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World Radio History

As you can see with this issue, *Hi-Fi World* has taken on a new, fresher look. We've also added a new member to the HFW team, Editorial Assistant Andrew Harrison. What hasn't changed is our mission to bring you informative reviews on the best of today's components, solutions to your letter and e-mail system problems and affordable DIY designs.



JON MARKS

Proudly displayed on this month's front cover is Sony's flagship MDS-JA50ES MiniDisc player. As Dominic Todd discovered, £1300 of audiophile components and superb mechanical engineering are two very strong arguments in favour of the smallest of hi-fi's three disc formats.

Most hi-fi manufacturers don't believe that resistors and capacitors specifically designed for audio use have anything to offer sonically over industrial-grade alternatives. As our experience with a wide range of audiophile goodies has taught us

though, that's rarely true. It's refreshing to see companies as large as Sony, and Technics too for that matter, selecting parts on sonic grounds as much as cost.

Another part of the appeal of this machine, or of any MD player, is the dinky disc itself. We share our love of the miniature with the Japanese, who took more quickly to MD than any other country (not surprising really, given the fact that it's MiniDisc's birthplace and the Compact Cassette never succeeded there.)

According to sources in the retail trade, thanks to the above

and sound quality that makes cassette sound like the 35-year-old technology that it is, MiniDisc is finally getting into its stride judging from the way recorders are selling like hotcakes. Portable and domestic varieties are flourishing - I know many of my friends have converted to the MD faith from the growing numbers of MiniDiscmans they now travel with.

As with any format, there's normally a kind of technological gestation period during which labcoats the world over learn how to squeeze the best out of their new protegee. MD's already been around for five years so you might think the tweaking was over and MiniDisc was mature. A quick look at CD's history will tell you that 15 years is closer to how long improvements can be in coming though.

MiniDisc sounds impressive already, who knows how good it might be when it celebrates its 10th anniversary? I for one look forward to finding out.

HOW WE TEST THE PRODUCTS

- *Hi-Fi World* has its own advanced test laboratory and acoustically treated listening room. No other hi-fi magazine has the benefit of such facilities.
- *Hi-Fi World* has a dedicated in-house team of experienced listeners, and uses selected freelance professionals. We review thoroughly by extensive auditioning, rather than by quick-fire group listening tests.
- *Hi-Fi World's* engineering team designs a wide range of products in-house. No other hi-fi magazine is so expert and dedicated.



WORLD VERDICT



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



GOOD - Has strong merit. Well worth an audition.



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



POOR - Seriously flawed. Not worth considering.

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CONSUMER PRESS

The Caspian System by Roksan



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fax: 070001 Roksan
email: info@roksan.co.uk

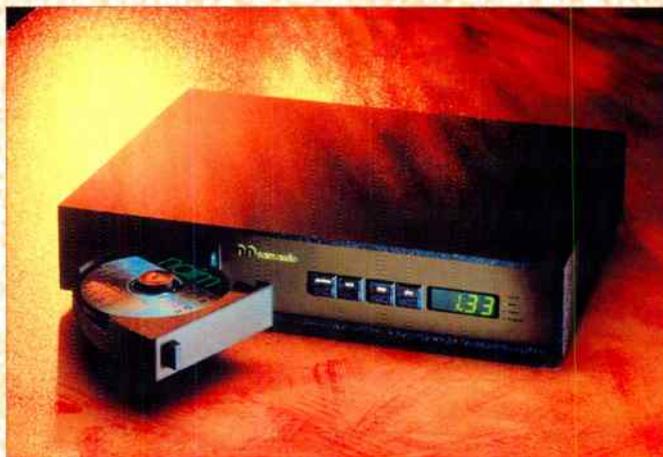
NEW NAIM ON THE BLOCK

Naim Audio have announced the imminent launch of a new Compact Disc player to feature HDCD decoding and filtering. The CDX will cost £2200 and be available from February.

Spinning the disc into motion is a VAM 1205 mechanism, a higher-spec variant from Philips' CDM12 range of transports with its Hall-effect drive motor. Transport functions are under the charge of a Philips SAA7376 servo controller, but Naim have taken the unusual steps of writing their own software code to maximise performance at this crucial stage of the information retrieval process.

A Pacific Microsonics PMD-100 filter chip works with the two separate 20-bit Burr-Brown PCM 1702-K Digital-to-Analogue converters.

Although the CDX is a single-box stand-alone player, Naim are planning a high-performance out-board power supply. This box of tricks, the XPS, can also power a new top-of-the-range player called the CDS, due later this year.



Naim Audio
Southampton Road,
Salisbury,
Wilts. SP1 2LN
Tel: 01722 332266

ON AN AUDIOVECTOR

We last caught sight of this company in the shape of the Audiovector 6 reviewed back in June 1995. Now the M Series has arrived.



There are two basic M types, one a floor stander and the other a stand mounter. What marks these transducers apart is the fact that they can be upgraded. The bookshelf-style M1 is a two-way that retails for £759 a pair and can be readily upgraded to the M1 Super (at £999/pr) or M1 Signature (£1449/pr) by using Audiovector-supplied drive units and crossover components. To reduce cabinet coloration in the up-rated versions, there is an additional front baffle.

If floor standers oil your cogs, then it might be worth checking out the M2 at £1399, M3 at £1899 or even the M3 Signature for £2499. They all use the same 7in. driver as the M1 but doubled up, so that one unit handles midrange and bass while the other deals solely with bass.

All the M1s feature bi-wireable crossovers while the M2s and M3s can be tri-wired.

Glaive
Wren Industrial Estate,
Coldred Road,
Maidstone,
Kent ME15 9XN
Tel: 01622 664070

KOPPERAE II

Unfortunately, gremlins crept into the works of last month's Trade Winds section and meddled with Kopperae's

telephone number. It should have read 07970 654356.

The TEAC VRDS Range

The One System You Can't Beat!

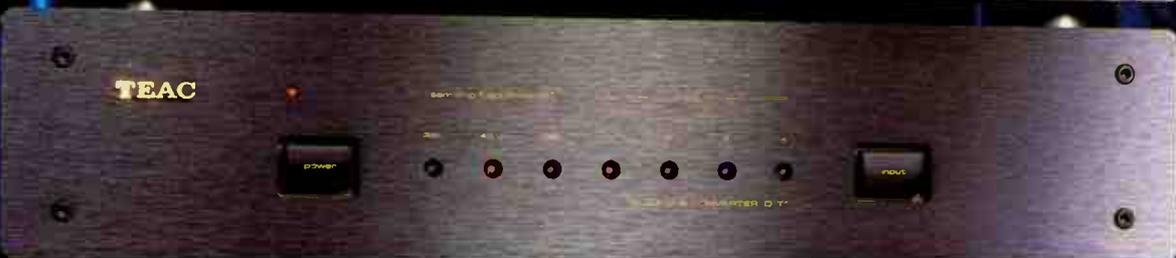
Everybody is aware of the huge success of the VRDS range of integrated CD Players and Transports. Now the VRDS players are complemented by a range of components which share the same outstanding build, engineering and sonic qualities

Everyone knows that the VRDS mechanism is the best CD transport in the world - Now there's no need to compromise with the rest of your system!



VRDS T-1 CD TRANSPORT

With the acclaimed VRDS mechanism, Highly rigid chassis and remote control - the TEAC ethos of sonic performance, build quality and ease of use are typified in the T-1



D-T1 D/A CONVERTER

The matching DAC for the T-1 uses Bitstream Conversion* in dual differential operation, a copper chassis to minimise RF interference and offers 4 digital inputs



V-8030S Cassette Deck

The latest example of TEAC's expertise in tape engineering features a 3-Head Dual-Capstan drive transport, Dolby S Noise Reduction and separate Bias and Level controls - proof indeed that the cassette is still a viable source. Also available is the V-6030S



A-BX10 INTEGRATED AMPLIFIER

An Audiophile amplifier which gives superb dynamic power and performance. Featuring a balanced stereo input and a fully balanced circuit configuration, the A-BX10 offers 100 Watts per channel and an optional phono board for MM and MC cartridges

Please send me information on the TEAC VRDS range

Name

Address

TEAC 5 Marlin House, The Grouley Centre, Watford, Herts. WD1 8YA TEL: 01923 819630 FAX: 01923 236297

Bitstream Conversion is a trademark of the Philips Corporation.

THREE FROM ACOUSTIC ENERGY

Lovers of those two well-known vowels will wobble at the prospect of AE's new 500 series floor standing range. Developed from the AE1 and AE2 Reference stand mounters, the three 500 models all sport silk-dome tweeters and AE-designed 130mm metal-cone bass and



midrange drivers.

The first to grace the shops will be the middle-man AE509, a sensitive three-way design using a pair of those metal drivers in each cabinet. The other two models are the two-way AE505 and three-way (with extra bass driver) AE520. Prices for the 505, 509 and 520 are £750, £895 and £1195 respectively.

The 18mm MDF cabinets come in a choice of three Ash veneers (black, Antique and Georgian), are mass loaded and include a die-cast alloy plinth to support the rear-ported enclosures. For protection against microphony the crossover unit is fully encapsulated inside its own box within the cabinet.

All three 500s have an impedance of six ohms to eight ohms, a power handling of 200watts and a high efficiency around the 90dB mark

Acoustic Energy
16 Bridge Road,
Cirencester,
Glos.
GL7 1NJ
Tel: 01285 654432

UNDERSTANDABLY STYLISH

A new company to join the throng of hi-fi stand producers is Understand Supports. A Yorkshire-based concern, they have put together the Xwing range of stands for components and loudspeakers.

Leading the range is the five-tiered Xwing DS175, a decoupled combination of white Italian marble, machined aluminium pillars and Oak-veneered MDF sub-shelves. Once the basic physical configuration has been decided, options include 10 different anodised colours for the legs, wooden sub-shelves in a range of paints and stains, and an array of exotic marbles, granites and slate in place of the

normal stone.

Prices start at £149.99 for a three-tier Xwing, with the five-tier at £199.99.

Understand Supports
42 Barley Rise,
York YO3 5AA
Tel: 01904 490184



RIP SYSTEMDEK?

The well-known turntable manufacturer Systemdek have stopped production of their turntables. We can now reveal that the latest Systemdek IIX turntables will live on with the help of Audionote (UK). They have bought up the design rights and tooling for the decks. Anyone needing spares or service for the IIX can contact Audionote.

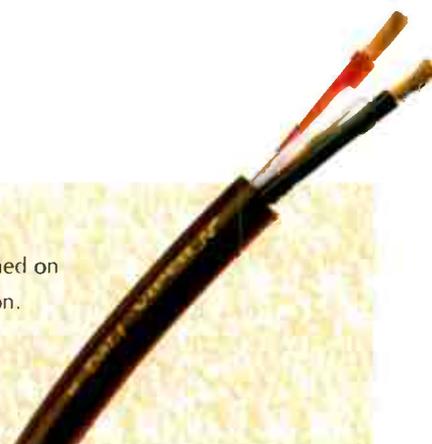
Audionote (UK)
125-127 Davigdor Road,
Hove,
East Sussex
BN3 1SG
Tel: 01273 220511

SURREAL SNAKE

Danish-made Dali loudspeakers have been joined by a new cable to really get the electrons flowing. 'Viper' is wrought from Oxygen-Free Copper and covered in polythene insulation. Audiophiles will need to dig out £4 for every mono metre between 'amp and 'speaker, or

double that if they're switched on to stereophonic reproduction.

Audioclub
Tel: 01296 82017



It was 20 years ago today....



In November '77, the design team of Bob Stuart and Allen Boothroyd launched their first Meridian product, an active loudspeaker of course!

Since then, Meridian Audio has continued to pioneer advanced audio design in products such as the first high end CD player, the first CD transport, the first DSP domestic loudspeaker, the first digital home theatre and now, high end DVD.

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<http://www.meridian-audio.com>

GOING DOTTY

Protection against theft is an important consideration for any enthusiast with a major investment in their hi-fi hardware. Aside from the obvious considerations of home security (locking the front door and removing from the garden those "I've got shed-loads of pukka kit in here"



signs), there is marking your property invisibly and indelibly.

Ultra-violet pens are one tried and tested method but can be detected and removed by anyone with a UV light.

Step up Alpha.Dot, a new system which uses tiny microdots imprinted with the owner's unique Personal Identification Number. A database of owners' details alongside their PIN is available to police if the stolen property is recovered.

The dots are suspended in a clear adhesive lacquer, which is applied to the cherished item in various places. When the dots are subsequently discovered, they can provide substantial proof of ownership to the authorities. A dot-laden bottle of this lacquer will cost £24.95.

Alpha Scientific
2 Stroud Wood Business Centre,
St. Albans,
Herts. AL2 2YY
Tel: 01727 875959

QED BFA

The well-loved 4mm banana plug at the end of millions of 'speaker cables is moving higher up the list of endangered hi-fi. It is being phased out by Brussels' civil servants, worried about the potential for electrocution.

Several British manufacturers are coming to terms with Mr Banana's passing by fitting re-designed connection posts to their amplifiers and loudspeakers. One such type of termination is the BFA so-called 'reverse 4mm' type which more and more manufacturers are adopting. Now QED are producing their Airloc plug, billed as, "the ultimate BFA connector". These are crimped on by a hydraulic tool that squeezes the plug with 36tonnes

of pressure. The joint is therefore airtight, say QED, and possesses excellent mechanical and electrical integrity. Due to the investment in the Airloc tools, these plugs will need to be fitted by QED or a suitably-equipped dealer.

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



IN NEXT MONTH'S ISSUE

SUPER CD

We pit standard CD at a sampling rate of 44.1kHz against the potential DVD Audio candidate at 96kHz and ultra-fast 192kHz to find out what digital dreams are made of.

CASTLE SEVERN II LOUDSPEAKER

More than just a cosmetic face-lift has gone into Castle's revised floor standing Severn II loudspeakers. Will the new carbon-fibre mid/bass driver

reinforce the fine reputation of this transducer?

UNISON RESEARCH SMART 300B

With the help of a Chinese super-300B and its anode UR have created a pair of 25watt 300B monoblocs. We see how smart they've been.

SONNETEER SEDLEY PHONO STAGE

This long-awaited £400 MM/MC

phono stage steps up to join Sonneteer's line-up. With stiff competition amongst turntable components, we find out if it can stand out from the crowd.

POWER TO THE LP12

We investigate four power supply units that get the LP12 up to speed. Is the Linn Lingo still the benchmark for Sondek excellence, or have the stalking horses overtaken it? Avondale, Manticore and Naim fight it out.



DIVIDE AND CONQUER

Ketan Bharadia and Jon Marks enter the pre and power amplifier arena to judge five £650-£1500 contenders from Audio Analogue, Crimson Electric, Linn, Technics and Audiolab.

When the integrated amp that has long served you and the rest of your system faithfully nears the time when it will be put out to pasture, where do you go for an upgrade? The alternatives break down simply into one-box or two-box solutions.

If space is at a premium, you can travel the path less frequently trod and invest in an expensive integrated amp like Sonneteer's excellent £900 Alabaster (reviewed in October 1997). If your rack isn't cramped and you prefer to have more room for upgrading, then a pre/power combination is the answer.

Separating delicate pre and hardier power amp circuitry yields a number of benefits. Foremost is the individual supplies that now feed the two sections. The output stages of power amps draw a lot of current from the mains transformers in integrations and this affects the purity of the DC going to the pre-amp and hence its sound quality. With its own dedicated transformer, a stand-alone pre-amp almost always has a more open, detailed and smoother character than that sharing case space with power transistors.

Flexibility also follows from doubling your component count. While some better integrations have

Pre-Amp Out/Power Amp In sockets for bi-amping, not all do. If you like a manufacturer's pre but not their power, you can mix and match to get exactly the sonic flavour you want as well. Finally, swapping interconnects to season the sound is also eminently practical with combos rather than solos.

A large chunk of the letters we receive on system upgrading revolve around where to go from a £400-£600 integration. So we've assembled a group of five pre/power competitors whose prices stretch from £650-£1500.

Cheapest are Technics' SU-C1000MkII battery-powered pre-amp and partnering SE-A1000MkII power. Then come Crimson Electric's new CS610C/CS620C pre and power at £875 the pair. Stepping just £50 over the £1000 line are the Bellini and Donizetti from Audio Analogue of Italy, whose Puccini SE has made a name for itself amongst integrations. At £1430 are Audiolab's stalwart 8000C pre and new 8000PX power, while a mere £120 higher we find Linn's Wakonda and LK100.

Take heart o ye who worship the LP, for all the pre-amps here support your favourite format with Moving Magnet and Moving Coil phono stages. All that remains is to read on and discover the prime pre and power.

THE TECHNOLOGY

Internally these amplifiers are solidly constructed and have neatly-laid out circuit boards. The Bellini pre-amplifier is Direct Coupled (ie, there are no capacitors in the signal path) and has no fewer than three Alema 50VA toroidal transformers. Two of these feed left and right channels while the third powers other functions such as standby operation and the protection circuits - quite an extravagance at this price.

The reservoir caps in both channels are custom-made by Kendell and total 18800uF. High-grade local decoupling caps come from Wima and Daewoo (yep, the car/ship building company). Volume adjustment is accomplished by the popular Alps Blue pot, leaving some snazzy looking Palazzo switches to take care of input and record selection. The phono stage can be configured for MC and MM cartridges by moving a pair of internal jumpers to set the gain of its selected NE5532 op amps.

The Donizetti power amp is another transformer feast, stuffed with three toroidals put to the same uses as those in the Bellini. In this case though, the rating is 200VA and the manufacturer PMM-Torex. Once again smoothing capacitors are by Kendell and run to 30000uF per channel.

SOUND QUALITY

This Audio Analogue combination faces competition on two fronts - from rival manufacturers and from within its own range. As regular readers will know, we've been using the Puccini SE from AA as a reference sub-£1000 integrated for many a month and nothing has managed to knock it off its perch thus far. This closely related pre/power combination comes in at just over the magic £1000 figure and has to be significantly better to justify its existence.

A preliminary listen while these amps were still running-in proved disappointing, not because the Bellini/Donizetti sounded technically bad but because the Puccini SE was more enjoyable to listen to. Yes, the Bellini and Donizetti were detailed and transparent but what they lacked was rhythm and funkiness.

Calls to the distributor UKD followed but the only advice forthcoming was to let the amps run in for longer, at least 100hrs with music flowing through them. After almost a week of non-stop 'speaker driving we were beginning to get worried. Then, almost overnight, things gelled and the AAs hit their stride.

In many ways the sound of the Donizetti and Bellini is as understated and elegant as their looks. It has bags of detail but this isn't thrust forward in an attempt to impress. Instead, it highlights the musicians' technique and expression, as a CD of Clannad in Concert proved. Though I didn't understand a word of what was being sung since it was in Gaelic, the beautiful acapella of 'Mhaire Bruineall' seduced me with those pure, sweet harmonies that Clannad are famous for.

The group's voices maintained their own identities and were rich in texture and natural warmth. All the hi-fi aspects of the sound such as tonal colour, sound staging and dynamics were in place but it was only the music that I noticed.

AUDIO ANALOGUE BELLINI PRE AND DONIZETTI POWER



These Italians didn't stop at detail and subtlety - they can get down and shake their 'thang' with the best as the *Serialement Votre CD* amply demonstrated. This album contains the cheesiest of theme tunes from famous '70s television series re-mixed in a '90s clubland stylee. Here the Audio Analogues thumped out heavyweight beats and reproduced rhythm with great dexterity. There's not much place for finesse in music like this but even here the Bellini and Donizetti managed to produce a cohesive, involving performance.

Another string to the pre-amp's bow is a very fine phono stage to suit Moving Magnet and Moving Coil cartridges. Plugging in Wilson Benesch's Full Circle turntable/arm/cartridge threesome, I was greeted by a substantial, full-bodied sound that lost very little to the line stages as regards transparency. Variations in musical style didn't matter - I played everything from Chopin to Lou Reed and wasn't disappointed by anything I heard.

If you seek a pre and power duo that invariably make music big, bold and exciting, look elsewhere. If you prefer electronics that replay music as the engineer heard it, have a listen here. For the Bellini and Donizetti don't 'improve' music, they only reproduce it.

Bellini £475
Donizetti £575

Audio Analogue
U.K.D.
23 Richings Way,
Iver,
Bucks. SL0 9DA
Tel: 01753 652669

*The alphabet according to
Musical Fidelity.*



X10D Class A
Tube Line Stage



X CANS Class A
Tube Headphone Amplifier



X DAC New Technology
HDCD DAC



XLP Low Noise
MC/MM Phone Stage



X PRE Class A
Tube Preamplifier



X PSU Add on Power Supply
for all X Series



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High Quality Tone Control

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15-17 OLYMPIC TRADING ESTATE,
FULTON ROAD, WOVEGATE, MIDDELTON, ESSEX HA9 0TF.
TELEPHONE 0181 900 2866.

THE TECHNOLOGY

Technics are certainly not averse to fitting specialist componentry to their amps - under the bonnet of the pre-amp nestle a couple of Silmic 25V 100uF caps alongside a 35V 1000uF X-Pro and a 25V 100uF Pureism.

If you choose mains operation there's a small R-core transformer to the left of the case leaving the centre to the rechargeable 9.6V 600mAh Nickel/Cadmium battery supply.

Inputs include an MM/MC phono stage, three line levels and two tape loops in addition to two sets of outputs for bi-amping. There are even balance and defeatable tone controls.

Making up the largest part of the power amp's 9.8kg mass is the mains transformer. This has been 'potted' in hard-setting resin to minimise mechanical noise. After the four high-power rectifier diodes comes a pair of Technics own Master Series Take II reservoir caps (63V at 22000uF) with bamboo, claimed to reduce internal vibration for a cleaner sound. Finally, one large, grey, heatsink-mounted 'BC Power Module' per channel does all the hard work controlling loudspeaker cones. Making bi-amping with another non-Technics power amp of different sensitivity easy are the direct and variable inputs.

SOUND QUALITY

Since we last looked at Technics' SU-C1000 pre and SU-C1000 power amps back in February 1997, they have moved with the times and now finds themselves in MkII form. What hasn't changed is the drawer full of Nickel/Cadmium rechargeable batteries that slips into the fascia and the attention-grabbing, if not exactly minimalist, power meters on the front of the power amp. These flicked to the right in time to the dancey basslines of Olive's Extra Virgin album and kept pulling my eyes back to them. I can also see lovers of the gadget-festooned going for the cooling fan on the back panel, even though that panel itself is about as rigid as cardboard (as we mentioned in the first review, build quality seems not to be too high on Technics' list of priorities).

At least the sound was more solidly hewn on Extra Virgin - bass was beefy, midrange clear and treble well-formed. Sound staging was good too for one of this group's cheaper contestants. Driving the Concert 8s (which the SE-A1000MkII managed without breaking into a sweat and twirling its fan) the Technics even succeeded in digging up a sense of acoustic on this processed synthesiser music which has a higher silicon content than a roomful of 'glamour' models.

The only areas where things started to get a bit saggy were the lower bass, which tends to the overabundant and loose, and a touch of hardness across the midrange and lower treble. A spell of interconnect swapping (Roksan HDC-01A, Kimber PBJ and DNM Reson) showed the Technics were colouring the sound rather than the cabling. Press the button marked Batt Operation though and things become perkier.

Bass notes tightened and separated, giving the music

TECHNICS SU-C1000MkII PRE AND SE-A1000MkII POWER



more bounce and rhythm while midrange and treble lost their wrinkles and smoothed out. On more wholesomely natural recordings acoustics opened up and were joined by greater expression and involvement.

An HDCD sampler disc (Vol2) from Reference Recordings spinning inside Pink Triangle's Litaural CD player provided proof of battery-power's superiority over the mains alternative. However, in spite of the NiCads there remained some smearing and grain on violins which could be tiring after an hour or two, as well as a certain tubbiness to the larger constituents of the string section. The original '1000 series pre and power fared better on these two points.

It's pretty unlikely that audiophiles of the black-disc persuasion will buy the SU-C1000MkII to get the most from their record collections but the switchable MM/MC stage is actually quite good. In common with the line stages imaging could be more precise and front-to-back perspectives deeper but the music didn't sound as if it had had all the life leached from it, as is often the case with built-in phono stages. Just watch out for the lack of a warp filter that will get the mid/bass cones of ported loudspeakers straining, if your records are warped

SU-C1000MkII £299.95
SE-A1000MkII £349.95

Technics
Panasonic (UK) Ltd
Panasonic House,
Willoughby Road,
Bracknell,
Berks.RG12 4PF
Tel: 01344 862444

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THE TECHNOLOGY

Crimson have decided not to depart from their traditional non-standard slim casework in the new pre and power. This means the two PCBs in the pre (one for the phono stage, which is user switchable between MM and MC, one for the line stages) are vertically mounted. All circuitry is discrete, the transistors standing alongside predominantly tantalum caps. The transformer is located in a wall-plug to keep hum low and feeds a small bridge rectifier and a pair of DNM's Slit-Foil reservoir caps (hefty 10000uF 50V types).

Within the cramped confines of the power amp the toroidal transformer is also vertically mounted and followed by another bridge rectifier and pair of 10000uF 50V Slit-Foils. Where many amps these days have bipolar transistors in the driver stage and FET output devices the Crimson reverses this order.

For your £800 spent on these two boxes (which aren't available separately), you get a free DNM Reson interconnect and mains lead as well as a five-pin-to-RCA adaptor for the DIN phono socket. There's an £800 trade-in on DNM's own more expensive components when you choose to upgrade too.

SOUND QUALITY

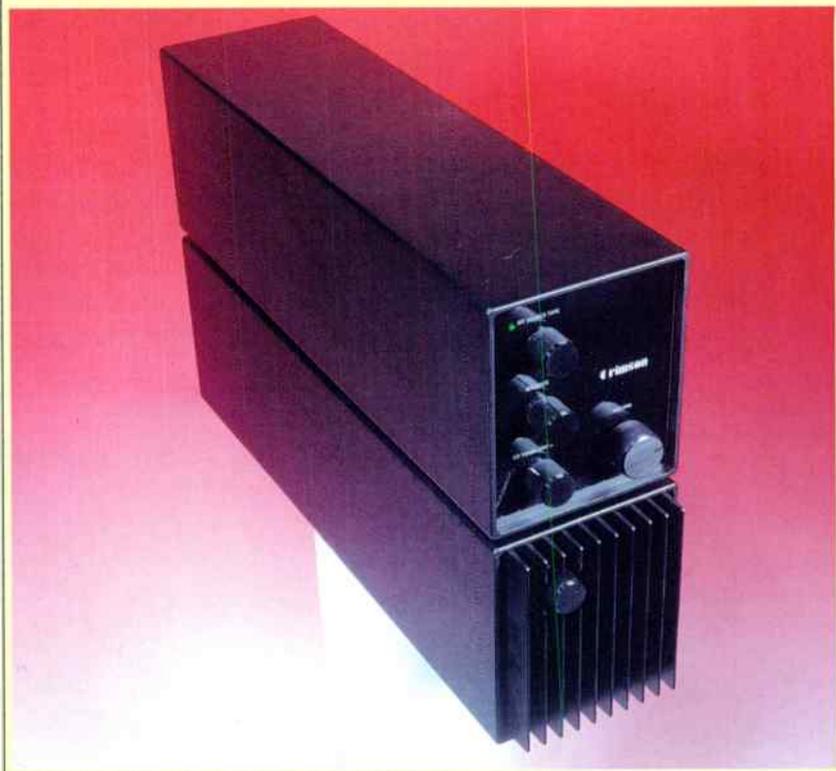
From the Crimsons' sleek looks you might think each black box with its wrap-around sleeve of brushed aluminium is hiding a single glass slipper belonging to one Miss Cinderella, but no. Rather giving the game away as to their true purpose in life are the gold-plated RCA sockets (six pairs on the pre - three line inputs, one tape loop and the outputs to the power amp), the control knobs and the heatsink on the front of the power amp. Slipper boxes also lack 50watts of 'speaker-driving ability and don't come with a free DNM interconnect and mains lead.

Linked to the Concert 8s the Crimsons proved there's little of the shoebox to their sound - music spread broad and deep between the 'speakers without doing so at the expense of focus. And where much footwear pinches in all the wrong places this pre and power never cramped the music flowing through them.

DNM, who distribute the Crimson range, say the combo has been balanced to work best with their interconnects (we tried a variety of alternatives and none worked as well) and mains lead, and they've obviously managed to get the synergy spot-on. Considering its price, this little package has a sweet tonality, stage depth and dynamics that are a real turn-up for the books. Nowhere was this more apparent than with well-produced Classical recordings - several of the HDCD variety had a storming impact and scale that gave them an adrenaline-rush excitement. All of which means the Crimsons offer more enjoyment to the audiophile than a whole cupboard full of mint Judy Garland slippers would to Imelda Marcos.

With a well-mannered input the Crimsons produce a similarly well-mannered output. But what happens when the signal entering the pre-amp is just a tad rougher around the edges, like a bit of Black Grape, for instance? Would the essence of the music still be there? Oh yes! 'Reverend Blake Grape' scorched along hotter and faster

CRIMSON ELECTRIC CS610C PRE AND CS620C POWER



than Thrust 2 nearing the speed of sound. Basslines were as unwashed, dirty and grungey as the day they were laid down in the studio and, even though the production has a sand-paper smoothness to it, the Crimsons for all their clarity didn't make the tunes unlistenable. There's more to music than speed and pace, so it was time to see how this pre/power would deal with the meditative rather than the manic.

With a mix of ethereal, down-tempo Pop (Maria McLachlan's Fumbling Towards Ecstasy) and Cesar Franck's Three Chorals the Crimsons' smoothness, tonal colour and dynamics scored again. The feeling of substance to the sound, whether it was to be found in cymbals or double-bass, gave the music convincing realism.

Unfortunately, that DIN-to-phono adaptor wasn't supplied in time for the phono stage to make it into this review, so a home demo is the best option for black discers. If it's as unfailingly rhythmic and engaging as the line stages, I can see the Crimson pre and power winning themselves a lot of friends.

CS610C and CS620C
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THE TECHNOLOGY

The two members of this combination are built into the customary Linn midi-sized casings. Internally both are extremely well finished and make extensive use of surface-mount components. The Wakonda runs on Linn's slimline and modestly-christened 'Brilliant' switch-mode power supply which, apart from claims of improved sound quality, makes for a lighter, more compact component.

Flexibility is another one of the aces that the pre-amp has up its sleeve with the ability to insert Linn's 'Sneaky' modules. At present you can add a Kudos tuner or Knekt multi-room options, and vinyl lovers are well looked after with an internally switchable MM/MC phono stage.

The LK100 power amp tips the scales a fair way thanks to a chunky custom-made toroidal mains transformer. All the audio circuits sit on a neat PCB where, in addition to the standard surface-mount resistors and caps, you'll see surface-mount regulators and transistors as well. An internal heatsink keeps the unit cool and tidy.

SOUND QUALITY

At over £1500 the Wakonda/LK100 combination is the most expensive twin-box on test here and in terms of physical presentation the two certainly look promising. The pre-amp features a full-function remote control which can operate all of Linn's products, the 'Sneaky' modules already mentioned, as well as some TVs and VCRs. Linn have tried to cover two bases with this pre/power pair, those of 'lifestyle' and serious hi-fi. It's a difficult balance to strike and many have failed in the past.

Linn are known for placing special emphasis on tune-playing ability in their hi-fi, so I started the Wakonda/LK100 off with some cool, easy Jazz in the form of 'Dooji Wooji' by Dick Hyman and the Swing All-Stars.

This piece needs an amplifier which has the rarely cohabiting talents of precision and fluidity to sound its best. The Wakonda and LK100, connected with Linn's own cables as well as a selection of others, gave a smooth, confident sound on this track because all of the various musical elements were well under control. The track's boppy swing was clearly portrayed, but strangely the expected rhythmic precision was lacking, making the piece sound a little loose and lazy. What didn't help matters was the Linns' rather sluggish approach to transients, which rounded off leading edges and slowed the pace.

None of the drawbacks above in themselves would pose a major problem. However, when taken together they cut quite a large slice out of the involvement from this Jazz piece. On the plus side, instruments were presented with a rare solidity and convincing presence, but for me these plus points didn't redress the aural balance.

Next I moved on to some Folk music by Clannad. Here the Linns impressed with their grain-free presentation. Sonically, this has been accomplished not by rolling off the top end or boosting upper-bass warmth

LINN WAKONDA PRE AND LK100 POWER



but by ensuring that there are no high-frequency nasties caused by the amplifier itself to spoil your enjoyment. Vocals and instruments stood out strongly against a velvet-quiet background, but the fine, intricate detailing that is normally clearly apparent with this recording was over-looked. Nuances such as the texturing of instruments and vocal inflections were veiled behind a faint haziness which robbed the music of some of its life and vitality.

Trying out the Wakonda's phono stage with the Wilson Benesch Full Circle I got a surprise - not only was there none of the signal degradation that generally afflicts onboard equalisers, but LPs actually sounded better than line-level sources. Detail retrieval was noticeably better, as were transient speed, dynamics and sound staging.

I have to say that I was rather disappointed by this combination. It's true that the Wakonda and LK100 are very well built and extremely versatile with their optional add-on modules and remote control. But in terms of sound quality at £1550 they have to be judged by the high standards set by others in this group, which they fail to meet.

Wakonda £900
LK100 £650
Linn Products Ltd
Floors Road,
Waterfoot,
Glasgow G76 0EP
Tel: 0141 307 7777

AUDIOLAB 8000C PRE AND 8000PX POWER



8000C **£580**
8000PX **£850**

Audiolab
Cambridge Systems
Technology Ltd
Spitfire Close,
Ermine Business Park,
Huntingdon,
Cambs. PE18 6XY
Tel: 01480 415600

THE TECHNOLOGY

The 8000C pre-amp may be a long-running design but it's been subject to continuous development over its lifetime. It takes its power from a 100VA Talema transformer which is followed by a single Elna 10000uF reservoir capacitor. The audio circuits are mounted on one, large Printed Circuit Board, the most obvious residents being the discrete transistors and Elna Starget capacitors.

The 8000C boasts a phono stage which is Moving Magnet/Moving Coil switchable by means of a button on the back panel. Where many volume potentiometers come from Alps the Audiolab's is a unit made by Noble. There are two tape loops and two outputs so flexibility is not a problem, and, if you're worried about the effect of tone controls in the signal path, there is also a defeat switch.

The 8000PX power amplifier is part of a new wave of Audiolab products, in this instance developed from the 8000P. The claimed 100watts per channel is delivered from fully symmetrical circuitry either side of the centrally-mounted 330VA transformer. This and the four Elna 10000uF reservoir capacitors are almost completely

covered by a metal shield thus reducing electromagnetic radiation.

The audio stages are once again fully discrete, with only a solitary TL071 op amp on each channel forming part of the DC-servo circuit of this direct-coupled amplifier.

SOUND QUALITY

The words 'plentiful' and 'power' were the first to pass through my mind as the opening bars of The Firebird Suite by Stravinsky emerged from the 8000C/PX. The speed at which bass transients were handled left an impression on me, as did the control and tautness possessed by instruments such as timpani and cellos.

Further up the frequency range it wasn't all good news, violins suffering from a slight shrill quality which wasn't helped by a brightish tonal balance. This didn't become too much of a problem in practice, but care would need to be taken with partnering equipment to make sure this isn't exacerbated.

The Audiolabs continued to win me over with their rendition of orchestral crescendos where grip and speed were the priorities once more. The broad sound stage width that characterises many an Audiolab amp cast the sound well beyond the outside edges of the Jamo Concert 8s' cabinets but left depth looking a little short-changed. More of a concern was the light bleaching of tonal colour which made instruments sound less realistic than they should have been.

Suspecting a change of mood might be called for, I put on 'Needed Time', an Eric Bibb track. This is heart-felt Blues at its best and the 8000C/PX made a good attempt at creating the right atmosphere. Eric's emotive vocals hung between the 'speakers alongside his acoustic guitar.

The easy flow of this number was nicely caught but rhythmically it wasn't as precise as I would have liked. In fact, the general presentation had a hint of the artificial to it, aspects like detail and dynamics emphasised at the expense of the musical message. Rather than listening to what Eric was singing my attention was constantly drawn to the mechanics of the sound. I know that there are some out there who like this approach but it tends not to be the kind of sound that encourages a lot of long listening sessions.

Giving the Litaural a rest I put the Wilson Benesch Full Circle turntable into action. Audiolab have always been recognised for very quiet, well-engineered phono stages and the one in the 8000C didn't let the side down. The fuller sound of the vinyl front end helped balance the Audiolab's cool nature and gave an enjoyable performance of Lou Reed's Transformer album. Trying something a little rougher, I ploughed Skunk Anansie's groove. On their Stoosh LP the power of these amps had no problem creating the right mood - a wall of sound leapt from the loudspeakers with Skin attempting to scream her way out of hers.

The 8000C/PX combination is for those who want a well-built pre/power which majors on detail and power. Their only weakness is that these qualities come ahead of musicality.

CONCLUSION

It could be argued that the price differences between these five pre/powers would turn out to be a major disadvantage for the cheaper combinations on test. In reality things didn't quite work out that way though. So, in the finest tradition of beauty contests, we'll announce the results in reverse order.

LINN-GERING

Last place goes to the most expensive combination, the Linn Wakonda/LK100. This came as a surprise to us all, for these are very well-finished and neatly-engineered components which are highly versatile and flexible in use. Unfortunately, in terms of musicality and involvement they came up short.

Linn place tune-playing ability right at the heart of their sonic philosophy but this was precisely where these amps fell down. Rhythmically they were imprecise and transients lacked speed, leading to a rendition that failed to grab and keep your attention. A change of interconnects and loudspeaker cables brought no change for the better. If the add-on tuner and multi-room facilities appeal then the Wakonda/LK100 are worth a look, but judged on a purely musical basis they fall short.

COMPETENT TECHNIQUE

The next level on the podium is occupied by the cheapest contestant, the Technics. The battery-powered SU-C1000 MkII pre and SE-A1000 MkII power were dropped in at the deep end here against some considerably more expensive competition and yet managed to survive with dignity.

This combination offered the convenience of a full-function remote control with a powerful, spacious sound. If Technics could manage to engineer a tauter bass and get rid of that touch of midrange grain which has crept in with the move from MkI to MkII, this pair would represent excellent value.

GIMME A 'C', A 'P' AND AN 'X'

Halfway to the top spot we find the 8000C pre and 8000PX power. With their bomb-proof casework these two are obviously built to last. The pre-amp, now fairly long in the tooth, is still sonically competitive and comes with balance and tone controls, which will swing the decision for some.

These amplifiers have a strikingly dynamic presentation which is backed up by sledgehammer bass. Even in terms of subtleties such as detail retrieval and sound staging they do well, so why didn't they finish higher up the ratings? Well, they're quite clinical at times (especially on orchestral string sections) and in the process lose some of the music's vital 'tingle factor'.

In this test two amplifiers stood out above the rest.

Both have their own individual physical and aural styles but accomplish that most difficult of feats, music making.

IT'S ELECTRIFYING

The Crimson Electric CS610C pre and CS620C power are the most idiosyncratic designs in the group. Built into two black, rectangular cases, they're hardly the best looking pair here. Go beyond the aesthetic and things get better - much better. Sonically they have it all - dynamics, vivid tonal colour and rhythm which could almost get the dead grooving.

Their £875 price tag makes them the second cheapest in the group, and bought as a package, includes interconnect and mains cable. And don't forget the generous trade-in offer should you decide to upgrade to DNM's own amps.



ARTFUL AUDIOPHILES

The contrast with the other winner couldn't be greater. The Audio Analogue Bellini and Donizetti are as smart and stylish as an Armani suit. Their construction inside and out shows the almost obsessive lengths Audio Analogue will go to to get good sound and good looks - witness the three separate power supplies in both the Donizetti and Bellini. It's hard to find any cut corners in the two.

These Italians sound powerful in an organic, natural manner. They may not quite match the Audiolabs and Crimsons for ultimate low-end grunt but with most 'speakers they'll happily produce clean, deep bass. The midrange and treble are both free from transistor hardness and there's a spaciousness and transparency to the sound stage that many more expensive pre/powers struggle to come up with ●

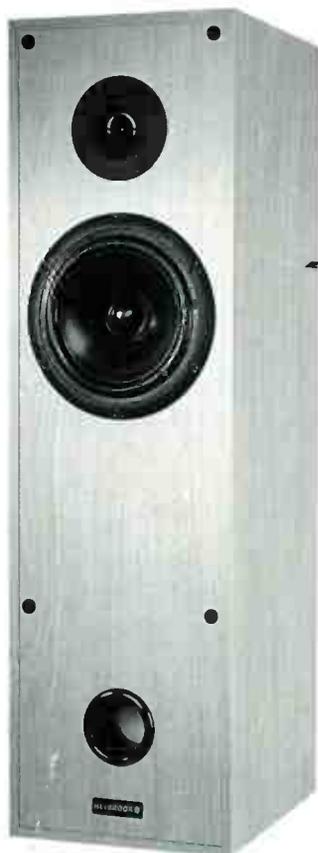
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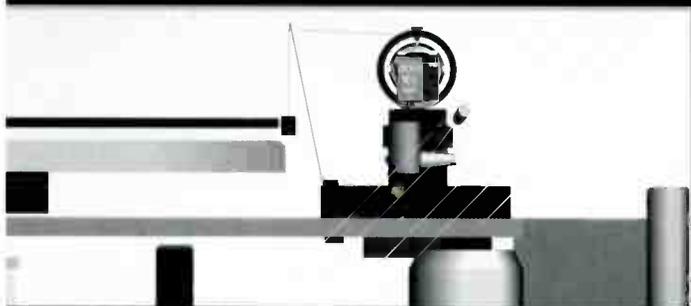
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READER'S SYSTEM

From Reggae sound systems to colour televisions, Rey Brown has taken an unusual route to hi-fi nirvana as Ketan Bharadia found.

A chilly winter morning in Maida Vale isn't the most auspicious start for a journey to the furthest corners of scenic North London but a letter from World reader and dedicated DIYer Rey Brown convinced me the trip would be worthwhile.

KETAN BHARADIA: This is quite an impressive set-up you have here but how did it all start?

REY BROWN: The passion for music goes back to my childhood - it's always been around me for as long as I can remember. As for the electronics side, my father has told me that when I was five or six he had to constantly stop me from getting into the back of the old Blaupunkt radiogram we had. Apparently the times that I succeeded it had to be sent away for repairs!

KB: So apart from wrecking the family stereo how did your interest develop?

RB: At about 13, I was growing up around older guys who were into Reggae sound systems. This is when I first saw valve PA power amps because transistors weren't widely used then. At the same sort of time my father bought me an 'Electricity Kit', the ones which teach children about electricity. But I wasn't satisfied because it had spring-loaded connectors and you didn't get a soldering iron. So I got hold of an iron and bugged the whole thing up.

KB: Did you go on to study electronics?

RB: Yes, I went on to do a City And Guild's in Electronics and became an apprentice at Rediffusion where I learned to repair TVs. In fact most of the TVs in those days were valve

black and whites with only a few colour sets.

KB: Did working at Rediffusion help with your interest in sound systems?

RB: Yes, a lot of what I learned I put to use making my own components. I was about 18 and going round to parties which had these huge sound systems using massive valve amps and this gave me the idea to build my own valve power amp. But I didn't start small. Instead I went for a 400watt power amp using ten KT88s.

Eventually it worked but it took a while to solve all its problems, namely burning out valves and blowing fuses. There was excessive hum too but with advice from Chris Petri of Zeta Windings, Barry Knight, who went on to design for Bill Beard and a bit of development, I got it working properly.

KB: Do you still have the amplifier?

RB: No, once I got it working and started using it, I realised that it was simply too big and powerful to use at



The JBL L220 'speakers sit on concrete slabs to improve the bass. On the shelves to the right are a Pink Triangle PT TOO with battery PSU, Pip I pre-amp (unused), Rey's own pre-amp, a JVC cassette deck, Rey's own power amp and matching separate power supply.

home and subsequently ended up loaning it to a friend with a sound system.

KB: What other designs did you build afterwards?

RB: I built a Leak Varislope III pre-amp in 1974, at the time transistors started coming in in a big way. I stuck to valve power amps but built transistor pre-amps. Three years later cash shortage problems caused me to take a break from building equipment and I didn't do anything for a couple of years. When I re-started I decided not to use valves because they were seen as archaic at the time and built a couple of transistor amps instead. These were pretty powerful at 120watts per channel and had really tight, deep bass. I used these until about 1990.

KB: Over the years have you used anyone else's amps?

RB: No, they've always been my own. With the knowledge I've gained I can tailor the sound to my preferences rather than someone else's. And the commercial amplifiers I wanted cost in the thousands so I could never afford them. The amps I constructed may have had some problems initially but once these were sorted out I kept them for years.

KB: So what came next?

RB: In 1984 I'd had enough of TV repairs as I felt I wasn't learning anything new. So I decided to leave and did a degree in Information Studies.

KB: What rekindled your interest in hi-fi?

RB: In about 1991 I started buying Hi-Fi World because it was different and talked about valves. A couple of my friends had good systems consisting of Pink Triangles, Koetsus and EAR amplifiers. I listened to these and loved the sound but simply couldn't afford them.

It wasn't until I passed a shop in Kentish Town called Vinyl Tube Audio that my enthusiasm was truly sparked. I couldn't believe it, it was an Aladdin's cave of turntables, valve amps and 'speakers. I managed to get a Beard BB100 integrated on loan and listened to it every day.

Taking a look inside I found they used what was essentially a GEC circuit and I wasn't willing to pay £500 for something I could make myself. So I decided to research electronics again because I'd become rusty.

For six months I went to the British Library and studied all the Wireless Worlds from 1955-65 and basically redesigned one of my old amps. I bought gold-plated valve bases and the solid-core signal wire is pure silver,

purchased direct from a bullion dealer and sleeved by myself. The high-tension lines are silver-plated copper and all resistors are 1% metal films from Maplins.

The original capacitors were standard polypropylenes but I found them a bit

bright in the treble and upper midrange so I swapped them for Ansar Supersound caps and found the sound became smoother and a lot more open.

KB: We've found the same thing ourselves when testing out varieties of coupling capacitors.

RB: Good caps give so much more clarity without any edginess in the treble. So they're all Ansars now. Then I read your article about Sanyo Os-Cons and decided to try those as well. I put them in the global feedback loop of the first common-cathode valve input stage and this improved bass, which got much deeper and better defined and the sound stage became more spacious.

Some of the resistors were then changed to Holcos - I would like to have used Vishays but couldn't afford them. The Holcos helped by smoothing out the sound. On this particular design I've put the power supply on a separate chassis.

KB: What was the reasoning behind that decision?

RB: Doing things this way means the mains transformer doesn't inject hum and vibration into the audio circuits. It also makes modifying that much easier.

I've updated and modified this amp over the last eight years and it has only broken down once, and that was because of an incorrectly-positioned low-wattage resistor in the output stage which blew.

I originally used KT88s and got around 100watts per channel flat out but now I use General Electric 6550As because I feel they are better quality. These are biased into Class A for the first 30watts and will go up to about 60watts in Class A/B.

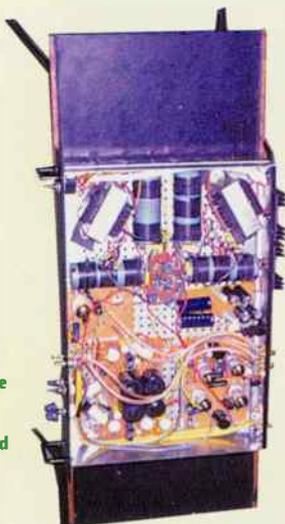
KB: You mentioned that you'd built pre-amps too.

RB: Those have turned out to be the most difficult for me to build. The trouble was keeping hum levels down and trying to find a circuit that I felt was up to date. The only circuits I knew at the time used EF86s and I didn't want to go that route because pentodes are never as linear or quiet as triodes.

Looking round I found a book by David Manley on



Rey Brown, thermionic hi-fi buff.



Inside Rey's power amp are audiophile components including Ansar Supersound coupling caps, Sanyo Os-Cons and pure silver cabling.

his range of VTL (Vacuum Tube Logic) amplifiers. Most of the designs are standard push-pulls - he claims the special ingredient is the transformer design. Of the pre-amp circuits printed I built the one called Ultimate, using 1% resistors, Ansar caps, silver wire and Sfernice potentiometers. Once finished, I initially had problems with the R.I.A.A. network; I couldn't use the one he'd calculated as the values weren't given, so I decided to use a different one. It eventually worked though and sounded pretty decent.

Unfortunately this pre had a bit of an accident later on. While I was modifying it in the kitchen, it fell off the table and as I tried to move away I trod on it. I didn't bother refurbishing the phono stage since I'd heard the EAR 834P and been very impressed by it.

KB: Which design did you go for then?

RB: I tried the phono stage of the World Audio Design KLPP1. Originally I partnered this with the VTL line stage, but last week I replaced that with the one from KLPP1.

Where before I'd chosen ECC83/81 valves I now use ECC88s which are Mullard originals. I'm quite happy with the sound.

KB: If you've gone the valve route, why did you pick up a Pink Triangle Pip I pre-amp?

RB: I only use it as a back-up to my pre, as to me the valve one sounds better in my system.

KB: Is that a PT TOO turntable with an Anniversary battery pack sitting on your shelf?

RB: Yes. What happened was a friend of mine who upgraded to an Anniversary sold the deck to me. The Pink Triangle replaced a Heybrook TT2 which I'd had for 10 years. In fact the Ittok LVII I have on the Pink was originally used with an Audio Technica OC3 on the Heybrook.

The battery power supply for the PT TOO had been damaged whilst in storage but when my friend went to Pink Triangle to get it repaired he was told that the parts were no longer available. After much head-scratching Pink did say it would be possible to fit an Anniversary motor and battery pack to it, which they duly did. The Koetsu cartridge was bought second-hand for £400 after it had been re-tipped by van den Hul since I'd been after one for years.

KB: I can't help but notice your rather large loudspeakers. Who were they made by?

RB: The 'speakers are JBL L220s. I've had them since 1980. What happened was that I had a pair of L150s and was using them with my 400watt valve power amp. One of the drivers got damaged so I took the 'speakers back to the shop where I'd bought them for repair. In the window were these awesome looking L220s and they were going for £600 because one cabinet had a cracked edge. I think the original price at the time was around £2700. They've always given me great service and have only recently

needed to be re-coned.

They were very sensitive for the day, and still are by modern standards at 90dB. The bass is handled by a 14in. woofer with a 15in. passive radiator. The 5in. midrange cone is hidden behind that diffuser and the tweeter is deep inside a 5in. aluminium casting so I'm not sure what type it is.

KB: And have they remained unmodified?

RB: No, about three years ago I rewired them with some vdH CS 122 cable which made a big difference. It was quite an involved job as the crossovers are pretty complex.

KB: I notice you've got paving slabs under the 'speakers and power supply for the power amp. We've found this really improves the sound in terms of bass weight and definition.

RB: Mmm. I've had the same results.

KB: I see you don't have a CD player.

RB: Well, actually I do. It's a little portable which I use on the move but I only have 10 or 12 CDs compared to hundreds of records and, to be honest, I don't like the sound of CDs - I still find them sterile and a little harsh compared to a good record deck. I've heard quite expensive players such as PT's two-box combination which is around £3000 but none has really appealed.

KB: What would you like to upgrade in your system?

RB: Well at some point in the future I'd like to upgrade the arm to an SME V but that's a way off. Apart from that I'm pretty happy with the front end and the set-up in general.

With that we settled back to enjoy Rey's system and its smooth, sumptuous sound underpinned by some of the deepest, tautest bass I've ever heard. I can see why he's happy with the hi-fi he's bought and built ●



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GLOWING



Jon Marks cues up his favourite LPs with Sonic Frontiers' £2000 Phono 1 phono stage.

Valves and vinyl were partners in the first real hi-fi systems audiophiles assembled back in the 1950s and 1960s. Four decades later, at a time when solid-state rules almost supreme, we find that they can still make perfect partners with the likes of Sonic Frontiers' Phono 1 phono stage.

CRACKING THE COMBINATION

There is some concession to the passing of the years though, as the Phono 1 contains the best of both amplification worlds, 6922 dual-triodes serving alongside younger J-FETs. Sonic Frontiers explain the rationale behind this latter choice of device in the accompanying manual: "it was realised that noise would be the final barrier to the finished product's performance."

The semiconductor input isn't the sole anti-noise measure. Others include careful layout of ground planes, elastomer mounts for the main PCB, a potted toroidal mains

transformer shielded with silicone steel and specially-selected resistors and capacitors.

Sonic Frontiers' hi-fi tends to look inside like an Aladdin's cave of passive components and the Phono 1 doesn't buck that trend. Large, white MIT MultiCap and smaller, grey Solen capacitors stand out against the green circuit board which also bears Roderstein, Vishay and Mills resistors in critical areas. Input and output signals are linked to the expensive gold-plated RCA sockets via Kimber Kable silver and solid-core copper wiring.

FLEXIBLE PHONO

There's no point lashing out two grand on a phono stage, if it can't be configured to match the needle of your dreams. So SF have thoughtfully provided two rows of switches on the back panel which offer a range of input impedances and capacitances (10ohm, 100ohm, 1kohm and 10kohm in addition to the standard 47.5kohm, 47pF twice and 100pF twice on top of the

standard 10pF). One nice touch is the two empty switch positions which allow you to solder in your own loading components, if your cartridge requires unusual values to give its best.

And that's not all for the flexibility roster. While our measurements show that the Phono 1 will take the signal from most MMs without overload problems, its gain can be factory adjusted up (to 62dB for very low-output MCs) or down (to 44dB in case of MMs with high outputs) by the factory or a dealer.

To settle the Phono 1 into the groove, it was left running for 10 days non-stop, since the distributors Picture The Sound say it needs at the very least 100hrs to break in. It was then hooked up to a system where Wilson Benesch's Circle turntable, 0.5 carbon-fibre arm and Matrix MC atop Elemental Audio's Monoplinth platform made up the source. Amplification was carried out by Chord's CPA 1800 pre-amp and SPM 400 power amp (linked

GROOVES

with Purist Audio Design and van den Hul interconnects), Jamo's Concert 8 stand mounters, Elemental Audio's loudspeaker stands and van den Hul's Revelation Hybrid loudspeaker cable rounded out the ensemble.

MUSIC, MAESTRO

One slab of the ole black stuff which had come across particularly well on the Circle in its review last month was Joan Armatrading's eponymous LP. It wasn't sounding in the least shabby on this occasion either.

Many components that rely on valves, especially phono stages, can come unstuck with a lower bass whose rich warmth smothers pace and drive. While the Phono 1 has the customary valve virtues of genuinely full-range tonal colour and a midband and treble as lacking in roughness as a Teflon-plated ice rink, it avoided potential thermionic pitfalls with a focused, pungent electric bass that propelled 'Like Fire' along with unremitting funkiness.

One particular area where the Chords really let the Sonic Frontiers sing was vocals. Not only were they solidly and securely-imagined at centre stage, they also had the sort of knee-wobbling seductiveness that I've rarely heard from any turntable working into a box of purely silicone tricks. Aiding and abetting was the way the Phono 1 didn't gloss over detail, a shortfall that can hamstring valve gear which takes the silky smooth approach too far.

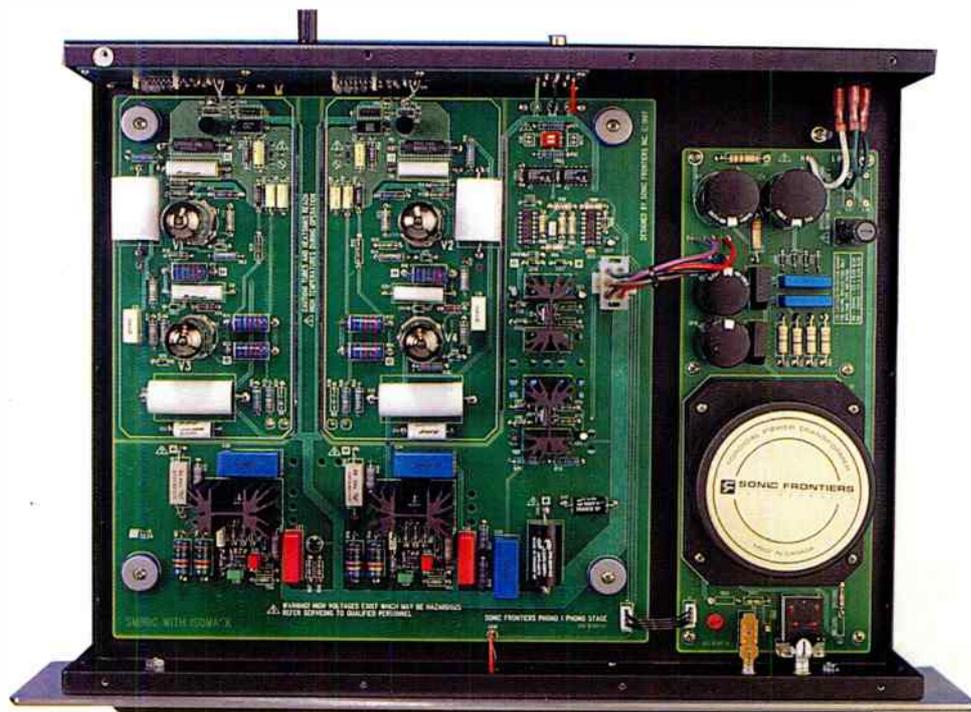
It was smiles all around on Heaven 17's How Men Are album too. Single-ended valve power amps seem to fit roughly into two sonic groups - that which often, but not always, characterises the 300B ("any sound you like as long as it's relaxed and creamy") and that of the 211/845 ("we do punch and grunt as well as smooth"). The same goes for pre-amps, where I have to say I prefer the latter flavour. So do SF obviously, judging from the flat overall tonal balance, crisp detail

and crystal transparency of this equaliser.

The drum-machine bass notes of How Men Are lost none of their slam and extension to the J-FETs and 6922s. Hi-hats were crisp and dynamic, as were vocals, which imaged as precisely as they had with Joan Armatrading's crooning.

Classical music carried on mining the same vein. Crescendos stood out for their power and impact. Many phono stages lose their grip on the music at these dramatic moments, letting rip with harsh treble and unsteady bass. Alternatively, playing the safety card, they round off the climactic peaks to give a mildly compressed rendition. The Phono 1 did neither, swinging right from the quietest instrumental whispers up to whole-orchestra blasts with ease.

On massed strings the Sonic Frontiers refused to be tempted into adding a shrill edge to the signal, instead recovering the instruments' harmonics unalloyed. The spread of the players in the acoustic turned out to be a forte as well, with the rear of the orchestra set against the back wall of our listening room almost at opera-glass distance.



THREE STEPS TO HEAVEN

£2000 may be a rather large sum of money to shell out on a phono stage, but this Sonic Frontiers combines that triplet of attributes guaranteed to bring a gleam to any music-lover's eye.

Number one is the open-door policy it operates towards software - it doesn't matter what you listen to, the Phono 1 stays discreetly out of the way of the disc's content and let's it speak for itself.

Number two, vital but frequently overlooked by manufacturers, is material pride of purchase. Under the lid of this box you'll find some very expensive bits and pieces, not just a handful of penny parts. Like the company's other products, the Phono 1 has an air of class about it that distinctly fails to waft from the bulk of hi-fi.

Number three is flexibility. You'd have a hard time tracking down a cartridge the SF can't work hand in glove with, which means any future front-end upgrades are covered. All in all, it looks like Sonic Frontiers have another success on their hands with the Phono 1 ●

Sonic Frontiers Phono 1
£2000

Picture The Sound
13 Weston Road,
Guildford,
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WORLD VERDICT



Expensive, yes, overpriced, no. The Phono 1 is a superb all-round phono stage.

Measured Performance
see p111

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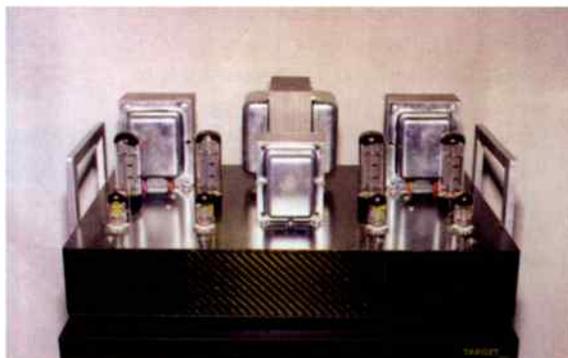
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If it's heavy, then it's expensive. Thus runs the adage and very apt it is too for Sony's latest technical tour de force in MiniDisc, the MDS-JA50ES. The name may be instantly forgettable but the last two letters, 'ES', count for something. They identify the JA50 as a member of Sony's high-end reference equipment club. Hence, as well as the plethora of editing features MiniDisc usually brings, there's a whole stack of extra technical wizardry inside their latest machine. The 'JA50ES may be expensive, but when you consider what you get it actually looks like good value.

PROCESSING POWER

At this player's heart lies the latest 4.5 version of the ATRAC processing chip. By employing what Sony call Adaptive High-Frequency Control this IC helps alleviate the worst effects of the data compression necessary to cram 74mins of music onto such a small disc. Apparently, the algorithms of A.H.F.C. can allocate more of the available data space to higher frequencies than previous ATRAC chips when called for by the content of the input signal, giving smoother, more natural upper octaves. The ATRAC processor itself is supported by a D/A convertor which claims 20-bit resolution.

There's a couple of other features onboard the MDS-JA50ES that you won't find on other MD machinery - the digital level control, non-clip circuit and what Sony call a "Variable Coefficient (VC) Digital Filter".

You'd have thought that a digital recording level control would be about as relevant as a driving holiday in Gibraltar, but there is logic here. CDs can vary quite widely in their recording levels, so the Sony gives you the chance to equalise them. In case you get a bit carried away here and bash the record meters into the red, there's a non-clip circuit. This automatically adjusts the level downwards to prevent overload and the nasty distortion it produces. For those of us who can trust ourselves with level-setting, this circuit is defeatable.

Finally there's that VC digital

The MIGHT of MINIDISC

£1300 for Sony's new MDS-JA50ES flagship MiniDisc player?
Yes please, says Dominic Todd.



filter. This offers four different sonic characters from two filters, cascade and direct eight-fold, together with sharp plus slow roll-off rates. I found the best results came from the standard arrangement, as did Leo Lam with Sony's £500 CDP-X3000ES CD player in last month's issue.

LIFTING THE LID

Peek inside and the care Sony has

taken with this player is sure to impress. There's a liberal scattering of Elna capacitors and two beefy R-Core power transformers.

On the mechanical side you'll find a floating disc mechanism mounted on insulators and coil springs in a bid to cut out detrimental external vibrations. Underlying all of this is a rigid frame-beam chassis.

A lot of effort has been put into

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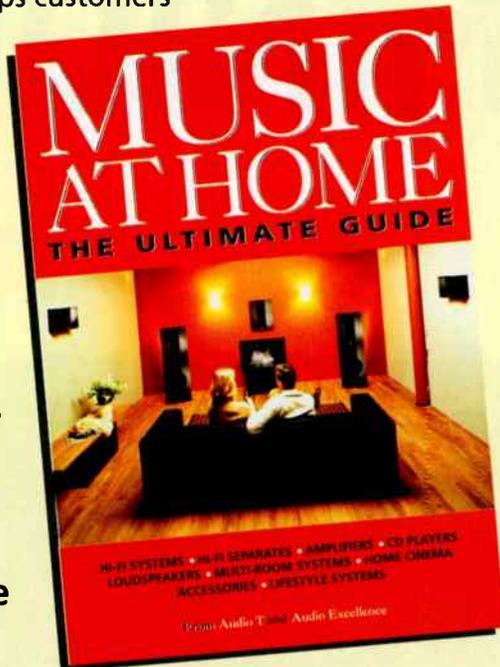
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the construction of the casing too. The front panel is formed from an alloy of brass, aluminium and steel, each of which is effective in quelling resonance at particular frequencies. The top-plate is double-thickness steel and the side cheeks sandwich foam damping material between inner and outer sections.

Unfortunately, for all its state-of-the-art electronics and build, the Sony manages to look exactly like one of the company's rather staid CD players circa 1987. Mind you, if it sounds as good as the technical spec would have us believe, then this will pale into insignificance.

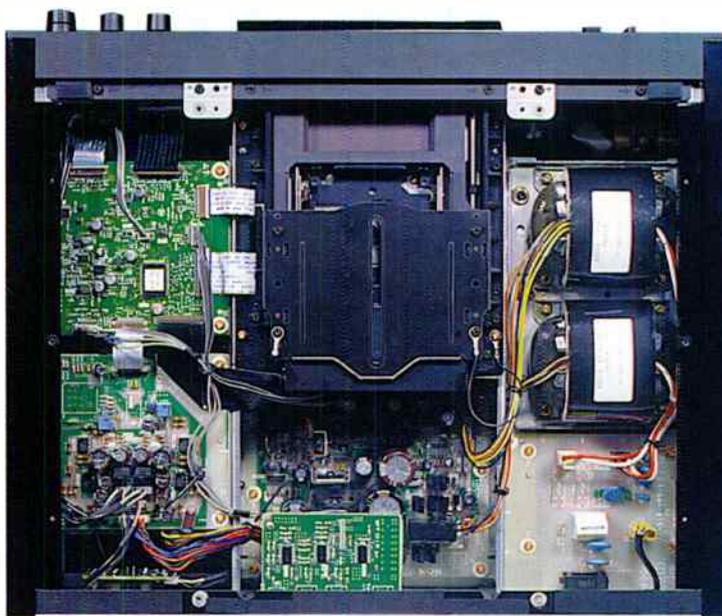
RECORDINGS ANALOGUE...

When recording with the 'JA50ES, I tested both the digital and analogue inputs. Blank MDs came from opposite ends of the price spectrum with a Sony ES at £6.99 and a Fuji at £3.95. I also had a £300 Sony MDS-JE510 MD recorder to hand for comparison.

The first recording I made through the analogue inputs onto the ES disc was of Donald Byrd's 'Dominoes'. The fidelity to the original was striking. The dynamic range remained intact, with an especially attractive bass performance; it was taut, accurate and extended.

Picking the nits, you could cite a very slight softening of the lowest frequencies, but it would take an extremely analytical system for this to become obvious. Likewise, while the treble remained detailed and well integrated, violins took on a slightly steely edge at high frequencies.

Switching to the Fuji disc exacerbated this problem. Again, playing the dynamic card I had recorded a version of Shirley Bassey and 'Light My Fire' (of The Doors fame) with its full orchestral backing. Returning to the ES disc brought about a worthwhile improvement. Vocals were firmly rooted in the centre of the sound stage with the orchestra arrayed behind them, as with the original. Timbre was bang on, and the layering and separation of instruments superb - it was an



The MDS-JA50ES's transport is much beefier than most MD recorders'. It's also more complex, with its CD-style loading tray. To its left, surface-mount components cover the green PCBs.

expansive (indeed, you could say expensive) sound stage that the Sony effortlessly whisked up. To realise this potential I really would recommend you use the best discs you can afford with a machine such as this.

... AND DIGITAL

The Sony rustled up equally satisfying sounds via its digital input with Finlay Quaye's 'Even After All'. It maintained a tight grip upon a bassline that often has lesser decks floundering. And the vocals, which can prove tricky, had none of the added sibilance which shows up some recorders' less-than-adequate electronics.

Danny Thompson's 'Africa' saw the Sony continue its sonic roll with an atmospheric rendition of this Latin-flavoured number and its warm, fruity double-bass. The way difficult rhythms were carried off with ease and the music enjoyed all its colour and vitality had my ears happily pinned to the 'speakers. The performance was extremely cohesive which, as the 'JA50ES had demonstrated earlier, made for a feeling of effortless replay confidence.

Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, performed by The Vienna Philharmonic, was the Sony's next course. The sound stage was deep although width was a mite

constricted, possibly due to the slight lack of space around instruments at higher frequencies. Other than that, the presence and weight of the original were present in full.

The MDS-JA50ES is, in a nutshell, a 'serious bit of kit'. The build is outstanding - far better than it need be, even at this price. Then there's the superb quality of the components inside the casework. On top of that, the Sony is a joy to use. Editing is a piece of cake, with all the features you could ever possibly need, right down to the separate digital record level control. It's just a shame it looks so boring; at least the sound is anything but.

Composed yet exhilarating, the Sony really does lend itself to all types of music. The treble could be a touch more open, but apart from this there's very little to fault with the MDS-JA50ES. Make a recording from an expensive CD player or record deck, replay it and it sounds just like an expensive CD player or record deck.

It seems as though the battle between MiniDisc and CD-Recordable is far from over. Philips may have trumped mid-price MiniDisc players with their CDR 870 but the 'JA50ES shows just how good MiniDisc can get when a big multi-national gets serious. Let battle commence ●

Sony MDS-JA50ES

£1299.99

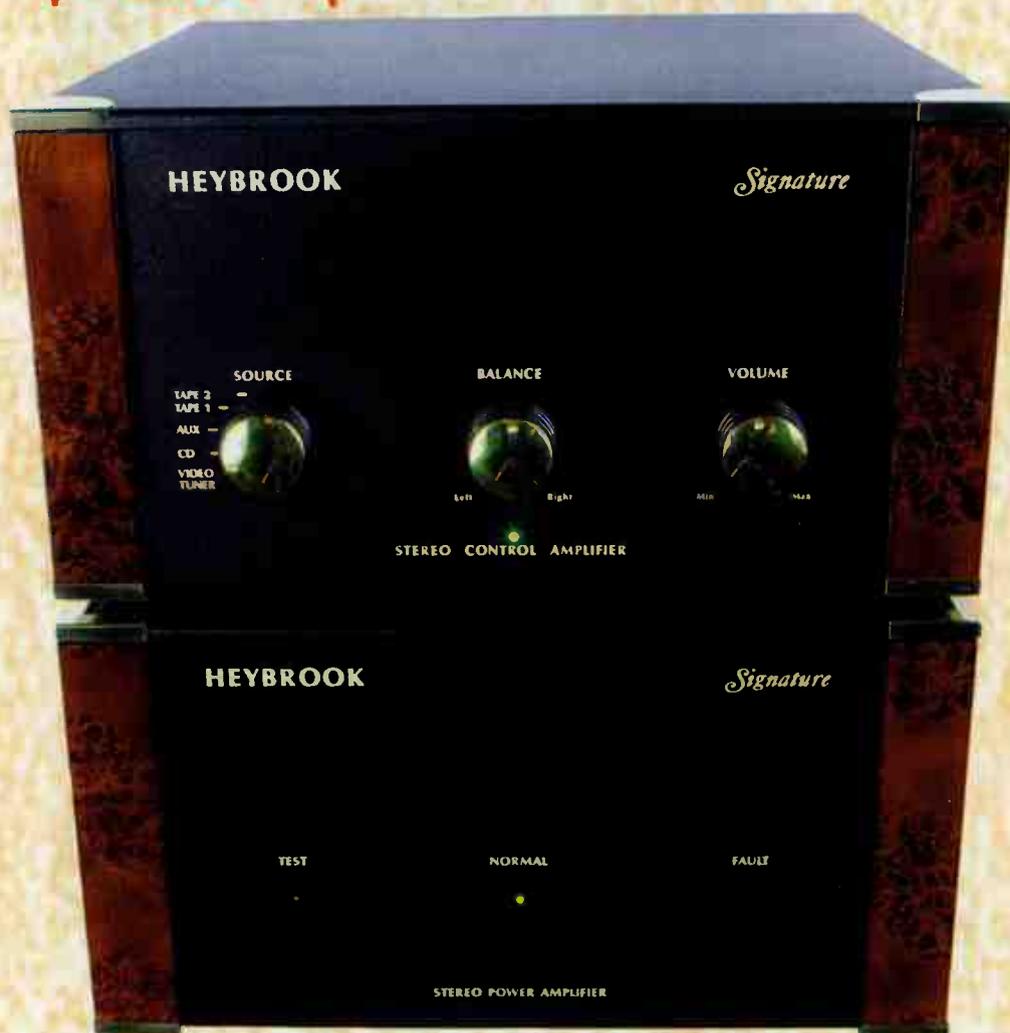
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WORLD VERDICT



At £1300 the Sony isn't cheap but for the sound on offer it isn't expensive either.

WIN HEYBROOK'S £1600 SIGNATURE II PRE AND POWER AMPS



One lucky winner this month will become the proud owner of Heybrook's Signature II pre and power amplifiers.

Heybrook are celebrating their 20th year of building hi-fi by offering the Signature II Stereo Control Amplifier and Stereo Power Amplifier (reviewed together in last May's Hi-Fi World) as this month's prize.

The company started life back in 1978 making loudspeakers in their works overlooking Heybrook Bay in Devon. The first arrival, the compact HB2, was followed by the near-legendary HB1 which survives to this day in its third incarnation and later the be-ribboned Sextet.

Amplification was added to loudspeakers in 1991 with the appearance of the four-box Signature series pre and power. Styled in black with rich Birdseye Maple trim, they matched the

Sextet's wood-veneer finish. Now there's the revised Signature II series of electronics, consisting of a line-level pre-amplifier with six inputs, a 100watt power amplifier and a one-box CD player using Burr-Brown hybrid convertors.

Ketan Bharadia found the amplifiers had that enviable ability to pick out detail and present it in a natural and unforced manner. Listening to Wagner's Traume he discovered, "a fine sense of scale which complemented an unforced presentation of detail, while violin, often sounding flat and dull, was reproduced with colour and life".

"Where the Signature IIs impressed me particularly," wrote Jon Marks, "was with their handling of piano. The instrument's upper registers were free of the oft-heard transistor graininess,

sounding instead smooth and coherent." With more up-tempo music the Heybrooks showed they could also deliver power with control (Noel's test of the power amplifier showed Heybrook's rating of 100watts into 8ohms to be conservative - he measured 136watts into 8ohms, and a 'speaking-frying 210watts into 4ohms).

With John Lee Hooker's 'Boom Boom', "cymbals and guitar had power without harshness, and timing was appealingly precise, helping the Signatures to relay the funkiness of this CD. With the Heybrooks, there was true life and drive."

The £555 Signature II pre-amplifier offers six inputs for line-level sources, including two tape loops, with three main outputs to the power amplifier: a Direct Out for use with short interconnects and two buffered outputs for longer cable runs. The volume potentiometer has been kept out of the signal path to the benefit of sound quality; in this case it controls gain by varying the amount of feedback.

The £1045 Signature II power amp is a low-distortion, wide-bandwidth design weighing in at 10kgs. The heatsinking is

concealed within the casework where it was exposed on the previous version. The class AB output stage uses DC servo control to reduce DC offset at the 'speaker terminals and also monitors the output for dangerous loads. Its ample reserves of power mean it will happily partner most loudspeakers without running out of steam.

If you'd like to be in the running to win this duo, just answer the questions opposite and complete the tie breaker. Send in the entry form on the back of a sealed envelope or post card to reach us before April 2nd to:

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

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

COMPETITION ENTRY QUESTIONS

- 1) What was Heybrook's first loudspeaker design called?
A. HB1 B. HB2 C. Sextet D. Octet
- 2) How many line-level inputs does the Signature II pre-amp have?
A. 1 B. 10 C. 6 D. 0
- 3) How much does the Signature II power amplifier cost?
A. £1500 B. £1045 C. £2000 D. £750
- 4) What class does the Signature II power amp's output stage work in?
A. Pure class A B. Class AB
C. Class D D. Class of '88
- 5) This year Heybrook are celebrating 20 years of what?
A. Life with the Cornish pixies B. Hi-fi manufacturing
C. Baking bread D. Making hay

TIE BREAKER (obligatory)

Complete the following in less than 30 words
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With one box for pre and one for power,
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COMPETITION WINNER

FEBRUARY ISSUE COMPETITION

We were calling all digiphiles in February with Pink Triangle's £2100 Litaural CD player as a prize. Taking home the PT will be

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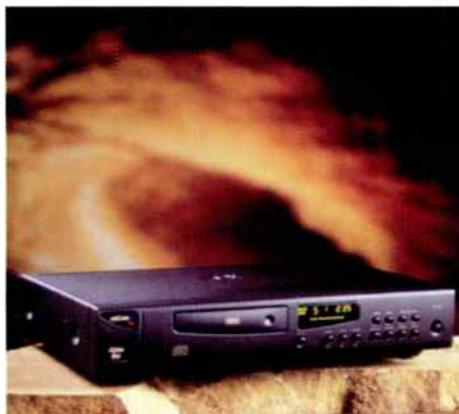
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GETTING Ahead

Andrew Harrison investigates Aiwa's £150 AD-F850 three-head cassette deck.

Given the specification of this deck, and then the price, I found myself doing a double-take. Less than £150 for a three-head, dual-capstan cassette recorder? But yes, that is the enviable niche this Aiwa AD-F850 fills. Time was when, as a fiscally-deficient student, I was forever scouting the classifieds for a successor to my smoked Teac - the acceptance criteria being great sound, a stable mechanism, off-tape monitoring and discreet looks. And this Aiwa might have been The One, if it had been an option at the time.

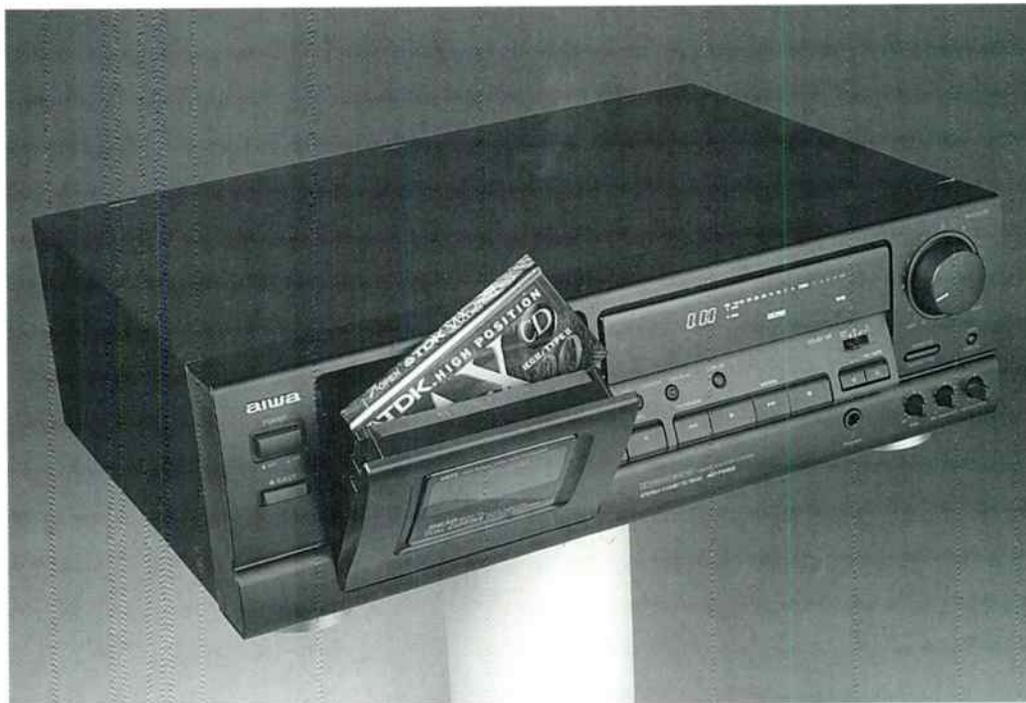
Performance-oriented features this machine can usefully boast include the dual-capstan transport for improved pitch stability; three separate heads for erase, playback and recording; bias tuning for tape matching; and Dolby HX Pro to extend high frequency headroom.

When recording, you'll find that the peak level meters light up to 16 segments a channel (although, typical of 99% of all decks, the 'minus infinity' LED is constantly lit). The entire display can even be switched off. (Purists may like to note that sound quality remained indifferent to the state of illumination).

To keep the vipers at bay, Dolby B and C noise-reduction systems are fitted, as is an MPX filter. I was also pleased to discover a tape counter running in minutes and seconds. Alas, this 'linear counter' is a kind of pseudo-real-time counter which only approximates elapsed playing times. More useful perhaps was a music search facility, an almost compulsory feature for analogue tape in a digital age.

SOUNDING OFF

On pre-recorded tapes the AD-F850 was accomplished. It may not have been as master tape-ish as a high-end machine, but clear, smooth musical renditions were the order of



the day.

Lesley Garrett soared above the Philharmonia Orchestra on her Prima Donna album, only an occasional climax causing her to lose her way. Then again, on my reference Nakamichi CR4 the same peaks are only just cleared without troubling the ear doctor.

One of my most treasured pre-recordeds, Kyung Wha Chung's 1972 performance of Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto, suffered from a reduced sound stage behind a less articulate solo violin, but this is a minor criticism of an otherwise worthy replaying.

FOR THE RECORD

Recordings made on chrome and metal tapes (Sony Metal ES, Maxell UDII Chrome) were exemplary on the Aiwa and obviously benefited from the manual bias current and record level sensitivity adjustments. A softening of cymbal harmonics was one indication of whether source or tape was being monitored.

Thanks to the HX Pro, Ferrics too proved quite extended after a little

tuning. The instruction manual even lists over 70 different tape types with guidelines on necessary bias levels. This kind of tweakability shows the AD-F850's potential as an enthusiast's machine - it rewards attention to fine tuning.

Recording from radio is much easier with a three-head deck than a two-head one. Because you don't get the opportunity to replay the same piece of source material while checking levels, the recording process is speeded up if levels can be monitored and adjusted 'on the hoof' like this.

In day to day use the Aiwa proved an easy deck to live with. You could gripe about the lightweight construction, the agricultural 'clonks' of the mechanism jumping to life and the pointless AMTS light (why waste a display light on telling people that inside the door lurks an Anti-Modulation Tape Stabiliser?) At the back of my mind though I could hear the price tag as it swung to the sounds of a very capable cassette deck. Analogue recording lives healthily on in the AD-F850 ●

Aiwa AD-F850 £149.95

Richer Sounds
Hankey Place,
London SE1 4BB
Tel: 0171 940 2240

WORLD VERDICT



No Dolby S, but three heads and two capstans make the AD-F850 a bargain.

Measured Performance
see p111

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THE DEEP

Jon Marks gets down with REL's £500 Q100E subwoofer.

"Please, Sir, can I have some more?" OK, so Oliver Twist wasn't talking about bass and his hi-fi but many modern-day system-owners are. The problem with small rooms is that, nine times out of ten, they suit small 'speakers better than large. And small 'speakers mean small bass. Cue REL's Q100E subwoofer, which masterfully masquerades as a large, black box in order to blend in with the rest of your furniture.

The perennial problem with subwoofers is how to get them to sound as if they aren't there. After all, a good sub should do as much for sound staging as it does for sheer bass extension and power. Even with the aid of our FFT and Bruel and Kjaer measuring mic, integrating the REL with the Jamo Concert 8s and B&W CDM1SEs was tough. Eventually we managed a fair compromise that took the bass down to below 20Hz without booming thanks to some fine twiddling of the REL's volume control.

One thing to watch out for, as the manual points out, is that the REL is resting on a solid foundation. We moved it around our room and found it wasn't happy on the wooden boards of a sprung floor judging from how slow and sludgy its bass was. So we planted its spikes on the concrete base of the fireplace and that speeded up its whole sound.

Finally, we went through the various ways of hooking the Q100E up to the rest of the system, first with a selection of interconnects

(Roksan, Kimber, van den Hul) from The Audio Analogue Bellini pre-amp's output sockets to the REL's line-level input. Then we ran the supplied cable from AA's Donizetti power amp loudspeaker terminals to the sub's Neutrik Speakon socket, of which REL says, "This means that the character of the bass from the main system is carried forward into the sub-bass." I have to say I heard no glaring tonal differences between the two connection methods.

BASS ACE

So, after all the hard work of blending the REL in with your main 'speakers, how does it sound? Like the other REL subs we've listened to, rather good. Given about a week to burn in and free up, this sub went from sticking out like a sore thumb to disappearing into the sound stage.

A piece of music I grew fond of over the course of my acquaintance with the Q100E was a track from an HDCD sampler. Wills' The Vikings with the Dallas symphony orchestra and Paul Riedo on organ contains the sort of low bass that rearranges your internal organs. Although both the Concert 8s and CDM1SEs had convincing stabs at handling the longest organ pipes by themselves, bringing in the REL bolstered the deepest notes substantially. What it also did was give these loudspeakers a slightly warmer, more amenable overall tonal balance.

Turning off the sub had the clearly audible effect of making the bass drier and flattening the sound

stage. All the recordings which capture the space of their venue reacted in the same way, whether it was solo guitar or a Big Band in full swing.

For headbangers whose favourite party bass crashes and bangs all the time, the REL possesses a Depth/Slam control. The former gives the flattest, most extended response while the latter puts in a broad peak from 40Hz-120Hz.

That the REL Q100E does its job well is not in doubt; its adjustable roll-off frequency, volume and phase controls put many other members of the sub species to shame, and the 100watts from its internal amp won't see it running out of steam quickly. However, at times it sounded a touch slow compared to the Jamos (although not the B&Ws), and while it's an effective upgrade, £500 looks a shade expensive. Still, take the time to get the best from it and the Q100E could be hard to live without ●



REL Q100E £495

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WORLD VERDICT



Another capable sub from REL that boosts bass and improves sound staging.

Measured Performance
see p111

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(Hi-Fi News & Record Review, April 1996)

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(STEREOPHILE, Vol 19, No 11, November 1996)

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ZEROS and ONES

Andrew Harrison slips between DAC and transport with three digital cables from CableTalk, The Chord Company and Kimber.

It has taken a while, but now nobody would deny the fact - the pieces of wire we use to string hi-fi components together influence the final sound. After interconnects and 'speaker cables, digital leads are

the last to have their sonic characteristics recognised. In the quest for a leading link, we tried three digital interconnects between our Teac P-30 transport and Pink Triangle Da Capo DAC.

CABLETALK DIGITAL 2 £77.95

For anyone still thinking that digital playback is synonymous with a hard and steely listen, try this flexible little number from CableTalk. The Digital 2 was the most mellow and forgiving of these three cables, with rich, full tonal colour. It offered a large sound stage in which to admire the natural, almost organic quality of musicianship.



On occasions this analoguesque sound showed itself as too warm for its own good; mild smearing of upper bass harmonics compromised the speed and slam of a band's rhythm section, slowing some tracks like Led Zeppelin's 'Good Times Bad Times'. And Kelli Dayton of the Sneaker Pimps was singing with conviction on 'Post Modern Sleaze', but she didn't want to upset your day too much with the rancour this tune bristles with.

Of the three cables here this one took the longest to reveal its true colours during burn-in, but the wait was worth it, albeit with reservations about its blunting of knife-edge harmonics.

CableTalk. Tel: 01252 373434

CHORD COMPANY PRODAC £65.99

The Prodac comes into your life all wound up like your car's front suspension spring. Its a narrow-bore solid-core link which may need disciplining in its journey betwixt transport and DAC by virtue of its stubborn resistance to bending.

This is a digital cable with a characteristically forward sound. Tonally both bright and bassy, the Prodac is quick with the beat and punchy with dynamics, although its bright balance doesn't do the hard sound of many CDs any favours.

Such a presentation often enhances detail, but I was left feeling there was actually a light veil partially obscuring low-level subtleties - Kelli's vocals, while clearly articulated, were just a little recessed. Mind you,

if sound staging is more your goal, the Prodac's uncanny stage width, especially on some Classical recordings, will please.

In lean or neutral systems the Prodac would tip the scales too far to the bright side for the most people's comfort. Use it to liven up an overly warm sounding set-up though and the results will be better.



Chord Company. Tel: 01722 331674

KIMBER KABLE ILLUMINATIONS DV-30 £70

Fast, lively and revealing is how Kimber's middle-ground digital linkage came across. It conveys detail, and it's the right kind of detail - not stark and clinical, but tuneful and expressive. There was minimal blurring between images too, so vocals and guitar never became uncomfortably close partners.

Rhythmically inspired like a well sorted Linn/Naim set-up, the DV-30's overall presentation was controlled and commanding - it conferred a sense of 'rightness' to the music it played. But it was with cool, funky grooves like Massive Attack's 'Be Thankful For What You Got' that the Kimber showed its ace of seamless integration between the various ingredients of the song - this is a cable that just begged to be left in circuit to transmit more music.

Kimber (RATA). Tel: 0800 373467



Letter of the Month

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

TO HELL WITH HI-FI

I am tied up with hi-fi. Let me explain. I have never been able to re-create the sense of awe and beauty I felt when I listened to my mate's dad's cheapo music centre through a pair of ultra-budget headphones. The venue: a back street in Grimsby. The time: 1977. The music: Pink Floyd's Dark Side Of The Moon. This was the first time I had heard music that wasn't coming out of the telly and we were just about to celebrate the Queen's Silver Jubilee in the street party outside.

That was a long time ago. I play guitar myself in a local band now and the hi-fi system I own cost more to buy second-hand than my mate's dad paid for his house. Yet, despite over 20 years

of searching through the trends, fads and marketing of the hi-fi industry and building systems accordingly, I have never come within a hundred miles of my expectations.

I know that the perfect system does not exist, and I have heard some top systems. What matters is the music itself, which will shine through anything if your heart is open to hear, as mine was 20 years ago. I make no judgements and I offer no answers, just a question for other readers, one which is posed on every cover of your magazine. Do we buy Hi-Fi because Hi-Fi is our World,

or for the love of Music?
Tim Birch
Derby.



Great music will have an impact on you whether you hear it through an expensive system or just a cheap trannie.

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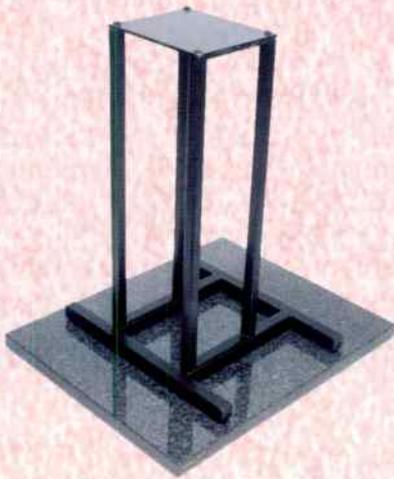
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EAR 'ERE

System: Quad 34/306 amplification, Quad FM3 tuner, Technics SL-PG570A CD player, Aiwa XD-S260 DAT (not working), Linn Index Plus 2 'speakers on Apollo stands, Monsterlink 200 interconnects and Cable Talk 4.1 loudspeaker cables. The 'speaker stands rest on two concrete slabs.

I recently read one of the tweaking ideas of Peter Belt. It ran: place a piece of paper under every fourth foot of four-



One of the best cheap upgrades around is to slip a concrete slab under each 'speaker stand to extend and tighten bass. Marble works well too.

footed components. Since the feet are not numbered, which one is the fourth, or am I being naive? I must be, the bits of paper are all in place to no noticeable effect (under the wrong foot perhaps?)

One suggestion (from a different source) which has worked is to place a concrete slab under the 'speaker stands. This is worth many times the £2 investment!

The next tweak I'm considering is to take the crossovers out of the 'speakers. Should they be put in containers of some kind or is it a waste of time?

The other query is about my DAT recorder, which has taken to making weird noises or not making any noises at all. Two local hi-fi shops said that there is a £40 inspection fee with no assurance that it can be repaired. Being a Yorkshire man, I am loathe to part wi' mi brass only to throw t'machine away! Can you suggest any less painful remedy?

Thanks for a highly readable mag.

Derek Wood
Shipley,
West Yorks.

Trust your ears! You have more experience than anyone else with your system, and if you can't hear any difference in sound quality when you've done the paper round

a la Belt, then it's probably because there IS no difference.

On the other hand, if the improvement is blindingly obvious and only costs £2 (concrete slabs under 'speaker stands) then self-congratulation might be in order.

Removing the crossovers from inside your loudspeakers' cabinets will definitely improve the sound as the components won't be taking a sonic battering from the rear radiation of the mid/bass unit. Put the crossovers in plastic or aluminium boxes (not steel) and you should find you get a smoother, more open sound.

You might be able to find a hi-fi shop which will charge you an inspection fee of less than £40, but it's unlikely you'll find one which doesn't charge at all. Opening up a piece of hi-fi and tracking down a fault can be a very time-consuming process. On the other hand, if the shop's engineer is experienced, he should already be familiar with most common faults. The answer is to shop around for the best deal.
JM

Make The Chord Company's Cobra 2 interconnects your next system upgrade. Chord Co. Tel: 01722 331674

AIN'T GROOVIN'

I am writing in the hope that you can steer my vinyl replay back on course.

I am currently disappointed with my Gyrodec/RB300/Ortofon MC 20 Supreme in comparison with my previous front-end (Systemdek IIX/RB250/Ortofon MC 15 Super II). The latest sounds flat, lifeless and muffled. I have spent many hours tweaking to no avail. Both Rega arms have been rewired with van den Hul cable and a Rotel RQ-970 has been used as an MC phono stage for both.

The rest of my amplification consists of an Art Audio VPL special pre-amp and Art Audio Quintet monoblocs driving ProAc Studio 1 MkII loudspeakers. Interconnects are van den Hul silver-plated hybrids, with 'speaker wire provided by Audio Quest (Indigo). I have tried using the Ortofon T20 II step-up transformer into the VPL's phono (MM) input, and am now contemplating the construction of your last published valve head-amp design in an attempt to regain the missing 'sparkle'.

I am really at a loss to localise the

problem. The questions facing me are; will buying the Gyro Power PSU really make that much difference (I currently use the supplied transformer); should I step back to an Ortofon MC 25 FL or is there anything I can do without throwing too much money at the problem?

Chris Vaughan
Kent.

There's no way a Gyrodec, RB300 and MC 20 Supreme should sound, "flat, lifeless and muffled." As long as the constituent parts have been set up properly you should hear much more music and detail from this source than your previous one.

First check the Gyrodec's platter is level and its suspension moves freely. Then make sure the cartridge is tracking at around 2gms with the bias set to 2 as well (these are only approximate figures - experimentation pays). Finally confirm the cartridge is accurately



In a re-wired RB300 a cartridge of the calibre of Ortofon's MC 20 Supreme should sound lively and involving.

aligned with a decent alignment gauge like the one we printed in our September 1997 issue.

If this fails try mounting the RB250 and MC15 Super II (if you still have them) on the Gyrodec in case the problem lies with arm or cartridge. JM

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TRANSDUCER TURMOIL

I am writing to you in the hope that you will be able to guide me in my quest for a set of loudspeakers to match my system and, more importantly, my ears.

Some history first! My 'old' system consisted of a Rega Planar 3 turntable with an A&R P77 cartridge, Nytech CA252 amp and ARC 050 loudspeakers. To me this was ideal for my vinyl and gave me the sound I wanted.

Within the last year I have upgraded. I now have a Rega 3 on a split-slab plinth with Rega's RB300 arm and an Ortofon MC 15 Super II cartridge, a Naim CD3 (which I adore), Meridian 101B pre-amp and 105 monoblocs (I like the sound even though they are old), and my ARC 050 'speakers.

I use Naim's interconnects and Linn K20 'speaker cable. The system is set up in an alcove on 50mm by 50mm by 6mm angle supports screwed to the wall and fitted with spikes, on top of which sits a 20mm shelf of MDF. The Rega is mounted on a custom stand fitted with 10mm plate glass above everything.

I owned a pair of Acoustic Energy AE2s for a while and whilst they were/are a superb 'speaker, I had some trouble on occasional records/CDs with a lower bass boom. They are now gone and I need a quality substitute that will hold its own if and when I upgrade my front end as well as amp.

I am willing to spend up to £1000 second-hand unless you recommend

otherwise and I agree with you! What would you say to something like the ProAc Response 2.5s? I hope you can help. My musical tastes are catholic.

N. Stuparyk
Newport,
Gwent.



If you want to avoid bass boom in a small room without sacrificing sound quality, Acoustic Energy's AE1 stand mounters bought second-hand are one option.

Considering the bass boom you experienced with the Acoustic Energy AE2s I think a good pair of mini monitors would serve you best. Going to the limit of your budget my first choice would be the Jamo Concert 8s. These are fast, clear and extremely transparent and should work well in a room such as yours, though I would pull them out away from the walls.

I would also consider ProAc's Response 1SC. Though we haven't reviewed this latest version formally I had the chance to listen to them at a recent hi-fi show and they sounded very promising indeed, having retained their predecessor's dynamic, musical quality and improved on their transparency, openness and bass. The 1SCs would be a better bet than the Response 2.5s you mention as they would have less tendency to boom in your room.

As regards second-hand 'speakers have a listen to Acoustic Energy AE1s which are available with stands for between £500-£700 and may well be exactly what you are looking for as you liked the AE2s. KB

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PRE-AMP PRESCRIPTION

How do I improve my amplification without spending a fortune? My present system consists of a Meridian 200 transport, an Audiolab 8000DAC convertor, an elderly Audiolab 8000A integrated amplifier and Rogers LS7T bi-wired 'speakers. The 8000A is very versatile but it sounds rather sterile and doesn't control the flabby bass of the LS7Ts.

I'm thinking about a Quad 707 power, but you weren't too keen on the matching 77 pre-amp. Is there a good remote-controlled pre-amp around for less than the Audiolab 8000Q? I also occasionally listen to my Systemdek IIX turntable, Linn Basik tone-arm and Denon DL160 high-output

Moving-Coil cartridge. As many pre-amplifiers are only line-level these days, is the answer here something like QED's little Discsaver or is there another low-cost solution instead? My room is 19ft. by 11.5ft. and I listen to Classical music and Jazz.

Nick Ollett
Essex.

You're right to go for Quad's 707



Once you've got your new power amp a better pre-amp is the next step

power amplifier, but when funds permit audition Linn's Wakonda with its optional phono stage, Meridian's 501 with phono card and Meridian System Remote, and Cyrus's Pre. All of these are strong performers and highly flexible too. Out of the three I'd plump for the Linn, which runs the Audiolab 8000Q very close but has an excellent plug-in phono stage and is a fair bit cheaper too. Forget about the QED Discsaver; it's a fine budget device at only £35 but it's frankly not good enough in this company. DP

Whether they run from source to pre, or pre to power, The Chord Company's Cobra 2 interconnects will benefit your system.
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STUDENT SOUNDS

I am a student, and whilst on sandwich placement I built up my present system - Eltax Symphony 6 loudspeakers, Arcam Alpha 8 amp, Denon TU-260L tuner, Aiwa ADF-450 cassette deck and the cheap but cheerful Marantz CD-36 CD player.

I have a couple of quid to spend and was looking toward upgrading the CD player. I had toyed around with halving the length of the captive mains lead or even opening the player up to hardwire in a decent lead but I don't really believe that the difference will be worth it. My system, although budget relative to the equipment that most of your readers talk about, is advanced in student land, believe me.

I have been very happy with the sound, particularly the match achieved between the Arcam and Eltax. I now have £200 to spend. I can add a decent interconnect later. What might I audition?



Cambridge's superb CD45E CD player sounds like it should cost a lot more than its asking price of £200

I listen to everything from Classical to Thrash (yes, such people do exist), so I guess that I am looking for an all-rounder. Or do you think that the CD player upgrade should wait till graduation and a bit more dosh - say £300-ish - to get any real difference?

Gary Lawson
 (E-mail address withheld by request)

The CD-36 is a rather humble machine that many £200 CD players these days would better. If you saw

February's sub-£250 CD player group test you'll know that two of the hottest budget contenders around are Cambridge's CD45E and Kenwood's DP-3080/II. The Cambridge is the warmer and more fluid sounding of the two, but the Kenwood has greater treble transparency. As an all-rounder the Cambridge would be a more appropriate choice for your system, especially given the Symphony 6s' bright midrange. And I think you'll be very pleasantly surprised at just how good the best of budget players are now. By the way, if you do still want to change the mains lead, Kimber PowerKord from RATA, tel: 0800 373467, is the one to go for (see December 1997's review). JM

Fit a pair of Cobra 2 interconnects between your new Cambridge CD and Arcam amp.
Chord Co. Tel: 01722 331 674

BACK TO BALANCE

I enjoy your magazine on a regular basis and am delighted to find you are on-line. My system is built up of the following bits and pieces: Pioneer PDS-703 CD player coupled to a Krell KAV 300i integrated amp driving Sonus Faber Minuetto on their iron and wood stands.

My musical tastes are varied and lean towards female vocal and Jazz, some Pop and a little Classical. Obviously in terms of pricing the front end is where I am looking to upgrade and therein lies the quandary.

Would the addition of an outboard DAC produce a significant improvement in sound quality? Is the Pioneer good enough to use as a respectable transport in this application? Would the Musical Fidelity X-DAC be worth considering or should I be spending a lot more money? If the DAC option is not favoured I could go to £1000 for a new CD player (if I



Partnering a decent transport Musical Fidelity's £300 X-DAC is guaranteed to make sweet music.

have to!)

Could you recommend suitable candidates to audition? Overall I am looking for even greater realism in my system. I value sound staging, detail retrieval and vocal quality - any advice you may give will be much appreciated.

Ken Arrowsmith
ken.arrowsmith@lion-nathan.com.au

A new DAC alone, even the highly-capable £300 X-DAC from Musical Fidelity with its HDCD capability, is unlikely to bring home the musical bacon. While an out-board convertor will open up the sound from the Pioneer, the latter is not an ideal transport and will hold back the DAC.

If you prefer the future upgradability of a two-box solution then there's Teac's T-1 transport and matching DT-1 DAC. Another convertor to consider is the Musical Fidelity you mentioned.

Within your £1000 budget also lie the one-box Roksan Caspian at £895 and Pink Triangle's £1000 Numeral. AH

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TEN-YEAR ITCH

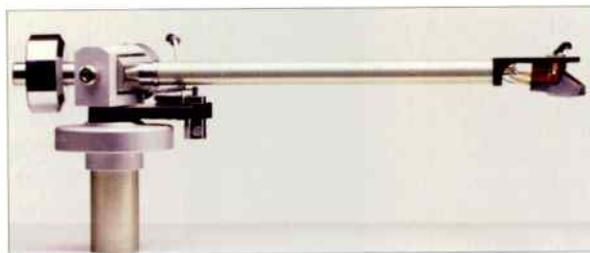
I've been reading your magazine for some time and have been impressed by the articles and reviews. So why, when it comes to upgrading my own system, do I not have a clue where to start? My current set-up is: Cambridge SA200 power amp, Cambridge C200 pre-amp, Linn LP12 (with Basik arm), Philips CD850 CD player and Linn Isobariks, plus Griffin 'speakers in a separate room.

After 10 years I'm due for an upgrade and the obvious candidates are the Cambridge amps or the Isobariks. But I only have £1000 to spend, so this probably limits me to second-hand equipment. I'm not too happy with the Isobariks - I actually prefer the Griffins - but to date I've

only looked at Linn 'speakers. Any suggestions for something smaller?

I. Plummer
IPlummer@aol.com

Your system is far from well balanced - Ivor T would have a coronary if he heard you were



A Basik tone-arm isn't really going to do your LP12 justice. An Ittok would make a better match.

driving Isobariks from a Basik!

If I were you I'd swap the 'Bariks for something smaller and more modern like second-hand KEF Reference Series Ones or Heybrook Sextets. I'd spend the rest on a good second-hand Ittok LVIII and a new Goldring G1042 cartridge, plus a turntable tune-up. Expect better dynamics, tighter stereo imaging and faster bass - in short, your system should sound fun again. Later on, think about an LP12 Cirkus bearing mod, tasty 'speaker cables and eventually a new mid-price pre/power. DP

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CHAMP AMP

I am looking for a power amp to match my ATC SCM10 loudspeakers. I know that this 'speaker is very hard to drive thanks to its low sensitivity. I am considering the following: Quad 606II, Audiolab 8000P and one of Musical Fidelity's FX series. Which of the choices will match well? Any other comments at less than US \$1200 would be welcome.

Sam
elvis.tam@escl.com.hk

We really need more information on your system to give a firm



For plenty of power that won't cost plenty of cash Quad's 707 power amp is one option.

recommendation for a power amplifier but something like a Quad 707 (£799.95) would be a good place to start. This has replaced the

606II in Quad's range and is a great all-rounder with plenty of detail, speed and power. Though we haven't reviewed the Musical Fidelity amps formally, I have heard them sound promising. Another option to consider is AVI amplification which makes a good match with ATCs in general. Of the Audiolab 8000P, this has now been replaced by the 8000PX but I feel the Quad is a better option. KB

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SEEKING SUPERIOR SPEAKERS

At the moment I'm the proud owner of a Linn Sondek/Valhalla/Basik Plus/Nagaoka MP11 Boron vinyl source, a Pioneer PDM6 CD player, Denon DR-640 cassette deck, Naim NAC92/NAP90/Flatcap amplification and Heybrook HB2 'speakers.

I have recently replaced my old Cyrus II amp with the Naim combination above as the first in a series of upgrades. I'd like your advice as to where I should go next to gain the maximum improvement.

When I auditioned my new amps I listened to them through Ruark Sceptres which had a lot more punch than my old Heybrooks. While I enjoy the clarity of my new amp the midrange is a bit subdued. Should I upgrade my tone-arm

and cartridge or go for a new pair of 'speakers? I intend to spend about £800 on each successive upgrade over the next 18 months with my final purchase being a CD player to replace the Pioneer.

Mark Stevens
STEVENMJ2@bp.com

As your own experience suggests the Heybrook HB2s are the weak link. I feel replacement with a set of 'speakers like the Castle Edens or Epos ES12s on good stands would be worthwhile. The next step in the upgrade path should be the arm and cartridge - something like an Ittok with an Ortofon MC 20 or MC 30 Supreme. As for a CD player, how about a Mission Cyrus dAD3Q at



Epos' ES12s will give you the lively sound you're after.

£900 or, bearing in mind your choice of amplifiers, the Naim CD3 at the same price? KB

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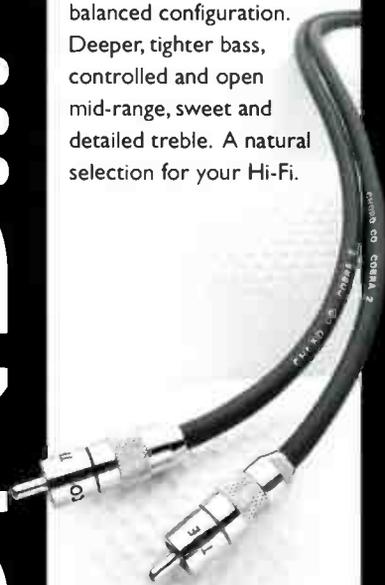
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MIGHTY MIDGET DIGIT

I upgraded my system five years ago (from a Rega Planar 3, Cyrus and Tannoy Mercury 2s) to a Linn LP12/Akito/ K18, Linn Intek amp and Linn Helix 'speakers and stands. There is now also a Kenwood DP-X9010 transport and QED Digit DAC.

I have not touched it since but now have 'permission' to return to the hi-fi fold. The only problem is that I am completely out of touch. Do you agree that I should get the LP12 serviced - it has not had a lot of use? Should I upgrade the DAC as well? To what - DPA or Meridian? Finally, is a change of amp called for? I have £1000 to spend.

Roger Higgins
Roger.Higgins@kpmg.co.uk

I think it would indeed be a good idea to get the LP12 checked out just to make sure everything's running as it should. Get the dealer to examine the K18's stylus too. If it's not much longer for this world then upgrade to the DNM Mica (reviewed in February) which costs £135, if you trade in the Linn at the same time.

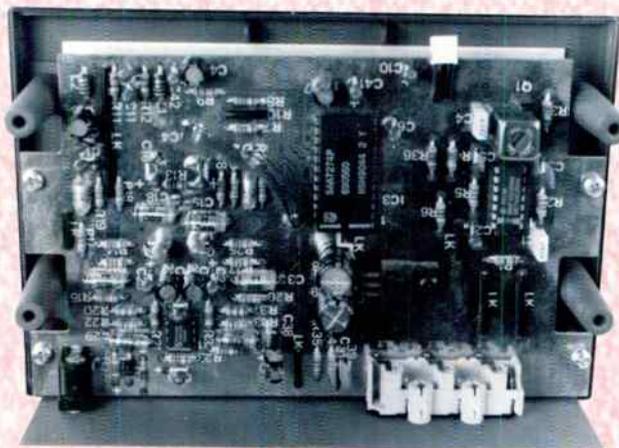
Although a DPA Enlightenment or even the Marston Audio DAC

(both reviewed in August 1997) would make a massive improvement to the sound of your silver discs, I'd recommend a different and more cost-effective option. Add a QED Positron power supply to your Digit as this would offer a

significant sonic boost Unfortunately QED no longer make the Positron so you'll have to try and find one second-hand, but don't pay more than £45 for it.

If you fancy a bit of DIYing, try to pick up a pair of Positrons and modify the Digit so that the analogue and digital sections have their own dedicated supplies. We carried out this tweak in the June 1993 Supplement and found it very effective.

Alternatively, consider Musical



Modifying one of QED's little Digit DACs will give you capable digital replay on a budget.

Fidelity's X-DAC which combines fine sound quality with HDCD capability for £300. If, once you've done this, you still feel the system isn't sounding right take a look at your amp and 'speakers. A combination such as Audio Analogue's Puccini SE (£595) with either Mission 751 Freedoms or KEF Q35s (both at £350) should suit. KB

You'll find hi-fi design elucidated with John Linsley Hood's Audio Electronics. Newnes Tel: 01865 310366

SLIMMING

At the moment my music is produced by an Arcam Alpha 6 CD player, Arcam Alpha amp and TDL RTL2 Mk1 loudspeakers. These are strung together with Audioquest Topaz interconnects and Cable Talk Concert bi-wire cable. The TDLs are about 7ft. apart and stand in a heavily curtained bay window, 18in. from the rear wall. I listen to anything from Prokofiev to Nine Inch Nails (including Rage Against The Machine and Tom Waits just to be awkward).

My problem? Whilst I get reasonable sound staging and am happy with the midrange/treble, I am constantly bothered by the flabby bass and lack of any real punch. I realise that the TDLs are always going to be a bit slow at the bottom end but I would like to tighten them up if possible. I have concentrated on looking at different amps, as the Arcam is a bit long in the tooth and I've got money burning a hole in my wallet.

I have recently auditioned the Audiolab 8000A, Cyrus SL and Naim Nait 3 with my own equipment, but as



Pioneer's tweaked A-300R Precision is a class-leader at only £400.

these all came from different dealers I have been unable to do a side-by-side comparison. I was impressed by all three, particularly the upgrade potential of the Naim. Do you know of any other set-up that would suit my existing CD and 'speakers? I have a budget of £700-£800.

Incidentally, as the Arcam amp will probably end up being used as a bookend, are there any ways in which it can be internally tweaked to improve the sound? Any suggestions would be welcome.

Sean Perry
sean.perry@virgin.net

The TDLs aren't renowned for taut,

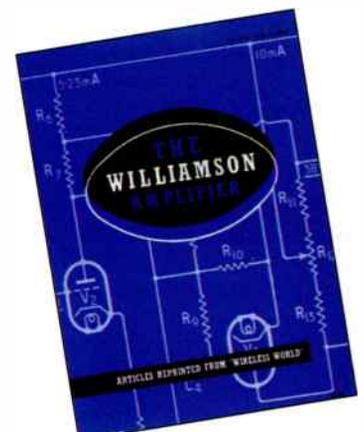
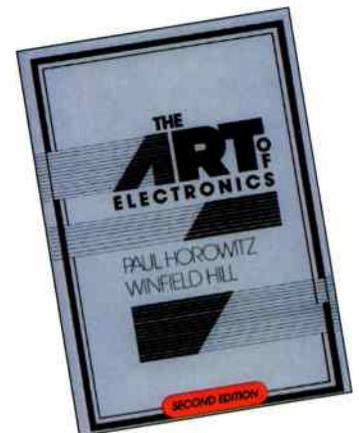
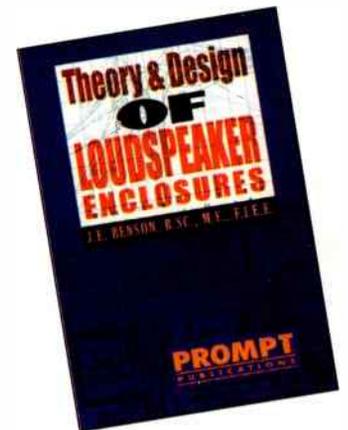
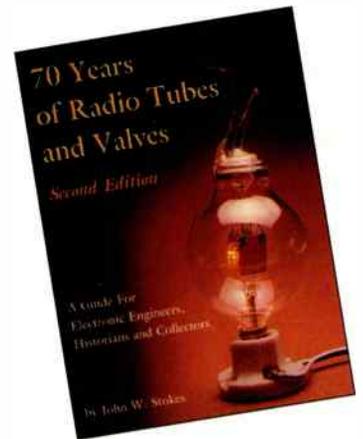
punchy bass and no amount of amp switching will ever really instil this quality in them. Unless you're intent on lashing out up to £800 on an amplifier as part of an upgrade plan with a more expensive CD player and 'speakers to follow, I'd split your budget two ways.

Pioneer's £400 A-300R Precision has great control, slam and musicality and would certainly outclass your Arcam. Add a pair of £350 KEF Q35 floor standers and forget about your system's faults.

Have a look in Supplements past and present for suggestions on tweaking with audiophile components. Your Arcam would certainly benefit from a few choice substitutions. If you want to do a comprehensive job though, you'll need a circuit diagram, a multimeter and a basic understanding of electronics. JM

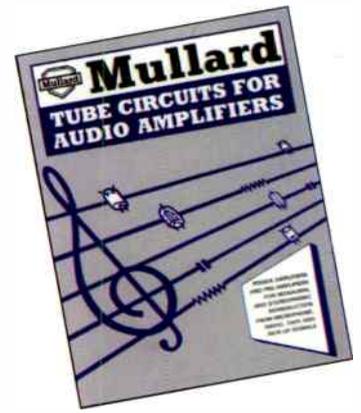
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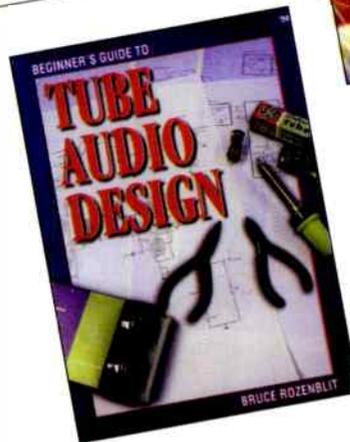
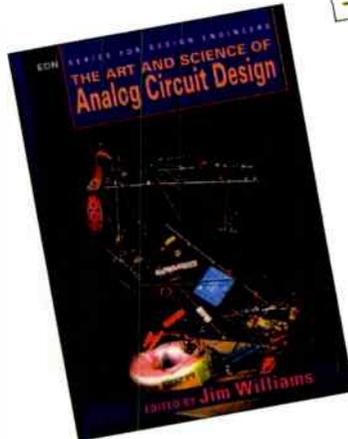
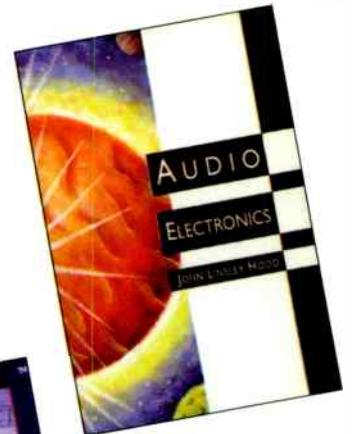
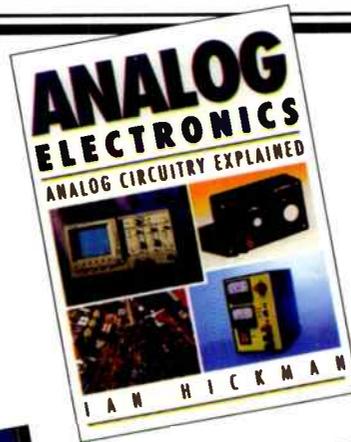
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Heat SEEKER

Dominic Todd finds out what new transistor technology from Kenwood offers in their KA-7090R amplifier.



I've always had something of a soft spot for Japanese 'super amps' with their massive power and control combined with tank-like construction and all the features you could ever need. Kenwood's new KA-7090R might not fully qualify as an oriental high-end amp but it has some of the credentials. A chunky frame-type mains transformer and hefty 85watt output should drive all but the most stubborn of 'speakers. Then there are the features: full remote control, 'speaker switching, MM/MC phono stage and tone controls. Oh, and don't forget the USP (Unique Selling Point) - special output transistors, memorably titled T.R.A.I.T.R.

Kenwood seem to have a way with acronyms - check out Dynamic Resolution Intensive Vector Enhancement (D.R.I.V.E.) on their MiniDisc and CD players. T.R.A.I.T.R. boils down to Thermally Reactive Advanced Instantaneous TRansistor - obvious really!

In a normal class AB or B push-pull amplifier the bias current for the output transistors is set by a separate transistor bolted onto the main heatsink. This tracks the temperature of the output transistors (which changes as the power required by the music signal varies) and adjusts the bias current to keep the transistors at their ideal operating point for a given temperature. Trouble is, as feedback circuits go, this arrangement is slow

to act. The heat inside the transistor changes very quickly, but these changes take a long time to pass through the heatsink to where the monitor transistor sits, giving rise, Kenwood say, to distortion. T.R.A.I.T.R. counters this problem by fitting the monitoring circuitry into the same package as the output transistors, making for a much faster response time and, supposedly, lower distortion and a clearer, more focused sound.

THEORY AND PRACTICE

The bassline on Finlay Quaye's 'Even After All' is pretty dominant in this track, and the KA-7090R made the most of it - it was deep, tight and unruffled by the rippling effect that can have some amps crying for mercy. Percussion was well defined and detailed too. The only snag was the way drums and guitar lost some texture and tonal colour compared with other amps of this price; there wasn't the realism of something like an Arcam Alpha 8 or Naim Nait 3, for example.

Sound staging, however, was very good and easily up with the best in terms of both width and depth. Quaye's vocals had real presence and I was impressed when, later on in the track, the backing vocals joined in and there was an excellent separation and layering to the sound. The abiding impression was one of great control over the music.

Leonard Cohen's 'Jazz Police'

also proved those T.R.A.I.T.R. transistors must be doing something right. Sharp transients, set against a quiet background, allowed for plenty of tension within the music. Vocals were well projected but here verged on bright - this wouldn't be an amp to partner 'speakers with over-enthusiastic tweeters. And this time it was the piano and backing vocals turn to sound somewhat bleached and grey.

Copeland's 'Appalachian Spring' produced mixed results. The violin and flute of the intro weren't especially memorable, suffering, once again, from poor timbral reproduction. A coloration in the upper-midband also left strings sounding 'grainy'. This could well have been down to the relatively large amounts of odd-order distortion, characteristic of poorly-implemented class B operation, which we measured. The Kenwood's saving grace was the way it built tension and excitement into the music through its sense of speed and spaciousness.

In some respects Kenwood's KA-7090R lives up to the title of 'super amp'. Its abilities are too uneven to really make the grade though. That's a shame, because its dynamics and sound staging really are first class. Anyone wanting a punchy amp to suit Dance music would be impressed, but fans of subtlety should look elsewhere. Now if only Kenwood were to do an SE version ●

Kenwood KA-7090R
£399.95

Kenwood
Dwight Road,
Watford,
Herts. WD1 8EB
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WORLD VERDICT



Excels with sound staging but lacks subtlety and tonal colour.

Measured Performance
see p111



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Noel Keywood

The end of 1997 brought a surprise: TAG Electronics announced they were buying Audiolab. Many of us know that TAG are closely associated with McLaren F1 cars, and those that don't will likely have heard of TAG Heuer watches. But neither are linked to hi-fi. At a time when specialised hi-fi sales are in slow decline, why would a company doing well in other fields decide hi-fi was an attractive proposition?

"Hi-Fi manufacturers are a cottage industry", declared Udo Zucker, head of TAG. "At Audiolab the components are placed by hand. We will use machines to speed up this process and eliminate errors". TAG see an industry technologically far behind their own. We were proudly shown two large surface-mount component placement machines, partnered by a solder oven. Apparently they had enough spare capacity to meet Audiolab's needs. In practice, Audiolab would likely have their own machines for this process, we were told, but the point remained.

This isn't an uncommon view from someone who thinks audio is solely about technology, as do too many audio engineers, unfortunately. Technologically, the picture is a little broader and more complicated than that.

DPA started using miniature surface-mount components in 1985 and installed a Philips pick 'n' place machine in 1991. They have manufactured their own surface-mount boards ever since, primarily because surface-mount has the ability to sound better than standard

components. Mission, Meridian, Philips, Pink Triangle, Sony and others also use surface-mount.

DPA have been building their own analogue operational amplifiers - thick-film hybrids - since 1986 and recently received a European grant to develop their own 24-bit Phase Array Digital-to-Analogue convertor for CD players. Pink Triangle and Arcam have both developed their own convertors.

There's an issue in here more important than technological prowess. We don't need more technology, we need more intelligent technology. Engineers of all persuasions, with but a few exceptions, fail to understand that in judging any piece of hi-fi we must take into account the human auditory process. Trouble is, it is highly complex and, until recently, was barely understood. The amount of debate and argument about

listening tests underlines this. Where engineering meets the human being, we get into a tizzy.

Electronics is a regime amenable to measurement and analysis. We can measure things to the nth degree. If measurement throws up an effect, it can be eliminated by design. This approach reached its logical conclusion in Hitachi's late-1970s HMA-7500 MOSFET power amp. It measured perfectly, and so have many others since but it sounded no better as a result.

One major complaint about conventional solid-state amplifiers has been the flatness of their sound stage. It is no coincidence that engineering for low distortion with solid-state means lots of feedback, because transistors are pretty variable and non-linear devices (ie, they produce lots of distortion). Happily, the little devils can be configured to eliminate the need for either blocking capacitors or, of course, an output transformer. This in turn means oodles of feedback can be applied. So it is.

All this seems like good engineering until you realise the

average non-technical but acute listener perceives few, if any, benefits. Engineers will convince themselves that if it measures right, it is right. But that is a pretty negative view, if it means people get less enjoyment from listening to your amplifiers.

The gross lack of understanding that hampers us here is the subjective impact of measured effects. William Yost of the Parmlly Hearing Institute has pointed out that psycho-acoustics as defined by audio/studio engineers offer a very limited understanding of the human auditory process.

Interesting progress in surround-sound has occurred recently, but the audio industry seems largely unaware of it. The computer business has seized on the idea of 3-D sound from two loudspeakers. This derives from dummy head

"We don't need more technology, we need more intelligent technology."

effects, researched by MIT Media Lab and Georgia Tech. Within this research we have the cues for depth perception. It isn't linear audio engineering but it is what people want and, for me, it represents a warning to all engineers who casually think that 0.01% less THD is a goal worth aiming for.

The big question that faces any linear audio engineer is: will it make a better sounding product? The answer remains: we do not know. Until engineers engaged in audio reach some small understanding of the complexities that lie in wait for us within psycho-acoustics I remain doubtful that we have much to gain in terms of progress with regard to sound quality in the realm of pure electronics.

I'm happy too see that TAG Electronics have decided to bring their enormous resources to audio. They will have an interesting time grappling with its uncertainties and, judging by the sort of determination the company displays in other fields, could well come up with the goods. I hope they find hi-fi an attractive acquisition ●

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KT'S HEROES

Andrew Harrison wonders if Kelly Transducers' high-efficiency KT3 loudspeakers will become the darling of the low-power valve amp set.

Sometimes you need to hear an efficient loudspeaker to make you realise how much of music's subtle detail can be lost. The £1200 Kelly KT3 will please eager followers of those natural nuances that bring recorded music one pace closer to life. After all, at 95dB claimed sensitivity (and 93dB measured), this new design can be run very loud from the scrawniest of amps. This is where the Kellys should be a god-send for listeners of the valve persuasion. The only caveat here is the impedance which, according to our results, isn't the flattest that a zero-feedback amp could be hooked up to.

The KT3 is a large, ported two-way design, a pair of 170mm Audax Aerogel mid/bass drivers wired together in parallel and mounted either side of a lightly horn-loaded Vifa 25mm soft-dome tweeter. The cabinet had those MDF lumberjacks sweating over their axes with its 25mm panels.

Sliding these weighty brutes from the boxes and splicing them up initially to a Quad 34/306 combination (followed later by a Linn Klout, Audio Analogue's pre/power [see p12] and Unison Research's Simply 845 valve single-ended), I was alarmed at the lumpiness of their response. Never one to succumb to the temptation of an early conclusion, I moved the Kellys to a larger room where they were gently run in on a steady diet of Radio 3.

Almost day by day they could be heard to even out, honky piano turning to concert grand, chesty male vocals clearing up their bronchial inflection. Now the Kellys' dynamics could be properly appreciated - that massive smack of high volume at the peak of a crescendo preceding an almost unnerving quiet as the music dies away.

The Kellys relish equally quieter performances. Plenty of quality

'speakers can sound anaemic at low volumes and aren't happy until levels go beyond the neighbourly. The Kellys weren't worried by this though - solo instruments and voices were convincingly portrayed and imaged securely to the front of a deep sound stage wherever the

volume control was parked.

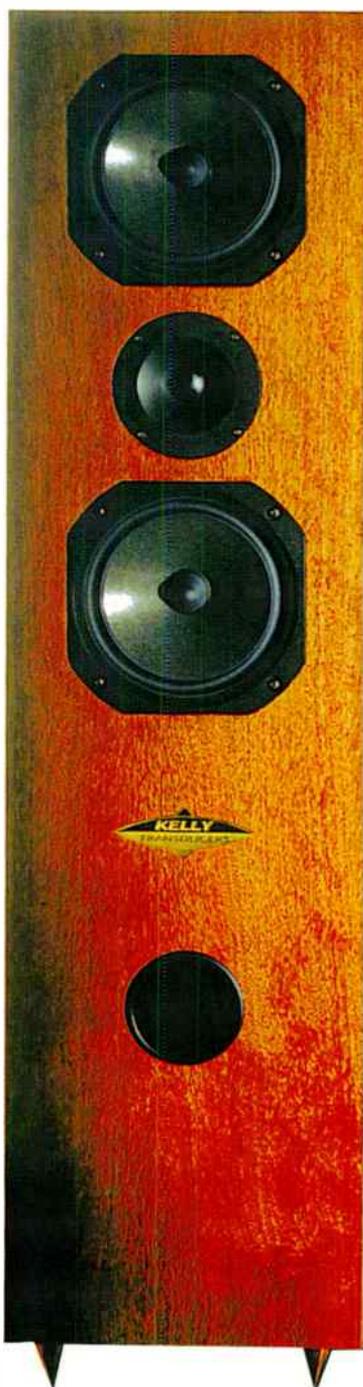
As with any revealing 'speaker, an impeccable source is rewarded while poorer material will falter. On Radio 3, live performances could really shine, from the intimate smooch of a Jazz trio to the violence of a full-blown orchestral outing. Journeys up the dial to the Indie station XFM were typically greeted with slices of compressed grunge that sounded two-dimensional and almost monotonic in comparison.

With LP at the helm, the Kellys became compulsive listening, sometimes inspiring thoughts of baton-waving alongside the conductor. Only a response that was still a little lumpy marred the proceedings.

Tonally, even after extended use, the KT3 is quite a way from neutral. Over-exuberance with the low notes is its primary habit, one that blurred bass guitar, although this could be tamed with a handful of long-haired wool up the rear port. Room walls are anathema to these boxes too, but away from room boundaries their imaging can impress.

When the Kellys first arrive they're fitted with screw-in rubber feet - these need replacing with spikes as soon as possible. Even at 30kgs apiece, the KT3s still need firm siting to keep images crisp and bass tuneful. In fact a concrete slab would not go amiss here.

In Kelly's advertising blurb we see reference made to low coloration, excellent dynamics and fine resolution. For the most part these claims are vindicated. Sensitivity has been maximised at the expense of frequency evenness and that tweeter isn't the smoothest in the business. With its great dynamics and scale this design will thrill many though it won't delight fans of neutrality. But if your 10watt valve amp is longing for a sensitive partner, this may be love at first listen ●



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WORLD VERDICT



The KT3s go very loud very easily but they don't possess the most even response.

Measured Performance
see p111



Valve Vision

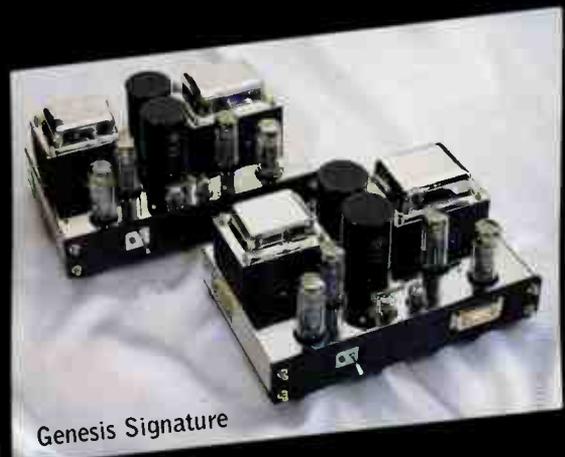
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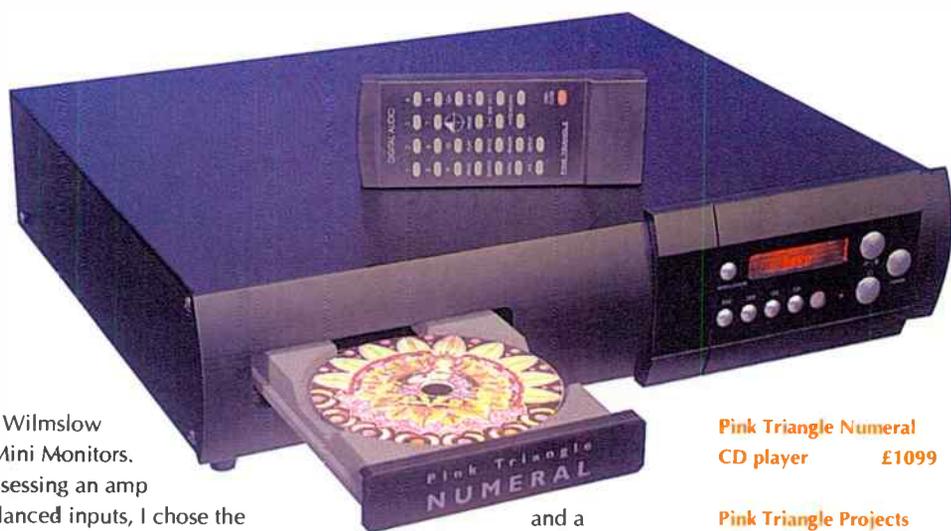


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NATURAL

Numeral

Leo Lam listens to the Pink Triangle Numeral CD player, little brother of the accomplished Litaural.



With high-density recordable storage discs looming large on the horizon and pilot schemes underway for selling music over the Internet, CD's days may seem numbered. Until said discs can be bought in your local computer emporium though, CD will continue to be the format of choice for many. And with players as good as Pink Triangle's £1000 single-box Numeral around, digital's stalwart is in no immediate danger.

If this player's appearance rings a few bells that's because it features basically the same case as the PT Litaural (reviewed in February '98). Other common features include a transport sourced from China with a Sanyo pick-up mechanism, both controlled by Sony ICs. Further downstream, the digital decoding section is based on two Philips Bit-Stream DACs running in dual-differential mode for true balanced operation.

Two separate transformers are responsible for the audio circuits and the control section, with heavy regulation on the former. Audiophile components (like the low drop-out-voltage regulators and Analogue Devices op amps in the output stage) play an important role too.

Helping me in the Numeral's sonic inquisition were the Roksan Caspian amplifier together with Musical Fidelity's X-A50 monoblocs

feeding Wilmslow Audio Mini Monitors. Not possessing an amp with balanced inputs, I chose the single-ended RCA outputs and Kimber KCAG silver interconnects.

TICKLED PINK

Definition was excellent, as Shaham's violin and Sollscher's guitar (DG 437 837-2) showed - they were set clearly apart from each other on respective sides of the sound stage. Low-level dynamics and pitch changes were also fully captured by the Numeral which imbued the recording with a likeable vivacity.

The most attractive part of this player's performance was its consistency across the frequency spectrum - no instrument stood out from any other nor were voices projected too far forward. I could really tell that the violin and the guitar were indeed recorded together in the same room and were positioned next to each other.

The Pink didn't get tangled up by complex material either. The double-basses and cellos in Mendelssohn's String Symphony No1 (Nimbus NI5141) were firm and solid without overwhelming the other players and there was no skewing of the sound stage when one instrument dominated. And if you like lucidity, you'll be smitten by the midrange which has accuracy

and a charming clarity that are rare at this price.

Rise an octave or two above and you realise the treble is very delicately rounded off, no bad thing. The Numeral never sounded harsh or unpleasant unless I gave it a grilling with some early digital recordings (or those that are badly recorded nowadays). String tone was definitely a class leader and I haven't heard such a naturally 'woody' violin sound for a long time - I could nearly smell the varnish.

The Numeral was a real mover and a groover when it came to Pop. Bass was fast, confident and deep. Merrill Bainbridge was as large as life, as was her guitar. This is close-mic'd in the recording, allowing the Numeral to extract some very fine detail as Merrill scratched the strings with her finger nails.

Compared to the competition the Numeral was a lot more natural. In strict detail retrieval terms it may come second by a nose to the Audiolab 8000CD but it won by a length everywhere else. The Numeral sets a new standard for digital replay at around the £1000 price-mark. It may not get the domestic authority's stamp of approval for looks but there's not an ear it won't charm ●

Pink Triangle Numeral CD player £1099

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WORLD VERDICT



With a natural presentation unsurpassed by any of its competitors, the Numeral fully justifies its £1000 cost.

Measured Performance see p111

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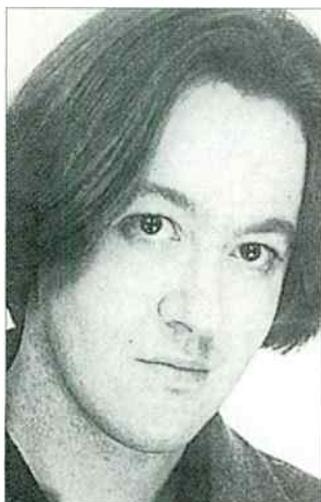
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David Price

Remember Alan Partridge, the sports-casual chat show host turned Radio Norwich DJ? Steve Coogan's brilliantly-studied comic character was the embodiment of all things deeply mediocre in middle England. He lived in a travel tavern, thought blazer badges were more stylish than a vindaloo-hot Jimmy Page guitar solo and professed his love of Brit Pop bands, "like Def Leppard and UB40"!

Last year's BBC2 series saw Alan dismantling a Corby trouser press because he was bored, having a run-in with the law about a motorway cone and repeatedly phoning Dixons for surround sound 'speakers for his Alba 'hi-fi'. Then when he came into some real money, the first thing he did was buy "the ultimate stereo", a Bang & Olufsen.

The sad truth is that many Brits, like Alan Partridge, are hi-fi illiterates. In marked contrast, even the most unenlightened of motoring duffers will have at least some grasp of a car's image. They'll be able to twig the difference between, say, a Mercedes SLK and a Metro, and make a reasonably accurate prediction as to the kind of people who'll drive them. The situation is rather different with hi-fi.

The majority of sound system buyers believe a £200 Micro system is genuine hi-fi. This is a tragedy which industry professionals have long known about. To its credit, BADA (the British Audio Dealers Association) has tried in its own modest way to educate the public,

but sadly to no avail. Of course, persuading people that decent hi-fi costs more than £200 is no easy task, especially with all the flashy, gadget-strewn toys in discount electrical shops which call themselves 'hi-fi'. Sure enough it's a tough job, but someone's got to do it.

Unfortunately, as often as not, the hi-fi biz does itself few favours. While there are some outstanding dealers around, there are still too many who'll stock Micro/Mini systems, call them hi-fi and take your money for a quick sale. Conversely, others carry no 'low-brow' budget separates (ie, those that cost less than your average mortgage) and scoff at anything that's [a] digital, [b] transistor or [c] Japanese. Either way, it's hardly engaging or educating buyers in the delights of music as it should be heard through truly capable and involving kit.

"While there are some outstanding dealers around, there are still too many who'll stock Micro/Mini systems, call them hi-fi and take your money for a quick sale."

Richer Sounds have in the past been a source of some amusement amongst the sniffer 'serious hi-fi' brigade, but they alone seem to be fighting the good fight against Minis. Everywhere from listings magazines and free-ads papers to Private Eye, their ads crop up, speaking out against cheap systems and coaxing punters towards separates. We need more proactive retailers like them because there's a propaganda war to be won.

What of certain members of Britain's hi-fi press who occasionally describe entry-level gear as 'stunning' and 'amazing' in reviews? Well, while I applaud such enthusiasm, and the desire to introduce readers to hi-fi via

inexpensive systems, the truth is that such purple prose artificially raises customers' expectations. When they buy gear on the strength of a review and then find it isn't 'awesome', they feel let down. Magazines should be pro budget separates but at the same time point out the kind of improvements further upgrading can bring.

Car manufacturers have achieved strong identities that are recognised across the land through careful 'product semantics' - meticulous design detailing, appropriate advertising and sympathetic dealers. These companies manage to reach out to the public and communicate their ethos. This is something few hi-fi manufacturers have so far achieved.

In the High Street, the only British name people recognise widely is Tannoy (like Hoover, mainly for historical reasons). More worldly Brits may recognise Arcam,

Quad and KEF - and Scots, Linn - but after that you're struggling. Even Audiolab and Naim, who've striven to communicate their brand values with large amounts of cross-media advertising (such as car magazines) still haven't really reached the household in the way that, say, Volvo has.

This is a shame. After all, wouldn't it be nice to hear Alan Partridge on the blower to his local dealer for a SNEAKY phono stage for his Linn MAJIK-I integrated? As a sign of a general increase in awareness of hi-fi, it would be great. But I somehow suspect Ivor would rather Alan stuck to playing his beloved Black Beauty theme on his B&O!

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TEST THE METTLE



Leo Lam meets the Kevlar mid/bass drivers and metal-dome tweeters of B&W's new CDM1SE loudspeakers.

Following the tweaking suit of the rest of the audio business, B&W have finally turned out their very first SE-plaquet loudspeakers, the CDM1SEs. The original, reviewed by David Price in our September 1997 issue, was introduced some time ago and has apparently sold healthily since then, especially in Asia. This came as no surprise given its ability to thrill in the showroom - that crisp treble and tuneful bass had many people reaching for their wallets.

One change I noticed straight away was a new Kevlar mid/bass driver. The predecessor's dustcap has been replaced by a bullet-shaped 'dispersion modifier' which B&W claim improves the spatial dispersion of the driver.

The crossover has been upgraded with polypropylene capacitors and is split into two halves for the respective high and low frequencies. This reduces interference and thus makes the most of the bi-wiring which B&W say is mandatory rather than optional with the CDM1SEs.

Retained from the original are the same beautifully-crafted cabinets with internal bracing, the front-firing reflex port and the metal tweeter mounted in its own housing.

The B&Ws were placed on a pair of Soundbyte-filled Atacama SE24 stands and driven by the Roksan Caspian integrated and Musical

Fidelity X-A50 monoblocs from an Assemblage DAC-2. Interconnects came from The Chord Company, van den Hul and Kimber.

The CDM1s were tested after running in continuously for a week. Though near-wall positioning is recommended, I obtained the best results by placing them about half a metre away from the back wall with a small toe-in.

From experience, I expected a fast and detailed response from the B&Ws and I wasn't disappointed. The leading edges of struck cymbals in a Miles Davis remaster were accurately produced and double-bass dug deep considering the cabinets' size. The opening lines of Miles' solo can sound brash and harsh in some systems but the CDM1SEs mated with the warm Caspian amp avoided excess in this area.

The Special Editions fit the bill for Pop too with their energetic character. They kept tunes flowing along on a firm foundation of deep, lively basslines as Pulp proved. However, it was this group which showed up one of the B&Ws' shortfalls.

Jarvis Cocker's voice was laid back and lightly coloured, "as if he had a slightly blocked nose" one friend commented. Referring to a pair of ProAc Tablettes showed that the cause was, indeed, the

CDM1SEs. Playing Classical music showed up another hiccup. Piano sounded a touch veiled in the middle octave but grew sharper as the notes ran up in pitch.

There is a forceful upscale progression in the opening bars of Brahms' Sonata No1 with Ax on the piano (Sony SK 45933). Here, the sound was powerful with the same excellent transient reproduction as in the Miles Davis recording. Tonally there was a hint of unevenness and some artificial metallic zing from the tweeter.

From the criticisms above you might be drawing the conclusion that the CDM1SEs are flawed. That would be an unfairly harsh judgement though. These little stand mounters do need to be driven to a realistic level to give their best. Set the volume too low and the bass loses weight, dynamics become flatter and complex passages can get confused. Feed the B&Ws the right musical diet at the right volume and they'll fare better.

That metal-dome tweeter can imbue more natural instrumentation with a rather synthetic tonal quality at times, which predisposes these 'speakers to Pop where their bold, substantial presentation is more suitable. Carefully matched with warmish ancillaries though, their transparency and excitement will appeal ●

B&W CDM1SE £600

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WORLD VERDICT



Tuneful and confident, these 'speakers are well-suited to Pop and Dance music

Measured Performance
see p111

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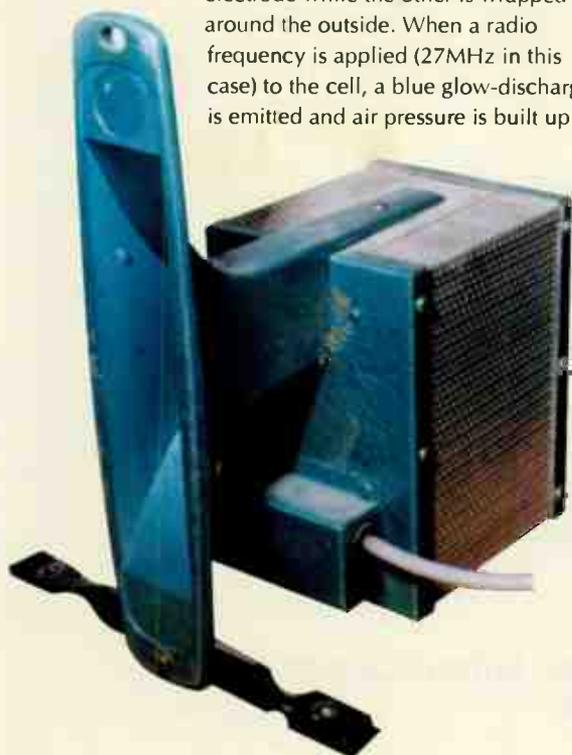
Vintage Virtues

By Haden Boardman

In hi-fi there's only a limited number of different types of drive units. Most are moving coil, a few electrostatic, but all rely on a moving surface to generate sounds. There is, however, a form of loudspeaker that has no moving parts whatsoever. It also has no resonance, practically no distortion and none of the problems associated with every other kind of drive-unit technology. It is called the Ionophone and was the invention of Parisian M.S. Klein back in 1951.

The B&W P2H was designed as a monitor-quality loudspeaker and was lucky enough to use a version of Monsieur Klein's Ionophone which was made in England by Fane Loudspeakers under the name "Ionofane".

These drivers use a controlled ionic discharge in a small quartz tube or cell. In the centre of the cell is one electrode while the other is wrapped around the outside. When a radio frequency is applied (27MHz in this case) to the cell, a blue glow-discharge is emitted and air pressure is built up.



Under the Ionofane's rear grille sit the step-up transformer, the 6DQ6 valve that drives the unit and the associated power supply.

By modulating this radio frequency with an audio signal the pressure can be changed and sound comes out of the open end of the tube.

This signal is quite low in level, so fitted over the end of the tube is an exponential horn which controls its frequency response and dispersion pattern. The size of horn that can be connected to the quartz cell means that this technology is only suitable for use in tweeters. The Fane unit operates from 2.5kHz to about 30kHz.

A fairly powerful valve, an American 6DQ6, is used to modulate the unit and mix in the audio signal, which is stepped up and isolated by a transformer.

FANE built the Ionofane 601 tweeter, which cost nearly £30, from 1960 up to around 1968. They weren't the first to do so in England - the electrical giant Plessey (later owners of Garrard) had a bash at making them too. The only real difference was the use of an inferior circular horn and a valve rather than solid-state power supply.

After this spectacular tweeter the rest of the P2H sounds pretty ordinary. B&W partnered it with an EMI 13.5in. by 8.12in. mid/bass unit. This is actually quite an exceptional unit but it could never equal the Ionofane. Variations of the EMI could be found in radiograms and record players as well as hi-fi equipment but it was a very brave choice by B&W to use this unit.

The crossover is a stunning design, with fancy little



The walls of the P2's enclosures are over an inch thick, which means clear, weighty bass free from blurring.

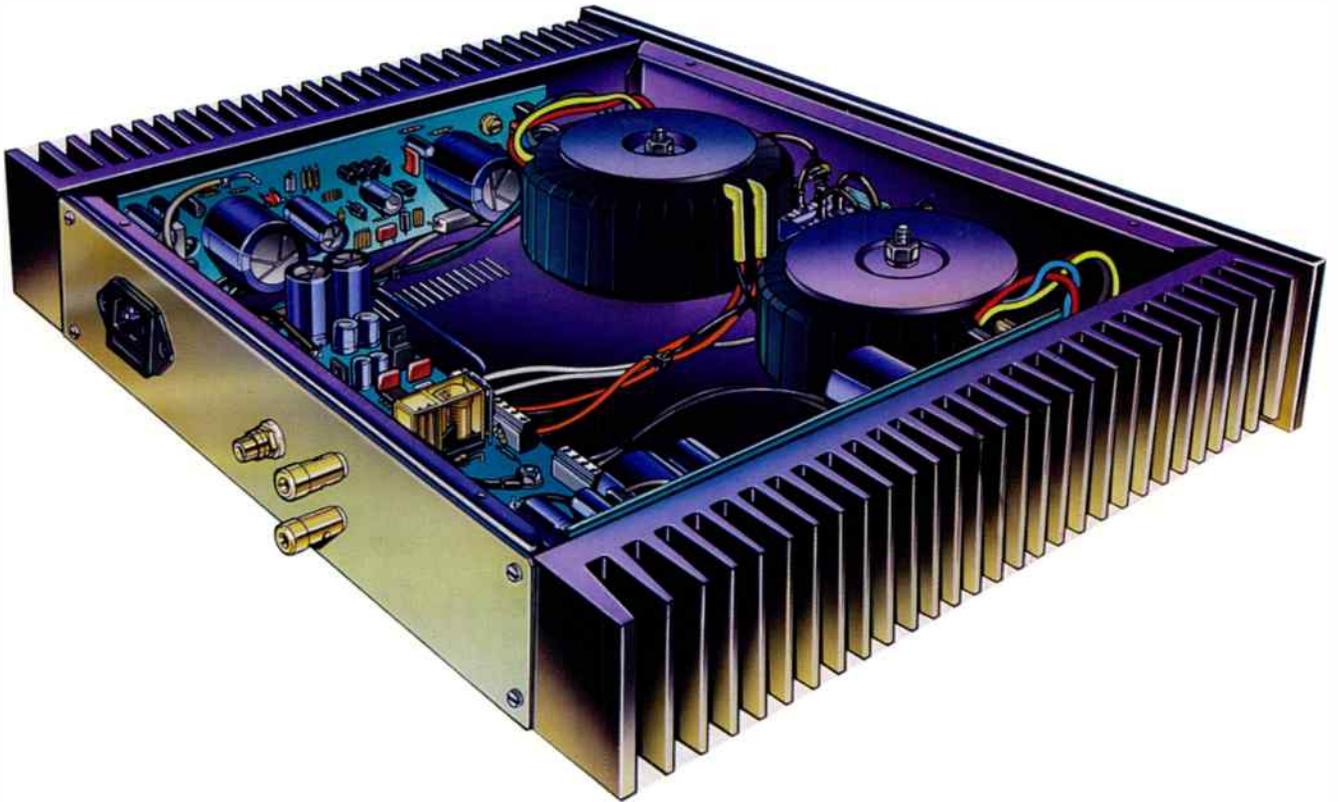
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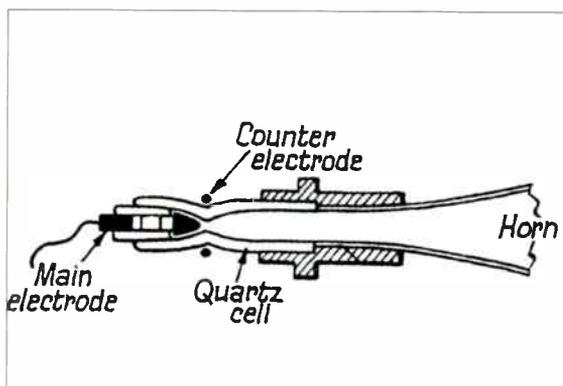
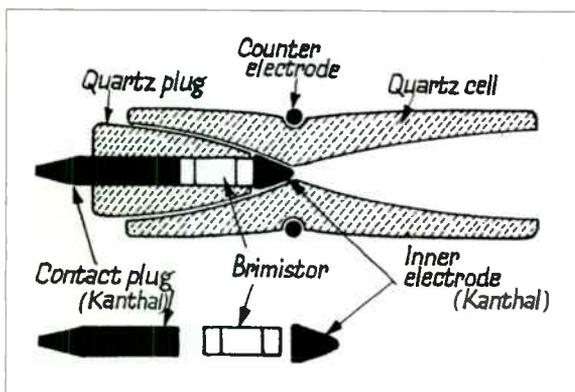
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The diagram on the left is a close-up of the ionofane's 'driver' while the one to the right shows the unit attached to its horn.

"Vincor" wound inductors, neat, modern looking capacitors and a selector switch to adjust tweeter output level. Anyone who thought that the LS 3/5a was the first commercial loudspeaker to have its crossover critically adjusted to the drive units should think again.

The cabinet is a work of audio art as well. The wood is over an inch thick and very heavily braced. One amusing point are the large casters screwed to the bottom; I wonder if B&W still fit them to today's studio monitors! The cabinet is very tall and thin by 1960s standards. The tweeter box at the top seems ridiculously large until you realise just how much heat is given off by that 6DQ6 valve - it needs a lot of ventilation. The tweeter is fixed in the cabinet on little rubber supports, with the crossover and the power supply mounted separately, all free from the pressures inside the bass cabinet.

A little neon lamp, only visible when the units are switched on, is fitted behind the grille cloth at the bottom of the cabinet. I don't know quite why B&W bothered with this because the tweeter gives off a healthy electric-blue glow anyway.

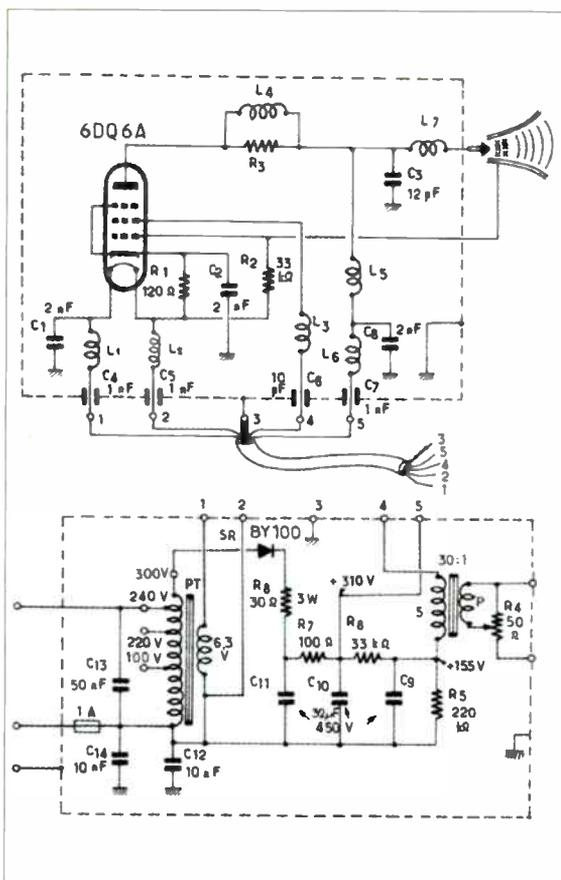
The P2s were supplied with individual pen charts of their frequency responses, which were very even. The finish is exemplary; only the curved fronts and very '60s grilles give away their age. And there were two versions of this 'speaker, the P2 and the P2H, the sole difference being higher power handling on the 'H' version. Cost for a single unit in 1967 was £84 and £89 respectively - a QUAD ESL57 was only £57.

So how do these monsters sound? Exceptionally clean is the answer. The amount of coloration is amazingly low, mainly due to the stiff cabinet. But it's the treble that steals the show. It's pure, fast and sweet. In fact, it's way better than anything an electrostatic could manage - so much cleaner, and, thanks to the superb dispersion of the Fane unit, you don't have to sit bang on axis to hear it. You would never guess you were listening to a horn.

The bass is very deep and, again, very clean. Overall, the P2 has a 'polite', well-behaved sound with no rough edges. It really comes alive on large-scale Classical works with its unparalleled control and delicacy. Even on Drum 'n' Bass it's hard not to be impressed. Sure, even the 'H' version will only handle 25watts (I do think it safer to stick to 15watts though) and neither is outrageously efficient (around 92dB/W) but the deep, powerful bass, and the extended treble are a real surprise.

In service the quartz cells will eventually burn themselves out, although the original pair should last decades. Replacements are almost impossible to get. If you are lucky enough to own a pair, don't leave them switched on all the time. Valves fail too but 6DQ6s aren't particularly rare. The EMI unit will be less easy to track down. What you pay for a pair of P2s very much depends on the condition of the ionofanes. If they are not working, then it will be a hell of a job to get them going.

It's interesting to look at some of B&W's later monitors, like the 801s. You can see where their design came from and the serious thought that produced the original B&W 'speaker, the exceptional P2 ●



The ionofane can't simply be connected directly to a normal crossover - the input signal has to be stepped up before being mixed in with the 27MHz waveform which causes the ionic discharge.

Curious things are happening in the music retail trade. Time was when all the talk was of CD overtaking vinyl. Once this had happened there were numerous reports of the renaissance of vinyl. To some extent this has been the case, but not in the manner that many of us were expecting. A recent record-shop crawl convinced me that one's choice of format is not dictated by the pros and cons of the format's technical merits but by what kind of music is going to be played.

Of course there's nothing new in this, it's simply an on-going development. In the late Eighties we saw Classical music emphatically switch its format allegiance to Compact Disc from vinyl; no doubt the supposed affluence of Classical music buyers had something to do with this at a time when the technology was still relatively expensive. A 'budget' CD player was £200-£300, whilst the cheapest boogie box with one built in cost about the same. Nowadays either can be had from as little as fifty quid. Yet it remains a real uphill struggle to find any decent Classical recordings on vinyl, despite the fact that, if anything, these days vinyl is viewed as the discerning listener's choice.

The opposite is the case when it comes to certain other genres. The start of this decade saw a growing interest in House, Dance, Drum 'n' Bass and Garage music. With this came a revival in home mixing and disc jockeying. A whole host of stars have been born out of this phenomenon and a far larger young audience now aspires to a career as a DJ - hence the growth of home DJ systems and, on the back of this, 12in. Dance vinyl.

Despite there being some extremely sophisticated dual-CD players around at the moment, vinyl still very much rules the roost here. No self-respecting DJ would be seen without a pair of the mandatory Technics SL1200/1210 direct-drive turntables and demand for them still runs high. Most prefer the hands-on approach of mixing with vinyl, hence the production of vinyl has actually increased in this area to meet demand.

But these are already established trends. What has surprised me recently is the amount of Jazz-based albums that are being relaunched on vinyl. Acid Jazz, Jazz Funk, Jazz Dance and even Jazz Rap titles now appear to be swelling the shelves of the more enlightened retailers. This is partly due to the fact that we are going through yet another Seventies revival. Fashion and film are harking back to the decade that taste forgot. Check out some of the trendier new vodka bars and comedy clubs and you'll often find the background music to be some derivative of Jazz, even if it's just the theme tune from *The Professionals!* Seventies retro Jazz is now cool again and coolest on the original Seventies format, vinyl.

Contemporary Pop artists are also doing their bit to promote the music from a quarter of a century ago. Wouldn't the Chemical Brothers' records sound very

"All hi-fi manufacturers can do is cross their fingers and wait for what the restless worlds of music, fashion and film drop into their laps."

different without the drum intro from Jimmy McGriff's 'The Worm'?! Another obvious example is Jamiroquai, who has cited Donald Byrd as a key influence for his most recent album, *Travelling Without Moving* - record label Blue Note have been quick to cash in by re-releasing Byrd albums. The irony is that when the albums were originally released, they often received a pasting from the critics. This fact hasn't prevented Blue Note from pressing up a whole string of compilation albums on the back of the new-found popularity of these rediscovered artists.

So as CD and vinyl go their own separate ways, where does this leave the other formats? Well, after long years as the dominant format, cassette is now feeling the pinch. But this isn't down to a new format (DCC or MiniDisc) as many



Dominic Todd

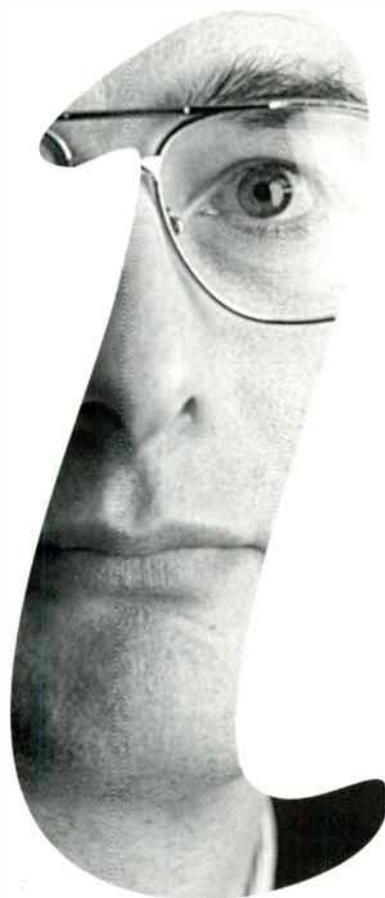
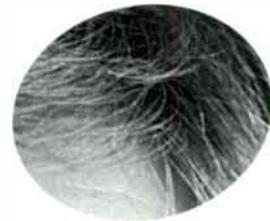
suspected but rather CD and vinyl themselves. Judging by the amount of pre-recorded software available for MiniDisc and DCC (ie, a gnat's whisker above none), they both seem destined to follow DAT into becoming formats whose sole raison d'être is recording. The consensus now, though, is that, of the two,

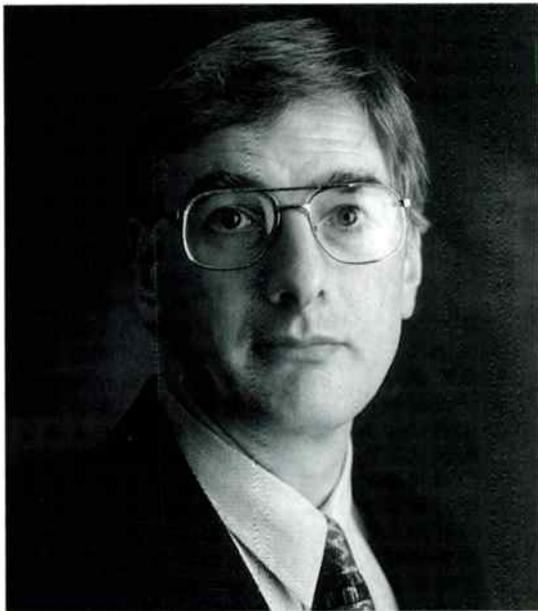
MiniDisc has succeeded and DCC failed.

If all this is leaving you a little bewildered, spare a thought for the poor hi-fi manufacturers. Despite the big guns (most notably Philips and Sony) spending a fortune on market research and then marketing, their best efforts often seem to have very little influence. The fact that a new format is technically better or marketed in a superior way doesn't seem to matter so much these days. All hi-fi manufacturers can do is cross their fingers and wait for what the restless worlds of music, fashion and film drop into their laps.

In the meantime, if you're a music lover, the same rules apply as they did 10 years ago - get yourself a decent CD player AND record deck. That way you're covered for all eventualities ●

This man can't
believe what he's
hearing...





...But it's true.

Peter J Comeau is no ordinary reviewer. As designer of the only product to win the coveted What Hi-fi Best Loudspeaker Award three times in succession, he's generally regarded as the guru of small speakers. With 30 years' experience as a specialist hi-fi retailer, co-founder of a highly respected UK hi-fi manufacturer and one of the 'terrible three' who pioneered subjective reviewing in the staid hi-fi press of the 1970s, his opinion carries formidable weight.

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Hi-Fi News & Record Review

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Well, we can't speak for anyone else - but we know what makes the 12i such a remarkable performer.

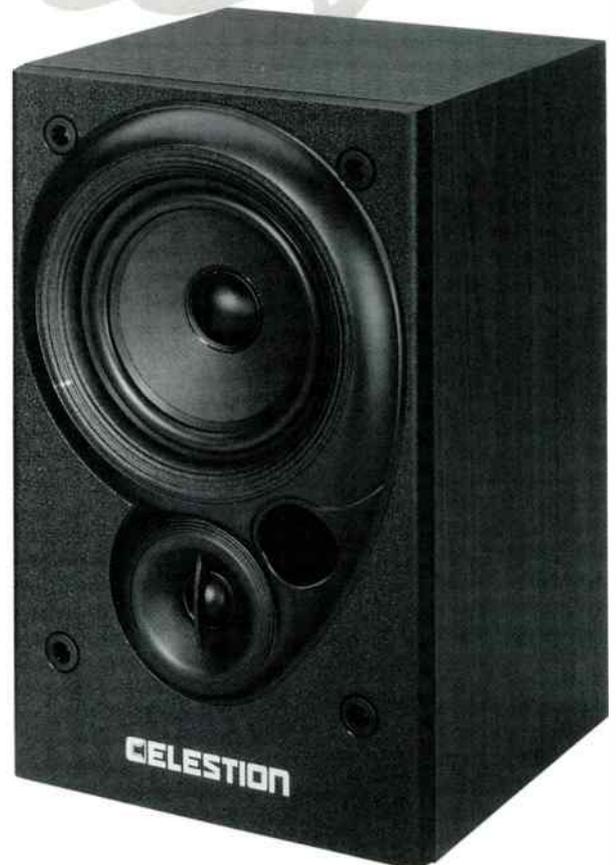
The smooth, natural-sounding vocals? Celestion's 19mm tweeter, whose neodymium magnet is ferrofluid-cooled for improved power handling.

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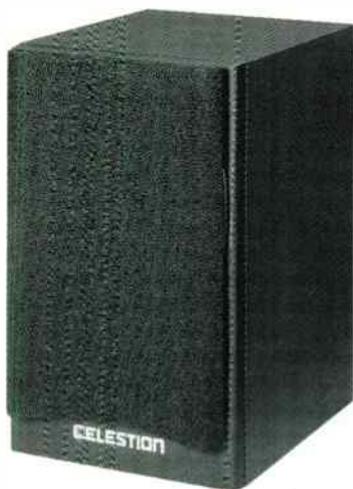
The acoustic purity and lack of distortion? The use of laser interferometry to tune out the response peaks of conventional speakers. Celestion crossovers to ensure seamlessly smooth transitions. Mounting the drivers and reflex port in a dense one-piece composite baffle to minimise resonance. Cabinets computer-designed to eliminate box coloration.

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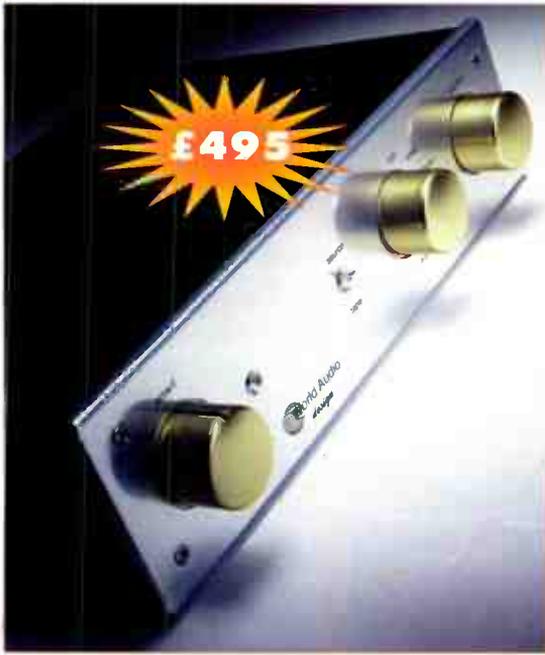
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KLS3 Gold

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NEW!



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Drive units, crossover parts, wool, etc

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Drive unit pack

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KLS3 Gold Mk II ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY THREE WAY LOUDSPEAKER

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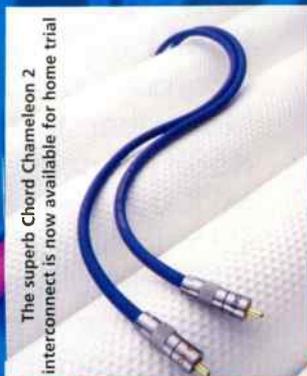


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KLS4 2-way carbon fibre driver standmounting loudspeaker				
Drive Units + Crossover kit etc	KLS4-C	<input type="checkbox"/>	£230	£200
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KLS8 2-way high sensitivity standmounting loudspeaker				
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Drive Units	KLS8-D	<input type="checkbox"/>	£175	£150
NEW KLS9 2-way HDA driver floorstanding loudspeaker				
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Drive Units	KLS9-D	<input type="checkbox"/>	£160	£140

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8inch bass, 91dB	HM210Z0	<input type="checkbox"/>	£64	£55
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Carbon Fibre Drivers

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SENSE and SENSIBILITY

David Price peers into the dark, eerie world of the hi-fi they didn't want you to buy.

Cue the spooky music, turn the lights down low and prepare to be visited by an alien genus of hi-fi, designs so weird you wonder how they could ever make noise, let alone music. Welcome to the mad, bad world of 'lifestyle' audio, where sound engineering takes a back seat to styling. You are now entering the hi-fi twilight zone.

REGA PLANET TURNTABLE

Back in the mid-Seventies, Roy Gandy set out to produce a turntable the like of which few had seen before. Called the Planet, it looked like it had come from another one, because its platter design ran counter to all established thinking. With just three 'podules' to support them, records wobbled around like jelly.

In their publicity Rega claimed that, "wow, flutter and rumble on the Planet turntable are so low that there is no current method capable of accurately measuring them".

Presumably they meant no method apart from the

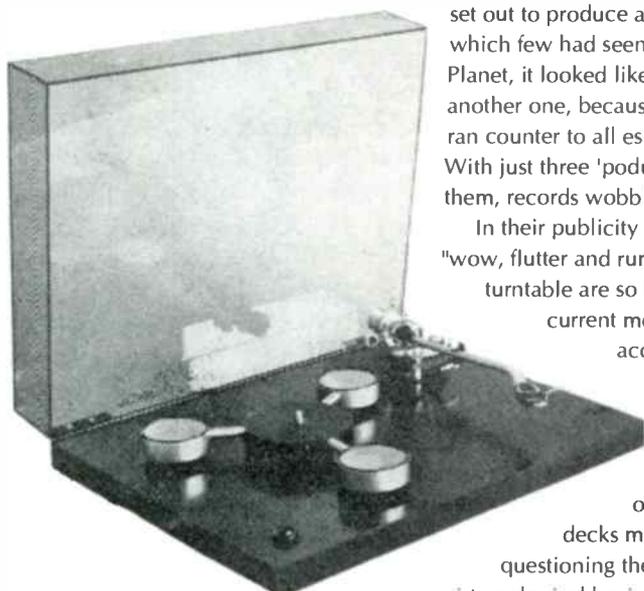
one that proved rival decks measured better? Still,

questioning the entire

epistemological basis of empiricist

science wasn't bad going for your first

advertisement.

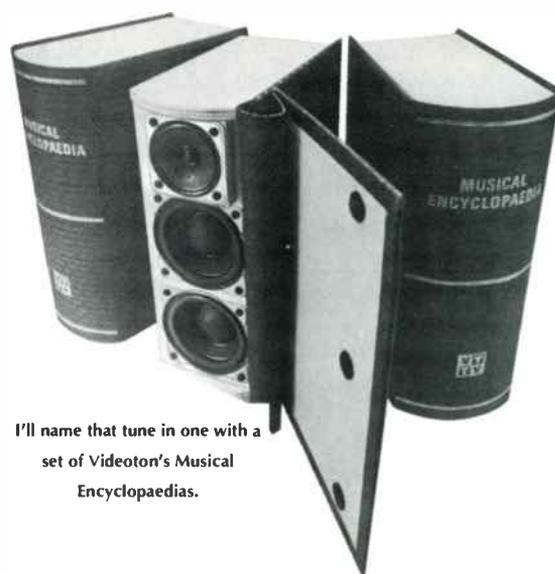


Have the aliens landed at last? No, it's Rega's Planet turntable from the 1970s.

VIDEOTON MUSICAL ENCYCLOPAEDIAS

Hungarian designers at Videoton took the idea of a bookshelf 'speaker rather too literally with these mini marvels. Eastern Europe was responsible for many interesting ideas during the Cold War (Trabants and

burly women shot putters, for example), but none could match the Musical Encyclopaedia from 1977. Here was a real two-way 'speaker complete with three-inch auxiliary bass radiator and a grille styled to look like a book! Beam me up, the little green people are coming!

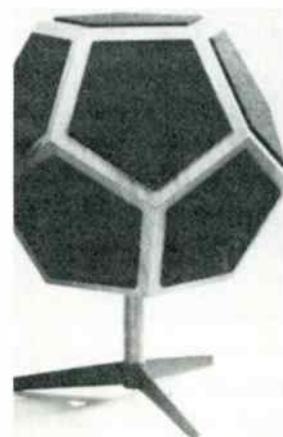


I'll name that tune in one with a set of Videoton's Musical Encyclopaedias.

Who needs rectangular cabinets when you could have the Design Acoustics D12 loudspeaker?

DESIGN ACOUSTICS D12 LOUDSPEAKERS

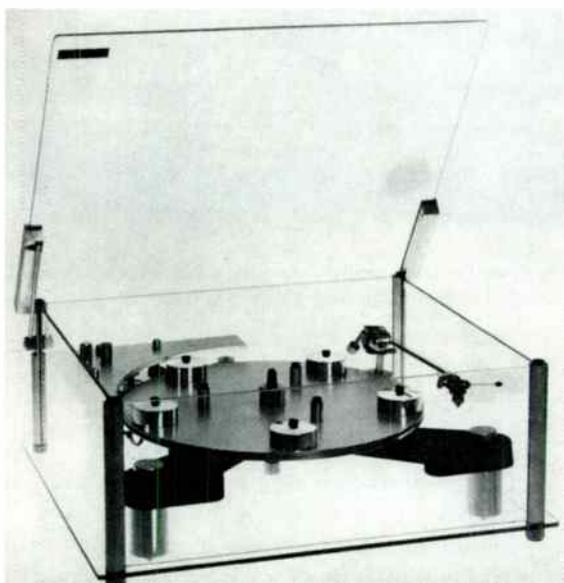
Bored with conventional loudspeaker cabinets, Design Acoustics had something funny in their tea one morning and came up with the D12. Its multi-planar honeycomb shape broke up cabinet



standing waves and also had the benefit of looking like it had come straight from the set of Gerry Anderson's Space 1999. Nurse!

TRANSCRIPTOR SKELETON TURNTABLE

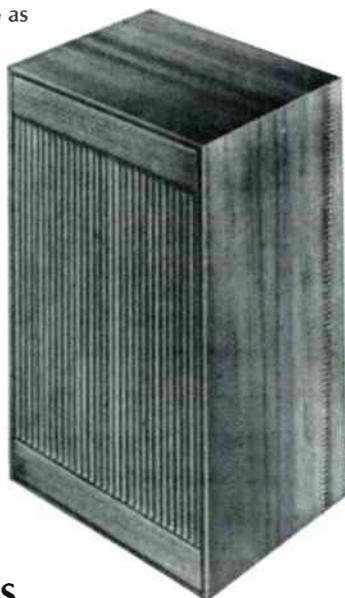
The maddest table that ever turned, its base was pure Triplex toughened glass, the sub-chassis aluminium and the platter a cast alloy disc with five rubber-tipped, gold-plated brass podules for support. The tone-arm was



There's not a lot of flesh on the mechanical bones of Transcriptor's Skeleton turntable.

Vestigial by name and vestigial by nature - Transcriptors claimed it could track accurately at well under a gram, before the men in white coats came to take them away.

In truth it didn't really matter - this deck wasn't much cop as hi-fi but its successor, the Michell Reference Hydraulic Transcription, ended up in Stanley Kubrick's *A Clockwork Orange* and New York's Museum of Modern Art. A fine early Seventies objet d'art then, and cheaper than an original Warhol at only £77 plus VAT!



Clear your head with a brand new pair of Sinuses from Scandinavia.

SINUS LOUDSPEAKERS

Why on earth didn't this attractively styled (not early-Seventies

Scandinavian loudspeaker catch on? Because it was called Sinus, that's why. When your mates would say, "I really like my KEF 104abs", or, "Don't these B&W 801s sound ace?", you'd be saying, "I love the sound of my Sinuses"! Doesn't have quite the same ring to it, does it?

JORDAN WATTS FLAGON LOUDSPEAKERS

Speakers styled like books? Eat your heart out Videoton, because these late-Seventies miniatures had 'exclusive decorative ceramic pottery enclosures' which gave them an uncanny resemblance to flagons of cider! What were Jordan Watts on, we ask ourselves, and could we please try some too?



Quench your thirst for music by quaffing from Jordan Watts Flagon loudspeakers, cunningly disguised as cider vessels.

OVALLA HI-FI CHAIR

The most outrageous object ever to call itself hi-fi, the Ovalla hi-fi chair was errm, oval, and had, "stereo speakers built-in". The ultimate in early-Seventies easy listening cool, you'd switch on your Lava lamp, cue up your autochanger, climb in and relax to hours of "super sounds" (it says here). And if you were really made of money, the Deluxe version came complete with a telephone! One of British design's greatest moments - why didn't it ever catch on?



Music in the comfort of your favourite chair with Ovalla's hi-fi chair.

GRUNDIG AUDIORAMA 5000 LOUDSPEAKERS

The Grundig boys had obviously watched one too many



Hi-fi for lollipop fans like Kojak - Grundig's Audiorama 5000 'speakers.

episodes of Doctor Who when they came up with these. Cunningly disguised as space aliens about to invade the Earth and conquer humankind, the Audiorama 5000s were in fact two-way infinite-baffle 'speakers which could handle a whole 35 watts of music power! Exterminate! Exterminate!

INCA TECH CLAYMORE GOLD

What does a black-box amplifier manufacturer do to make their products stand out from the crowd? Gold plate the whole lot, that's what! Yes, welcome to the loadsamoney Eighties!

The Claymore was never an aesthetic tour de force, but then as it was small and black you could always hide it in your equipment rack and just enjoy its sweet, musical sound. Unless it was the gold version that is, which cost twice as much and looked more at home in Fort Knox than your front room. Still, when the recession came, you could always have melted it down and taken it to the jewellers.



If the normal Inca Tech amplifier didn't take your fancy, try a spot of tasteful gold plating.

they had to be devoid of sense too.



The ultimate in 'hi-fi as furniture' - Environmental Sound's VT15 even came with the matching tablecloth.

BUYING SECOND-HAND

All these hi-fi products did actually exist, so they should be around on the second-hand market.

Should you wish to purchase one however, powerful psychiatric drugs are now available which will make you feel better. Don't worry, everything's going to be just fine.

FIXLER QUADRAPHONIC HEADPHONES

Before these little beauties appeared, life on earth had never been able to enjoy realistic four-channel sound with only two ears. But salvation arrived in the shape of the Fixler Quadraphonic headphones. Placing them on your head let you into new vistas of sound, as music came from the left, the right, the middle, and erm, the other left and right. Well it was 1975. . .

ENVIRONMENTAL SOUND VT15 LOUDSPEAKERS

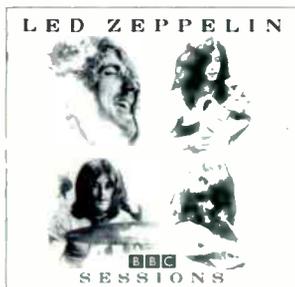
Proof positive that Martians had in fact come to Earth in the late Seventies, these Environmental Sound 'speakers could only ever have been thought up by those from another world. The ad reads, in all seriousness, "Infinite baffle completely disguised as an elegant Victorian table. The structure of the table is covered in a variety of shades of beige and the whole object enveloped in a lace tablecloth which is acoustically transparent and designed to blend in with the decor of the home". Buyers not only had to be loopy, but at £190 plus VAT in 1978,



You didn't need four ears to enjoy Quadraphonic recordings through cans, just a pair of Fixler's dedicated 'phones and a smile!

ROCK & POP

by Jon Clarke & Stuart Lenz



LED ZEPPELIN
BBC SESSIONS

ATLANTIC 7567-83061-2

Led Zeppelin remain one of the few Rock groups whose mystique can sell them more records today than it did in their heyday - and this from a group who never released singles!

One thing for certain is that it has nothing to do with the drink-binge death of drummer John Bonham. Rather it's due to the release of their material on CD, which has latterly boosted the careers of the Rolling Stones.

For all Robert Plant's infernal tea-pot posturing, those long-winded solos and a dabbling in black magic, Led Zeppelin were a mighty Blues Rock band with a cocksure nerve to boot. And this intriguing collection of in-the-studio and in-concert out-takes, recorded for the dear ol' Beeb in 1969 and 1971, proves they were more than just axe heroes.

Long boot-legged and now finally legitimate through some solid remastering by guitarist Jimmy Page himself, it proves to be a great collection, something at last to replace *The Song Remains The Same*, that 1976 dishwasher that passed as the

official live experience.

It's all here - the frantic thrusting of 'Communication Breakdown', the power chord hormones of 'Whole Lotta Love', the Blues workout of 'I Can't Quit You Baby' and the 12-minute exhilaration of 'How Many More Times'. There is even the curiosity of a version of Eddie Cochrane's classic 'Somethin' Else'.

While the first disc covers the 1969 sessions and is a diet that consists of contributions from Led Zep's first two albums, the second disc comprises the maturer 1971 live concert appearance at London's now-defunct Paris Theatre.

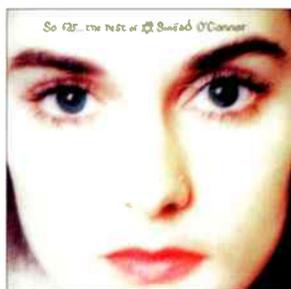
Introduced by the omnipresent John Peel no less, Disc Two is more coherent and satisfying than number one for its inclusion of a couple of blinding versions of later material like 'Heartbreaker' and 'Black Dog'. To top that, 'Stairway To Heaven' gets its premiere airing and leaves the audience merely applauding politely.

Picking up where Jimmy Page's Yardbirds left off, the songs are mostly revved up traditional Blues made loud and brutal. The live extracts are particularly interesting as they show what concerts were like when maximum audience reaction was gentle applause - hard to believe but true. In those days it was all so very civil.

If there's one gripe then it's this: there are, for some strange reason, two versions of 'I Can't Quit You Baby', two of 'You Shook Me' and three of 'Communication

Breakdown'. That's presumably taking 'The Song Remains The Same' to its logical conclusion: or is it simply money for old rope?

Whether you were there or not, this is an album worth a listen. The mystique continues and they may still "squeeze your lemons", at least every once in a while.



SINEAD O'CONNOR
SO FAR... THE BEST OF

CHRYSALIS 7243 8 21581 27

Sinéad O'Connor, that short-haired Irish minx, has been making somewhat of a resurgence of late. Having ducked out of the limelight in order to have babies, get married and presumably contemplate the injustices of life, she returned last year with some new material.

Sinéad has drawn a lot of flak over the last few years for outbursts like that against the Pope through to her litany of insults about the British occupation in Ireland and the potato famine. All that's in the past now and she has to face the bald reaction to an album

with scarcely any commercial hits.

OK, there's the Prince-penned classic 'Nothing Compares 2 U' with its sparse production courtesy of Nellie Hooper, and a smattering of her better-known songs from the 1987 debut album *The Lion And The Cobra*, like 'Troy' and 'Jackie'.

Listening to this offering we get the distinct impression she has learnt to curb the aggression of her earlier songs since metamorphosing into a maturer political and spiritual animal. You only have to compare the abrasive vocals and grinding guitars that swallow songs like 'Mandinka' and 'Jackie' to alternatives like 'Thank You For Hearing Me', which is quiet but purposeful.

The anger and disquiet haven't gone away but her soft, elfin-like vocals now channel her anger into words more meaningful. This is achieved with varying degrees of success. Numbers with an autobiographical bent, such as the wonderfully-orchestrated (almost Bjork-like) 'Success Has Made A Failure Of Our Home' and the anguished 'Fire On Babylon' work well. At other times the ideas are just too big - the madcap 'Empire' for one, built on the disparate and colliding inputs of Bomb The Bass and Benjamin Zephaniah, who all conspire to make a pig's ear of it.

Too bland is the other extreme - take the dreadful 'John I Love You'. Then there are the film tracks 'You Made Me The Thief Of Your Heart'

ROCK & POP

(from the film *In The Name Of The Father*) and 'Don't Cry For Me Argentina' which look completely out of place.

The album spans a decade and shows up the flaws as well as the depths in the personality that Sinéad has developed. In many ways she reminds one of Van Morrison, Ireland's favourite son - commercial when necessary but nonetheless steeped in an Irish waywardness, which translates into songs of either poetic genius or sheer, maddening drivel.

It remains to be seen over the course of the next ten years, if Sinéad can pluck a song out of the hat with a title as ludicrous as that Man Van's 'You Don't Pull No Punches But You Don't Push The River'. Now that would be some feat.



LOUDON WAINWRIGHT III
LITTLE SHIP
VIRGIN CDV 2844

Erstwhile Summer Of Love participant and occasional MASH actor, Loudon Wainwright III has been churning out albums since 1970. Miraculously this is his sixteenth. Earning him the

reputation as a new Bob Dylan on his debut, Loudon's songs are always honest interpretations of life and love and, when coupled with his talent for juggling various instruments, make him an American version of Max Boyce. Loudon's a kind of engaging Charles Hamilton IV, who in turn was a dreary US version of our own tank-topped Val Doonican.

Though there have been several generations of Loudon Wainwrights, there is but one dimension to the song-writing here. This is a man who always likes to blend a steelstring guitar with a crystal clear vocal - a modern troubadour in the vein of a Jackson Browne, an Al Stewart or indeed a Don McLean.

He has managed to recruit other able musicians to the ranks, but they tinkle very quietly in the background, so unless you are a fan of his songs, there is very little else to enthuse about. However, the addition of a banjo on 'The World' and trumpets on 'Our Own War' shows some latitude on Loudon's part.

The overall result is a collection of Country-tinged songs, which are perhaps too suburban for their own good. This is due partly to the production values of the Grammy-award-winning John Leventhal, who gives the music a smooth quality when a bit of rough would have gone down well. The main reason though is because the songs tell stories of everyday strife, and a whole series of mini kitchen-sink dramas

emerge.

All the usual wry observations and self-mockeries are here, couched in terms taken from the most mundane of daily activities, such as 'Bein' A Dad' and having 'Breakfast In Bed' as well as, most peculiarly of all, ruminations on 'Underwear'. Oh well, each to their own.

It's all fairly amusing I suppose you might say, but personally-speaking, a hum-drum trip to the laundrette is a more captivating prospect.



DARYL HALL AND JOHN OATES
MARIGOLD SKY
EAGCD011

The latest in a long series of albums sees the return of one of Pop's most formidable of partnerships, Hall and Oates. Despite a five-year hiatus, they've managed to get back together again for another crooning performance to delight housewives everywhere.

In their own way, Hall and Oates were as much a part of the '80s as the Duran Durans, Spandau and Whams of the world. Less bloated certainly

and using far less stencil eyeliner, they captured the essence and optimism of the boom times just as well. They had already cut a swathe by the end of the '70s with songs such as 'Sara Smile' and 'Rich Girl', but it was the breakthrough in the early '80s with 'Private Eye' that set them on the right foot and endeared them to the cocktail party set.

If you still have recall problems, think the unlikely duo ever, one tall and glamorous, the other short and dark with a stupid Clouseau moustache. Somehow they have connived to put down a new album which for the most part is a pastiche of their former glories.

The opener, 'Romeo Is Bleeding', bears more than a passing resemblance to 1983's 'Say It Isn't So', while 'Hold On To Yourself', without any reservations whatsoever, is a repeat of the international hit 'I Can't Go For That (No Can Do)'. They know it's special so you're treated later to the re-mixed Garage version.

Apart from the usual concerns that beset the middle-aged and the middle-of-the-road, there's little to tickle the taste buds. So we have much balladeering about their troubled romantic lives with the occasional good song - 'War Of Words' and the lyrically somewhat unimaginative 'Time Won't Pass Me By', which is helped no end by lilting summery Jazz guitar patterns.

There are also desperate

ROCK & POP

RECORD OF THE MONTH

PROPELLERHEADS
DECKSANDDRUMS
ANDROCKANDROLL
 WALL OF SOUND CD015

Regency crescents, Romans and Rugby. Now add Alex Gifford and Will White to the attractions of Bath. For these crafty little deckmasters - along with the likes of The Chemical Brothers and Bentley Rhythm Ace who between them comprise the ferocious new breed of Big Beat - are a beauty to behold in themselves.

In the Propellerheads' Big Beat, now firmly part of the Pop consciousness, delivers perhaps its most lavish and commercial item to date. And from this twosome we hear an album that combines both modern and traditional values. Hence we have psyched orchestrations, rolling beatbox noises and looped rhythms sprouting all over the place. Yet all the while there are enough old school sounds to make a respectable big-band type arrangement.

If you can't swallow that, there are two words that will surely convince you - Shirley Bassey. The diva has, in fact,

recorded a duet with these nicey, nicey West country boys; need I say more?

To date, the Propellerheads' first foray

David Arnold.

Gifford and White could almost be John Barry's bastard offspring for the amount of Bond themes

Shirley 'Goldfinger' Bassey on 'History Repeating', a swaggering blast of near-operatic scale that employs the best lyrics in the business.

There's no denying the schmaltz in this but the sound is all the Propellerheads' own. Bass drops, large slabs of Funk, Hammond organ and vocal sampling feature large, and where it hangs together, as on the aforementioned 'History', 'Take California' and the powering 'Cominagetcha', the effects are awesome.

The truly experimental 'Velvet Pants' and 'Bigget' may show a sense of humour, but could quite reasonably be described by a shorter, less endearing Americanism.

The results might lay themselves open to accusations of being messy, but frankly they'd sound great in any environment you care to name - car, club or open-air arena. That's the frightening potential of Big Beat. Atmospheric, even stratospheric, the Propellerheads are coming at you from a different dimension.



into the scene was the little-known EP Dive, whose title track became the musical backdrop for a world-wide Adidas advert in 1996. This should come as no surprise to the few who already know them for the equally well-hudged Tomorrow Never Dies collaboration with

which crop up on Decksanddrums. Their first outing with Arnold ('On Her Majesty's Secret Service') and the spy movie pastiche 'Spybreak' are prime examples.

And then, of course, there's no getting away from their collaboration with

displays of the rockers in them trying to get out, lively outbursts like 'Want To' or the slower paced 'The Sky Is Falling' which sounds uncannily like Tom Petty and The Heartbreakers' 'Freefalling'.

All the familiar hallmarks are still there, however - the enduring passion for

Philly Soul, the quality singing, the smooth arrangements, that saxophone and the effective harmonising contributions provided by John Oates (now thankfully without moustache). But the constant threat is blandness.

Marigold Sky closely follows the spirit

of their earlier albums - radio-friendly songs and good rhythms but not the same catchiness that their compositions used to have. The impression you get is of a couple of laboratory technicians at work with time on their hands but lacking any real soul

DANCE & AMBIENT

by Sara Davis & Leon Palmer



DJ QUICKSILVER
QUICKSILVER
 POSITIVA 49349422

This month's dose of melodic, epic House comes courtesy of internationally successful DJ Quicksilver. Named after the contents of a type of barometer used for judging DJ competitions, and the fact that when he used to compete the silver mercury shot up the barometer, er, quickly, this man has one of the more dubious tags within DJdom. However, Quicksilver's recent successes cannot be faulted - two top-20 hits in the UK last year, the debut 'Bellissima' entering at number four and staying in the charts for 14 weeks, and the more recent 'Free' which was equally buoyant.

Featuring both hits and the next single 'Planet Love', the debut album (due for release this month) shows no sudden change of tack: expect the type of Poppy anthem that turns up in a Ritzy-style student night or your mid-week aerobics class. 'Bingo Bongo' is a prime example, with its regular drum/hi-hat base, twangy key-changes and that old favourite 'Woo - Yeah' sample. Other tunes such as 'Techno Macht Spass' offer more to get the teeth into

with meatier layers of sound, samples and uplifting breakdowns.

Quicksilver's recent claim to fame - that he played the same Turkish venue as the Spice Girls - is a further clue as to the nature of his musical approach and aspirations. Accordingly, Quicksilver the album is a well-produced, chart-friendly combination of tunes with more Pop than a Pepsi promotion and plenty of bouncy bits.



VARIOUS
DOPE ON PLASTIC
VOLS
 REACT LP 118

First released back in 1994, React's Dope On Plastic was one of the first Trip-Hop compilations and has fought off competition from all sides to reach its fifth volume.

Promising to be the series' biggest and best collection to date, the new LP features cuts gathered internationally from such weird beat luminaries as Mr Dan, Smoke And Mirrors and Krash Slaughta.

The album has once again been compiled by veteran beat-head John Stapleton, hailed as one of the West

Country's longest-standing and well-respected DJs. Stapleton himself masterminded the first ever Dope On Plastic Tour, which took to the UK, the rest of Europe and Australia last year. That probably explains how tracks originating from Germany, Ireland and Iceland have arrived on this album.

Of course there's a healthy slab of Hip-Hop-related material from the US, but for some the main course will be the local UK fare from the likes of Brighton, Bristol and Scotland-based artists - oh, and that hot-bed of musical innovation, Weybridge.

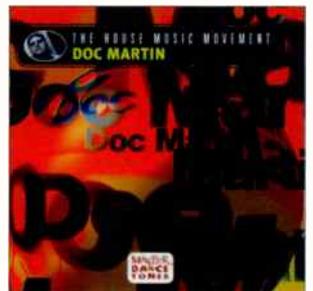
That said, those with a broad view of Trip-Hop will enjoy D.O.P.'s variety of souped-up Electronica beats and Hip-Hop - you could soon find yourself on a mission to locate all things low-down, dirty, heavily funky, tripped-out and blunted, which shouldn't be too tough. On the other hand, you may be content with the down-tempo side of things, and there's plenty of that too.

Amongst the crazy Breakbeat stuff, Dutchman Prince Abooboo's '1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8' is about as in-your-face and brain-bruising as it gets whilst still managing to be entertaining. Steady G kicks in with the sprawling sampledela of 'DJ For Prez', a block-rockin' Hip-Hop beat with a persistent rap, enriched by a catchy riff lifted from Tom Tom Club and familiar Thrash Metal chords from somewhere else!

For many, the spirit of D.O.P. is summed up by the

mellow cuts, the chilled-out and Dubby numbers or the ones that make your feet tap but don't force you to get up and dance. 'Cyclops 4000', a spacey Hip-Hop dub by Macro Scope, would go down well at any summer festival.

No wonder Stapleton's one of the few people to have landed the coveted DJ residency at the Glastonbury and Womad festivals. His ability to manipulate vaguely recognisable tunes and churn out eclectic collections of quality Hip-Hop, Soul and Jazz makes him one of modern music's brightest talents, one that after four years and five Dopes is still fresh enough to sample.



VARIOUS ARTISTS
THE HOUSE MUSIC
MOVEMENT, DOC
MARTIN
 MASTER DANCE
 TONES HMMCD 8091

Hailing from the West Side, Doc Martin is a rare star of the LA House scene as well as being one of its most successful international exports. He's not a Doctor and he doesn't wear DMs but

DANCE & AMBIENT

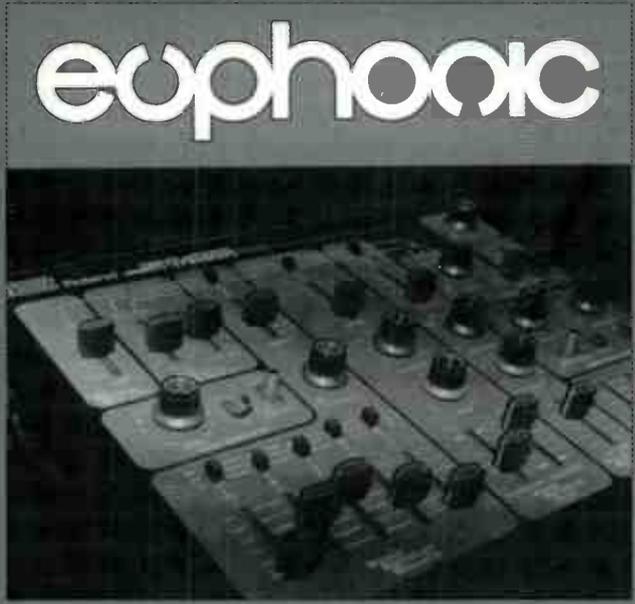
RECORD OF THE MONTH

EUPHONIC

EUPHONIC
DIFFERENT DRUMMER

Birmingham's underground label Different Drummer is surfacing as one of the country's key purveyors of beat-heavy tunes. First there were Dub-masters Rockers Hi-Fi, and now Euphonic, the debut release from Rob Henry, Nick Trimm and a host of friends and influences from the Brooklyn Hip-Hop scene. Despite playing host to such guests as Dr Israel and tuffer-than-Ragga vocals, Euphonic's is an idiosyncratic Hip-Hop rhythm, refined and multi-layered with scratching, rappin', processing and cunning distortion.

With plenty to please all tastes in Breakbeat, Euphonic



moves from grass-roots numbers such as 'Revolution/Solution' (one of the Soothsayer/Dr Israel collaborations) to really

innovative blends of instrumentation. The Bluesy 'Cattleprod' takes the rolling Euphonic beat and adds manipulated vocals and

samples to great effect, while '7 Orbits' puts orchestral strings and the advice of an ex-astronaut on the same foundation to create an Ambient classic.

Although Euphonic evolves at a slow pace - meandering at times - you won't lose interest because there's a great range of vocals and samples tweaked to truly musical effect. Taking a purer approach than Trip-Hop artists, Euphonic stay true to their Hip-Hop roots and decorate the bass beats with wicked processing and Jazzy melodies. Avoid the Drum 'n' Bass pigeon-hole - it doesn't do them justice. This album is a remarkable feat of musical cross-breeding which works well and does good. Listen up geneticists.

here he puts on his fancy footwear and chooses a fine selection of durable, deep House and Garage classics from The House Music Movement to keep you healthy.

Experienced remixer/producer and obviously a bit nifty behind the decks, Doc M gives us his unashamedly American version of the story of House music, at least as we Brits know it. Leaving aside the pioneers of UK and continental Dance music, some of the artists and producers on show here

certainly get a mention in the House hall of infamy: DJ Pierre, Francois Kervorkian, George Morel, Joe T. Vanelli and Karen Pollack's best efforts are mixed into a refreshingly varied pick 'n' mix of hits.

The duff ones are few and far between, as you'd expect from someone who's famous for his ability to hold a crowd for up to eight hours. Still, there are a couple of candidates, namely Government's (where did they get that name from?) 'Basement Groove'. But this is soon forgiven as Doc puts the

boot in and hits us with a brief taste of sing-along favourite, 'Brighter Days' before the unmistakably simple but deep House formula of Mood II Swing's production of Wall Of Sound's 'I Need Your Love'.

The Doc's managed to unearth a few real gems which haven't been overplayed - original classics like The Believers' 'Who Dares To Believe In Me' is rarely heard these days. Naturally there's one by the Doc himself under the guise Blakdoktor and it stands up pretty well amongst the heavyweights. He might even like to consider spending

less time touring, if he can make records like these more often.

For the rest, who would rather be in bed than dancing to funky US House? As an added bonus, the album comes with an extra CD containing interviews on the music with some of its leading lights. If Todd Terry and Juan Atkins waxing lyrical doesn't ease you off, try the soothing tones of Steve 'Silk' Hurley: "It all evolved from the fact that I just loved music and loved playing music for people" - cute! I'm sure the Doc would agree ●

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JAZZ

by Simon Hopkins



MUSIC REVELATION
ENSEMBLE

CROSS FIRE
DIW DIW-927

Another hugely influential Jazz Rock guitarist after John McLaughlin, although one who couldn't be more different, is the American James "Blood" Ulmer. Coincidentally born the same year as McLaughlin, 1942, he led an undistinguished earlier musical career playing relatively straightforward post-Bop guitar initially with house bands in Detroit and New York and then with figures of the stature of Art Blakey and Joe Henderson. He did contribute guitar to organist Larry Young's monumental *Lawrence Of Newark* (which is thus far lamentably not issued on CD), but it was not until 1974, when he joined alto saxophonist Ornette Coleman's group, Prime Time, that he truly came into his own.

There's some contention over the degree to which Ulmer came to the improvising systems for which he became famous. Despite the claims of his more rigorous fans it seems unlikely that Ornette didn't have a huge influence on him.

Coleman is many things to many people - the most significant Jazz artist of his generation to some, a charlatan to others.

Something he's notorious for having developed with Prime Time is a mystifying, labyrinthine musical theory he terms Harmolodics. Sniffed at by detractors, Harmolodics is, at its most basic, a way that allows small or large groups to improvise collectively, with no soloist taking precedent and with no harmonic or melodic system dictating what form the improvised lines might take. Whatever the theory, the results are possibly an acquired taste, but there's little doubt that at their best, Prime Time were pretty extraordinary.

After Ulmer left the group in 1977 with this experience under his belt, he embarked upon a genuinely remarkable solo career. What was to mark this out as special was the way he grasped his R'n'B and Blues roots. Two albums in particular, 1978's *Tales Of Captain Black* and 1980's *Are You Glad To Be In America?*, really established his reputation. His overall approach (hoarse, Blues vocal and stinging, R'n'B-meet-Bebop guitar lines pitched against lopsided, jerky rhythms) found favour as much with a post-Punk generation of Rock fans as it did with the modern Jazz cognoscenti, often more so.

Over the last decade or so, Ulmer's principal energies have gone into his on-going, floating-personnel project, the Music Revelation Ensemble.

The earlier line-ups of the groups made them look more like modern ad hoc Jazz supergroups than like the compact units they've become, with such major figures as tenor saxophonist David Murray and bassist Jamaaladeen Tacuma filling its ranks. It frankly didn't always work, with the group's real star, Murray, often sounding like a fish out of water, something unusual for so versatile a player.

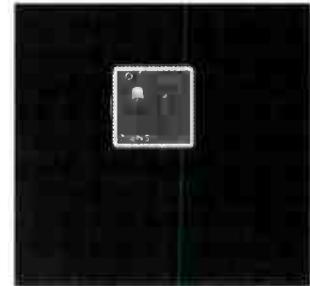
But the last couple of albums have seen Ulmer settle on a working method that's creatively far more successful. 1996's *Knights Of Power* saw the group reduced to a trio, with saxophonists - Hamiet Bluiett and Arthur Blythe - adding cameo roles. The core trio for *Cross Fire*, recorded in January last year, retains drummer Cornell Rochester, who has been with the group now since 1990's *Electric Jazz*, and sees electric bassist Calvin "Hassen Truth" Jones join them.

In itself, this is a powerful trio. Ulmer has perhaps developed in a diametrically different direction from that of many players with equally long careers. Where it's often said of others that they've 'honed their chops', in Ulmer's case the years have seen him discarding what few frills his playing contained, leaving a fairly raw carcass of a sound. Meanwhile, Rochester and Jones are a fine pairing, whose elastic rhythms and sheer power ably support the leader's compositions and improvisations.

Joining this trio, and

turning a fine session into a real blazer, are also saxophonist John Zorn and legendary tenorist Pharoah Sanders. Two very different stylists, they nonetheless both grasp the real dirt in Ulmer's music and play it for all it's worth.

Immense stuff.



PIECES

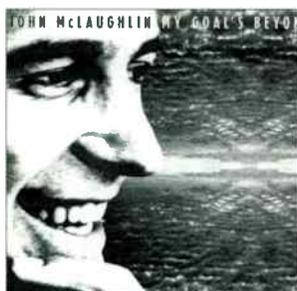
I NEED 5 MINUTES ALONE
AVANT AVAN 054

Finally, an all-too-brief mention for a real curio, but one which deserves a mention now if only because its progenitors have made regular appearances in this column (hey, continuity!) Pieces seems to be basically two San Franciscan freaks: avant-metal shred guitarist Buckethead (known here for his contributions to such Bill Laswell-led projects as Praxis, Death Cube K and Arcana) and his long-time buddy, a drummer known to we earthlings simply as Brain (a colleague in many of these aforementioned projects). Also along for the ride is a

JAZZ

singer called Herbie, whose mumbled offerings make Beck sound like Stevie Wonder.

What this threesome offer up defies categorisation more than most things here, and, yes, that's saying something: primitive synth and sequencer patterns jammed against Black Sabbath drum patterns; mind-boggling jerk-off H-M guitar solos; almost pretty acoustic guitar passages; oddly whimsical Gen-X balladry. The overall feeling is of genuine psychosis (a thought supported by the album's graphics and sleeve notes - "Buckethead thanks The Classic Sports Channel", etc). An acquired taste then, but a blast for all that.



JOHN MCLAUGHLIN
MY GOALS BEYOND
DOUGLAS MUSIC

John McLaughlin's *My Goals Beyond* remains, in many ways, a very peculiar record. Originally released in 1970, it's now being reissued on CD - not for the first time, I believe - on Douglas Music. It's a curiously serendipitous synchronicity of record company release schedules

that finds its rerelease at more or less the same moment as the first two albums by drummer Tony Williams' Lifetime. Last month in this column I reviewed the second, and, for my money, the better (although it's a close-run thing) of those CDs, *Turn It Over*.

McLaughlin left Lifetime shortly after the recording of *Turn It Over*. To say that the group burned itself out might merely sound like a naff Rock journalist's purple prose, but by many accounts, that's exactly what the first line-up of Lifetime really did. It's certainly true to say that without McLaughlin the group would never sound as powerful again.

In any case, it's not difficult to conclude that McLaughlin retreated into the studio to record *My Goals Beyond* as some act of cleansing after his 18 months with Lifetime - the music couldn't be more different. Lifetime had pretty much been the first real Jazz Rock group. Miles Davis is generally credited with giving birth to the genre, but, truly, Lifetime made a far more radical break with the Jazz tradition. They had also been, crucially, a completely electric group.

McLaughlin returned to his first love, the acoustic guitar, to record *My Goals Beyond*. And into the sessions he brought Brazilian percussionist Airtó Moreira and the great American double-bassist Charlie Haden.

In many respects, the music looks forward several

years to that he would record with the acoustic Indian/Jazz crossover supergroup Shakti in the mid-1970s. Not that the music here does much more than hint at the use of the Indian modes and time signatures which McLaughlin would begin to explore with the Mahavishnu Orchestra and then more fully with Shakti. Indeed, much of the material is drawn from the mainstream Jazz repertoire. It's more in the overall feel and mood of the music.

McLaughlin's electric playing with both Miles and Lifetime had been part of something really 'earthy'. Much is often made of how Jazz Rock can be too abstract, or un-Bluesy, but Williams' and Miles' music at that time was the music of the city, the music of the street: harsh, wildly eclectic yet deeply funky. *My Goals Beyond* is more conspicuously spiritual in its tone (compare the title alone with, say, *Bitches Brew* or *Emergency!*) This would become a hallmark of McLaughlin's music. For although *My Goals Beyond* was a brief acoustic respite before the electric onslaught of the Mahavishnu Orchestra, it set a precedent which wouldn't go away.

Miles' 1970s electric music would become ever more that of the street, evoking James Brown, Sly Stone and Hendrix as much as it did the Jazz or Classical traditions in which the trumpeter had trained. McLaughlin moved in the other direction entirely. His philosophical outlook turned east, his music, even at its

fiercest, always burning with some spiritual longing for the numinous.

My Goals Beyond was, in many respects, a turning point; its acoustic form set it apart from his recent work while the intensity of McLaughlin's playing hinted at what was to come, although it remained very different in itself.

Crucially, the recording was overseen by producer Alan Douglas, who remains an odd figure in the history of cutting-edge music over the last three decades. In spite of being reviled by many for his role in posthumously-compiled Jimi Hendrix albums, on which Hendrix's playing and singing was spliced together with newly recorded backing tracks, many of them played by musicians he'd never even met, he's still seriously regarded by some to be one of the music's most influential figures, bringing together undreamed of projects at a point - the turn of the 1970s - when anything seemed possible.

Douglas is back in business again, with a reactivated Douglas Music label releasing the finest Jazz and Jazz Rock. (This month also sees the release of an unexpected and hugely enjoyable collaboration between American and Finnish guitarists Nicky Skopelitis and Raoul Björkenheim). It's a welcome return to the fray and the reissue of *My Goals Beyond* reminds us just why ●

AVON

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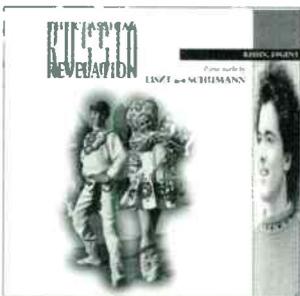
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by Peter Herring

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It was surprising to find the youthful Evgeny Kissin included among the somewhat more venerable names which adorn the list of recordings from the Revelation label, the likes of Richter, Gilels, Rostropovich and Oistrakh. But Kissin's fledgling career before he astonished his first Western audience as a 16-year-old at a Berlin concert in 1987 was in the former Soviet Union, and it was probable that, among the 400,000 mainly ex-Soviet Radio tapes to which Revelation has been granted access, there would be some early recordings by this prodigiously gifted pianist.

This selection of works by Liszt and Schumann, with the latter's Symphonic Études the major item in the programme, is drawn from two recitals, the earlier in May 1994 when Kissin was still a couple of months off his 13th birthday. Not that you would guess that from his remarkably mature and assured playing of Schumann's Abegg Variations; in some respects, particularly the articulation, it is breathtaking. Indeed, the

technique throughout is astonishing and, along with the Abegg Variations, the performances of the Liszt items are never less than impressive and, in the main, hugely satisfying.

However, I would be surprised if Kissin regards this 1989 recording as his last word on the Symphonic Études, one of Schumann's greatest compositions and here given complete with the posthumously-discovered Variations restored to the score. That Kissin is the master of the work's technical demands is never in doubt. The complex polyrhythms hold no terrors for him, and the playing of fast staccato passages is dazzling.

Less endearing is Kissin's tendency to overdo the fortissimos, and this heavy-handedness is not helped by the variable recording quality of these live concert performances. Balances vary appreciably, although the focus is never less than close, and doubtless this contributes hugely to the steely, occasionally clangorous piano tone. At the other end of the sonic spectrum, a halo of distortion sometimes

intrudes on the quieter playing.

Despite these technical drawbacks, Kissin's playing is always compelling and, while he will surely discover greater levels of poetic expression in future performances of Schumann's Études, this disc remains an intriguing portrait of a flowering talent.



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**Piano Concerto No 2
In B flat major, Op83**
Maurizio Pollini,
piano; Berlin
Philharmonic
Orchestra; conductor,
Claudio Abbado
DEUTSCHE
GRAMMOPHON 453 505-2
(DDD/48.37)

Pollini and Abbado made a noteworthy recording of this

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Waldesrauschen
(Forest Murmurs),
S145/La Leggerezza,
S144/Liebestraüme
No3 in A flat,
S541/Hungarian
Rhapsody No12 in E
minor 'Heroide
élégiaque',
S242/Études
d'exécution
Transcendante No10,
S139

ROBERT SCHUMANN
Symphonic Études,
Op13 (with
posthumous
Études)/Theme and
Variations on the
name 'Abegg',
Op1/'Widmung'
(transcribed by Liszt)
Evgeny Kissin, piano
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concerto some 20 years ago, at that time with the latter conducting the Vienna Philharmonic. This new version, recorded at a concert in Berlin's Philharmonie in December 1995, demonstrates from the outset that neither the soloist's nor the conductor's view of the piece has altered significantly in the ensuing two decades. True, the overall approach is noticeably broader, more contemplative, with the effect that the emotional core of the work, the heart-felt andante with its wistfully beautiful cello solo, is utterly spell-binding.

As always with Pollini, the integrity and scrupulousness of the reading are beyond question, and, for a concert recording, the precision of his playing is little short of phenomenal. Yet it remains a performance more gripping than immediately endearing, but one whose strengths and qualities grow more apparent with successive hearings. Pollini's uncompromisingly direct and encouragingly unvarnished treatment of this concerto has much to commend it, although there is a downside to this in the normally care-free finale where, in line with the rest of the interpretation, the swagger and exuberance are kept pretty much in check.

Elsewhere, though, the absence of spurious sentimentality and bravura are to be welcomed, Pollini instead moulding his reading around the work's conflicting

tensions and volatile inner forces. In this he is at one with Abbado and the Berlin orchestra, whose playing throughout is wholly responsive, with several telling individual contributions. Indeed, it would have given even greater satisfaction to have heard more of the Berliners but the recording does them no favours. The piano is overly prominent in the sound picture (although recorded with great lucidity and limpid refinement) and the orchestral sound, while full-bodied, lacks depth and transparency. Surely pianist and orchestra could have been better integrated without in any way inhibiting the range or presence of the solo instrument, even in the generally less-than-helpful acoustic of the Philharmonie? With these technical and artistic caveats, those who empathise with Pollini's resolutely cerebral approach will be well, if not especially generously (given the sub-fifty minutes playing time) rewarded here.



FRANZ SCHUBERT
Piano Sonata No16 in

**A minor,
Op42 - D845/Four
Impromptus,
Op142 - D935
Paolo Giacometti,
fortepiano
CHANNEL CLASSICS
CCS10697 (DDD/75.11)**

They're still in the minority, and I see no sign of a bandwagon appearing over the horizon, but the increase in the number of pianists choosing to record Schubert on the instrument of his time, the fortepiano, has been encouraging. To a list that includes, most successfully, Andreas Staier on Teldec, Peter Katin on Athene and Trudlies Leonhardt, originally on the Swiss Jecklin label but now recording with Globe of the Netherlands, must be added another Netherlands-based pianist, Paolo Giacometti. As his name suggests, the 27-year-old Giacometti is of Italian origin but has lived all but the first year of his life in Holland, where he records for the ambitious and adventurous Channel Classics.

In this recording of two of Schubert's finest keyboard inspirations, the A minor sonata D845 of 1825 and the Four Impromptus, D935, of the following year, Giacometti uses a fortepiano of the Viennese school dating from 1815, built by Salvatore Lagrassa and, to judge from the sound, superbly restored in The Netherlands by Edwin Beunk and Johan Wennink.

Commenting on his

interpretations in the accompanying booklet, Giacometti concedes that using the fortepiano inevitably brings problems of tuning and mechanical noise but adds that the subtleties of shading, dynamics and tonal colour which the instrument offers more than compensate. I can only add that, in this exceptionally clear, full and life-like recording, I was never aware of any sonic limitations: quite the opposite. There is no suggestion of a constricted range, no nagging feeling that some of the power and projection has been lost. Instead, Giacometti's taut, attentive and dramatic playing reveals new details and brings fresh insights into both the sonata and the Impromptus which, declared "too difficult" in Schubert's lifetime, remained unpublished until 1839, eleven years after the composer's death.

The peculiarly frail image of Giacometti on the booklet cover belies the command and confidence he displays in these performances, illuminating the individual character of each of the Impromptus and underlining the cogency and sometimes violent contrasts of the sonata. Yet the flowing variations of the second movement are played with rare tenderness.

With pianism of such high order, considered and persuasive interpretations and first-rate recording, what more can one ask for - except more of the same .

CLASSICAL

RECORD OF THE MONTH

Winterreise (Winter's Journey)-song cycle D911

Matthias Goerne, baritone; Graham Johnson, piano

HYPERION SCHUBERT EDITION VOLUME 30 CDJ33030 (DDD/74.08)

As Hyperion's Schubert Edition has progressed, with consistently fine contributions from a fascinating and illustrious cast of singers, it has become intriguing to speculate who from the roster of names would have the honour and challenge of performing Winterreise. This, after all, would be the apex of this mammoth project to record all of Schubert's songs; in all that vast treasure-house of music, Winterreise, surely the greatest of song cycles, is indisputably the crowning glory.

Two years ago, for Schubert's other incomparable setting of the poetry of Wilhelm Müller, Die Schöne Müllerin, the inspired choice of interpreter was the youthful Ian Bostridge and the result was universally acclaimed. Would Hyperion and the architect of the Schubert series, Graham Johnson, similarly opt for a 'young' voice in Winterreise, or would they turn to one of the tried-and-tested interpreters of German lieder? Shrewdly,

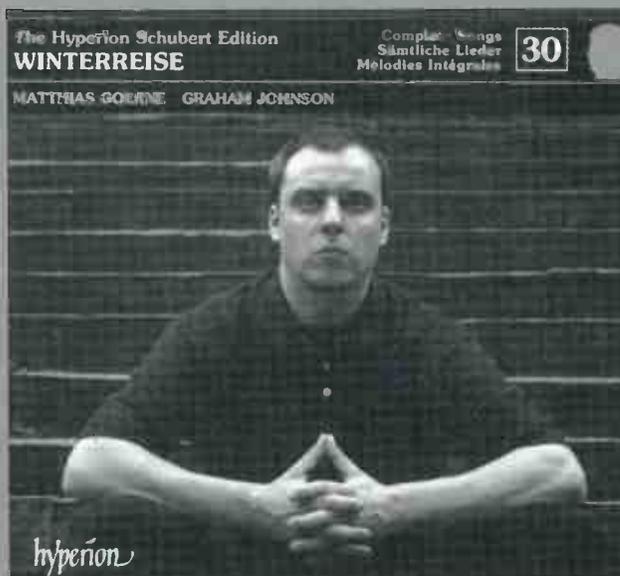
they have settled for an almost ideal blend of relative youth and considerable experience in the 30-year-old German baritone Matthias Goerne.

an absence of mannerism which is immediately appealing. Importantly, there is no mistaking that this winter's journey is being undertaken within the

darkens: his expressions of despair and melancholy do not need to be sung at funereal tempos in order to point up the contrasts with the earlier, less traumatic songs such as the exquisitely lyrical Frühlingstraum (Dream of Spring). It is easy to appreciate why some of the composer's closest acquaintances, accustomed to the radiant charm of so many of his songs, were left deeply distressed by the unremitting bleakness of so much of Winterreise.

While attention here naturally focuses on the voice, every worthwhile performance of this most profound of song cycles is necessarily the product of a partnership, and Hyperion's Winterreise is no exception.

A perfectly-tailored balance, coupled to the transparency and definition of the recording, allows the refinement, subtlety and meticulous attention to detail of Graham Johnson's accompaniment to shine through. As ever in this series, he proves the most sensitive and supportive of accompanists, and his searching analysis of Schubert's masterpiece, occupying over 100 pages of the accompanying booklet, combines erudition with deep understanding and affection. Recorded music doesn't come better performed or presented than this ●



A pupil of both Elisabeth Schwarzkopf and Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, Goerne has fast become established as perhaps the freshest and most exciting of the new generation of lieder singers. Many consider him the natural heir to Fischer-Dieskau's mantle as the supreme Schubert interpreter.

Yet, as he has demonstrated in recitals and in recordings, most memorably with a survey of Schubert's Goethe settings for Decca, the pupil is no 'clone' of his tutor. Goerne's voice has an admirable openness and directness, and

troubled, highly-charged psyche of a young man. There is nothing prosaic or routine here - every one of the 24 songs has clearly been thought through, as has the overall structure and balance of the cycle.

In the first song, Gute Nacht, for example, Goerne and his accompanist, Graham Johnson, set off at an unusually brisk and purposeful pace, but one that is entirely in keeping with the mood of Müller's verse and the place of the song in the cycle as a whole. In so doing, Goerne has ample room for manoeuvre as, later, the atmosphere

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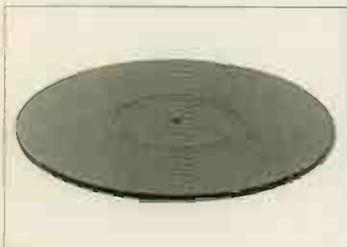
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Based around the justly famous 300B directly heated triode, we see this kit as the introduction to real Audio Amplification, as it covers all the important aspects of design necessary, Single Ended, No-Feedback, Class A, Directly Heated Triode, to become a member of this exclusive club of amplifiers.

Kit One has one 300B per channel running at 420 volts with 75mA current giving 8-9 watts of the cleanest power you will ever hear, the input stage consists of a 6SN7GT with a 5687 double triode driver stage running in SRPP. The power supply is capacitor-choke-capacitor configuration with a 5U4G HT rectifier, the 300B's have a DC filament supply for hum-free operation whilst the other valves are AC heated. Component quality is similar to our Level 2 finished products. **Audio Note** paper in oil signal capacitors, Beyschlag 1 watt 1% metal film resistors, good quality electrolytics (sorry NO Black Gates!) and a simple, attractive stereo chassis in black paintwork. We have several component and cosmetic upgrades available for **Kit One**, please ask for details.



The Kit One has recently been awarded the title "The Greatest Audio Bargain of the Twentieth Century" by Dick Olsner (ex-Stereophile) in a review on the Internet - this is just one of many rave reviews, copies of which we can supply on request.

Price: £799 incl. VAT, which includes ALL parts & valves (yes, also the 2 x 300B's needed) but not postage/packing which to UK customers is £12.

KIT ONE ORDER CODE: AN-KIT-001

Audio Note is happy to provide a wide range of complete kits, output and mains transformers, chokes, paper in oil, aluminium, tin, copper or silver foil signal capacitors, Black Gate, Cerafine or standard electrolytic capacitors, tantalum, carbon and metal film resistors, silver wires, interstage and driver transformers, switches, balance controls, potentiometers, attenuators, chassis's and fittings for the quality oriented D.N'er, whether you are a beginner or hardened experimenter, male or female, we have the best (and not always most expensive) parts for most projects.

Audio Note Loudspeaker Drivers & Kits

We shall be offering the speaker drivers that we use in our own loudspeakers for general sale from now on. You can buy the drivers individually or together with matched and tested cross-overs, cabinet drawings and reflex ports.

Audio Note Circuits, Valvedata & Basic Technical Information

If you would like some suggestions which to base a future project around, then we shall be happy to provide you with a circuit pack containing good circuits like ONGAKU, KEGON/KASSAI, NEIRO, GAKU-ON plus several other power amplifier circuits and the M7Tube & M10 pre-amplifiers, which are the best sounding pre-amplifier circuits we have come across.

Audio Note Quality Output Transformers

We are in the process of building up four separate ranges of **Audio Note** output transformers. In order to offer the best possible outputs at different pricepoints, they will fall into four categories.

Economy range Selected to ensure quality audio in a price efficient package.

Mid-price range Top quality with specially selected components.

High Quality range Double C-core outputs for single-ended circuits exclusively.

Super High Quality range All-silver wired outputs of the best possible quality.

Audio Note offer a design, prototyping and production service, where we can supply for almost any requirement. Please telephone for details.

Audio Note Mains Transformers

Available for most popular designs. We shall continue to expand the range as opportunities become available.

The Audio Note Kit Two

Kit Two features a single 6550 tetrode running in Single-Ended mode, yielding some 12 watts of pure Class A. With a valve rectified HT for the output stage, stereo chassis, and 6SN7GT input and 12AX7/ECC83 SRPP driver stage, componentry and chassis as **Kit One**.

Kit Two costs **£599 incl. VAT, includes valves, but not postage/packing.**

KIT TWO ORDER CODE: AN-KIT-002

The Audio Note Kit Three

Kit Three features 2 x 300B's per channel running in single-ended parallel yielding 16/17 watts in pure Class A. This kit is on two mono chassis with valve rectified HT supplies, no signal feedback, it uses a 6SN7GT double triode as input valve and a pair of 5687 double triodes running in SRPP as drivers. The **Kit Three** is essentially a mono version of the **Kit One** with double the power, the same component choices and on two chassis' instead of one.

The Kit Three costs **£1,550 incl. VAT but excluding delivery.**

KIT THREE ORDER CODE: AN-KIT-003

The Audio Note Kit Four

The **Kit Four** is really our introduction to valve amplifier kit building, the circuit and power supply being mounted on a single printed circuit board. The high-quality push-pull output and mains transformers are all mounted in a small aluminium chassis covering everything so nobody will be able to see that you have succumbed to the lure of the valve amplifier which is sweeping the world. The circuit consists of two 6V6GT tetrodes running in Push-Pull class A, yielding about 10 watts, driven by a 6SN7GT and a 12AX7/ECC83 input stage. Easy to build, even for the beginner. Visually **Kit Four** matches the **Audio Note** Pre-amplifier shown here but with a single chrome-plated volume control. As with all **Audio Note** kits everything (except solder) is included.

The Kit Four costs: **£299 incl. VAT but not delivery.**

KIT FOUR ORDER CODE: AN-KIT-004

Audio Note Driver, Interstage & Pre-Amplifier Output Transformers

Here is a product group that you do not see advertised every day! As usual we start small with the intention to grow quickly.

Audio Note Paper In Oil Signal Capacitors

These handmade signal capacitors are sonically superior to any of the plastic or other paper types we have come across. If you have never experienced the difference that a really good paper/oil capacitor can make in a valve amplifier, then you really should try.

Audio Note Paper In Oil Tin Foil Signal Capacitors

The tin foil is better than alu-foil for most applications, we recommend you try them!

Audio Note Paper In Oil Copper & Silver Foil Signal Capacitors

These copperfoil paper signal capacitors are considerably better than both the standard offerings and the tin foils. To start with there will be a few values / voltages of each available and we shall expand as fast as we can to cover all the popular values.

Audio Note Acid & Chloride Free Silver Solder

The best solder available, used in all our amplifiers from OTO to the mighty GAKU-ON.

Audio Note Cables & Wires

Audio Note manufacture a range of high quality copper and silver coax, speaker and wiring cables, which, depending on the overall price of the project, will do justice to any hifi system, regardless of price. Please call for prices and details.

Audio Note High Quality Stepped Attenuators & Switches

These handmade attenuators and switches are manufactured by a friend of **Mr Kondo** of **Audio Note**. They are the best you can buy.

Audio Note High Quality Valve Bases

All of our valve bases are of the highest possible quality materials. Ceramic, Teflon and gold and silver plated. If you want the best look no further - they are the ultimate!

Audio Note Resistors

Audio Note endeavour to stock the entire E12 range of all the different makes of resistor, since most are used in our products stock is generally available within four weeks.

BEYSCHLAG - HOLCO - SHINKOH Tantalum Film Resistors

AUDIO NOTE 1/2 Watt Tantalum Resistors

AUDIO NOTE 1 Watt Tantalum Resistors

AUDIO NOTE 2 Watt 1% Tantalum Resistors

AUDIO NOTE Precision Carbon Film Resistors

ALLEN BRADLEY 1 Watt 5% Carbon Film Resistors

Components & Valves

Pre-Amp Kit

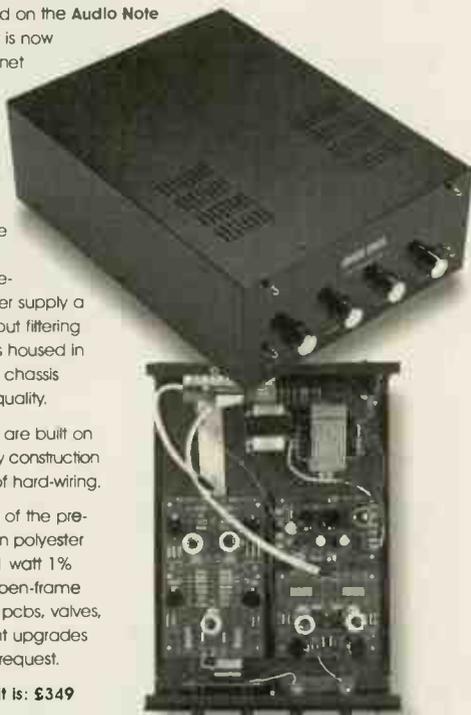
The Audio Note Pre-Amplifier Kit (illustrated)

A complete kit loosely based on the Audio Note M7Tube pre-amplifier circuit is now available. The moving-magnet compatible phono stage consists of a cascode input, with passive RIAA equalisation and anode-follower output using the 12AX7/ECC83. Line buffer/amplification for the four line inputs consists of an ECC82 configured in parallel anode-follower mode. For the power supply a valve rectifier and choke-input filtering are employed. All circuitry is housed in a non-magnetic aluminium chassis giving the very best sound quality.

Both phono and line stages are built on 'track-less' pcbs allowing easy construction but with the sonic benefits of hard-wiring.

The standard-quality version of the pre-amp kit includes Roederstein polyester film capacitors, Beyschiag 1 watt 1% metal film resistors, Noble open-frame style potentiometers and all pcbs, valves, wire etc. Various component upgrades are available, details upon request.

Cost of The Pre-Amplifier Kit is: **£349**
Incl. VAT but not delivery.



Audio Note Black Gate Electron Transfer, High Performance, Graphite Foil Capacitors

Audio Note is currently the sole source in Europe that holds any significant range of values in stock, we use literally 1000's in production, as we were the first company to realise the tremendous benefits that Black Gate capacitors offer, and we are to date the only high-end audio company in the world to incorporate Black Gate capacitors consistently in our finished products.

There are very few audio parts that promise a guaranteed improvement when replacing practically any other part, but this is what the BLACK GATE capacitors actually do. Exchanging any electrolytic capacitor anywhere in the circuit of an amplifier or in the crossover of a speaker will greatly improve sound quality. We are working on some guidelines as to where, how and which types of Black Gates to use in different circuits, the first such technical guideline is available now and is called "Improving your CD-Player" and can be obtained by sending a stamped addressed envelope to us requesting this leaflet. All AUDIO NOTE Level 2 Signature products use Black Gate Electron Transfer in critical signal / power supply junctions.

Audio Note Cerafine Powdered Ceramic Electrolytic Capacitors

We have at long last secured a reliable source for these fine power supply filter capacitors, a must in any single-ended project. The Cerafines really cover many of the Black Gates values and where the prices for the BG's are prohibitive the Cerafine is a fine sounding alternative. We have increased the range of Cerafines we stock quite recently, and strongly recommend all the Cerafines as a far superior replacement or substitute for ordinary electrolytics, and at the prices offered that should be within most budgets. All power supply Cerafines are supplied with a capacitor clamp and are upright mounting.

Audio Note Potentiometers

The best available from a sound quality / price viewpoint, made by Noble in Japan, utilising high quality conductive plastic film. However a better alternative is the KO-ON volume controls which are used in pre-amplifiers like the M7 Tube, M7Line, and in a mono version on the input in the NEIRO, KASSAI, KEGON and GAKU-ON. these are very good sounding pots by any standard.

Audio Note also carry large quantities of STANDARD TYPE SWITCHES, STANDARD ELECTROLYTIC CAPACITORS (good quality industrial types), RCA, BNC, BANDANA, PLUGS, RCA SOCKETS, SPEAKER & GROUND TERMINALS & LOUDSPEAKER SPADES.

Audio Note Moving Coil, CD Line & Input Matching Transformers

Audio Note now offer moving coil, CD and input matching transformers for general sale. Common to all of these small signal transformers is that they come in a mumetal screening can with a threaded spindle with a nut for mounting.

Valves

The Audio Note AV300BSL (illustrated)

Audio Note is proud and happy to announce a joint venture with Mr Ales Vaic of AVVT in the Czech Republic, under the agreement reached Ales Vaic's company will be making a range of directly heated triodes for small signal, driver and output stages exclusively for Audio Note. This will with time allow us to explore hitherto uncharted territory in the field of Single-Ended Audio Amplifier design, by putting us in a position to design and manufacture triodes specifically for a given purpose, something which has not been within our reach in the past, where we have always had to settle for the best amplifying devices available, but which good as many of them are, were generally made for other purposes.

Currently, we have a super linear version of the 300B available, dubbed The Audio Note AV300B SL It is available in limited numbered samples at US \$250 each either single, or in matched pairs. We will follow this fairly quickly by a new, more powerful, power triode, the Audio Note AV32B SL with 65 watt dissipation for about 18 watt class A in single-ended configuration for an expected price of US \$300 each. The Audio Note AV52B SL with an 85 watt dissipation for 28 watts of class A operation will be available in early 1998. This will be quickly followed by the most powerful and linear power triode available - the Audio Note AV62B SL with 120 watt dissipation for about 40 watt class A in single ended configuration at an expected price of US \$500 each, it will help advance the case for SE operation despite the deplorable inefficiency of most modern loudspeakers!!



Audio Note Selected Audio Valves

Our valves are selected from the best available sources and are tested to the same stringent standards that we apply in the production of our own amplifiers. They fall into two categories, standard production items and rare, mostly NOS (New Old Stock) valves which are no longer in production. We have compiled a special list of the NOS items, which is available against a stamped self addressed envelope, if you live outside the UK, send US \$2. You should be aware that the valves on this list are NOT cheap, but we have stock of original GE, RCA and United Electronics 211, both standard versions and reinforced anode type for the US airforce, 845 Westinghouse, VT25/110/Y, VT62/801A, WE300B, STC4300A, Mullard GZ34/CV1377, Tungsol 5U4G (best sounding 5U4G we have ever heard!), Chatham 5R4WGY and many others.

Audio Note Recommended Magazines Full list available on request.

Listener - Review based music & hi-fi magazine that contains some of the best considered & well written articles in print. A very good read £4 per copy.

The Audio Adventure - Well produced publication, a good alternative to the established magazines. Not afraid to be controversial. £4 per copy.

Sound Practices - Our best seller. A must for all DIY projects. Contributors include Audio Note, Herb Reichert and Diego Nardi. £5 per copy.

Vacuum Tube Valley - Specialising in anything to do with audio valves. A wealth of information on specific valves and their applications. £8.50 per copy.

Positive Feedback - Including zany, controversial articles from a wide range of contributors including our own Peter Qvortrup. £7 per copy.

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DPA PDM 1.7 DAC 7 Two Box DAC		£1000	£395
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	AMPS	RRP	NOW
Naim NAC 72K		£805	£495
Naim NAP 140		£750	£450
Naim NAC 92 MM		£550	£350
Naim NAP 90		£450	£295
Naim NAC 32K		£370	£145
Quad 606 MK II		£718	£450
Quad 405 MK 11x3 (Full recent rebuild by Quad)		£500	£295
Quad 77 + Remote		£850	£550
Linn Majik		£650	£395
Linn Kaim		£1700	£795
Musical Fidelity A1001		£2500	£1995

	SPEAKERS	RRP	NOW
Naim IBL Black		£1000	£395
Linn Kabers (Special Rosewood finish latest spec)		£2500	£995
Linn Kabers (Black MK I)		£2000	£495
Acoustic Energy AE1 + AE1 Stands		£1145	£650
TDL Studio 1M Rosewood + Stands		£1000	£495
Linn Sara 9 + Stands		£1000	£395
Meridian D600 Rosewood (Digital Active)		£3000	£1495
Linn Kans + Stands (Teak)		£500	£195

	TURNTABLES	RRP	NOW
Roksan Xerxes Black		£700	£295
Roksan Artemiz		£950	£395
Rock II + Rega 250 + Ortofon MC20 Sup		£850	£350
SME V (Boxed As New)		£1500	£1200

	AUDIO VISUALS	TUNERS
Yamaha 590	£350	£145
Yamaha 390	£300	£95
Naim 101 + Snaps		£800
		£495

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TL12+ (Pair)	£300
Stereo 20	£250
TL12.1 (Pair)	£1500
TL25+ (single) Black	£150
Varislope (very early)	
LW/MW/SW	£50
Troughline (very early) FM	£60

Decca FFSS Cartridges £50 to £80	
Decca MKI Arm	£25
SME 3012 Series II	£200
SME 3009 Series II	£70
Garrard 301	£150
Garrard 401	£120
Shure M61-2 Stereo	
Pre-Amp 220V	£40
Tannoy Hi-Gain 15 Amplifier	£50

Valves (G.E.C. Mullard etc)	
KT66, ECC81/2/3, 6SN7GT + Many Others.	
Please Phone For Details.	

Most Models Of Leak Mono + Stereo Pre-Amps In Stock.

Spare Parts For Quad + Leak - Transformers etc.

Vintage Classical LP's Bought and Sold
Decca - SXL
Columbia - SAX
HMV - ASD
RCA - SB + LSC
+ Furtwangler / De Vito Martzy Etc
Please Phone or Fax wanted list

Speakers	
Tannoy 3LZ (Pair)	£200
Wharfedale W15FS D/Unit (Single)	£15
Wharfedale W15RS D/Unit (Single)	£15
Ferranti M1 Plus D/Unit (1930's)	£15
Lowther corner acoustas (pair) original PM6 1 drive unit open circuit	£350
Decca deccola corner speakers (Pair)	£200
Tannoy speakers + drive units for sale please phone for details	
Microphones: various, please phone for details	

Wanted

Tannoy Speakers - Lancaster, York, G.R.F. and Autograph.

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Cambridge P25 Int. (fair c.)	s/h	-	69.95
Nytech CTP 102 preamp (vgc)	s/h	-	79.95
Moth Passive pre/phono stage/power supply (vgc)	s/h	450.00	229.95
Quad 405 I power amp (g.c.)	s/h	-	199.95
Quad 44 preamp (vgc)	s/h	-	249.95
Arwa X003 2x40 watts Int. (phono stage) (mint)	s/h	140.00	99.95
Beard P500 Export/MM Phono/P80 Export power amp (valve) recent service and new valves (g/c)	s/h	-	799.95
Audio Innovation '2nd Audio' triode monoblock power amps/Series 1000 passive pre (recent full service/new valves (vgc)	s/h	3500.00	1195.95
Denon PHA250 2x30 watts Int. (mint)	s/h	-	99.95
Philips Black Tulip 280 preamp (vgc)	s/h	-	89.95
Sony TAF 170 Int. amp (mint)	s/h	-	99.95
Luxman CX-100/MO2 pre/power amp			
2x150 watts (preamp has acrylic cover showing all internals (vgc)	s/h	-	399.95
Luxman Z S02 advance direct coupled preamp (vgc)	s/h	-	149.95
Luxman RX 102 Classic 70's receiver with servo panel (g.c.)	s/h	-	139.95
Mission Cyrus II/PSX PSU (late cast chassis model) (vgc)	s/h	550.00	369.95
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Sugden C 51/A 51 Class A pre/pwr (good c.)	s/h	-	329.95
Sansui CT77/B77 pre/pwr (fair c.)	s/h	-	129.95
Musical fidelity A2 2x25 watts Class A 852 (mint)	s/h	500.00	399.95
DPA DSP 2005 line pre-amp	s/h	500.00	299.95
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Quad 44 Pre (Grey Phono version (mint/as new)	s/h	700.00	299.95

TURNTABLES

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Gale 301 II bi-wire (mint) (black)	s/h	325.00	189.95
A.R. 28 (walnut) (f.c.)	s/h	-	99.95
Mordaunt Short Carnival II (mint/as new)	s/h	-	89.95
Royd Sintra I (black)	s/h	370.00	169.95
Ruzark Talisman II bi-wire (rosewood) (mint)	s/h	710.00	549.95
Ruzark Templar II bi-wire (light oak) (mint)	s/h	600.00	429.95
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System 935 (light ash) bi-wire (mint/as new)	s/h	410.00	329.95
Mission 780 bi-wire (black) (vgc)	s/h	-	119.95
Linn Index II bi-wire (black) (mint)	s/h	260.00	179.95
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Kel Kit 104 & B 8 200's/T 27's/passive rads/x-overs (g.c.)	s/h	-	99.95
Snell Type K (walnut) (f.c.)	s/h	700.00	299.95
Lumley Reference 3 (light oak) (mint)	s/h	900.00	595.00
Rel Sirata II 80 watts active sub. (mint)	s/h	575.00	399.95
B&W DM.6 300 watts/3. way monitors (teak) (g.c.)	s/h	-	349.95
Mission 764i Bi-wire floorstanders (black) (g.c.)	s/h	680.00	269.95

CASSETTE DECKS/REEL TO REEL

Nakamichi 1000 Tri-Tracer 3 head etc (f.c.)	s/h/thousands	349.95	
NAD 6240 playtime etc (vgc)	s/h	-	99.95
Technics RS-8X 501 autoreverse etc (mint)	s/h	230.00	139.95
Yamaha R220 2 motor drive etc (mint/as new)	s/h	-	79.95
Technics RS 8505 HX Pro etc (vgc)	s/h	-	129.95

Arwa A3800 3 head/computer/auto demag etc (mint)/s/h	-	139.95	
Arwa ADF 370 HX-Pro etc (vgc)	s/h	-	79.95

COMPACT DISC PLAYERS

Technics SL PG 470A full remote etc (mint)	s/h	150.00	99.95
Arcam alpha 5 remote etc (mint/as new)	s/h	450.00	249.95
Philips CD732 remote etc: Bitstream (mint)	s/h	140.00	99.95
DPA 'Little Bit' DAC (g.c.)	s/h	300.00	119.95
Musical Fidelity X-Act DAC (mint/as new)	s/h	130.00	109.95
Marantz CD 63 II K.I. signature (mint/as new)	s/h	500.00	299.95
Technics SLP 350 (Rose silver remote) (g.c.)	s/h	-	89.95
Pioneer RCD 945 BX discreet remote (mint/as new)	s/h	379.00	269.95
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Rotel RCD 945 BX remote (mint)	s/h	-	149.95
Technics SL-PG 380A (vgc)	s/h	-	99.95
Marantz CD 72 remote bitstream (mint)	s/h	400.00	249.95
Rotel RCD 965BX remote/bitstream (vgc)	s/h	300.00	169.95
Pioneer PD 9700 full remote/digital out (mint)	s/h	400.00	229.95
Marantz CD 72 S.E. copper-clad chassis etc. (mint)	s/h	600.00	369.95

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Target DS 5 shell/3 leg equipment stand (vgc)	s/h	200.00	159.95
Sony SA 3ES RDS digital tuner (mint)	s/h	250.00	179.95
Target 5 shelf equipment stand (g.c.)	s/h	-	119.95
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Rega Bias MM cartridge (vgc)	s/h	40.00	25.00
JVC TR 6L silver digital tuner (g.c.)	s/h	-	59.95
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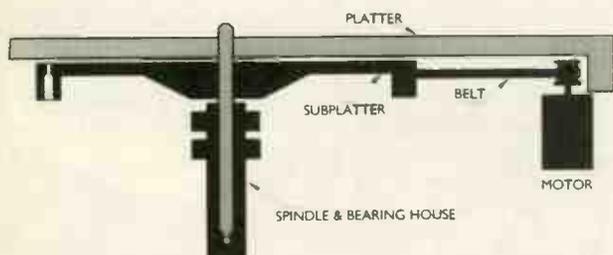
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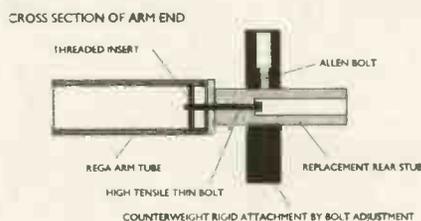


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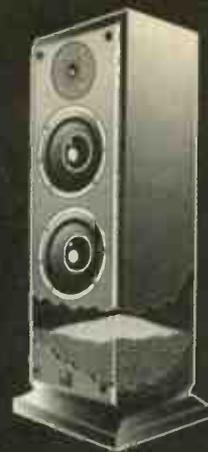


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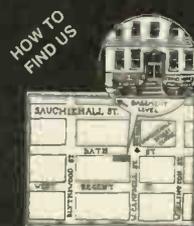
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Arcam	Alpha 6	Amplifier	S	1	£330.00	£200.00
Arcam	Alpha 8	CD Cd Player	X	1	£520.00	£375.00
Audiolab	8000 A	Amplifier	X	2	£500.00	£400.00
Audiolab	8000 S	Amplifier	X	1	£700.00	£560.00
Audiolab	8000 CD	Cd Player-Ex Dem but unused!	X	1	£1,000.00	£800.00
Castle	Isis	Bookshelf Loudspeaker-Mahogany	X	1	£250.00	£175.00
Castle	Severn II	Loudspeaker of the year 1997-Yew	N	1	£670.00	£600.00
Celestion	9	2 Way Loudspeakers	N	1	£290.00	£190.00
Celestion	A 1	Loudspeakers with Stands Black	X	1	£1,100.00	£700.00
Cyrus	Cyrus 1	Amplifier	S	1	£279.00	£100.00
Cyrus	Remote	Remote Control	S	1	£100.00	£25.00
Linn	Tukan	Loudspeakers	S	1	£475.00	£250.00
Meridian	501 V	Preamplifier	X	1	£700.00	£400.00
Meridian	541	AV Processor	X	1	£1,100.00	£695.00
Meridian	566	Digital to Analogue converter	X	1	£1,095.00	£795.00
Misson	733i	Loudspeaker - £100 OFF	X & 2	£300.00	£230.00	
Nad	910	Surround Sound Processor	S	1	£400.00	£150.00
Naim	HICAP	Power Supply Old Style	S	1	£800.00	£350.00
Naim	NAC 32	Pre Amplifier Old Style	S	1	£370.00	£200.00
Naim	NAC 32.5	Pre Amplifier Old Style	S	1		£250.00
Naim	NAP 110	Power Amplifier Old Style	S	1		£200.00
Pioneer	CLD D925	Laserdisc Player - HALF PRICE!	N	2	£800.00	£400.00
Quad	77 Preamp	Pre-amplifier	N	1	£850.00	£680.00
Rega	Planar 78	78 rpm Turntable	S	1	£215.00	£125.00
Rotel	RB 960	Power Amplifier	S	1	£225.00	£150.00
Rotel	RB 970	Power Amplifier	S	1	£225.00	£160.00
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Yamaha	DSPA 2070	Prologic Amplifier - HALF PRICE!	N	2	£1,100.00	£499.00
Yamaha	DSPA 990	Prologic Amplifier - HALF PRICE!	N	2	£900.00	£399.00
Yamaha	DSPA 590	1996 Pro-logic Amplifier of the year	X	1	£350.00	£200.00
Yamaha	DSPA 592	Pro-logic - Dolby Digital Upgradable	X	2	£330.00	£300.00
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MEASURED PERFORMANCE

PHONO STAGE

SONIC FRONTIERS PHONO 1

Much like our own KLPP1 designed a few years ago by Andy Grove, Sonic Frontiers phono stage utilises the incredible dynamic range of valves in conjunction with low-noise J-FET inputs to offer a "universal" phono stage, one lacking an additional MC (Moving Coil) gain stage with obligatory MM/MC switch. Instead, the SF provides a single, fixed MC-compatible gain of x500.

This means the stage swings relatively high output volts when fed

a strong MM (Moving Magnet) input signal. However, since MMs rarely produce much more than 10mV on occasional peaks, average output hovering around 5mV, with MMs this stage will produce 2.5V-5V output max, not enough to overload the odd buffered input.

Frequency response was flat from 5Hz up to 128kHz, following the RIAA curve very closely throughout. Since there is no warp filtering, warped records and resultant loudspeaker cone flap will be a problem with some set-ups/LPs. Distortion was low at 0.2% maximum, second harmonic only -

not a subjective problem at all. Input noise was exceptionally low, measuring just 0.1µV.

SF have put some very good circuits into the Phono 1 to make it a fine design. NK

Frequency response	5Hz-128kHz
Separation	90dB
Equivalent input noise	0.1µV
Distortion	0.2%
Gain	x500
Overload	100mV in/50V out

CD PLAYER

PINK TRIANGLE NUMERAL

The frequency response shown was obtained with a frequency sweep rather than our usual impulse method because the Numeral wouldn't trigger on the impulse. As can be seen from the oscillogram, there is a gentle roll-off at higher frequencies which ensures smoothness.

Distortion measurements were very good, as were the separation figures, demonstrating that Pink Triangle are well on the ball digitally. The -30dB trace shows small amounts of harmonic distortion which are predominantly odd-order - this could lead to an edginess to the sound, but because of the low levels shouldn't cause any problems. Output is a little high at 2.2V but overall the Numeral is well engineered. KB

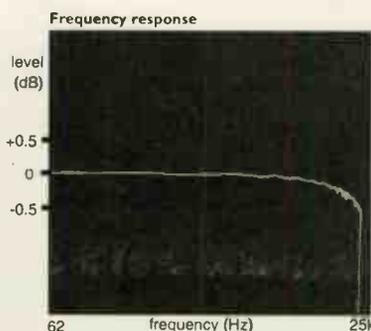
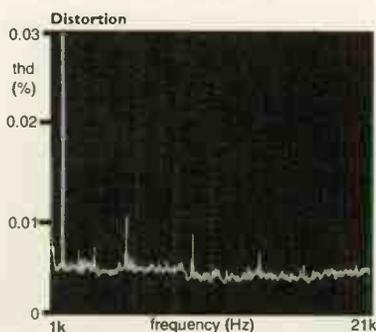
Frequency Response 4Hz-20kHz

Distortion (%)	left	right
-6dB	0.0035	0.0036

-30dB	0.021	0.022
-60dB	0.29	0.38
-90dB	29.2	30.4
-90dB dithered	13.7	15.6

Separation (dB)	left	right
1kHz	117	118
20kHz	101	94

Noise	-106dB
with emphasis	-106dB
Dynamic range	117dB
Output	2.2V





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Douglas Floyd-Douglas
Hi-Fi World Feb. '98

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...Jason Kennedy Hi-Fi Choice April 97

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B&W CDM1 Speakers Red Ash Finish	£600	£450
Cyrus AV-Master Pro-Logic Processor	£650	£550
Exposure 17/18 Pre/Power Amplifier	£1700	£1495
Marantz CD67 CD Player	£270	£185
Neat Mystique Speakers Cherry Finish	£650	£585
Proac Studio 250 Speakers Cherry Finish	£2249	£1995
REL Q50 Active Subwoofer	£375	£295
Rotel RC970/RB970 Pre/Power Amp	£395	£275
Yamaha DSP-E390 Pro-Logic Processor	£250	£125
Yamaha DSP-A590 Pro Logic Amplifier	£350	£230
Yamaha DSP-E580 Pro Logic Processor	£450	£365
Yamaha DSP-E1000 7 Channel Pro Logic Processor	£700	£595
Yamaha DSP-3090 7 Channel AC3 Amplifier	£1500	£1195

QUALITY USED EQUIPMENT

Arcam Alpha Plus CD Player	N/A	£150
Arcam Alpha 6 CD Player	£600	£395
Audiolab 8000A Integrated Amplifier	£500	£350
Audiolab 8000C Pre Amplifier	£580	£395
Dual CS 505-3 Semi-Automatic Turntable	£250	£120
EPOS ES11 Loudspeakers Black Finish (inc. stands)	£550	£350
Linn LP12 With Ittok Arm and ATOC9	N/A	£495
Ruark Sabre Loudspeakers Walnut Finish (inc. stands)	N/A	£195
Sony MDP850D Laser Disc Player	£700	£250
Spendor BC1 Loudspeakers Teak Finish	N/A	£349

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LOUDSPEAKERS

KELLY TRANSDUCERS KT3

The Kelly KT3 loudspeakers justified their claim to be very sensitive under test by generating a good 93dB sound pressure level from one nominal watt (2.84V) of input. This is enormous, 90dB being very good from a large floor stander. The result is these 'speakers will go heinously loud at a very low volume-control setting, much louder than all rivals. I don't recall measuring anything greater than 91dB in the past.

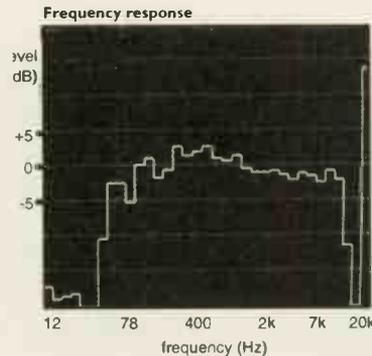
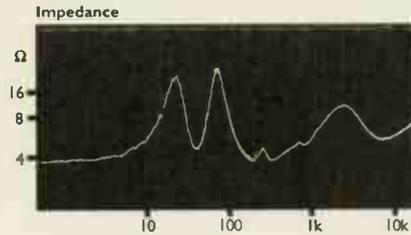
However, by engineering in a low overall impedance of five ohms (measured), manufacturers Musical Fidelity have organised a tail wind for themselves. The KT3s will draw more current and therefore more electrical power than an eight-ohm loudspeaker, so whilst their voltage sensitivity is good, their true efficiency isn't quite as great. They will give a little less output with valve amps, but with a reasonably smooth impedance curve - reflex peaks excepted - these 'speakers will

still be a pretty easy load and valve-amp friendly I suspect. Generally though, the KT3s need little power to go very loud. Amplifiers of five watts to about 30watts will be fine. More powerful amps will do also, but of course volume simply has to be kept down.

Frequency response proved reasonably even, as our analysis shows. Integration between the central tweeter and the two bass/midrange units was excellent, giving a smooth response even off-axis. Ours is an averaged forward response. The rise in output below 1kHz will add some warmth and body.

Bass starts to roll down smoothly in this shot, reaching down to 50Hz (-6dB) in use, with the 'speaker sitting on the floor.

The KT3s are well engineered all round and a very interesting proposition. They will get the best out of low-power, high-quality amplifiers. **NK**



B&W CDM1SE

B&W have integrated the tweeter and Kevlar midrange unit of this 'speaker well. I'm surprised that with all the front-panel paraphernalia of protective mesh, sloped baffle and what have you there aren't some phase peaks/suckouts, but B&W have adeptly avoided these problems.

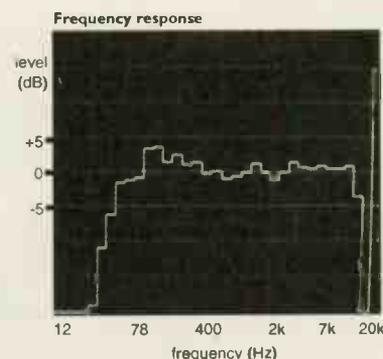
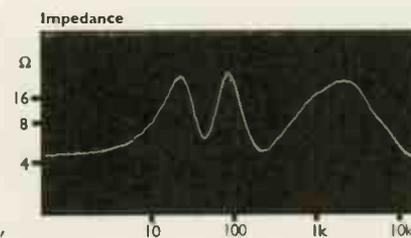
The ruler-flat response will likely translate into a reasonably bright sound, not peaky but possibly with some stridency, depending upon tweeter quality. Few of today's tweeters are good enough to be run flat to 20kHz - ribbons and the Audax piezo-electric gold-dome are the exceptions. Detailing will be good though, due to the absence of a midrange crossover suckout.

B&W have lifted bass by +3dB to give body, warmth and "enthusiasm". This, in my experience, is just about right in degree. Too much and the 'speaker booms (one-note); too little and it

sounds bass light and overdamped. This sort of peaking usually increases the rate of bass roll-off, compromising downward extension. The CDM1 reaches down to 50Hz (-6dB, no bung in the port) but in practice upper bass output around 125Hz will dominate the sound; I doubt if deep bass will be readily apparent.

The impedance curve is characterised by vertiginous slopes, indicative of heavy reactance and energy storage. Nothing too clever here, I'm afraid. Impedance hit a low of four ohms - not too bad - but the peaks brought the overall figure up to 7ohms, so generally the CDM1SEs will not draw heavy current. High sensitivity (for a small 'speaker) of 88dB will also discourage current draw, so low-ish power designs of 30watts-50watts should suffice in most circumstances.

Could do better, but good all the same. **NK**



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CASSETTE DECK

AIWA AD-F850

The AD-F850 has a dual-capstan transport for good speed stability. Tests showed there was little capstan wow, seen as an absence of distinct shoulders (sidebands) 6Hz either side of the main test-tone peak at left in our spectrum analysis. The shoulders can be seen, but are at a relatively low level. Sharpness of the peak indicates low cyclic drift and absence of flutter peaks across the centre of the analysis is also a good sign. Aiwa's transport in this deck measures well and reflects the strengths of dual-capstan operation. Music will sound stable and temporally well focused.

The AD-F850 lacks Dolby S, but it has a good recording head, which goes some way to maintaining dynamic range. Recordings can be peaked at around +4 above 0dB on the record level display before serious distortion starts to set in, a healthy value. Likewise, Ferric and Chrome tapes could be pushed in terms of record level.

Frequency response with standard blank tapes like TDK MA, SA and AD was very level and even. Bias adjustment affected Metal tape response almost as much as Ferric and Chrome, so Metals can be tuned in effectively. Frequency response with TDK MA Metal tape can be

seen in our analysis. It is very flat, so the deck will give an even sounding tonal balance on recordings.

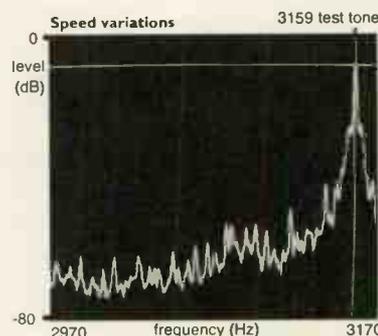
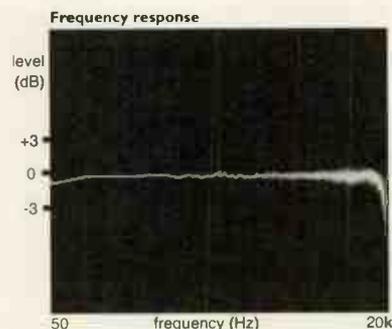
Replay performance was a bit mediocre. Head azimuth error introduced some treble fall off, meaning pre-recordeds will generally sound a little dull, especially with Dolby B engaged, since this exacerbates the situation. The transport ran a little fast too, but not so much as to be very noticeable.

The AD-F850 measured well. It will produce good recordings with any tape. Replay of pre-recordeds will be good, if not quite top-notch. NK

REPLAY (pre-recorded tapes)
 Frequency response (-2dB) 30Hz-12kHz
 Speed accuracy +1.2% fast
 Hiss (70uS, Dolby out) -58dB

RECORDING (blank tapes)
 Frequency response (IEC Primary Refs.)
 Ferric (IECI) 12Hz-16kHz
 Chrome (IECII) 12Hz-16kHz
 Metal (IECIV) 12Hz-19kHz
 Separation (1kHz) 64dB
 Distortion (315Hz) 0.7%
 Hiss (70uS, Dolby out) -55.5dB
 Speed variations (DIN total) 0.08%
 Flutter energy (3-3.13kHz) -39dB

MOL/SAT (IEC Refs)	315/10k
IEC I (Ferric)	4dB/-7.5dB
IECII (Chrome)	3.5dB/-6dB
IECIV (Metal)	3.5dB/0dB



SUBWOOFER

REL Q100E

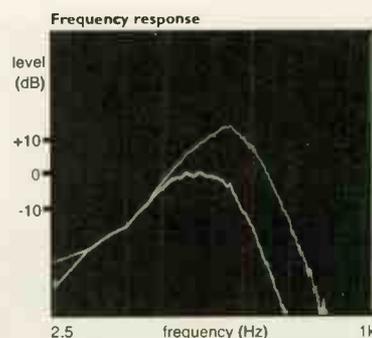
Subwoofers need to operate from 40Hz downward. For matching purposes, level and the upper roll-off frequency both need to be reducible. In this respect, the REL was inflexible. Set flat it goes low, reaching right down to 16Hz (-6dB), so in this respect for the size of cabinet it gives an excellent performance. Passive subwoofers generally peak around 40Hz and boom madly; the REL truly goes low.

Set flat (upper roll-off set to MIN), and with DEPTH rather than SLAM selected, the upper limit measured a relatively high 75Hz. This will match a real miniature, but it is too high for a Wharfedale Diamond, for example, or in other words a small

hi-fi loudspeaker. The resultant peak around 65Hz, where outputs add, will result in boominess. The neat band-pass response of the REL set as above can be seen in our frequency response analysis. Note that the vertical scale at left is 10dB, unlike our other 'speaker analyses, which are 5dB.

Bringing down the upper roll-off frequency actually has the effect of increasing gain and peaking up the response at around 60Hz. If there's a logic in this, it escapes me. Downward extension is curtailed, as you can see in our analysis, and the Q100E won't match in any better either. So this REL cannot be tuned to accurately match any loudspeaker that reaches down to 40Hz or so, as

most small-to-medium sized hi-fi designs do. Whilst the REL really does reach down low, it is unlikely to match loudspeakers other than the very smallest. NK



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Unison Research Smart 845	Mint S/H	£2300.00	£3000.00
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Musical Fidelity XA 50 Mono	As New	£425.00	£500.00
Audio Research VT130	Mint S/H	£3995.00	£6000.00
Jadis JA 80 Monoblocks	Mint S/H	£4995.00	£10000.00
Jadis JA 200	Mint S/H	£7500.00	£16000.00
Naim Nap 140 (New style)	Mint S/H	£450.00	£650.00
Meridian 551 Integrated	As New	£650.00	£900.00
PRE AMPLIFIERS			
Unison Research Mystery One	Mint S/H	£995.00	£2000.00
Expressive Technologies SM Step Up	Mint S/H	£1500.00	£3000.00
Jadis JP 80 mc	As New	£6500.00	£12000.00
Audio Research LS3	Mint S/H	£1195.00	£1900.00
Audio Research SP15 Rev A	Mint S/H	£2495.00	£6000.00
Audio Research LS5 mk II	Mint S/H	£3000.00	£5700.00
Audio Research SP11 mk II	Mint S/H	£1795.00	£3500.00
Audio Research LS1	Mint S/H	£ 895.00	£1900.00
SPEAKERS			
Wilson System 5.1	Mint S/H	£12500.00	£17000.00
Castle Howard	Mint S/H	£795.00	£1400.00
Proac Response 3	Mint S/H	£1795.00	£3000.00
Wilson 3/2	Mint S/H	£5995.00	£15000.00
Linn Keltiks	Mint S/H	£3500.00	£6600.00
Sonus Faber Guarneri	Mint S/H	£4000.00	£6000.00
Alon Lotus SE	New	£3000.00	-
Sonus Faber Extrema + Stands	Mint S/H	£4250.00	£7000.00
TURNTABLES/ANALOGUE/ VARIOUS			
Transfiguration Temper	As New	£1500.00	£2500.00
Tesseract Phono Stage mm/mc	Mint S/H	£795.00	£1500.00
Linn LP12 Lingo/Cirkus	Mint S/H	£1200.00	£2000.00
Voyd 0.5 SME V (ref bearing /platter)	Mint S/H	£1800.00	£3000.00
Ortofon MC 7500	Mint S/H	£1295.00	£2250.00
Kiseki Agat Ruby	Mint S/H	£1495.00	£ V Rare
Kiseki Purpleheart Sapphire	Mint S/H	£ 495.00	£1200.00
C.D PLAYERS			
Micromega Minium C D	Mint S/H	£275.00	£350.00
DPA PDM1 Series 3	Mint S/H	£550.00	£1000.00
Mark Levinson 30.5/31	Mint S/H	£11500.00	£24000.00
Sony R1/S1	As New	£4950.00	£8000.00

Snell JII's	Mint S/H	£450.00	£800.00
Infinity IRS Beta	Mint S/H	£4995.00	£12000.00
Marin Logan CLS IZ & Knergetic Subwoofer	Mint S/H	£4500.00	£10000.00
Dalquist DQ12	Mint S/H	£595.00	£1500.00
Spendor SP2/2	Mint S/H	£395.00	£769.00
Monitor Audio 700 PMC	Mint S/H	£450.00	£600.00
Westlake HR1 (Retail £20,000)	Mint S/H	£6995.00	£20000.00
Alon Phalanx	Mint S/H	£9995.00	£19000.00
Acoustic Energy AE1 & Stands	Mint S/H	£695.00	£1170.00
Proac Response 4	Mint S/H	£7995.00	£12500.00
Soundlab Dynastat	Mint S/H	£2500.00	£3790.00
Apogee Centaur Minors	Mint S/H	£595.00	£1500.00
Meridian M60 Rosewood	Mint S/H	£1395.00	£2350.00
Royd Priors	Mint S/H	£495.00	£ 950.00
Wilson Watts 2 (White)	Mint S/H	£2500.00	£6000.00
Shahinian Arc	Mint S/H	£995.00	£1500.00
Alon V mk II Oak	Mint S/H	£2500.00	£5000.00
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Exposure V Active x over	Mint S/H	£495.00	£ 995.00
McCormack Micro Line Drive	As New	£395.00	£ 595.00
Mod Squad Line Drive	Mint S/H	£250.00	£450.00
Krell PAM 3 Pre amp	Mint S/H	£1295.00	£3000.00
Musical Fidelity MVT	Mint S/H	£595.00	£1200.00
Michell Argo & Hera	Mint S/H	£495.00	£ 900.00
Jadis JP 80 mm	Mint S/H	£4995.00	£8000.00

Power Amplifiers

	Condition	Choice Price	Original Retail Price
Audio Research VT 60	Mint S/H	£1295.00	£2390.00
Alchemist Kraken x 2 Stereo & Pre-amp	Mint S/H	£695.00	£1400.00
Conrad Johnson MF 2300	Mint S/H	£1895.00	£2990.00
Audio Research M300 monoblocks	Mint S/H	£4995.00	£10000.00
Jadis JA500 monoblocks	Mint S/H	£7995.00	£21000.00
Lumley REF 120 monoblocks	Mint S/H	£1695.00	£3200.00
Albary PP1	Mint S/H	£295.00	£450.00
Conrad Johnson Prem 8a	Mint S/H	£7995.00	£16000.00
Boulder 500 AE	Mint S/H	£3295.00	£5000.00
LFD PA1/LS1	Mint S/H	£895.00	£1998.00
NVA A80 Monoblocks & P50 Pre-amp	Mint S/H	£995.00	£1760.00
Musical Fidelity P180 & CRPS	Mint S/H	£895.00	£1600.00
Krell KSL Pre-amp	Mint S/H	£1095.00	£3000.00
Meridian 557	As New	£1050.00	£1400.00
Audio Innovations S500 Integrated	Mint S/H	£495.00	£999.00
Meridian 505 Monoblocks	As New	£1195.00	£1590.00
Mark Levinson ML 2 Monoblock	Mint S/H	£2795.00	£15500.00
Audio Research D200	Mint S/H	£1995.00	£3248.00
Audio Research D240 mk II	Mint S/H	£1795.00	£3500.00
Audion 300B Silver Knights	Mint S/H	£1495.00	£2800.00
Talk Electronics 2P	As New	£475.00	£730.00

Pre Amplifiers

	Condition	Choice Price	Original Retail Price
Audio Research SP14	Mint S/H	£1395.00	£3000.00
Audio Research PH1 Black	Mint S/H	£795.00	£1500.00
MC Cormack TLC-1	As New	£595.00	£ 995.00
Tesseract Tala	Mint S/H	£795.00	£1495.00
Boulder LSAE	X-Dem	£2250.00	£3400.00
Conrad Johnson Prem 7B	Mint S/H	£5995.00	£11000.00

Quality Speakers

	Condition	Choice Price	Original Retail Price
ATC SCM 10 Black	Mint S/H	£795.00	£1150.00
Impulse M2	Mint S/H	£1295.00	£2250.00
Epos ES 14	Mint S/H	£395.00	£675.00
Alon IV mk II	Ex Dem	£2000.00	£3500.00

CD Players & DACS

	Condition	Choice Price	Original Retail Price
Pink Triangle da Capo 1307	Mint S/H	£895.00	£1450.00
EAD 7000 Transport	Mint S/H	£1295.00	£2495.00
Krell Studio 2	Mint S/H	£1495.00	£3198.00
P.S. Audio Ultralink	Mint S/H	£795.00	£2390.00
EAD 9000 Series III HDCD	Mint S/H	£3250.00	£6000.00
Wadia 16	As New	£4750.00	£7395.00
Mission Cyrus Discmaster (Transport)	Mint S/H	£595.00	£1000.00
Krell SBP 64X	Mint S/H	£3500.00	£9900.00
M C Cormack DAC-1	Mint S/H	£695.00	£995.00
Wadia 22/26	As New	p.o.a.	
Acuphase PD70	Mint S/H	£2250.00	£4500.00
Acuphase DP90/91	Mint S/H	£9950.00	£20000.00
Mark Levinson 30.5/ 31.5	Mint S/H	£12500.00	£26245.00
Forsell Air Ref Transport mk II			
Forsell Air Ref dac	Mint S/H	£8995.00	£13800.00
Rotel 965 BX	Mint S/H	£250.00	£300.00
DPA PDM 2 Silver Wired	As New	£995.00	£2500.00
Meridian 500 Transport	As New	£995.00	£1245.00
Audio Alchemy Transport		£495.00	£900.00
Theta Progeny	Mint S/H	£750.00	£1145.00
Marantz CD94/CDA94	Mint S/H	£595.00	£1500.00
Micromega Duo CD2	Mint S/H	£995.00	£2000.00

Turntables & Analogue

	Condition	Choice Price	Original Retail Price
VPI HW 19 jr/ RB 300	As New	£550.00	£750.00
Piere Lurne J1/SL5	Mint S/H	£1750.00	£4500.00
Kuzma Stabi/ Stogi reference	Mint S/H	£1295.00	£2600.00
Stax SR Gamma Pro & SRMX Pro Energizer	Mint S/H	£350.00	£500.00
Basis Ovation	As New	£3495.00	£4950.00
Piere Lurne J1/Sowther mk III	Mint S/H	£2250.00	£4500.00
VPI TNT Wheaton III	Mint S/H	£1995.00	£5000.00
Musical Fidelity T1 Tuner	Mint S/H	£195.00	£450.00
TNT mk III & Lid	Mint S/H	£3995.00	£4000.00
Clear Audio Gamma 24 CT Gold Col	As New	£495.00	£900.00
Forsell Air Force One	As New	£11995.00	£25000.00
Kinshaw Overture Phono	Mint S/H	£250.00	£395.00
Michel ISO	Mint S/H	£295.00	£400.00

Clearance Bargains

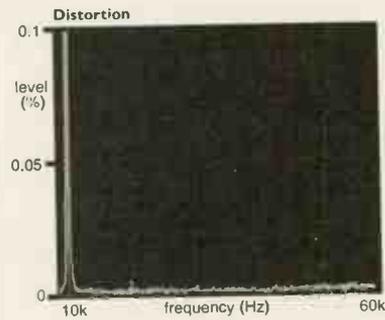
	Condition	Choice Price	Original Retail Price
Audio Research D125 balanced power	Mint S/H	£1595.00	£3500.00
Jadis DA 30 integrated	Mint S/H	£1700.00	£2880.00
Beard P35	Mint S/H	£495.00	£1395.00
Chameleon Ruby Power Amp (200W)	Mint S/H	£495.00	£1200.00
Naim 42.5 Avondale	Mint S/H	£195.00	£600.00
Apogee Scintila	Mint S/H	£695.00	£5000.00
Duntech Crown Princes	Mint S/H	£1650.00	£6120.00
Apogee Caliper	Good S/H	£595.00	£3500.00
SD Acoustics SD1	V Good S/H	£795.00	£2695.00
Wadia x 64.4 dac	Mint S/H	£1395.00	£4750.00
Linx Tuner	Mint S/H	£225.00	£475.00
Ensemble PAI Silver - bi wire	As New	£1695.00	£3000.00
Ruark Icon & Stands	Mint S/H	£250.00	£500.00
Royd Sapphire	Mint S/H	£175.00	£245.00

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AMPLIFIERS

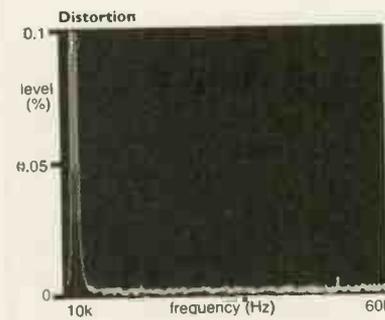
AUDIO ANALOGUE BELLINI & DONIZETTI

		Disc MM	
		Frequency response	14Hz-77kHz
Power	60watts	Separation	52dB
CD/tuner/aux.		Noise	-76dB
Frequency response	10Hz-130kHz	Distortion	0.006%
Separation	47dB	Sensitivity	2.5mV
Noise	-99dB	Overload	50mV
Distortion	0.005%		
Sensitivity	240mV		
DC offset	-22mV/-13mV		



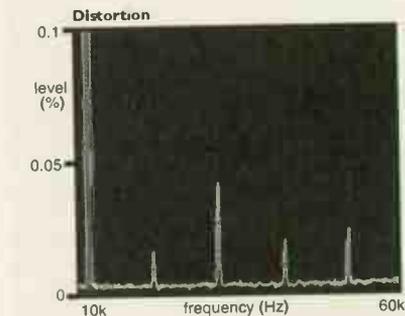
AUDIOLAB 8000C AND 8000PX

		Frequency response	40Hz-36kHz
		Separation	77dB
		Noise	-80dB
Power	153watts	Distortion	0.006%
CD/tuner/aux.		Sensitivity	4mV
Frequency response	24Hz-40kHz	Overload	180mV
Separation	79dB	Disc MC	
Noise	-99dB	Frequency response	40Hz-26kHz
Distortion	0.004%	Separation	77dB
Sensitivity	200mV	Noise	-73dB
DC offset	1.5mV/0.6mV	Distortion	0.006%
Disc MM		Sensitivity	0.2mV
		Overload	10mV



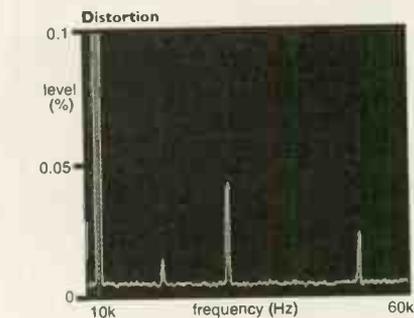
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		DC offset	1.5mV/0.6mV
		Disc MC	
		Frequency response	20Hz-17kHz
Power	55watts	Separation	45dB
CD/tuner/aux.		Noise	-72dB
Frequency response	8Hz-23kHz	Distortion	0.014%
Separation	46dB	Sensitivity	0.2mV
Noise	-96dB	Overload	4mV
Distortion	0.013%		
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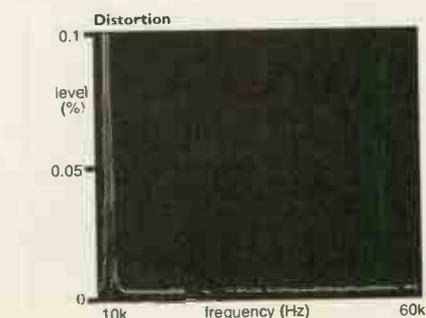
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		DC offset	-18mV/+9mV
		Disc MC	
		Frequency response	50Hz-21kHz
Power	45watts	Separation	60dB
CD/tuner/aux.		Noise	-75dB
Frequency response	24Hz-30kHz	Distortion	0.006%
Separation	70dB	Sensitivity	0.22mV
Noise	-91dB	Overload	4.5mV
Distortion	0.005%		
Sensitivity	260mV		



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		Frequency response	4Hz-24kHz
		Separation	64dB
		Noise	-88dB
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Frequency response	4Hz-24kHz	Overload	120mV
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Noise	-96dB	Frequency response	4Hz-18kHz
Distortion	0.004%	Separation	62dB
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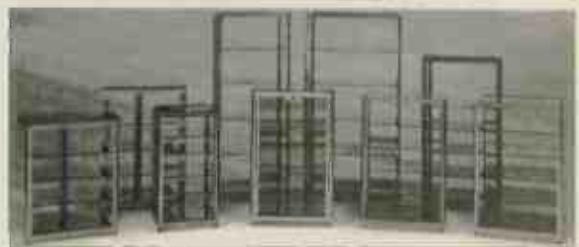
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POWER RANGERS

David Price celebrates Japan's best-kept 'speaker secret, Yamaha's NS1000M.

Why, if humankind has put vehicles on Mars and mastered open-heart surgery, can it not design an accurate loudspeaker? Even at the best of times, modern 'speakers are compromised devices, and getting one to work properly from 20Hz to 20kHz is still an uncommon occurrence.

Given that moving-coil drivers have all sorts of colorations to sully them, and that electrostatics only work effectively over a limited frequency range, engineers have to employ clever tricks to get the best from these units. Back in the early Seventies, Yamaha decided the answer was Beryllium domes, and the NS1000 was born.

Using this expensive metal, Yamaha came up with treble and midrange drivers that produced extremely low levels of distortion, excellent dispersion and phase coherence. In fact, mated together by a complex crossover network, they behaved much as an electrostatic panel but with more extended highs and better power handling. Matched with a fast, light, rigid paper-coned 300mm bass unit, the combination was dynamite.

The first NS1000s went on sale in 1975, built like the proverbial brick powder room and with HF and midrange trim pots built into the front baffles. At over £400, their price reflected their advanced engineering and superb 32kg-per-box build. They were quite unlike anything people had ever heard – best described as sounding like a Quad ESL with a ribbon super-tweeter and a sub-woofer to handle the lows!

In Japan and the States they were rapturously received, with recording

studios and broadcast companies throwing their money at Yamaha. Quite simply, there was no other 'speaker to touch the NS1000's combination of transparency, speed and power handling. But over here, reactions were mixed. Reviewers used to soft, bland Bextrene-coned BBC monitors found them forward and fatiguing and prone to harshness and fizz.

The problem was that the Yamahas were utterly unforgiving of the amps that drove them. With high sensitivity and a relatively easy load, most Japanese audiophiles were using them with muscular valve amps that had a warm, smooth sound. In Britain the fashion was for big, punchy transistor power amps such as Naim's NAP250, which, without soft Bextrene or polypropylene cones to hide behind, could sound – yes, that's right – forward, fatiguing and fizzy!

In 1977 the NS1000s gained slightly smaller, more rigid cabinets, black paint and an 'M' suffix. Re-reviewed by the UK press, they were decried as harsh – with the exception of Practical Hi-Fi, whose reviewer used them with the then seriously unfashionable Quad II and gave them a big thumbs up. Funny, that.

In truth, the NS1000Ms are one of the most transparent 'speakers ever made, with dazzlingly fast transients, superb sound staging and great clarity and detail. But they also have a JBL-like capacity to inject life, drama and scale into everything they touch – a formidable combination of virtues! Partner them with valves or Class A tranny power amps, turn the midrange trim pot down to -3dB (they do have a slight



mid-forward balance, but this assuages it), site them on sturdy, low stands (Atacama BD200s are perfect) and you'll struggle to find a 'speaker that's as much fun.

Although Yamaha discontinued the NS1000M in the UK in 1995, in Japan it lives on as the NS1000X. With the M's fabled mid and treble units plus an improved carbon-fibre woofer, it's a fantastic loudspeaker. But top dog is the anniversary edition NS10000, big enough to make the '1000 look like a Wharfedale Diamond!

Because the last NS1000Ms cost over £1500, these are not cheap boxes second-hand – pay between £400 and £800 depending on age and condition. Look for 'one careful owner' and avoid examples that sound fizzy – it's a sign of a distressed Beryllium driver just about to die. Replacements are readily available from Yamaha Electronics (tel: 01923 233166) but expensive. Happy headbanging!

Thanks to Yamaha's David Hunt for his assistance in the preparation of this article.

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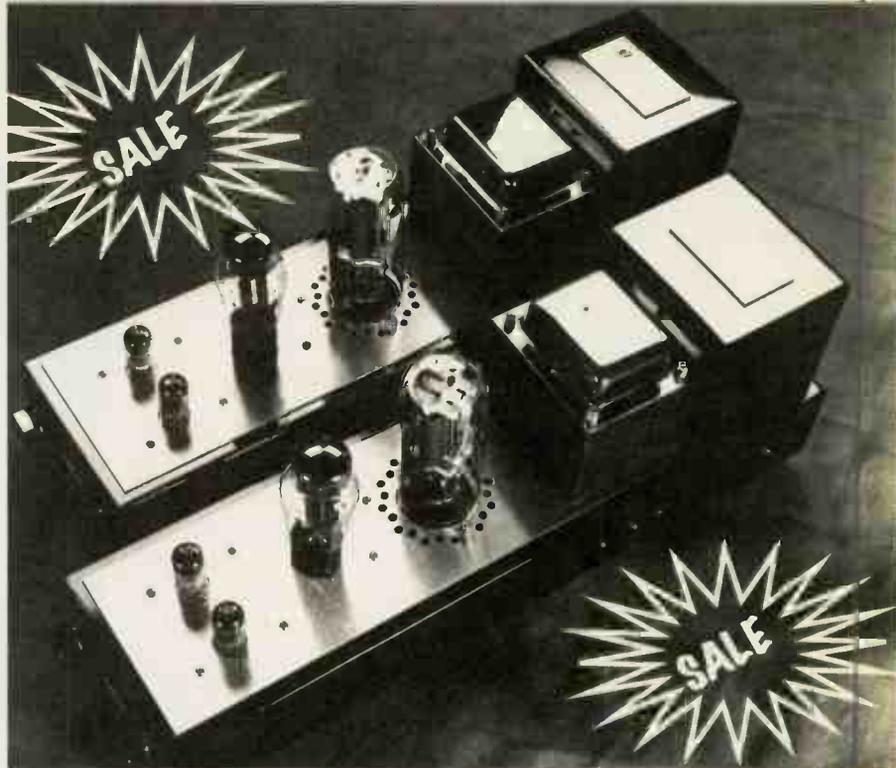


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COMPACT DISC PLAYERS

QUAD 67 second-hand

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KENWOOD DP-3080/II £180

Has great clarity and presence for the price. Not quite as naturally expressive as the CD4SE though.

CAMBRIDGE CD4SE £200

A touch soft in the treble but outstanding in every other aspect.

ARCAM ALPHA 7 £320

This British built player is extremely good value. Upfront, punchy nature suits Techno and Rock.

MARANTZ CD-63MKII KI-S £400

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

PHILIPS CDR 870 RECORDER £500

Replay quality is on a par with £250 machines but analogue and digital recordings on CD-R and CD-RW are outstanding.

ROKSAN CASPIAN £895

The Caspian has a smooth, even sound with some of the clearest treble in the business. Very engaging, dynamic character.

MERIDIAN 506 20-BIT £1100

Very detailed and revealing player. More cerebral than visceral though.

DENON DCD-S10 £1300

A warm, atmospheric and smooth performer that never fails to involve.

MARANTZ CD-17 KI-S £1300

The Marantz excels in all areas. Without doubt this is one of the most involving CD players on the planet. Build quality is also exemplary.

PINK TRIANGLE LITAURAL £2100

Possesses the same lush tonal colour as the Da Capo but is superior in every other way.

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 reliably, day-in day-out.

TEAC P-30 £2500

Cheap it isn't, but then it sounds like a million digital dollars. Nothing short of superb.

CD CONVERTORS

MUSICAL FIDELITY X-DAC £300

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ASSEMBLAGE DAC-2 £400 (KIT)

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MARSTON SILHOUETTE £795

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PINK TRIANGLE DA CAPO £1450+

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DPA 1024 £6000

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TURNTABLES

GARRARD 401 second-hand

In a decent plinth with an arm of SME 309 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.

ORIGIN LIVE STANDARD £145 (KIT)

Fine in standard form with AC motor, frighteningly good with a DC motor and battery PSU.

SYSTEMDEK IIX900/RB250 £330

A fine all rounder and easy to upgrade too. Has more depth and breadth than Rega Planar 3.

PINK TRIANGLE TARANTELLA £575

Not only does the Tarantella have more style than a catwalk full of models, it also combines PT's usual clarity with real authority. The biz.

VPI HW 19 JUNIOR/RB300 £599

With its control and grip on music the Junior never fails to engage. Set-up is a piece of cake and there's a whole range of upgrades on offer too.

MICHELL GYRODEC £800

Stunning looks, build and fine sound. Standard PSU has detailed, architectural, if undynamic sound. With QC PSU, scale and insight kill the competition.

PRO-JECT 6.1SA £999

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

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.

TONE-ARMS

LINN ITTOK S/H

This early heavyweight arm benefits from fine engineering. Good dynamics and grip.

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 V £1235

A masterpiece of precision engineering with a cohesive, ultra-transparent sound.

CARTRIDGES

ORTOFON VMS-2E £10

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

GOLDRING 1012GX £60

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

World favourites guide

DNM MICA £185

Bettors Goldring's 1042 and costs only £135 on trade-in. An assured, detailed and transparent MM.

ORTOFON SUPREMES £225-£450

The MC10, MC20 and MC30 Supremes all offer superb sound and value for money, with a rich, smooth and musical performance.

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 put into their moving-coil cartridges.

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. CD lovers would die if they heard it.

INTEGRATED AMPLIFIERS

MISSION CYRUS I/II S/H

Both versions give a detailed, articulate and dynamic sound but can sound lean.

DENON PMA-250SE £160

It might not have bags of grunt but the Denon can sound very natural and open.

ROTEL RA-970BX £250

With its smooth and powerful sound, the Rotel sings a seductive song with all types of music.

PIONEER A-300R PRECISION £299

This is the cooking A-300 tweaked with special components and it shows. Rhythm and detail are first-class and the phono stage isn't far behind.

AUDIO ANALOGUE PUCCINI SE £595

This superbly made Italian integrated has a lucidity and control which leave the competition at up to £1000 standing. Sound stage depth is unequalled.

SUGDEN A21a £640

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

ROKSAN CASPIAN £695

Smooth, warm integrated with remote control that works happily into most 'speakers.

SONETEER ALABASTER £995

Builds on the strengths of the Champion with ample control, colour and drive.

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.

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.

PHONO STAGES

QED DISCSAVER £35

A true bargain that offers a cohesive, musical sound but avoid using it in thin sounding systems.

ROTEL RQ-970BX £130

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

LFD MISTRAL PHONO STAGE £300

The Mistral has a warmth and involvement that make many more expensive phono stages sound overpriced.

MICHELL ISO/HERA £530

Open, spacious and 3-D sound. Not for fans of warmth though.

AUDIO INNOVATIONS P2 £749

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

ROKSAN ARTAXERXES X £950

With the Atessa PSU the Artaxerxes X MM/MC stage still shines. Its fortes are great stage depth, neutrality and tonal colour. Musical too.

PRE-AMPLIFIERS

AUDIOLAB 8000C £520

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

AUDIOLAB 8000Q £995

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

XTC PRE-1 £1000

Almost valve-like in its smoothness, the line-level Pre-1 is a warm and seductively clear.

CHORD CPA1800 £1800

Clarity, insight and control are second to none - an addictive mixture.

MARANTZ MODEL 7 PRE-AMP £3500

A '60s reissue, the Marantz pre-amp still sounds superb. Has a great phono stage.

POWER AMPLIFIERS

QUAD II second-hand

Classic valve monoblock with many thousands still in use. 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.

ARCAM ALPHA 9 £400

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

MISSION CYRUS POWER £450

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

SUGDEN AU41P £530

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

NAIM NAP180 £900

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

MICHELL ALECTO STEREO £1300

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

CHORD SPM 400 £1400

There's a sense of effortless power to the Chord that gives music scale and presence.

XTC POW-1 £2000

Like the SPM 400 but loads more power on tap. Will drive just about anything.

CHORD SPM 1200 £2995

As smooth and composed as the Pre-1, the POW-1 has bags of power and refinement.

MARANTZ MODEL 9 £8000

Authentic reproduction monoblocs still more than cut the sonic mustard. The sound combines grunt with great tonal colour and expressiveness.

World favourites guide

TUNERS

LEAK TROUGHLINE second-hand

Our favourite way of listening to the wireless. A deliciously mellifluous sound will have you junking your transistor radio in seconds.

NAD 412 £190

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

SONY ST-SA3ES £250

Beguiling RDS tuner for sonically discerning button lovers. Good ergonomics and sensitive too.

MISSION CYRUS FM7 £300

Clear and lucid sound puts it up with the best regardless of price. Superb build too.

ROTEL RT990BX £500

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

NAIM NAT03 £500

The NAT03's warm, atmospheric sound is further proof of Naim's proficiency with tuners.

FANFARE FT-1 £1350

In its native US the FT-1 is no mere tuner but a 'broadcast monitor' no less, a task at which it acquires itself well, with a clear and powerful sound.

NAIM NAT01 £1380

This is the best solid-state tuner available bar none. For better radio, go and live in the studio.

CASSETTE DECKS

AIWA AD-S750 £150

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

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.

YAMAHA KX-580SE £250

The 'Special Edition' tag is more than a marketing gimmick. Sound is solid and clear with Dolby S.

AIWA AD-S950 £300

A stable transport, superb head and Dolby S make the AD-S950 an excellent all rounder.

PIONEER CT-S740S £430

A great piece of engineering from Pioneer, with first rate sound on playback and recording.

NAKAMICHI DR2 £600

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

NAKAMICHI DRI £850

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

NAKAMICHI CR7 £1500

Kills every other cassette deck and stamps on their graves.

LOUDSPEAKERS

TANNOY MERCURY m2 £140

A true audiophile bargain which embarrasses many more expensive boxes.

KEF Q15 £199

These stand mounters offer impressive bass and excellent clarity but need a powerful amplifier to perform at their considerable best.

MISSION 732 £200

Characteristically fast, punchy Mission sound. Very well balanced tonally.

B&W DM 602 £300

Deep and strong bass, pure, projected and uncoloured midrange. Treble quality a little metallic, but imaging precise. A lively, enjoyable sound.

REL Q-BASS £350

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

CASTLE EDEN £450

Impressively vice-free 'speakers that offer great transparency and involvement. Unbeatable at the price.

EPOS ES12 £495

Strong, punchy bass is allied to detailed and articulate midrange and treble. Above all, these 'speakers are thoroughly musical.

REL STRATA £500

The Strata subwoofer is not a toy. It offers superb, true hi-fi bass depth and power, and opens up sound stage depth in particular.

HARBETH HL-P3ES £799

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

HARBETH HL-K6 £975

Clean, musical and classy - Harbeth have done themselves proud again.

KEF REFERENCE SERIES ONE £995

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

JAMO CONCERT 8 £1500

With their inch-thick cabinets and fabulous drive units, the Concert 8s are the most transparent stand mounters around. They don't suffer poor sources gladly though.

EPOS ES25 £1505

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

SPENDOR SP7/1 £1970

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

TANNOY AMS8 £2700

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

QUAD ESL 63 £2860

A reference against which all other loudspeakers are judged, the '63s have superb imaging qualities and genuine transparency. Earlier ESL model is a fine second-hand buy.

KEF REFERENCE SERIES FOUR £3099

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

JBL S2600 £3500

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

TANNOY WESTMINSTER ROYAL £10,000

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

MINI DISCS

SONY MDS-JE500 £300

An impressive overall sound quality and unmatched convenience and editing facilities make this budget MiniDisc player an excellent buy.

KENWOOD DM-7090 £500

Both replay and recording quality are superb through this Kenwood. Nakamichi owners should start getting worried - at last there's competition.

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RA920AX INTEGRATED	85.00	119.95
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Audio Alchemy DAC 1.2	(£595)	Sale £375
Chord Electronics LS512A Loudspeakers (Ebony)	(£1679)	Sale £1200
Parasound P/LD 2000 Preamp	(£1495)	Sale £1095
VPI HPW 19 MkIII Piano Black Turntable	(£1800)	Sale £1150
Alon Petit Loudspeakers (walnut)	(£1087)	Sale £795
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Chord 800 Power Amp	(£2155)	Sale £1600
Michell Argo HR Pre-Amp	(£1339)	Sale £1050
Audio Alchemy Headphone Amp	(£249)	Sale £199
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Stax SR-84 Electret Headphones	(£259)	Sale £195
Questar QA2 Active Speakers/Stands/3M Kimer 4TC		£300 the lot
4M Set Nordost Red Dawn Speaker Cables (Terminated)	(£929)	Sale £750
Audio Silver Knight 300B Mono Blocks	(£2495)	Sale £1750
Roksan Xerxes (Piano Black) Tonearm	S/H	£1200
Audionote Meishu (phono m/m) amplifier	(s/h)	£2250
XTC Pre 1 pre amp - 3 weeks old	(s/h)	£800
Trichord Pulsar 1 DAC	(s/h)	£825
Meridian 200 CD transport	(s/h)	£400
Proac Studio 100 loudspeakers (cherry) 3 weeks old		£550
Technics SE-A1000 and SU-C1000 pre/power combo		£450
SD Acoustics SD3 loudspeakers	(ex dem)	£350
SD Acoustics Alexandra stands for above	(new)	£220
Foundation Designer '600' stands 21 inches tall		£210

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Manticore Mantra / Magician + MBP6 pwr sup / Ort MC3000		£998
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Rega Planar 3		£198
Revolver / Helius Scorpion / P77		£249
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CARTRIDGES

Decca Gold (Garrotted - little used)		£195
Koetsu Urushi	£1990	£998
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AMPLIFIERS - SOLID STATE

Alchemist Kraken Pre	£395	£238
A&R A60 Integrated		£75
Arcam Delta 90 (Int)	£500	£268
Arcam Delta 110/120 (Pre/Pow)		£550
Audiolab PPA (Phono stage)	£900	£528
Audiolab 8000S	£700	£528
Audiolab 8000C Pre	£500	£298
Audiolab 8000P Power	£800	£748
Audiolab 8000A/8000P (Pre/Pwr)		£195
Aura Evolution		£195
AVI S2000 M1 Integrated	£999	£648
AVI S2000 MP Pre	£799	£498
BGW 202 (Control/Pre)		£275
Bryston 2B Power amp	£630	£428
Classe Audio Thirty Pre	£1320	£695

C J Sonographe FET (Pre) £1250 £495
 Conrad Johnson sonic qualities with solid state reliability, now at a truly budget price

Counterpoint Solid 1 Pwr	£1495	£845
Cyrus 1		£165
Cyrus 2 + PSX		£415
DPA 200S Pre/Power	£1250	£745
DPA 50S Power	£1500	£695
DPA Renaissance Int	£595	£477
DNM Pre Series 2	£900	£528
DNM PA1 Power	£1800	£1168
Dynaco ST120 (Classic circa '76)		£328
EAR 834P Head Amp	£500	£350
ElectroCompaniet Anniversary Pwr	£4000	£1298
Exposure VII/VIII Pre/Pwr	£700	£448
Finestra EC (Inc mains filter)		£795
Heybrook C3+P3 Pre/Pwr	£1425	£795
Jeff Rowland Consumate Pre	£5500	£2198

Krell KBL Line Stage	£4998	£2798
Krell KSA150 Power	£4998	£2998
Krell Ref KRBP6 (6 comp balanced pre)		£3995
Krell KPE Phono stage		£POA
Krell MDA300 Monoblocks (Pair)	£11,982	£5998
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As officially authorised Krell main dealers we offer full service back-up on any of these incomparable components

Lecson AC1/AP1 (Circa 1975)		£295
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Musical Fidelity P270	£1399	£728
Naim Nait 3	£550	£358
Naim 92 / Flat Cap / 90	£1252	£998
Naim 42 Pre		£195
Naim 72	£725	£528
Naim 180 Power	£1095	£698
Naim 160 (Old style)		£495
Naim 250 (Old Style)	£1655	£795
Naim 135 Mono's (Late)	£3330	£2245
Naim Hi-Cap (Late)	£700	£495
Nakamichi 600 Pwr		£290
NVA AP30 (Integrated)	£350	£228
NVA A60 Power amps (Two available)	£430	£280
Nytech CP122 / CPA602	£700	£325
OCM 500 Power amp	£2750	£1098
Onkyo A809-R1 Integrated		£195

Quad 66 Pre-amp		£498
Quad 44 Pre-amp	£495	£265
Quad 34 Pre-amp	£400	£220
Quad 405 Power-amp	£400	£195
Quad 606 Power-amp		£495

Quad items constantly changing and always sought for cash - please call.

PS Audio TwoC power amps X 2		£595
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Rappaport Pre 2 (Pre)		£295
Rotel RB850 Power	£190	£110
Rotel RC850 Pre	£160	£99
Roksan L2 Pre + PSU	£1100	£758
Sugden A48 (Circa 1976)		£98
Sumo Athena (Pre) & 9 (Pwr) Class A!		£795
Technics SU VX820	£450	£295
YBA 2 (Pre)	£1700	£878

Threshold S300 (pwr) £5500 £1500
 Fabulous - our customer agonised for months before deciding to part with this for big Krells!

VALVE AMPLIFIERS

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Grant G100 MC / Pre / Pwr £2200 £998
 Big physical presence and a mighty sound to match - a poor mans Chords?

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CD PLAYERS / DACS

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Marantz CD65II	£250	£125
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We've been Meridian dealers since they began in business. We also stock their full range of hi-fi and audio-visual components.

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Creek T40	£199	£125
Cyrus Tuner	£399	£268
DPA Little Bit 2 (DAC)	£250	£148
Linn Kremlin Tuner	£2600	£1548
Marantz SD55 3 hd / 2 mtr	£400	£195
Nakamichi CR7A	£1500	£1208
Nakamichi 1000ZXL		£1898
Pioneer CT70R 3 head (Silver)		£150
Quad 66 Tuner		£438
Revox B215	£1950	£658

REVOX - TEAC - TASCAM - ETC

Amateur use studio and semi-pro quality
tape decks always wanted. Please call.

Revox B77 MK2	£2200	£998
Roksan DP-1 Transport	£900	£528
Sequeria Reference	£5973	£3498
Sony DAT DTC77ES		£POA
Sony TCK 611S	£330	£218
Yamaha TC800D Classic Cassette Deck		£235
Yamaha T-09 Tuner	£150	£90

LOUDSPEAKERS

Acoustic Energy AE1 Black	£799	£498
Acoustic Energy AE1 (Rosewood) with stands	£950	£648
Apogee Caliper Signature	£4000	£1508
Apogee Diva Grigio/Perla	£12,980	£6998
ATC SCM 50A (Piano black/Active)	£6600	£3498
Castle Harlech (Ex-dem/Yew)	£995	£879
Castle Pembroke (Black)		£200
Celestion 300 (Rosewood)	£1095	£598

Dali 104MS Special Edit £650 ~~£418~~
Efficient, specially re-wired, and a worthy
match for high quality low power valve amps

Epos ES11 + stands (Black)		£448
Equation Zero (Blk)	£1700	£748
Harbeth HL4 + Stands	£1000	£398
Harbeth HL5 Teak		£798
Heybrook Quartets	£650	£398
JBL M Series M330 PA Speakers		£895
KEF 103/4 (Black)	£1200	£595
KEF 104/2 (Teak)	£1495	£595
KEF 70s (Surrounds)	£299	£195
Klipsch Heresy 11 (Black)		£754
Lentek Monitors		£400
Linn Isobarik Passive (Blk)		£950
Linn Kaber (Marked)	£2000	£898

DCM Time Windows £395
One time state-of-the-art speakers which simply
weren't publicised enough. Compatible with a
wide range of amps ... and they look nice too!

Linn Kaber Black	£2000	£995
Linn Sara + Stands		£375
Martin Logan Aerius	£2200	£1548
Meridian D600 Active	£3500	£1798
Mission 752 (Black)	£580	£295
Mission 753 (Rosewood)	£900	£545
Mission 765i	£695	£395
Monitor Audio R352 (Teak)	£395	£248
Monitor Audio 852 Gold Teak	£500	£269
Monitor Audio MAB00 Rose	£795	£395
Musical Fidelity MC2		£195

Prawel Acoustics Ensemble (Teak) £1399
Unbelievable performance from a genuine
bookshelf size speaker, and less than half price!

ProAc Response 2	£1700	£998
Polk Audio FDA-SRS 1.2TL Signtre	£3400	£1498
Rega Kites	£200	£128
Rega ELA	£450	£268

Rogers LS-4 (Black)		£185
Rogers Studio 3	£600	£388
Rogers LS3/5a (Black)	£799	
£398Roksan Ojan 3 (Black)	£900	£548
Rogers AB1 Sub	£549	£348
Ruark Templar 2	£559	£395
Spendor BC1		£238
Spendor BCIII (Teak)		£395
Spendor SP2/3	£1195	£775

Thiel CS1.2 £1100 ~~£645~~
Good looking floor standers. A fine pedigree
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Tangent RS2 + Stands	£400	£225
Tannoy Devon (12" drivers)	£795	£298
TDL Studio 1	£800	£475
Wilson Watt 3 + Puppy 2 (Black)	£13,300	£7498

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AMPLIFIERS - SOLID STATE

Audiolab 8000C Mk2 Pre	£549	£447
Audiolab 8000P Mk2 Pwr	£749	£547
Audiolab 8000Q Pre	£1099	£897
Audio Research D200 200 wpc	£3250	£2257
Chord SPM1000B		
Balance Power	£2785	£1997
Chord SPM1200B		
Balance Power	£3525	£2527
Chord CPA2800B		
Line Stage Pre	£3246	£2247
DPA Renaissance Intgrtd	£595	£477
DPA DSP200 Line Pre	£499	£397
Krell KSA100S	£5843	£3997
QED Systemline		
Kit + Modifications	£3000	£1897
Thorens TTP2000 Mk1 Pre	£499	£397
Thorens TTA2000 Pwr (35w)	£599	£477
Yamaha A970 (New)	£800	£507

VALVE AMPLIFIERS

Audio Alchemy		
Vac-In-The-Box Phono/Pre	£249	£197
Audion Sterling Intgrtd	£600	£487
Audion Silver Knight		
Anniversary Monoblocks	£3400	£2697
Audion Silver Knight		
Integrated 300B	£1125	£897
Audio Research BLI Cnvr	£888	£587
Audio Research V70 Pwr	£4480	£2487
Audio Research LS5/1 Line Pre	£5295	£3997
Graaf 5050 Power	£2150	£1657
Graaf WFB 2 Pre	£1195	£897
PM Components MPL1 Pre plus		
2 x Mp211 Power amps	£5000	£2507

Unison Mystery One	£1750	£1450
Unison 845 Monoblocks	£3250	£2750

CD PLAYERS / DACS

Arcam Delta 270CD	£800	£447
Audio Alchemy DACMAN	£149	£117
Audio Alchemy DAC-IN-BOX	£229	£177
Audio Alchemy Digital		
Encoding Engine V1.1	£399	£297
Audio Alchemy DTI Plus	£249	£197
Audio Alchemy ACD2 Plyr	£490	£397
Audiolab 8000CDM Tms	£1399	£1097
Audiolab 8000D Rev	£899	£697
DPA Renaissance CD Plyr	£950	£647
Micromega Stage 4 CD	£600	£397
Micromega Stage 5 CD	£750	£597
Micromega Stage 6 CD	£950	£747
Monarchy DIP Jitterbuster	£245	£197
Theta TLC Jitter Buster	£229	£177

LOUDSPEAKERS

B&W THX System	£4975	£2977
Castle Howard Mk2	£1200	£947
Epos ES22	£1185	£987
Harbeth HL Compact 7	£1499	£1197
Harbeth HL K6	£1049	£847
KEF Ref Model 1 Blk	£1199	£997
Meridian M2500 Active Sub	£1595	£1297
Mission 754F	£1498	£997
Note Perfect Virtuoso	£2750	£1497
Note Perfect Concert	£2450	£1297
Pink Triangle Vertical	£896	£597
Quad ESL63 Afro/black	£3450	£1997
Sonus Faber		
Electa Amator Mk1	£3293	£2497
Wilson Witt Mk1	£8888	£6887

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COUNTERPOINT SA12 Hybrid power amp, 85w into 8 ohms, black, new tubes, checked over by engineer Jan 98. Ken Kessler 'loved it'. Booklet, no box. £550 ono. Tel: 0171 837 2342 (Apr/I)

Naim NAXO 1.6
crossover, new facial, never used, boxed £400 or part exchange considered on other Naim amplification. Tel: (181) 877 3333 (11) 299 4078 (1306pm) privately (Apr)

MUSICAL FIDELITY FCD. Excellent condition, boxed, cost new £1500. Offers @ £850. Tel: 01827 718 576 (eves), 0121 711 6221 (days). (Apr)

KLIPF STREAKERS HI-FI
World hit, assembled, oak veneered, fitted with Deflex panel £360. Audio Innovations Series 700 valve amplifier, new valves £390. Two fantastic bargains. Tel: 01224 561144 evenings. (Apr/I)

FOR SALE: E.A.R 834P MC+MM phono amp £275. Monarchy 22B DAC £650. XLO Type 4 phono to BNC digital interconnect £45. Tel: Mike 0161 291 9331 (Apr)

NAKAMICHI DRI Cassette deck. Little used, as new £500. Quad 44 + 405/2 £350. All with manuals and original boxes. Tel: 0181 393 4265 days or 01737 362 899 eves (Apr)

LINN EKOS. Bearings updated. Changed to Aro £600. Tel: Leigh 01245 283 125 (Apr/I)

AUDIO SYNTHESIS DAX with built in Passion pre. All silver and Vishay £765. Heybrook Quartets, burr with matching stands. £290. Pioneer A400 £85. All perfect. 01224 572 370 after 8pm (Apr/I)

HI-FI ANSWERS transmission line monitors, superbly built in rosewood £185. Tannoy M2 speakers, new £100. Wanted: Koetsu Red cartridge, Furukawa interconnect cable, Technics EPA 100 or 500 arm. Tel: 01603 714 528 (Apr)

DENON FI0 Mini Separates. CD player and amplifier. 1 month old, unwanted gift £475. Harman Kardon HK 6150 amplifier. Little used and in immaculate condition 3160. All with boxes and manuals. Tel: 0181 877 3669 (London) (Apr/I)

AUDIOLAB 8000M (one only). Possibly AV centre channel power amp for Audiolab 8000M owners? Six months old, boxed, paperwork, immaculate. £475 ono. Tel: 01794 830 111 (days), 01703 769 175 (evenings) Ask for Alex. (Apr/I)

CROFT CHARISMA pre-amp (£975), Croft Series X OTL power amp (£1150). Rare opportunity to buy these modern valve amps. £1050. Living Voice Auditorium speakers, walnut finish, 3 way, 94dB (£1500) £850. All boxed. Tel: 01752 47550 (Apr/I)

REGA ELA Speakers (walnut, 1991) £150. Linn Valhalla kit £70. Sound Organisation shelf £20, 3-shelf table £30. Wanted: Exposure 17/18/18-mono amps. Tel: Steve 01954 718 038 (Cambridge) (Apr/I)

AUDIO NOTE AN-E speakers with MAF stands £850. Audio Note AN-J speakers £400. Edison valve amp £180. NAD 501 CD, Aiwa AD-F850 cassette, Rotel RT-940-AX tuner, Musical Fidelity X10-D. Tel: 01903 731 646 (Apr/I)

BOSE-LIFESTYLE 12 CD system, unused, brand new, still boxed, cost £2500, will sell for first sensible offers. 10 units available. Must sell. Tel: 01705 782 872 (Apr/I)

TECHNICS SU-A900Mk2 amplifier, 90 watts per channel. Remote control £225. (new £450) Tel: 01234 824 682 (Bedford) (Apr/I)

AUDIO ALCHEMY DDE v3.0 DAC/Power Station Three, 20 bit, HDCD (£900), £450. Alchemist Odin power amp, 80w dual mono A/B (£1100) £300. Rotel RCD 965BX £125. All as new. Tel: 01992 626 138 (Apr/I)

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TOTALLY ORIGINAL

Unmarked, Celestion Ditton 66 studio monitors, boxed, all original packaging with book. Stored for 9 years. One owner from new, reluctant sale £475. Tel: Stewart 0161 950 6814 (Apr/I)

LINN KANS, Kan II stands £200. Naim NAC 32, Snaps power supply (K boards) £150. Naim NAP 140 power amp £250. Tel: 0141 357 3889 (Glasgow) (Apr/I)

SELL - EXCHANGE Unison Research Simply Two mint, boxed £600 or exchange for Audionote Kit One built, or Single Ended 2A3 power amp. Tel: 01268 455 966 evenings between 6-9pm (Essex) (Apr)

MAGNUM REFERENCE MP300 preamp with 2 MF125 mono amps, 130 watts per channel £300. Sony CDX55ES CD player (heavy) £200. All boxed and near perfect condition. Can dem 50ml radius of Northants. Tel: 01933 388 769 after 6pm (Apr)

WANTED: LINN Troika, Linn Numerik and Linn Kremlin or Naim 01 tuner. Linn Helix speaker black ash inc. stands, mint £145. 4 x 7 metre K400 £100. Tel: Jerry 01702 545 622 (Apr)

LOWTHER ACOUSTA Twin loudspeaker wanted. Made 1960 to 1968. Barking, Essex area. Tel: Jeff 0181 924 0207 (Apr)

PIONEER PD-S505 Precision CD player, six months old £365. Tel: 01794 514 916 (Romsey, Hants) (Apr/I)

MICROMEGA T-DAC & T-Drive, tremendous sound, perfect condition, boxed, manuals, remote, as new £650. Crucing combination, will not split. No offers. First genuine offer secures. Tel: 01244 541 014 (Apr)

REVOX EQUIPMENT, B760 tuner, B750MkII, B226 CD player, B795 T/T. all as new and boxed. A77 1/2 track tape deck £1700. May split. Pioneer F90 AM/FM tuner, sensitive and selective, boxed £120. Tel: 01244 541 014 (May)

SME 20 TURNTABLE with SME V tonearm £2300 ono. Van den Hul Grasshopper Mark IV GLA MC phono cartridge £1850 ovno. E.A.R. 'The Head' step-up phono transformer £300. Prcac Response 3.5 speakers in beautiful burr oak finish £2450 ovno. Concordant Exquisite high-end pre-amp (with phono stage) £1300. Art Audio Maestro Forte monoblock power amps (180 watt pentode/90 watt triode 6550 valves - nearly £7000 retail) £3250 ovno. Baby necessitates very reluctant sale of the above. Tel: 01403 733 055 (Apr/I)

LOWTHER ACOUSTA speakers PM6A, teak, exc £400. Garrard 301, spotless A1 condition £200. Garrard 301 Red Spot, boxed c/w paperwork £100, cream, strobe platters. Thorens TD124 MkII, no chips £200, SME 3009 S2 FHS £60. Tel: 01244 541 014 (Apr)

PAIR ATC10 £580, Harbeth HL-P3ES £450, both mint, Ruark Equinoxes, slightly marked hence £850 ono. Wanted: Pink Triangle Verticals, Denon 2000/3000 Series Quartz D/D turntable. Tel: 01892 536 919 (W. Kent) (Apr/I)

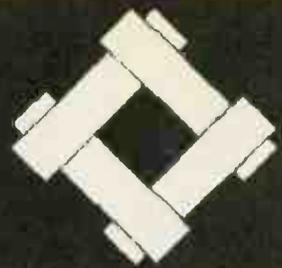
B&W SERIES 2 Martrix speakers. Black ash. Maughnbox line stages by Listenup Audio, Sound Anchor stand with the new Goldmund cone, boxed as new £2800 onro. Tel: 01527 459 274 (Apr)

PRIMARE A20 Integrated amp, remote, high quality £550. Meridian S51 integrated with M.S.R. £475. Meridian 508 20 Bit £1200. Wanted: Lescon AP3 II amp. Yamaha NS1000M. Tel: 01226 710 605 (Yorkshire) (Apr/I)

QUAD CD67, and boxed as new £595; Cambridge T55 analogue tuner £55; Audio Alchemy Dac in a Box £95, Vintage JVC analogue tuner £30. Tel: 01203 679 165 (Coventry) (Apr/I)

EAR 859 Integrated valve amplifier, 6 inputs, Tim De Paravicini designed £1250 half original price. Quad ESL speakers, genuine bargain £290. Tel: 01323 842 227 (Apr)

IMPULSE H2's. Very late pair in light ash. Dealer purchased, superb condition £1750 ovno. Tel: Mark 01765 677 639 evenings and weekends. (Apr/I)



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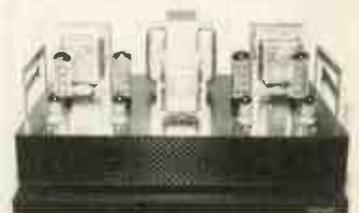
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CYRUS 111i Amplifier	£598
CYRUS PSX-R Power Supply	£328
CYRUS daD3Q CD Player	£898
Mission 752F	£578

TOTAL £2402

PART-EXCHANGE (example) or Deposit	£602
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QUAD 77 Control Amplifier	£849
QUAD 77 CD Player	£699
QUAD 77 Tuner	£699
Quad 10i Speakers	£599

TOTAL £2846

PART-EXCHANGE (example) or Deposit	£846
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There is still something so beguiling about the quality of vinyl that even now, some fifteen years after the introduction of digital sound, many of us treasure our LPs more than ever. You know that old saying "you don't know what you've got until you lose it!"

If you're no longer playing your old albums, or if you've replaced your collection with CDs, it's worth knowing that we have a high demand for quality used turntables - so whatever you do, talk to us - please don't throw it away!

But, if you're a 'vinyl junkie' you'll want to speak with kindred spirits.

So this is our recommended 'Re-start System' for anyone with a dominant collection of the beautiful black stuff!

PINK TRIANGLE TARANTELLA With Rega RB300 & Grado	£795
COPLAND CSA 14 Amplifier	£1199
SONUS FABER Concertino Spkrs	£599
SONUS FABER Speaker Stands	£290

TOTAL £2883

PART-EX (Example) or Deposit	£663
BALANCE	£2220*

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There's little we can say about Audiolab and Monitor Audio that isn't already well known. Other than that they are near neighbours of ours in a concentration of top-name manufacturers in the hi-fi hot-bed that is Cambridgeshire.

The two companies come even closer in this system, demonstrate how bi-amping a superb two-way speaker with Audiolab's latest 'minimal' integrated and additional power amp creates a soundstage of amazing scale and precision.

We commend Audiolab and Monitor Audio, not only for such obvious sonic qualities but also for their outstanding engineering as well as a cosmetic finish which enhances the sheer desirability of all their award winning components.

AUDIOLAB 8000CD CD Player	£999
AUDIOLAB 8000LX Integrated	£469
AUDIOLAB 8000SX Pwr Amp	£549
MONITOR AUDIO Studio 12	

Floorstanding Speakers **£999**

TOTAL £3016

PART-EX (Example) or Deposit	£756
BALANCE	£2260*

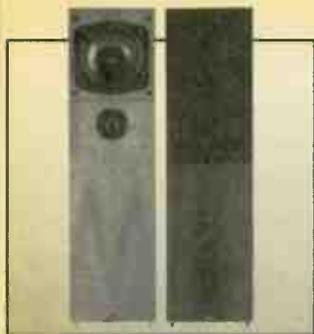
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If you're after that 'toe-tappin', 'finger poppin', 'hand clappin', 'thigh slappin', sound experience - simply call in and listen! We'll demonstrate Naim, a company that places a convincing emphasis on the value of true system synergy. For a growing number of our customers, Naim reproduces music the way they like it, and we'll place a bet that when you listen, you'll probably discover that you do too! A complete Naim system starts from around £2,300 which you can build incrementally to a staggering £30,000! And if you'd like a personal endorsement, we can tell you that some of our people have chosen to spend their own 'hard-earned' on Naim systems! Always on demonstration at our Peterborough shop.

- NAIM CD2 CD Player £2000
- NAIM 102 Pre-amp £1050
- NAIM 180 Power amp £1060
- NAIM Credo Speakers £1060
- TOTAL £5170**
- PART-EXCHANGE (example) or Deposit £1990
- BALANCE £3180*
- INTEREST FREE PAYMENTS 12 X £265

*OR DEFER PAYMENT 90 DAYS THEN THREE YEARS AT JUST £29.72 PER WEEK

VALVE & SOLID STATE - BEST OF BOTH WORLDS?

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£324.00
PER MONTH

No dogma here! While different technologies provide different solutions to achieving state-of-the-art sound reproduction, The Hi-Fi Company will always provide an appropriately wide choice of top quality equipment for your personal assessment. Audio Research have earned a global reputation with their highly sophisticated vacuum-tube amplifiers which, with the help of their new CD player in this system, produce an utterly convincing portrayal of all types of music. Add the ProAc Response 2.5 loudspeakers and, in our view, these rare devices help this system create the transparent sound of electrostatics with the sheer power that only superior cabinet speakers can achieve.

- AUDIO RESEARCH CD2 CD player £3399
- AUDIO RESEARCH LS9 Pre £1949
- AUDIO RESEARCH VT50 Pwr £2895
- PRO-AC RESPONSE 2.5 £2700
- TOTAL £10,943**
- PART-EX (Example) or Deposit £2943
- BALANCE £8000*
- INTEREST FREE PAYMENTS 12 X £667

*OR DEFER PAYMENT 90 DAYS THEN 3 YEARS AT JUST £74.77 PER WEEK

KRELL CLASS A POWER DRIVES MARTIN LOGAN

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For many years we have delighted in the transparency of electrostatic speakers, but never more than when driven by hugely powerful Class A amps. Electrostatics really open up to Krell amplifiers, enhancing their clarity with a three dimensionality which can be eerily real in some instances. With well recorded discs one can feel as if it's possible to walk right through a literally transparent soundstage to mingle with the musicians in your own living room! Any system offering this level of performance usually deserves a home demonstration and if that is something you would like to experience for yourself, please contact us and we will be delighted to make the arrangements for you. The system is of course on dem in store.

- KRELL KAV300CD CD player £3549
- KRELL KAV250P Pre amp £1999
- KRELL KAV250A Pwr amp £3195
- MARTIN LOGAN CLS11 £4555
- TOTAL £13,298**
- PART-EX (Example) or Deposit £4298
- BALANCE £9000*
- INTEREST FREE PAYMENTS 12 X £750

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Digital technology leads the way in audio-visual systems and there's no doubt that Meridian of Cambridgeshire are world leaders in the design of state-of-the-art multi-channel sound equipment. With our own extensive expertise in home-cinema installations at all budget levels, we have to place this system as perhaps offering the perfect combination of hi-fi pedigree and sonic performance with genuine up-to-the-minute audio-visual compatibility. If you are serious about creating a multi-channel 'home cinema' and hi-fi system, this is the ultimate installation.

- MERIDIAN 500 CD Transport £1245
- MERIDIAN 518 Processor £925
- MERIDIAN 519 RF Demod £450
- MERIDIAN 562V Dig Control £995
- MERIDIAN 565-7.1 S/S Decoder with AC3/DTS £2850
- MERIDIAN DSP 5000 Digital spkrs Rosewood (2 pairs) £6920
- TOTAL £13,385**
- PART-EX (Example) or Deposit £3385
- BALANCE £10,000*
- INTEREST FREE PAYMENTS 12 X £833

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- ◆ DENON ◆ EPOS ◆ GRAAF ◆ KEF ◆ KRELL ◆ LEXICON ◆ MANNAPAN ◆ MARANTZ ◆ MARTIN LOGAN ◆ M&K ◆ MERIDIAN ◆ ROGERS ◆ SME ◆ SONUS FABER ◆ SPENDOR ◆ TEAC ◆ TECHNICS ◆ UNISON ◆ WILSON ◆ WILSON BENESCH ◆ YAMAHA

Midland Audio X-change

181 Franche Road Kidderminster
Worcester .DY11 5AD

Telephone: 01562 822236 Mobile: 0421 605966

New Arrivals...Midland Audio Exchange are pleased to be the Midlands stockist for all things UKD.

UNISON RESEARCH Single ended excellence from this superb Italian valve manufacturer.

SIMPLY TWO A pentode design featuring a full 12 watts pure Class A, with feedback control switch and 4 & 8 ohm tapings. £995 suggested retail.

SIMPLY FOUR Available in pentode or triode design. Giving all full 11 watts of output in triode and full Class A Or pentode, 24 watts full Class A. Pentode £1555, Triode £1595.

SIMPLY 845 Anyone who has heard this stunning amplifier has not been disappointed. This is truly the most magnificent valve amplifier available at this price. Single ended Class A triode, giving a full 24 watts. Affordable high end with style has arrived. £2995.

SIMPLY PHONO On the rear of all the previously mentioned amplifiers there is a power outlet so that the simply phono stage may be used. M/M and M/C settings are allowed via switches on the rear of the unit. £499.

OPERA LOUDSPEAKERS

OPERA DUETTO 2 way reflex design 2nd order crossover with superb build quality and stunning sounds all for only £395.

OPERA CALLAS GOLD 2 way bass reflex. 4th order crossover, with superb balance and staging. Truly magnificent sound. £1050

AUDIO ANALOGUE

With the success of the Puccini SE, Audio Analogue will soon release their CD player. Based on the CEC mechanism and utilising a 20 bit D/A conversion system this has all the makings of world beating CD player. With a projected price of around £600 we eagerly await this one. Midland Audio Exchange keep most of the other items of the range on demo and in stock.

MONRIO

Tasty Class A sounds from this the most interesting CD in some time. Utilising a Philips 9 transport and a discreet 20 bit D/A conversion system, a must for any audiophile listening choice. All for the amazing price of £999.

OTHER NEW ARRIVALS

We are now pleased to announce that we stock the whole range of DYNAVECTOR moving coil cartridges.

The Dynavector range is:

DV 50X II High Output	£159
DV 104X II High Output	£199
DV 23RS II Low Output	£375
D 17D2 II Low Output	£449
XX 1 L Low Output	£998
Te Kaitora Low Output	£1698

Never forget, we are only too pleased to demonstrate any cartridge from our huge range in stock. Phone now to talk about the possibilities.

MARK LEVINSON

Now we have had time with this formidable range of electronics, we all have realised that these audiophile masterpieces from the UAS are truly the finest solid state amplifiers known to man. Not only amplifiers, but also the superb No.39 CD player which has had rave reviews Stateside and now is available for £4999.

Yes they have knocked off £1000 which makes it unbelievable value.

Other products stocked:

No.39 CD player	£4999
No.380 Pre amplifier	£3995
No.331 Power amplifier	£4499

Please call John Roberts on any aspect of Mark Levinson products on 01562 822236 (part exchanges welcome)

Midland Audio Exchange are currently demonstrating the following superb CD players.

Rega Planet CD player	£ 649.00
Orelle CD 100c CD player	£ 423.00 inc remote
Roksan Caspian CD player	£ 895.00
DPA Renaissance CD player	£ 925.00
Monno Privilege CD player	£ 895.00
Audio Note CD 2 player	£ 999.00
Roksan Attezza CD player	£1595.00
Roksan Attezza 3 box	£2439.00
Mark Levinson No. 39 (now only)	£4999.00

Also, we have the finest choice in up and coming integrated amplifiers.

Audio Analogue Puccini SE	£ 595.00
Densen Beal 100	£ 650.00
Roksan Caspian	£ 895.00
Orelle SA100	£ 449.00
Audio Note Oto Se (phono)	£1500.00
Electrocompaniet EC1-2	£ 995.00
Densen DM10	£1375.00

If digital is not your bag then choose from our fine selection of Analogue Turntables/Tonearms/Cartridges.

Rega Planar 2 / RB 250	Rega Planar 9 / RB 250
Rega Planar 3 / RB 300	Michell Mycro / RB 300
Systemdek 2 x 2 / RB 300	Michell Gyrodeck / RB 300
Audio Note ATT 1 / RB 300	Michell Orbe / SME / Graham
Roksan Radius / Tabriz	Roksan TMS / Artemiz
Roksan Xerxes X / Tabriz	Audio Note ATT 3 / AN1s / ANV

Cartridges at M.A.X.

Ortofon	- All models stocked
Lyra	- Lydian Clavis DaCapo
Transfiguration	- Spirit, Temper
Sumiko	- All models stocked
Grado	- Signature series
Roksan	- All models stocked
Rega	- All models stocked
Golding	- 10 series
Audio Note	- Most of range in stock
Dynavector	- All models stocked

S/Hand and Ex Demo Clearance Items - March 1998

	WAS	NOW
Acoustic Energy AE1 R/W inc Stands	1200	699
Arcam Alpha 6 CD player (6 months old)	599	395
Audio Research LS7 preamplifier	1599	1095
Audiolab 8000P/8000C pre/power	1080	650
Castle Acoustics Isis	249	179
Castle Acoustics Kendal	449	349
Castle Acoustics Seven/2	579	465
Castle Acoustics Tax	349	269
Castle Acoustics Keep (Centre)	249	179
Dalquist DD10 phased array loudspeakers	999	775
Deva 600 Integrated	999	699
Deva 250 Integrated	399	279
DPA Enlightenment DAC (ex demo)	825	675
DPA Renaissance Cd player	950	750
Linn Kan II black inc stands	780	325
Micromega Stage 1 CD player	549	345
Mission 753 Loudspeakers	200	425
Mission Cyrus 781 Loudspeakers (Black)	200	85
Monitor Audio 352 rosewood speakers	299	159

Suppliers & Installers of High Quality Audio Systems

Roksan - Rega - Michell - D.P.A. - ProAc
Audio Note - Densen - UKD - Orelle - Myriad -
Impulse - Ruark - Mark Levinson

We also pride ourselves in keeping a wide range of phono stages in stock, starting with -

Rotel RHQ 970 BX	£139.00
Henley Designs HMC 50	£199.00
Densen DP 02 Drive	£349.00
Rega EOS	£398.00
Roksan Artemiz/Rega X	£395.00
Electrocompaniet ECP1	£495.00
Unison Research simply phono	£499.00
Audio Note Moving Coil Transformers	
AN S1	£349.00
AN S2	£449.00

Always a wide range on Loudspeakers to listen to from, ProAc / Impulse / Audio Note / Roksan / Ruark / Rega / Kef / QLN / JM Labs / Diapalson and Blueprint.

MAGNUM DYNALAB

The most highly regarded FM tuners are now on permanent demonstration at Midland Audio Exchange. More and more people are now listening to radio as an ultimate source, with stations like Classic FM and Jazz FM providing a huge catalogue of new and old recordings, what better than listening to them on a MAGNUM tuner.

Prices start at:

MAGNUM DYNALAB FT-11	£ 550.00
MAGNUM DYNALAB FT-101	£ 825.00
MAGNUM DYNALAB FT102	£1250.00
MAGNUM DYNALAB 108 HYBRID	£4500.00

Recommended Vinyl

Allman Brothers Band	Brothers and Sisters MFSL 200 grm	£19.95
Art Pepper	Meets The Rhythm Section AP HQ 180 grm	£21.95
Arthur Louis (featuring Eric Clapton)	Knocking on Heaven's Door	£11.95
Average White Band	Axis MFSL 200 grm	£19.99
Bert Kaempfert	Master recordings Polydor 180 grm	£21.95
Blue Nile	Peace at Last	£11.75
Bob Dylan	Time Out Of Mind 120 grm double	£14.99
Boston	Boston MFSL 200 grm	19.95
Buddy Guy	I Was Waking Through The Woods 180 grm	£21.95
Buddy Holly	MCA Heavy Vinyl 180 grm	£17.95
Cannonball Adderley	Something Else 180 grm	£15.90
Cassandra Wilson	New Moon Daughter	£19.95
Car Stevens	Izitis MFSL 200 grm	£19.99
Dave Brubeck	Time Out 180grm	£21.95
Dave Mason	Alone Together MCA Heavy Vinyl 180 grm	£24.95
Deep Purple	Made in Japan Limited Edition	£17.95
DCC 180 gm Series	Virgin Vinyl	£21.95
Deep Purple	Fireball/In Rock Limited Edition	£14.95
Dexter Gordon	Go 180grm	£15.90
Dizzy Gillespie	Reunion Big Band MPS 180 grm	£19.95
Doc & Merle Watson	Picking the Blues AP HQ 180 grm	£21.95
Eagles	Hell Freezes Over	£17.90
ELP	Hotel California DCC 180 grm	£21.95
Elvis	Tarkus MFSL 200 grm	£19.95
Elvis	24 Karat Hits DCC 180 gm Double	£34.95
EMI	Elvis is Back DCC 180 grm	£21.95
EMJ	EMI 100 Years 180 gm (All titles stocked)	£14.90
Erykah Badu	180 gm Jazz Classics	£15.90
Fleetwood Mac	Badizm	£10.90
Frampton Comes Alive	Rumours 180 grm	£15.90
Hank Mobley	MFSL 200 gm Double	£34.95
Herbie Hancock	Soul Station 180 grm	£15.90
Horace Parlan	Slow Up 180 grm	£15.90
Ike Quebec	On the Spur of the Moment Blue Note 180 gm	£19.95
Janis Ian	Soul Samba Blue Note 180 gm	£19.95
Janis Ian	Revenge	£9.95
Jimi Hendrix	Breaking Silence 180 grm	£24.95
Jimi Hendrix	Band of Gypsies	£12.95
Jimi Hendrix	R.U. Experienced	£17.95
Jimi Hendrix	Axis Bold As Love 180 grm	£21.95
Jimi Hendrix	First Rays of the New Rising Sun 180 gm	£21.95
Joan Armatrading	Same 180 gm	£19.95
John Lee Hooker	The Real Folk Blues Alto 180 grm	£19.95
John M Jarre	Oxygene 7-13 MFSL 200 grm	£15.95
John Mayall	The Blues Alone MFSL 200 grm	£19.95
Joni Mitchell	Court & Spark DCC 190 grm	£21.95
Lee Morgan	Sidewinder 180 grm	£15.90
Linda Ronstadt	Greatest Hits DCC 180 grm	£21.95
Louis Armstrong/Duke Ellington	Sessions 180 grm	£19.95
Massenet L Fremaux	Le Cid/Last Sleep 180 grm	£21.95
Miles Davis	Kind of Blue Double 180 gm	£38.00
Miles Davis	Tutu 180 gm	£15.90
Mobile Fidelity Titles	200 gm Special Offer	£19.99
Monty Alexander	Live At Montreux 180 gm	£19.95
Moody Blues	Every Good Boy MFSL 200 grm	£19.99
Nat King Cole	The Very Thought of You DCC 190 gm	£21.95
Nina Simone	Sings The Blues 180 gm	£19.95
Oscar Peterson	We Got Requests	£19.90
Oscar Peterson	the Lost Tapes MPS 180 gm	£19.95
Paco Pena	Flamenco Pure Live 180 gm	£21.95
Patricia Barber	Cafe Blue 180 gm	£21.95
Pink Floyd	EMI Cent 180 gm Box Set	£99.95
Pink Floyd	EMI Cent 180 gm Single Albums	£15.90
Queen Rocks	Best of Queen 180 gm	£17.90
REM	Murmur MFSL 200 grm	£19.95
Ravel	Paray Rapsodie Espanole 180 gm	£21.95
Rick Wakeman	J.T.C.O.T.E. MFSL 200 grm	£19.95
Ry Cooder	Paris Texas 180 grm	£15.90
Saint Saen	L. Fremaux - Organ Symphony 180 gm	£21.95
Santana	1st Album 180 gm	£19.99
Santana	Abraxas 180 gm	£21.95
Sarah McLachlan	Fumbling Towards/Freedom Sessions	£29.95
Sergio Mendes and Brasil '66	180 gm	£19.95
Sony Clark	Cool Struttin' Blue Note 150 gm	£19.95
Sony Landreth	Outward Bound 180 gm	£15.95
Steve Miller	Greatest Hits DCC 180 gm	£21.95
The Best of Roy Orbison	DCC 180 gm double	£32.95
The Doors	DCC 180 gm	£21.95
The Doors	Strange Days DCC 180 gm	£21.95
The Weavers	Reunion At Carnegie Hall AP HQ 180 gm	£21.95
Tom Petty and The Heartbreakers	She's The One	£11.90
U2	Unforgettable Fire MFSL 200 gm	£19.95
Van Morrison	Moondance 180 gm	£15.90
Wayne Shorter	Speak No Evil 180 gm	£15.90

All these titles are available from stock mail order - a charge of £1.50 per consignment will be made.

Naim Audio Naxo 3/6 X-Over	650	425
Nakamichi Cassette Deck 2	399	249
Ortofon T3000 Moving Coil Transformer	849	299
ProAc Tablette 50 Signature (Ebony)	999	699
Quad 33 Controller Fire-amp	N/A	425
Rogers LS33 & 533 subwoofers	678	425
Roksan Caspian amplifiers 2nd quality	695	550
Roksan Caspian CD Player (EX-Demo)	895	749
Roksan Hotcakes (Gun Metal Grey)	199	75
Roksan Ojan 3 rosewood speakers 2nd	970	649
Roksan Shiraz (Brand new boxed old stock)	870	650
Roksan Xerxes R/W RB300 MC10/XP5 2	1055	549
Roksan Xerxes RB300 ATOC5/XP5 3	1055	549
Rotel RC 970 BX pre amp (new)	175	135
Rotel RP855 turntable	225	95
Tascam 688 Midi Studio (Flight Cased)	2500	799
Teac P500 Transport	600	375
VPI TMT MK 2.5 (new parts fitted)	3995	2999

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APOGEE STAGE Ribbon speakers, excellent sound, Anthracite colour £950 (£3000). Krell KSL line level preamp £975 (£2200). Boxes, manuals. REL Stentor mahogany subwoofer £500. Tel: Maz 0161 873 5020 or 0161 330 7912 evenings (May/I)

LINN LP12, Lingo, Ittok, K9 £1000. Linn Majik £350. Linn LK100 £350. Shahinian Compass, Medium Oak, new £1200. Arcam Alpha 5+ CD player £200. Two 5m lengths K600 £75. Tel: 01829 741 830 (May/I)

NAIM CDS. Mint condition £1900 ono. Tel: 01703 345 188 after 6pm (Southampton) (May/I)

GARRARD 301 Transcription motor mounted tone arm and cartridge £185. Ferrograph tape recorder Model 631 with tapes and handbook £150. Armstrong 626 tuner amp £80. For full information Tel: 01676 533 640 after 6pm (Apr/I)

EPOS ES25 Loudspeakers, dark cherry £1125. DPA Renaissance integrated amplifier £350. Teac VRDS 10SE £600. Pioneer CLD1950 laser disc player £350. Star Wars trilogy laser disc's £100. Tel: 0385 765 727 (Apr/I)

ORELLE SA100RX Remote-control integrated amplifier, 75W, silver/copper/carbon internal wiring, silver/copper/teflon hard-wired mains cable, audiophile sound, mint, boxed £450. High-end speaker cable £175. Tel: 01803 211 012 (Apr/I)

GARRARD 401 + AT arm, very little use £195. Richard Allan Class 'A' amp £30. NAD tuner amp £68. NAD CD £50. All vgc. Wanted: Analogue 'Puccini' amp. Tel: 01787 223 754 (Apr/I)

PAPWORTH PPA-6 Preamp, 3 months old, as new £1200 (£1750). Teac TI transport with Trichord Research digital output board and two power supplies, mint, boxed £450. Tel: 01780 764 149 (Apr/I)

MARANTZ CD 63 MkII KI Signature CD player £300 ono. B&W CDM I compact loudspeakers in red ash £400 ono. Both August 97. Tel: 01205 750 314 (Apr)

GARRARD 401 with SME 3009 arm. Good condition £150 ono. Revox G36 reel to reel. Just serviced £225 ono. Tel: 01403 790 818 (Apr/I)

ATC SCM 20 speakers, gloss black, boxed as new, with Epos 14 stands £1000. Tel: 01442 822 707 (Apr/I)

LUXMAN CL32 Valve preamp + Luxman 3600 valve poweramp. Very nice condition, only £950 for quick sale. Tel: 0171 385 5875 (Apr/I)

MERIDIAN 508 20bit CD, Meridian 502 analogue controller, Meridian 557 power amplifier, Martin Logan SL3 electrostatic speakers. Two pairs Music Link balanced cables, two 3.5m Tira Labs Prism 22, fcc, rarely used. £5500. Tel: 01628 715 8885 (May/I)

LEAK TL10 Amps matched pair with KT61 valves £500 ono. Spare KT61 valves available. Pair Lowther PM6C speakers, refurbished by Lowther, one in Acoustas cabinet £300. Tel: 01555 663 110 evenings (Apr/I)

ORIGINAL CYRUS Tuner £65. Rogers Cadet III, needs output transformer £45. Satin M/C M1172 £30. Audio Technica AT30E/AT630, boxed £60. Hi-Fi World first issue onwards, supplements. Hi-fi News 1974 onwards. Tequipment dual beam oscilloscope, needs ECF 804 £30. HP 820A signal generator, working, heavy £60. Many valves, some new, boxed. Offers. Tel: 01582 725 166 (Apr/I)

MERIDIAN 101 Preamp, M3 loudspeakers (requires one new bass unit) stands, cables, offers. Tel: 01732 461 358 (Apr/I)

LEAK DELTA 75 receiver. SME 3009 arm with Shure V-15 Type 2 improved cartridge with Thorens TD125 turntable in SME 2000 plinth system. B&W DM3 speakers. Offers. Tel: 01222 563 500 (Apr/I)

PAIR KLIPSCH CF4 speakers, solid cherry wood, 300 watt continuous 1500 peak, two 12" subs in each, hom loaded, ht 44", wi 17" dp 20" £2100. Tel: 01842 764 818 (Apr/I)

QUAD 33 and 303 (with operating manual), Thorens TD125 (with cover) and SME 3009 Series II improved arm and Shure V15 cartridge, offers please. Tel: 01508 538 943 (Apr)

WANTED: MARANTZ CD85, excellent condition preferred but anything in working condition considered. Tel: 01332 603 768 evenings (Apr/I)

AUDIO SYNTHESIS DAX-II D/A converter, excellent condition and superb sound £1400 ono. Tel: 01208 872 316 (Bodmin) (May/I)

WANTED: AKAI GX 4000DB, Reel to reel tape deck with Dolby 'B' in good condition (or for spares). Willing to pay up to £200 in cash. Tel: 01223 622299 (Apr/I)

SUMIKO BLUE Point Special £75. DNM Mica, 1042 conversion £60. Both approx 3 hours use only. Perfect condition. Tel: 0181 994 2030 after 6pm. (Apr/I)

KLIPSCH CHORUS II, hom mid, hom treble + relex bass. 15" driver + passive. sensitivity 101dB for 1 watt. Bargain at £1100. Tel: Geoff 01922 477 682 (Apr)

TRICHORD DIGITAL transport (rare, rebuilt Pioneer with very advanced clock + dig. o/p mods) £300. Harbeth monitors (similar to BC1's) £300. Audio Technica ATH70 electret headphones £50. Tel: 0131 539 8262 (Apr/I)

NAIM NAP250 Power amp, old style, unmarked £500. Dynavector XXIL cartridge, boxed, 3 months old, 50 hours use £600. Tel: 01923 857 348 (evenings) (Apr/I)

List of Electrocompaniet Dealers

Audible Elegance
 Castle Sound & Vision
 Connections
 Hazelmere Audio
 Midland Audio Exchange
 Nichols Hi-Fi
 R J F Audio Visual
 Sound of Music
 Sounds of Music
 Stowsounds
 The Hi End
 The Hi-Fi Room
 The Hi-Fi Studios
 V'Audio Hi-Fi Consultants

Hearne Bay, Kent
 Nottingham
 London, W1
 High Wycombe, Bucks
 Kidderminster, Worcestershire
 London SE12
 Cambourne, Cornwall
 Crewe, Cheshire
 Tunbridge Wells, Kent
 Gt Finborough, Suffolk
 London, SW13
 Manchester
 Doncaster, South Yorkshire
 Bristol

Tel: 01227 742 928
 Tel: 0115 958 4404
 Tel: 0181 348 5676
 Tel: 01494 437 892
 Tel: 01562 822 236
 Tel: 0181 852 5780
 Tel: 01209 612 260
 Tel: 01270 214 143
 Tel: 01892 547 003
 Tel: 01449 675 060
 Tel: 0181 876 3355
 Tel: 0161 832 0888
 Tel: 01302 781 387
 Tel: 0117 968 6005

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Creek OBH-8, OBH-8SE & OBH-9 MM and MC phono pre-amplifiers



WORLD VERDICT ○○○○

Smooth, yet truly musical, these are the best entry-level phono stages around at present.

November 97

Is your vinyl input getting a little long in the tooth? Or does your latest amplifier not have a phono input? Either way the Creek phono pre-amplifiers will give a boost to your system.

Employing state-of-the-art circuitry and high grade components, the OBH - Phono pre-amps perform miracles at a very modest price. Optimal matching is achieved by using an OBH-8 or SE for moving magnet and OBH-9 for moving coil.

UK Prices: OBH-8 - £99

OBH-8SE - £130

OBH-9 - £160

OBH-11 Headphone Amplifier

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED WHAT HI-FI AWARDS 1997

"The Creek OBH-11 makes the most of high-quality electronics and delivers clarity and weight that make any headphones perform to their utmost capabilities. If you are serious about personal listening, it's just the thing."

OBH-11 UK Price: £129

OBH-12 Remote Control Passive Pre-amp

The Creek OBH-12 enables you to sit back and turn the volume up and down, select the input to your amplifier, have a remote mute facility as well as tape monitoring without the need to get up to press any buttons or adjust knobs on your amplifier - "...something that isn't possible with any other passive unit out there (yet)." (Audio Video Shopper, USA, Feb 97).

OBH-12 UK Price: £199

Creek
 AUDIO LIMITED

For an Info pack please contact:
 CREEK AUDIO LTD, 2 Bellevue Road,
 Friern Barnet, London H11 3ER, UK
 Tel: 00 44 + (0)181-361 4133
 Fax: 00 44 + (0)181-361 4136
 E-mail: mcreek@lbm.net

Audible Elegance



WINTER SPECIAL PRICES

ART AUDIO QUINTET MONOBLOCKS (CHROME/GOLD)	£2095.00
BEAM ECHO DL7-35 MONOBLOCKS	£2500.00
GAMMA ACOUSTICS GEMINI LINE INTEGRATED	£ 450.00
GAMMA ACOUSTICS RHYTHM PHONO	£1100.00
GAMMA ACOUSTICS AEON MONOBLOCKS	£2995.00
TUBE TECHNOLOGY UNISIS POWER	£1195.00
TUBE TECHNOLOGY PROPHET PRE AMP	£1250.00
UNISON RESEARCH SMART 845 MONOBLOCKS	£2495.00
AUDION SILVER KNIGHT MONOBLOCKS (USED)	£795.00

Art Audio - Alchemist - Beam Echo - Bravura - Gamma Acoustics -
 Loricraft Audio/Garrard - JM Labs Speakers - Kilpsch - Monrio -
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LINN LP12 Sondek, Nirvana, Valhalla, Re-Brace, Ittok, Troika (30 hrs), Lingo. Very rarely used (1-2 hrs every Christmas), but regularly serviced by specialists. Naim 42.5 pre + 160 power, Hi-Cap. Absolutely fabulous bargain at £2000 - no split.

Tel: 0181 330 5117. Email: [connor@manorhouse@btinternet.com](mailto:connor@manorhouse.btinternet.com) (Apr/I)

LINN LP12, Ekos, Klyde, Lingo, mint £1450. Cyrus 780 £120 boxed. Dynaudio Zenon 3 kits, built, 3 way floorstanders, excellent £950. Tel: 01295 780 363 (Oxfordshire) (Apr/I)

STADIUM II Sub-woofer £650, EAR 834P MM/MC phonostage £250. Goldring 1042 - 10 hours £75. Ortofon MC25L - 20 hours £150. All boxed and guaranteed. Tel: 01253 402 557/0468 881 681 (Apr/I)

BEARD P50 Power amp, meters, rack handles £495. P500 pre (export model) line and superb phono stage £395. Both serviced by Bill Beard 'The Best He's Seen' make a super sounding combo. Naim Hi-Cap silver trim, latest caps fitted £340. Tel: 01785 840 724 (Stafford) (Apr/I)

ROGERS LS7's Classic 2 way 200wpc 8 ohm inc. target sand filled stands + 2x3.5 mtr Supra4 cable + gold 4mm plugs. Used not abused. Gladly demonstrate £200. Tel: 01634 815 710 (North Kent) (Apr)

TEAC P700 Transport and D700 DAC. Mint, boxed, bargain at £725. DPA Enlightenment DAC, mint, boxed £550. Tel: 01952 406 759 (Apr/I)

AUDIO RESEARCH SP9 Mk1 hybrid valve pre amplifier with phono stage. Black front panel, instructions but no box. Serviced by Absolute Sounds in May 1995 £750. Tel: 0171 736 6193 (Apr/I)

TRANSPARENT MUSIC

Wave plus speaker cable 15ft bi-wired £525 (£798) Krell KRC2 pre-amplifier £2200 (£4200) Tel: 01797 253 073 (East Sussex) (Apr)

CAMBRIDGE CD6 CD player £140. Pioneer Precision A300R £300. UKD Callas (Focal) speakers £550. All vgc, boxed. Cambridge A1 amp £50. Linn LK400 bi-wire speaker cables, 5m £45. Tel: 01603 633 451 (Apr/I)

ONIX OA2IS/SOAP2 with mm/mc boards £300 ono. Linn Basik/K9 £175. Sony 505ES-RDS tuner £140 ono. Arcam Alpha SCD £220 ono. Paradigm Esprit bipolars £350 ono, will consider individual/match offers. Tel: Dale 01903 527 248 eves, 01903 286 054 day (Apr/I)

VALVE AMP, Michaelson TVA1, sexiest valve amp ever made and Croft pre-amp £2000. NEC 903 CD player, quadrupial DACs weighs 45 lbs. Broadcasting quality, solid gold components £800. Tel: 01952 405 268 (Apr/I)

MAGNAPLANER MG2.5R panel speaker, ribbon tweeter. Demo and transport possible. Moving forces sale £795 ono. Arcam Delta 250/Black Box 500 CD combo £395 ono. Tel: 01635 37066 (Newbury) (Apr/I)

SPENDIOR SP2/3 Limited Edition speakers. Target HI-FI stands. Walnut SE phono badge, v.h. spec. x-overs, studio grade drivers, absolutely superb sound quality. Full demo, must hear! (£1185) £525 ono. Tel: DAC £385 ono. Tel: 0151 531100 (Derbyshire) (Apr)

TANNOY EATONS 10" HPD (1978) boxed £295. Hafler DH200 power amp £280. Leak Sandwich 250s £45. Quad 22 preamp £45. Ali vgc. New Tannoy 625 Alf subwoofer, bargain £200. Tel: 01494 874 381 (Bucks) (Apr/I)

WANTED: COPY of Hi-Fi World April 96 Supplement, building sub woofers for ESL 63's. Also Leak 2075 speakers, any condition, drive units must be good. Tel: 01453 764 734 or 0370 951 875 (Apr/I)

JEFF ROWLAND Model 5 (150W/transfiguration) £2150, Mesa Engineering Baron latest £2200. Audio Research LS7 £1175, Sonus Faber Extremas & stands £3300, Audio Synthesis DAX-2 £1475 and Transcend Transport AT&T + C/N-code £500, Yamaha T2 tuner £350, Pioneer TX9100 tuner £150, Deltac The Power (conditioners x2) £50 each, all in superb condition. Tel: 01733 310 819 (day) 01733 892 228 (eve) (Apr/I)

QUAD ELECTROSTATICS (black), Quad 33/303, Tandberg 3300X, Pioneer RTU11/TAU11 tape units. Sale or swap for power amp/quality smaller speakers. Tel: 01844 212 059 or hawkstone@clara.net (Apr/I)

NAIM NAP 250, boxed, mint £850. DPA 8's speaker cable 2.5 mtr £60. Naim NAC 42, mint £90. Quad II valve amps, re-valved, mint condition £350. Audio Technica OC9 cartridge, unused, brand new £220. DPA Enlightenment Drive/Dac, as new under 12 months old £980 ono. Naim 72 preamp, new style inc. ded. CD input £450. Tel: Jules 01792 280 061 (Apr/I)

QUAD MONOBLOCK Pair, 22 pre-amp, FM tuner, Quad serviced £450. Arcam Alpha 5 CD £200. Alpha 5 plus DAC board £45. Tel: 01705 690 093 (Portsmouth) (Apr/I)

2 X MUSICAL FIDELITY PI40 £150 ea. 2 x Marantz MA500 monoblocks £150 ea. 2 x Roksan Darius x-overs £30. 4 x 5.5m terminated lengths Linn K20 speaker cable £20. Tel: Mike 01684 892 722 (day) 01684 561 526 (eves before 9pm) (Apr/I)

MERIDIAN 557 power amplifier, immaculate, boxed, guaranteed £950. vdH Revelation 6m set speaker cables £800 (£1550) Orelle DA180 DAC £250. ATC20 towers £1200. Kimber power cables £45. WHY? Tel: 0131 556 7545 or s.hussain@ed.sac.ac.uk (May/I)

MERIDIAN 551 amp £425 pair, Ruark Swordsman Plus Two, walnut £100. XLO Ref Type 4 digital interconnect 0.5m £65. XLO Ref Type 1 interconnect 0.5m pair £125. Chord Flatline Gold bi-wire 10m pair £150. Tel: 01249 821 288 (Wilts) (Apr)

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MUSICAL FIDELITY A1000

Integrated amplifier two months old boxed £800, Musical Fidelity X-Cans headphone amplifier, boxed £70. JR 149 loudspeakers £80. Sennheiser HD 535 headphones £60. Tel: 0121 427 8810

AUDIO INNOVATIONS

S500 £375. Mission pre & power 776 & 777. Rare, genuine offers. Yamaha C.I. pre amp, classic quality £300. Meridian 206 D.S. CD £375. Magna Planar 1.4 panel speakers £400. Swops. Tel: 01626 774 246 (Apr/I)

NAIM NAC 92/NAP 180,

recent, mint, boxed, will separate £775. Epos ESII, walnut with stands, mint £275. Tel: 01905 830 120 (Worcester area) (Apr/I)

KEF REFERENCE Series 105/3

rare rosewood (cost option) bi-wired model. Superb unmarked condition £1200 ono. Meridian 208 & 209 CD/Preamp unmarked condition £599. Quad 306 vgc £190. Tel: 01293 885 929 evenings (Sussex) (Apr/I)

OXFORD CRYSTAL

Reference turntable, 'rare', RB300 OC7 as new £1250 ono. Naim SB1 'Black' latest drive units, as new £1200 ono. Finestra preamp with separate overkill power supply, as new, 'rare' £700 ono. Audio Research D70 power amp, very good £700 ono, or sell complete system £3000. Tel: Jason 01823 767 834 (Essex) (Apr/I)

MISSION 763 Loudspeakers, floorstanding 2-way design, ex. con. £95. A&R Cambridge A60 amplifier with box and instructions. £90. A&R Cambridge T21 tuner £80. Linn Kan stands, excellent condition £60. 2x7m K20 terminated Linn plugs £15. Wanted: Linn Lingo LP12 power supply, Quad FM4 tuner. Tel: 0181 664 7090 (Apr/I)

BOSE LIFESTYLE 5 music system, 6 months old, black, mint condition, boxed (£1750) Accept £900, no offers. Tel: 01295 261 166 (Apr/I)

EPOS ES25 Loudspeakers, black £1100. Audio Alchemy DITB converter £130. Rega 9, Exact cartridge £850. Rogers Studio 3's, rosewood, stands £300. Custom Design five glass shelf rack's £125. Tel: 0181 311 8986 (Apr/I)

PROCEED PRE, (Mark Levinson), fully balanced pre-amp with learning remote £1530 (£2000). Proceed AMP2, 150w dual mono THX power amp. £1450 (£2000). Tel: 01284 769 985 (Suffolk) (Apr/I)

PRIME DESIGNS A100 Mk2 integrated amp. 100 watts. Sweeter sound than earlier version. Brand new condition, new £600, £350 for quick sale. Tel: Nick 0171 221 0691 after 6pm. Leave message on ansaphone. (Dec/I)

FOR SALE: DPA (Deltec) 50S pre/power combination, excellent condition and boxed with manuals. £800 ono. Tel: 0181 452 1452 eves after 7pm (Apr/I)

DPA ENLIGHTENMENT

DAC, boxed £480. Michell Iso £250. Thorens TD2001 + Audio Technica ATF5/OCC cartridge £350. Arcam Delta Black Box £70. Tel: 01423 540 655 (Harrogate, Yorks) (Apr/I)

LINN LP12 VALHALLA

Ittok, Troika, mint, boxed £650, with Michi phono equaliser, mint (world class, configured for Troika) £450. Record collection also available. Tel: 01492 580 201 evenings (North Wales) (May/I)

THREE PRIVATE collectors

have 3 1/2 pages of very desirable vintage valve equipment for sale. Names such as Westrex, Leak, Quad, Rogers, Goodsell/Williamson, Lowther etc to tempt you. Tel: 01548 560 913 for list. (Apr/I)

SONY CDP-101 superbly engineered early CD player (£800 new) with cult status in Japan, see Hi-Fi World May 96 for details, in mint condition with remote and handbook, sensible offers. KT-66R boxed, unused set of four £150. Audio Innovations Series 200, preamp £225, poweramp £225. Tel: 01834 860 681 (Apr/I)

WANTED: MERIDIAN 200

Transport, must be in good condition. Pro 9 TL transmission line speakers, (homemade) Kef B139 bass units, kit costs £550 minus wood panels, sell £300 complete. Tel: 0191 243 2298 (Apr/I)

QUAD 306 Power amp with Quad 34 control unit and FM tuner. Complete with Quad rack, original boxes and manuals. Mint condition. £595 ono. Tel: 01293 885 929 evenings (Sussex) (Apr/I)

MONARCHY 22B DAC

£650 ono. Tel: Mike 0161 291 9331 (Apr)

WANTED: MICHELL ISO

phono stage, preferably with Hera power supply. Tel: 0181 452 1452 evenings after 7pm (Apr/I)

WANTED: ORIGINAL

carbon and boron headshell for Trio L07D turntable. Sony TA-N 88B power amp and Technics SST-1 speakers. Also Musical Fidelity P140, P150 or P170 power amps and Teac VRDS-7 SE CD player. Tel: Jon 0181 992 8952 eves & w/ends (Apr/I)

CLEAROUT: ELECTRONICS,

cartridges, speakers. Variable condition. Cheap. Cambridge CD2, Armstrong 625, Goodmans Module 90, Technics M260 (3 head), Audiotronic LT4040 tuner, Elite MCP555, Glanz GMC 10 EX, Dynavector 10 X 2, Rega RB100, SME headshell, fluid damper, alignment gauge; Hitachi SS8310G (3 way), large drive units. Tel: Paul 01582 664 339 (S. Beds) (Apr)

ROKSAN XERXES with XPS

2 power supply and suspension mods with Artemis arm £550. Tel: 0181 452 1452 evenings

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CAMBRIDGE AUDIO

DacMagic 2 D/A converter.
Pioneer 9700 CD player.
AudioQuest DigiPro cable. All
boxed as new. Superb
sounding combination. £295.
Tel: 01788 544 889 (Rugby)
(Apr/I)

ELECTROCOMPANIE

ECi/1, 100 wpc, current 80
amps, drives any speaker
(£2350) £1250. Orelle
CD10T/DA180 Mk2, silver
interconnect, Colloms
recommended (£1400) £600.
New records available. Any
demo. Tel: Roy 01902 892
613 (Apr)

ESL55 (CHARTWELL)
speakers with dedicated AB
sub-woofer system £450
Tel: 01223 881 101 (Apr/I)

DECCA GOLD Cartridge,
modified by Nottingham
Analogue to Microscanner
standard. Less than 100 hours
use since re-tipped. Supplied
with two alternative mounting
blocks to suit arm £95. Tel:
0115 937 3783 (Nottingham)
(Apr/I)

SME 20A. Sensible offers only.
Jadis JP80 £4500 ono. 2 x 7m
Audio Research Litzline
speaker cable £500.
Upgrading all above. Tel:
Work 01223 868 204 Home
01708 442 598 Mobile 0411
069 525 (Apr)

LOWTHER PM7A Homs
£260. One PM6A hom £100.
Sekt88 monoblocks £285.
SE4W Tripletone amp £185.
Apogee Minor speakers £550.
Cambridge A1 amp, phono
board £80. Tel: 01322 292
391 office hours (Kent)
(Apr/I)

NAIM NAIT 2 Integrated
amplifier, boxed, excellent
condition £250. Naim IBL
loudspeakers, black ash,
good condition £325.
Garrard 301 Lockwood
plinth cover, SME
3009/Goldring 1012,
original instructions, mint
£250. Tel: 01454 881 889
(Llwynn) (Apr/I)

DUAL CS505-2 Philips
CD582 CD, NAD 3020 amp,
NAD 6050C cassette deck,
pair Monitor Audio System R
speakers and stands £500
ono. No split. Tel: 01473 227
381 (Apr/I)

STUDER A725 Compact disc
player £750. Linn Isobarik
D.M.S. loudspeakers, black
£650. Pair of Quad 50E's
£190. Musical Fidelity MA 50's
£325. Goldring G99, Decca
arm, cartridge £125. Tel: 0191
281 0260 (Apr/I)

AUDIO INNOVATIONS 800
power amplifier £395. Walker
CJ55/SME/MP11 £195. Leak
Troughline £85. Folding Horns
£150. Dean Alto 3's/2's
£175/£135. Sound
Organisation stands £20.
Wanted: Rock/Oracle Delphi,
Innovations OR-200 spk cable.
Tel: 0113 255 9475 (Apr/I)

THORENS TCD2000 CD
Player, stunning sound and
looks, only 3 months old. Cost
£1000, sell £600. Meridian
201 pre-amplifier with 209
remote, only £250. Audio
Innovations Series 800CD line
valve pre-amp, bargain £130.
Standesign 5-tier table £90.
Tel: 0385 542 611 (Apr/I)

WILSON BENECH
Turntable (Red Cherry),
Wilson Benesch Act Two
Tondarrn, Wilton Benesch
Stage One Phono Amp
(line level fully adjustable),
All boxed with instructions,
excellent condition (new
£4500) sell £2500. Tel:
0151 446 0366 (Apr/I)

AUDIOQUAL 8000A £250.
Yamaha NS1000 monitor
loudspeakers, superb £600
Audio Synthesis Passion
preamp £250. Jeddin Post
Electrostatic headphones
£150. Srak SR34
headphones £50. Quad II
amps £250. All vgc. Tel:
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GARRARD 401 Chassis £50,
AR C77 cartridge £20, Target
RI £190, Quad FM3, mint
£75, 303, mint £125, Leak
TL12+, grey £150, Leak
Troughline £50. Tel: 0141 647
5364 (Apr/I)

NAIM HI CAPS For Sale.
Unmarked - 450 - 400. Tel:
01923 448 265 (Watford)
(Apr/I)

GAMMA SYSTEM Space
Reference (£4000), ERA
preamp (£1000), Epoch
speakers (£1500); only £2200
ono. Audio Innovations P2
£450, Burmeister 838 £400,
Riverside P2 valve phono
stage - almost as good as
above two, only £150! Elite
Rock II + plinth £250, Roksan
Artemiz £250, Moth Record
Cleaning Machine kit £90,
Tannoy 625ALF subwoofer
£200, Wharfedale Harewood
£200. Wanted: Goldmund
ST4, Technics EPC205. Tel:
0181 672 4319 (Apr/I)

ATC 100 ACTIVE Speakers
£4100, AVI preamp £425, AVI
CD player £475, Teac VRDS
7 CD player £325, Micromega
Stage CD drive £300, Rotel
Pro-Logic preamp and 6
channel power amp £400. Tel:
01977 643 629 (Apr/I)

GARRARD 301 (white),
Martin Bastin rebuild, solid
MDF plinth £300 ono. (PSU
extra). Leak Stereo 20 (Gold),
Haden Boardman rebuild
£275 ono. Tel: 01274 599
234 (Apr/I)

CONRAD JOHNSON
PV10AL preamp, recently
serviced £550. Musical
Fidelity XA50 monoblocks
£350. Audio Synthesis Solid
Silver interconnect, WBT
plugs, 4 metres £100. Leak
Mono Troughline tuners
one really old, wood case
£30, other metal case like
new £70. Tel: 011 89 41 2
987 (Reading) (Apr/I)

REVOX B77 Open reel
tapedeck with manual, 10
reels and some accessories,
excellent condition, had light
home use only £600. Teac
MC120 microphone, unused
£55. Ortofon VMS 20E MkII
pickup (boxed) £10. Tel:
01432 275 729 (Apr/I)

ATC SPEAKERS SCM 201
SL Walnut, new driver
design, wonderful, 6 months
old, little used by mature
classical listener. Reissues
have space for ESL 65S.
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(Even) 01284 870 353
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NAIM/LINN/MANA

BUY/SELL ALL ITEMS e.g. 52, CDS, SCAP, SNAXO, HICAP, NAXO, 135, 250, 5BL, IBL, 180, 140, 72, 32, MANA etc TEL: BOB 01382 819 732 (Dec)

HALCYON SYSTEMS Class

A Mono-Bloc Amplifier 60 watt £495 ea. Passive Pre-Amplifier £299 ea. Two Way Horn Loaded Loudspeaker, Horn Loaded A.B.R. System Bi-Wireable £599 pair. Necromancer Two Way Ported Loudspeaker With Ribbon Tweeter Bi-Wireable £899 pair. Tel/Fax 01903 716 209 (Apr)

WANTED - EARLY HI-FI

LOUDSPEAKERS Tannoy, Lowther, Parmeko, Voigt, Vitavox, RCA WE etc
TURNTABLES Garrard, BBC301, EMT SME, Ortofon, Decca, etc.
VALVE AMPLIFIERS AEI, EMI, Leak, Rogers, PYE-Quad, WE etc
AUDIO VALVES DA30, KT66, KT88, PX4, PX25, PP3/350, WE300
CLEAR CRYSTAL SYSTEMS John Petrie-Baker Tel: 0171 328 9275

MIRAGE BI-POLAR speakers

ex-dem bargains. M1090 (£1295) £995. M5 SI (£1995) £1395. MBS2 mini monitors (£599) £479. BPS 150 active sub (£759) £559. MC2 centre speaker (£449) £349. All with full warranty Tel/Fax 01628 440 873 (Apr/I)

AUDIO SELECTION Buy:

Sell: Exchange: Audiolab: Marantz: Meridian: Arcam: DPA: Rel: Kef: Tannoy: Stax: IMF: TDL: Teac: Quad: Sale-Linn LP12/3009/AT95 £399. Denon PMA920 180wrms £179. Tel: Jim 01206 510 392 (Colchester) (Dec/I)

PG SYSTEMS. Guaranteed top quality repairs, servicing, modification, upgrading or restoration to all valve equipment. Valve testing and matching with our purpose built listening room and 20 years experience we can demonstrate our superiority. We also have classic equipment for sale. Tel: 0181 691 8597 (Apr/I)

EMT 950 £900. Studer C37 £1500. Studer B67 VU £1200. EMT 948 £550. Technics SP10 MkII £360. Revox G36 £450. Revox A77 HS £600. Studer AB0 VU £1500. Studer B62 VU £600. Tel: 01246 235 024 (Apr/I)

AUDIOLAB 8000 Q (new) £795. Audiolab 8000 M's (new) £1095. Quad 77 pre (carbon) with console £595. Quad 77 CD (bus) £495. Meridian 602 transport £695. Naim NAC 125/Nap I 60 £400. Tel: 01403 251 587 (Apr/I)

LEVINSON No.27 Power amp £1995. Teac P30 transport (new) £1995. Manley 300B SE/PP monoblocks (new) £1995. Helius Chameleon loudspeakers £250. Musical Fidelity F22 pre-amp £695. Nakamichi CD4 £195. Tel: 01403 251 587 (Apr/I)

SALE OF EX

DEMONSTRATION Hi-Fi Separates. Naim Nait amplifier (£575) £400. Naim 92/90 amplifier (£920) £650. Naim 140 poweramp (£750) £525. Naim 180 poweramp (£1060) £850. Naim CD2 CD player (£2000) £1600. Naim NAT03 tuner (£595) £475. Naim 82 preamp (£2160) £1750. Naim 102 preamp (£1050) £850. Linn Majic amplifier (£900) £650. Linn Mimik CD player (£875) £675. Linn Karik CD player (£1850) £1350. Linn LK100 poweramp (£650) £450. Linn Wakonda preamp (£750) £595. Linn Kaim preamp (£1700) £1200. Linn Keilidh speakers (£985) £700. Quad 77 CD pre & poweramp (£2150) £1850. Quad 77 integrated amp (£700) £500. All with six months guarantee. Tel: Griffin Audio 0121 622 2230 (Birmingham) Apr/I)

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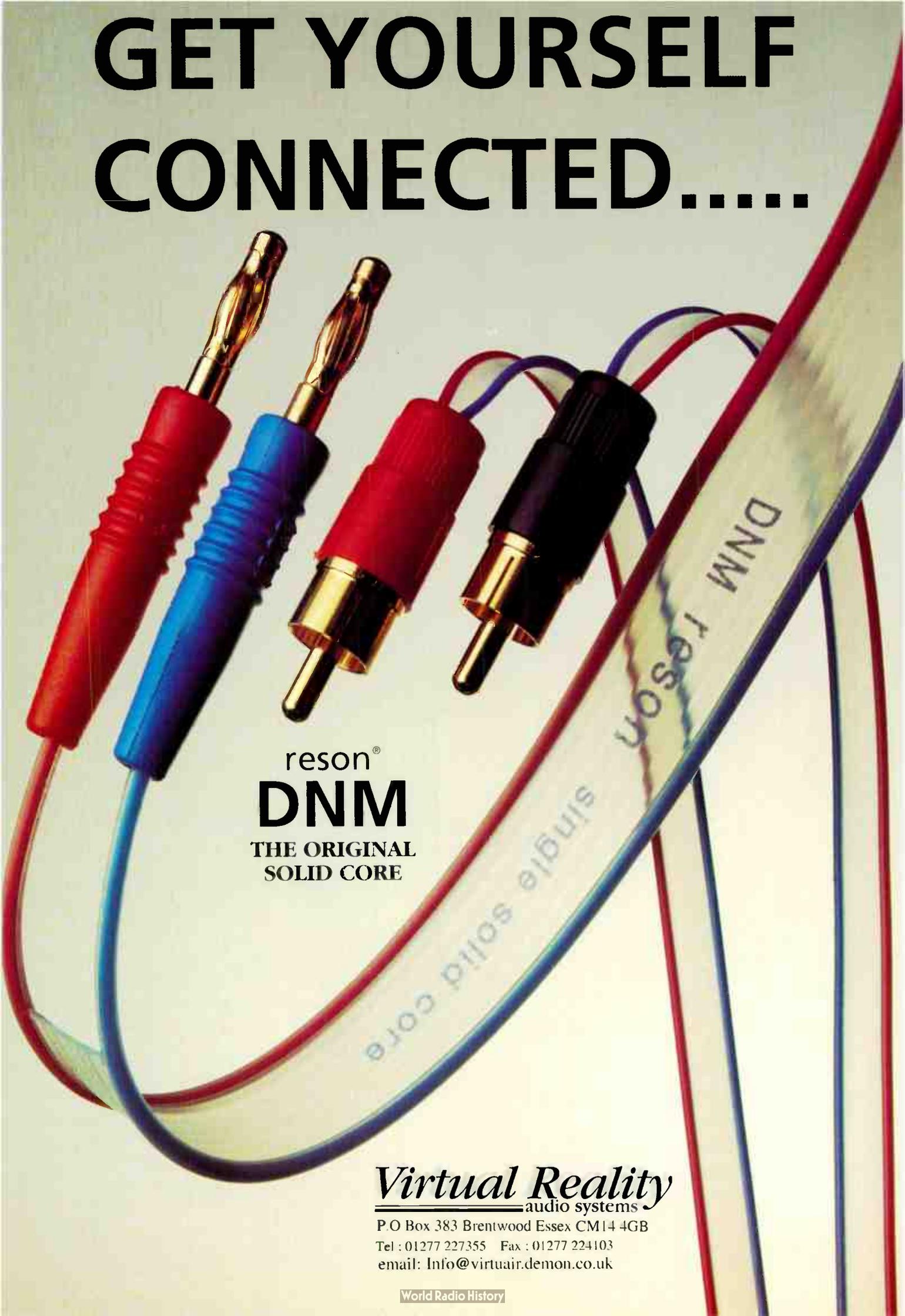
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