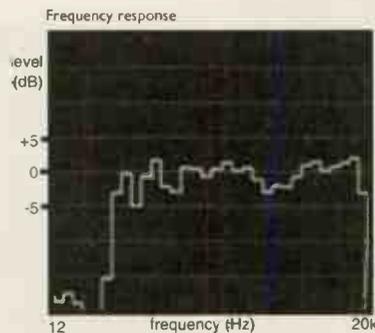
This makes the Eden a very amenable load. The drawback is that it is very insensitive too, producing a meagre 83.5dB sound pressure level for one nominal watt (2.84V) of input. A powerful amplifier will be needed to achieve high volume. **NK**



HEYBROOK HEYLIOS

The Heylios has a prominent tweeter characteristic, rising treble possibly giving some 'sting' to the sound. A dip in the crossover region is likely to soften detail. These features apart, the Heylios have a flat overall response characteristic and bass goes low, so it will have plenty of oomph, plus some treble 'ting'.

Impedance was high at 9Ω overall and sensitivity correspondingly low at 86dB. But the Heylio is not reactive, having a smooth impedance curve. It will need at least 40watts to go loud. **NK**



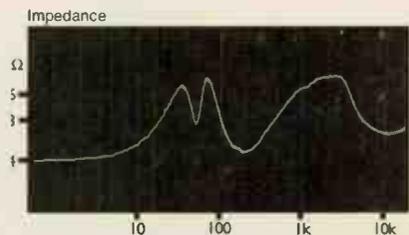
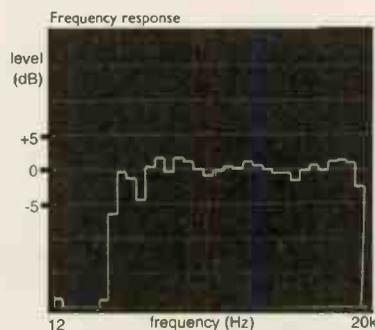
B&W DM305

The response curve of this speaker is essentially flat, a good sign. It means the design is fundamentally accurate. A rise in tweeter output toward high frequencies threatens to put some sharpness or hardness in the sound, whilst a small bass lift around 200Hz should add a little richness and body.

Bass extension downward was exceptionally good, output at 50Hz being just -6dB down. This should give bass good weight. With smooth output down to this frequency the 305s will play bass lines very evenly, room modes permitting. It's a good performance by any standard.

The impedance curve swings from 30Ω to 5Ω; an overall figure of 7Ω was measured. Sensitivity was average for a large loudspeaker, measuring 87dB sound

pressure level for a nominal watt of input (2.84V). To fill a large room amplifiers of 50watts or more would be needed. **NK**



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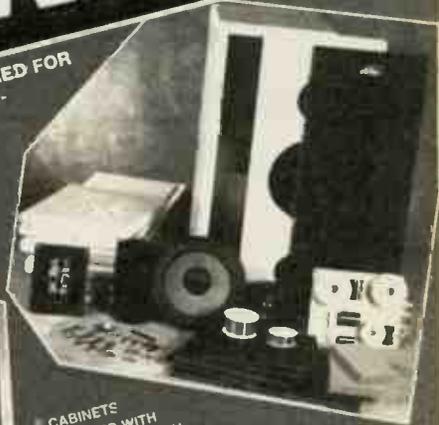
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LOUDSPEAKERS

HARBETH HL-S8

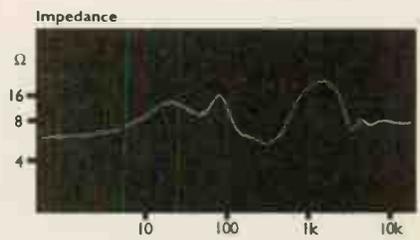
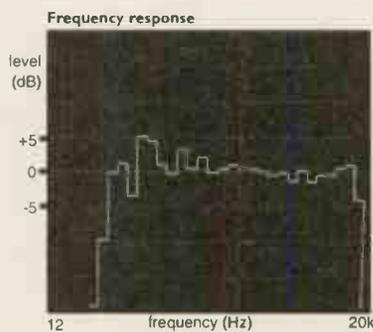
A lift in low frequency output around 125Hz helps the HL-S8 reach down to 52Hz or so in our room, a very good result. However, we would expect some bass coloration, perhaps speed enhancement, from the peaking. Otherwise the HL-S8 looks very smooth in its on-axis frequency response.

Tweeter output rises steadily to 16kHz and this was, we suspect, responsible for the apparent treble brightness of this loudspeaker. Absence of a crossover suckout will ensure good detailing and vocal projection.

Sensitivity was average at 86dB and overall impedance measured exactly

8Ω, suggesting a fairly standard load. However, a substantial peak in impedance, from 8Ω to 30Ω, in the mid-band is not only unusual but also indicative of heavy reactance, which causes large V/I phase changes. Our analysis of modulus of

impedance shows this effect clearly. This speaker is a strange load. Its compatibility with amplifiers should be checked by listening tests. **NK**



CASSETTE

PIONEER CT-95 CASSETTE DECK

The CT-95 has unusually quiet replay amplifiers or, more accurately, quiet heads and amplifiers, since coils in themselves generate thermal noise (from Brownian movement). A replay noise figure of -68dB was no less than 7dB better than usual - a huge improvement. I measured this many times before believing it.

Quiet replay and record amps usually result in lower tape hiss figures. They did with the CT-95; it turned in a noise figure of -61dB, Dolby off, chrome tape (TDK SA-X). This is no less than 5dB better than average. However, the advantage wasn't maintained at low levels. Dolby C and S measured normally, so most users will not notice lower hiss. Those using no Dolby (for quality) or just Dolby B will notice the benefit. The CT-95 has a 3dB midband dynamic range advantage over a Nakamichi - impressive.

The right channel of the replay amplifier displayed falling treble (-2dB at 10k) whilst the left was flat. In use there was image pulling to one side as a result. Frequency response after BLE tuning was

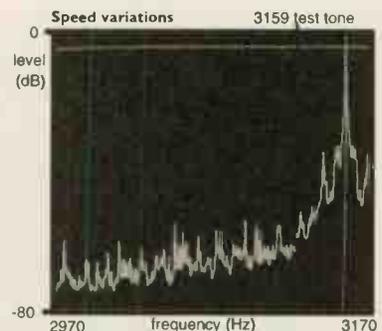
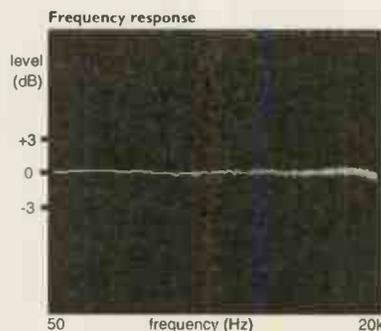
very flat with all tape types, as our analysis shows.

The dual-capstan transport worked very well, giving stable speed and low flutter.

The CT-95 was impressive. It did not display the attention to detail of a Nakamichi - I'm thinking mainly of replay response here - nor does it have the overload ceiling, but it is otherwise a well honed machine technically. **NK**

REPLAY (prerecorded tapes)
 Frequency response (-2dB) 30Hz-12kHz
 Speed accuracy +0.6% fast
 Hiss (70uS, Dolby out) -68dB

RECORDING (blank tapes)	
Frequency response (IEC Primary Refs.)	
ferric (IECI)	10Hz-20kHz
chrome (IECII)	10Hz-20kHz
metal (IECIV)	10Hz-20kHz
Separation (1kHz)	59dB
Distortion (315Hz)	0.6%
Hiss (70uS, Dolby out)	-61dB
Speed variations (DIN total)	0.04%
Flutter energy (3-3.13kHz)	-40dB
MOL/SAT (IEC Refs)	31S/10k
IEC I (ferric)	+3.5dB/-9dB
IECII (chrome)	+3dB/-5dB
IECIV (metal)	+4dB/0dB



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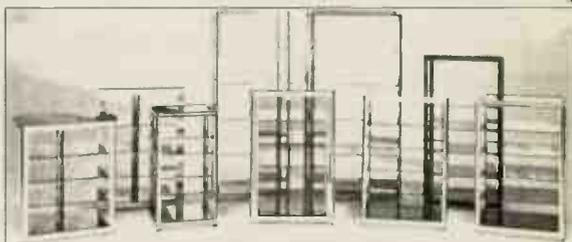
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Linn Keilidh/Kustone Stands	£ 885	£ 595
Quad ESL63 Black/Stand	£3750	£2095
Spica TC50 SEX External crossover	£ 950	£ 650
Spendor S100 Mahogany Mint	£2125	£1200
Spendor S20 Walnut Mint	£ 770	£ 500
Yamaha NS1000 Rare in Cherry	£1399	£ 700
Quad ELS7 Black	£1500	£ 495
Spendor BC3 teak	£1500	£ 600
Celestion SL6 walnut	£ 399	£ 220
Manitor Audio MA800 rosewood	£ 795	£ 495
Rogers LS7 teak finish	£ 550	£ 300
Time Window 1A	£ 999	£ 499
Castle Durham 900 Yew Finish Mint	£ 380	£ 269
ATC SCM10 Black	£1100	£ 650
Rega EL8	£ 300	£ 240

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Classified Ads

For details on how to place a Classified Advertisement, please see page 129

NAIM/LINN BUY/SELL. 52, CDS, 250, 135, 140, HICAP, ARO, 72, 82 ETC.
TEL: BOB 01382 819732

NAIM CDI CD Player with remote £1250. Naim NAC 82 Pre-amp with remote £1225, Naim SBL speakers (walnut finish) £1150. Linn LP12/Ekos/Troika £1050. Selling to upgrade, all immaculate and boxed, will demonstrate.
Tel: 01703 667728 (Day) 01703 398731 (eve).

MARK LEVINSON M.L.2 Power amps, latest, mint £2650. Quicksilver 100W power amps £1200. Preamp with M.C. Transformer £700. Concordant exelsior preamp £375. Oracle Delphi 2 turntable £475. Sonus Fabre Amators with stands latest £1550. Wanted Extreames.
Tel: 01274 545219 (Bradford)

SONUS FABER ELECTA Speakers £875. Slate Audio stands £240, Papworth TVA 50 amp £750, ART Audio quintet power amp £650, Musical Fidelity P180 Pwr MX Pre CRPS P.S.U. £900, Sonus Faber Minuetto Speakers £525.
Tel: 01977 643629

VINTAGE FISHER 500C all valve stereo FM receiver, in fine original condition with original walnut case, 23 WPC, superb tuner section, full service manual. Koetsu rosewood plus Ortofon MC Transformers, very musical combination. £375 the lot
Tel: 0181 883 5618

MONITOR AUDIO ET500 record deck Rega RB250 and Linn K5 Apollo wall shelf £175 ono. Denon DRS810 3HD cassette deck with remote, little used £160 ono
Tel: 01702 420693 (Southend) Eves

TRICHORD CLOCKED KENWOOD DPX9010 CD transport & Pink Triangle Ordinal DAC only £750. Also Musical Fidelity amps Pre & Typhoons only £250. No splits will haggle
Tel: 0171 630 8410 (Andy)

TOWNSHEND GALAHADS for sale £2750. Note these are not current production models but the earlier prototype still awesome! though.
Tel: 0181 393 4265 work 0181 393 4147 Eves (Epsom)

ARCAM DELTA SERIES 250 Transport, 50 Black Box, 290 integrated amp with MM phono stage, 290 power amp. Boxed, little used may split. £1400 ono.
Tel: 01730 893106 (Laurence), 0468 420115 eves. (Hampshire)

ROGERS LS33-AB33 £4.20 DPA50.5 White slink cables £550 DPA Bigger bits £300. Faraday SG1s £190 all above unmarked as new. Tannoy Venus Mk 2 speakers £90. Thorens TD165 (serviced) £30. 2x Goldring Lenco 69s (offers). Various other cables, drive units etc for sale due to house move. Tel: 01883 330063 (Surrey)

TANNOY DEVON LOUDSPEAKERS in good condition £200 ono. Revox A78 amplifier £120 ono. Rega 3 (with RB300) £150 ono. Armstrong F.M. tuner £40 ono Tel: 0191 422 3415

SONAB. WANTED, A pair of 0A6s. Must be in perfect working and clean condition, will pay up to £200 for a matched mint pair.
Tel: 01244 836131 after 6pm

NEAT PETITE Speakers £300. Nakamichi DR2 £375. Micromega Stage 2 CD £475. NAD 501 £110. All immaculate and boxed.
Tel: 01753 684887 (Lcndon Heathrow)

IMPULSE H5 HORN LOUDSPEAKERS one year old, cost £1695 on offer for £750 ono. V.T.L. de luxe valve pre-amplifier £395 ono.
Tel: 0171 582 0543

NVA SECOND STATEMENT power amp. £2500 ono (£3700) Price includes NVA P50, Supersmac interconnects (metre pair) and LS1 speaker cable (2.5 metre pair)
Tel: 01522 573267 (day) 01522 792627 (eves)

CELESTION 3000 ribbon hybrid loudspeakers and stands £350 (£1100). Meridian 200 transport (+£250 Trichord modifications) £500 (£1250). Orelle CD10T/DA180, Martin Coiloms Reference £650 (£1400), offers acceptable. Cables available. Salman
Tel: 0131 228 9070

FOR SALE AFTER UPGRADE; Arcam Alpha Plus CD - £125. Alchemy DAC in box - £100. Alchemy Power Station 2 - £100. Box of assorted Linn cables. All bills available - £275 the lot.
Tel: 0181 841 5782 before 10pm. (Brian)

MARANTZ CD52se (Trichord clock ii mod) £165. Audio Alchemy D.I.T.B. £115. Both boxed in excellent condition. Reson mica mm cartridge (new £150) low hours £60. Interconnects V.D.H. First 0.6m £60, V.D.H. source 0.6m £15, Audioquest Digital pro 1m £30
Tel: 01324 563364

AUDIO INNOVATIONS L1 preamp only 14 months old, mint condition, new valve, cost £300 sell for £150. No offers
Tel: 0181 281 1389 (London Essex borders)

AUDIOLAB 8000S integrated amp, quite new £550. Marantz CD52 MkII £90. Rotel RA930AX amp £55. Mission 760i speakers £45.
Tel: 0113 252 4958 (Leeds)

LINN, LP12, ITTOK, LVII, Denon DL 103 (unused) £450. Quad FM4 Tuner £150, Quad ESP (bronze) £250. Naim NAP160, Naim NAC42, Snaps £350. Dean Alto PRO speakers £80
Tel: 01256 760862

NAIM ACTIVE SBL SPEAKERS new version, black ash, 18 months old, mint. NAXO X over and 4x3m NAC A5 cable. All supplied with boxes, manuals, receipts
Tel: 0181 270 9393 (Essex)

NOTTINGHAM ANALOGUE HYPERSPACE (5 hours use) Silver wired space arm, Tracer 4 cartridge (4 hours use) absolutely mint, receipts available cost £2200 bargain at £1200. Croft 3 'R' OTL, mint condition, 2 years old £2500 new bargain £995 ono. REL Stadium - mint £420 ono. Wanted Audio Research VT60 power amp
Tel: 01902 786818 (Midlands)

AUDIOTECH TABLE £55, Pico power supply table £20, Sound Organisation 2 shelf table £35. Mission Isoplat £20, Chord Chameleon 1.8m Naim DIN to Phono £25, Naim SNA1C £25
Tel: 01702 347364

MERIDIAN CD Player 602/606 (transport/DAC - 2nd series) + remote, manuals, boxes. VDH connector. Perfect condition £1100 (£3200 new)
Tel: 0171 402 0826

MERIDIAN 563 CONVERTOR. £450. Meridian MSR remote (current model), £60. Quad FM4 tuner, £325. Jecklin Float electrostatic headphones, £275. Audio Technica ATH-70 electret headphones, £120. Sennheiser 414SL, £10. All absolutely mint and boxed
Tel: 01793 526796

MICHELL ALECTOs, mint £1095. Michell Argo/Hera, mint £550. Wadia X32/3200 DAC/transport £1345. Mission 753 loudspeakers, rosewood mint £395. Mod Squad passive preamp £150
Tel: 0118 9815681 (Reading)

PIONEER STEREO tape deck CT-F600, Amplifier SA508, Tuner TX608L, excellent condition. Best offer
Tel: 01258 861175

VAN DEN HUL MC10 (improved) moving coil cartridge. Exquisite detail and impressive dynamics; a classic. Light use. Modified and "turbocharged" by Van Den Hul himself. Willing to demo in your system if within sensible distance of Surrey. £450 (£850+ mmp)
Tel: 01372 468266 (Jerry)

AUDIO ALCHEMY DITB £130 (£230). Monarchy DIP (Jitter Buster) £130 (£245). Digital links 2x Siltech HF6 0.5m £50 each (£100). 1x Audio Alchemy link £25 (£70) £335 Lot
Tel: 01703 283191 So'ton

SUGDEN SYMETRA mono amplifiers, ten months only, over a year warranty £1100. Pro-Ac Studio 100 with Target HJ20 £600. Wanted Pro-Ac 2.5
Tel: 0161 928 1158

MUSICAL FIDELITY F15 Serviced and upgraded by MF April 96 £1095, Linn Kann Mk II plus wall brackets £165. Audio Research LS22 8 months old, mint condition £2800 plus Michell Iso/Hera phono £385 or £3150 together. Also available Denon

AVR1000 Dolby surround receiver. New, unused and boxed bargain at £350.
Tel: 01737 761207 (Redhill) evenings or e-mail peter.alton@dial.pipex.com

LINN KAIRN pre-amplifier phono input, mint condition, four years old, replacement £1600 sell £950 or nearest offer. SDL Acoustics OBS 3-Way floor standing speakers, four years old, new £950 sell £495
Tel: 0141 638 4400 (Glasgow)

TEAC 3300S reel tape deck £250. Pair. Ruark Sabre speakers £165 Kenwood K.A.3020SE amplifier £125. Meridian 200 CD Transport with Meridian 263 Digital converter £690 B/O cassette deck £55 VGC
Tel: 0181 686 7996 (Croydon)

PROAC RESPONSE three point five loudspeakers, mahogany, as new £2500 (£4250). Wanted: Quad 67 CD player, must be mint, pay up to £550.
Tel: 01703 601222 Kevin (Southampton)

AVI 2000 MP preamp £425 (new £750) and 2000MM monobloc power amp (150 WPC) £650 (new £1099) less than two years old and mint. Quad FM4 tuner £135
Tel: 01785 604576 (Stafford)

NAIM HI-CAP old style box. £3200ono. Linn LVX tone arm low mileage, £50. 2x3m Naim NAC 5 cable, £25
Tel: 01595 694205

DUAL TURNTABLE ORTOFON OM30 £120 Magnum preamp P200 Magnum power amps A50's 280WPC £950 o.v.n.o. Akai GX65 3 head Dolby HXPRO cassette deck £100. NAD 302 integrated amp £85. SILVERADO RAIDERS PIANO BLK £450 (AS NEW)
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THE SILVERADO S1's MONITORS piano blk £1500. Purpose built stands £150 (as new) as close to the Wilson Watts as you will get
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NAIM NAP 90 power amp, Naim NAC 62 preamp, Naim HI CAP power supply, complete mint condition £600
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NAIM AUDIO CDI with remote & new double boxed, £1325 ono
Tel: 01702 354946

DPA 1024 REFERENCE DAC 2 years old, as new £2800. Very rare - DPA 100S pre + 2 100S power amps - bi-amped including black slink speaker cables, mint condition £2950.
Tel: 01268 757739 (evenings)

QUAD 34 (1995) Russ Andrews modified + 606 power (Nov 94) excellent condition £550
Tel: 01604 753391 after 5pm SME 3009 Imp. fixed head, superb £60, Akai AT-2400 AM/FM tuner, 70s styling, excellent performance £40, Cambridge Audio C100/ A70 active/passive phono/ line preamp & 55wpc power amp, can be monoblocked, £500 RATA upgrade, thus lifetime warranty £500. All boxed with manuals. Wanted: Audio Innovations

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SAX 90 £1 80	MXS 90 £2 50	SENNHEISER HE60/V70 £830
MA 90 £1 85	DAT 120 £5 45	BEYER DT931 £185
MAXG 90 £7 90	UD 35/90 £6 75	BEYER DT531 £107
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TRADE IN 1 OLD M.C. £120	GOLDRING 1042 £95	SHURE V15VXMR £235	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
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TEST CD'S & CASSETTES; TEST RECORD

HIFI NEWS TEST CD3 £13.00	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
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CARTRIDGES, TONEARMS & TURNTABLES

AUDIO TECHNICA, DENON, SHURE ORTOFON	GOLDRING, ARCAM, AUDIOQUEST	VAN DEN HUL, TRANSFIGURATION, KOETSU, GRADO, B & O, TECHNICS, STANTON, ROKSAN, LONDON (DECCA)
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Home Demonstrations

There isn't too much to talk about this month, so I thought this might be a good time to remind regular readers of the advantages of our Home Demonstration Service, which not only allows you to hear equipment in your own system and acoustic environment, but also allows me to evaluate the performance of your system and to make suggestions. Alright, not everybody wants to hear the truth, but I can save you an awful lot of charging around and money. To do this takes time; I regularly spend between 2 and 4 hours at customers houses. Even if shops are prepared to lend equipment or even install it, they seldom will have time to sit down and really take the trouble to listen!

Origin Live Sovereign

Although there have been no reviews so far of the new Sovereign floorstanding speaker, this latest model will sell itself on it's sheer natural easy balance. Easy to drive and attractive looking, it will appeal to anyone who finds most of today's speakers a touch brash. Works beautifully with our AVI Integrated and also sounds good with Naim amplifiers, so do come and audition.

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		NEW	SALE
EAD CD1000 Series 3 CD Player with HDCD	Ex Demo	£2000	£1495
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
Classe 70 Balanced 70w Power Amplifier	S/Hand (Mint)	£1400	£ 850
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
Mirage:			
M-290 2-way Audiophile Compact Monitor	Ex-Demo	£ 400	£ 250
M-1090i 2-way, 4 driver symmetrical Bipolar Radiator	Ex-Demo	£1300	£ 950
MBS the World's smallest symmetrical Bipolar Speaker includes matching stands - superb sound	Ex-Demo	£ 400	£ 285
BPS-100 Active 100w Bipolar Subwoofer	Ex-Demo	£ 575	£ 395
BPS 150 Active 150w Bipolar Subwoofer	Ex Demo	£ 800	£ 499
Dynaudio Kraft Reference Monitors including Stands	S/Hand (Mint)	£2600	£1495
Proac Super Tablette Loudspeakers, Black	S/Hand (Mint)		£ 145

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NAKAMICHI'S FIRST CASSETTE

DECK the 1000 Tri-Tracer in full working order. Pictured in Hi Fi World July 1996. Offers please. Can demonstrate, buyer collects
Tel: 01202 397545 (evenings)
(Bournemouth)

ROTEL RCD865 CD player. Little used, as new £80

Tel: 01923 234956 (Herts)

SONUS FABER ELECTAS £850.

Woodside ISA 230 amplifier £495.
Radford WS2 heavily modified CD £420.
Orelle DA180 £260. Origin Live O.L.2s £300.
Ortofon MC20 Super (new) £30
Neat Critiques £195.
Tel: 01707 321878 (Herts)

MUSICAL FIDELITY PRE3A and pair MA65 mono blocks, chrome finish £500, Linn Kans & stands £100, Rega RB 300 arm £40, no offers.
Tel: 0151 645 4803 (evenings)

NAIM HICAP £250, NAP250 £750 old style. Mana Reference table £250. Audiomeca Kreatura CD transport plus Audionote DAC 2, superb vinyl like sound £1350. Quad ESL bronze, refurbished by Quad £500.
Tel: 0181 546 2881 (evenings)

NAIM AUDIO 32.5 preamp boxed excellent condition £210. Wanted: Naim CD1 or CD3
Tel: 01623 796266 mobile 0860 923573 (Nottingham area)

REGA PLANAR 3 inc. RB 300 arm, Elys cartridge boxed can demo £120 ono
Tel: 01704 550868 (Southport)

GARRARD 401. SME 1009. New Goldring 1042. Mixed vinyls. £200
Tel: 01454 614427 (Bristol)

NAIM AUDIO CDS,52, £5000. 72 Hi-cap, 180, £1400. SBL's (new bass cone) £1200. All about 2 years old
Tel: 01494 442934

NAIM 62 PRE-AMP & 140 power-amp mint condition, boxed can demonstrate with three Chord Company interconnects and NACA4 speaker cable £650
Tel: 01277 657964 (Essex)

B&W 802 MATRIX SPEAKERS. New boxed, bargain to serious listener. £2800 new will accept £1800 ono
Tel: 0171 542 8727

RADFORD DSM control unit, Radford STA12 power amplifier, Radford FM tuner, Goodsell MA25 power amplifier, Goodsell FTC control unit (choice of two), Rogers valve FM tuner, Wharfedale super 12/CS/AL speaker. Also other items.
Tel: 01924 468189 day or evening (D. Ward)

LINN LP12 black Lingo Ekos Trampoline current spec between one and three years old, wonderful condition, includes K18 cartridge only £2100. New price is now over £3400
Tel: 01684 773387

HART BUILT LINDLEY HOOD separates. Power 80x80 + pre stand

alone phono + power supply. £250 ono cost £1200!
Tel: 01254 399152 anytime

MERIDIAN 200 DAC (original) £200 ono
Tel: 0121 605 6665 or 0468 520634 (Chris, Birmingham)

TOWNSHEND ELITE ROCK Mk II £200, Thorens TD 160S, Rega RB250 arm £100, can opener headphone device £30. Snell J Mk II walnut £300, Rote 820 AL tuner £30, Notts Analogue Tracer II cartridge £50
Tel: 0114 2215271

NEW AIMED AT THE PROFESSIONAL Omni Audio 27" 3-way loudspeakers piano black 200 Watts music power (cost £1400) £760 ono. Beautiful sound
Tel: 0181 337 5006 evenings (Adam)

AUDIO RESEARCH LS7 preamp black absolutely as new £1200. V.D.H. The First 0.8m interconnect boxed unused £140. Apollo Aria double rack black/glass inc. CD drawer cost £400 - £175
Tel: 01829 741270

ACOUSTIC STUDIO MONITORS 3311 series 125 Watt. 3" tweeter, 5" mid, 12" woofer, two frequency controls. Liquid cooled, boxed, unused, warranty, black ash finish. Worth £700 each, take £900 for pair
Tel: 01752 262626 (Plymouth)

LS3/5A SPEAKERS, famous miniatures, teak, by Spondor, 5 yrs old but hardly used, as new with original packing £260 ono
Tel: 0114 2301392 (Sheffield)

MIRAGE M-7Si bipolar speakers £895 (£1550 new); Audio Alchemy DDS II CD transport, DDE V1.0 DAC £395; Magnum Dynalab FT II FM analogue tuner £295; Mission Cyrus 1 amp £125. As new condition throughout, superb audiophile sound
Tel: 0181 421 2226

QUAD VALVE TUNER, full Quad overhaul, £75. Decca FFSS, excellent, £60. Connoisseur transcription motor, 1955, suspension needs repair, £25. Two Lowther Acoustas, £100 each. Pair B&W two-way speakers, biwireable, immaculate, £100. Demos first. Pair very early Leak mono variolopes, offers
Tel: 01825 790480 (Sussex)

KRELL KSA 250, just serviced, mint £3295 ono. Audio Research LS 2B Mk II 11mths old £2495 ono - sad sale
Tel: 01629 822995 or 01623 871950

QUAD II AMPS, unmodified, boxed with manual, £280. Rogers Cadet III, spare valves, manual, £130. NAD 1020 preamp, boxed, £65. Pioneer reel to reel PR85, rack mount, £150. Rogers Ravensbourne amp £60. Canon BJ330, A3-A4 printer, unopened cartridge, £80
Tel: 01480 464691 (John)

MICHELL MYCRO turntable, £200 (£400 new), Dual 505.4, Dual arm Ortofon OM20 boxed £85 (£180 new), Thorens arm instruction book £35.
Tel: 01734 787225 after 6pm

CROFT SUPER MICRA II valve pre-

amplifier No 918 phono, serviced, box, mint £350
Tel: 01746 783650 (Midlands)

AUDIOLAB GDT for £500. Pink Triangle DaCapo for £600. Audiolab 8000M (Pair) for £700. Audionote OTO SE (Valve) for £500
Tel: 01827 62981 (day)

E.A.R. 802 PREAMP £465 ono. Quad II power amplifiers gold phonos, building posts, re-structured by Tim Paravicini £325 ono. Leak 20 amplifier £225 ono. Leak tuner Troughline 3 mono £65
Tel: 01745 331681

SOWTER TRANSFORMERS and chassis for 100W GEC Amp £125. Pairs - Focal 10V01 £70, Audax HM100ZO £35, TWO34XO £25 (complete speakers). Richard Allan BM8PVG £25. Leak Sandwich 600 £50
Tel: 01622 844409

MERIDIAN 207 CD / preamp and 209 remote £325 Meridian 203 DAC £225. Linn Vega 75W poweramp £200. All mint. boxed, with manuals. Magnaplanar SMGAs £250
Tel: 01732 463314 (Sevenoaks)

LINN AXIS turntable. C/W Akifo arm and AT-F5 cartridge, in excellent condition, boxed etc. £250. Kenwood KA3020SE amplifier, boxed and as new £100
Tel: 01200 443320 (Lancs)

AUDIONOTE MELHU 300B single-ended valve phono amp mint £2450 ANE-SFX light ash loudspeakers on pirates VGC £1150. Silver Sounds 2m bi-wire £150. Kimber 8TC 2m bi-wire £150. Kinshaw Perception Export DAC £495
Tel: 01628 788502 / 0835 268050 (Iain)

PINK TRIANGLE export turntable, Rega RB300 tonearm, Audio Technica AT03 cartridge £500. Magneplanar SMGA loudspeakers oak/black finish £200. Both excellent condition
Tel: 01224 702619 (evenings)

WADIA 2000 TRANSPORT ATT £3250, 64X converter £2250 Levinson 28 preamp £1800, Pair Krell KST100 switchable amps £1600 each, ART, Siltech and assorted cables
Tel: 01923 826830

LINN LP12, Valhalla, Ittok, A&R P77 £495, Quad 33/303 £165, FM3 £65, Quad serviced, NAD 6325 cassette £75, Mordaunt Short MS10 £45. All excellent condition
Tel: 01869 277639 (Nick, evenings)

AUDIO SYNTHESIS PASSION selector switch unit (2 in, 1 out) £100 (easily upgradeable to full passive preamp). Nottingham Analogue Paragon I arm, latest Mk 2 version with super-light carriage £1000
Tel: 0171 751 3771 Gerry Hassell (work)

MICHELL ISO, moving coil phono stage,

excellent sound quality, very good condition, latest specification, original packaging £275. AR Legend turntable, Linn Basik arm, Goldring Elan, 3 point suspended subchassis, real wood finish, plays only 33rpm, excellent condition, boxed £95
Tel: 01245 262842

QUAD 77 integrated amplifier £400. Mission 752 speakers (rosewood) £300. Both 18 months old. boxed, excellent condition
Tel: 0171 389 2885 (daytime Berks)

2 W.B. STENTORIAN H.F. 8 16 speaker units with universal voice coils £40 pair. 1 professionally built column with potentiometer (no unit) suit Lowther PM6 £40. 1 Garrard 301 £70
Tel: 01429 262517 (Hartlepool)

FOR SALE NAIM NAC 72, Nap 180, Hi Cap. Boxed new style mint. Two and a half years old £1400. Marantz CD 52II £100 Naim Nait I £140
Tel: 01865 792020

MARANTZ DD82 DCC Deck £180 Marantz CD36 £75. Technics SLP770 CD old but stunning £100. Technics SLDL1 ditto £90. NAD 310 amp £70. Tannoy 631 £65. Mordaunt Short MS10I £90
Tel: 0181 460 7364

LINN ISOBARIK speakers in black ash with stands. Sound superb. Original boxes and packing, £550. Also Linn LK1 preamp including XLR plugs £150.
Tel: 01256 764339 (Hampshire)

AUDIO TECHNICA OC9 cartridges. Brand new, guaranteed, £230 inc. P&P. DPA Renaissance CD player, immaculate, boxed, manuals etc £700 inc. P&P. DPA RF filter & power slink (170) £90
Tel: 01792 280061

ORTOFON MC TRANSFORMER T2000 and MC200 integrated cartridge, £125. Various interconnects (£10/£15) and Target wall shelves, TT1 £25 & TT2 £35
Tel: 01506 844683 (Lothian)

"THE VOYD" TURNTABLE c/w RB 250 tonearm £750, Audiomeca Kreatura CD transport £550, Audi Alchemy DAC in the box £100, Gamma Remthm 211/VT4C (with phono stage) £1000. Garrard 401 turntable c/w SME 3009 £150
Tel: 01592 874145 (Scotland)

KRELL K.S.T. 100 power-amp warranty until Feb 1998 £1700 ono. KEF 103/4 speakers £800 ono
Tel: 01582 582540 (eves)

WANTED- MERIDIAN 565, DSP5500 and DSP5000 urgently. For sale-collectable Meridian MCA1 integrated modular amplifier plus optional MM unit in mint condition with original box and manuals- £560
Tel: 0121 717 4834 (day) 01789 840655 (evening). Email: g.robinson@cenit.de

GARRARD 401, SME 3009/11, teak plinth with cover, bought new in 1971, very little used, mint condition, £195 ono
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MUSICAL FIDELITY E200/300 c/w phono (£1458) £800, Audiolab 8000

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QUAD ESL 63s, GRADIENT SW63s, 2x Deltac DPA50s poweramps, Deltac DSP50S preamp, dedicated 500S speaker cable, Black Slink interconnects, boxed manuals, for sale. As system, £3500
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new)
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Tel: 0181 906 1924

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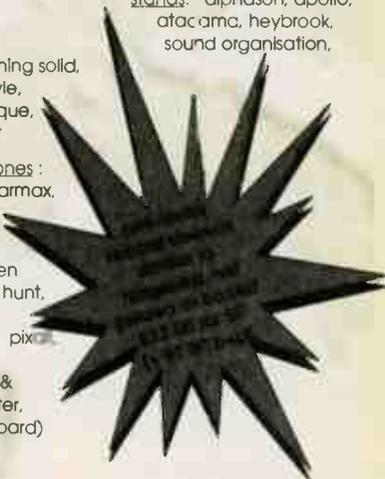
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Tel: 01604 410174 (Northampton)

LINN LP12, Grace Arm, K9 (with new stylus), excellent condition, will demo £250
Tel: 01425 475465 (Hants)

LINN AXIS + AKITO ARM with original box £225 ono. Leak Stereo Troughline tuner, GWO, £90. Leak Stereofetic tuner GWO £15.
Tel: 01603 788377 (Mike Brown, Norwich)

MARANTZ CD63SE CDP (15 months guarantee left) £240; Yamaha KX-580 c/deck £180; Meridian 508 18-bit CDP £775; Meridian 551 ampl incl. MC

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WORLD AUDIO DESIGN KLP1 preamp and K5881 power amp built by World Audio Design £575, E.A.R. 834P valve phono preamp £300 ono. All in mint condition. Unmarked. Can demo
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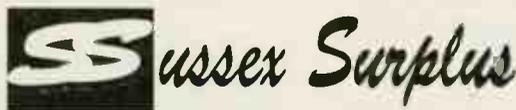
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QUAD VALVE AMPS, pre amp, tuner and decoder, ELS 57 speakers £550.
Tel: 01282 863674 (East Lincs)

LEAK TL 12 + (PR) £275. Croft Epoch preamp £325. Audio Alchemy D.I.T.B. £145 inc. 1/C KEF Corelli Spkrs £50. Sony PSX 6 D/D T/able £45. Castle 20" Spkr. stands £35
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NAIM HI-CAP, NAC 62 and NAP 90, all in beautiful condition. Happy to demonstrate. All boxes, cables and instructions £750
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LINN LP 12 Nirvana Valhalla Ittok Asaka £600, Naim NAC62, Hicap, NAP250 £1300, Naim SBL black £850, Sony Professional PCM Recorder uses 8mm video tape (£1200 new) £300, all perfect, little used.
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