We test a trio of dedicated systems from Nakamichi, Audio Note & Denon

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Channel hopping a few nights ago, I came across a programme dedicated to the history of the Bunny Girl. This included a quote from the seventies by Playboy supremo Hugh Hefner describing the Playboy philosophy. As well as the inevitable fast cars, jet travel and "pretty girls", he also hinted that the type of chap who frequented his establishment was probably also into hi-fi. I pictured an oily, smoking-jacketed fifty-something, cigar in one hand and "pretty girl" in the other, cooing into her ear "how do you like my monoblocs?", treating her to the aural delights of James Last or Mantovani. This got me thinking - why is it that hi-fi is still so much a man's world? As far as I am aware, the female population is just as mad about playing music as the male. Why, then, are they not equally mad about what they play it on?

My Other Half certainly appreciates music played through decent gear. The main difference, though, is that she will have none of the constant changing of equipment and cabling -fiddling that I find myself unconsciously indulging in.

A simple comment such as "Why do that?, what's wrong with it?" awakes a hammer-blow realization: there's nothing wrong with it at all, so am I a hobbyist, or am I simply showing off? After much deliberation and as much as I tell myself I'm not, it seems that I'm a bit of an 'anorak'. And I thought I was just in it for the music!

How we test the products

- Hi-Fi World has its own advanced test laboratory and acoustically treated listening room.

- Hi-Fi World has a dedicated in-house team of experienced listeners. 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.

**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.

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Getting a better, more involving sound often means spending a lot of hard earned money. It’s such a waste, because every system can benefit from our cables and accessories, at a fraction of the cost of some new "black box". Here are some of the ways we can help.

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Panasonic UK,
Panasonic House,
Willoughby Road,
Bracknell,
Berks G12 8FP
Tel: 08701 578577

ZAP THAT STAT

The supposed demise of the vinyl disc also brought about the premature demise of the Milty Zerostat gun. This beauty was often found lurking in an audiophile's cupboard, ready to zap static into oblivion. The good news for all vinylphiles is that it's back!

A squeeze of the trigger apparently generates several thousand volts and releases a burst of ionised air, with the help of a piezo-electric voltage-generating crystal. No batteries are needed and no refills or cloths are called for. Flash indeed!

The Zerostat is available now from Goldring Products at £30

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Bury St. Edmunds,
Suffolk IP32 7SX
Tel: 01284 701101
e-mail: sales@goldring.co.uk

CERWIN MOVE HOME

Sonic beefcakes Cerwin-Vega have moved their domestic and professional audio range to Lamba Plc for future distribution. Lamba have been dealing with the company's Pro-Stax and V Series professional gear for five years and now have the rest of the range to accompany them.

The projected market is apparently the home cinema and "domestic dance" (home studio?) sectors. There are two new ranges to coincide with Lamba's distribution, the E Series and the CVT range.

Lamba Plc,
Albion Mills,
Albion Road,
St. Albans,
Herts AL1 5ER
Tel: 01727 840527
BRAND NEW HEAVIES

These two obelisks of power are the new high-end 'speakers from ProAc, the Future One and Future Two. They both feature an asymmetrical bass chamber in an attempt to reduce standing waves and they are port loaded to the floor. An open-backed midrange allows the rear cone sounds to be “coupled” by the speaker shape. For the top-end material ProAc employ a ribbon tweeter.

Although they appear monster in size, ProAc describe them as having a very slim shape that will not intrude into the room. If these take your fancy, you will need £5,800 for the smaller Future One and a substantial £10,500 for the Future Two.

Celef Audio International,
Highpoint House, Riding Road,
Buckingham Road Industrial Estate,
Brackley,
Northants NN13 7BE
Tel: 01280 700147

Prima Donnas

Ethos Acoustics have announced that they are to supply the installation ‘speakers for the new Royal Opera House, scheduled to re-open in December (maybe!). The Performer Pro will feature both on-stage and front-of-house. The 31mm dampened laminated cabinet is braced by a 20mm solid steel bar and features a “low turbulence” rear port. Drivers consist of a 175mm bass unit and 26mm soft dome tweeter.

If you wish to recreate Placido Domingo’s role of Siegfried in your front room, you could always opt for the domestic version of the Performer. Finished in real wood veneer, it has the same drive units and characteristics as its professional brother and is available for the sum of £1495 per pair, inc VAT.

Ethos Acoustics Ltd.,
268a Kingshill Ave.,
Hayes,
Middlesex UB4 8BY
Tel: 020 8842 0020

Snell’s Pace

All the way from the USA, Snell Acoustics’ new loudspeaker model has reached our (to them) distant shores. The XA 60s are the smaller brothers of the 70s and 90s. The 60s are incorporated into Snell’s expanding ‘array format’ (hence the XA) consisting of five-element arrays which are intended to benefit the surround-sound lover.

Two eight-inch bass drivers, two upper midranges and an aluminium dome tweeter are located on the front panel, whilst at the back there is a rear firing soft-dome tweeter for ‘added ambience’. A ‘boundary’ switch is located to aid bass response in various room positions and the front tweeters are under the thumb of a level control. A switch enables the rear tweeter to be used at will. A pair of these technologically advanced cabinets will cost you £2,500 inc. VAT.

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FB OR NOT FB

PMC have introduced their new FB1 floorstanding speaker. With claims of 90dB sensitivity and bass extension down to 22Hz, the FB1s are priced at £1100 for Black Ash, Cherry Walnut and Oak, whilst a rose-wood finish is available for an extra £469.

Bryston's Powerpac 60 powered modules can be added by bolting them to the bottom rear of the cabinets. For an extra £75 per pair, the loudspeakers can be supplied with sculpted plinths.

THAT'S MY dAD

Cyrus have announced the arrival of their new CD player - the 24-bit dAD 3 Q24. Cyrus say that it incorporates a host of new improvements in technology, including no less than nine fully regulated power supplies, a regenerated master clock and Cyrus' new DAC filtering. All these wonders are contained in the familiar trade-mark die-cast box.

The Q24 module adds two more "low noise" supplies to reduce power supply interference. Also amongst those present is a post-DAC filter with a four-pole design featuring surface mount technology for shorter signal paths.

Cyrus dAD 3 Q24 tips the scales at £900.

NEXT MONTH'S ISSUE

Here is a selection of the equipment we hope to bring you in just four weeks' time:

Dancing Partners

We pair CD players and integrated amplifiers from four top manufacturers including Cyrus and Naim. Which will be the marriage made in heaven?

Sony SCD-1 SACD player

The long-awaited SCD-1 arrives at World Towers for our inspection. All we have to do now is get it upstairs! You'll have to contain yourself for another month for our verdict.

Nakamichi DR-8

The newly revitalised Nakamichi brand has resurrected some of the old favourites. The DR-8 sees us harking back to the good old days of the humble cassette.
Throughout audio history, 'systems' and 'compacts' have played a part in the development of 'hi-fi' as we know it. Esteemed audio author John Earl even devoted a small chapter to encased systems in his Tuners and Amplifiers (Fountain Press, 1970). He noted then that “the most popular hi-fi system is based on units or audio components”.

Most dyed-in-the-wool audiophiles wouldn't be seen dead with a mini-component or a one-unit system in their household, not even in the bedroom! We have however encountered a few systems in the past (most notably TEACs Reference 600 back in June of this year) which have genuinely impressed us with a sonic performance that could sway even the most doubting of Thomases.

Judging by the style of these systems, it also seems we Brits are becoming increasingly obsessed with design. You can't turn on the telly without some brightly-dressed bod explaining how to transform your front room into a Bavarian Baroque nightmare. No longer are we the laughing stock of southern Europe, with our knotted hankies, socks and sandals, as we stroll along the Via Appia. This has had a major effect on domestic audio - from the cheapest systems available right up to fantastical, silly-priced esoteric gear. Many manufacturers seem to feel that, in order to sell equipment, it now has to look good in the home as well as sound good.

All of the three examples we have summoned to our doors also have a solid hi-fi pedigree as far as their manufacturers are concerned. We've taken an example from three price brackets (budget, mid and expensive). In each case, the maker has a 'name' in component hi-fi to defend. Because each system is differently conceived and differently priced, it's not a comparative test, but rather a trio of reviews highlighting what they sound like and who they're aimed at.

It appears that manufacturers are constantly striving to improve the quality of one-box and components systems, searching for the holy grail of function-plus-form. Since a combined system is an easy option for a starter in hi-fi, we thought we'd better check these out. It's silly to vaunt the virtues of individual components without having a serious look at the alternatives.
Denon's component system is reminiscent of the compact separates of fifteen years or so ago. I can recall a friend of mine wheezing up Battersea Rise with such a system newly purchased, and very good it was too, compared with the turntable/radio/amp (the original compact arrangement) which it replaced. Arguably the Denon falls into this sort of category: not hi-fi in the purist sense but a real ear-opener for anyone struggling with an all-in-one moulded stack.

To begin with, although compact, the Denon's components are not absurdly so. Dimensions seem standardized at 10.5in wide and 3.25in tall: Depth varies a little depending on course on how compacted you can get the wires arranged. Display is blue. All-in-all nothing to offend the eye here, indeed the brushed aluminium and bronzey knobs and buttons give a generally smart look.

Power is daisy-chained from captive leads, a sensible arrangement making for minimum earth loop troubles, although the electric shaver type plugs could possibly be a little more robust. In addition, there are terminals for jack-to-jack connections for enabling the remote to operate any of the connected components through the receiver, or else for the timer/alarm clock feature. Rather irritantly if you're remote-animate (not me) only the receiver can be powered up from a distance, everything else must be left on if it's to respond to the far commands.

A distinctly generous allowance of inputs is provided: CD, Tape, Tuner, Phono, MD and naturally the Great Aux. An hour or two spent with the system will enable anyone to recite these by heart, through them forwards, one by one!

The Mission-built loudspeakers provided are small and light but surprisingly, not to say alarmingly full in the bass region. A four inch woven bass-mid driver is integrated nicely with the 1 in soft dome tweeter and the reflex port in a d'Appolito-ish arrangement. It looks flashy but sounds rather good, although I suspect much fine detail is ultimately lost. Although the interconnects are what you'd expect with any budget gear, the speaker leads are a disgrace: just a few yards of stranded wire with bare ends (Yes! We have no bananas!). Terminals on the loudspeakers themselves are robust enough but the plastic screw-up things on the receiver want careful handling if they are to withstand a more substantial cable.

Since it comes 'free' with the amplifier and control departments, I began with the tuner on Radio 3; a live broadcast form Ronnie Scott's. As hinted above, the loudspeakers provide an astonishing amount of bass - that doesn't mean to say that it's accurate, but at least you can hear it to judge! The tuner section has one of those irritatingly picky mutes which shuts up if the signal is below a certain level. Unhappily, I'd guess with the 'aerial' provided, you'd be hard put to find any station which passes the equipment own test. Band-width for stereo was settling amount of bass - that doesn't mean for) was expected to be pretty universal, inasmuch as it could sound a touch on the sparkly side. Playing a pre-recorded cassette was perfectly satisfactory within the limits of the system, as was the oh-so-Tweeter and the reflex port in a

Whilst things were going reasonably well with all the hop cats at Ronnie's, I tried recording some of the proceedings with the cassette machine. Cassette as a format keeps pushing the nails out of its coffin, although a MiniDisc option is available for a few dollars more; in this instance the recorder made a nice job of things, although I was disturbed to find that the recording-level indication did not correspond with playback - perhaps there's a margin of overload allowed for? Playback sounded very much as if the use of Dolby noise reduction (B and C provided for) was expected to be pretty universal, inasmuch as it could sound a touch on the sparkly side. Playing a pre-recorded cassette was perfectly satisfactory within the limits of the system, as was the oh-so-handly-track-finder.

Denon's matching CD player was probably the most rewarding of all: it's easy to forget how fresh CD can sound within the confines of a budget system. Gesualdi's motets might have benefitted from a dash more treble but I suspect that this lies with the system overall, not the player. In the same way, the Rite of Spring needed a little more clarity to quell the nodges of bass which the loudspeakers insisted on serving.

Notwithstanding all these grumbles, it's difficult to fault the Denon for what it is. Better cables, more balanced loudspeakers, and a genuine aerial would help things considerably but they may unsettle the balance of the system regarded as a system. As an introduction to hi-fi we must reserve judgement, but as a willing domestic workhorse and a tall step up from a mini, it all seems excellent value.
Nakamichi is undoubtedly a big name in audio. At a time when compact cassette was the only serious popular home-recording format, their products were more serious than most. Unhappily, as so often noted, nothing in this world lasts forever, and in the end the name, which had seemed as indestructible as one of the cassette decks, vanished.

Nak's resurrection under the umbrella of BBG Distribution has apparently diversified the brand, although towards the end of the company's previous existence they had started to experiment in other areas of audio, including amplification and CD technology. In addition to producing new editions of the classic cassette decks, Nakamichi have unveiled a range of seriously priced lifestyle systems.

Admittedly his kind of equipment is as far away from the Hi-Fi World tradition as it's possible to get. We've strayed from the path quite a few times in the past - in-car DAB receivers, multimedia subwoofer sets - but only when feel that it's something different from the crowd, which is what the SoundSpace 8 promised to be. After all, Nakamichi's distinguished audio past should count for something.

The System 8 (£1100) employs an active subwoofer with two small, plastic satellites. The main part of the system is absolutely tiny (shoe box size!) and powered from the sub via a computer-style five pin connector. No photograph will do its dimensions justice - it's certainly a shock when you get it out of the box! Although fairly weighty, the main 'works' is designed to be hung on a wall and comprises an FM/AM receiver and five CD changer (or 'music bank'). Nakamichi recommend various 'speaker configurations in the accompanying manual: if the main unit and satellites are resting on furniture, then the satellites should be placed slightly in front of the subwoofer; with wall installation for the unit and the satellites, the sub should also being placed against the wall. Maybe they're hinting that optimum performance will be gained from using the non-wall mounted set up?

Now for the moment you're all waiting for with bated breath - the sound. You may think it goes without saying that a similarly priced separates system would show clear superiority. I fact, my highly prejudiced audiophile ears were pleasantly surprised with well-recorded pop and rock music such as Talk Talk's seminal Colour of Spring album or The Best of Everything But The Girl.

However, a tinny sounding CD will sound very tinny indeed, since the miniscule 'speakers emphasise any 'transient' tendencies.

Once the Nakamichi's bass, mid and treble were adjusted slightly, and the sub-woofer levelled to balance, the overall sound was very good, with forward, if slightly sibilant, vocals and a nice depth to the sound stage. Although the bass was tuneful, the sub isn't exactly the fastest about, so certain dance tracks sounded a trifle sluggish and laboured.

Not wholly surprisingly, the Nakamichi system was less confident with orchestral music. The satellites are no more than six inches high and four inches deep, so no matter how big the sub is, you're not going to recreate Carnegie Hall here. In the fortissimo passages of Mahler's Fifth Symphony the overall sound was thin. A shame, because the depth of field was still there, with a pleasant airiness in the woodwinds' quieter passages. Orchestral balance was also commendable.

It is fair, if brutal, to say that the SoundSpace 8 probably isn't hi-fi as we know it, but that doesn't mean to say that there aren't plenty of people reading this very article who may be impressed by the performance and the technology that has gone into creating it. What lets things down is that sense of excitement and vibrancy which sonically sorts out the men from the boys; it just lacks a bit of smoothness. Is it hi-fi? Well, no, and I don't think Nakamichi really intend it to be, but despite this it sounds by no means bad, and, as our picture shows, there's no denying that it looks good!
There are mini-systems and there are mini-systems, apparently. This is obviously a mini-system and a half. For just under ten years or so Audio Note have beavered away at producing high-end esoteric equipment. Peter Qvortrop, the mastermind behind Audio Note, felt that “the biggest challenge left was to be sought in conceptualising a product range that combined compactness with flexibility, style with sound quality, longevity with elegance and simplicity of presentation” - phew! Mr Qvortrop travels to a lot of shows worldwide and is very ‘up’ on current trends in the audio market. The result of his hunch-plus-research is the entry-level Zero series of components.

This system comprises a CD transport, separate 24/96 DAC, and pre and power monoblocs! All the components are available separately, or the system as a whole comes to just over £2000 - not an unreasonable sum considering what’s involved. Sub-miniature valves are used in the CD and DAC, whilst the Zero P push-pull monoblocs use a pair of ECL-82s to output 8W of pure valve power. If you don’t use Audio Note’s own ‘speakers, then a pair with equally high sensitivities is a must.

Taking the manufacturer’s advice and positioning the ‘speakers close to corners, I fired up the Zeros with Everything But The Girl’s ‘Best Of’ album. Straight from the start it was perfectly obvious that this was not your run-of-the-mill mini component system. A sense of clarity was prevalent here which is lacking in much equipment at the price, regardless of size. One aspect which makes all the difference is the clarity of lower level detail, again something that is close to Audio Note’s heart. Anyone can create Watts, it’s what’s below the Watts that count! - such is the Audio Note philosophy.

Intricate detail is brought to the fore, with percussion and subtle vocal nuances clearly discernable. In the track ‘Single there is very low, subtle bass which is often missed out by most equipment apart from subwoofers, but the Zero system picked up the rumbles in a winningly warm way. For example, if you hear a Russian bass sing a bottom B flat, it’s pure, round and slightly breathy (in a positive way!): a sound not unlike that which breathed from the loudspeakers.

With classical music such as Messiaen’s colourful and detailed Chronochromie, the openness of the mid-range was a treat. Woodwind was especially clean and remained unobtrusive as part of the canvas as a whole. This clarity of sound is what we should expect from monobloc amplification. The real revelation came with low frequency detail such as pianissimo bass drum strokes and lower strings passages. The result was not so much noise, as movement of air. Yes, I know noise is just this, but there was real depth to the sound - firm and fast without boom.

The opening of Bernstein’s definitive recording of Mahler’s Fifth Symphony with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra showed off the Zeros comfortable handling of dynamics. The initial solo trumpet fanfare was followed by a full and excitingly realistic tutti that took my wig off! It’s not just a matter of loudness here but depth of sound. The tympani were apparently located in my neighbour’s fireplace and the rest of the orchestra was positioned in a near perfect arc behind the ‘speakers. Again the lower level detail such as string vibrato and concert hall ambience (live recording!) added to the sense of realism that we’ve only heard bettered by new high resolution formats such as SACD.

If you’re after a system that manages to look uniform and stylish while being able to deliver the sonic goods, you could do a lot worse than listen to the Zero. A complete valve system for this kind of money and with as much quality is pretty rare.

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NuVista - Nuvistor. All at sea? Don't know what's what? Don't worry, pals. While the late-comers are settling in their seats, I'll just summarize the story so far: In the late 1950s, when the valve was king, a new 'alternative technology' device began to be commercially available - the semiconductor transistor. Naturally at first, these little critters were prohibitively expensive, crude and unreliable. At about the same time, stretching known thermionic techniques to the limit, the Nuvistor was developed, essentially an ultra-reliable, superfine, miniature valve.

Although not exactly teeny-weeny, a Nuvistor is a fraction the size of a small B9-base conventional valve of the same capacity; small enough to sidestep many of the headaches inherent with a conventional valve: no top supports in the form of mica discs; no 'getter'; no glass envelope to melt. At the time of their development it was hoped that power Nuvistors of about 30 Watts would not be long in arriving. What could be more perfect!

The years roll by; the transistor ousts the valve from just about everything; the Nuvistor remains quietly gathering dust in the siding into which happenstance has shunted it. Who'd be a prophet, eh?

Come 1998, Musical Fidelity buys the remaining known stock of Nuvistors and builds them into the limited-edition NuVista pre-amplifier. Sensation! Coming right up to date, Musical Fidelity has the good fortune to discover another small caché of Nuvistors and Hey Presto!, the £3300 NuVista 300 watt power amplifier is born. Now read on ...

Judging by the weight of the things, it must have been a difficult birth: the 'dual mono' amplifier is rather a job to lift on its own; add the external power pack and seven stone weaklings need not apply! Fortunately my He-Man body-building course stood me in good stead here, and I was soon pondering the interesting selection of cables, plugs and sockets which are required to set things up. Each channel has its own independent power supply and consequently its own safety-lock cable between the power supply and amplifier boxes.

I have referred to the excellence of the NuVista loudspeaker terminals before and I note no falling off in the breed! The provision of two pairs of terminals per channel is not just for show: the NuVista amplifier is designed to dish up the power practically unconditionally, which is one of the reasons there are sophisticated warm-up and safety cut-out features built into the supply unit.

I have a fancy for trying out monster power amps with down-right insulting jobs, so it should come as no surprise that I first turned to my Gregorian chant series (Vespers) in order to test for clarity with the unaccompanied human voice. Musical Fidelity products have occasionally been accused of having a somewhat 'crisp' sound which could be a liability with treble-heavy sources. While not sharing this opinion, the first thing that struck me was that the Nuvistor front-end had slightly mellowed the MF sound, happily without sacrificing their essentially accurate approach. What helped point this out was the less-than-concert-hall performance. Members of a religious order are not necessarily chosen for their voices; indeed the naturalness of this old Archiv set is one of the points which make it so useful for reviewing. Prior Anselm (or whoever) fluted through the loudspeakers with his slight hoarseness intact. The very fabric of the Spanish monastery location seemed to be lining my walls, although in fairness they tend to look pretty ruined already. In short, a treat - and there are those who think 300W is only for rattling the windows.

Speaking of windows, it would of course be unreasonable not to try wig-gling them just a little. Carl Orff's too-well-known Carmina Burana suite was brought into play in an effort to make the amp work for its living. As anyone who
ULDER has listened to the piece all through may have decided, Mr Orff swiftly ran out of ideas with this so, after a knockout start, the old spice drops away rather quickly. This provides a good test for the amplifier, inasmuch as if boredom is not to settle in, reproduction should be of a high order. Sacrificing my well-being in an attempt to keep readers posted, I turned the volume up to A Lot. Although I was close to wishing myself elsewhere, and the crack in the ceiling was giving its last and final warning, I could not bring the slightest drop of perspiration to the NuVista's brow. Accurate and smooth, the amplifier just got on with it. Bass? Yes - no further qualification required.

Having placated my neighbours and waited for dust to settle, I turned to my tuner. Radio 3 is running a Sunday night Shakespeare series at the moment and although there are some bolt-on designer features which are a bit so-so (a typewriter in Hamlet?), there's nothing like a BBC play for checking stereo accuracy and natural presentation, if not acting.

Having been rather puzzled by A Midsummer Night's Dream performed apparently as a straight play the other week, I was nevertheless thoroughly swept up in the action-packed thriller Julius Caesar (artillery fire and Jeeps!). As poor Brutus killed himself with twice as good a will, I noted that all the entering and exiting had made quite a stereophonic event. If you haven't used quality high fidelity gear for plays, you might give the dial a spin - it's dead cultural!

I discovered that Benny Waters' Live in Stockholm had seldom sounded live-er. The faintest suspicion of harshness and you wonder if the old master should change his reed. This time he was apparently on for an all-night jam. Moral: live recording plus good amplification equals astonishing immediacy.

Of course 300W is a considerable slab of power by anybody's standards. What concerned me more immediately was what might happen to your voice - coils if there was a start-up or shut-down thump. To try this out, I spent a few minutes doing daft things: tripping over the mains flex; disconnecting one channel's power lead; the sort of things that could conceivably occur if you're not careful. To my intense relief, far from returning my 'speakers for re-coning, the worst noise I could drag out of them sounded uncommonly like a cupboard door being closed - "a-plumfle-umfle" is about the closest I can transcribe it - which seemed a poor return for 96dB/W/m!

Without doubt £3300 is an awful lot of money, but you can easily spend considerably more for woefully fewer Watts. In my book, manners maketh both man and amplifiers. The degree to which the NuVista 300 governs its almost limitless strength in the interests of sweet music is practically beyond belief. There may be a sense of fin de siecle about the NuVistor valve, but there's no use crying over spilt milk - at least not while Musical Fidelity's NuVista 300 is able to turn it into the purest cream...

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Nu Vista 300 power amplifier
£3300
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WORLD VERDICT
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Measured Performance see page 119
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TURN AGAIN WHITINGTON, UNWORTHY CITIZEN, LORD MAYOR OF TOOTING . . .

Thus ring the chimes of St Anselms, Upper Tooting Road, as our intrepid hero sets out on his travels. With nothing to comfort him aside from a bundle and stick, and none to help aside from a trusty Austin A40, the valiant Whitington steps out boldly.

But what luck! As our hero treads the grassy knolls of Putney Heath, what should he espy but a cat; a rather well-fed ginger-haired cat with glasses.

Dick: Young puss, old chum, pray walk my way
And keep me comp'ny for the day.
I have been summoned by the bell
To go to Hammersmith Novotel.
Let's walk along this lonely road
And see what hi-fi's to us showed.

Cat: Meeow. Meeow.

Thus our two chums trudge far and wide, until in the distance they spy a little village by the river.

Dick: What town is that good passer-by
That we from here can now espy?

Passer-by: It's Hammersmith.

Dick: Good citizen of this fair town
My cat and I are prone to frown
'Cos we've come far as you can tell
But still can't find the Novotel . . .

Citizen: It's behind you . . .

Dick: It's where, boys and girls?
OMNES: BEHIlIIND YOU . . .!!!

Dick Whitington and his faithful ginger-haired cat with glasses gasp at the wonders shown to them by the exhibitors:

Dick: My gosh! They're showing so much stuff
I wonder if we've time enough?

Cat: Meeow. Meeow. ("Quite right, Dick.")

Dick: There's so much here to see and hear
We'll never reach the end, I fear.
Tell me good man, how many stalls
Are situate in these fair halls?

Man: ProAc Future One & Future Two
Cat: Meeow. Meeow.
Man: Have you had that cat seen to . . .?

As his faithful cat disappeared into the distance, Dick Whitington shouldered his stick and bundle and began the long, tired-but-happy walk back to the Royal Car Park (Park Royal). Who could tell what excitement lay in store for him in his quest to become Lord Mayor of Tooting (three times) and listen to hi-fi as well. But I dare say that's another long and boring story . . .

... and finally, a magical glimpse of the future in the past - the imminent Quad II Forty. Make sure you tell Father Christmas all about it, boys and girls . . .
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The new CDP-XB930E UK Edition mid price CD player promises a lot. Does it live up to Simon Pope's expectations?

There is no doubt that with the impending promise of SACD, Sony have to put that little bit extra into their CD players in order to make them economically viable (ie. sell them). There is also no doubt that in the CDP-XB930E Sony are giving the consumer a little taste of the high end at a fraction of the price.

Stuffed inside are Sony's fixed pick-up mechanism as used in the QS range, a more rigid chassis with strengthening beams, a Variable Coefficient digital filter with four settings for 'customising' the sound, S-TACT Current Pulse conversion (attempting to rid the amplitude and time axes of noise), and digital outputs both optical and coaxial.

Little touches such as the supplied machined metal CD stabiliser, CD Text capability, the chunky loading tray that opens so smoothly, the value for money build and the jog dial for track skipping (normally associated with MD) all whiff of an £800-plus product. Like Spanish Rioja wine, matured in oak barrels to add richness to the flavour in the style of a classic vintage Claret, they are there to convince you that this is a quality product - not quite the real thing but as damn near as your going to get at the price. And like a Rioja, the 930E is very good value for money. Not only does it have the look and feel of a more expensive machine, it sounds pretty much like one too.

First to get on the loading tray was the Alban Berg Quartet's reading of the Debussy and Ravel string quartets. The immediate response was well-balanced, level and smooth. The string tone of the violins was both light and sinuous by turns, showing an impressive sense of sheer music making that gets by many players at the price. Setting the filter to No2, which Sony describe as 'high clarity, strength' improved the plucked string work in the Debussy's third movement, so that fingers-on-string content was easily heard and added considerably to the rhythmic drive of the player. A good, deep soundstage is delivered with a wide stereo canvas (perhaps a little too wide on the standard filter setting) and you sense a powerful grip on the music - it doesn't seem as though it will all go sonically pear-shaped at anytime in the next twenty years or so - quite a convincing sign.

Moving onto something with a little more oomph, Everything But The Girl's excellent new album Tempermental was next to try its luck. This has a smooth, almost claustrophobic production to it that sounded rich and sophisticated with the Sony. The opening track, Five Fathoms, bounced through my Magneplanar SMGa 'speakers with precision and verve, the dead thumps of the electronic percussion tight and controlled. I found the treble of the ‘standard’ a tad thin, so a little turn of the filter switch onto setting No1 - clear, smooth sound reproduction according to the manual - slightly rolled off the sound to even things out a little better. It's a smooth-sounding customer and not for you if your tastes are for German Industrial techno played by eyeball-pierced ravers or guitar-driven onslaughts such as Motorhead.

In my experience it's the big Japanese companies such as Sony which can really deliver the goods at this mid price range. The small matter of lots of money and technological expertise tends to help, mind you. The Sony CDP-XB930E runs neck and neck with the similarly priced Rotel RCD-951, which I suppose just pips it to the post with its HDDC compatibility, but the Sony wins on facilities and build. The filters are a nice touch. However there are times when the Sony sounds better than quite a few players I've encountered at twice the price. For example, Tracey Thorn's lyrically-phrased vocals glided so effortlessly over the sound canvas of the Everything But The Girl CD that the next day I sent her a marriage proposal, no reply as yet, so I'll have to content myself with the next best thing, thanks to my CD, Sony and a dark room!
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TUBE AMPLIFIERS

Music
I review the Zingali Omniray Concerto 1s are finished in fine style. Master carpenter Richard White takes a look across the grain.

It would be a funny thing if a hybrid were not a mixed bag; the very term implies a cross-breeding of different characteristics in the hope of deriving a combination of both sets of virtues. Even in these days of genetic modification, it's not always easy to achieve an easy balance in the process; combinations of questionable utility are always surfacing, only to be hurriedly shelved: Fido the Sheep springs to mind.

The Zingali Concerto 1s are not horn speakers in the generally accepted sense of the term. It would be more accurate to describe them as a two-way reflex with horn-assisted tweeter, perhaps. Construction is beyond reproach, inasmuch as there is an awful lot of very solid wood to hand. The cabinets are weighty considering their reasonably compact 18in by 12in by 13in (hwd) dimensions; construction seems to be on the sandwich, not to say doorstep principle, with the front and rear baffles (the bread) apparently made from solid 1 1/4 inch timber, enclosing a somewhat less aesthetic black filling. The bass/mid driver features a generous rubbery dome and the tweeter tweets into the inch-wide sharp end of the turned wooden horn - this configuration indicating a pressure load of some kind.

Bi-wire terminals are provided and, as an optional extra, well-crafted stands matching the 'speaker finish may be ordered.

Giving a willing ear to a sequence of Lassus' masterful polyphonic Masses showed the Zingalis were easily capable of a very natural sound. Being myself something of a hanging judge of reflex systems, I was pleased to find that the bass gave no sign of booming. Let's not forget though, unaccompanied voices are a good test for naturalness but give a poor indication of frequency range.

For this, I returned yet again to Germaini's familiar recording of the Widor Toccata. This gave a response rather more difficult to pronounce upon. On the one hand, the treble pipes were reproduced with a forceful, perhaps even piercing clarity. On the other, the well-known recapitulation of the theme, when the 32 foot reeds are brought into action, sounded peculiarly unbalanced by virtue of the fact that, for once, you could still distinguish all the rest of the instrument. Usually once the great guns are truly going, the upper ranks of pipes tend to be elbowed out of the picture a little.

Alerted to this potential bass-lightness, I next tried the Russian State recordings of Glazanov's Fourth and Fifth symphonies. As our reviewer noted last month, these performances incorporate a goodly dose of late Romantic richness which a well-balanced loudspeaker should enjoy. Although the Fourth's jingly Scherzo came over especially clearly, I did not experience much sense of power in the rest of the work: it's too much to say that the large scale orchestra sounded tinny, but it certainly gave a less than sumptuous sensation.

In an effort to increase the scale of the reproduction, I turned up the volume and discovered that this treble skew remained constant, even at levels at which listening was a duty rather than a pleasure. A mercifully short earful of Capital FM exacerbated this problem: by using a Musical Fidelity X-Tone, I was able gently to boost the lower end to the point where a customary boom-ba-de-balance was achieved. To be strictly fair, the bass thus boosted proved agile and taut but ideally it should be far more apparent in the first place.

I am the last person to vaunt bass for its own sake: we are more used to 'speakers engineered for lumbering bass and smearable treble, rather than clear, almost shouty treble and bass which is too shy to come out and play. Its possible that the designers envisaged these loudspeakers being used with a subwoofer which would redress the balance in their favour - but that's another story. It's also more than likely that the letter-box slot stifles the reflex action, compared with the more usual round port.

It would be easier to be kind to the Zingali Concerto 1s if it weren't for their high price and classy finish. As it is, I was left feeling a little cheated: for all their generous carpentry, in my opinion there's better around at the price.

**Zingali Omniray Concerto 1** £1100
Zentek Music
10-12 Chapel Place,
Tunbridge Wells, Kent.
TN1 1YQ
Tel: 01892 616383

**WORLD VERDICT**

Beautiful cosmetics but poor frequency balance. May be an ideal partner for a subwoofer but otherwise too bass-light.

Measured Performance see page 119
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WORLD VERDICT

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HI-FI WORLD MAY 1999

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Sound Sentinel manufactured under licence from Sound Sentinel Systems. Sound Sentinel is a registered trade mark.
Jon Marks finds a mix of Old World and New in the Exclame integrated from Valve Audio of South Africa.

As we've gathered from many a reader's letter, the southern tip of Africa is a bit of a desert when it comes to hi-fi. Whilst wine is one of the country's well-known exports, black boxes designed for musical pleasure are almost exclusively an import. Still, where there's plenty of sand you're bound to come across the odd oasis. In this case it's Valve Audio with their Exclame 50W hybrid proving that the home-grown talent is quite capable of showing the European and Japanese competition a thing or two.

For a start, considering it'll set you back around £310 (depending on exactly how the Rand fares), the Exclame is built nothing like the traditional budget biscuit box. The three line-level inputs and single tape loop boast heavy, gold-plated terminals, the case is steel far sturdier than the usual paper-gauge offerings, and there's even a valve inside! What's more, we're not talking about a bottom-of-the-barrel bottle here; the Svetlana 6922, the sort used by Sonic Frontiers in gear costing rather more than the Exclame.

The second thumbs up is for the Exclame's driving ability. It might not get far behind the wheel, but partner it with some tough loudspeaker loads and it will go much further than many amps. Jamo's Concert 8s provided a perfect example of how ably that chunky toroidal mains transformer and uncomplicated circuit could cope, as basslines remained firm and controlled, and scale was never in short supply.

Valve Audio's contender avoided these pitfalls more convincingly than most of its peers thanks to the innate smoothness and harmonic 'rightness' of the 6922. It succeeded handsomely with sound staging too, albeit without the truly holographic depiction of the venue which all-valve electronics seem to manage so frequently.

Assuming that currency-related problems don't force up the price of the Exclame, Valve Audio have a winner on their hands. This integrated has the pace and impact necessary to bring Rock, Dance or Reggae to life, but it won't skimp on finesse or transparency to reach these goals. The fact that it can pull off such tricks into loudspeakers that are less than friendly to amplifiers is a very important icing on the cake. It looks as if South African hi-fi has arrived in more ways than one.

Valve Audio Exclame £310
Valve Audio, PO Box 0017 Doornport, South Africa, Tel: (012) 547 1649 e-mail:valveaudio@mega.co.za

WORLD VERDICT

The Exclame does an excellent job of being all things to all audiophiles on a budget.

Measured Performance see page 119
massive performance

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J. S. BACH
Musical Offering
Musica Antiqua Köln
ARCHIV 2533 422 (1979)

J.S. Bach's Musical Offering exhausted the superlatives of its admirers long ago. Whether or not it is properly understood is another matter. Opinions vary as to the best way of performing the piece, which means that the field is wide open: if someone decides that a consort of Kazoos and Stylophones with tea-chest bass will suit the job, there's not much to say against it - except that it hasn't been done before. What's more than certain is that Bach's notes would doubtless survive even an ordeal like the kazoos. Music as perfectly constructed as the Musical Offering can stand up to a few knocks; indeed if anything Bach seems to suffer from is a too rigidly academic interpretation rather than from what we are now taught to regard as 'Romantic excesses'.

Enter Musica Antiqua Köln. A first glance at the back cover, as shown in our picture, inspires a rare old bout of the sniggers - "did people really look like that in those days, Grandad?!" 1979 - Acme of Style. Never mind, those chaps are probably all white-tie-and-tails respectable nowadays. Notwithstanding 'let's snap into the boogie, cats' and all that up-to-date jive-talk, their interpretation of Bach's immortal gift is both exhilarating and time-less.

Eschewing the sometime rigidity of tempo which 'authentic instrumentation' is prone to bring in its wake, this select band from the Antiqua attack the Offering in a manner which takes a little getting used to if you've been brought up on Trevor Pinnock and Neville Marriner. Tempo Rubato in Bach?! Well, yes actually. Admittedly it's a good trick if you can do it - forces significantly larger than the five on this recording might not carry things off so well.

The two violins used for the recording are of some antiquity themselves; the bass viol, transverse flute and harpsichord are replicas of approved Baroque models so, had Bach ever particularly envisaged this particular line-up, the tone colours would be familiar to him. I suppose strictly speaking this is of little importance - Bach has been dead for nearly 250 years and his music is peculiarly tolerant of peculiar instrumentation, witness the famous Moog record, the Swingle Singers, Jacques Loussier et al. All the more reason for treating his chamber works as pure music, which is what the Musica Antiqua do so successfully on this album.

Playing Bach with the intensity usually applied to Beethoven's late string quartets makes a rare treat for jaded ears. If nothing else, you should begin to realize that J.S.B. had arrived at most of the answers already. The Donkey's years before anyone else had formulated the questions. RMW
Alchemist's stylish Nexus range replaces their late Nemesis series. Simon Pope spends some time with the £800 APD43A integrated amplifier.

Throughout their history, Alchemist have always had the knack of producing cutting edge designs that often belie their price tags. Take the Axiom and the Maxim, for example - Solid machined aluminum fascias and weighty, metal knobs in the days when this was the sole right of high-end gear. You could say they were there at the start of the surge of value-for-money building that is now at the forefront of design criteria.

The Nexus look fits in somewhere between the sensibility of the Axiom/Maxims and the Buck Rogers in the 21st Century look of the Kraken and Forsetti 'high-end' models. On the front panel are eight metal pin-head buttons for the six inputs, power switch and tape-monitor functions. These are shared with two green LEDs, one for tape monitor 'on', the other for the input number (1-6), and a solid, centrally-place volume control that's good to the touch. Of the six inputs, one can be converted to an MM phono input for an extra £60. A small pod-like volume remote is also included in the package.

Improvements on the Nexus include the upgrading of components in the output stages, and a revised component layout to incorporate minimum wiring. Other features include an independent delay circuit with timed switch-on to reduce things that go bump in the night. To complete the package, and increase its audiophile status, the bias sensing transistorized circuitry is designed by the "legendary" valve guru Tim de Paravacini of Esoteric Audio Research.

"Way back in the days when I just listened to hi-fi rather than rained literary plaudits on it, I was the proud owner of an Axiom integrated and was very happy with its smooth and laid-back sound. This may account for the slight shock I got when confronted with the beefy sound of the Nexus. At a rated 50W per channel, it is only 20W more than my old Axiom, but what a difference! My reference Magneplanar loudspeakers are a notoriously hungry load, but with Pearl Jam playing and the Nexus' volume control at about 8 'o clock, they were pounding away like wounded buffalos.

While not being the most subtle of sounds, there was a nice flat response to make the tonal balance evenly spread. The bass drum thudded and the snare smacked with wild abandon. Here was power and drive without abrasion. Eddie Vedders vank-rock warblings were forward and precise, despite his still sounding as though he was suffering from terminal chaffing - he's right up there with Liz Fraser of the Cocteau Twins when it comes to deciphering lyrics. For all the excitement though, I was quite detached emotionally from what was taking place - quite a curious phenomenon.

As far as classical music goes, the Nexus fared well with Tchaikovsky's fourth symphony in the Oslo Philharmonic recording on Chandos. Brass instruments were bold and fiery and the violins showed a glistening sheen. The speed and fury of the last movement was captured well by the Nexus, but again, it just failed to grab me emotionally.

This integrated from Alchemist carries on the company traditional of a nice, even, smooth sound but it has a little more grip and excitement than I would have expected. Its more-than-adequate power drives hungry 'speakers very well. It is great with rock, dance and rhythmic orchestral music, but somehow just falls slightly short of the mark with musical involvement, especially after prolonged listening. Definitely well worth a listen.

Alchemist APD43A Nexus integrated amplifier

£799

Henley Designs, The Old Coach House, The Street, Crowmarsh Gifford, Wallingford, Oxon OX10 8EH Tel: 01491 834700

WORLD VERDICT
A good looker with a smooth and powerful sound, if a tad sterile. Competition is strong at the price.

Measured Performance see page 119
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JUST IMAGINE HOW GOOD
THE ELECTRONICS MUST BE.
Titan's 'minis' are pretty hefty for standmounters and I think they need a heavy stand to hold them solidly, the manufacturers recommend Atacama SE 24s, I stuck to one of Target's beefier efforts. The heavy cabinets give a good, dead 'thock' when rapped, which hints that they should have few problems with cabinet coloration. Metal domed and coned drivers are housed in chunky, nautical-style surrounds, covered by a pear-shaped grill and the cabinet houses a rear firing port. Attractive? Yes. Mini? Certainly not. I tried out the Titans initially with Musical Fidelity's X-P100 pre-amp and X-A200 monoblocs, Roksan’s trusty Caspian CD player at the front, connected with Nordost’s Blue Heaven. Running them in with The Best of Everything But The Girl, my suspicions about both the metal-dome tweeter and the thick cabinet were more or less confirmed. Initial listening showed that the treble could be quite hard, with sibilant vocals and high percussion shrill; this is not unlike the sound of professional monitors with similar tweeter designs. When a voice as smooth as Tracy Thorn's is showing signs of loosening fillings, some more running in is required!

Going back to the same record a couple of days later, the roughness was on the wane but the treble was still very prominent, which suggests that brightness is a characteristic of the Titans that’s there to stay. On the plus side, these ‘speakers have a very solid and deep bass, indeed deeper than that found in many floorstanders at the price. The makers recommend placement close to a wall or a corner, but I found the bass tighter and less boomy when the ‘speakers are slightly away from a back wall. Bass was fast and fairly colourless, although a little boom and looseness was evident at certain frequencies. Overall, apart from a brightness which certain recordings will emphasize, music sounded exciting and forward.

Playing Pearl Jam’s ‘Dissident’ showed where the true heart of these ‘speakers really lies. The sound rocketed out with real clout, with bass guitar and kick drum particularly impressive. The deep soundstage positioned the kick drum well back, but it pounded away with determination and drive, showing what an essential part of the mix it was. These are very rhythmic ‘speakers indeed, with a ‘grab you by the throat’ sound which can leave others standing.

Even with classical music the rhythmic element wasn’t far from the surface. Tchaikovsky’s Fifth Symphony opening movement had excellent grip and attack, but due to the bright sound of the drivers, especially the tweeter, the tonal balance let the performance down. Violins were often scratchy, sounding shrill in the very highest register, which led to a very un-violin-like sound. Similarly, even the ‘cello lines sounded strained at times. On the other hand, this slight brashness suited the Russian-style brass playing well - bold and raspy to a ‘T'; again a very exciting sound. Woodwind was floaty and light and the sound staging was spot-on.

These are punchy and exciting loudspeakers, with very promising characteristics. Deep, tight bass and attack are highlighted, as well as keen transparency. Possibly they just need a bit of fine tuning to balance their attack and rhythm into an overall smoother response - this would complete one heck of a loudspeaker.

titan Mini T2B £600
Titan Loudspeakers
16, Folly Lane,
Hockley,
Essex SS5 4SE.
Tel: 01702 206870.

WORLD VERDICT

simply built standmounts with terrific punch and attack. The metal drivers might make classical music a little harsh.

Measured Performance see page 119
In search of sweeter digital sound, John Shearne has teamed up with Trichord Research for his new Phase 7 CD player. Jon Marks takes a look.

One of hi-fi’s most genuinely difficult nuts to crack is how to extract a smooth, life-like and convincing presentation from the silver disc. Some designers have turned to that old favourite, the valve, in the quest for a player with a more natural character. Others have gone in for a spot of less-than-subtle signal manipulation, Pioneer and their Legato Link system being one prime example. However, John Shearne, a man known for amplification which aims to sound valve without actually being thermionic, has decided on another approach in his £1500 Phase 7.

Any enthusiastic DIYer will be familiar with the idea of “clocking” a player to improve it by replacing its common-or-garden master clock with something souped up to provide cleaner, more stable timing. It’s only recently, though, that certain manufacturers have recognised the value of such clocks as factory-fitted components rather than after-market tweaks, hence the Trichord clock sitting on the Phase 7’s main PCB.

Joining this clock in the reassuringly heavy case is a pair of dual-differential 20-bit DACs, their choice explained succinctly in the manual: “Decoding normal CDs requires no more than this specification - higher technology just for the sake of marketing is not our way.” The operative word here is “normal”, as the Phase 7’s digital filtering boasts Pacific Microsonic’s PMD100 HDCCD chip for suitably-encoded recordings. Other sonically beneficial touches include copper-foil screening on a number of the ICs and twin mains transformers (one dedicated to the display and control electronics, which explains the lack of a Display Off facility).

Given the lack of grain and brightness in Trichord’s Genesis and Revelation players as well as previous Shearne amps, I was expecting a smooth, warm but musical demeanour from the Phase 7 and I wasn’t disappointed. In fact, after the T+A CD 1210R that has lived with the DPA 50S and Trio L-08 monoblocs for the last six months or so, the Shearne was a real change. Where the T+A is slightly bright and lean, the Phase 7 sits on the other side of the tonally neutral line with its rich but rhythmic bass and unfatiguing treble.

The Phase 7 proved an atmospheric and involving performer whether it was chewing on Bjork’s Homogenic or lo-fi Reggae tracks, the three-dimensionality of its sound staging held back only by a lack of fine detailing. It was marginally less successful when faced with the sort of pyrotechnics found on Soundgarden’s A-Sides Rock/Metal compilation and Deus’ Ideal Crash album. Here, its mellower character sapped the adrenaline from high-octane numbers such as ‘Everybody’s Weird’ and ‘Jesus Christ Pose’.

The most successful musical marriage was between the Shearne and just about anything acoustic, as this player is capable of reproducing very realistic tone-colour. Feed it an HDCCD disc like Eric Bibb and Needed Time’s Good Stuff, and it will show most of the competition a clean pair of heels in this area.

If you’re after a CD player to counter-balance brightness elsewhere in your set-up, the Phase 7 is one for the shopping list - it has a freedom from the flat, hard artificiality that plagues so much digital equipment. On the other hand, if you prize speed, detail and incisive treble above all, you may find that its easy-going manner doesn’t quite hit the spot.

Shearne Audio Phase 7 £1499
Shearne Audio
PO Box 22,
Stevenage, Herts.
SG2 8HF
Tel: 01438 740953

**WORLD VERDICT**
The Phase 7 leads the pack for smoothness and tonal colour more than detail and excitement.

Measured Performance see page 119
MICHELL ORBE
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Michell will be offering 50 numbered Limited Edition Gold plated Orbes complete with SME V Gold Plated tonearms, to commemorate the coming Millennium....

For details contact:
Michell Engineering Ltd, 2 Theobald St, Borehamwood, Herts, WD6 4SL
Tel: 0181 953 0771 Fax: 0181 207 4688
e-mail: john@michell-engineering.co.uk Website: www.michell-engineering.co.uk

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PITCH PERFECT?
Jon Marks gets creepy-crawly with Perfect Pitch’s Le Scarabée sonic accessory.

One side-effect of a life spent reviewing hi-fi equipment is the nagging scepticism that tends to be set off by “widgets” accompanied by claims such as: “Subjectively Le Scarabée brings about a midrange clarity associated with the best single-ended triode amplifiers.” Hmmm, that one certainly set the alarm bells ringing. However, the petite passive lumps of epoxy-sealed componentry under scrutiny here are the brainchild of erstwhile Hi-Fi World contributor Richard Brice, a man not short on experience when it comes to either electronics or the theories of acoustics, so a fair hearing seemed in order.

Via their 4mm input and output sockets, Les Scarabées (The Beetles) sit between the far end of your loudspeaker leads and your loudspeaker terminals. In a nutshell, their aim in life is to provide a smoother ride for any amplifier driving said speakers. Apparently, by working their magic, they reduce “midrange harmonic and intermodulation distortion due to the loudspeaker.”

After a week of use to bed them in, I put The Beetles through their paces with a modified Mission Cyrus One integrated and a pair of old AR Red Box ‘speakers as well as a DPA 505 pre and Technics SE-A5 power amp upstream of Jamo’s Concert 8s.

These Perfect Pitches aren’t tweaks whose impact is so subtle it takes a day to hear any difference. Through both systems, their addition brought a warmer tonal balance, thanks largely to a drop in treble level. In spite of careful listening, though, I was unable to detect that triode-like midrange clarity. While Les Scarabées would be an effective antidote against an excessive top-end, they appeared to do nothing to enhance transparency in general, even when partnering the highly revealing Jamos.

Considering their £40 cost, Les Scarabées are hardly a wallet-trashing tweak, but the same amount spent on a cable upgrade would probably stand your system in better stead, unless it suffers from a major treble harshness or brightness which wiring has not been able to cure.

Perfect Pitch Music
60 Avenue d’Iena,
75116 Paris,
France
Tel: +33 (0)1 47 23 54 02

CLASS OF THE HEAD
Simon Pope gets his head round Sennheiser’s new HD-590 ‘Prestige’ headphones.

Sennheiser describe these new headphones as being for the high-end audio customer and a “no-compromise design” (ie. dearer than usual).

The £160 HD-590 is the flagship product of the ‘Five’ Series and is an open-back design incorporating Sennheiser’s new generation of transducers. These Duofoil exciters are fabricated with two Mylar films bonded together in order to reduce resonance in the diaphragm. 18mm aluminium voice coils and neodym-iron magnets help out the sound, along with oxygen-free copper and Kevlar stranded signal leads. All this results in a quoted frequency response of 12Hz-38kHz, an impedance of 120Ω and an exciting and vibrant sound. Conveying a well-produced dance music collection, the Sennheiser’s were lightning fast, with a tight but fat bass response, coupled with a sweet, un-tinny treble. The vocals were warm, if a little ‘peaky’ but nicely out-of-the-head spacious!

A CD of Debussy’s string quartet was light and airy, the ambient acoustics of the recording venue represented with a nice sense of space. The string tone wasn’t quite as natural as it could be from, say, a pair of Jecklin Float or Ergo ‘panel’ headphones, and this was true for vocals and midrange detail in general. On the plus side, the Sennheiser’s will give a more involving performance overall, especially with rhythmic material. If you have moany neighbours and like your music ‘full-on’ you could do a lot worse than purchase a pair of these ear-warmers.

Sennheiser helpline: 01494 551571
www.sennheiser.co.uk
Europe's No1 commission sale specialists

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### Amplifiers

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<tr>
<th>Model</th>
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<th>Price (Demo)</th>
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<td>Krell 300 Int Amp (Loved over price)</td>
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Note: All previous prices as shown are either the former manufacturers' list price when new: Prices paid for shier equipment or the estimated price of comparable equipment / models at today's value.

### Tuners

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<td>Quad 4H Amplifier</td>
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<td>Quad FM2 Tuner</td>
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<td>Quad FM3 Tuner</td>
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*Note: Instant ‘reserve’ valuations - We endeavour to offer you realistic market values for carefully used audio components. Helped by our unique audio pricing matrix, we hope to pleasantly surprise you. Whether wishing to upgrade to your dream system or simply engage in our caring and fair ‘commission sale’ scheme, we will always aim to please!*

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### CD Players, DAC’s & Transports

<table>
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<th>Price</th>
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<td>Acapella DP8S CD Player + Digital Volume</td>
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<td>Ancom 7.3 CD Player</td>
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<td>Ancom Delta Black Box DAC</td>
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<td>Audio Alchemy AD22 CD Player (Sendet Brief)</td>
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<td>AVI 2000 Reference CD Player</td>
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<td>Cyrus DAC CD Player (Ex-dem)</td>
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### Loudspeakers

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### Turntables

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<td>Air Tangent 18 Air Bearing Tonearm</td>
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<td>Fonz CQ20 + SME 300 + AT Carr</td>
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<td>Golfering Loxus 75/7/1 (White)</td>
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<td>Linn LP12 + Basic Plr</td>
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<td>Linn Sander's Stock changing weekly, please call for latest arrivals</td>
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<td>Linnman PD 300 T/Table</td>
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<td>Linnman PD 555 T/Table (Fully Serviced and Superb)</td>
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<td>Oracle Arquendo (Piano Black)</td>
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<td>Pink Triangle LPT + Roksan Table + High spec PSU</td>
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Due to lack of space, my turntable set-up - a Mk1 Xerxes, SME V & Ortofon MC3000 - has sat gathering dust on top of the wardrobe for far too long. Finally I could stand it no longer. Down came the turntable; a long time was spent levelling its dedicated table, connecting it to my ISO, Audio Innovations 500 and Rogers LS3/5A / AB1 combination. Then finally I dusted off my vinyl collection.

Ahh! The joys of Van Morrison, Nick Drake & Louis Armstrong. Now let's try one of my new albums. Come on Alanis, let's get aggressive. What? no, this can't be! Alanis is gigging in Ye Olde Englishe Tea Room. She is being far too polite: has Sarah Brightman possessed Alanis Morrisette? The quality is there - the sound staging, the detail, I can even hear the producer thinking. But I don't want to jump up and down any more. I don't want to run round the room kicking cushions. I just want to sit down, sip my cocoa and listen to the colour of her hair.

What can I do? The album makes me want to live when I hear it on my Musical Fidelity CDT but makes me want to snooze when played on the turntable. Would a change of cartridge help? It's well overdue for replacement. Or does the Xerxes have to go too? If it does, what are my turntable options? Maybe a new Xerxes, Orbe or SME 20? Or what about a secondhand Oracle Delphi or Alexandria?

Please help me before I buy myself some tartan slippers and a pipe.

We guess it's a software problem: modern vinyl can have too many tracks per side. This in turn means that the grooves are not only narrower but also less deep - hence the dulling-off effect.

This has something to do with vinyl's need to match the now standard lengths for CDs. Vinyl multi-disc packages are expensive and seventy-four minutes is a bit of a squeeze for one gramophone record.

As regards your alternative options, we're sure we don't know what you mean...!
At the moment, I am the proud owner of a Teac CDP3450SE CD player, clocked by Trichord (clock2), a Rotel 870BX pre-amp, an Arcam BP power amp and Mordaunt Short Ms 30i classic ‘speakers. These are connected with Nordost Flatline biwire. The electronics are connected with vdH 102mk3 phono leads.

I also have a Sony 770ES tuner and a Denon DRW750 twin tape deck. Due to the purchase of the £600 MS’s, I need a better CD player - the Teac just lacks that bit of pizazz. I was thinking Pioneer 505 precision, Kenwood DP7090, Cambridge CD4SE or a Micromega stage 4 which I can get for £350. It is an ex-demo model. I don’t want a Marantz because I don’t think they are built well. I listen to mostly well-recorded pop and jazz music.

Thank you very much.

Rory Duncan
roryduncan@yahoo.com

Your suggestions for CD players will all give you that bit 'pizazz' you require, but we can’t comment on the Micromega stage 4, as we haven’t heard it! Both the Kenwood and the Pioneer are strong contenders and will give you hours exciting and involving playing, but among the players you mention we would probably swing with the

I am an A-level student, hence my lack of money but I enjoy music immensely, but thanks to my stereo, I can’t enjoy it fully! I know any music can sound much better with decent equipment, but it seems that I can only get listening quality with money/robbery - which I don’t have/do. One important thing for me, (and I’m not alone!), is BASS! However my mother loathes my “booming dribble,” as all the boom escapes my room. That’s why I want a system with clean powerful bass, without the boom.

What’s the best way to have it all - a great system, at a great price? Also, although I know the whole system contributes to the sound quality, but what is the most beneficial component to upgrade?

Thanks,

James Denny
jamesdenny@cwcom.net

Unfortunately you don’t tell us exactly how much money you haven’t got, if you know what I mean? But we can make some suggestions to get you on the path to enlightenment. Firstly, you seem to have a love of music, and this helps, no matter what you listen to it on! You’d be surprised at the amount of people into hi-fi who don’t know their Massive Attack from their Bach.

As we’ve featured in previous issues quality sound is available at reasonable cost, both new and second-hand. If you can’t be bothered with the hassle of doing the second-hand bit, there are a number of options open to you.

In our August ‘99 issue we highlighted a few cheap systems for students. Our cheapest system, at £300 total (including cables) could be reduced a little by purchasing the Technics SL-PG390 CD player (instead of the 590), together with the Cambridge A1 Mk3, Tangent’s Monitor 3 bookshelf ‘speakers, Maplin’s 79 strand cable for ‘speaker duty and Monacor’s £5 Green interconnect. This would bring the whole shebang down to £270, which would be hard to better for sound quality at the price. You’ll get a firm and secure bass (which is all that you need) with excellent sound-staging and depth for a price which, in hi-fi terms, is peanuts! SP

N.B Because the bass frequencies pass through walls much more readily than the treble, the matter of bass boom is irrelevant - the cleanest tautest bass in the world will still go straight through. You can always explain to your mother that she’s now wincing at high quality booming dribble? RMW
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**PAGE 44 • DECEMBER 1999**
For some years now I've been the proud owner of a pair of vintage Tannoy Ardens - no, not with the better alnicos, I'm told. I love them anyway. I use different amps (old Marantz, General Electric etc...), a Thorens TD 124 / II with SME 3009 / II / R with Clearaudio headshell and Denon DL-103 or Ortofon SPU Classic A / GM / E and Shindo interconnects.

Since one of my Tannoy drivers has two ruptures in the cone and the cabinets are not the last word in rigidity and control either, I decided to buy a pair of drivers and have cabinets custom built. There you go: What a confusing range of drivers there is: Monitor Golds, Silvers, Reds, Little Reds with orange throats: I'm confused to the max! And above all, Tannoy won't give out the plans anymore.

What can I do? I live in Germany and sure will I come over to buy the stuff, but who can help me before, give advice which is the best of the drivers and where are the construction plans? Maybe there is a Tannoy club or something? Thanks in advance, I really do appreciate your help! And I will raise the Tannoy (and the Hi-Fi World) flag high over here.

With regards

Christian Bayer,
Munich, Germany.

At risk of sounding too damning, I am not aware of any published design for Tannoy dual-concentric drivers which gives particularly good results - information to the contrary is welcome! Those which I have looked at seem fated to give disappointment most often because of the poor rigidity of the construction. In addition to this problem, the sheer size of the drivers can make effective air-loading rather difficult. Slate Audio's Stormforce cabinet, which we reviewed last year is about the most sensible arrangement I've stumbled across, combining the fine rigidity of marble with a 'reasonable' reflex load.

The drawback of these cabinets was the weight, indeed effectively housing Tannoy dual-concentrics seems to bring weight in its wake.

Despite a not-too-short journey into audio life (more than 15 years), I still have poor knowledge of audio mechanics, particularly about the best methods of controlling my audio system.

I have an Audion Silver Knight single-ended power amp, with volume control, Spendor Sp 1 'speakers with Target stands and an Alchemist Nexus 24bit CD player. Although it could of course be better, I am satisfied with it, in particular with classical music.

Now I would like to extend my system with an analogue stage for my 60s and 70s rock LP collection. This means I need a turntable, pre-amp, phono stage and cable, but my budget is not strong enough to buy all of them, I think. I would consider using a phono amp, such as the X-LP or EAR's 834P, direct to my power amp. I am considering a Rega 25 or a second-hand Roksan Xerxes with an MC cartridge.

I need some advice, since I am not sure about the role of my power amp's volume control. Would it be better to use a good pre-amp's control, rather than the power amp's? In any case, do you think it is better to use a pre-amp for analogue and 'musical' benefit?

J.W Kim

If I understand you correctly you have two associated problems to be tackled: how can you most conveniently control two sources and will your amplifier volume control be suitable.

I fancy a pre-amp would be a rather extravagant way of switching just two sources. If, as you say, you are satisfied generally with your sound, I suggest that you make yourself a little changeover switch box and leave the main amplifier volume control performing its useful work.

Alternatively, you could simply change over the leads when you swap between sources. In many respects this is the best way to do it, since the source not in use is not connected at all. Always turn down the volume to nothing when you commence a 'hot swap' like this, otherwise the amplifier noise is likely to be unpleasant and potentially damaging to your loudspeakers.

Phono stages are usually left on all the time, and do not require much attention once they're fitted. Neither of those you mention will have any difficulty jumping up the output from a MC cartridge to be fed straight into the main amplifier.

The days when a pre-amplifier was the focus of a whole system are gone: a good many people get by without now. RMW
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Hi-Fi WORLD
I have a pair of Castle Durham speakers, which have a large split in the bass driver. The cost of a replacement drive unit is a little prohibitive but I heard that there was someone who could repair/replace just the cone. Do you know of anyone, or am I better off buying a (very) budget pair of speakers? Thanks.

Mark

I would be inclined to persevere with your Durhams since the probable cost of the driver repair or replacement is unlikely to buy a comparable pair in exchange.

Although not exactly at the cutting edge any longer, the Castles were well enough reviewed when they came out and would be in the £350-£400 range to replace like-for-like now.

Re-coning your damaged driver should not cost more than about £40 assuming that there is not additional damage to the coil and spider.

You might like to try our old friend "DK Dave" of DK Loudspeaker Services (Tel: 01708 447344) whose work we featured in our March issue. RMW

Apart from the effects of microphony, what other factors contribute to the way valves influence an amplifier's sound? After talking to various hi-fi nuts covering the entire spectrum of views, I decided to refurbish my Sovtek EL84/VECC81 dressed Beard P3511 with New Old Stock Mullards.

They didn't come cheap, but any lingering doubts I may have had as the cheque was posted and my bank balance teetered on the unhealthy were dispelled a few days later when the valves arrived. It's not like I had to listen hard to hear the difference; it jumped out from between the speakers barely a few minutes into warm-up. How can I describe it? The old lifted-veil metaphor hardly does it justice; chalk and cheese might be more accurate.

While the Sovtek's made a decent enough stab at reproducing music etc, the Mullards are way ahead of the Russian bottles in all respects from sound staging and detail to bass and treble response and a far tighter and more responsive dynamic range. I put the Sovtek's back and had another listen. Then I listened to some Chinese bottles I had kicking around. Needless to say, it was no contest; the Sovteks were better than the orientals but the Mullards were way ahead of both. Needless to say, the 'old' tubes have now been consigned to the spares' cabinet.

David Miller (Leeds)
E-mail d.miller@leeds.ac.uk

Before we have a look at the matter of brands and turbo-charging and the like, one factor which can make an enormous A-B difference is the amount of use that a valve has had. A new-old bottle, stuck in a protective cardboard box for years, away from the light, all being well will still be 'as new'. Of course no 'getter' can be perfect and solder does do peculiar things over the years but, provided the pins are carefully cleaned (and that goes for any valve), the valve doesn't know how old it is!

A year or two ago I was getting desperate for some new KT61 output valves for my TL10s. They are available as new-old stock but . . . £25+ each? This was to be avoided if possible! The upshot was that I haunted the audio jumbles and record fairs for old ones. In this manner I found enough to be going on with.

All went moderately well until I chanced upon some new-old ones which I could afford. Then I realized the truth of what Ted Hay, one of our Reader's System readers (eh?) told me: valves should be changed at least once a year, assuming that the equipment is used regularly.

I now realize that the restoration of brightness and detail to my amps would have been well worth the money spent on the dearer (and unused) valves; ah well! Live and learn.

Differences in sound between brands of valve have several causes. As a quick look at a valve equivalent book will demonstrate, many different numbers are given to what is essentially the same thing. I stress the 'essentially'. When a manufacturer develops a valve for a given purpose, it is exceedingly unlikely that no other firm will be at the same job - the electronics industry was market-driven in the days of valves just as much as it is now - hence the 'equivalent' minefield.

To take an instance at random, GEC's 2729 and Mullard's EF86. It is too facile to say that one is simply a copy of the other; at the time, the world was crying out for a high-gain, low-noise pentode so 'it's hardly surprising that a number of firms hit upon similar solutions. What may start the ball rolling as regards sonic differences nowadays is the original upon which a modern manufacturer has based his copy. For example, 5881, KT66 and EL34 may be do the same job in a great many circuits, but they're not the same valve by a long chalk. Take an original EF86 with its gauze outer screen and compare it with the Sovtek-style cheese grater - you'll see what I mean. I believe that the electron stream in a valve is too physical a thing to be unaffected by the gauge of grid wire chosen, distance apart of the support pieces, shape of anode and so on.

I would hesitate, though, before claiming that the old ones are the best. That there are differences is beyond dispute.

By-the-bye, I hope you didn't pay too much for an EL84. As one of the most commonly used output valves for low power amplifiers, I shouldn't have thought new old stock is in desperately short supply yet.

RMW
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Richard White enjoys a sneak preview of Pro-ject's £40 phono stage.

PRO-JECT AUDIO OF AUSTRIA AND THE CZECH REPUBLIC ARE PLUMMING FOR FULL FLIGHT: NOT CONTENT WITH HOTTING UP THE STAKES IN BUDGET TURNTABLES, AS MY EDITORIAL COLLEAGUE RECKONS THEY SO EFFECTIVELY DO WITH THE DEBUT, THEY HAVE AFTER MUCH THOUGHT DECIDED TO OFFER TO A STILL-EAGER WORLD A BUDGET MM/MC PHONO STAGE.

Pro-ject's Phono Box boasts a choice of input impedances, and can be changed from the standard 47kΩ for moving magnet to 100kΩ for many moving-coils. By a not-so-startling coincidence, given Pro-ject's long association with Henley Designs and Ortofon, 100kΩ is just the ticket for loading an Ortofon moving-coil pick-up to a nicety, so the Box has a sporting chance with many cartridges manufactured today. Besides this, would you really use a budget phono stage with an esoteric 28.76Ω critical-load pickup?

Power supply is by a combined plug and transformer - a cost-effective method which is growing in popularity. A welcome bonus of this is that the great humming magnetic mains transformer can be placed several feet away from the rather sensitive circuitry itself. That's not to say that the Phono Box isn't adequately shielded: its functional mild steel case will certainly survive an uncommon degree of rough handling, too.

Richard White enjoys a sneak preview of Pro-ject's £40 phono stage.

Pro-ject Audio of Austria and the Czech Republic are plumming for full flight: not content with hotting up the stakes in budget turntables, as my editorial colleague reckons they so effectively do with the Debut, they have after much thought decided to offer to a still-eager world a budget MM/MC phono stage.

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A word about setting things up: since the Pro-ject Phono Box is by its own admission a budget device, there's no denying that designer features are not plentiful. Instead of switches, 'jumpers' are provided which must be correctly placed to get the required amplification and input impedance. It sounds more awkward than it is, especially since a jumper is inherently no less reliable than a switch for making contacts: the only drawback might be for impatient types, for whom the unscrewing of the four casing screws to get at the innards might be the last straw!

And on with the music. . . . In order to give the Pro-ject a fair test, I lined up two unimpeachable witnesses in the form of Cartridge Man's moving-iron Music Maker (£549) and the moving-coil van den Hul Frog (£1700). I listened to the same series of records on each to check for any anomalies. Since I didn't find any, the following remarks apply both to MM and MC amplification.

First on the platter, pop pickers, was Pierre Fournier with Haydn's 'cello concertos. A very nicely chosen tonal balance quickly made itself unnoticeable - half of the best in hi-fi lies in this: don't listen to the equipment, listen to the music. Treble was clear without harshness and the midrange showed that Pro-ject's designers prefer a neutral balance to manufactured brightness.

A digital cut of Allegri's famous Miserere Mei on EMI achieved much the same smoothness. There is a worry of course that this can equate with blandness and slowness but this didn't seem to be the case. The natural slight hoarseness which is the sonic signature of the boytreble was readily discernable, so details were obviously not being swept away.

Walton's Façade has plenty of instrumental variety. I was pleased to find that the all pervading 'oomph' of the orchestral bass drum was transmitted with full value from this good old Decca deep cut. So too the numerous percussion effects - claves, rattles, choke cymbals - made their way through in an orderly fashion. Even in the somewhat genteel ballet-suite version, Façade loses its sense of humour if these little snaps are rolled off too much. Suffice it to say I was still laughing.

All-in-all I found practically nothing to be sniffy about. Pro-ject's little packet works wonders at the price and decidedly side-steps the pitfalls of low level solid-state amplification. Considering its very competitive price, it looks like a new star is on the way.

Henley Designs Ltd., The Old Coach House, The Street, Crowmarsh Gifford, Wallingford, Oxon OX10 8EH Tel: 01491 834700
Simon Pope gets into a spin over Pro-ject's budget-priced Debut turntable.

Being over a certain age, we at World towers all cut our teeth on the black stuff - not as some of you may think downing flagons of Irish stout and taking the stage at the Keg and Karaoke, but I'm talking about the good old vinyl disc here. To listen to music then, you played records - full stop. There was no mystique or snobbery about knowing how to set up a turntable or change a cartridge, you just did it. How times change!

As soon as CD players came out I bought one, rushed home with my two CDs (Ravel and the Cocteau Twins), played them non-stop for two days and then reclaimed my crumbling Trio turntable from the wardrobe. Apart from the fact that I was totally sick-and-tired of my sole CDs, I somehow preferred the sound of my records. I really couldn't, and to a certain extent still can't explain why, but I did. So, what about those that never reclaimed their plastic-but-functional turntables from the skip (or wardrobe) but kept the records? As we all know, digital has improved vastly since those early days, but there's still something irresistible about taking a record out of its sleeve, placing it onto a platter and enjoying the sheer 'life' of the sound - a moment sadly missed with digital.

The past few years have seen Rega in the forefront of budget vinyl with their classic Planar series of turntables. Now they have some competition. Pro-ject's Debut turntable clocks in at a staggering £109, including arm and cartridge. Well-built as the Debut is, you wouldn't expect a 3cwt concrete plinth, a Forth Bridge arm and a solid cast platter at the price. What you do get though is a sleek, black, functional design: you get the whole shebang out of the box with the arm already set by the manufacturer, you lower the platter into place, attach the anti-skate balance - and play your records. It should take no more than a minute or two.

You may be thinking that at this price something must be sacrificed, probably the sound! Let me pleasantly surprise you. It sounds very good.

Playing Talvin Singh's brilliantly recorded and mastered 'OK', I had to keep reminding myself that the Debut costs a mere ton and not £350+. There is a solid and deep bass response that I admit was something of a surprise. The supplied arm looks slightly flimsy but nonetheless it's a very solid sounding performer. The frequency response was impressive, everything from the lowest bass growl to the highest percussive tinkle appeared present and correct. What's more, the Debut is musically involving too - it was hard to keep the old feet stationary for more than ten seconds.

Changing tack slightly to the classical repertoire, Mozart was asked to call. Specifically he brought along his Oboe Concerto played by Nicholas Daniel and the Chamber Orchestra of Europe under Paavo Berglund. This is an early Direct Metal Mastering pressing, which can lack a bit of ambient depth, but the Debut made impressive work of it. The choice of an Ortofon OMB 5E cartridge as standard means that violins can sound a little thin and scratchy in the high register, but again you can't grumble at the price. In fact the Debut gave an overall smooth reading, which isn't what you'd expect for so little cash. Basses and 'cellos stealthily strode along with confidence while the woodwind was light and airy - floating skyward with little effort.

As its name suggests, the Debut isn't meant for your die-hard 'audiophile' or record collector, so it shouldn't be compared with, say, a 301 or LP12. For those who use digital as a primary source, but still have a collection of vinyl and don't want to spend a fortune in putting them to use, the Debut looks just the job. The sound can be improved easily by upgrading the cartridge - the Ortofon 510 at £40 will give a little more depth to the sound - but the package as it stands is not to be sniffed at, even by vinyl 'snobs' like us!
Bits & Pieces

STRICTLY ON THE LEVEL

We tilt our hats to Cartridge Man's Digital Turntable Level.

Following the success of his electronic Stylus Force Gauge, the Cartridge Man has cooked up another handy little gadget in the shape of the Digital Turntable Level. The need for a turntable to be as horizontal as possible should not need elaborating upon, in this magazine at any rate! What perhaps needs a word in season is the rather indifferent accuracy of many inexpensive bubble levels provided for the job. Granted that most serious listeners are likely to check things with rather more care, but notwithstanding this, spirit levels are not inherently the most sophisticated of devices in the first place. I believe one was extensively employed during the construction of the famous Tower of Pisa.

Essentially Cartridge Man's gadget is an electronic device which, once calibrated on a scrupulously, scientifically, absolutely dead-level table, remembers the setting and 'insists' upon it ever after. Better than this, the Digital Turntable Level's 'little arrow' LED indicators show, in two planes at once, in which directions the correction should be made.

Anyone who has found their faculties deserting them after half-an-hour spent trying to work out under which foot the next 'bus ticket should go will perceive the benefits of this arrangement at once. As you may well have already discovered, spirit level bubbles are inclined to vanish from the map if more than a slight tilt is permitted. Once slipped over the turntable spindle, Cartridge Man's little helper will point out discrepancies within a range of at least 30° either way, with a minimum resolution of ±0.1°.

2 x AAA batteries give up to ten hours' continuous use, which I guess is long enough for even the most fuddle-fingered to level up the National Debt, let alone a gramophone. This easy-to-use device supplies a long-felt want. Let's hope there aren't too many rude awakenings when it's tried on a 'perfectly level' turntable at home - I've always wondered why records keep falling off my turntable!

Digital Turntable Level £125
The Cartridge Man
88, Southbridge Road,
Croydon,
Surrey,
CRO 1AF
Tel: 0181 688 6565

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LEFT ON THE SHELF

Will Qtrax's £150 shelving outfit help drive you up the wall?

One question which all too often is only asked belatedly is "Where shall we put it?". Let's face it, hi-fi equipment doesn't take too kindly to being kicked around on the floor. What's more, these days not every home has a plethora of sideboards, pianos and other horizontal surfaces to make a kindly home-from-home for your equipment. Many firms can help those on the horns of this dilemma but usually at a price: what with the need to ensure both maximum stability and reasonable domestic harmony, hi-fi racks tend to be on the costly side.

Although just bunging up some shelves and hoping for the best seems to be a blindingly obvious solution, few seem to opt for this. One reason may be that the choice of shelving at DIY super-mega-duper stores is not all one could wish. The strong stuff is usually functional to an inharmonious degree, whilst the more decorous systems do very well with displays of wrens' feathers and cotton-wool sculptures but are not necessarily to be trusted with heavily transformed amplifiers and the like.

Qtrax believe they may be able to help. Their modular system is founded upon a strong alloy channel along the outside of which the brackets can slide to any height you like - no more slots every two inches or so. Smart facing-plates clip over the channel section providing both a neat finish and a generous cable duct: with the help of the cable ports the whole of your cabling can be neatly concealed as it wends its weary way 'twixt component and amplifier or mains socket. Each and any of the individual bits is available separately.

Qtrax's starter outfit comprises two wall channels 27in long, three pairs of brackets and three 13in x 24in shelves in either toughened glass or maple or beech wood finish. This give about six square feet of neatness - and - tidiness, which at £150 compares very favourably with many more esoteric arrangements. With a broad range of related modules in the pipeline, including loudspeaker brackets and a mains-block tidy, Qtrax may well score an impressive victory for common sense.

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P I E G A

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Whether you are a Music Lover or a Home Cinema Enthusiast call AUDIO ILLUSION to find out more
David Price goes back to the future with Aiwa's space-age flagship, the AT-9700K tuner.

It is the last year of the nineteen seventies and The Buggles are Number One. Microcomputers and digital watches are the coolest things on earth. Blake's Seven and Doctor Who are essential televizual viewing. And as for hi-fi, 'high tech' is everything. The Japanese electronics giants are falling over themselves to get microchips and LEDs into all their latest gear . . .

Tuners are rarely objects of desire. Even the best examples of the breed struggle to arouse passions like, say, high end turntables or monster open - reels. Aiwa's AT-9700 was different. Ultra modern in the purest seventies sense - you can easily picture it in Gerry Anderson's Space 1999 - it was a dramatic confection of slinky brushed aluminium and dramatic spun alloy control knobs, dripping with multicoloured lights and LEDs.

Spacey styling was all very well but even the sharpest suit in the shop couldn't justify its £300 retail price. This was twenty years ago, remember, when the aforesaid sum would get you a new Linn Sondek and a stack of vinyl LPs for your troubles - plus a long taxi ride home. The Aiwa's racy looks were simply a diversion from the fact that it was one of the very first ever digital synthesizer tuners.

Big deal, you say. But in those days it was dazzling enough to make you suffer an entire episode of The Archers just to confirm your AT-9700's quartz-crystal could lock on the nearest Radio Four transmitter. In a world of analogue tuners with nothing but an AFC button between them and inter-station mush, this seemed the height of technological perfection.

Look inside one today and its build is impressive - they don't, much as I hate to say it, make 'em like that any more. Pop the hood of your average radio these days and you're looking at a box full of air. By contrast the Aiwa is 10kg of discrete transistors, integrated circuits, FETs, diodes and no less than 63 LEDs! Then there's the wildly over-the-top mains transformer and more case bracing metalwork than your average oil rig. No wonder that at 45cm across, you can only just squeeze it into a standard hi-fi rack.

It's a thoroughly engineered bit of kit, for sure. The front end uses a five gang variable capacitor and two MOSFETs for high sensitivity, and star - earthing is used for low noise. Its dual system IF stage has a twelve pole LC filter for high sensitivity, plus a linear phase ceramic filter for optimum selectivity. These are normally selected automatically, but users can manually specify the latter in difficult reception conditions by moving the front panel SELECTIVITY control to SHARP. There's also a choice of two HI-BLEND settings - good for crowded airwaves but not so hot for sound.

Speaking of which, the AT-9700 auditions very impressively. Most early synthesizer tuners were hardly the most beguiling of performers and some were a downright pain. But the Aiwa was unusually clean and uncluttered, lacking the digital tuners' trademark: upper mid-band coarseness. In truth the sound is still quite a way behind a Troughline, but it does have other strengths. Whereas many classics are notoriously insensitive, the AT-9700 can pick anything you care to listen to out of the ether. Its 0.6μV sensitivity means that if you live miles from a transmitter, or in an FM-unfriendly urban environment, it's one of the most practical classic wirelesses on the market.

Although quite happy with a coat hanger, the Aiwa positively motors with a decent aerial. Properly set up, its excellent stereo imaging, fine depth perspective, strong confident bass and crisp (if not sweet) treble and highly detailed mid-band will impress. By comparison, your average modern black plastic box can sound dull and leaden.

Thanks to its stratospheric original retail price, the Aiwa AT-9700 isn't the most common tuner on the used market, but there's actually more of them around than you'd think. I bought my mint example for £80, but I've seen them for as little as £20 in junk shops. They'll never be absolute classics in the mould of the Leak Troughline or Yamaha CT7000, but neither do you have to pay silly prices. As the new millennium approaches, you'll appreciate something to remind you of how we once thought it would look!
The Internet... audio and hi-fi offer the best example of what is happening and how much potential there is - or is not.

Little more consequential from this service than Dr Ruth. I am looking forward to joining the rest of Britain in using the net for business and pleasure using a high speed link, and music download will be very much on the agenda.

Downloading a full album comprising 650MBytes of data at 500kbits/sec through a cable modem is going to take up to 3 hours, which still doesn't look so good. I am not talking short term in this piece though, but the next decade. The arrival of ADSL in the year 2000 will give download speeds of 500kbits/sec-2Mbits/sec, the latter figure being a high enough rate to download a CD in real time. Artists seem to feel obliged to make CDs long, adding remixes, fillers and such like to stretch playing time. Net albums may well be more like LPs, offering 30-45 minutes of music. If they were compressed using the 5:1 compression level of MPEG2, in the modified forms of ATRAC or PASC, whose effect is imperceptible, download times would drop to 15 minutes or so. The is more acceptable. With other cable transmission technologies in the pipeline to further strengthen the internet and other forms of communication in the future these times will fall yet again.

At present rates of progress it will take another five years at a guess for the whole of the UK to receive the benefits of ADSL and cable modem coverage. By 2005 most people should be able to download music of MiniDisc quality (i.e. ATRAC compressed) in a comfortable time. After downloading, the music can be recorded to MD or CD. In the past audio purists have objected to any form of data reduction being applied to music. However, as the requirements of the computer business, including the Internet, become ever more dominant I believe this purist approach will evaporate. Most audiophiles accept it is just about impossible to differentiate between MD and CD in sound quality so a fifteen minute download is going to give the same level of quality as today's CD - and that's good enough for most people.

Of all people I have been one to argue that CD never matched the LP for sound quality and that it is an inferior source. I still think so and delight in using a fine LP system. But the LP is now just about extinct and the CD has become everyman's hi-fi, removing much of the cost and religion from listening to music. Taking the place of the LP will come a much higher quality CD format, like SACD. Don't expect to download one of these too soon into the future. By the time we do I believe it will be obvious the Internet was a great innovation marking the start of the 21st century, one that will have a huge impact upon how we listen to music, if not how we do our shopping.
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Prices correct at 20/3/99 E&OE

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Available for Audition

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Prices correct 29/11/98 E&OE
FASHION. One year it's black that's in, the next it's brown, then grey, then purple, and so the cycle continues. Yet, in the words of Shirley Bassey, it's all just case of history repeating itself. One could buy almost any article of clothing these days and wait only a few years for it to come back in fashion after a stint of being uncool.

You might think that hi-fi was immune from the vagaries of such whims, especially as it's a technology-based product where form really has to follow function. Yet this isn't always the case, and fashionable trends exist within engineering as well as styling. As an example you need look no further than the art of loudspeaker design.

Back in the days when I was just a twinkle, 'speakers were big. Well it wasn't so much big as imposing. The trouble with 'speakers from the sixties and seventies is that most were either just too small to comfortably rest on the floor, yet too bulky for stands. The end result usually meant that they were simply plonked on the floor. What strikes people these days when faced with such beasts, is the sheer width (madam!) of the things. Even into the 1980s many 'speakers were far wider than they were deep.

The introduction of designs such as the Goodmans Maxim and later Wharfedale Diamond, did much to change the whole direction of design. For sure, loudspeakers became smaller, but a complete change of proportion meant that they were narrower too. These 'speakers began a trend that led the way towards a clearer definition between stand mounters and floor mounters.

However, just when it looked as though we were heading towards a point when the average 'speaker would be nigh on invisible, à la Bose, a strange thing happened in that they became bigger again. In short, the mid-1990's saw a revival of the floorstanding 'speaker, only this time it was narrower and sparked off a rash of competing designs that are still selling strongly today. Look no further than the likes of Eltax's Symphony 6 (£240), Tannoy's M3 (£230) and Mission's 702e (£220) to see proof of this. I'm sure the statistics don't exist but I'd be happy to wager that the average volume of units sold today would be far greater than that of ten years ago. So it's something of an anomaly that in today's increasingly congested domestic environment, more of us are quite happy to have larger 'speakers than ever before. However, even now floor standers are evolving. One of the problems that's always blighted especially budget floor standers is the high reflectivity of the front panel marring the imaging. Big boxes demanded large bass drivers with the result being a rather broad girth. Of course manu-

Recently, several floor standers have become incredibly skinny to the point of being no wider than the smallest bookshelf design.
All the instruments had tonal signatures and the loudspeakers clarity coupled with a realistic soundstage gave the impression of almost being in the Wigmore hall, without the coughs and dropped programs of course. Simon Pope Hi Fi World

The quality of the bass and the subtle dynamic contrasts it can convey puts conventional box loudspeakers to shame. This speaker has true grip and poise, and doesn't stop around muddling detail. Paul Messenger Hi Fi Choice

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Boxed! Mint! Immaculate! Only thirty hours' use (count 'em, thirty!). Like Ol' Man River, some people's systems appear to just keep rolling along, according to our Classifieds. What goes on? Considering the discounting which the dissatisfied ex-owner has to accept as a sort of tax on changing his mind, you might be forgiven for thinking that there's an Association of Philanthropic Audiophiles out there. Perhaps there is... (echo) ...perhaps there is... (Cue Voice-Over)

"It was the thought of poor listeners shivering by the faint glimmer of the year-before-lasts' kit which spurred the Association into action. Shall the Curse year -before -lasts' kit which spurred the Association of Philanthropic Audiophiles out there. Perhaps there is... (echo) ...perhaps there is... (Cue Voice-Over)

How is it possible to make a mistake so absolute that the whole caboodle has to be dropped like a hot brick only a few weeks down the line?

This is all nonsense, of course (A voice: "Yes, as bloody usual!"). In truth there very probably isn't an Association of Philanthropic Audiophiles at all. So why do the classified pages look as if there is? The roots lie somewhat deeper, I fancy.

High-fidelity as a 'popular' hobby is the child of Surplus. To be perfectly brutal, to achieve a reasonable standard of fidelity costs money, and if there is surplus of income that any but the most dedicated even consider it. A change of circumstances - new baby, loss of job etc - can swallow up a surplus and lead to the "only six months' use" advert being placed. In these instances the low value of even slightly second-hand stuff works with maximum unfairness. Somehow though, I don't feel that this can apply to all of them.

In my mind I keep returning to the same question: how is it possible to make a mistake so absolute that the whole caboodle has to be dropped like a hot brick only a few weeks down the line?

Not that the making of mistakes isn't common to us all. For example, I shouldn't think I shall ever get all my money back on the Post Office Tower, but that's an entirely different matter.

Anyway, getting caught out with negative equity is a far cry from buying - with your eyes and ears wide open, mark you - a non-essential, non-investment item and then changing your mind - or is that your ears?

We'll have another stir in the sink of superfluity another time perhaps. In the meantime, I'm less puzzled by mistaken buys than I am by the sort of competition winner we occasionally get. It's the same sort of story except that it goes this way:

January: "What have I won? .. O lovely, I shall enjoy that .. it's just what I wanted .."

February: 'For Sale - Unwanted Competition Prize, Unused'. Can you figure it out, pals?
**KITS HAVE NEVER BEEN BETTER!**

**KEL80 MONOBLOCK AMPLIFIER KIT**
Following the success of our budget KEL84 45watt kit amplifier, we have come up with a 'bigger brother' design. The output stage utilises two pairs of TESLA EL34 pentodes in parallel-push-pull mode, allowing KEL163 to output 160 watts into an 8ohm load. Heading up the input stage we have the wonderful EL34! It happily partner both passive and active pre-amplifiers. It is easy to assemble. Simon Pope says, "The proof of the pudding is in the eating and the KEL80 is a feast for the ears, with solid bass attack, lighting fast reactions, that emphasises musicality as well as power at 590.00 GBP a pair, a definite valve winner. Each monopod weighs 12kgs., external dimensions are with valves 43.5cm(w) x 43.5cm(l) x 9cm(h)."

**HD83 VALVE HEADPHONE AMPLIFIER**
The HD83 is our new headphone amplifier, a beautifully simplistic design using Mullard ECC83 valves, a triode and power pentode housed in the same envelope. It works directly from any source be it a CD, tape, tuner etc., or from an amplifier's tape out or pre-amp sockets. The circuit utilises high specification output E and I output transformers of valve amplifiers saturating. The line stage has gain, distortion audio smoothie and it matches modern loudspeakers well. Weight 590.00 GBP a pair.

**K5881 MKII VALVE AMPLIFIER KIT**
A 20watt, Class A power amplifier that uses reliable Russian 5881 output valves, a military version of the American 6L6, designed for low distortion audio work. Now with a super shunt regulated push-pull (SRPP) input stage K5881 offers amazing sound quality. It can be used with a simple passive pre-amp or one of our own pre-amplifiers, and it matches modern loudspeakers well. Weight 15kgs external dimensions with valves 43.5cm(w) x 33cm(l) x 17cm(h).

**WAP SURPLUS PRODUCTS**

**KEL34 E&I VALVE INTEGRATED AMPLIFIER KIT**
The KEL34 E&I version is our second generation budget stereo integrated valve amplifier, providing a massive 40 watts of pure valve sound. With 4 line level inputs and one tape output. The KEL34 E&I is a simple and elegant circuit design using a 6AU6 phase splitter, and a push-pull pair of Tesla JJ branded EL34s. The result is a type allly sweet, open valve sound with atypical bass control and power. The KEL34 E&I will work its magic into 'speakers of average sensitivity too! Jon Marks says, "Totally the KEL34 E&I is a bit of a smoothie. It has a fast, dynamic sound, plucked guitar strings and bass drum enjoy crisp leading edges and great impact. Clear imaging and spacious sound staging means voices and instruments really jumped out of the loudspeaker boxes. Overall the KEL34 E&I is a beautiful power amp."

**KLP1 VALVE PHONO PREAMPLIFIER**
KLP1 has five line inputs, a tape input with monitor, and a unique low noise valve MM/MF phono stage. There is a switchable subsonic filter to prevent output transformers of valve amplifiers saturating. The line stage has gain, so it will drive any power amplifier. Audio grade components are used and many parts are custom made for higher quality. KLP1 has a super clean sound, sweet and detailed sound through line and phono inputs. Weight 5kg external dimensions 28.5cm(w) x 8cm(l) x 8cm(h).

**KEL80 Upgrade Kit**
Buy the KEL34 with the Upgrade Kit for an incredible knockdown price of:

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- **KEL80** $135
- **K5881** $25
- **K5881 Upgrade** $10

**NEW!**

**KEL34 E&I VALVE INTEGRATED AMPLIFIER KIT**

- **Price:** $295

**KEL80 MONOBLOCK AMPLIFIER KIT**

- **Price:** $590

**EL34 E&I VALVE INTEGRATED AMPLIFIER KIT**

- **Price:** $465

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**WAD TRANSISTOR 36W PCB £25.00 each**

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Our mini-marshall uses an Audax carbon fibre bass/midrange unit, married to the world's most advanced tweeter, the piezo-electric gold dome HD3P from Audax. KLS10 offers high performance from a small package. The main 'speakers are designed to work alone, or with a dedicated subwoofer to extend their bass. Alone, they are suited to near-wall mounting and can be tuned by port adjustment to suit personal taste and location. They are easy to drive and need just 30-60 watts. KLS10 is unique. Technically advanced, yet compact and relatively inexpensive. There is little to match it. Sensitivity 89dB 1W/1m, 15mm MDF, internal volume 9Ltrs, external dimensions 19cm(w) x 31cm(h) x 23cm(d).

**DRIVE UNIT & CROSSOVER KIT**

£365.00  
**DRIVE UNITS ONLY**

£292.00

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**KLS10 GOLD SUBWOOFER**

Designed to complement KLS10 Gold stand mounters by providing a deep and open bass. The subwoofer is inexpensive, easy to build, comprising a simple crossover network to a high quality 8 inch Aerogel dual voice coil unit. A must for all KLS10 Gold customers. Sens. 89dB, volume 25 litres, external dimensions 28cm(w) x 43cm(h) x 34cm(d).

**DRIVE UNIT & CROSSOVER KIT**

£135.00  
**DRIVE UNIT ONLY**

£65.00

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**KLS9 TWO WAY FLOORSTANDER**

Here's a storm for you - KLS9, with its BB4 alignment bass cabinet and Audax High Definition Aerogel 8in bass/midrange unit. Designed by Noel Keywood to possess optimal bass damping and a clean step response. Aided by a teensy bit of bass lift, KLS9 really thunders; it will re-arrange your floorstanders! 12mm MDF, internal volume 25 litres, external dimensions 25cm(w) x 93cm(h) x 40cm(d).

**DRIVE UNIT & CROSSOVER KIT**

£205.00  
**DRIVE UNIT PACK**

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**KLS3 3 WAY CARBON-FIBRE DRIVER LOUDSPEAKER**

KLS3 uses extremely light and stiff carbon-fibre cone drive units for a fast, accurate sound. A dedicated 4in carbon-fibre midrange drive unit provides the clean, smooth and detailed midrange characterised by superb projection. Its high 90dB sensitivity and near flat 80Hz importance make it one of the easiest loudspeakers to drive. An ideal loudspeaker for high-end valve amplifiers. 25mm MDF, internal volume 60Ltrs, external dimensions 26cm(w) x 100cm(h) x 35cm(d).

**DRIVE UNIT & CROSSOVER KIT**

£320.00  
**DRIVE UNIT PACK**

£200.00

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**KLS7 2 WAY CARBON-FIBRE DRIVER FLOORSTANDER**

Compact and affordable two way reflex loudspeaker. KLS7's slim dimensions make it easy to accommodate, but it uses top quality carbon-fibre drivers, so performance isn't compromised. An audiophile bargain. Sensitivity 88dB at 1W/1m 12mm MDF, internal volume 18Ltrs, external dimensions 15cm(w) x 80cm(h) x 22cm(d).

**DRIVE UNIT & CROSSOVER KIT**

£180.00  
**DRIVE UNIT PACK**

£100.00

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**KLS12 TWO WAYFLOORSTANDER/STANDMOUNTER**

KLS12 is a versatile budget loudspeaker that delivers fine sound quality at a low low price. It utilises Audax' H7210FO woven glass fibre cone, mid/bass unit, beautifully married with the TV034X0, 34mm diameter doped fabric dome tweeter. Noel Keywood says, the KLS12 is easy to drive, thus, it is suitable for 20W and upward power amplitudes. Internal volume = 58cm(h) x 24cm(w) x 34cm(d). floor stander external dimensions(with sand filled space cavity) = 58cm(h) x 24cm(w) x 34cm(d).

**DRIVE UNIT & CROSSOVER KIT**

£135.00  
**DRIVE UNIT PACK**

£80.00

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**KLS11 3 WAY DESIGN**

Our newest design is a wonderful three way bass reflex enclosure stand mounter. Another star performer, featuring the superb gold dome tweeter, the HD3P. This, married perfectly to a H110X0Z0 midrange unit and utilising the deep full sound of the 10in PR240X0Z0 bass unit. All units are from Audax. As both these units use high definition Aerogel cones they have similar sonic signatures, providing a deliciously gelled sound. Our KLS11 is a quality three way, with powerful bass and midrange drive that ensures vocals are handled with high fidelity. The treble is both smooth and sweet. Sensitivity 88dB  

Volume 5Ltrs, External dimensions 31cm(w) x 17cm(d) x 64cm(h).

**DRIVE UNIT & CROSSOVER KIT**

£245.00  
**DRIVE UNIT PACK**

£145.00

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**KLS8 TWO WAY HIGH SENSITIVITY**

With a sensitivity of 94dB, KLS8 needs very little power. Its 10in. professional bass driver and horn loaded tweeter give it a big sound. Ideal for low power amplifiers. Internal volume 50.5Ltrs, external dimensions 29cm(w) x 65cm(h) x 36cm(d).

**DRIVE UNIT & CROSSOVER KIT**

£240.00  
**DRIVE UNIT PACK**

£160.00

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**KLS3 GOLD MK II**

ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY THREE WAY LOUDSPEAKER

KLS3 Gold uses the latest version of Audax's innovative oval gold dome piezo-electric tweeter, giving it the sweetest and most extended treble. Married to a 4in. carbon fibre cone midrange driver for neutral and clear reproduction, and a powerful 8in. bass driver for superb depth, this is our top-of-the-line reference 'speaker. Sensitivity 90dB at 1W/1m. 25mm MDF, internal volume 60Ltrs, external dimensions 26cm(w) x 100cm(h) x 35cm(d).

**DRIVE UNIT & CROSSOVER KIT**

£355.00  
**DRIVE UNIT PACK**

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**WAP SURPLUS VALVE TOROIDAL MAINS TRANSFORMER**

£20.00

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**DRIVE UNIT & CROSSOVER KIT**

£355.00  
**DRIVE UNIT PACK**

£430.00

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**WAP SURPLUS VALVE TOROIDAL MAINS TRANSFORMER**

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If you would like a data sheet on any of the kits, please write a 'D' in the QTY box.

**SALE OFFER ENDS 30/11/99**

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Carriage and packaging please add £6.00 for one unit or a tweeter pair, otherwise add £13.00 for 2-6 units

*Not applicable to overseas prices.*

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**LOUDSPEAKER KITS**

Valves included except where otherwise stated.

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Jon Marks liaises with his loudspeakers thanks to cables from Reference Cables, Sonic Link and The Chord Company

REFERENCE CABLES
MONOCRYSTAL MS-2.3 £20/m
Talking about cables today, it's easy to get lost in a jungle of acronyms. The hierarchy begins with Tough Pitch Copper (otherwise known as bog standard), and develops into Oxygen Free Copper, Linear Crystal OFC (patented by Hitachi and used by the likes of van Damme) and PC-OCC (Pure Copper - Ohno Continuous Casting), which is what sits beneath the MS2.3's olive-drab polypropylene jacket. What all these letters add up to in this set of loudspeaker cables is a very clear, evenly-balanced performer that's equally happy working with relatively budget or relatively esoteric equipment. Common to both sorts of set-up with the Reference in place was an impressive transparency and dynamic subtlety particularly obvious on acoustic music. This isn't a delicacy-only wimp of a wire though - throw some Heavy Metal or Dance at it and there's plenty of bass extension, speed and control. And where these qualities go, rhythm and drive are sure to follow. The MS2.3 is a cable that's revealing without being ruthless, one that possesses as much musicality as it does analytical ability. In other words, it does its job rather well.

Reference Cables
48 Bridgehillhouse Road, Kilmarnock
KA1 4QD
Tel: 01563 550827

SONIC LINK
SILVER AERO S300 £20/m
With its silver-plated copper conductors and white silicone rubber insulation, the S300 bears more than a passing resemblance to The Chord Company's revamped Rumour 4. However, where the Rumour is a bi-wire cable, the Sonic Link, like the MS2.3, is single-wire, hence the somewhat lower price.

In use, the Sonic Link turned out to have quite a different presentation from that of the Kilmarnock contender. Where the latter produced the kind of perspective you'd expect from a row or two away from the stage, the Sonic Link jumped right in amongst the band members. It managed this trick with a bold, up-front balance and a powerful bottom-end that gelled very nicely with the Rocking Country of Bonnie Raitt's Luck Of The Draw album. Classical music proved another success, although the 5300 takes slightly more of a shine to blood and guts on a large scale than it does to lighter fare.

No doubt about it, this is an exciting, involving cable which should have no problems fitting into the majority of systems.

Sonic Link
Derwent Business Centre, Clarke Street, Derby DE1 2BU
Tel: 01332 361390

THE CHORD COMPANY
RUMOUR 4 £19.90/m
The Rumour has been around in its various guises for quite some time, and indeed used to be a reviewing stalwart in the World system. This silver-plated copper cable is included here to find out what bi-wiring at £20/m has to offer against single-wire alternatives.

Stepping into the boots of its peers here, the Rumour showed that it falls somewhere between the two in terms of presentation. While it has a beefier bass than the MS2.3, it remains leaner than the Sonic Link. Its treble is brighter than that of the S300, but has just as much detail as either it or the Reference Cable. And when it came to positioning the performers, the same was true too, with a viewpoint standing right at the edge of the stage.

Considering its sound in bi-wire topology, and that it can be had as a single-wire variant at considerably reduced price, the Rumour 4 is a bit of a bargain. Bargains are not everything in the world of hi-fi, but coupled with sterling performance, they're worth giving a very serious listening to.

The Chord Company
30a Sarum Bus. Park, Portway, Salisbury, Wilts. SP4 6EA
Tel: 01722 331674
Aztec Camera
The Best Of Aztec Camera

When the new wave guitar groups emerged in the early eighties, it was the likes of Haircut 100 and Modern Romance, who stole all the headlines. Dodgy Barnets, catchy choruses and Nick Heyward’s famously cheeky grin, they also found themselves soaring up the charts.

They were however only the tip of the quiff and to the more discerning listener there was also Scottish roustabouts like Altered Images, Orange Juice and the Fire Engines. And alongside, Roddy Frame and Aztec Camera stood out like a rocky crag that should have reduced Nick Heyward to a life of toothpaste commercials. At the tender age of 16, Roddy was routinely cast as the Boy Wonder and the Bob Dylan of his day, which his 1983 debut, High Land, Hard Rain only confirmed. For all its naivety the album was full of poetic charm.

The superb Pillar To Post, the stylish Oblivious (which did just dent the charts), the emotional We Could Send Letters and the upbeat Walk Out To Winter all proved Roddy Frame was more than simply an indie ingenue. The formula seemed deceptively simple; with Roddy’s exquisite guitar matched only by Campbell Owen’s driving bass, and creating an effortless and resonant sound, simple and joyfully conceived.

Roddy Frame’s new found glow was not to last however, and his image was soon tarnished by 1984’s follow up album The Knife, produced, oddly, by Mark Knopfler of Dire Straits. It left the band in those exact straits and with art being replaced with production skills, Roddy’s weak voice was exposed blatantly on such tracks as Birth Of The True and All I Need I Everything.

To make things worse, as he moved away from his jazzy troubadour arrangements and into rock territory with his follow up albums 1987’s Love and 1990’s Stray, the one-dimensional character of his singing left his songs undistinguished amidst the increasingly plainer, weaker melodies. The ‘angry’ duet with the Clash’s Mick Jones on Good Morning Britain was as effective as the Clash’s own “Cut The Crap” period, This Is England. Kind of said it all.

Not that the later period is a complete shambles. Memons like Spanish Horses from the Ryuichi Sakamoto-produced Dreamland album (1993) was an inven-
tive and delightful piece of flamenco pop, while his recent The North Star (1998) found Roddy in resurgent form and back on the UK pop map. But at best this anthology is a patchy affair which serves only to show a how talent in youth can so easily turn pedestrian. With his recent come-back Roddy at last looks to be getting back to the form of his first album.

Air
Premiers Symptomes

Joy of joys; a follow up to Moon Safari - last year’s album of the year. Not so fast! Premiers Symptomes, as its title suggests, is the early sketches, the doodlings and studies, which led to the 1998 masterpiece, not a new album in its own right. We must wait until next year for that.

That aside, Premiers Symptomes is a great package. Testing our mettle, it cleverly tracks the genesis of the French pair’s mellow pop revolution, to become the polished dinner party and loft living accoutrement of the decade. Certainly when it comes to stylish electronica it seems the French have it down pat. Especially if done in pairs. Daft Punk do it with stripped down grooves and terse witty melodies, whilst Air use sensuous ethereal and funky themes. Because Air’s music buzzes with theremins, processors and vintage synths, most of time the effect rings rather retro.

Premiers Symptomes comprises three official EP releases prior to Moon Safari, stretching back to 1995, and all since deleted, with two additional cuts for this CD edition. The early material bears up well to what Moon Safari went on to contain though the spirit is more in line with the textured ambience of La Femme D’Argent than the Kraftwerkian Krautrock meanderings of Sexy Boy. The best track here is probably Le Soleil Est Pres De Moi, a soft focus trance with church organ and horns, and layered with cheesy vocals. And we soon discover that Les Professionels is a forerunner to All I Need off the Moon Safari album without the Beth Hirsch vocals.

Clever, clean and all-round educational, Premiers Symptomes is yet another slice of Martini Moog music for a generation who don’t drink Martini. Who needs it when you’ve got Air instead, eh?
James
Millionaires

Time was when Manchester bands came, saw and conquered. From the mid-eighties onwards, bands like the Happy Mondays and the Stone Roses created minor revolutions and as quickly as they arrived they disappeared. Not so with James (or the Charlatans to be fair) who were in no such hurry to ruin a good thing. But whenever it seemed they were on the cusp of winning us all over, some other bunch of callow and impudent Mancunians would arrive to steal the show.

Not that the Gallagher brothers’ success rankled or anything but it was a well known fact that Tim Booth and the band comprising James didn’t have two pennies to rub together (not surprising as there’s seven of them!). It’s a cliché of course that all artists are impoverished, starving in lonely garrets and even if they’re not, it makes good copy in the fan magazines! Now in their autumnal years they appear rejuvenated, or at least reconciled to the fact that early retirement cannot be contemplated. Their million-selling Best Of album last year and the recycled Sit Down did not provide any easy answers but it did restore the band’s morale and enabled them to deliver a finely packaged set of live dates. Millionaires, if nothing else, is a declaration of their hard won social status.

Like their other Mancunian counterparts New Order, James’ strength, despite the tag of being an album band, came from great three-minute pop epics - their last true classic, She’s A Star from 1997’s Whiplash album was cruelly underrated. Millionaires carries on that tradition.

Reunited with Eno, 1993’s Laid producer, Millionaires fires off with a battery charge of single material: I Know What I’m Here For, Just Like Fred Astaire (actual singles) and then Shooting My Mouth Off and We’re Going To Miss You, which are the likely candidates for future release.

The latter is a strange concoction of dark brooding mantras and football chants - “Singing, we’re going to miss you when you’re gone”. Expansive, infectious and completely wonderful. The band tread a little flat-footed elsewhere, but this is always a possibility with an album starting off on such a good foot. Someone’s Got It In For Me, a lo-fi duet with Faithless’ Jamie Cato, the bouncy Afro Lover and the melancholic Vervacious with Sinead O’Connor guesting, are worth savouring.

Millionaires represents for James something of a new momentum and is certainly their most rounded album since Laid. With luck it will make the world sit up at last

Birthday Party
Live 1981 - 82

Big Jesus Trash Can, Release the Bats, Dead Joe, Six inch Gold Blade. The Birthday Party was never a humorous or light-hearted prospect but the intensity and aggression of the Aussie band’s mostly violent, angry and misogynistic tracks, were very much awe-inspiring.

The 17 tracks paraded on this, their first official album release since they split in 1983, will make even Marilyn Manson quake in his high heel boots. Recorded in Germany, Greece and London, they show a band consumed by self-destruction and ire. Fronted by a very disturbed young Nick Cave, in the throes of a nasty junk habit, the Birthday Party pointed punk in new directions. With the clever songwriting talents of Cave, the guitar guile of Mick Harvey and Rowland S Howard, (both fully fledged members of Nick Cave’s later reincarnation, The Bad Seeds), and the madness of bassist Tracy Pew, who once overdosed before he reached the stage, at their best, as often found here, they were awesome.

Tracks like She’s Hit, a chilling ramble, blotched with haunting guitar, and Six Inch Gold Blade “I stuck a six inch gold blade in the head of a girl” echo coldly and clearly the very apparent misogynistic feelings that have marked Nick Cave’s career. There is little humour here, and it can get particularly heavy and gloomy. This is not uncommon with juvenilia of any description - somehow you just can’t believe that things’II get better! Take Blast Off! and (Sometimes) Pleasure Heads Must Burn; they are little more than walls of noise, and verging on the insane. But for each of the veritable stinkers there is a trio of fine tracks here. Nick the Stripper, with its perverse, grinding rhythm, is some sort of classic. As is opening track Junkyard, about the king of a decaying regime.

All-in-all it’s a must for anyone with a passion for punk and youth revolt. And if you thought Nick Cave is that nice dark haired Antipodean, who duets with Kylie and PJ, then it will be an eye opener to hear this. However, be prepared. This classic slice of history is 74 minutes of mind-numbingly screwed up sounds and sentiment. Release the Bats.
It's no real surprise that Günter Wand is such an extraordinary interpreter of Bruckner's work. Bruckner was generally acknowledged as a modest and somewhat 'simple' fellow who managed to pen music of enormous scale and emotional depth. Likewise, Wand is a small, visually un-dynamic man of eighty-seven years but manages to pull out something from these vast sounds that others fail to even comprehend. He is consequently now acknowledged as perhaps the greatest living 'Brucknerian'.

After a Bruckner cycle with his NDR Symphony Orchestra, the voice of the esteemed Berlin Philharmonic called. Karajan was undoubtedly a great Bruckner interpreter and hence this is a great Bruckner Orchestra. The unfinished Ninth ends with the twenty-five minute Adagio, surely Bruckner's most intense music, preceded by a devilish, hard scherzo and the monumental, mysterious first movement.

Few conductors can conjure up the right amount of misterioso in the Ninth's movement - one that strangely springs to life as its better known stable - fectly measured - so many conductors either rush this passage or do the opposite and put in an overwrought and out of place rallentando. The fact that Wand measures this and, indeed, the whole of the symphony with stealth and stature is one of the keys to his reading of the music.

The scherzo rasps along at a fair lick, emphasising the vast differences in dynamics and mood that are the crux of this movement. The opening unison string theme of the last movement shows up both the intense, singing tone that this orchestra can produce and the sheer intensity of the notes themselves. Similar to the openings of Mahler's last movement of the Ninth and the first of the Tenth, you know exactly where you are emotionally. The writing is somewhat alien territory to Bruckner, and one that almost ventures into atonality. A vast song of farewell into the unknown, spiritually and musically; a fourth movement would have seemed almost superfluous.

This is one music's great symphonic works played by one of the world's great orchestras by a conductor who lives this music like few now alive. Need I say more? SP

**ILLUMINA**

**THE CHOIR OF CLARE COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE**

**DIRECTOR, TIMOTHY BROWN**

**Collegium COLCD 125**

The Collegium record label is a Cambridge-based outfit specialising in choral music. Past recordings include two quite wonderful collections of unaccompanied English secular and sacred music by the Cambridge Singers, surely one of the finest mixed voice chambers choirs in existence. These Illumina are performed by the Choir of Clare College, who have been a mixed voice (male and female) choir since 1971 (although the college was founded in 1326!) - very unusual in an Oxbridge collegiate choir.

The choral pieces included here were all chosen for their connexion with the theme of light (hence the title) - a potent symbol throughout the history of all religions. The vast selection, ranges from the pure and mystic plainsong of Abbess Hildegard of Bingen to Ligeti's creepy Lux Aeterna. We also travel far and wide, visiting France, Germany, Russia, Hungary, Italy, England and even Finland.

This is a young choir and in some of the purer-sounding pieces, such as the Ligeti it works very well. In others, you feel that the support which more mature male voices bring would benefit Rachmaninov's wondrous Nunc Dimittis from his All-Night Vigil features help from two extra basses, but although beautifully sung, the lower notes which are essential to this particular sound lack a bit of body - especially the closing bass line descending to the bottom B flat.

One highlight is William Harris's anthem bring Us, O Lord God. Often overlooked in favour of his Faire Is The Heaven, this piece has the same wealth of lush harmonies as its better known stablemate. Tinged with Harris's unmistakable English melancholy, akin to that of Herbert Howells, it has what must be one of the most magical endings in choral music and is here sung sympathetically and with supreme control.

The Clare choir put their hearts and souls into these pieces and take well to the likes of Tallis, Byrd, Desprez and Palestrina. They falter slightly with richer Russian fare but throughout the tonality and balance is as spot on as you'd expect - essential for the semitonal clusters and the eerie detachment of Ligeti's ten-minute closing masterpiece. Very illuminating. SP (Frank Blake is on holiday.)
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Far Out founder Joe Davis has worn a groove across the Atlantic reinforcing the modern connexions between Brazilian and British musicians, as well as issuing twenty-odd albums from past life heroes like Marcos Valle, Celia Vaz and Azymuth, and a set of remix compilations that do justice to the originals. This is the first new Joyce album on FarOut, recorded with a European release firmly in mind. But that's because Joyce has spent the last few years or so touring this side of the Atlantic and catching up on how much her original samba stylings and distinctive, edgy, songs and singing are appreciated by European audiences. Yes, she sings in Portuguese, but if the Japanese and the Italians can make the leap, so can we.

Although when there's as much of the African diaspora in Joyce's celebratory or bitter sweet choruses, familiarity isn't such a surprise. There's a potent echo of forceful work-song harmonies on Todos de Santos, while she sings a duet here with Vittor Santos's trombone on London Samba that conveys the same magic that Taj Mahal and the Howard Johnson Tuba ensemble brought to their cross-stitch of Bourbon Street and the Blues in the Seventies, or Ali Farka Toure and Ry Cooder conjured up this decade - a sense of universal connection across history and conflict and culture. But hey, you can still sip cocktails around the Dansette if you want to, or sashay down to the coffee shop humming these inimitable Brazilian melodies in your head if you want to.

People have been savouring Joyce's songs and singing for decades. Late last year - with total artistic control - she wrote, sang, played guitar on and produced the songs for Hard Bossa. Good call, Joe.

**JOYCE**

Hard Bossa

(FAROUT FARO 134CD)

—Ian Nicolson

I'm worried by the strength of my affection for this French recording. It may be to do with being hooked on music that reflects light glinting on summer water, or dancing with itself like gambolling cubs. Or it may be from suffering through one too many albums that succeed best at stripmining a single musical setting appallingly efficiently. Then again it could just be getting to hear Andy Sheppard's honeyed sax sharing the lead on a succession of stellar melodies with the fresh-faced and succinct Sylvain Luc's guitars. Or the global percussion of Bobby Thomas suffusing the amused, ironically sultry acoustic bass of leader Benita.

I could continue in this vein indefinitely. By now you may be wondering what limits can be placed on Jazz - is it the 'other' or worse the 'don't know' of music? How do you compare King Oliver with Ornette Coleman? What possible or even loosely probable connexion do you make between a musical tradition which owes its form to the work songs of the cotton fields with a style in which sophistication is not a later refinement, but the whole well-spring of its being?

Whatever, even if you can't usually deal with instrumental albums that forget a couple of times and dress up an almost-embarrassing but too-cute-to-cut tune with a wacky Smooth Jazz singer or the producer's mate, this is as neat a way to spend an hour going to the places music takes you as anything else I've heard this year. It's not in any style except alive, original and accessible and comes with warm spacious sound, pinpoint playing and and a louche, sleazy ambience that could tempt me into table-dancing. Or perhaps not - even a Jazz reviewer isn't a sad enough individual to go table dancing!

This kind of thing is going to give World Jazz Smooth a good name.

**MICHAEL BENITA**

Lower The Walls

(LABEL BLEU LBLC 6611)
Larry Heard
Genesis
MECCA RECORDINGS

Heard is one of those artist-cum-producers who approaches a new album like an easel, mixing concept and expression, so his releases are always profound and well thought out. It's an extremely palatable combination that guarantees soulful and emotive tunes that grow with every listen. Like the last album, Dance 2000 and the previous Ice Castles (reviewed here), Genesis is a futuristic soundscape that builds on Heard's Chicago House roots. A fine example is the cool classic house number Missing You - a blend of soulful vocals fused with ambient smooch. Comfort is a second fine and sophisticated reworking of traditional soul elements coupled with a chilled-out vibe. Elsewhere the mood gets less formulaic, something which Heard puts down to his “internal need... to conjure up little ditties that are simply personal experiments”. Lunar Gases, for example, mixes retro-futuristic sounds with an 801s dance track - a case of experimentation that's also innovation.

Tracks such as Interlaced Expressions and Kaleidoscopic Events delve into the world of electronic jamming - and prove that a good tune runs deep in Heard's soul. Dexter Jackson fans should check out either of two collaborations spawned from late nights spent dabling with textures and haunting melodies.

This is the kind of album that requires careful listening and full appreciation of the beautifully crafted ambient mood. It is generating rave reviews across the dance press so it seems at last Larry Heard is starting to get the credit he deserves for his talent and musicianship. This is a great introduction to a whole catalogue of laid-back grooves, listen then sleep.

Mr Oizo, the Flat Eric Levi's puppet-master returns with an album, believe it or not! Anyone who thought that Quentin Dupieux's four minutes of Flat Beat squelching was enough will be surprised to see a whole catalogue of farting noises featured within this 15 track selection. In fact there's so much, earth-shaking, bowel-loosening bass it leads one to think that Dupieux's next campaign should be for a toilet paper company rather than a jeans manufacturer.

The surprise here is that Mr Oizo isn't just a commercials director with a flukey pop-techno smash. While tracks like Smoking Tape and One Minute Shakin' sound just a little too similar to Flat Beat for comfort, its the hip-hop and funk influences that make tracks like (strange title) Inside The Kidney Machine really stand out. The swinging Analog Worms Attacks takes the beefastic squelch one stage funkier and completely excels in comparison to the array of Flat Beat soundalikes.

Even if you don't invest in this album, you will be hearing a lot more from Flat Eric and Mr Oizo in the coming months. Flat 551 is another of this album's tunes that's already destined for more commercials, this time on the internet and once again directed by Dupieux. Love him or loathe him, the new grooves of Mr Oizo are likely to take the worldwide web by storm this time - and there will be very little you can do to escape.


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<td>JFW Ruby 2</td>
<td>Nov 97</td>
<td>499</td>
<td>Excellent bass allied to detailed and articulate midrange and treble.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kef LS5/SA</td>
<td>Jul 95</td>
<td>599</td>
<td>Very well finished and detailed but the dry bass is a problem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kef Q35</td>
<td>Aug 97</td>
<td>499</td>
<td>The Q35s look rather expensive at £500 with their 'boom and fizz' presentation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kef Q55</td>
<td>Dec 96</td>
<td>479</td>
<td>The Q55s are relatively expensive at £500 with their 'boom and fizz' presentation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linn Tukan</td>
<td>Oct 95</td>
<td>899</td>
<td>Highly musical standmounts that give similarly priced floorstanders a good deal of worry about.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meridian A500</td>
<td>May 95</td>
<td>755</td>
<td>Very polite and many will appreciate their civility. Powerful bass.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission 733</td>
<td>Apr 95</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>Captivating floorstanders that bring music to life - what good hi-fi should do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission 754</td>
<td>Sep 95</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>Engineering for low price and realistic appeal rather than absolute sound quality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission 754/Freedom</td>
<td>Jan 97</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>Charming little stand-mounters with a sweet, warm, musical sound.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission 752 Freedom</td>
<td>Jan 97</td>
<td>578</td>
<td>Warm and detailed sound allied to well rounded bass.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission 774</td>
<td>Feb 99</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>With the right ancillaries, the 774s have a clarity and lack of colouration still rare with £1000 systems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitor Short MS25i</td>
<td>Nov 97</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>Sweet sounding metal dome tweeter although dry bass and rather plasticity midrange work against it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical Technology PAT51</td>
<td>Jan 99</td>
<td>647</td>
<td>Sophisticated, neutral sound and fine musicality put the PAT51s near the head of the class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Near 10M</td>
<td>May 99</td>
<td>347</td>
<td>A thin and hard sound but precise with £1199.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neat Cube II</td>
<td>Jun 95</td>
<td>445</td>
<td>Deserving floorstanders with good looks and build. Can fail to shine with over-equip. ple.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NHT 1.3</td>
<td>Aug 95</td>
<td>389</td>
<td>Very crisp sounding speakers best suited to smaller rooms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opera Prime</td>
<td>Dec 96</td>
<td>495</td>
<td>The Prima is a fine piece of kit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orfeon ConCorde II</td>
<td>Dec 95</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>Good value floorstanders with clean enjoyable sound - not quite supersonic, though.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polk PSW150</td>
<td>Jul 97</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>By this standard it is hard to believe the PSW150 costs as much as £500.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proac Classic</td>
<td>Aug 95</td>
<td>509</td>
<td>Arguably the best floorstander for the money.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rel Q Bass</td>
<td>May 96</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>Another classic from REL that boosts bass and improves sound stage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REL Q100ES</td>
<td>Apr 96</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>Another very fine REL monitor that boosts bass and improves sound stage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rogers AB 1</td>
<td>Jul 96</td>
<td>499</td>
<td>When used with the Kef LS5/SA this sub delivers the goods, a doubt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rogan RockChine</td>
<td>Feb 97</td>
<td>565</td>
<td>Very musical involving speakers that many will enjoy, but a little uncertain at times.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sequence 1630</td>
<td>Apr 96</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>Good at orchestral scale but coloured in the midband.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soundcraft Absolute 4P</td>
<td>Sep 97</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>The Absolute 4Ps excel in all areas except for the rather bright, hard treble. Neither is exceptional.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spendor 2900</td>
<td>Jun 96</td>
<td>599</td>
<td>Smooth, focused and coherent in their delivery with deep, deep bass extension. Not the most spacious sound.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systemdek 165</td>
<td>Feb 98</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>Dry and clean sound, but can become hard and confused when pushed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tonary Precision P10</td>
<td>Mar 98</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>Good at orchestral scale but coloured in the midband.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turntable 6433 plus</td>
<td>Nov 96</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>Needs care in setting up but this subwoofer offers serious quality bass for not a lot of money.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TDL RTL4</td>
<td>Feb 95</td>
<td>850</td>
<td>Easy going with plenty of detail and timbral richness. Better with classical fare.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TDL Tilt 2</td>
<td>Jan 97</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>Midrange and treble have good tonal colour, detail and speed. Bass is slow and brum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technics SB-3300</td>
<td>Sep 96</td>
<td>759</td>
<td>Good sound with solid bass from a compact and well priced 'speaker.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technics SB-5500</td>
<td>May 96</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>Clean, dry and top with good imaging and sound staging. More neutral than Mission's 771s but less euphonic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Triangle Cornett TZx4</td>
<td>Apr 95</td>
<td>375</td>
<td>Quite present, lively sound but others creating less can offer more.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wharfdale Vales 550</td>
<td>Oct 95</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>Good for adding scale and power to a weak system or budget separates.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Low Thermal Noise Interconnects

**£E800-£1499**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brand</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Verdict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audio Note E</td>
<td>Mar 95</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>BASS will be long-lasting with a crisp and excellent sound.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio Note MA1 Big</td>
<td>Aug 96</td>
<td>1499</td>
<td>The MA1 Big may be a little laid-back, but they have a pleasant and involving sound.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audiovector M2</td>
<td>Jun 98</td>
<td>499</td>
<td>The M2s are marred by a boom in &quot;n&quot; liss presentation that adds Heavy Metal but not much else.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BW CD97</td>
<td>Feb 96</td>
<td>599</td>
<td>With warm Warmacs the C97 has a weighty, open sound. Very bass could be faster.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castle Howard S2</td>
<td>Sep 96</td>
<td>4199</td>
<td>Fantastic deep and tight bass but some treble sharpness requires careful matching.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celestion A2</td>
<td>Jun 98</td>
<td>1499</td>
<td>Focus is not a strength, but bass extension and overall balance are perfect. Metal tweeter can be bright.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chario Academy One</td>
<td>Nov 96</td>
<td>1250</td>
<td>Warm bass and a great midrange finish make these 'speakers very enjoyable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diplason KEA</td>
<td>May 99</td>
<td>1185</td>
<td>A great sound with solid bass from a compact and well priced 'speaker.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epos ES22</td>
<td>Jun 98</td>
<td>849</td>
<td>Good at orchestral scale but coloured in the midband.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event/2000BAS</td>
<td>Sep 97</td>
<td>1195</td>
<td>More neutral and well-endowed in the bass, the Event lacks only a touch of overall clout.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harbeth DPM1 Active</td>
<td>Sep 98</td>
<td>849</td>
<td>The Harbeths are superbly built but their rising bass and treble suit home cinema more than hi-fi.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harbeth Compact 7</td>
<td>Dec 96</td>
<td>849</td>
<td>Handles rock and classical with equal aplomb, with the ability to reproduce detail that flummoxes many other models.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harbeth HL K6</td>
<td>Dec 96</td>
<td>985</td>
<td>Most neutral but still with a little less of bass and control.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KAR Torino</td>
<td>Jan 97</td>
<td>895</td>
<td>The Torino's stylish sound won't shame any system. That powerful bass does need space to breathe properly though.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KEF Reference 1</td>
<td>May 95</td>
<td>1199</td>
<td>The KEF Reference 1 is a true all-rounder, with a powerful bass and a well balanced sound.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KEF Reference 2</td>
<td>Jan 95</td>
<td>1199</td>
<td>The KEF Reference 2 is a true all-rounder, with a powerful bass and a well balanced sound.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Price Guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brand</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JFW Ruby 2</td>
<td>£799</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soundcraft Absolute 4P</td>
<td>£199</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Prices shown are those at time of review.

**Buying Guide**

- **POWERSAFE specialised electronics**
  - Email: bernard@psafe.u-net.com
  - 13, Lloyd Street, Heaton Norris, Stockport SK4 1QP
  - Tel/Fax 0161-477-8670

**TEMP-O**

**Low Thermal Noise Interconnects**

**Listen to the Music - not the background noise and interference!**

**TEMP-O** Interconnects are manufactured from a highly specialised cable, which has been treated to remove sources of thermal noise within the cable.

Terminations are made with a unique Sn/Cd low thermal solder.

To further enhance noise rejection, the signal is carried by a twisted pair of conductors, with an overall grounded screen. To make full use of the quality of the cable, **TEMP-O** interconnects are terminated with the acclaimed NEUTRIK PROFI sliding shield Phono Plugs.

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www.audio-excellence.co.uk
www.music-at-home.co.uk

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## Loudspeakers £ Year Verdict

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loudspeaker</th>
<th>£</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Verdict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>£800-£1499</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kelly KT3</strong></td>
<td>£1199</td>
<td>Apr 98</td>
<td>The KT3s go very loud very easily but they don’t possess the most even response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>KiiTe Heresy II</strong></td>
<td>£1159</td>
<td>May 99</td>
<td>Proven successful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>KRK V8</strong></td>
<td>£995</td>
<td>Sep 98</td>
<td>Ultra-detailed and revealing, the V8s are true pro more than domestic transducers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Harmonodyn MG0.5/5</strong></td>
<td>£795</td>
<td>Mar 97</td>
<td>Very clear detail and separation, but just fails to produce a fully 3-dimensional sound.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Magneplanar MG12/QR</strong></td>
<td>£900</td>
<td>May 99</td>
<td>Lightness of touch and clarity in tympanic. Needs powerful amplification for 78rpm. Not a valve speaker.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Marie 860</strong></td>
<td>£795</td>
<td>Oct 95</td>
<td>An easy going, open and natural sound makes the maries an attractive proposition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mordaunt Short 860</strong></td>
<td>£1450</td>
<td>Dec 95</td>
<td>Fast, light and informative. A poor tweeter casts a grey shadow.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tannoy AMS8</strong></td>
<td>£1200</td>
<td>Sep 98</td>
<td>A mix of control, delicacy and detail allows it to excel with any music.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spendor FL8</strong></td>
<td>£1275</td>
<td>Jun 98</td>
<td>The FL8s are warm, mellow performers which prefer Classical to Rock.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Arcam Alpha One</strong></td>
<td>£1199</td>
<td>Aug 95</td>
<td>The OLs have transparency and detail in considerable amounts. Bass can be loose though.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AMC 3025</strong></td>
<td>£895</td>
<td>Aug 95</td>
<td>Smooth and refined loudspeakers that some listeners will find captivating.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Technics SB-M1</strong></td>
<td>£1500</td>
<td>May 96</td>
<td>Super sound staging, openness and detail. Very well sought out.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tannoy D300</strong></td>
<td>£1600</td>
<td>Apr 97</td>
<td>Impressive bass extension and control with precise imaging make the D300s a steal at £1000.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tobem Model 1 Sig:</strong></td>
<td>£1295</td>
<td>Sep 95</td>
<td>A rich and open sound, extremely musical if not strictly accurate. Great bass extension for their size.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UKD Gallias Gold</strong></td>
<td>£1495</td>
<td>Jun 96</td>
<td>Not the most neutral speakers but they are extremely smooth with an overall coherence to the sound.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UKD Divia</strong></td>
<td>£1300</td>
<td>Jun 95</td>
<td>The Aura has a smooth, civilized sound with fine detail. Bass punch really rolls along. Good phono stage.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## £1500-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loudspeaker</th>
<th>£</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Verdict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Audiovector 6</strong></td>
<td>£4600</td>
<td>Jun 95</td>
<td>If you have enough room and money the 6s are capable of a highly musical, involving performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DGS 107 Mart</strong></td>
<td>£1500</td>
<td>Dec 98</td>
<td>The 107 Mk2s may look slim but they have a solid sound and are fabulously revealing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cadena 85</strong></td>
<td>£2695</td>
<td>Sep 99</td>
<td>Interesting design that incorporates an electrolastic tweeter. An impressive but inconsistent performer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Carlsson 52.2</strong></td>
<td>£1500</td>
<td>May 99</td>
<td>Unusual design which is placed back against a wall for optimum performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Celitron 33 A</strong></td>
<td>£1800</td>
<td>May 97</td>
<td>The 33s are simply superb. All you’ll need to enjoy them is a large enought listening room.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Epics 8000</strong></td>
<td>£2500</td>
<td>Sep 98</td>
<td>A mix of control, delicacy and detail allows it to excel with any music.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Harbeth HL8</strong></td>
<td>£1999</td>
<td>Mar 97</td>
<td>Glassy clarity, bright treble, with bass that comes alive when given welly. Expensive though.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Jamo Concert 11</strong></td>
<td>£2000</td>
<td>Dec 97</td>
<td>A worthy bigger brother for the Concert 8s, with a fast, transparent and even sound.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Jamo Concert 8</strong></td>
<td>£1500</td>
<td>Jun 97</td>
<td>The Concert 8s are superbly clean and transparent. Their nature will show up any source shortcomings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>JBL S2600</strong></td>
<td>£2400</td>
<td>Oct 96</td>
<td>Very well sought out.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kef Reference 5</strong></td>
<td>£2200</td>
<td>Nov 95</td>
<td>For superb reproduction within large rooms, the 5s are a force to be reckoned with.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kef Reference 3</strong></td>
<td>£3999</td>
<td>Nov 99</td>
<td>Superb bass and near-electrostatic sound staging make these involving speakers a bargain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Living Voice Auditorum</strong></td>
<td>£1500</td>
<td>May 99</td>
<td>Their strengths suggest a Classical 'speaker but they suit electronic compositions better. Rich tone but loose bass.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prieo Studio 160</strong></td>
<td>£1600</td>
<td>Mar 99</td>
<td>They may be musically engaging but the Proci’s brightness suits them best for smooth valve amplification.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Blu Audio Stormfront</strong></td>
<td>£8000</td>
<td>Feb 99</td>
<td>The best home for a reflex-loaded Tannoy dual-concentric, but they don’t come cheap!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spendor SP771</strong></td>
<td>£1970</td>
<td>Jan 95</td>
<td>Unusual design which is placed back against a wall for optimum performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spendor SP9</strong></td>
<td>£3400</td>
<td>Apr 96</td>
<td>One of the cleanest and most expressive loudspeakers you’ll ever find for a large room. Easy to drive, too.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tannoy D300</strong></td>
<td>£2700</td>
<td>Aug 96</td>
<td>Bold and powerful with solid bass, clearly focused midrange and delicious treble. Well worth tracking down, £1500 may be a lot to pay for a pair of 'speakers, but the Tannoys deliver to great effect in all areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Technics SB-M1</strong></td>
<td>£1500</td>
<td>Nov 96</td>
<td>Materialey excellent value. Sound clean and extended but can lack involvement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thomas Transducers Brno</strong></td>
<td>£1475</td>
<td>Feb 95</td>
<td>Capable of producing a captivating performance of highibre proportions with a great air of naturalness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thomas Verices Gold</strong></td>
<td>£3395</td>
<td>May 98</td>
<td>Impressive horns that combine tightness of touch with power and clarity.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Integrated £ Year Verdict

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Integrated</th>
<th>£</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Verdict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>£300</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alchemist Maxim</strong></td>
<td>£299</td>
<td>Mar 96</td>
<td>Fluid and musical but upper bass is a little dry. Useful phone stage with but with a little silliness and ringing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ARC 3035</strong></td>
<td>£150</td>
<td>Nov 96</td>
<td>A mix of control, delicacy and detail allows it to excel with any music.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ARC 300A</strong></td>
<td>£170</td>
<td>Feb 98</td>
<td>Good with efficient loudspeakers but generally needs more power and control.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ancill Alpha 8 plus</strong></td>
<td>£250</td>
<td>Oct 96</td>
<td>In a smooth system with a warmish bass the Alphas One makes a strong case for itself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Arcam Alpha One</strong></td>
<td>£270</td>
<td>Apr 96</td>
<td>Excellent value for money and will get the best from any component. Needs a separate phone stage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Audio Analogue Boston</strong></td>
<td>£230</td>
<td>Sep 96</td>
<td>The Aura has a smooth, civilized sound with fine detail. Bass punch really rolls along. Good phone stage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bespoke Audio Visual</strong></td>
<td>£270</td>
<td>Jul 98</td>
<td>Impressive bass and near-electrostatic sound staging make these involving speakers a bargain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Denon PMA 296SE</strong></td>
<td>£160</td>
<td>Feb 97</td>
<td>A mix of control, delicacy and detail allows it to excel with any music.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Denon PMA 2690</strong></td>
<td>£280</td>
<td>Oct 96</td>
<td>Good drive, punch and an open soundstage, but suffers from confusion plus a thin midrange and treble.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Harmon Kardon HX910</strong></td>
<td>£180</td>
<td>Jun 96</td>
<td>Big and brash but unfortunately blends with it. Something of a blast from the 1970s-80s past!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Harmon Kardon HC620</strong></td>
<td>£280</td>
<td>Nov 96</td>
<td>Thorough-going down to earth liveliness. Bright but clean which gives appealing vivacity.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Hi-End Audio & Home Theatre**

**Multi-Room Design & Installation**

**Home Demonstrations**

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---

**MUSICAL FIDELITY**

**X SERIES**

**At**

**AudioVenue**

**Bespoke Audio Visual Consultants**
buying guide

Prices shown are those at the time of review.

Audio Analogue Puccini.

MVL A2+.

### £300-£799

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Integrated</th>
<th>£</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Verdict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alchemist Axiom</td>
<td>£380</td>
<td>Sep 95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ai &amp; Co 301DX</td>
<td>£329</td>
<td>Nov 98</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arcam Alpha 6+</td>
<td>£350</td>
<td>Jan 96</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arcam Alpha 9</td>
<td>£565</td>
<td>Dec 97</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. A. Puccini SE</td>
<td>£345</td>
<td>Dec 97</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio Analog/ Puccini</td>
<td>£595</td>
<td>Sep 97</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audiphile 800CA</td>
<td>£650</td>
<td>May 99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audiolab 8000G</td>
<td>£700</td>
<td>Dec 97</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benchmark Raycon SIA 1</td>
<td>£880</td>
<td>Aug 96</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyrus 3</td>
<td>£599</td>
<td>Oct 96</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cyrus Straight Line</td>
<td>£398</td>
<td>Nov 98</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Denon Sealed</td>
<td>£699</td>
<td>Dec 97</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edmond ESI-10</td>
<td>£440</td>
<td>Apr 99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hifi Audio</td>
<td>£750</td>
<td>Jun 96</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenwood KA-7090R</td>
<td>£490</td>
<td>Apr 98</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LFD Merton</td>
<td>£499</td>
<td>Jun 97</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marantz PM-66 K6-B</td>
<td>£600</td>
<td>Nov 97</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meridian M-30</td>
<td>£599</td>
<td>Jan 99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical Fidelity X-A1</td>
<td>£490</td>
<td>Mar 98</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myrdal T-40</td>
<td>£399</td>
<td>Nov 98</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nad 317</td>
<td>£479</td>
<td>Oct 97</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Naim Nait</td>
<td>£560</td>
<td>May 99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oude SA 100</td>
<td>£429</td>
<td>Jun 96</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pioneer A-300R Precision</td>
<td>£400</td>
<td>Aug 97</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Pioneer A400X</td>
<td>£300</td>
<td>Oct 99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quad 77</td>
<td>£499</td>
<td>Feb 99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roksan Caspian</td>
<td>£599</td>
<td>Jan 99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rose Scion</td>
<td>£615</td>
<td>May 87</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sonic Fronteers Anthem</td>
<td>£579</td>
<td>Jan 96</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sony TAF466E</td>
<td>£285</td>
<td>Aug 99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technics SL-A700 MK3</td>
<td>£250</td>
<td>Jan 97</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### £800-£1000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Integrated</th>
<th>£</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Verdict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audionote Soni Se</td>
<td>£1999</td>
<td>Mar 05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copland CSA 14</td>
<td>£1899</td>
<td>Apr 96</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denon DM 10</td>
<td>£1399</td>
<td>Jun 95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure Super XV</td>
<td>£1699</td>
<td>Oct 95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gamma Rhythm</td>
<td>£2499</td>
<td>Jan 99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Levinson IT</td>
<td>£2499</td>
<td>Jan 99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McIntosh MA680</td>
<td>£2999</td>
<td>Feb 99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical Fidelity A1001</td>
<td>£3999</td>
<td>May 99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MVL integral A2</td>
<td>£350</td>
<td>May 99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norma Phase 2</td>
<td>£1999</td>
<td>May 99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sonic Fronteers Anthem</td>
<td>£2399</td>
<td>May 96</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sonneteer Alabaster</td>
<td>£2999</td>
<td>Oct 97</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teac AB 70</td>
<td>£2999</td>
<td>Jan 99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unison Res. Simply 845</td>
<td>£2950</td>
<td>Mar 98</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A very capable integrated with a smoothness and warmth predisposed to classical rather than rock.


A stringy-sounding transistor amp for rock. Build and finish could be better and price lower.

A stringy-sounding transistor amp for rock. Build and finish could be better and price lower.

A mighty confection of power, facilities and style. and it sounds good to boot.

Nominally a separate pre and power, but the pre can't work alone. Exciting but unsubtle.

Needs the right loudspeaker but a good musical presentation is In there somewhere.

A stringy-sounding transistor amp for rock. Build and finish could be better and price lower.

A mighty confection of power, facilities and style. and it sounds good to boot.

A very strong all-rounder with very strong all-rounder.

A vast range of models available, from small to large, with a wide range of features and capabilities.

An excellent performer with any music. Adapt to handling complex balance. Difficult to beat at the price.

A mighty confection of power, facilities and style. and it sounds good to boot.

An excellent performer with any music. Adapt to handling complex balance. Difficult to beat at the price.

A mighty confection of power, facilities and style. and it sounds good to boot.

An excellent performer with any music. Adapt to handling complex balance. Difficult to beat at the price.
### Pre-amps

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Verdict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Linn LK100</td>
<td>£130</td>
<td>Mar 98</td>
<td>If you haven't yet experienced the world of quality headphone listening, the X-Cans is the way to start.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creek A43</td>
<td>£575</td>
<td>Jun 97</td>
<td>This is a first-rate budget amplifier that looks and sounds like an audiophile.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aura PA100</td>
<td>£575</td>
<td>Jun 97</td>
<td>Offers finesse, control and clarity for a very reasonable outlay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio Analogue Donizetti</td>
<td>£149</td>
<td>Nov 97</td>
<td>Offers finesse, control and clarity for a very reasonable outlay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arcam Alpha 10P</td>
<td>£600</td>
<td>Jul 96</td>
<td>Smooth, powerful sound free from the rough brightness that afflicts many solid-state designs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arcam 9P</td>
<td>£400</td>
<td>Dec 96</td>
<td>A detailed and open sound gives great atmosphere to all types of music.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio Analogue Donizetti</td>
<td>£575</td>
<td>Apr 96</td>
<td>This power amp lags behind the best of the competition, and the build is flimsy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allnic Pre</td>
<td>£449</td>
<td>Feb 96</td>
<td>The Cyrus Power is simply impressive in all respects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chord CPA 1800</td>
<td>£1774</td>
<td>Mar 95</td>
<td>Offers finesse, control and clarity for a very reasonable outlay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical Fidelity X-Tone</td>
<td>£120</td>
<td>Mar 98</td>
<td>Smooth, powerful sound free from the rough brightness that afflicts many solid-state designs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project 7</td>
<td>£259</td>
<td>Feb 95</td>
<td>Excellent sound quality ensures the Puccini S.E. outstrips the competition at up to £1,000.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rothwell Indus</td>
<td>£150</td>
<td>Mar 95</td>
<td>Needs slightly more detail and a less grainless midrange to bring it up to the best.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Power amps

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Verdict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AMC 2200</td>
<td>£150</td>
<td>Mar 99</td>
<td>Super value with first-rate sound staging.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arcam SR</td>
<td>£400</td>
<td>Dec 96</td>
<td>A detailed and open sound gives great atmosphere to all types of music.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arcam Alpha 10P</td>
<td>£500</td>
<td>Jul 96</td>
<td>As smart as an Amral suit, they sound powerful in a natural, organic manner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio Analogue Donizetti</td>
<td>£799</td>
<td>Apr 96</td>
<td>Shows what a skilled designer can do, even when hooked up with a passive pre.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auris PA100</td>
<td>£399</td>
<td>Mar 96</td>
<td>Shows what a skilled designer can do, even when hooked up with a passive pre.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyrus Power</td>
<td>£449</td>
<td>Feb 96</td>
<td>This pre-amp is highly detailed and spacious.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line LX100</td>
<td>£550</td>
<td>Apr 98</td>
<td>Very musical, very revealing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### £300-£799

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Verdict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audio Analogue Bellini</td>
<td>£475</td>
<td>Apr 98</td>
<td>Organic and transparent. Few from transistor hardness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ayre CA200</td>
<td>£745</td>
<td>Mar 97</td>
<td>A smooth and sweet sound devoid of roughness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crimson CS810C</td>
<td>£440</td>
<td>Nov 98</td>
<td>The phono stage is the main area of weakness. Can sound a touch muddled at times.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croft Epoch</td>
<td>£650</td>
<td>Jun 96</td>
<td>This valve pre-amp is very good value indeed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyrus Pre</td>
<td>£550</td>
<td>Feb 96</td>
<td>Pre-amplifier has plenty of facilities, but sounds a little unexciting and &quot;conventional&quot;.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heybrook Signature II</td>
<td>£549</td>
<td>May 97</td>
<td>Impressive smoothness and tonal colour, transparent as well.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PM Audio Lab L15S</td>
<td>£550</td>
<td>Dec 95</td>
<td>This valve pre-amp is very good value indeed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rothwell Indus</td>
<td>£189</td>
<td>May 99</td>
<td>Passive pre of box-of-switches, whichever way you look at it the Indus is stylishly finished and well conceived.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunco Athena II</td>
<td>£767</td>
<td>May 96</td>
<td>More valve-like than transistor in sound; highly competent if not spectacular.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk Hurricane 1</td>
<td>£500</td>
<td>Jun 97</td>
<td>Flexible with a strong controlled sound, but won't suit all tastes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technics SU-C1000</td>
<td>£350</td>
<td>Feb 97</td>
<td>Good when mains powered, even better running on its batteries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theorens TTA2000</td>
<td>£550</td>
<td>Jul 95</td>
<td>Acoustic excellence at a very reasonable price.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unison Res. Feather 1</td>
<td>£795</td>
<td>Aug 98</td>
<td>Warm but still exciting, it is only let down by a slightly recessed midrange.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### £800-£1499

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Verdict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audio Analogue Bellini</td>
<td>£999</td>
<td>Jun 95</td>
<td>Highly recommended for its blend of operational sophistication, build and sound quality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elan Premiamp</td>
<td>£1055</td>
<td>Feb 98</td>
<td>Smooth, even and transparent. Well worth the outlay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Shierman Phase 6</td>
<td>£895</td>
<td>Sep 96</td>
<td>Matched with a smooth amp and &quot;speakers the Phase 6 is capable of a transparent and rewarding performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meridian SSI</td>
<td>£1125</td>
<td>Dec 96</td>
<td>Transparent, detailed sound with good tonal range and very natural presentation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical Fd. NuVista</td>
<td>£899</td>
<td>Apr 97</td>
<td>This even-handed performer images well and deals confidently with music regardless of genre.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naim NAC102</td>
<td>£999</td>
<td>Apr 97</td>
<td>Flexible with a strong controlled sound, but won't suit all tastes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quad 7741</td>
<td>£850</td>
<td>Jul 96</td>
<td>Bright and detailed, but phono stage is inadequate at this price.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAG Micro PA10</td>
<td>£985</td>
<td>Nov 98</td>
<td>Justifies its price with a very musical and revealing performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XTC Pre-3</td>
<td>£1000</td>
<td>Nov 96</td>
<td>This pre-amp is highly detailed and spacious.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### £1500

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Verdict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audio Analogue PPP30</td>
<td>£1995</td>
<td>Mar 95</td>
<td>This valve pre-amp is very good value indeed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chord CPA 1800</td>
<td>£1774</td>
<td>Mar 95</td>
<td>Has it all - detail, transparency, slam and rhythm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Music 5</td>
<td>£1500</td>
<td>Feb 99</td>
<td>Partner for the Final Music 6 power amp. Battery powered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galaxtron Pre</td>
<td>£1630</td>
<td>Nov 96</td>
<td>Smooth, but dull balance makes it suitable for bright systems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandarin 7</td>
<td>£3600</td>
<td>Mar 97</td>
<td>Superb, combines delicacy and power, especially with a vinyl source.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical Fd. NuVista</td>
<td>£4295</td>
<td>Oct 98</td>
<td>With its Panasonic pot, the Indus is stylishly finished and well conceived.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical Fd. NuVista</td>
<td>£4395</td>
<td>Oct 98</td>
<td>With its Panasonic pot, the Indus is stylishly finished and well conceived.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical Fd. NuVista</td>
<td>£4495</td>
<td>Oct 98</td>
<td>With its Panasonic pot, the Indus is stylishly finished and well conceived.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical Fd. NuVista</td>
<td>£4595</td>
<td>Oct 98</td>
<td>With its Panasonic pot, the Indus is stylishly finished and well conceived.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical Fd. NuVista</td>
<td>£4695</td>
<td>Oct 98</td>
<td>With its Panasonic pot, the Indus is stylishly finished and well conceived.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical Fd. NuVista</td>
<td>£4795</td>
<td>Oct 98</td>
<td>With its Panasonic pot, the Indus is stylishly finished and well conceived.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### £800

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Verdict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Art Beat X-Cans</td>
<td>£299</td>
<td>Jul 98</td>
<td>Warm but still exciting, it is only let down by a slightly recessed midrange.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chord CPA-1800</td>
<td>£1795</td>
<td>May 98</td>
<td>Offers finesse, control and clarity for a very reasonable outlay.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Power amps £ Year Verdict

### under £300

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>£</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Verdict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Linn LK40</td>
<td>£750</td>
<td>Aug 97</td>
<td>The LK420 plays tunes exceptionally well, tonal colour and image precision are not its fortes though.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meridian 505</td>
<td>£795</td>
<td>Aug 97</td>
<td>Crisp, clear images are set in a broad spread between the 'speakers but the 505 lacks stage depth and grun.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitor MM-70</td>
<td>£630</td>
<td>Mar 99</td>
<td>Refined approach with the lighter acoustic music but lacking a little in overall clout.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moth Stereo 6C</td>
<td>£500</td>
<td>Dec 95</td>
<td>This power amp unfortunately suffers from sharp sound staging treble and poor depth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mustek Fidelity X-850</td>
<td>£600</td>
<td>Jan 98</td>
<td>Very smooth, sweet and musical performers, not over-analytical but very involving.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qute 77Q7</td>
<td>£450</td>
<td>Jul 96</td>
<td>With good punch, speed and attack its not bad at all but can be a little uninspiring.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rotel RB-971</td>
<td>£325</td>
<td>Mar 99</td>
<td>70 Watts a channel helps give lucid presentation with deep sound staging. Perhaps on the bright side.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shanane Phase 3</td>
<td>£250</td>
<td>Apr 97</td>
<td>The Phase 3 possesses impressive clarity, detail and dynamics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk Toradora 1</td>
<td>£200</td>
<td>Jan 97</td>
<td>A flexible power amp with a strong, controlled sound, but won't suit all tastes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technics SE-A1000</td>
<td>£150</td>
<td>Apr 97</td>
<td>Soft, warm sound has plenty of grunt when needed but is very enjoyable to listen to.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shearne Power 3400</td>
<td>£100</td>
<td>Dec 98</td>
<td>Its best feature is the key on/off switch, otherwise its a case of poor sound quality and engineering.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### £800-£1499

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>£</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Verdict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chord PMK 440</td>
<td>£1325</td>
<td>Mar 98</td>
<td>This amp has it all - detail, transparency, slam and rhythm. In a word, excellent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chord CFC 200</td>
<td>£800</td>
<td>Nov 98</td>
<td>These monoblocks have a tonal richness and bass speed rare amongst powerful amps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croft Series V</td>
<td>£600</td>
<td>Jun 96</td>
<td>Fast, clear and detailed sound will win friends in both the transistor and valve camps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dap De Capo</td>
<td>£1469</td>
<td>May 95</td>
<td>Quality bass and a clear midband but the treble can harsh at high volume.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPA 2000S</td>
<td>£1245</td>
<td>Jul 93</td>
<td>Serious audiophile product at a affordable price. Well constructed, pleasant to fire and sounding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galacron Power</td>
<td>£1200</td>
<td>Nov 95</td>
<td>Smooth sound but full balance make the Galacron suitable for bright systems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HD Audio Duo</td>
<td>£1150</td>
<td>May 95</td>
<td>Not dissimilar to the Audiolab monoblocks, the sound has a sweet top and amazing clarity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heydecro Signature II</td>
<td>£1051</td>
<td>May 97</td>
<td>Not quite as transparent as it could be but impresses with its smoothness and tonal colour.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meridian M-577</td>
<td>£1400</td>
<td>Dec 94</td>
<td>Great control and dynamics allied to seductive smoothness. A rare combination of power and delicacy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical Fidelity X-2200</td>
<td>£1100</td>
<td>Aug 98</td>
<td>Hugely powerful and controlled, the X-2200s are still superbly musical.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MVL Integrator A2</td>
<td>£899</td>
<td>May 99</td>
<td>An excellent performer with any music. It is hard to imagine the A2 being beaten at the price.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mynd MA 100</td>
<td>£1200</td>
<td>Nov 95</td>
<td>The sound is a somewhat acquired taste and a little rough in places.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onak Jewel One</td>
<td>£899</td>
<td>Jul 95</td>
<td>A lot of amplifier for the money. Big, warm, sweet sound places it ahead of most.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quad 707</td>
<td>£250</td>
<td>Sep 99</td>
<td>The 707 embodies a rare blend of grace and power in its sleek grey casework.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rothwell Rubicon</td>
<td>£999</td>
<td>May 99</td>
<td>Smooth, warm sound has plenty of grunt when needed and is very enjoyable to listen to.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sumo Polarice III</td>
<td>£1449</td>
<td>Jun 95</td>
<td>Lovers of light piano-based fare and Baroque music will appreciate this amp’s delicacy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### £1500-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>£</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Verdict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audiovector LC8</td>
<td>£1995</td>
<td>Mar 98</td>
<td>Eschews the traditional lavish tube sound for a brighter and leaner approach.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canary 301</td>
<td>£355</td>
<td>Nov 98</td>
<td>The 301 puts the 300B's traditional virtues to good use in a push-pull design that will drive most loudspeakers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cary 304/8 SE</td>
<td>£3975</td>
<td>Feb 98</td>
<td>Chry have a winning amplifier that is a prime example of how a 300B can sound.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elson Ampi</td>
<td>£250</td>
<td>Feb 98</td>
<td>Very natural, subtle presentation with lots of power on tap.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Music 8</td>
<td>£1500</td>
<td>Feb 98</td>
<td>Battery powered amp puts convincing scale and three-dimensionality into suitably sensitive loudspeakers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusrite R 5</td>
<td>£2057</td>
<td>Feb 98</td>
<td>Powerful, smooth and detailed sound, not as clinical as some professional amplifiers can be.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gamma Aeons</td>
<td>£499</td>
<td>Apr 97</td>
<td>Sound quality of these monoblocks is impressive but marred by a rather obvious hum. Build could be better.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marantz 9</td>
<td>£600</td>
<td>Mar 99</td>
<td>These monoblocks are superb, producing a beguiling performance of grace and verve.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Aliceto</td>
<td>£1989</td>
<td>Oct 88</td>
<td>The new Alecto is crispier, cleaner and more controlled than earlier incarnations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owida RC750</td>
<td>£600</td>
<td>Aug 96</td>
<td>A powerful grip on ice, but articulate and detailed too. A rare combination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gheorge Phase 1</td>
<td>£999</td>
<td>Oct 84</td>
<td>Good sound quality and an impressive tonal balance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J/kgac Symetres</td>
<td>£1550</td>
<td>Oct 86</td>
<td>The Symetres monoblocks impress with their grip. They run hot and sound warm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tube Technology General 300B</td>
<td>£1259</td>
<td>Jun 94</td>
<td>Valve monoblocks that produce explosive bass, midrange as clear as a bell and shimmering treble.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union Res. Power 35</td>
<td>£1525</td>
<td>Aug 98</td>
<td>A great compromise between delicacy, power and practicality. Very musically satisfying, too.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valer 835</td>
<td>£1250</td>
<td>Sep 99</td>
<td>The 835 is laid-back rather than in-your-face.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XTC PW-1</td>
<td>£2000</td>
<td>Nov 96</td>
<td>Great for simple Jazz and Folk, but soft bass slows things down.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### CD Players £ Year Verdict

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>£</th>
<th>Year</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AMC CD8</td>
<td>£150</td>
<td>Oct 97</td>
<td>The CD8 is free from grain but can sound too polished at times.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambridge CD45E</td>
<td>£300</td>
<td>Feb 98</td>
<td>Natural and very life-like, the CD4SE embarrasses many pricier players.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denon DCD-425</td>
<td>£150</td>
<td>Apr 97</td>
<td>Crisp, up-front player which is incomparable in its overall presentation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denon DCD-635</td>
<td>£280</td>
<td>Nov 98</td>
<td>Rhythmically slick and dynamic, the Denon puts all others to the cool side of neutral.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denon DCD-835</td>
<td>£280</td>
<td>Nov 98</td>
<td>Warm and smooth, the 835 is laid-back rather than in-your-face.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammaphone CD3</td>
<td>£210</td>
<td>Sep 94</td>
<td>Great for simple Jazz and Folk, but soft bass slows things down.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JVC XL-V230</td>
<td>£157</td>
<td>Jan 99</td>
<td>Slightly muddled in the bass, the '230 isn't the most rhythmic of players.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Final Music-6.**

**Cambridge CD4SE.**

---

**release the full potential of your system**

---

**what Hi-Fi?**

"What's more, a mains block of this quality is for life."
### CD Players £ Year Verdict

**Under £300**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Verdict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kenwood DP-3080i</td>
<td>£180</td>
<td>Feb 98</td>
<td>One of the best budget all-rounders there is.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenwood DP-3080</td>
<td>£249</td>
<td>Jun 94</td>
<td>A fine performer. Lacks only some of the aspect of its predecessors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marantz CD-63</td>
<td>£270</td>
<td>Nov 96</td>
<td>Fine voice projection and treble. Bass is deep if not that tight.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marantz CD-67</td>
<td>£220</td>
<td>Dec 95</td>
<td>Hard to criticise at price, with typically smooth, fluid NAD sound.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAD 922</td>
<td>£170</td>
<td>Jan 92</td>
<td>Warm and smooth, this is a cultured player. Can be over-civilised at times.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philips CD721</td>
<td>£136</td>
<td>Feb 92</td>
<td>Not the most accurate machine, but holds its own at the price.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pioneers PD-103</td>
<td>£140</td>
<td>Feb 95</td>
<td>Rolling treble and bottom detail. Light bass retains foot-tapping ability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quad E67</td>
<td>£72</td>
<td>May 93</td>
<td>One of the top players at the price with great speed and grip.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rotel RCD-946X</td>
<td>£240</td>
<td>Oct 94</td>
<td>Controlled and instigating player albeit a touch sterile.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teac CD-P3100SE</td>
<td>£200</td>
<td>May 97</td>
<td>Refuses to become flustered. Can lack emotion as a result, though.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teac CD-P4500</td>
<td>£249</td>
<td>Nov 92</td>
<td>Like many of its contemporaries, the Teac is too smooth to shine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technics SL-7200TA</td>
<td>£100</td>
<td>Jan 99</td>
<td>In spite of a bias towards bass and treble, this machine remains a bargain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technics SL-P557/7D</td>
<td>£190</td>
<td>Feb 98</td>
<td>Typical Technics’ bright and bassy sound. Perfect Dance and Rock.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yamaha CDX-990</td>
<td>£220</td>
<td>Nov 97</td>
<td>Martian, look-back machine drops points for inferior timing and imaging.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yamaha CDX-S99</td>
<td>£150</td>
<td>Jan 99</td>
<td>Dated, refined but not particularly engaging or exciting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yamaha C-3000</td>
<td>£150</td>
<td>Jan 99</td>
<td>Lean and up-front, the Yamaha is Involved on Rock but can sound rough.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**£300-£799**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Verdict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AMC CD7</td>
<td>£340</td>
<td>Jun 95</td>
<td>Very musical outfit which gains sweetness with optional valve output stage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arcam Alpha 7</td>
<td>£320</td>
<td>Jan 97</td>
<td>Superbly-designed, instinctively musical player destined for success.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arcam Alpha 8SE</td>
<td>£359</td>
<td>Jun 97</td>
<td>The RSE builds on the strengths of the standard 8 with HDCD filtering.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arcam Alpha 9</td>
<td>£799</td>
<td>Dec 96</td>
<td>Apart from its tonal brightness, the Alpha 9 is a very capable machine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio Innovations Alto CD18</td>
<td>£449</td>
<td>May 95</td>
<td>Excellent at its price. Medium-sized delivery. The Pagodlet does for CD what its predecessor does for amplification.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apex CD54</td>
<td>£450</td>
<td>Jul 93</td>
<td>High measured distortion marks the treble and bass is dry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creek CD43</td>
<td>£499</td>
<td>Oct 98</td>
<td>A competent player with a musicality that will seduce any music-lover.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyrus CD-9.1</td>
<td>£398</td>
<td>Dec 96</td>
<td>Tactile and with just the right amount of muscle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyrus CD-9.3</td>
<td>£400</td>
<td>Mar 92</td>
<td>Lacks like the Linn, the CD-9SE is a smaller, more intimate sound.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denon DCD-1500AR</td>
<td>£350</td>
<td>Jul 98</td>
<td>Clean and precise, the Denon lacks only in warmth and openness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dynavox T70</td>
<td>£600</td>
<td>Dec 98</td>
<td>Strong on dynamics and drive, but little treble can dampen music.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eire CD100</td>
<td>£400</td>
<td>Sep 95</td>
<td>Tonaly powerful but really, not all of the Linn rhythmic strengths.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eire CD100R</td>
<td>£400</td>
<td>Sep 95</td>
<td>Tonaly powerful but really, not all of the Linn rhythmic strengths.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roksan CML-965X</td>
<td>£375</td>
<td>Dec 94</td>
<td>Fast, clean sound voices on the clinical at times.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roksan CML-965X</td>
<td>£375</td>
<td>Dec 94</td>
<td>Fast, clean sound voices on the clinical at times.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roksan RCD-971</td>
<td>£320</td>
<td>Jan 97</td>
<td>Refinement is a plus point, but lack of vitality holds the Roksan back.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rokson RCD-975</td>
<td>£450</td>
<td>Sep 95</td>
<td>Tuneful, punchy bass are the pros, flat sound staging and tone the cons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sony CDP-X1300SE</td>
<td>£500</td>
<td>Mar 98</td>
<td>Neutral, dynamic and stylish but not quite up with the best.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sony CDP-X9000SE</td>
<td>£750</td>
<td>Dec 98</td>
<td>In spite of fine sound staging and clarity, the Sony falls to involve.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teac CD-6</td>
<td>£350</td>
<td>Jan 96</td>
<td>Clean and dry, the Teac is rather sterile compared to the competition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teac CD-P4500</td>
<td>£450</td>
<td>May 96</td>
<td>Not the last word in bass control. Midrange is more persuasive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teac CD-P4500</td>
<td>£600</td>
<td>Sep 95</td>
<td>A very smooth and refined player with the added bonus of good detailing. Can lack rhythmic bite at times.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teac CD-P4500</td>
<td>£450</td>
<td>May 96</td>
<td>Not the last word in bass control. Midrange is more persuasive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teac CD-P4500</td>
<td>£600</td>
<td>Sep 95</td>
<td>A very smooth and refined player with the added bonus of good detailing. Can lack rhythmic bite at times.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teac CD-P4500</td>
<td>£450</td>
<td>May 96</td>
<td>Not the last word in bass control. Midrange is more persuasive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trichord Genesis</td>
<td>£549</td>
<td>Sep 95</td>
<td>Warm and bassy, but extremely natural. Not the most consistent player.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trichord Revelation</td>
<td>£799</td>
<td>May 97</td>
<td>When it’s good, it’s very good indeed. Can get confused on dense mixes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**£800-£1499**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Verdict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audiolab 8800</td>
<td>£1000</td>
<td>Dec 95</td>
<td>Sweet treble and midrange give the 8800CD a solid sound.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cablesa CDA 296</td>
<td>£2190</td>
<td>Feb 95</td>
<td>Its warm, musical sound plus HDCD compatibility are a strong combination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cymbal CD12</td>
<td>£1790</td>
<td>Dec 97</td>
<td>Up with the best at the money, the Cymbal simply sounds ‘right’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyrus CD-9.3</td>
<td>£895</td>
<td>Jun 95</td>
<td>Breathtaking imagery and dynamics. Not strictly accurate, but who cares?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dynavox T-10 CD</td>
<td>£300</td>
<td>Jan 94</td>
<td>Construction is price-correct, but not the excessively relaxed sound.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hovarth Signature</td>
<td>£899</td>
<td>Oct 97</td>
<td>The Heybrook looses because of its rough treble and lack of clarity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hollie Xara</td>
<td>£350</td>
<td>May 96</td>
<td>It’s not cheap but the Xara scores for firm bass and exciting presentation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JFO CD-1000</td>
<td>£800</td>
<td>Nov 97</td>
<td>The Linn is outclassed in areas like pace and bass depth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marantz CD-17</td>
<td>£300</td>
<td>Mar 92</td>
<td>The CD-17 has a presentation which excels in musicality and liquidity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marantz CD-17S 51-KS</td>
<td>£1300</td>
<td>Sep 97</td>
<td>The KS has a valve流星ness and clarity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical Fidelity X-Ray</td>
<td>£1300</td>
<td>Apr 99</td>
<td>Characteristically dry Meridian balance which could do with more emotion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rickshaw CD45</td>
<td>£850</td>
<td>Nov 93</td>
<td>Bright, clear and well-built, the X-Ray’s transparency can be hard on poor recordings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page CD-100</td>
<td>£800</td>
<td>Sep 95</td>
<td>This very natural one-box fully justifies its £1000 price tag.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philips CD45</td>
<td>£1250</td>
<td>Dec 97</td>
<td>Rhythmically satisfying, but can sound hard in the wrong system.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CD Players £ Year Verdict**

**£1500+**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Verdict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anthem CD1</td>
<td>£1600</td>
<td>Mar 98</td>
<td>Sweet sound and numerous features make the Anthem fine value for money.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bummert CD-900</td>
<td>£1400</td>
<td>Dec 95</td>
<td>Unmatched quality from CD at a high but fair price.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwood CD-7100</td>
<td>£2250</td>
<td>Dec 95</td>
<td>The £2000 is one of the top performers at its price.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meridian 508.24</td>
<td>£1950</td>
<td>Jul 98</td>
<td>The 508.24 is a very capable machine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAD 523</td>
<td>£1300</td>
<td>Aug 96</td>
<td>One-box player with sound capable of mixing it with the best.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pink Triangle Liteauto</td>
<td>£2300</td>
<td>Jun 92</td>
<td>You’d either love or hate this machine’s great flux and confidence.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Turntables £ Year Verdict**

**Under £800**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Verdict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clearaudio Solution</td>
<td>£575</td>
<td>Feb 99</td>
<td>If you seek powerful presentation with musicality over absolute finesses, this could be the answer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linear Signature</td>
<td>£450</td>
<td>Nov 99</td>
<td>Definitely a candidate for devotees of attack and strong bass lines. Not strong on imaging.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michel Goederts CD</td>
<td>£755</td>
<td>Apr 99</td>
<td>Great sound, superb build and excellent upgradability make the ‘spider’ a wonder at the price.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michel Njyo</td>
<td>£539</td>
<td>Jan 94</td>
<td>Silent and beautifully made, with transparent reproduction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAD 253</td>
<td>£755</td>
<td>Oct 97</td>
<td>Based on a Rega Planar 2. Both pleasant to use and look at with a mature sound, all for £249.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pink Triangle Tarantella</td>
<td>£575</td>
<td>Dec 99</td>
<td>Simply the best at the money. Combines PT’s customary transparency with real authority.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sunglasses by Ray-Ban,
suit by Cerruti,
watch by Cartier,
Hi-Fi by Marantz.
100% value

A supremely elegant, neat and complete, CD music system combining power, performance and style.

a classik by Linn°

Linn the only sound°

Linn is available from the very best hi-fi retailers and Linn at Harrods. For further information simply see our website on www.linn.co.uk or call 0500 888909
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Turntables £</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Verdict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Under £800</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project 1.2</td>
<td>£200</td>
<td>Jun 97</td>
</tr>
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<td>Project 6</td>
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<td>Project 6.1</td>
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<td>Systemdek 292K</td>
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<td>Systemdek IX8000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technics SL-1200</td>
<td>£250</td>
<td>Jan 95</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thorens TCI180</td>
<td>£160</td>
<td>Feb 95</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thorens TD200 Mk4</td>
<td>£350</td>
<td>Nov 94</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vini Reality Rossini r/p</td>
<td>£500</td>
<td>Nov 95</td>
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<tr>
<td>**Turntables £</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Verdict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>£800-</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alphason Symphony</td>
<td>£680</td>
<td>Nov 92</td>
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<tr>
<td>Michell Orbe</td>
<td>£1950</td>
<td>Apr 95</td>
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<tr>
<td>Origin Live Oasis-A</td>
<td>£3250</td>
<td>Oct 95</td>
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<tr>
<td>Origin Live Oasis-S</td>
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<td>Technics SL-1200</td>
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<td>QED Discsaver</td>
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<td>NAD PP1</td>
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<td>Lehmann Black Cub</td>
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<td>EAR 834P</td>
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<td>Siemens Phono</td>
<td>£120</td>
<td>Sep 99</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wilson Benesch</td>
<td>£2000</td>
<td>Mar 98</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Turntables £</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Verdict</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>**Phono stages £</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Verdict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Under £500</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Crook OBH-550/SOBH-2</td>
<td>£160</td>
<td>Nov 97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crook OBH-5/SOBH-1</td>
<td>£110</td>
<td>Nov 97</td>
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<tr>
<td>Danisa DP-4/DP-399A</td>
<td>£120</td>
<td>Sep 97</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dean 640</td>
<td>£340</td>
<td>Oct 94</td>
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<td>Linn Sondek Black Cube</td>
<td>£390</td>
<td>Sep 97</td>
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<td>LFD Maitral</td>
<td>£399</td>
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<td>Musical Fidelity X-LP</td>
<td>£130</td>
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<td>Rockman Xeros X</td>
<td>£60</td>
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<td>SME Model 20</td>
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<td>Technics SL-1200 LTD</td>
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<td>Wilson Benesch</td>
<td>£1775</td>
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<td>Wilson Benesch Full Circle</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Turntables £</th>
<th>Year</th>
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<tr>
<td>**Phono stages £</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Verdict</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>£500-</strong></td>
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<td>Anthem Pre 1P</td>
<td>£899</td>
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<td>Audio Innovations P2</td>
<td>£799</td>
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<td>Antioxidant 2</td>
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<td>DPA DSP 2005D</td>
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<td>Kinshure Perception</td>
<td>£525</td>
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<td>NAD P745</td>
<td>£525</td>
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<td>Wilhelm 150</td>
<td>£528</td>
<td>Oct 94</td>
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<tr>
<td>Music Hall HR</td>
<td>£512</td>
<td>Oct 93</td>
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<td>Rockman Antikrasses/DS5</td>
<td>£490</td>
<td>Apr 98</td>
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<td>Sonic Frontiers Phono 1</td>
<td>£2000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wilson Single Shot</td>
<td>£495</td>
<td>Mar 96</td>
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<tr>
<td>**Cartridges £</td>
<td>Year</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Under £200</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Clearaudio Alpha</td>
<td>£120</td>
<td>Apr 99</td>
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<tr>
<td>Denon DL193M</td>
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<td>Denon DL-110</td>
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<td>ETI</td>
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<td>Goldring 1042</td>
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<td>Nottingham 1012GX</td>
<td>£60</td>
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<td>Grado Prestige Silver</td>
<td>£119</td>
<td>Apr 97</td>
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<td>Linn K9</td>
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<td>Linus</td>
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<td>Dec 95</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ortofon MC15 Super II</td>
<td>£115</td>
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<td>Ortofon MC25SE</td>
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<td>Ortofon MC300 Supreme</td>
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<td>Apr 96</td>
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<td>Ortofon Rohmann</td>
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<td>Mar 97</td>
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<td>Shure V15/VMAR</td>
<td>£130</td>
<td>Aug 96</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transfiguration Spirit</td>
<td>£1300</td>
<td>Jul 98</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Turntables £</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Verdict</th>
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<tr>
<td>**Cartridges £</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Verdict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>£200-</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cartridge Man Music Maker</td>
<td>£549</td>
<td>Feb 99</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dynavector DV20XH</td>
<td>£255</td>
<td>Jun 98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SME 3010</td>
<td>£1300</td>
<td>Jan 99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SME 3010</td>
<td>£1500</td>
<td>Mar 99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SME 3010</td>
<td>£1250</td>
<td>Sep 99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SME 3010</td>
<td>£1500</td>
<td>Sep 99</td>
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<tr>
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<td>£2000</td>
<td>Apr 96</td>
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<td>SME 3010</td>
<td>£205</td>
<td>Mar 97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SME 3010</td>
<td>£1300</td>
<td>Jul 98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SME 3010</td>
<td>£1300</td>
<td>Jul 98</td>
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<tr>
<td>SME 3010</td>
<td>£1500</td>
<td>Mar 99</td>
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<tr>
<td>SME 3010</td>
<td>£1250</td>
<td>Sep 99</td>
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</table>

**prices shown are those at the time of review.**

**Sonic Frontiers Phono 1.**

**van den Hul Grasshopper.**

**Pink Triangle Tarantella.**

**browsing guide**

**Hi-Fi World**
### Tbone Arms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>£</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Verdict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hadcock GH 228 SE</td>
<td>£995</td>
<td>Dec 98</td>
<td>Construction won't hurt SME but its sound quality will unsettle a lot of the competition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Origin Live RiftBoxR800S600</td>
<td>varies</td>
<td>Nov 97</td>
<td>These modified arms are a considerable improvement on the originals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SME 309</td>
<td>£689</td>
<td>Jan 93</td>
<td>Tight, neutral sound with good tonality, but lacks the 1's pace and precision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SME IV</td>
<td>£628</td>
<td>Mar 92</td>
<td>Sexy chassis and staggering engineering along with potent performance earn it a place in audio history.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Tuners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>£</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Verdict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AMC T7</td>
<td>£130</td>
<td>Jul 97</td>
<td>Although it has theming a tempting price, its sound quality is poor compared with its rivals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arcam Cheetah 7</td>
<td>£220</td>
<td>Apr 95</td>
<td>These modified arms are a considerable improvement on the original.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambridge T500</td>
<td>£160</td>
<td>Feb 99</td>
<td>The T500 is one of the most gifted tuners under £500; a very accomplished all-round performer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harmann/Kardon T9 750</td>
<td>£300</td>
<td>Jul 96</td>
<td>Sound quality is generally impressive. Let down by a rather contrived sound stage, but still good value.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hermonas 750</td>
<td>£180</td>
<td>Sep 95</td>
<td>Smooth, even balance allows the KT-290R to coexist with whatever it's receiving. £300 well spent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marantz ST-57</td>
<td>£150</td>
<td>Oct 97</td>
<td>The ST-57 is a smooth, warm tuner but lacks a little clarity and transparency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rotel F10/31</td>
<td>£96</td>
<td>Dec 97</td>
<td>Musical, communicative and extremely detailed and a steal at the price.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAD 412</td>
<td>£190</td>
<td>Jan 95</td>
<td>A remarkably musical, natural sounding tuner. Unbeatable at the price, or even twice the price for that matter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onkyo T-S61</td>
<td>£160</td>
<td>May 94</td>
<td>A competent machine, but time has taken its toll on the sound quality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rega Radio</td>
<td>£220</td>
<td>Jun 95</td>
<td>Sounds on the whole more than its price, but in other respects it isn't especially competitive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rotel RT-930AX</td>
<td>£175</td>
<td>Aug 94</td>
<td>The RT-930AX is a glowing little bargain. real quality at a very realistic price.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sony ST-6273S</td>
<td>£230</td>
<td>Apr 97</td>
<td>The Sony is worthy of every penny of its asking price. If you're a fan of radio this is one to go for.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sony ST-SE700</td>
<td>£160</td>
<td>Aug 97</td>
<td>The ST-SE700 is one of the best at this price. UV reception is a welcome bonus.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### £300+

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>£</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Verdict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Addon GPT 555:2</td>
<td>£399</td>
<td>May 93</td>
<td>Quite musical but does not rejuvenate the waves! Good solid performance but less than luxurious.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burmester 931</td>
<td>£437</td>
<td>Nov 94</td>
<td>This is not a cheap tuner, but its cheaper than buying a radio station, which is the only possible alternative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greens T45</td>
<td>£309</td>
<td>May 98</td>
<td>A great little tuner. This is the one in the price bracket.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hadcock T-500</td>
<td>£430</td>
<td>Mar 96</td>
<td>A stylish, well-built tuner which has a detailed sound but needs careful matching.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fanfare FT 1</td>
<td>£315</td>
<td>Mar 95</td>
<td>Whether it's wetsissy disco or symphony hall, the Fanfare comes up to scratch.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kikuson HX-1000</td>
<td>£600</td>
<td>Sep 95</td>
<td>A good value, excellent sounding stb tuna, but lacks full EON facilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linn Kremlin</td>
<td>£165</td>
<td>Nov 94</td>
<td>Compendious basic sound quality but, considering the price there are limitations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marantz ST-17T</td>
<td>£660</td>
<td>Mar 96</td>
<td>A clear, natural sound with good punch. No strong rival at the price, but acquits itself well.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meridian 504</td>
<td>£270</td>
<td>Jul 95</td>
<td>An unusual design from littleenglish that's well built but sonically unsatisfactory and expensive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimonega Tuner</td>
<td>£70</td>
<td>Jul 95</td>
<td>Well worth auditioning, even if you've never previously considered a receiver.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naim NAP 300</td>
<td>£499</td>
<td>Sep 93</td>
<td>Soft and pure, especially across the midband. Speech very well reproduced plus solid weighty bass.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nakamichi STS</td>
<td>£255</td>
<td>Dec 96</td>
<td>A clean, natural tuner with good punch. Not strong rivals at the price, but acquits itself well.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pioneer F-500RDS</td>
<td>£300</td>
<td>Dec 98</td>
<td>An unusual design from littleenglish that's well built but sonically unsatisfactory and expensive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pioneer F-500RDS</td>
<td>£350</td>
<td>Nov 95</td>
<td>Well engineered and competent tuner, but a little unimpressive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rotel RT-9508X</td>
<td>£399</td>
<td>Apr 95</td>
<td>The price of twenty concert tickets, and for that you can listen as if you were there. A bargain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission T-C50</td>
<td>£1109</td>
<td>Apr 95</td>
<td>Extremely well built with a lucid if slightly dry sound. The only real drawback is the high price.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission T-C50</td>
<td>£560</td>
<td>Dec 97</td>
<td>An otherwise competent tuner is let down by a rather processed character.</td>
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### Cassette

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<th>Model</th>
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<th>Year</th>
<th>Verdict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alva AD-F500</td>
<td>£150</td>
<td>Apr 95</td>
<td>No Dolby S, but three heads and two capstans make the Alva a bargain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denon DRM-550</td>
<td>£160</td>
<td>May 95</td>
<td>Good enough for the price and no worse than the competition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denon DRM-550S</td>
<td>£230</td>
<td>Aug 96</td>
<td>Front sound quality with ferric and chrome makes this deck a steal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grundig C40</td>
<td>£250</td>
<td>Jan 91</td>
<td>A top sound quality with ferric and chrome makes this deck a steal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JVC TD-V652</td>
<td>£300</td>
<td>Sep 98</td>
<td>Only the lack of Dolby S conspires against the otherwise excellent JVC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenwood KX-65VS</td>
<td>£210</td>
<td>Jan 93</td>
<td>Stable transport gives fine results on metal and chrome. Rough on terras.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAD 613</td>
<td>£230</td>
<td>Jan 96</td>
<td>Excellent electronics are let down by a low-grade transport.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAD 614</td>
<td>£230</td>
<td>Nov 95</td>
<td>A solid, competent machine which is reasonable value for money.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philips 96068X</td>
<td>£230</td>
<td>Oct 95</td>
<td>Auto-tuning is mediocre and the general results are unexceptional.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sony TC-X311</td>
<td>£170</td>
<td>Dec 93</td>
<td>The average of average heads and electronics doesn't make for happy tapping.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sony TC-710</td>
<td>£170</td>
<td>Jan 93</td>
<td>The V-610's performance matches its price well, but audiophile it isn't.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teac V-610</td>
<td>£160</td>
<td>Apr 97</td>
<td>The '580 lives up to its SE tag with a fine performance in all areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TeacX-V600</td>
<td>£150</td>
<td>Sep 94</td>
<td>A competent machine, but time has taken its toll on the sound quality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yamaha XQ-550 SE</td>
<td>£550</td>
<td>Sep 97</td>
<td>Sounds on the whole more than its price, but in other respects it isn't especially competitive.</td>
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### Under £300

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Model</th>
<th>£</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Verdict</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AVI S2000 Pre amp inc phono (WOW!)</td>
<td>(1199.00)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>AVI S2000 Reference CD Player (WOW!)</td>
<td>(1239.00)</td>
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<tr>
<td>AVI S2000 FM Tuner (WOW!)</td>
<td>(599.00)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arcam Delta 270 CD Player (WOW!)</td>
<td>(799.00)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arcam Alpha 9 Power Amp* (WOW!)</td>
<td>(399.00)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Epos ES12 Speakers (Dark Cherry)</td>
<td>(499.00)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Epos ES22 Speakers (Light Cherry)</td>
<td>(1185.00)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Linn Nerrilnik DAC S/H (1 YR warranty)</td>
<td>(1200.00)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Linn Kellihc Inc Stands (Roseunt)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Linn Kellihc Inc Stands (Blk S/H)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meridian 500/566 CD &amp; DAC (WOW!)</td>
<td>(2800.00)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mission 773 Spkrs (WOW!)</td>
<td>(349.00)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quad 606 Power Amp S/H</td>
<td>(750.00)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>£699.00</td>
<td>Naim 72 Preamplifier S/H</td>
<td>(720.00)</td>
<td>£400.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£799.00</td>
<td>Naim NAP 90 Power Amp</td>
<td>(450.00)</td>
<td>£299.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£379.00</td>
<td>Naim Intro Speakers (WOW!)</td>
<td>(700.00)</td>
<td>£499.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£299.00</td>
<td>Naim 82 Preamplifier (2 YR warranty)</td>
<td>(2250.00)</td>
<td>£1595.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£299.00</td>
<td>Naim CD5 Player S/H (1 YR warranty)</td>
<td>(3900.00)</td>
<td>£2195.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£349.00</td>
<td>Pioneer 515 DVD Player (NEW)</td>
<td>(350.00)</td>
<td>£399.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£365.00</td>
<td>Pioneer 717 DVD Player (Gold)</td>
<td>(350.00)</td>
<td>£399.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£395.00</td>
<td>Pioneer A300R Precision Amp</td>
<td>(399.00)</td>
<td>£295.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£299.00</td>
<td>Pioneer PDR04 CD Recorder New (WOW!)</td>
<td>(449.00)</td>
<td>£299.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£245.00</td>
<td>Rotek RCD 951 CD Player S/H</td>
<td>(350.00)</td>
<td>£299.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£199.00</td>
<td>Rega XEL Speakers (BLK) (WOW!)</td>
<td>(300.00)</td>
<td>£239.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£459.00</td>
<td>Tannoy P10 Speakers (WOW!)</td>
<td>(199.00)</td>
<td>£99.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Cassette

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Verdict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aiwa AD-S950</td>
<td>£330</td>
<td>Feb 95</td>
<td>Virtually playback is mirrored by impressive recording.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denon DR-810</td>
<td>£300</td>
<td>Jun 92</td>
<td>On the right tracks, the Denon plays with delightful sound quality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JVC JV-810</td>
<td>£400</td>
<td>Sep 92</td>
<td>Captivating on replay but recording is another kettle of fish altogether.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenwood KX-7010S</td>
<td>£780</td>
<td>Jun 93</td>
<td>Convincing all-rounder except for heavy-handed noise reduction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nakamichi 1.5S</td>
<td>£500</td>
<td>Dec 94</td>
<td>The Nakamichi 1.5S has no rivals in its ability to recreate a realistic performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nakamichi DR-1</td>
<td>£780</td>
<td>Jun 93</td>
<td>Not perfect but as close as you can get for the money.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nakamichi DR-3</td>
<td>£330</td>
<td>Mar 93</td>
<td>Unfortunately keeping the price down keeps performance below Nak's norm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onkyo TA250</td>
<td>£430</td>
<td>Oct 94</td>
<td>Top transport but the electronics aren't on a par.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pioneer CT-95</td>
<td>£1100</td>
<td>Mar 97</td>
<td>On chrome and ferrite, the '85 is smooth and natural. Not so good with metals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rotel CT-9900</td>
<td>£800</td>
<td>Mar 96</td>
<td>Three heads, ease of use and high quality make the Doxy S equipped Precision a strong contender.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sony CDK-1100S</td>
<td>£700</td>
<td>May 99</td>
<td>Complex but superb in every important area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technics V-8030S</td>
<td>£650</td>
<td>Aug 95</td>
<td>One of the highest quality Dolby S decks available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technics RE-A27</td>
<td>£300</td>
<td>Jul 99</td>
<td>Excellent bass but re-ble and treble lack dynamics. Auto-tunes poorly on metal.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### DVD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Verdict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Denon DVD-3100</td>
<td>£700</td>
<td>Aug 98</td>
<td>The Denon is a fine performer with CD and better still with 24/96.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denon DVD-5000</td>
<td>£1500</td>
<td>Mar 99</td>
<td>Build is second to none. Sound is very solid conveing, but not as musical as the 3000.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panasonic DVD-A350</td>
<td>£350</td>
<td>Jul 99</td>
<td>The A350 wipes out the CD-only competition at the price and threatens players up to £2000.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panasonic DVD-L10</td>
<td>£1100</td>
<td>Nov 98</td>
<td>Isn't cheap, but it's an outstanding portable and a capable domestic device.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sony DVP-S715</td>
<td>£220</td>
<td>Jul 99</td>
<td>The Sony is warm and smooth but lacks clarity and precision.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Minidisc

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Verdict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Denon DMD-1000</td>
<td>£199</td>
<td>Sep 99</td>
<td>With its uncoloured and natural approach, the Denon is digital done right.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JVC XM-228</td>
<td>£230</td>
<td>Sep 99</td>
<td>Well-built recorder. Good but not exceptional as Minidisc improves generally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenwood DM-990</td>
<td>£550</td>
<td>Aug 99</td>
<td>An excellent tool for home recording; combines convenience, superb sound and a fair price.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenwood DM-7990</td>
<td>£580</td>
<td>Apr 97</td>
<td>If your heart was set on a Nakamichi cassette, have a listen to the Kenwood instead!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenwood DM-5890</td>
<td>£530</td>
<td>Feb 99</td>
<td>One of the best MD machines to date but CD-R has the sonic edge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pioneer DMC-G10</td>
<td>£330</td>
<td>Mar 99</td>
<td>Analogue recordings are especially good. Lack of digital recording level is a small stibackin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharp 272 portable</td>
<td>£230</td>
<td>Aug 99</td>
<td>This portable offers fair performance on the move but isn't the last word in sound quality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sony ID8E JES1000 MD</td>
<td>£200</td>
<td>Feb 97</td>
<td>Good, clean dynamic sound with a neutral and pure midrange tone.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Headphones

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Verdict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JVC FMH-6800</td>
<td>£230</td>
<td>May 98</td>
<td>Electrostatic that set a class standard and can put a case for chucking out your power amp and speakers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panasonic SFX800</td>
<td>£500</td>
<td>Nov 99</td>
<td>Have a lot of potential but basic operating problems have to be cleaned up first.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panasonic SFX800</td>
<td>£500</td>
<td>Nov 99</td>
<td>Excellent that is rarely heard in headphones, but have a little trouble with heavy orchestral loads.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### CD Transports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Verdict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AudioLab 8000 CD</td>
<td>£1249</td>
<td>Aug 94</td>
<td>Distinguished by a wide array of failiities, Thoughtfully designed and high quality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aria KX-700</td>
<td>£1600</td>
<td>Jul 94</td>
<td>Smooth and cohesive. The 'Disc Master looks good and comes with the Disc Master within the price.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPA Enlightenment</td>
<td>£330</td>
<td>Mar 95</td>
<td>Solid and likeable sound with Rock music and full bodied on Classics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denon DCM 715S</td>
<td>£330</td>
<td>Mar 95</td>
<td>Great build for the money and a very musical sound. Benefits greatly from clocking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denon DCM 715S</td>
<td>£330</td>
<td>Mar 95</td>
<td>Excellent build quality and a sound quality to match.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denon DCM 715S</td>
<td>£330</td>
<td>Mar 95</td>
<td>Isn't cheap but has a solid dependable sound with a big, powerful presentation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denon DCM 715S</td>
<td>£330</td>
<td>Mar 95</td>
<td>The belt drive is an interesting idea but the Parasound is bettered by cheaper transports.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denon DCM 715S</td>
<td>£330</td>
<td>Mar 95</td>
<td>Heart-stopping speed and impact contribute to what is an exceptionally good machine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denon DCM 715S</td>
<td>£330</td>
<td>Mar 95</td>
<td>Good, clean dynamic sound with a neutral and pure midrange tone.</td>
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</table>

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### Buying Guide

**Panasonic DVD.**

**Sharp 722 portable.**

**Sonic Frontiers 3.**
WHAT DO YOU SEE HERE?

- the future - how music is going to be delivered and enjoyed.
- an excellent opportunity to get your computer audio world.
- the latest news and reviews - what’s going on-line with mp3.

WHERE ON EARTH CAN I HEAR A PLANET?

CALL 0181 318 5755
248 Lee High Road, London SE13 5PL
email: sales@billyvee.demon.co.uk

Rega products deliver a unique blend of quality, performance and value for the money, offering superb sound at a surprisingly low price. Couple this with our comfortable listening facilities, Free delivery, local installation, 0% A.P.R. & 2 year warranty and you could have some great music ahead. To get the whole picture drop in for a listening today or call the number above.

Available for Audition
- Rega Planar 2 T/T ..................£214.00
- Rega Planar 3 T/Table ..............£274.00
- Rega Planar 25 T/T (new) .........£600.00
- Rega Super Bias cartridge ........£59.00
- Rega Elys Cartridge .................£265.00
- Rega Planet CD Player..............£439.00
- Rega Brio Amplifier .................£298.00
- Rega Luna Amplifier (new) .......£375.00
- Rega Mira Amplifier .................£450.00
- Rega Radio Remote (New)..........£350.00
- Rega Cursa Preamplifier (new) ...£450.00
- Rega Maia Power Amp (New) ......£450.00
- Rega Aya Speaker (New) ..........£350.00
- Rega Jura Speakers (New) .........£450.00
- Rega ELA Speakers .................£498.00

Prices correct 29/11/98 £0.00

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## World Classic

### Cassette

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nakamichi (Various)</td>
<td>See main Guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yamaha TC-800GL</td>
<td>Early classic in serious cassette. Its ski-slope looks got it a cult following once it had ceased to be simply ugly.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### CD Players

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meridian 207</td>
<td>Beautifully built two-box with pre-amp stage. Very musical although not as refined as modern Streamline gear. No digital output.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pioneer PD-91</td>
<td>Built-to-last player with easy upgrade routes for modifiers. Not hackneyed as it stands but get one cheap and have a go!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Amplifiers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leak TL12</td>
<td>Ancestors of hi-fi; consequently expensive nowadays. As with all vintage stuff, overhauling is de rigueur before use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leak TL12+</td>
<td>Line of 'good for their time' pre-amps. Use of EF86 pentode for high gain rules out ultra performance. Not the highest-fi.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leak TL125</td>
<td>Excellent workaday classic. In good order the 20 will not disgrace itself; various upgrades are available from specialist repairers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leak TL126</td>
<td>Reasonably inexpensive and a tweakers' dream. Guaranteed hi-fi on a budget.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leak TL127</td>
<td>You can argue with success NAD's budget integrated gave thousands their first taste of hi-fi and remains great value.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leak TL128</td>
<td>By no means a bad job and value for money. With its matching 303 pre-amp makes a good introduction to audio classics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leak TL129</td>
<td>One of the all-time classic mono amplifiers. Unusual circuit but it works beautifully.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leak TL130</td>
<td>Seventies transistor integrated has an eminently likeable smoothness and musicality. Limited inputs via DIN sockets.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Loudspeakers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Klipschorn</td>
<td>Not exactly plentiful or cheap but a splendid beast. For efficiency they have seldom been equaled.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leak Sandwich</td>
<td>Rather warm sounding big infinite baffle but cheap with it. With reasonably powerful amp can sound quite satisfying.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowther PM6A</td>
<td>High quality full-range driver; still manufactured. High sensitivity, as fitted to many classic horn designs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magneplanar SX/Gs</td>
<td>Touch dry in the bass but a technologically 'speaker with genuinely musical abilities. Usual warnings re: diaphragm apply.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission 770</td>
<td>Father of the 77 range which continues to this day. Well mannered with a warm sound and a kind load to amplifiers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quad ESL 57</td>
<td>Unicelled. Properly seasoned there is nothing like 'em. Their natural presentation may make them cater to the general.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tannoy GRF &amp; Autograph</td>
<td>Folded horn monsters which certainly sound good if you have the space.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHARFEDALE Super 8 RS DD</td>
<td>For Tannoy vintage see HFW November 1998.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yamaha NS1000M</td>
<td>Many similar models of infinite baffle or reflex design. Not the last word in launtness but the drivers work well in modern cabinets.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Vinyl

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acos Lustre</td>
<td>Very honest piece of kit, well made and easily adjusted. Vinyl beginners could do very much worse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alphason HR1005</td>
<td>First class arm, up to present-day standards. Buy carefully, though, as there's no service available now.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alister RD11</td>
<td>A one-time king of turntables very similar to the Linn LP12. Now deposed but worth a look at the right price.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garrard 301 &amp; 401</td>
<td>Legendary and fairly plentiful. Excellent back-up available; many different custom plinths available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goldring Lenco 88 &amp; 99</td>
<td>High quality for the kitchen table enthusiast. Garrard fans won't look at &quot;em but cheap and capable. Servicing available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hadcock 228</td>
<td>Recently re-classed by Hadcock's updated 229 Special Edition but a proper hi-fi arm for all that. Makers still service.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linn Ailsis</td>
<td>Uncomplicated, lower-price version of the famous Sondek. Considerably less expensive than some of its stalwarts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Focus One</td>
<td>20 years and still going strong. Early version in the 'modern' turntable cycle with a first class arm. Factory servicing available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shure M75</td>
<td>Recent line-contact improvements have left the M7S behind but the wide range of needles make it a handy tool.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SME 3009 1S</td>
<td>Everlasting classic box-arm. Spares permanently available from SME. No longer the best but it's quite good.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thorens TDI 124</td>
<td>Best classic deck ever? Judging by the prices they fetch it's possible - 78rpm tool.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thorens TDI 105</td>
<td>Mid-price deck with a keen following. No real difficulty in servicing - novices may find the suspension system unnerving.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thorens TDI 107</td>
<td>Knockout weight from 1960 with stainless bearing and 11lb platter! Not a give-away and beware - spares scarce.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Tuners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leak Troughline (original)</td>
<td>Interesting criterion but no longer hi-fi. Bandwidth limited to 88kHz to 100kHz only.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leak Troughline II &amp; III mono</td>
<td>Arguably the best-sounding tuners ever. Adaptation for stereo extra via phone multiplex socket.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leak Troughline III Stereo</td>
<td>Excellent tuner with indirect stereo decoding circuit. Best when adapted to use modern outboard decoder.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mariental ST-8</td>
<td>Possibly the ultimate Tardis console, including an oscilloscope for checking the strength of signal. Expensive even now.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WELCOME TO OUR MARKET PLACE

Here you will find a variety of stalls offering a wide range of products.

Look out for our regulars, some of whom have sales on, with some real bargains to be had.

So if you’re looking for a great deal this summer, then look no further.

HAPPY HUNTING!!!
Previously Cherished Items, or something new from Choice

**STOCKIST OF:**

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- Musical Fidelity
- Oracle analogue and digital, P.M.C.
- Pinlinus
- Rockport
- Shahanin
- SME
- Tara Labs
- Target
- Totem
- Trichord
- Tragor, Van den Hul
- VPI
- XLO
- DVD Players now available from Sony, Panasonic and Pioneer, and many more.

**Clearance Items**

- **Power Amplifiers**
  - Musical Fidelity S1S-100 (4-den) £895.00
  - Musical Fidelity A22 Integrated (3-den) £325.00
  - LFD Zen12 Integrated £350.00
  - Rega Brio SRP £399.00
  - Audiolab 8000 MX £1950.00
  - Audiolab 8000 M £1950.00
  - Sunfire 6EPA, 300w integrated £1950.00
  - Adventson Brixon £250.00
  - Microgiga amp £515.00
  - Micromega Tempo P £515.00

- **Pre Amplifiers**
  - Exposure 16A £260.00
  - Exposure 16A £260.00
  - Magnum Flag £1695.00
  - Gale 401 £250.00
  - Audiolab A99F £515.00

- **New in This Month**
  - Jeff Rowland Consolato + Phono (box) £399.00
  - Mission 545 Dolby Surround £1950.00
  - FM Acoustics 126 Resolution £1200.00
  - Krell KRC £1280.00
  - Musical Fidelity F25 £715.00
  - C.A.T. SL1 Signature mk II (black) £4500.00
  - Conrad Johnson PS10 £1995.00
  - Conrad Johnson PV91A £895.00
  - Croft Super Mono 1 £950.00
  - Audio Research LS7 £1950.00
  - CAT SL1 sig mk III £2955.00
  - Jeff Rowland model 2 + phono power supply £3750.00

- **AV COMPONENTS**
  - Orkii iii TDD Knee £1495.00

- **Quality Speakers**
  - Wason 121/3 (Black) £895.00
  - B & W 603 Series 2 (black ash) £1050.00
  - Apogee Stage £950.00
  - Sonos Future Guarnier £255.00
  - Roksan Box £895.00
  - Wilson System KI (Black) £5750.00
  - Rogers LS100 Series (NEW) £3350.00
  - Atlantic Spazio £250.00
  - Martin Logan Legacy £500.00
  - Alon Antelina £165.00
  - Alon Y model £1250.00
  - Meridian DSP 2000 £1300.00
  - Meridian M 220 Sub £1300.00
  - Quad ESL £250.00
  - Meridian DSP 5000 £4300.00
  - A.T.C. SCM 1000 SL Active Speaker £4300.00
  - Sony ES2 £1950.00
  - Orfena Swings £1750.00
  - Infinity IRS 25 £1750.00

- **CD Players & DACs**
  - Linn Sondeck LP12/ Valhala/ Basic £3500.00
  - Basis Debut Gold/ Graham Model 2.0 (Ceramice £7500.00
  - Lyra Parnasus (NEV) £1200.00
  - Linn LP12/ ARO/ Armegeddon/ Prek/I-ll Cap/ 1706 £6700.00
  - Forsell Air Force One £4950.00
  - Pierre Lurne Jl/SL5 £2995.00
  - Roksan Xerses/ Linn Akito/ PSIII/ DSU £1800.00
  - Helios Model 3 £495.00
  - Helios Model 1 £850.00
  - Meridian 565 £1000.00
  - Wadia 6 CD Player £799.00

- **Speakers**
  - M C Cormack DAC-1 £799.00
  - Mark Levinson No 39 £4250.00
  - Cambridge Dac Magic £900.00
  - M C Cormack DAC-1 £995.00

- **Turntables**
  - SCM 1000 SL Active Speaker £4500.00

- **CD Players & DACs**
  - Naim CDI £1895.00
  - Arcam Alpha plus £1995.00

- **Power Amplifiers**
  - Rega Aria II £1950.00
  - Amplifier £1895.00

- **Speakers**
  - Smalt £6966.00

- **Turntables & Analogue**
  - Altec Lansing Active Speaker £250.00

- **CD Players & DACs**
  - Onkyo TXD 939 AV Receiver £1250.00

- **Speakers**
  - Kitty £695.00

- **Turntables & Analogue**
  - LCS 100 £1200.00

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The Audio Note Kit Amplifiers - Power-Amp Kit

The Audio Note Kit One (Illustrated)

Based around the controversial 300B directly heated triode, this kit is 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 the exclusive club of amplifiers.

The Audio Note Kit One (300B) and a simple, attractive signal capacitors, Beyschlag 1 watt 1% metal film resistors, good quality electrolytics Component quality is similar to our Level 2 finished products, Audio Note paper in oil 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 a DC filament supply for hum-free operation whilst the other valves are AC heated.

The Kit One has one 300B per channel running at 420 watts with 75mA current giving 8-9 watts of the cleanest power you will ever hear. The input stage consists of a 6SN7GT with a 5677 double triode driver stage running in SRPP. The power supply is capacitor-choke-capacitor configuration with a SUG HT rectifier, the 300B's have a DC filament supply for hum-free operation whilst the others are AC heated. Component quality is similar to our Level 2 finished products, Audio Note paper in oil a DC filament supply for hum-free operation whilst the other valves are AC heated.

Audio Note is happy to provide a wide range of complete kits, output and mains transformers, chokes, capacitors, paper in oil, aluminium, tin, copper or silver foil signal capacitors, Black Gate, Cerafine or standard electrolytics, tantalum, carbon and metal film resistors, silver wires, Intergate and driver transformers, switches, balance controls, potentiometers, attenuators, chassis's and fittings for the quality oriented DIY'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 try the drivers individually or together with matched and tested cross-overs, cabinet drawings and reflex ports.

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 price points, 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 on request.

Audio Note 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 manufacture a range of high quality copper and silver plating, resistor and wire winding. Most, depending on the overall price of the project, will do justice to any kit system, regardless of price. Please call for prices and details.

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Audio Note Capacitors & Wires

Audio Note manufacture a range of high quality copper and silver plating, resistor and wire winding. Most, depending on the overall price of the project, will do justice to any kit system, regardless of price. Please call for prices and details.
Audio Note is currently the sole source in Europe that holds any significant range of Audio Note Black Gate Electron Transfer, High Performance, film capacitors, Beyschlag 1 watt 1% valve rectifier and choke -input filtering follower output using the equalisation and anode -

A complete kit loosely based on the Audio Not, volume controls which are used in pre -amplifiers like the M7 Tube, M7Line, and in a The best available from a sound quality / price viewpoint, made by Noble in Japan, Audio Note Potentiometers should be within most budgets. All power supply Cerafines are supplied with a replacement or substitute for ordinary electrolytics, and at the prices offered that quite recently, and strongly recommend all the Cerafines as a far superior is a fine sounding alternative. We have increased the range of Cerafines we stock the Black Gates values and where the prices for the BG's are prohibitive the Cerafine capacitors, a must in any single -ended project. The Cerafines really cover many of We have at long last secured a reliable source for these fine power supply filter components & -Valves

The Audio Note Pre-Amplifier Kit (illustrated)

A complete kit loosely based on the Audio Note MTube pre-amplifier circuit is now available. The moving magnet compatible phono stage consists of a cascode input, with passive RAA equalization and a line -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 acuity is housed in a non-magnetic aluminum 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 preamp kit includes Roedendertstein polyester film capacitors, Blyschlag 1 watt 1% metal film resistors, Noble open-frame style potentiometers and all, knobs, 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 Ceramine 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 Ceramines really cover many of the Black Gates values and where the prices for the BG's are prohibitive the Ceramine is a fine sounding alternative. We have increased the range of Ceramines we stock quite radically, and strongly recommend all the Ceramines as a far superior replacement or substitute for ordinary electronics, and at the prices offered that should be within most budgets. All power supply Ceramines are supplied with a ceramic stump 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 XO-ON volume controls which are used in pre-amplifiers like the MT Tube, MTline, and in a mono version on the input in the NEBO, KASSAI, KEGON and GARU-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, XLRHUA, PLUGS, RCA SOCKETS, SPEAKER & GROUND TERMINALS & LOUDSPEAKER SPICES.

Audio Note Moving Coil, CD Line & Input Matching Transformers

Audio Note now offer moving coil, CD and input matching transformers for general use. 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.

Stock Clearance SALE

In anticipation of the arrival of the new in-house made Audio Note copper foil paper in oil signal capacitors, we are pleased to offer a 60% discount on current list price on all Tobias Jensen made paper in oil aluminium, tin and copper foil signal capacitors. Offer strictly limited to availability, while stocks last. Minimum Order 4 pcs single or mixed values or £20.00.

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, 645 Westinghouse, 6T25/1/10Y, 6B6/803A, WE308B, STC-430A, Mullard GZ34/CV137, Tungsol SU4G (best sounding SU4G we have ever heard!), Chatham 845 GY and many others.

Audio Note now has a dedicated division to keep pace with the growing demand for amplifier kits and specialist components. Music’s Finest Conductor Limited will now be able to provide a specialist service to DIY enthusiasts and record collectors. Personal callers strictly by appointment only.

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Please make all cheques payable to: Music’s Finest Conductor Ltd

All other enquires relating to Audio Note products should be addressed to their head office: Audio Note (UK), Unit G, Peacock Industrial Estate, Lyon Close 125-127 Davidsroad, Hove, East Sussex BN3 1SG

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<tr>
<td>Acuphase P-800 Power Amp, 200W/ch.</td>
<td>£ 299.-</td>
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<td>Yamaha NS-1000 M 489.-</td>
<td>£ 289.-</td>
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<td>Yamaha RX-55 2950.-</td>
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<td>Yamaha RX-30 1999.-</td>
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<td>Yamaha RX-21 1199.-</td>
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<td>Yamaha RX-11 799.-</td>
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<td>Dynaco Mark III 1000.-</td>
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<td>Marantz SR-9000</td>
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<td>Sony TC-816</td>
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<td>Sony CFS-920</td>
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<td>Sony CFS-912</td>
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<td>Sony CFS-911</td>
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## Nakamichi Dragon, Tape deck with Auto reverse and Auto Azimuth, 3 Head, 3 Motor, Reference, mint £ 690.- Tel.: +49 (0) 26 32 / 93 75 - 28 or 29

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## HIFI - CLASSICS

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## CD-PLAYER + CD-DRIVE

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Most cables have a sonic signature or tonal character to match specific components. In well-matched systems these cables are often found to be harsh or dull.

Petros cables were designed for AudioSOURCE to complement transparent components in a well-matched system: the goal was neutrality - musical flavour transmitted as water flows along a smooth pipe. If our cables sound bright or blurred, be confident that it is the equipment that you are hearing! Stratos cables have the greatest differentiation of all interconnects we have compared, that is to say that different recordings and different components just yield their own characters, transparently.

The design is the attention to many details, based on simple physics and many listening tests. We are now so far ahead of the game - and still moving the goal posts - that we will disclose the basic principles. The two major principles are conductivity and contamination. Conductivity: low resistance, capacitance, etc., using the highest purity copper (silver content acid-free solder) in very fine but many strands. In outer space, such cables would transmit Nothing But Signal (hence the esteemed American NBS brand! Incidentally, we have some of their amazing materials (solid phosphor bronze, not bent copper) for enhanced contact and noise rejection. Do not judge the performance by the price. Customers are disposing of major brands now shamed by Stratos II because our cables are sold direct to end-users without marketing costs. This saves at least 75% when you consider that packaging and promotion double the cost of cables and dealer margins and vat double it again. One stereo metre of Stratos II thus sells for only £125. Stratos II Digital costs £59. Terminations are RCA or Neutrik Black Gold XLR from stock; others to order.

"These cables are everything you said they were ... this has been the cheapest and by far and away the most significant upgrade I've done to my hi-fi in years. I ordered cables, and when I opened the box, the contents looked like cables but these Stratos cables are much, much more than that. They have made such a huge difference to my listening pleasure that it's the equivalent of replacing one or more of the key items of hardware. At £120 (Series II now £125) a 1 metre pair, £125. Stratos II Digital costs £59. Terminations are RCA or Neutrik Black Gold XLR from stock; others to order.

Dirty mains has been neglected for too long in the UK but conditioners can improve AC mains cords, and can advise you on high-end products from America before you invest. Advice on speaker cables freely available.

Still using old Wirewound Resistor Technology?

Replacing wirewound resistors in cross-over circuits with new Thick Film Resistors can significantly increase reliability and stability as well as giving improved overload.

The unique way in which Vishay's Sfernice Thick Film Resistors are trimmed to resistance value eliminates hot-spots which can lead to microcracks and loss of performance. The new high performance drop-in replacements are non-inductive with high power ratings and tolerances down to 1%.

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Autholab 80003 Pre Amp vgc
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Autholab 80003 Pre Amp vgc
Onix 0A-30 2x40 Watt Int mcM.M. phono ego
Primate 0520 Int vgdrernote/2x60 watt
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QED. R-232/OrmIRATA RP20 KM Unite GC
Monaca SPR-6 KM F1xno-Stage /PIO. (Ham Vane) new
HAD 535 (Raga II) thin/As New
Garrard 401 dosso rgc
Dena Super Gold/Pod
vgdrrenuals and set-up amnions origiana cost siniar to Lim I.P12
%kg Systerndet (original and best model dw Rega RB-300 and Ado Tedinio 0C-7 moring ail cartridge
Assam 0-60 Int
Mission 103 150 Watts /4- Way Floontanders vgc
Urn Keilidyh/Ku-Stone Stands (MCI) blacl not
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MUSICAL IMAGES - Covent Garden

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...Jackson Kennedy Hi-Fi Choice April 97

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**Audio Research VT60**
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**Mission 750LE (Rosewood) + Mission Stands**
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HI-FI WORLD

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Cyros Pre Amplifier Ex-D £648 £350
Epos EX30 (Cherry) Loadspeakers Ex-D £2550 £1995
Krell PAM3 Ex-D £1900 £1500
Krell KSA100MK2 Power Amplifier Used £3847 £1500
Linn Kukan Loadspeakers £600 £450
Micromega Stage 1 Integrated CD Player £1500 £520
Micromega Drive3 £1000 £525
Marantz PMB666 Integrated Amplifier Used £495 £275
Marantz CD630 Big CD Player Ex-D £400 £275
Marantz CD63SE CD Player Used £300 £165
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**LEADING FRENCH MAGAZINE DIAPASON VOTED THE V20 AMPLIFIER OF THE YEAR.**

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Even his disasters are better than most designer's triumphs! HI-FI NEWS: Ken Kessler What I think we're witnessing here is Tim De Paravicini's forest moon and that's scary, when you consider that even his disasters are better than most designer's triumphs! What HI-FI! Mindbending! Living Umphreys can drive most from it's satellites, especially old photos.

---

A.E.R. Yoshino have just launched the CM2 Cartridge Transformer with a bandwidth of 30m-40kHz, facilities for a wide range of quality capacitors, and two output terminals for maximum noise reduction. The CM2 amplifiers all the subtitles from the most complex recording without resorting to tweaking or setting it up, it's extreme clarity and guaranteed performance makes for a soup stick. Very Ex-Demo! Leading American Hi-fi critics:

---

Tim impressed with the CM2, and from a musical point of view, I think it's worth every penny of the price. Those of you who have tube-based systems & can afford it should pest your local dealer until he lets you take one home and give away some Value! Quality "***

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Prices listed are for ex-demonstration or second hand equipment. Prices are subject to change without notice. Please phone or write for specific reviews, brochures or prices.

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RECORD STORAGE

Shoarne's front elevation is here compared with one of IAN EDWARDS' larger units, the 40" S-tier LP unit which is drawn to the same scale & which holds 1250 LPs.

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Last month I spoke mainly about speakers, and interestingly, the response has generally been in agreement on their importance, in contradiction to the myth perpetuated by much of the Hi-Fi press about front ends. The next most vital thing in the chain is to achieve that synergy between amplifier and speaker, which is not easy. Regular readers will know of my regard for the AVI range of electronics, which are all extremely neutral, will drive most speakers with aplomb, and are realistically priced. The AVI has pre-amp outputs for bi-amping, at the same price as their long awaited EMC.1 reference CD player (24 bit/96Khz plus balanced out) at £2249, and you can now add to that the ECP1 MM/MC phono pre-amp (£499) and their long awaited EMC.1 reference CD player (24 bit/96Khz plus balanced out) at £2249, and you can now build a complete E/C system, as I still have their ‘QUBE speakers, which have now been discontinued. If that’s not enough there’s the AW180 monoblocks at £4K and the 600 watt NEMO monaural class A reference power amp at £7.5K each.

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562V CONTROLLER  995  795 XD
504 TUNER  740  679 XD
551 AMP  845  749 XD
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557 POWER AMP  1525  1299 XD
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Aura evolution va100  150
castle chester mahogany slight mark  295
Chord chrysalis. 5 pin to phono (naim)  25
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Denon DL304 mc cartridge  125
epos ES 30 dark cherry new (sealed box)  1600
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Exposure XX Super Int amp/boxed  395
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Linn kubers black  695
Linn keliDr black  395
Linn lk 100 x2  325
Linn lK2 power amp  250
Linn lK20 4x2 metres 8  250
Lp12/cirkus/trapolin/lingo/akito/denon304 mc1295
dl12/vahalla/akito/k5 black  625
marantz k1 17 CD player (gold)  725
marantz k1 63 CD player  225
Mark levinson 28pre +psu balanced  1500
Meridian 200/203 transport/dac  595
Naim Hicap new style  475
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Naim 160 Power Amp  475
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Naim 4 top pin power chord  30
Naim 62 Pre Amp  150
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<td>TDL CHILTERN (CHERRY)</td>
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AVI, ALCHEMIST, ANTHEM, BEYER, BOSE, BOULDER, CABLETALK, CASTLE, CHARIO, CITATION, ELECTROCOMPANIET, EXPOSURE, FINAL, GAMMA ACOUSTICS, GENESIS, HEYBROOK, JAMO, KEF, LINN, LUMLEY, MAGNUM DYNALAB, MARantz, MARSTON, MCINTOSH, MERIDIAN, MICHELL, MICROMEGA, MONARCHY, MYRYAD, PRECIOUS METALS, PRIMARE, PROJECT, ORTOFON, QED, QUAD, RESTEK, REVOX, ROKSAN, RUARK, SEQUENCE, SOUNDSTYLE, SONNETEER, SONICLINK, SENNHEISER, SONIC FRONTIERS, SME, STAX, TDL, TEAC, TOTEM, TRICHORD, TANNoy, TARGET, XANTEK.

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<th>Was</th>
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<tr>
<td>Audio Note ANCD2 Valve CD player (New &amp; boxed)</td>
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<td>Copland CD266 HDCD CD player</td>
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<td>Radford/woodside WS2 CD player</td>
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<td>Impulse Lail Loudspeakers (Cherry)</td>
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<td>Musical Fidelity MC5 Loudspeakers / stands</td>
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<td>Odeon Riggioato 94B horn loaded (Beech)</td>
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<td>ProAc Response 3.8 Loudspeakers (Yew)</td>
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### VALVES

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### OIL-FILLED CHOKEs

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### PLUGS AND SOCKETS

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<td>Quad 6 pin output</td>
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<td>Bulgin Free 3 pin mains</td>
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<td>Bulgin Free 2 pin Spkr plug used for leak spkr output</td>
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</tr>
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The Nuvista 300 stereo power amplifier produces a massive 338W into 8Ω, the standard load value. Low loads affected the massive power supply very little, consequently power nearly doubled into 4Ω, measuring 530W. Such power is more than enough to fill a room with sound, no matter how large it is. The real difficulty is to find a loudspeaker able to take such power if it is all to be used. Powerful amplifiers do sound very relaxed when cruising at low powers though, so there's always a benefit.

An almost complete absence of distortion, even at full output at high frequencies will greatly help toward a sense of smoothness and openness in the sound. Distortion levels hovered around 0.004%, close to the noise floor, rising to a maximum of just 0.014% at full output, 10kHz - a severe test. Since this was second harmonic only, the power amplifier is effectively distortion free. Bandwidth was good at 6Hz - 85kHz, -1dB but sensitivity was low at 1.5V for full output. A pre-amplifier with gain is needed and ideally Musical Fidelity’s own Nuvista pre-amp should be used.

EXCLAME 50 AMPLIFIER

A Valve Audio badge on the front of this amplifier is a little misleading. It is a solid-state amplifier with one pre-amplifier valve inside. As such it produces plenty of power, but the designer has chosen to limit bandwidth to a low 22kHz and ensure there's plenty of distortion - not difficult with transistors - to get what he believes are valve characteristics. This is an old, simple and inadequate view of what a valve amplifier offers. In truth valves are innately very linear, they produce low-order correlated distortion and they also have no dielectric between the electrodes. None of these things can be mimicked by simply letting a transistor amplifier distort.

True, the Exclame 50 did not produce more distortion at high frequencies than in the midband, unlike most solid-state amps, but its distortion spectrum was pretty gruesome compared with a valve amp and with 0.3% at low levels and over 1% near full output I would expect it to sound coarse and rough.

Valve amps sink down to deep linearity at low levels and this amplifier does not, so it does not really get close to mimicking a valve amplifier at all. This of course is assuming that this is what the designers intended it to do.

As it stands, it is just a not particularly distinguished solid-state design. NK
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SONY CDP-XB930E

The multiple digital filter settings of this player remind me of the Cambridge CD-1, a sophisticated mid-eighties player with selectable filters designed by Stan Curtis. There was much debate about which sounded best then and there may well be about the subtle differences brought about by the filters of this player. Set to 'normal' the Sony has a ruler-flat response out to 21kHz, like any CD player.

Position 1 rolls off treble smoothly, in an analogue fashion, above 10kHz and should make the sound a little less hard and brittle. Some sheen may well be lost from cymbals and such like though.

Position 2 introduces just a little treble lift across the treble region, reaching +0.2dB or so at 8kHz. This will add a little brightness and improve detailing, but the high treble roll off of Position 1 is retained and this will ensure there's no undue hardness. Position 3 is a little baffling technically. Sony claims it improves bass and warmth, but there's no effect upon low frequencies at all. Instead it offers a compromise between 'normal' and Position 1. If this subjectively strengthens bass, so be it. To me it looks like a smoother and less drastic alternative to the other positions that may well be the most neutral and satisfying to listen to in the long term.

In all other areas the CDP-XB930E measured very well, producing little distortion, strong output, wide channel separation and minimal noise.

JOHN SHEARNE PHASE 7

The John Shearne Phase 7 has steadily falling treble output, enough to give it a warm sound. Our third-octave frequency response analysis shows a pronounced fall above 5kHz, output measuring -6dB at 20kHz - quite a steep fall.

There was little distortion at any level and a peculiar noise spectrum which suggests a different processing scheme is being used compared with that of conventional players. At -60dB distortion was a little higher than normal, but lower down the scale it was actually lower. The player behaved reasonably well in this area.

At -90dB (CCIR weighted) noise was a little higher than usual but not high enough to be audible.

In all other areas the player measured normally, but quite obviously the Phase 7 will sound unusually smooth and warm.
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**TITAN MINI T2b**

The dominating feature of this loudspeaker is its extreme treble lift. Bright sounding loudspeakers typically possess +5dB lift or so, an amount that is clearly audible. The Titan has no less than +13dB of lift, which is excessive. This is going to make it sound very bright, probably overpowering for most tastes.

Bass output extends down to 50Hz (-6dB) before rolling off. Below this the port takes over.

Overall impedance was high at 11Ω, limiting sensitivity to a mediocre 85dB SPL from one nominal watt of input. Volume will have to be cranked up to get the speakers to go loud, but they draw little current.

The Mini T2bs are unimpressive in terms of measured performance, although this does not necessarily mean that the subjective performance will be unacceptable in a given environment, especially one which is too well damped.NK

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**ZINGALI OVERTURE 0.1**

The Zingali Overture 0.1 has a short wooden horn, behind which a pressure driver midrange/treble unit works from 1.5kHz up to 20kHz. High frequency output is quite strong and there’s some peaking around 1kHz where the bass/midrange crosses over to the tweeter. I’d expect the Overture 0.1 to sound a bit coloured or ragged as a result. Response varied according to listening (ear) height. The steady treble lift will add some brightness to the sound as well.

The bass unit looks well damped, suitable for use close to a wall. There is a steady roll off below 100Hz but the lower limit (-6dB) is a respectable 50Hz, low enough to reveal deep bass fundamentals.

Sensitivity was a healthy 88dB for a nominal watt of input (2.84V). The system is efficient because a high impedance of 1252 overall means the Zingalis draw little power and will be a light load on any amplifier.

The Zingali Overture 0.1s will have a bright and characterful sound. They are a light amplifier load though. NK
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NAIM NAC 72, good condition £325 ono. Tel: 01773 825 216 (Dec)(I)

PIONEER Hi-Fi A300R. Precision stereo amplifier £200. PDS505 Precision CD player £220. Boxed, as new condition, includes carriage costs. Tel: 01983 874 138 (Isle of Wight) (Dec)(I)

PROAC STUDIO 100 speakers £399. Very good condition, boxed, previous Hi-Fi World favourite, exceptional sound quality. Also Target RS2 stands £149. Will sell as separates. Tel: Dave 01992 628 848 (Dec)(I)

EPOS ES14 speakers, black with Epos dedicated stands. Immaculate condition, (not bi-wireable). Original cartons, instructions. Will demonstrate, £295. No offers. Tel: 01254 261 162 (Lancs) (Dec)(I)

FOR SALE: Complete set of Hi-Fi World magazines, including DIY Supplements, in vgc, £100. Buyer collects. Tel: 01376 511 730 (Essex) (Dec)(I)

JAZZ LP'S for sale. Approx 100, Miles Davis, John Coltrane etc. Please phone for details. Tel: 0161 626 7282 (Gtr Manchester) (Dec)(I)

NAIM AUDIO Two NAP90/3 poweramps and one Flatcap power supply. NAP60's £250 each, Flatcap £175. All mint and boxed. Tel: Russell 07830 279 549 or 01245 284 321 (Essex) (Dec)(I)

LINN INTEK Integrated pre and power amplifier. Mint condition, boxed and manual, £195. Free Linn speaker cable. Tel: 01444 841 482 (Huddersfield) (Dec)(I)

AUDIO INNOVATIONS 1000 Mk3 valve monoblocs. 50 watts Class A. Little used because of move abroad. No packaging, hence £575. Tel: Mike 0032 2 512 0952 evenings. (Belgium, but buyer can collect equipment in North London) (Dec)(I)

KEF R102 Speakers with Kubé 5m pair van den Hul Clearwater cables and Target rigid speaker brackets. Thorens TD160S turntable with RB300 board ATF5 cartridge. Offers. Tel: 01606 44441 evenings (Dec)(I)

ROGERS E20A valve integrated, £550, L53/5A ABI subwoofer £700, Garrard 301 £120, Goodmans single speaker Axiom 60 Midax, Trexax £40, Arcam Alpha 9 £290 phono card £25. Tel: 02392 690 093 (Portsmouth) (Dec)(I)

ALON VMKII Speaker (£5500) £2300, Ruark Crusader speaker (£1600) £850. Mark Levinson 331 poweramp (£5200) £2900. Tel: 01493 856 899 (Dec)(I)

ADC PLUG-IN headshell wanted for their ALT-1 arm. Will consider complete arm. Tel: 01670 855 558 (day or evening) (Dec)(I)

REVOX B77 3.75/7.5, needs new heads £220. Leak Troughline MkII tuner £60. Tel: 0191 272 2899 (Dec)(I)

CARMC ALPHA 5(+) CD player, boxed, handbook, 5 star player £200 (£470). Upgrading sale. Tel: 0181 637 7945 daytime or leave a message (Dec)(I)
Representing Audio Note, Bow Tech and Mark Levinson hardly puts us in urgent search of new agencies each year, but we heard some great new products from this year's Hi-Fi News Show. Unfortunately, our friends at AN were stretched at Milan to show their new "lifestyle" system in London but its value and quality of build establish a case for seasoned audiophiles to end their quest by starting afresh ... a matched system instead of the never-ending upgrade path.

Price for the system? CD drive, 24/96 DAC, line pre-amp, mono blocks and speakers is £2,200 which does not suggest the high-end sound-making is bargain; cables cost extra. Of course Audio Note is celebrated for its more expensive products, and the new range has introduced newcomers to the entire vinyl and digital spectrum of products. Send for the excellent Analogue Products booklet. Try Audio Note cables, and don't overlook the MC transformers (from £339) which enhance any MC cartridge, or the TT-3 (three-motor) turntable at £1,995 with split phase external power supply. It is the finest sounding deck at the price.

"If show reports highlight the high density formats, I suggest they will only become rational purchases in five years if they establish a) survival; b) sensible prices; c) third generation amplifiers (if possible), and d) availability of musical titles. Until then, surely cash is more wisely spent on buying the best CD players already available. If you doubt this, listen to some of today's best with a carefully mastered 16-bit CD.""}

Bow Technologies launched a 2 x 75 watt Wazoo-XL at £2,495, a remarkable bargain in amplification, and a pre-out power (Warlock/ Walrus 2 x 150 watts). The WIZARD integrated CD player has really taken off in terms of sales. The price of £3,495 now includes the WAND - that prince of remote controls. One of my literary customers, in Edinburgh, says that I overuse the word stunning ...

Mark Levinson Audio Systems infrequently replace models because they get them right and protect your investment, but one long-awaited new model was announced: the company's first integrated amp. It too redefines the concept, and don't get too excited, it is dual monaural, fully differential, unbalanced and unlikely to cost much under £6,000 but with a No. 39 it will make a system of, er, stunning, excellence and simplicity.

Still in the Madrigal room I saw the Revel Performa F-30 loudspeakers. I can only urge you to short-list them if you are in the market for speakers around £2,895. This is a very serious challenge to the British industry, a case of the company's first integrated amp. It too redefines the concept, and don't get too excited, it is dual monaural, fully differential, unbalanced and unlikely to cost much under £6,000 but with a No. 39 it will make a system of, er, stunning, excellence and simplicity.

Revel F-30s, Zingali Overture 4S, Totem Forest and ProAc Future Twos played in unison make a room-filling holographic sound ... and and look like a forest as we discovered breaking 'em all in the week after the show ...

Although Zingali speakers announced a price increase, always sad, I have to say that the old prices were obviously unrealistic, and they are still outstanding value, especially in the upgraded "S" versions. I love them. Good news: a less costly "B" series was launched using a conventional mid-range unit instead of the very costly compression driver, but still with the "Omniray" horn and the new style of cabinet. We have a sample of the award-winning Zingali 95-112 studio control monitor ex-dem (List £7,450) for £5,750: mint, crated, as new - send for a brochure. Using a 12" horn (bigger than the domestic speakers) it exudes confidence, presence, a gift making loudspeakers; open yet very delicate. Amazing with transistor or valve amps.

As agents for ProAc (and a user who always returns to the brand since my schooldays) we extol the virtues of mini-monitors. I gave the Tablets their name, but forgot to demand a royalty. Today we have the $49 tablette 2000 and the incredible ProAc Response One SC ($1,199 per pair standard veneers). We are proud to announce a parallel range, namely Totem Acoustic from Canada. The Model One sells for $55 more and gives our clients a worthy rival: the Arro is a floorstanding mini-monitor which drew gasps of disbelief from audiences when I was present yet it costs only $599. Per pair? You'd better believe it! As I was writing my order, I foolishly said, well if that is the Arro, what can the $2,750 Forest and president Vincent Bruzzese was eager to demonstrate, and that cost me more money. If you like three-dimensional sound and you can believe what you hear, start saving, they're cheap. Could be the biggest advance in loudspeakers as their UK distributor claimed. The forest stands out from the trees, itself invisible, you can't see the wood. Unique selling points pour poetry in sound...

"... the end of a long and adventurous search." I went to ProAc's room to joke Stewart Tyler that he's finished, the Canadians were advancing, but my eyes popped out to hear the future ... the Future One and the Future Two. Products of many years work, they look gorgeous. Here Tyler succeeds in cohering a ribbon tweeter, glass fibre weave mid-range with rear horn-flared open air dispersion, and asymmetrical cabinet handling standing waves of his famed carbon fibre 7" bass driver (two in the Future Twos). I entered the room, saw an entrance guard and president Vincent Bruzzese was eager to demonstrate and that cost me more money. If you like three-dimensional sound and you can believe what you hear, start saving, they're cheap. Could be the biggest advance in loudspeakers as their UK distributor claimed. The forest stands out from the trees, itself invisible, you can't see the wood. Unique selling points pour poetry in sound...

="The Audio Note Salon, 5 Crown Terrace, Glasgow G12 9HA. Tel. 0141-357 5700. Fax 0141-339 9762. E-mail: jack@audiosource.co.uk . Website:www.audiosource.co.uk."
COUP 34 control unit, Quad 306 power amplifier.
Immaculate, boxed with manuals £350. Quad 34 control unit, Quad 405 Mk2 power amplifier, DIN inputs, excellent condition with manuals £325. Tel: 01582 573 286 (Dec(I)

B+W 801 Mk3 speakers, rosewood £3200. Chord CPA2800 SPM600 £2600. AVI Reference CD £800. All less than one year old. As new. Offers considered. Tel: 0780 872 965 (Dec(I)

MARANTZ CD94/CD94 transport converter, mint, boxed, £695. Revox B760 tuner, mint, £475. Rotel RT850AL tuner £95. Marantz DD-82 DCC recorder £125. WANTED: Meridian 604/606 tuner converter (mint) Tel: 01279 724 804 (Herts)

FERROGRAPH LOGIC 7, high speed, half track, users manual, tapes £95. Audiolab 8000A, good condition £175. Tel: 01235 529 480 (Oxfordshire) (Dec(I)

MERIDIAN 605. Superb, fantastic, amongst the worlds ten best power amps states Martin Colloms about these £1200. Tel: 01932 967 441 evenings (Dec(I)

NAIM AS New condition, with boxes and manuals. 72/140 latest models, MC/MM boards £850. May split. Also CDI £900. Tel: Andrew 01703 442 591 (Southampton) (Dec(I)

NOTTINGHAM ANALOGUE Hyperspace turntable with Space tonearm and Tracer 3 cartridge £980. Ruark Talisman II speakers, cherry £430. Exposure 15 moving magnet phono stage £390. All mint condition, low use. Tel: 01689 822 931 (Dec(I)

BOWERS & WILKINS Matrix 801 Series 2 speakers (pair) in walnut £795. Also B&W MPA1 monobloc amplifiers £195. Bargain buys in excellent condition. Tel: 01245 223 143 (Dec(I)

ROKsan XERXES with later DSU/PSU11 power supply + RB3000 arm £200. Target rack system £30. Various high quality speaker drive units. Please phone. All genuine bargains. Tel: 01943 468 835 (Yorks) (Dec(I)

WANTED: RADFORD TT100 valve amplifier, ZD100, ZD200 transistor amplifiers, STA 25 Mark Four. Best prices paid. Buyer will collect. Tel: 0973 304 578, Email: pparke352@aol.com (Dec(I)

Hi-END Cables. Top quality speaker cables and interconnects. Various brands. Tel: D. Burton 01895 274 001, Email: barig@sbx.com (Dec(I)

EPOS ES22 £590 (£1350) for quick sale. 3 months old, walnut veneer, boxed, immaculate condition, hardly used. Tel: 0181 691 0098 (Greenwich) (Dec(I)

NAIM NAC72 Preamp with MC phono boards, mint condition, boxed, original invoice from Infidelity. Can demonstrate. Upgrading to NAC102. Tel: 01932 867 441 evenings (Dec(I)

SME IV ARM, boxed £500. Krell KAV300CD, little used, boxed, immaculate condition £2200. Tel: 01924 290 749 (Dec(I)

REGA JURA floorstanding loudspeakers, 4 months old, immaculate, cost £450 new, will sell for £295. Tel: day 0831 208 205 or evenings 0121 240 2543 (Dec(I)

MERIDIAN 501 Pre with phono £350. Arcam 170.3 transport £225. Arcam BB5 DAC £100. Royd A7 speakers £50. WANTED: Audio Research pre, Ittok LVII/III, Meridian transport, must be mint. Tel: 0161 652 0754 (Dec(I)

TYSON PRE/POWER combo. 2x70w monoblocks. Passive line pre with MM/MC phono stage (£2200 new) £800. Beats similarly priced Audiolab, Naim etc. Detail power finesse neutrality. Any audition welcome. Tel: 01778 394 542 (Dec(I)

MERIDIAN 603 Preamp and D/A converter £495. Heybrook Sextets £140. Harbeth Extenders (bass speakers/stands for LS3/5A or similar) £165. Technics SL120 direct drive turntable £100. Tel: 01892 536 919 (West Kent) (Dec(I)

NORDOST SPEAKER Cable, Blue Heaven 4m pair as new, box lost, (£545) will accept £275 including postage and packing. Tel: John 01772 690 211 day or evenings (Dec(I)

NORDSTOCK Speaker Cable, Blue Heaven 4m pair as new, box lost, (£554) will accept £275 including postage and packing. Tel: John 01772 690 211 day or evenings (Dec(I)

STEPOOFORT SF100 Amp, warm and transparent £350. Super clocked by Tom Evans, Marantz CD-10 with XLO-Pro main cable £400. Rel Strata II £250. All boxed and mint condition. Tel/Fax: 0171 267 3544 (Dec(I)

MARANTZ 63SE CD player, little used £140. Kef 102/2 speakers £130. Spendor BC1 speakers £125. Tel: 0181 652 1069 (Dec(I)


KRELL KAV250A Power amps (two) 250 watts/channel stereo; 1000 (yes 1000!) bridged mono, £3495. Akai AT93L quality tuner £149. Alphonse tonearms. HR100S (early) £250; Xenon £125. Tel: 01234 713 199 (Bedford) (Dec(I)

RUARK ACCOLADES £1350, Ruark Equinox piano black £1300. Hitachi HCA 7500 Mk2 control with HMA 7500 Mk2 power £120. Technics SLGPS80A CD £110. Tannoy Profile 632 Plus, £140. Tel: 01986 895 053 (Bungay) (Dec(I)

AUDIOMASTER Valve amp, 1960s. Pre +2 power needs work, AVO valve signal generator +LCR bridge. Original valve construction booklets 1950-60s. Valve hi-fi books.Offers. Tel: Jeff 01524 33410 (Lancs) (Dec(I)

PROAC RESPONSE ISC speakers, rosewood, perfect condition, boxed, complete with matching heavyweight Target R4 stands, £825 ono. Tel: 01293 411 500 (Dec(I)

TECHNICS SL7 direct drive automatic turntable, size 12.5" x 12.5", parallel tracking with Ortofon OMP30 and Audio Tech AT422EP P- Mount cartridges plus spare stylis, £150. Tel: 0191 529 2405 (Sunderland) (Dec(I)

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HI-FI WORLD
## CODE KEY:

- **N** = NEW
- **X** = EXTEM
- **S** = SECOND HAND

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MERIDIAN 508.20 £1050. Meridian 502 505 pair with 1m and 6m balanced interconnects, new £3500, now £2100. Can demo. All mint. Genuine reason for sale. Tel: 01703 902 107 (Southampton) (Dec(I))

LINN LK1 Preamp with Linn Dirak power supply remote £250. Marantz CD 52 Mk2 SE £120. AE 109 speakers £200. Yamaha tuner £60. Teac A3300 SX reel professional deck, high speed £260. Tel: 0181 681 1054 (Croydon) (Dec(I))

SHAHINIAN HAWK Subwoofers, mint and boxed in walnut £1300. Tel: 01626 352 682 evenings (Dec(I))

AUDIOLAB 8000Q preamp, as new, boxed, 10 hours use, new £1250 £675. Audiolab 8000A integrated, boxed, good condition (new £5500) £225. Tel: 0181 868 3300 days, 01923 663 547 evenings (Dec(I))

JAMO CONCERT 8 loudspeakers, mahogany, mint and boxed, complete with dedicated stands £1000. Krell KRC-3 preamplifier £2200, Krell Kav-250a power amplifier £2200 or both for £4200. Quad 2 x 50e monoblocks, boxed with instructions £350. Tel: 01480 412 464, Email: alan.j Davies@tesco.net (Jan(I))

VALVE AMPS, One D.J. Russell single end, one M. Harvey Class A push-pull, 50's design made from old parts, N.O.S. valves genuinely good sound and looks. £150 and 3275. Tel: 01703 860 058 (Southampton) (Dec(I))

QUAD 34 Preamp. Quad 306 power. 5 years old, inc. boxes and manuals £400. Tel: 01302 539 469 (S.Yorks) (Dec(I))

BARGAIN, JAMO Concert 8's, sable mahogany finish, immaculate, three months old, including original stands £950 (new £1615) Tel: 01792 536 143 (Dec(I))

NEW CASCAPN CD £670. Teac transport £290. X-Dac £150. Electrocompaniet pre/power around £1900, B&W CC Centre £75. Seismic Sine 90. Soniclink 150 2x3m £30 terminated. Mint, all ono. Tel: Chris 0114 237 7168 (Sheffield) (Dec(I))

NAIM CD 3-5 (£1050) £650. Mission Cyrus DAD7 (£900) £350. Target R2 stands (£350) £175. Apollo 3 tier rack (£100) £50. VDH Source interconnect (£50) £25. All mint, boxed. Tel: 07967 646 089 (Dec(I))

REL STADIUM 2 subwoofer, black, superb upgrade £70. Audionote valve DAC4. Blissful involvement, analogue tone colours. 24/96 upgradeble. (cost £5000) barter. (Dec(I))

RAURK TALISMAN II speakers, light oak, 2 years old, cherished, cost £750, sell £395. Subwoofer M&K VX7 II, stupendous bass, cost £450, sell £195. Move forces sale. Tel: 01392 671 281 (Dec(I))

ARGAM DELTA 170.3 and Black Box DAC 50, includes optical cable for sync lock and Chord Prodic digital interconnect, excellent sound and condition, new £1300, bargain £260. Tel: day 01442 886 168, evening 01707 892 094 (Dec(I))

VANDERSTEEN MODEL 3A loudspeakers, rare chance to buy this highly acclaimed model in the UK. 3 way minimal baffle design with long throw acoustic coupler. Very open sound, £1600. Tel: 01628 483 988 (Marlow) (Dec(I))

FEROGRAPH REEL to reel recorders Series 6, 240 volts, 3 speed Series 6, 110 volts, Series 4A, 240 volts, 3.75 -7.5 IPS, all working, £60 each, offers for lot. Tel: 01332 605 772 (Dec(I))

WANTED: NAIM NACB2 preamplifier must be in excellent condition. Tel: 01785 822 063 evenings / 07713 000 450 (inc. voicemail) other times. (Dec(I))

QUAD 63s, mint condition, latest spec, with Deane Deluxe stands, boxes, manual, £1550. Tel: 01287 638 986 (Cleveland area) (Dec(I))

BEARD P101 Power amp, offers. Pioneer D05 DAT, mint £500. Sony MDJ510 £80. Tel: 07775 612 970 (Dec(I))

SUGDEN AU41 pre/power (£900) £410. Spendor BC1 £150. Linn Sondek Ittock K9 £350. Quad FM3, 33. 303 £150. NVA P50, latest, guaranteed (£300) £120. Pink Triangle LPT RB300 £150. Tel: 0161 762 9884 or 0161 764 8888 (Dec(I))

MERIDIAN 508-20 CD player, as new, hardly used, M.S.R. £950. Linn LP12 Afromosia, Valhalla, Akito, K9, mint £440. Nam M1 phono boards £45. Phono to DIN interconnects, Audioquest. £60, Chord Cobra £25. Single to triwire Chord Rumble speaker cable 2.5 metre pair £65. Tel: 01766 781 211 (Dec(I))

ARGAM DELTA 170.3 and Black Box DAC 50, includes optical cable for sync lock and Chord Prodic digital interconnect, excellent sound and condition, new £1300, bargain £260. Tel: day 01442 886 168, evening 01707 892 094 (Dec(I))

VANDERSTEEN MODEL 3A loudspeakers, rare chance to buy this highly acclaimed model in the UK. 3 way minimal baffle design with long throw acoustic coupler. Very open sound, £1600. Tel: 01628 483 988 (Marlow) (Dec(I))

MONARCHY 22B 20 bit digital to analogue converter. Boxed, receipt, mint condition £395. Tel: 0161 291 9331 (Dec(I))

KEF103.4 SPEAKERS £575, KEF Reference 102/2 £275, Grado 325 headphones £99, Audio Innovations 1000 Mk3 Monoblocks, boxed as new £700, Roksan Attesa ATT- DAC2 DAC (new) £175. Laser discs wanted. Tel: 01952 502 097 (Dec(I))

MUSICAL FIDELITY X-Series: X-DAC £195, X-PSU £80, all three items £310, plus free digital interconnect. Magnaplanar SMGa speakers £295 with marble plinths £360, Halfer DH101 preamplifier £80. Tel: 0121 449 5957 (Dec(I))

CAMBRIDGE DACMAGIC £75, Cyrus II £200, Cyrus I £50, AVR 850 £50, Chord Co. Legend (biwire) 2x 2.5m £40. NAD 4020 tuner £40. Tel: 0117 909 8736 (Dec(I))

KLIP1 VALVE line pre-amplifier upgrade components, Mullard valves etc. £175. Tel: 01293 824 677 (Dec(I))

LINN ISOBARIKS KEF 105/2, KEF 105/4, KEF 104 all boxed. Tannoy Buckinghams, Cheviots , Wharfedale E50's, Snell 'E', KEF 104AB, Michaelsons, Austin, Tua-1, Mus/Fid F22, Nakam 422/100/2/410/25/100, 2x 2.5m £40. NAD 4020 tuner £40. Tel: 01952 502 097 (Dec(I))

REVOX B77 Mk2, 1/2 track, 15 &7.5 IPS, excellent condition, especially heads £475. Leak Stereo 20 £250, Crot Micro A £150. Musical Fidelity A1 £130. Tel: 01780 764 149 (Dec(I))

SUBWOOFERS for ESL63, boxed £850, Stax SR-001 portable electrostatic headphones £85. 3-off DPA 'The Power' mains filters £60 each. Tel. Mike 00 32 2 512 0952 evenings (Belgium, but equipment in North London). (Dec(I))

GRADIENT SUB-WOOFERS for ES1.63, boxed £850, Stax SR-001 portable electrostatic headphones £85. 3-off DPA 'The Power' mains filters £60 each. Tel. Mike 00 32 2 512 0952 evenings (Belgium, but equipment in North London). (Dec(I))
**Audio Designs of East Grinstead**

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LYRA CLAVIS DC
boxed, mint, little used.
Koetsu black, boxed unused,
offers. Trio KT7500 tuner
£100. Modified Ariston RD80
with Linn VX plus arm £150.
Tel: 0171 833 1793 (Dec(I)

ROGERS STUDIO 1s,
Atacama stands £180.
LS35A £150. Marantz CD 52
MKi £75. Harmon Kardon
amp. PM 650 £40. Technics
SL3200 £40, SL1700 £50.
Tel: 01297 213 65 (Dec)

ROKSAN XERXES turntable
with KU2MA STOG1 tonearm
and Audio Technica OS9 card-
ridge £850, good condition.
Tel 0116 287 1772 (Dec(I)

SPACEDECK SPACEARM
1042 £650 ono.
Alchemist Forrest integrated
with remote £750 ono. Dali Royal
Menuet Mk2 loudspeakers
Mission stands £275 ono.
Kinshaw Overture phono
MM/MC £150 ono, all boxed
hardly used. Tel: Dean 01443
685 191 (Dec(I)

REVOX B660 synthesized
FM tuner £350. Revox B780
FM tuner £250. Revox B710
MK2 cassette deck £200.
All VGC with instruction books.
Will split.

QUAD FM4 £150. Leak
Troughline £100. Nytech CT4
252XD £80. Leak Stereofonic
turner + Stereo 30 amplifier
£30. Revox A77 + Dolby unit
£900 ono. Tel: Tony 01203
46079 (home) 01203 206
650 (work) (Dec(I)

GARRARD 401, Origin Live
RB250, Audio Technica
ATOC5 in mini-plinth with
custom tripod stand £350.
Pair of Harvelley-Hood
custom made stands £500
(E675) 4 months old Tel 0121
246 0486 (Dec(I)

ALPHASON SONATA
turntable, HR100MCS ton-
earm, Atlas PSU, mint £650,
see HFi Dec 98. Rega
Planet CD player, remote,
boxed, £300. Tel: 01273 205
530 (Brighton) Email:
dunningham@freeuk.com (Dec(I)

TWO DYNALAB SDA 2.8
speakers, brand new, boxed,
 warranty, unused, unneeded
present. Retail at £1800,
 bargain at £1100 ono. Tel:
01494 726 993 (Amersham,
Bucks) Deliver depending on
location. (Dec(I)

MERIDIAN 101B (upgraded)
pre-amplifier, M3 loudspeakers
(blown bass units) cables, stands, offers?
Tel: 01732 461 358 (Dec(I)

LOWTHOR ACOUSTA Twin
speakers wanted. Made
1980's. Also wanted, working
translations, leaflets, Lowther
drive units, Twin speaker feet
and drive unit screws. Tel:
Jeff 01926 924 0207 (Barking,
Essex area) (Dec)

SPEAKERS GALE 401-C
walnut £100, Gale 402 black
ash £250. Tel: 01268 776
847 (evening) 01702 344 584
(daytime) (Dec(I)

KESWICK AUDIO Figaro
speakers Rosewood £550.
Audio Innovation Series 1000
Pre/Triode Monobloc combi-
nation £1900. Quad 77/707
pre/power with remote con-
trol £950. Audio Innovations
400 integrated amp £300.
Tel: 01977 643 629 (Dec(I)

THORENS TD 280 Mk4
turntable £140 ono.
Celestion 100 speakers cost £535
will accept £330 ono. Mission
771 speakers with Target
stands cost £230 will accept
£150 ono. All immaculate and
boxed. Tel: 0171 937 5900
(Dec(I)

PAIR SONY Esprit Tan 900
power amps. £800. Nivico
981E Globe speakers £350
Phillips 850 CD player (£500)
£100. Tel: 07771 297 6103
(Dec(I)

FMI ACOUSTICS 300A power
amp (£950) £1750 consider
pre-amp or turntable in PX.
Orelle SA100 £200. STD
turntable SME 3 £125.
Ariston Q-deck £30. Musical
Fidelity P150 power amp
£125. Tel: 0771 297 6103
(Dec(I)

OPERAN CALLAS Gold loud-
speakers (mahogany) £550.
24" Slate Audio stands £250.
Radford SC25 valve pre-
amplifier £275. Linn Kydve
£165. Linn Asaka £65 MC
cartridges.

Sugden A21 MM/MMC phono board £45.
Tel: Steve 01922 640 737
(Dec(I)

QUAD ES57 fully serviced
two months ago by Classicque
Sounds, mint like new cond-
tion with boxes still under
warranty, unused, unneeded
for all 4 monoblocs x 4 no.
ification converter, with manu-
box bitstream digital to ana-

SUGDEN A21a amp £600,
Cyrus III amplifier £400,
Rogers Studio 7 speakers
£325. AVI Neutrons Apollo
custom made stands £500
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246 0486 (Dec(I)

Sonic FRONTiERS SFCD-1
Stereo Class A rated CD
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Email: jonathan.ing@whitespace.co.uk
(Dec(I)

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Argemiz arm. Power Supply
Three. Very good condition
£600. Demonstration in Naim
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transformer (£425) - Garrard
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plinth. All in mint condition
with record clamp & electro-
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Tel: 0151 327 2436 (Dec(I)

Sonic FRONTiers SFCD-1
Stereo Class A rated CD
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Balanced & RCA output.
Beautifully musical player.
Valve output stage. Mint condi-
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FOR SALE. 1980 Sony casset-
tape deck TC K75, v.g.c.,
manual & boxed £120. Tel: 01903 247 777
(Sussex) (Dec)

TEAC P-5000 CD drive unit
with DPA PDM1 Series 3 two
box bitstream digital to ana-
logue converter, with manu-
als. As new, £995. May split.
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(Dec(I)

SME IV Tone arm (£893)
Dynavector 17D2 Mk2 (£450)
Audiconote A.N.S. 2 M/C
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301 (grease bearing) custom
plinth. All in mint condition
with record clamp & electro-
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You must send us your drive units. We will then design & optimise a crossover network specifically for those units.

2) Cabinet Design:
In order to achieve optimum performance from the bass driver the cabinet must be the correct volume for that driver. Given the parameters of the unit we will supply cabinet dimensions together with port tube length & diameter if required.

3) Full Test Service:
We use a sophisticated computerised measurement system to fully test your loudspeaker with regard to frequency response, phase and impedance. We can also test driver units & supply you with the actual Thiele/Small parameters values. This will insure that you have the correct values for your calculations.

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MERIDIAN 200 Transport, updated by Meridian October 1999. Includes Audio Synthesis special low jitter output board £300. Theta Pro-Prime DAC; tremendous performance £600. Both boxed, perfect condition. Tel: 01509 215 230 (Jan/I)

FOR SALE 300B single ended monoblocs power amplifiers £550. Wilmslow Elegance speakers as advertised in Hi-Fi World and Hi-Fi News, £200. Tel: 0181 531 5979 (Dec/I)

CONRAD JOHNSON
Premier 14 remote controlled pre-amp. Mint condition, little used £2600 ono (£4500) Tel: 01273 464 449 (day) 01273 441 151 (evening) (Dec/I)

REVOX B77 Mk2, excellent machine, remote control. 10 large reels, Ampex 456 unopened. 6 small reels Ampex 406 unopened. One damaged switch otherwise perfect, £500. Tel: Eddie 01264 391 900 (Dec/I)

MUSICAL FIDELITY A1000, superb quality amp in mint condition £920 ono. Linn Kan speakers £175 ono. Naim Nait original £110 ono. Tel: 01489 707 990 (Dec/I)

ORDINAL DAC (1307 module) £385. Trichord Pulsewire 1m digital £29. Celestion 3 (II) speakers £65. Technics R9050 5X head cassette deck £75. All items boxed/instr. Tel: 01908 260 112 (Dec/I)


CELESTION SL600 speakers, brown, very good condition, plus 18 ins Target stands £225. Tel: 01256 324 901 after 7pm (Basingstoke) (Dec/I)

NAIM NAT01 with NAPST PSU £950. Quad FM4 mint £250. Luxman T33 tunner mint £175. Luxman T30 amp mint £175. Luxman PD282 turntable mint £295. Tel: 01606 862 175 (Dec/I)


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AUDIO NOTE P2SE single ended Class A valve power amp. Boxed as new £750 ono. Tel: 01773 826 170 (Dec/I)

LILLIAN KARMA MC. Offers. WANTED: Linn Klouts, latest model only. Linn S140 cherry finish, must be mint. Linn Kaber Active, latest spec, black finish, mint, boxed. Offers. Tel: 01702 545 622 after 6pm (Dec/I)

NAKAMICHI 200 ZXL
Cassette deck, auto calibrate, dolby processor, ultimate machine £650. Meridian Tuner 104 with Silver interconnect £150. Luxman PD350 vacuum disc belt drive turntable, remote pump £550. All boxed and mint condition. Tel: 01767 677 634 (Dec/I)

AUDIO INNOVATIONS 2nd Audio monoblocks, re-valved, excellent condition £1100 ono. Castle Clifton-2 speakers, boxed, new, unused £110 ono. Tel: 01208 872 316 (Dec/I)


FOR SALE 300B single ended monoblocs power amplifiers £550. Wilmslow Elegance speakers as advertised in Hi-Fi World and Hi-Fi News, £200. Tel: 0181 531 5979 (Dec/I)

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AUDIO INNOVATIONS 2nd Audio monoblocks, re-valved, excellent condition £1100 ono. Castle Clifton-2 speakers, boxed, new, unused £110 ono. Tel: 01208 872 316 (Dec/I)

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THE ‘PICKUP’ SERIES 1-5 cartridges. A range of quality analogue devices. For further details contact: Lake Audio. Tel/Fax: 01209 613 733 (Jan(I)

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TRANSPARENT BALANCED Interconnect RRP £250, accept £150 ono. Roksan TMS turntable with Artimex, Shiraz, DSU psi, approx 4 years old, £2200. Krell KPS 30i CD player, as new, £2300 ono. Krell KSA 50 MKI power amp £1150. Audio Research SP9 MK1, immaculate £750. Musical Fidelity X-Ray CD player, brand new, unused £670. Marston Silhouette CD player, brand new £450. Tara Labs Reference balanced interconnect, 1 metre, £650 new, accept £250 ono. Teac VRS025 CD, as new, boxed, immaculate RRP £1400, £785 ono. DPA Enlightenment drive plus DAC, new 24 bit, 96kHz technology, guaranteed 2years, £1300. Oracle CD Player, brand new, stunning sound and looks (RRP £7415) £6200 ono. Musical Fidelity XLP-2 phono stage, brand new (RRP £500) £400 ono. Tel: Jules 01792 280 061 (Dec(I)

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