

HI-FI CHOICE

PASSION FOR SOUND MARCH 2006 £3.90 WWW.HIFICHOICE.CO.UK



WIN!
ALR Jordan Classic 5 speakers worth £1,200!
See page 28

GREAT NEW KIT FOR 2006
FIRST IN-DEPTH TESTS INSIDE



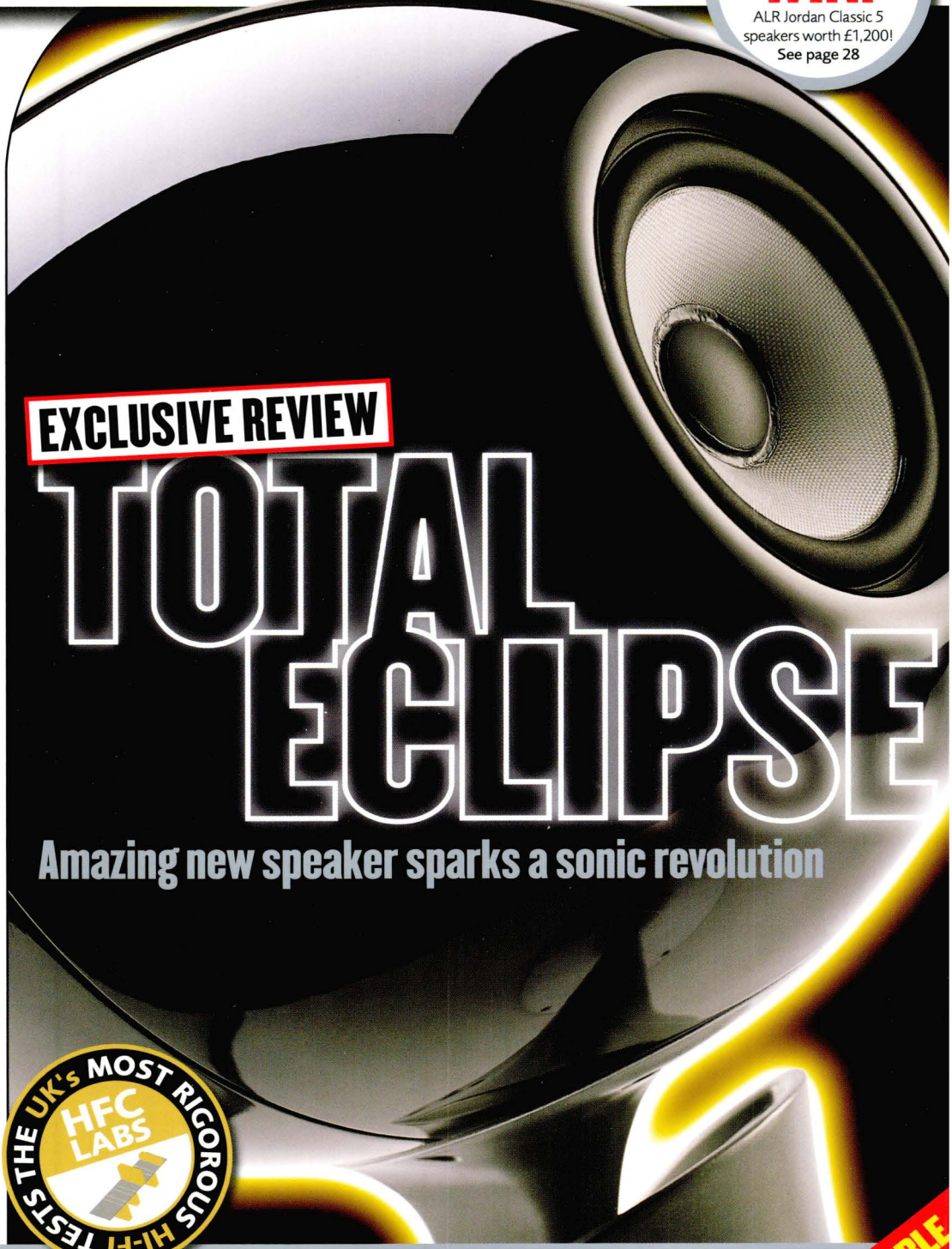
Creek Destiny CD player and amplifier



B&W CM1 compact loudspeaker



Marantz special edition CD/amp combo



EXCLUSIVE REVIEW

TOTAL ECLIPSE

Amazing new speaker sparks a sonic revolution



MARCH 2006 £3.90
 Future MEDIA WITH PASSION
 9 770955 111076 03

FREE!
2nd hand hi-fi mini-mag!



ULTIMATE GROUP TEST >>> SPEAKERS

- FEATURING**
- > Focal Profile 918
 - > MJ Acoustics S1R
 - > Reson 5th ReTHM
 - > Totem Model 1 Signature
 - > Triangle Celius Esw
 - > Waterfall Iguasca

*** BUYER'S BIBLE**
World's best hi-fi rated



A different Classé

For more than 20 years Classé has been designing and manufacturing extraordinary audio equipment for enthusiasts who demand nothing less than the very best. Our engineers have a passion for what they create and it shows: engineering, style, user-interface, product reliability and performance are all second to none. The new Delta series is an inspired statement about the art of high performance design. Visit us at www.classeaudio.com or experience the product range at one of the following authorised retailers.

Holburn Hi-Fi Ltd
+44 (0) 1224 585 713
note@holburnhifi.co.uk

Hi-Fi Experience
+44 (0) 20 7580 3535
sales@hifilondon.co.uk

Sound Academy
+44 (0)1922 493 499
sales@soundacademy.co.uk

Acoustica
+44 (0) 1244 344 227
geoff.coleman@acoustica.co.uk

Robert Taussig
+44 (0) 20 7487 3455
sales@roberttaussig.co.uk

Cloney Audio
+353 (0) 1288 9449
sales@cloneyaudio.com

CLASSE

Welcome to the issue...

HI-FI CHOICE MARCH 2006 ISSUE 277

Future Publishing Ltd, 1 Balcombe Street, London NW1 6NA ☎ +44 (0)20 7042 4000



2006: the start of a brave new audiophile year. I hope Santa brought you all wanted for Christmas... though that pair of Krells might have been pushing things a bit far. Personally, I was delighted – a new needle for my Gyrodec, another set of Townshend cables for the system downstairs, a bottle of Nordost Eco 3 and plenty of music to play, too. That would put the Happy in any New Year.

It's now 31 years since an intrepid band of enthusiasts first decided to put together an intelligent guide to audio gear and call it *Hi-Fi Choice*. In the decades since, we've experienced the best that hi-fi has to offer: from the continued excellence of analogue to the ongoing evolution of digital, the quality of sound continues to improve, delight and amaze.

Among this issue's many in-depth test highlights are remarkable new speakers from Eclipse and B&W, and fantastic electronics from Creek and Densen. There's also a selection of new components from the budget end of 'quality' hi-fi – from Marantz, Cambridge Audio and Acoustic Energy – because good hi-fi doesn't have to cost the Earth.

Judging by the kit that's coming, 2006 will be another vintage year for hi-fi. Which, in turn, is great news for music lovers. So, keep the faith and spread the word: it's time for music fans to get real...

Real hi-fi, real sound, the real thing – make your music come *alive!*

Tim Bownen

Tim Bownen Editor

WHY WE'RE NO.1 FOR HI-FI...

- Since 1975, *Hi-Fi Choice* has delivered the world's most thorough, no-nonsense guide to buying high-performance hi-fi.
- We now publish 13 issues a year, including two special editions: *The Collection*, an issue dedicated to the finest high-end components, and *The Hi-Fi Awards* – the most important annual awards in the hi-fi calendar.
- Every issue contains a potent mix of the latest hi-fi news, views, music, interviews and in-depth tests, brought to you by a prestigious team of expert writers from the UK and around the world.
- We only review the most interesting and worthy new hi-fi components – high-performance audio products across a wide range of price points. We obtain more genuine hi-fi exclusives than any other magazine – if it's worthy of your attention, you'll read about it first in *Hi-Fi Choice*.
- Our tests are the most rigorous in the business, conducted by the UK's most experienced team of hi-fi reviewers.
- Alongside in-depth component reviews and accessory round-ups, every regular issue of *Hi-Fi Choice* features an *Ultimate Group Test* on a core hi-fi product category – from source components to amps and speakers.
- Each *Ultimate Group Test* is conducted using a uniquely thorough three-step test regime. This consists of carefully controlled 'blind' and sighted listening sessions, a full set of laboratory tests and extended 'hands on' testing by the primary reviewer. No other magazine goes to such lengths to ensure accurate comparative reviews.
- Components that best meet our exacting standards are listed in the *Buyer's Bible* section – the world's most reliable reference guide for the hi-fi buyer.
- That's why *Hi-Fi Choice* is...
The Essential Guide To Audio Excellence In The Home

Beautiful in-house photography, so you see the product in all its glory

Cherry-picked kit – only the most worthy components make it into *Hi-Fi Choice*

Comprehensive in-depth reviews – we give you the full story

Annotated shots show you what's really going on inside

Inte views with designers give you extra background information

Carefully considered verdict scores, so you really know what we think of a product



THIS ISSUE'S EXPERT WRITERS AND REVIEWERS INCLUDE...



PAUL MESSENGER
A former *HFC* editor, Paul has been writing about his beloved hi-fi hobby for nearly 30 years. In that time he has become one of the world's most respected scribes and probably the UK's foremost loudspeaker reviewer.



DAN GEORGE
Dan is a hi-fi nut whose dream came true when he became *HFC*'s reviews editor. Armed with a bristling contacts book and a pair of razor-sharp ears, he ensures that only interesting products make it into *HFC*.



RICHARD BLACK
Richard is a professional musician, recording engineer and a highly knowledgeable hi-fi analyst to boot. He has a knack for writing about complicated subjects in a readable way – and he only writes for *HFC*.



DOMINIC TODD
Like many industry types, Dominic started his hi-fi life working in the retail sector. But he is better known as a hi-fi reviewer, columnist and all-round audio journalist. He has been writing about his passion since 1993.



ALVIN GOLD
Alvin has been writing about his obsession for more than 20 years. In that time he has contributed his encyclopaedic knowledge to almost every hi-fi periodical you can think of (and several more besides).



DAVID VIVIAN
An award-winning journalist, David's sharp ears and equally sharp powers of description are a valuable mix for *HFC*. He also writes about cars, but who needs the latest Lotus when you've got the finest hi-fi to test drive.



JASON KENNEDY
Jason previously edited *HFC*, but can now be found in the wilds of Sussex indulging himself with the very best hi-fi money can buy. His own system is simply sensational and his love of music knows no bounds.



ART DUDLEY
One of the most respected commentators on the American hi-fi scene, Art has written for *Hi-Fi Hereic*, *Sounds Like* and *Listener*. Among other things, he is currently US journal *Stereophile*'s 'editor at large'.

To ensure you get the best information, opinion and advice, *Hi-Fi Choice* employs the most knowledgeable and experienced hi-fi writers in the business.



46



62



50



54



40

Eastern Electric

Eastern Electric

Eastern Electric

Contents

NEWS AND FEATURES

9 PRODUCT NEWS

The juiciest new fruit from the hi-fi tree

14 HAPPENINGS

Hot stories from around Planet Hi-Fi

16 DISPATCHES

Fresh opinion from the hi-fi commentators with clout

23 ESSENTIALS

Hot hi-fi accessories – tested just for you

27 MUSIC INTERVIEW

The Firestarter is reborn from the ashes, The Prodigy are back. Hide your woofers!

28 COMPETITION

Win a pair of ALR Jordan Classic 5 speakers worth £1,200!

30 CHOICE CUTS

New music – rated by our experts

33 CHOICE MAIL

A selection of your letters and emails

37 THE SCIENCE OF HEARING

We take a second look into your ears

40 BEAUTIFUL SYSTEMS

A high-end system of sonic beauty... This issue: Eastern Electric and Jas Audio

EQUIPMENT REVIEWS

IN-DEPTH PRODUCT TESTS

46 Eclipse TD510 standmount loudspeaker

50 Creek Destiny CD player and integrated amplifier

54 B&W CM1 standmount loudspeaker

56 Densen Beat B-150 integrated amplifier

59 Acoustic Energy Linear 1 standmount loudspeaker

60 Marantz CD5001 OSE CD player and PM4001 OSE integrated amplifier

62 Border Patrol Control Unit valve preamplifier

65 Cambridge Audio 540P and 640P phono stages

ULTIMATE GROUP TEST

LOUDSPEAKERS £1,400-£2,000

68 Focal Profile 918

69 MJ Acoustics Subliminal S1R

71 Reson 5th ReTHM

72 Totem Model 1 Signature

73 Triangle Celius Esw

75 Waterfall Iguasca

BUYER'S BIBLE

The ultimate guide to high performance hi-fi and AV gathering together all our favourite products for your perusal. Your shortlist starts here...

SOURCE COMPONENTS

84 CD players

86 DVD players

88 Vinyl

91 Radio tuners

93 Digital recorders

AMPLIFIERS

100 Stereo amps

102 AV amps

LOUDSPEAKERS

106 Stereo speakers

110 AV speaker packages

ANCILLARIES

113 Headphones

115 Cables

117 Stands and supports

READER SERVICES

Our regular information service, including where to buy, how to get a back issue and our newly expanded hi-fi accessories shop

78 How to subscribe
80 Choice Bits accessories shop

82 Back issues

119 Glossary

122 Dealer Guide

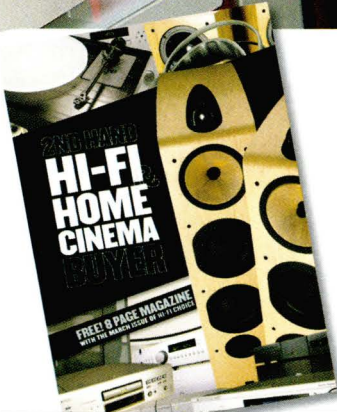
128 Dealer Directory

130 What's in next month's *Hi-Fi Choice*

FREE MINI-MAG!

Inside your free 2nd-hand hi-fi mini-mag...

- 2 Guide to 2nd-hand kit – this issue, Roksan, plus DIY tips
- 3 Trading Pages
- 7 Reader Classified



“No PC 4 MP3”

And no, we don't mean **Politically Correct**.

What we do mean is you can now record MP3 copies directly to your MP3 player or USB storage device* without using your PC. Not only that, but you can also record your CDs and DAB radio in MP3 format. And playing back your music couldn't be easier through the USB port or the AUX input on the front panel which is suitable for iPod playback.

Our new Reference Series CR-H255 CD Receiver has total connectivity by way of USB front panel connection.

All these new features coupled with the exceptional build quality and component level of performance that you have come to expect from TEAC.

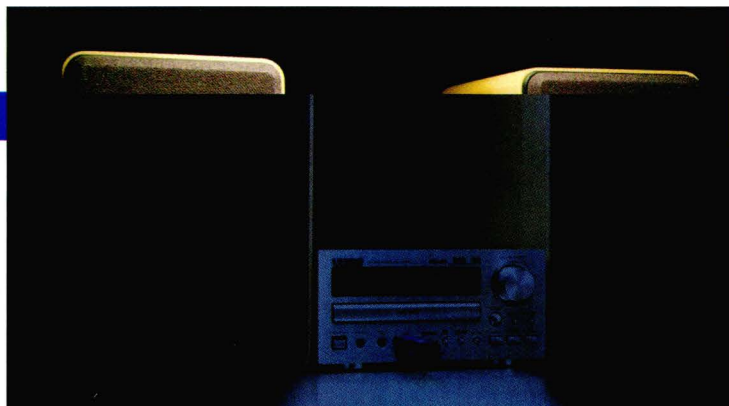
So now you can connect directly to your MP3 Player without the need of a computer.

**The new Reference CR-H255.
DAB radio + MP3 record and playback
via the USB port.**

TEAC. CD ripping made easy.

Now you can get connected at your nearest retailer.
Contact TEAC on 0845 130 2511 or at info@teac.co.uk

*Please check with your retailer or TEAC for compatibility



**The NEW Reference
CR-H255 USB/DAB**

**MP3 record and playback
via the USB port**

Are you connected?



CoolBrands

MP3 player not included

TEAC

www.teac.co.uk

Vivid Audio www.vividaudio.co.uk think outside of the square box

Whether you are a Hi-Fi Dealer, Home Installer, Lifestyle Specialist, or Interior Design Company - Vivid Loudspeakers are a 21st Century technical tour de force - visually stunning and musically rewarding. Trade Enquiries very welcome.

" Even a seasoned speaker designer was just transported into the film, effortlessly and instantly. And that after all, is what the filmmakers' art is all about and what we hope our home cinema kit will deliver to us in our homes. Only the best kit does it this well and Vivid is up there. It is big and it is clever. "

Vivid Audio Surround Sound System (B1, K1, C1)
Adam Rayner, Home Cinema Choice, August 2005
Gold Star Reference Status

" An extremely revealing and genuinely neutral loudspeaker with dynamic range, timing and imaging to die for.

A true world class loudspeaker from a brand that knows how to get results. "

Vivid Audio B1
Jason Kennedy, Hi-Fi Choice
Editors Choice Award

" Seamless is a much-banded term in describing speaker sound, but the K1 gave a definitive reference point for applying the description. What may be termed the aspiration of this speaker was nigh-on perfect. "

Vivid Audio K1
Andrew Harrison, Hi-Fi News, Dec 2005



To create ultimate detail in a range of monitor studio loudspeakers for the home, Vivid took a completely new and radical approach to their design...

...this meant surpassing existing speaker technology in order to reach a no compromise solution, giving unparalleled musical insight, resolution, speed, dynamics and tonal accuracy.



Both two-channel and home cinema configurations available.
Choice of 5 standard colour finishes or custom colour matching.

To arrange an audition please contact your local specialist or contact us direct for advice.

Current UK Dealers:

Tony Revelle
Audio Excellence
134/6 Crwys Road
Cardiff. CF24 4NR.
029 2022 8565

Matthew Hotchkiss
Glasgow Audio Ltd
135 Great Western Road
Glasgow. G4 9AH.
Scotland
0141 332 4707

Dom Peers
Cornflake Shop
37 Windmill Street
Tottenham Ct Rd
London. W1T 2JU.
020 7631 0472

John Jefferies
Metropolis Music
U2, Firgrove Business Park
Firgrove Park
Cross-In-Hand, Heathfield,
East Sussex. TN21 0QL.
01435 865212

Paul Goncalves
Rochester HiFi
30 High Street
Rochester
Kent. ME1 1LD
01634 880037

Robin Lambert
Sevenoaks HiFi
597-599 Mansfield Rd
Sherwood
Nottingham, NG5 2FW.
0115 911 2121

High Tech Living Ltd
Prospect Lane
Solihull
West Midland. B91 1HT
0845 009 0237



hi-fi+
Product Discovery
Of The Year
Annual Award 2004

home cinema choice
**Gold Star
Reference Status
Guarantee**



Rowles Music Limited

For more information:
Tel 01903 530005
Mob 07950 274224
ray@rowlesmusic.co.uk
www.vividaudio.co.uk

Official HI-FI Loudspeaker Supplier To The
10th Anniversary 2005 MOBO Awards



T+A SACD 1245 R SACD PLAYER

Just how much technology can you pack into an audio disc player these days? Just ask T+A – its new SACD 1245 R is crammed with nifty features and fresh design ideas. For starters, the two-channel player has independent dedicated signal processing sections for each channel to minimise jitter. It's also said to provide perfect synchronisation of the converter and mechanism clock signals.

As a result of T+A's war on jitter, the signal is treated to quadruple D-to-A conversion

(four per channel), courtesy of eight Burr-Brown DACs – a process claimed to be unique to T+A. CD playback also has the option of switchable oversampling algorithms, according to the quality and mix of the disc material. And if user-definable settings float your boat, the player has a pure analogue output filter that can be switched between 60kHz and 120kHz for improved amp matching.

To find out more, see our exclusive in-depth review in the next issue of Hi-Fi Choice

PRODUCT T+A SACD 1245 R

TYPE SACD player (two-channel)

PRICE £2,000

KEY FEATURES Separate processing for CD and SACD • Quadruple D-to-A conversion • Selectable output bandwidth • Jitter-busting topology

CONTACT ☎ 01623 517 000

🌐 www.taelektroakustik.de

So transparent
is this CD player/transport,
it's difficult to see!



Transparent.
Less between you and the music.

Rendering performances with authority and finesse, effortlessly delivering powerful dynamics from a black background.

Superbly accurate and true to the disc, extracting vibrant music, not bits. From the pioneers of true digital amplifiers, an exciting player/transport is launched. The long-awaited Lyngdorf CD-1 is here. Also available in black, which may be easier to see.

The Lyngdorf CD-1 player/transport

Expectations were high when the company that delivered the world's first true digital amplifier, the ground-breaking Millennium, announced a CD player/transport launch.

Using their extensive knowledge of digital circuits, clocks, sampling rates, jitter and noise control, the designers were meticulous in their approach. The philosophy is simple. Less noise means more music.

The high-spec'd CD-1 is also loaded with features to maximize musical performance.

- + Digital signal upsampled to 96khz for optimal analogue conversion
- + User-selectable 24 bit sampling rate for digital output (44.1, 48, 96 & 192khz)
- + To optimize performance when used as a dedicated transport, the DAC is powered down
- + High precision clock resamples signal close to output stage, further reducing jitter and noise
- + Low noise linear (non-switching) power supply

As a CD Player

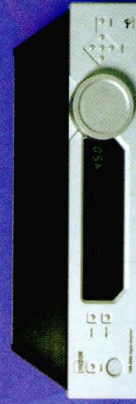
Connect to our matching integrated amplifier (or any other integrated or pre/power) using balanced or unbalanced cables, and enjoy a truly musical performance from a low-noise, upsampling CD player.

As a Transport

Connect to our own True Digital Amplifier (or any other DAC) for an even purer (err, transparent) performance. Select the upsampling frequency that delivers the optimal sound for your system, music and taste.



SDA2175 Semi Digital Amplifier



TDA2200 True Digital Amplifier

Lyngdorf Audio UK distribute the ground-breaking Lyngdorf digital products, together with ExactPower conditioners, Stillpoints and AudioDeskSysteme CD enhancers. We also complement these products by offering/dealing with a very few, select components such as the award winning DALI speakers, Vertex AQ accessories and the new range of Final Electrostatic panel speakers

0870 9 100 100 www.lyngdorfaudio.co.uk

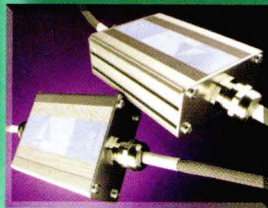
LYNGDORF



DALI Loudspeakers



Stillpoints Isolation



Vertex AQ



ExactPower Conditioners



AudioDeskSysteme



Final Electrostatics



TacT/Lyngdorf Audio

B&W XT4 LOUDSPEAKER

▶ B&W's new XT Series loudspeakers demonstrate a change in thinking about cabinet design that harks back to the world's most distinctive speaker, the B&W Nautilus. The key is the use of an extruded aluminium cabinet – a material that presents a whole new set of engineering virtues over the traditional wooden box.

B&W says aluminium helps to deliver strong bass performance and striking, out-the-box imaging. As the cabinet is so stiff, it needs less internal volume for the same strength

value, meaning fewer cabinet reflections and internal standing waves. Gracing the sublime new enclosure are two paper/Kevlar bass drivers, a new Kevlar midrange unit, plus a 25mm 'Nautilus Tapering Tube' tweeter with extension to 50kHz. A simple crossover design, borrowed from the 800 Series, has also been deployed to flatter both the new driver and cabinet. But will this new Metal Guru influence B&W speakers of the future?

To find out more, see our exclusive in-depth review in the next issue of Hi-Fi Choice

PRODUCT B&W XT4

TYPE Floorstanding loudspeaker

PRICE £1,699 per pair

KEY FEATURES Aluminium extruded cabinet

▶ 25mm 'Nautilus Tapering Tube' tweeter ▶ Twin paper/Kevlar bass drivers ▶ New Kevlar midrange unit ▶ Simple crossover network

CONTACT ☎ 01903 221500

🌐 www.bwspeakers.com

NEW PRODUCT HIGHLIGHTS



MERIDIAN G61 AND DSP3100

Meridian Audio, pioneer of the digital surround processor, has launched a stripped-down version of its advanced G Series G68 processor with a lower price to match. The new G61 controller/processor eschews complex multiroom features and room correction functionality, instead concentrating on superior audio quality. Its powerful DSP engine processes with 48-bit precision, with all incoming analogue signals converted to 24-bit before re-clocking to maintain data integrity. The unit boasts eight analogue outputs and an amazing ten digital outs, plus further socketry for other applications.

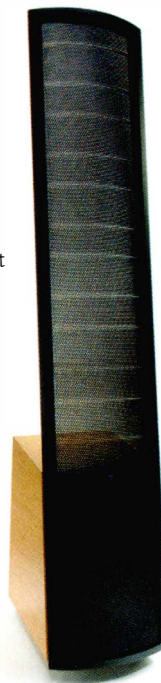
Meridian also has a new compact 'digital' active speaker called the DSP3100, which replaces the DSP33. The high-gloss speaker has an MDF cabinet with aluminium side panels and is available in a vertical or horizontal (centre channel) configuration. Features include S/PDIF inputs at up to 24-bit/96kHz resolution, plus carbon-fibre drive units and fabric dome tweeters, each driven by a 75-watt power amplifier.

Price G61 £2,995; DSP3100 £2,595 per pair **Due** now
 ☎ 01480 445678 🌐 www.meridian-audio.com

MARTINLOGAN VANTAGE

Vantage, MartinLogan's latest electrostatic speaker, will soon be available in Blighty. It uses technology from the reference Summit speaker compressed into a smaller package. Bass comes from a 200mm aluminium cone, powered by a 200-watt amplifier, said to encourage extension down to 34Hz. It also features ML's extruded aluminium 'AirFrame' chassis and the 'Xstat' electrostatic transducer. The Xstat panel's perforations are said to offer a playable area equivalent to a traditional panel of twice the size.

Price £3,998 per pair **Due** February
 ☎ 020 8971 3909
 🌐 www.martinlogan.com



ROKSAN FR-5

Roksan's FR-5 (short for Full Range 5) is a completely new speaker from the hi-fi specialist. The high-gloss floorstander uses twin 130mm coated paper woofers and a fabric dome tweeter, all wrapped up in a 25mm MDF cabinet, finished in piano black or bird's eye maple lacquer. The rear-ported speakers can be placed close to walls and are bi-wirable, and a matching centre speaker is also available. Expect an in-depth review in the May issue of *Hi-Fi Choice*.

Price £2,000 per pair **Due** now
 ☎ 01235 511166 🌐 www.roksan.co.uk



DENON AVR-4806

Denon's new AVR-4806 is the world's first internet-enabled AV receiver, giving access to 2,300 web radio stations plus audio from networked PCs. Global Web Radio allows the unit to access the stations over a broadband connection, which can also be used for remote access by installers for diagnostics. The feature-packed receiver also sports HDMI conversion, 1080i video upscaling and Denon Link 3 digital audio connectivity. There's also Denon's Audyssey MultEQ room calibration software, while power is rated at 130 watts across seven channels, with the ability to operate a three-zone music system. Portable audio devices – including iPods and USB external hard drives – can also be connected and controlled through the unit via on-screen displays.

Price £1,500 **Due** now ☎ 01234 741 200 🌐 www.denon.co.uk



ARCAM FMJ AV9

⊕ Arcam has unveiled a replacement for the *HFC* Award-winning AV8 preamp/processor. The new AV9 is an HDMI-equipped, 1080p-capable unit with switching for forthcoming High-Def video products, such as Blu-Ray disc players and Sky HD boxes. The processor is designed and built in the UK and features Arcam's special 'Acousteel' damped chassis, multiple separated power supplies and a number of high-precision calibration options. The first public showing will be at the Bristol Sound and Vision Show in February (see *Hi-Fi Diary* overleaf).

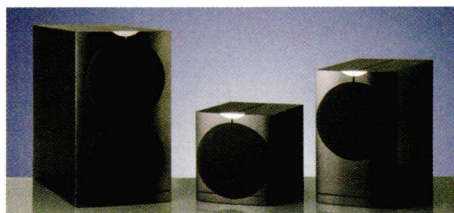
Price £3,600 **Due** February/March ☎ 01223 203200 # www.arcam.co.uk

TIVOLI iSONGBOOK

⊕ If you use an iPod and you're looking for a portable 'docking' system to free yourself from headphone use, this might just be the best-sounding option yet. Based on Tivoli's excellent desktop radio designs, it incorporates an AM/FM radio plus amplification and speakers, and also sports a number of 'firsts' for an iPod-related accessory. These include a concealed, 'flip down' docking station, detachable second speaker and sleep timer/alarm function. It is also supplied with a remote control to access the iPod's album and playlist features, plus a built-in charger.

Price £300 **Due** now

☎ 01702 601410 # www.tivoliaudio.com



WATERFALL HIGH FORCE

⊕ French speaker specialist Waterfall is best known for its glass speaker enclosures, but the three High Force powered subwoofers use traditional (opaque) speaker cabinets. First up is the High Force 1, a compact design with 150 watts of power, which is joined by a larger model (High Force 2) and the flagship 300-watt model, said to descend to 29Hz. Colour choices are black or white, and the High Force 1 and 2 have a rack-mountable amp option to allow discrete placement of the subs in the home.

Price From £500 to £1,000 **Due** now

☎ 01623 517000 # www.waterfallaudio.com



MARANTZ PM7001

⊕ Could this new integrated be the best stereo amplifier under £400? It's the new PM7001 from Marantz, the hot replacement for our favourite sub-£400 amplifier from 2004/05, the PM7200. With 120 watts on tap, the dual-mono newcomer has an acoustically damped chassis, an oversized power transformer, plus six line inputs with a MM phono stage. Also specified is the latest version of Marantz's proprietary HDAM op-amp modules – HDAM-SA2 – plus a bespoke current-feedback design and custom audiophile components throughout. A remote control and tone bypass mode adds increased flexibility. Look out for our exclusive review in the May issue of *Hi-Fi Choice*.

Price £350 **Due** February ☎ 01753 680868 # www.marantz.com

Soundbites



MARANTZ has launched a new micro-sized CD/DAB receiver called the CR601. Priced at £350, it includes a CD player, DAB/FM radio and 24-bit/192kHz DACs, and pumps out 30 watts per channel. CD-R/RW and MP3 discs can be played, plus there is a full compliment of connections including digital in/out. Add bypassable tone controls, a headphone socket and an alarm function, and the feature-packed newcomer should give micro-sized system rivals Denon and Onkyo something to worry about.

☎ 01753 680868

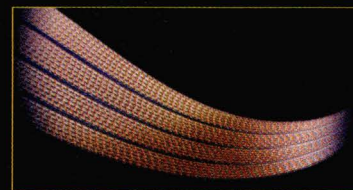
QED has branched out into power cables.

The new Qonduit mains lead is said to "outperform cables costing up to four times as much". It uses three cores of 84-strand oxygen-free copper with PVC insulation, copper braiding and an aluminium Mylar Foil to cut interference. There's also a custom-made IEC connector with 24-carat gold-plated contacts. The cable comes in 1.5m (£40) and 3.0m (£60) lengths.

☎ 01279 501111

PHILIPS has unveiled a new range of hard disk portables called Go Gear. Available in 6GB and 30GB varieties, the new players boast colour screens, photo viewing capability and backlit sensory touchpads. The gloss-black portables can also be used for voice recording using the integrated microphone. The 6GB device can hold up to 3,000 songs, while the 30GB device has a whopping 15,000-song capacity.

☎ 09061 010 016



NORDOST is expanding its range of unique Micro Mono Filament (MMF) cables to include the new Heimdall interconnects and speaker wires. The £370 (1m) interconnect uses four helically-wrapped MMF OFC conductors, in a design said to transfer signals more efficiently and at extremely high speeds. The speaker cable – priced from £955 for a 2m terminated pair – is the most 'affordable' Nordost wire to employ the MMF technology. Expect an exclusive review next month.

☎ 01635 291357

The Insider

THIS MONTH, HFC TALKS TO...

DOMINIC BAKER
Job Title: Senior Product Designer
Company: Focal-JMLab



What's the future of hi-fi?

I foresee high fidelity becoming more exclusive, more of a passion for those who seek the ultimate sound.

DVD-Audio or SACD and why?

Sony has put far more behind marketing and promoting SACD to consumers and has obvious links with artists/recording studios. Here in France, many new releases are TV advertised as dual CD/SACD format discs, so consumers are aware of the format. DVD-A is relatively unknown on a European scale.

Is the 'universal player' concept the future of CD playback?

There are a number of universal disc players that set the standard for audio playback at their various price points. And there are the obvious advantages of investing in just one player. But the future of how we listen to music will almost certainly be driven by the internet – this will become our future music source and, with increasing data transfer speeds, there's no reason why this shouldn't mean an increase in sound quality.

What type of products will consumers be buying from you in five years time?

We will be selling slimmer and more elegant speakers, more in-wall designs, more compact subwoofers, but there will still be a strong market for traditional wooden loudspeakers.

Hi-Fi Diary

JANUARY

28-29 **Northern Sound and Vision 2006**
Radisson SAS, Manchester Airport
01829 740650
www.chestergroup.org
Rapidly expanding Northern hi-fi expo

FEBRUARY

12 **Audiojumble 2006**
The Angel Leisure Centre, Tonbridge, Kent
www.audiojumble.co.uk
Antiques Roadshow with valves

24-26 **Sound and Vision 2006**
Bristol Marriot Hotel
www.bristolshow.co.uk
Top hi-fi show – not to be missed!

JB joins Meridian

Erstwhile *Hi-Fi Choice* editor John Bamford has joined the hi-tech AV experts at Meridian, filling the new post of product manager. JB – as he's known – edited *HFC* when it re-launched as a glossy A4 title in the late 1980s. He went on to be product manager at Pioneer UK, a post he held for 14 years. Given his comprehensive knowledge of all things digital, audio and video, the move to Huntingdon should be an easy one. The fact that he has known Meridian MD Bob Stuart for 20 years should also be handy. John has said of the move that "it's a privilege indeed to now find myself surrounded by many of the world's foremost research and development engineers in the fields of digital audio and video processing, and I'm looking forward immensely to working with the Meridian team." But he would do, wouldn't he?



DRM on AM



No, Digital Rights

Management has not taken over the wireless. This 'DRM' stands for Digital Radio Mondiale, a digital radio system designed

to work at medium and long wave (AM) frequencies, yet provide a stereo signal. It claims to offer "near FM" quality that can be easily picked up by standard car aerials (which don't pick-up DAB). It is also said to offer improved reception quality (though it doesn't say what it improves upon), along with the sort of data and text information associated with DAB.

The system is being tested across Europe (including Germany and the UK) and in the USA. At present, there are only a few companies making receivers, such as Mayah Communications and its DRM 2010, but PC users have the option of a software receiver made by Winradio that de-modulates and decodes DRM. Hardware from mainstream brands is expected to become available over the coming year. For more info, visit: www.drm.org.

High-quality downloads

Download service Magnatune.com provides music in both 320kbps MP3 or so-called 'CD equivalent' .WAV file formats. Its catalogue concentrates on classical music, but includes jazz, rock and world material that can be auditioned prior to purchase, and the price is pretty much what you think it's worth – as long as you think an album is worth at least \$8.

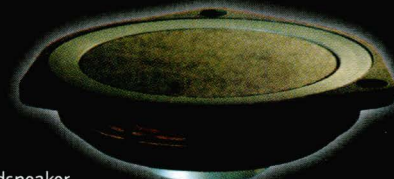
Equally significant for the producers of the work is the fact that they receive half of what you pay. This is rather more generous than the single figure royalties paid by most record labels.



NXT BMR in full

Following last month's scoop on NXT's new wide-bandwidth loudspeaker design, we can disclose more details of this intriguing new technology. The Balanced Mode Radiator (BMR) combines NXT's Distributed Mode Loudspeaker (DML) technology with a chassis and motor system akin to that found in traditional drive units. While the flat drivers can be circular or rectangular in shape (with the area dictating the limit of low frequency extension), their unique selling point is the ability to reproduce all the frequencies above this point without compromising directivity in the way that occurs with conventional piston drivers.

As the technology is scalable, it is claimed that genuinely full-range drivers can be manufactured if the panel area is great enough. Unlike the original DML design, which had the problems with producing bass that still plague many panels, the BMR is designed to sit in a box and is theoretically capable of the same low frequency results achieved with a piston cone.

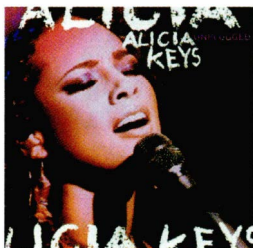


Sony BMG takes rap

Following the difficulties surrounding XCP anti-piracy technology (see last issue), Record label Sony BMG says it is "re-evaluating" the way it protects its copyright. XCP-protected discs, which have included Alicia Keys' *Unplugged*, sport a 'root-kit' that installs itself on PCs when played. This can be used by hackers to hide a virus on the user's computer. Offending XCP-protected discs are rumoured to have been withdrawn.

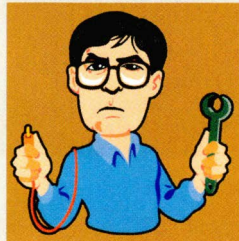
According to Thomas Hesse, head of Sony BMG's digital business: "The key point to remember is that copyright infringement is a huge issue for the recording industry as a whole. That's where we came from originally, but this whole story has led us to look at the approach we have to take going forward."

The company has also been having trouble with SunComm's Mediamax anti-copy program used on 32 CDs in the US. This also caused a security loophole to be left on PCs and one which the provided patch failed to rectify. A later patch (December 8) did, however, solve the problem. The answer seems obvious to us: play CDs on a CD player. Not only is it hard to corrupt a CD player simply by playing a disc, they sound a lot better, too!



JIMMY'S TWEAKS #40

HANDY HINTS FROM JIMMY HUGHES – HI-FI'S SUPER TWEAKER



Should you clean up your mains?

Mains purifiers seem to divide opinion: some swear by them, others swear at them! A dirty electricity supply is a problem all of us suffer from to a lesser or greater extent, and it affects the way your hi-fi sounds. The cleaner the mains, the cleaner and truer your hi-fi system will sound. Dirty mains robs the sound of its

purity and subtle delicacy. However, not everyone worries about this. If you like loud, in-your-face music, a little added aggression may be just what's required. Sonically, dirty mains creates a false brightness and liveliness that many listeners find engaging. Clean up these impurities and the sound may seem dull – too clean and well-mannered. There are many ways of cleaning up the mains supply, some simple and cheap, others complex and expensive. If you decide to experiment, always try one device or treatment at a time and don't move on to the next until you're sure it works.

TOP 10 ALBUMS OF 2005 (ACCORDING TO SOME OF US, AT LEAST)

- Kate Bush** Aerial
- Bloc Party** Silent Alarm
- The Arcade Fire** Funeral
- Mylo** Destroy Rock and Roll
- The National** Alligator
- Gorillaz** Demon Days
- Ryan Adams** Cold Roses
- The Magic Numbers** The Magic Numbers
- Kaiser Chiefs** Employment
- Josh Rouse** Nashville



New Music

IN THE STUDIO

ARTISTS RECENTLY ABSENT FROM THE CUT AND THRUST OF SHOWBIZ HYPE DUE TO FINISHING THEIR LATEST ALBUMS



THE ARCADE FIRE

Title: *tbc*

Release date: 2006

Funeral, the debut from Canada's The Arcade Fire, was voted 'album of 2005' by *Uncut* and featured prominently in most end-of-year 'best of' lists. The follow-up is currently being recorded in a church in the band's native Montreal, which they've just bought and converted into a studio.

DAVID GILMOUR

Title: *On An Island*

Due: March

There's still little chance of the Floyd recording a new studio album – but guitarist David Gilmour has recorded a solo LP that also features fellow Floyd member Richard Wright. Other guests include Roxy Music's Phil Manzanera (who co-produced), Robert Wyatt, Jools Holland and Byrds David Crosby and Graham Nash.

TRAVIS

Title: *tbc*

Release date: summer 2006

Travis have recorded 20 songs for their forthcoming album. "It sounds like we've got two albums' worth of material," says bassist Dougie Payne, who also revealed that Scottish singer-songwriter KT Tunstall guests on the record as a female foil to lead singer Fran Healy.

YEAH YEAH YEAHS

Title: *tbc*

Release date: March 2006

New York's acclaimed garage-rockers the Yeah Yeah Yeahs reckon the follow-up to



2003's *Fever To Tell* is a concept album about singer Karen O's cat. Says producer, Squeak E Clean: "The album is much more mature. It rocks really hard, but there's some beautiful songs. Karen sings beautifully."

WILCO

Title: *tbc*

Release date: autumn 2006

Hot on the heels of the band's first live album, *Kicking Television*, Wilco frontman Jeff Tweedy says they already have 13 new songs for the next studio album. *I'm Talking To Myself About You* and *On And On And On*, are already in the band's live set.

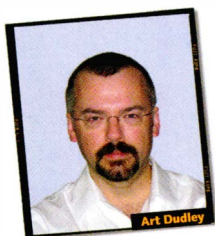
ALSO COMING SOON...

JAZZ/ CLASSICAL

Hélène Grimaud *Reflexions*: Schumann, Brahms (Jan); **Aled Jones** *The Collection* (3CD, Jan); **Carmen McRae** *Carmen McRae For Lovers* (Jan); **Herb Ellis** *Ellis In Wonderland* (Jan)

SACD/ DVD-A

James Horner *Legend Of Zorro* (SACD, Jan); **Boston Symphony Orchestra** *Berlioz: Symphonie Fantastique* (SACD, Feb); **Mario Lanza** *Mario! At His Best* (SACD, Feb); **Markus Schirmer** *Pictures And Reflections* (DVD-A, Feb)



Blasts from the past

Art's three best products from hi-fi's history

One thing made clear in Ken Kessler's entertaining book about England's most important and beloved name in British hi-fi – *Quad: The Closest Approach* – is that the company never made a dime on the original ESL. Indeed, manufacturing such a crazily labour-hungry thing as a full-range electrostatic loudspeaker in the 1950s and making it available at a price that was within the reach of enthusiasts was a hellish challenge. Today's corporate accountants would simply disallow that sort of thing.

Armed with that fresh point of view, I've decided to stop haranguing Quad into tooling up and putting the original ESL back into production, to join their recent – and excellent – vintage reissue of the Quad II amplifier. In fact,

“All they need is to find an out-of-work machinist with NASA experience, which certainly shouldn't be too hard these days.”

I recently cemented my surrender by buying a pair of early-1960s Quad ESLs on eBay, which I intend to refurbish myself during the winter months ahead. But I'm not giving up on certain other items that would be a good deal easier to resurrect. So, without further ado, here are my top three choices (in reverse order, like all good beauty contests) for products that I wish could round out domestic audio's first wave of vintage reissues:

3) **Syrinx PU3 tonearm.** The Linn Ekos is nice, and I love my Naim Aro – but was there ever a sweeter sounding tonearm than the Syrinx? Someone should buy the name and the rights to the design from its originator, the ingenious Scott Strachan, and get cracking. All they need is to find an out-of-work machinist with NASA experience, which certainly shouldn't be too hard these days. Better bearings this time out would also be a plus.

2) **Spendor BC1 loudspeaker.** After the aforementioned ESL, this classic three-way standmounter was conspicuously good at

reproducing classical music in general, and opera in particular: The BC1 allowed voices to sound almost shockingly real, yet remained clear and poised during all the loud bits. I suppose the obsolete Celestion tweeters might be tricky to duplicate, but not so the original Bextrene woofer, which was Spendor's own. Notwithstanding the rebuilding of Iraq, plywood is still available in limited quantities.

1) **Audio Research SP6 preamplifier.**

Twenty-five years ago, this was the preamp to have. Designed and manufactured at a time when a (high-gain) phono section was *de rigueur* for any serious preamplifier, the SP6 combined a sweet, warmish sound with superb spatial performance and a level of musical performance (as in notes and beats) that was acceptably good, if not quite to Linn/Naim standards. And while subsequent Audio Research preamps have been better in some regards – clarity, colorlessness, and so forth – I haven't heard another one that I like this much overall. If the good folks in Minnetonka,

Minnesota are worried that an act of industrial nostalgia would diminish their more recent accomplishments, they should just hold their noses and do it anyway. The SP6 was a magical thing, and if they bring it in for less than \$2,000, I'm convinced that they'll sell every one they can make.

Art Dudley has written for Hi-Fi Heretic, Sounds Like and Listener. He lives in the US and works as Stereophile's editor-at-large



A year in the life of...

Is DVD-Audio winning the hi-res war?

Another year in the life of high-resolution audio begins and it's as good a time as any to take stock of how DVD-Audio and SACD have progressed over the past twelve months.

There are now only a few AV disc players that support one hi-res audio format but not the other – notably from Meridian, Arcam and Sony. The majority of hardware companies are now selling universal players, but at the budget end of the scale, DVD-Audio is more widely supported and the PCM-based format continues to gain ground in the car market.

Similarly, DVD-Audio rules the roost when it comes to consumer or small-studio disc production. Leaving aside expensive authoring tools, Minnetonka's \$99 discWelder BRONZE set the trend and has this year been joined by Cirilca's \$35 DVD-Audio Solo. That means you can burn your own *sans*-MLP DVD-Audio discs for a mere £20.

Last year, DVD-Audio stood on shaky ground. There was a lot of uncertainty about the schedule of releases, confusion created largely by the introduction of DualDisc, the DVD/CD double-sided 'hybrid' disc. This year, the tables have turned. The SACD release program still saunters along, but the vast majority of releases are from minor labels and feature music that does not appeal to the masses. Most of SACD's promotional organisations have been disbanded and interest remains rooted in audiophile circles.

There were (literally) just a handful of headline titles released on SACD, and although superb productions such as Elton John's *Tumbleweed Connection*, Eric Clapton's *461 Ocean Boulevard* and the Carpenters' *Singles 1969-1981* hit the shelves, there ▶

R

RETRO

HI-FI REVISITED

INDUCTIVELY COUPLED TWEETER TECHNOLOGY



This month, *Retro* breaks the mould. For once, this is less a retrospective of a specific model than a celebration of a

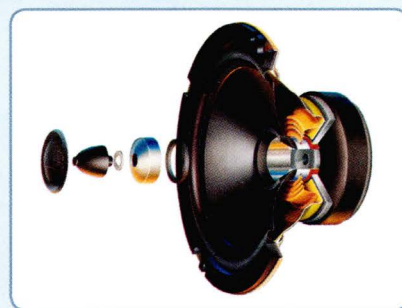
technology – ICT. A strange choice, you might think, particularly given that this intriguing yet largely ill-fated loudspeaker technology failed to set the hi-fi world alight. But its story, from invention to the present day, makes for interesting reading...

The company behind ICT, GLL (Goodmans Loudspeakers Ltd), was part of the TGI group. This was finally wound up a year or so ago, though individual member companies like Tannoy continue successfully on their way. The Goodmans brand remains, now attached to everything from karaoke systems to speaker stands, but GLL – and the core business of speaker building – has long gone.

In the early 1990s, though, GLL had something different to sell: something unique in the shape of Inductively Coupled Tweeter technology – ICT for short – based on a patent from one Boaz Elieli. ICT was briefly used as the core enabling technology in a range of Goodmans Arena Imagio speakers – the IC100, the 110, 120 and 130.

ICT was one of three varieties of coincident loudspeaker technologies manufactured by British brands at that time. Its rivals – KEF's Uni-Q and Tannoy's Dual Concentric – are still very popular today. A coincident driver is a compound unit that consists of a bass unit with a tweeter mounted at its acoustic centre, coupled for phase and level, the arrangement in many ways mimicking a single full-range driver. ICT was quite different from its rivals, however. Instead of being a separate unit, the tweeter consisted of nothing more than a metal tweeter dome that was suspended in the magnetic field of the main bass unit magnet.

A flange or skirt around the edge allowed induced eddy currents to circulate, providing the motor drive force. But the only magnet was the one in the bass unit, and there were no windings to overload and burn out. Indeed, there was no electrical connection between the amplifier and the tweeter, no mechanical suspension and, of course, no electrical



“ICT drivers were supposedly difficult to optimise but they could show real advantages.”

crossover. Such a drive unit is all but indestructible in practice, certainly in the high frequency region where all speakers are at greatest risk.

ICT drivers were supposedly difficult to optimise but they could show real advantages. They produce a very coherent sound off axis, a real advantage in automotive applications. Car makers soon recognised this fact: ICT units were used as line-fit speakers in vehicles from Rover, Ford, Peugeot and VW. Other homes for ICT included Sony televisions (the more expensive ones), the Aston Martin DB7, Jaguar XJS, BMW Mini and the MGF.

ICT continues on a relatively small scale. The rights to ICT technology were sold to one-time stablemate Tannoy, which uses 125mm and 150mm ICT drivers in its in-ceiling speaker units. ICT's popularity is assured by the fact that the drivers cannot burn out or go open circuit. This is a distinct advantage in a hard to service architectural speaker, where – in extreme cases – replacements can involve a cherry picker to reach the ceiling in a large conference room or airport lounge. Intriguingly, I'm told that the California-based Harman Automotive & Becker group found a loophole in the Elieli patent, which in principle allows them to make their own version of ICT. But to date no such driver has materialised. **HFC**

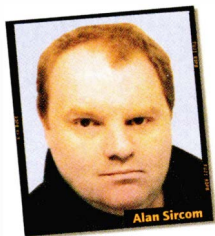
Alvin Gold

was nothing to really inspire new buyers... unless they're into freeform jazz. DVD-Audio fared somewhat better, in the US at least.

Rather than confusing the market, DualDisc has actually injected new life into DVD-Audio. While not all 2005 DualDisc releases have high-resolution content (those from Sony, obviously), the majority do, and they're selling in their bucket-loads. Almost one million people stateside have a copy of Rob Thomas' *Something to Be*, some of whom will undoubtedly wonder what the heck this DVD-Audio "thingy" is all about and give it a try. Other major releases include Talking Heads' *Brick*, a superb collection of eight of their albums and, of course, the 20th Anniversary Edition DualDisc version of *Brothers in Arms*, preferred by everyone concerned with its production – including Mark Knopfler – to its SACD counterpart. Even Jackson Browne's legendary *Running on Empty* finally put in an appearance this autumn. I'd say it was well worth the wait, were it not for the fact that we've waited about three years...

Neither DVD-Audio nor SACD are setting the world alight. They haven't turned the tide back towards physical media as was hoped by the record companies, but they're far from dead and buried. It's true, SACD is looking a bit green around the gills especially in the mainstream American market, but the sales of discs with DVD-Audio content have been significantly higher in 2005 than during any year to date.

Stuart M Robinson is editor and publisher of HighFidelityReview.com, a website dedicated to high-resolution digital sound



Measurebation

Kit fondlers of the world, unite!

I learned a fantastic word recently. It's a term of derision, usually fired at the 'all the gear, no idea' types. The word is 'measurebator', and I'll leave it to you to work out the etymology.

Although the word comes from photography, it fits beautifully into hi-fi. Let's face it, measurebators abound in audio. Twenty-six grand of shiny new hi-fi and only six CDs to play on it... measurebator. An encyclopaedic knowledge of the differences between the Spume Two and Spume Two+ preamps (despite both models being more than 20 years old)... measurebator. Using the words 'inter-transient silence' at the dinner table... measurebator. Focusing obsessively on the type of cables used when hearing an entirely new system made up of unheard of components for the very first time... you get the picture.

There's something peculiar about some branches of consumer electronics that they attract this measurebator element. Why don't you get experts in the relative merits of different washing machine spin cycles, unless they repair the things for a living? I think measurebators require a slow, yet steadily improving technology (like the gradual path to greatness of hi-fi), the technology must be recondite (so most people don't really understand the concepts), but cannot be so abstruse that people fail to have an opinion on it, even if that opinion is based on shaky understanding. And it must be something notionally 'arty'. There must also be an entry level, with regular upgrade points, so that the measurebator has both something to aspire to and something to criticise.

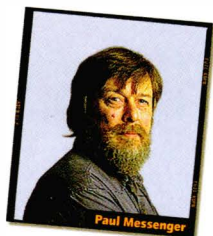
I think these concepts have helped make home cinema less of a challenge to hi-fi than it seemed at first; the technology wasn't easily differentiated, and few people have an opinion about the relative merits of 'flavours' of Dolby Digital. Home cinema also had a geometric growth rate at first, then levelled out. All of which makes it highly acceptable to the mainstream, but of little interest to the measurebator, who wants nothing more than to show off their knowledge of microscopic improvements to the technology.

“Why don't you get experts in the relative merits of different washing machine spin cycles, unless they repair the things?”



So, do we need the measurebator? They help drive the industry, even though they often drive it in the wrong direction. They were the people who said cables don't make a difference, then they were the people who said they did. They represent the cutting edge... albeit of geekdom. Somewhere down the line, everyone whoever connected their own CD player to amp and secretly enjoyed doing it has a little bit of the measurebator, struggling to come out. Go on... hug your inner geek.

Alan Sircom began his journalistic career in the early 1990s. He has since become one of the hi-fi and AV industry's most respected scribes



Deep impact

Velodyne finally conquer perfect placement

The bass end is undoubtedly the most problematic sector of the audio band to reproduce well. This is for a number of good reasons, mostly to do with the way the sound sources interact with and excite the standing wave modes of the listening room.

While a pair of good size speakers can often do a very good job of bass reproduction, the whole procedure is unpredictable. It relies entirely on the judgement of the listener to choose the optimum locations for the speakers to give the best balance.

Having used test gear to help me position speakers for many years, I've become uncomfortably aware of the pitfalls of trying to do the job without such assistance. So, the latest technology from US subwoofer specialist Velodyne is all the more welcome. Referred to either as Digital Drive (when incorporated in a subwoofer) or SMS (for subwoofer management system, when packaged as an outboard processor), this at last provides a simple, useful and above all convenient tool for assessing and processing low frequency signals to improve the bass alignment.

Perhaps 'simple' isn't quite the right word, as the package in both forms allows adjustment of a wide range of parameters. But it is at least simply presented, providing excellent feedback via an on screen display.

I've so far only had the chance to try just the smallest of the four DD subwoofers, the £2,000 DD-10, and I'm still exploring much of its potential. A solitary subwoofer used on its own has the inherent limitation that it excites

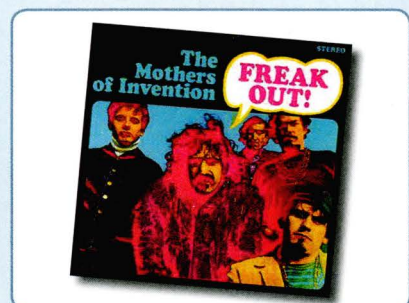


Released in June of 1966 as Verve/MGM V6-5005-2, *Freak Out!* was the second double-disc concept album in rock history after Dylan's *Blonde On Blonde*. A mixture of doo-wop vocals, guitar rock, vocal snippets, avant-garde noises and orchestral passages conducted by Zappa himself, the album was recorded in four days in Los Angeles T.T.G. studios by famed black producer Tom Wilson. Having made both Bob Dylan and Simon & Garfunkel into hit recording artists, the genius of Tom Wilson was to persuade MGM/Verve to take on Zappa's motley crew, a trick he would repeat again in late 1966 with another legend in the making, The Velvet Underground.

The originality of *Freak Out!* lies in the strangeness of Zappa himself, a Sicilian/Greek/German/Irish/French Arab born in 1940 and who as a boy suffered from chronic asthma. His parents moved him to the Mojave desert in California for health reasons and at a succession of different schools he developed an interest in the R&B of Howlin' Wolf and the avant-garde music of Varese and Stravinsky. At only 14, Zappa was already writing classical music and by age 19, he was married and into Dada and surrealism. In 1963 he was scoring amateur films for good money, which he invested in an electric guitar and a five-track studio.

After being framed for making a porno tape and doing time in jail, Zappa formed The Mothers with Ray Collins (vocals), Jimmy Carl Black (drums), Roy Estrada (bass) and Elliott Ingber (guitars). They played the Sunset Strip and were spotted by Tom Wilson, who signed them after being rejected by Clive Davis at Columbia for having "no commercial potential". Wilson admired the song *Trouble Every Day*, about the Watts County riots, and produced it on the album as a Dylan-styled harmonica rocker.

In fact, Wilson was very loose on the record. Stylistically, he allowed Zappa to indulge himself. If *Go Cry On Somebody's Shoulder* was naked 1950s doo-wop, the concluding side-long *The Return Of The Son Of Monster Magnet* included 24 freak friends from the



"After being framed for making a porno film and doing time in jail, Zappa formed The Mothers..."

Strip playing \$500 of percussion equipment at 1am. In truth, Wilson allowed Zappa to push the envelope because Frank wasn't into drugs and orchestrated the entire album in classical notation, even conducting the instrumental passages. In the end, Tom Wilson spent an unheard-of \$21,000 on the package.

Freak Out! was recorded at T.T.G. Sunset Highland 4-Track Studios in Los Angeles from 9 March to 12 March 1966. *Any Way The Wind Blows*, *You Didn't Try To Call Me*, *I Ain't Got No Heart* and *How Could I Be Such A Fool* were all overdubbed by the band and Gene Estes (percussionist) on 11 March. The freak finale was done the next day, a moment which saw Zappa inaugurate his Suzy Creamcheese invention. Kim Fowley, Dr John, Paul Butterfield and a legion of horn, cello, reed and woodwind players guested on sessions that never fell into the chaos of the Stones' later *Satanic Majesties* misfire.

As an ironic document of the weirdness of the LA psychedelic scene of the 1960s, *Freak Out!* has no equal (except in the sombre tones of Love's *Forever Changes*). After having gone through 14 release incarnations (including the latest Rykodisc mini-papersleeve CD edition) *Freak Out!* is rightfully seen like as a 1960s psychedelic classic, worthy to stand alongside the likes of *Sgt Pepper*. **HFC**

Mark Prendergast

M

MUSO

CLASSIC ALBUMS

FRANK ZAPPA & THE MOTHERS OF INVENTION FREAK OUT!

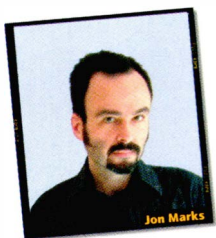
much more extreme room modes than a pair of subs – or more. I'm really waiting to get my hands on the SMS-1, a £550 processor that duplicates all bar the variable servo control feature of the DD subs.

Three crucial features of both the DD-10 and the SMS-1 are that they have full remote control, so adjustment may be made from the listening seat; both have connections to a TV, for accurate feedback on all settings; and they come with built-in test tones and a calibration microphone, so that automatic or manual equalisation can be performed, based on measurements made at the listening seat.

There's a graphic equaliser, fixed or parametric, auto or manual EQ, adjustable frequency and roll-off of low pass and subsonic filters, adjustable phase in 15 degree increments, and so on. And that's just with Version 2.0 of the software: future upgrades are promised in due course.

Velodyne's innovative DSP developments could well represent the future of subwoofery, and perhaps of bass reproduction in general. The biggest name in subwoofers is fast turning itself into a digital signal processing (DSP) specialist, too.

Paul Messenger is a former editor of Hi-Fi Choice and has been writing about his favourite hobby for nearly 30 years



Studio succour

Your local pro shop may be the hi-fi cure

Audiotitis (*n*) – the feeling occasionally experienced by some seasoned audiophiles that they may have exhausted their upgrade options. That the law of diminishing returns may be about to kick in.

It's not unusual to feel a bit jaded every now and again by the quest for a better sound after picking over a van-load of brochures. After all, if the grass on your side of the fence sometimes seems to have more crispy brown patches than verdant growth, where's all the better greenery?

Well, there is indeed a fence, and on one side of it are the pastures of domestic audio. On the other is a place unfamiliar to audiophiles, a place where amplifiers and speakers graze happily alongside keyboards, guitars and Digital Audio Workstations, a place known, of course, as the field of professional audio



“Once you’ve found a path through the Moogs and drum kits, there’s plenty of interesting gear to investigate.”

equipment. Okay, Monty Don probably wouldn't give their grass ten out of ten either, but it's still a place well worth visiting.

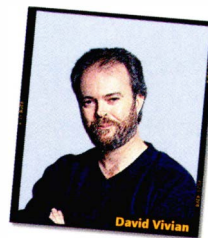
Some well-recognised brands already have a presence on both sides of said fence – think of Tannoy, B&W, Quad (its electrostatics have been used to monitor more than a handful of classical recordings), Bryston and ATC. There may not be too many hi-fi fans who are also musicians, but once you've found a path through the Moogs and drum kits, there's plenty of interesting gear to investigate, like affordable active loudspeakers, DACs/ADCs and various digital recorders and processors (the Behringer Ultracurve Pro, for example).

It's evidently a truism to say that not all hi-fi is made equal, and there is some surprisingly ropery pro equipment out there (I vividly remember one set of active speakers from a respected brand that produced the most shockingly coloured, muddy sound I've heard from a loudspeaker). The same rules apply here as in domestic audio – let your ears be the judge of what sounds best, take along your own favourite recordings, and try to listen to a good selection of what's on offer.

If you decide on a visit to your local pro emporium, don't be put off by the spotty muppet in the corner making a racket with three chords and a guitar amp whose volume knob's turned up to 11. Ignore also the small but vocally rabid minority in the pro community (usually to be found on a few Internet bulletin boards and mailing lists) who would have you believe that all pro gear is

automatically superior to every piece of domestic hi-fi that's ever been built, and anyone who listens to music purely for pleasure is self-deluded. Instead, if you're ever unlucky enough to feel the dread hand of audiotitis on your shoulder, pay a remedial visit to the professional field – you might well like what you find there.

Jon Marks has been happily addicted to hi-fi for 20 years, especially since becoming a member of the hi-fi press in the mid-1990s



Ergonomicon

Let's hear it for high-quality design

Good design doesn't have to explain itself. The teapot that pours, the milk carton you can open, the one knob/six button integrated amp: encounters with these and other unsung heroes of our manufactured environment are unmemorable because they require no unnatural thoughts or actions. They fit us, we don't have to adapt to them.

On the whole, domestic hi-fi (and especially the stuff designed in Britain) is a joy to use.

But when was the last time you mastered a modern car stereo? Chances are you remember your most recent radio days all too vividly. You remember the frustration, the bewilderment, the feelings of dread and loathing. An on-off button? If there's one at all, it will be tiny, a mushroom nestling in a forest of competing controls. Then again, powering-up might be a matter of hitting a tab of translucent plastic marked 'tuner' or 'CD' or something with a meaningless symbol on it. How would you know? Prod and hope. That's when your troubles really start.

It won't have slipped your attention that car stereos with big friendly knobs, simple displays and easily understandable buttons – the sort we tend to take for granted on our side of the home/car audio divide – aren't made any more. You might even sympathise with the designers. No way can the mighty sophistication of today's multi-faceted units be presented with the child's play simplicity of the old sets. Wrong – advanced technology and intuition needn't be incompatible (just look at the iPod), but you'd never believe it.

I wonder which part of 'less-is-more' car audio designers don't understand? Lean, clean minimalism has been the dress-code for top-line domestic kit for at least a couple of decades. Look at the products of Naim, Exposure, Cyrus, Meridian, Quad *et al* – stripped bare of all frills and daft functions.

Contrast that with the fascia just about any in-car unit. I have no beef with the way it is engineered or sounds, or any company's endeavour to give you maximum technology for your money. It's the miniaturised Piccadilly Circus light show I can't stand.

There used to be a straight correlation between how much appeared to be going on and perceived value. That's why even relatively rudimentary sets were tricked up to look complicated and technically precocious. Today, there's no need for such deception. What with the advent of second and third generation RDS, CD multichangers, digital signal processing and the like, even budget hardware can call on more than enough complexity with which to bamboozle the poor punter.

Good design is here to help, not to hinder. The basics, at least, should be obvious to anyone. And by and large, it's the Germans who most consistently get it right. I've never encountered a Blaupunkt I couldn't use after a couple of minutes, while Becker's no-nonsense approach is probably the closest thing we have to a good old fashion radio set.

So here's the thing, car audio designers: we've had it with itsy-bitsy buttons and garish graphics. Buy a British hi-fi and take note.

David Vivian has been wallowing in gorgeous hi-fi and then describing its virtues and vices in Hi-Fi Choice since 1990

TECHNO

TECHNOLOGY EXPLORED

WHAT IS FREQUENCY?



Gone are the days when *HFC* was full of 'spectrum plots', but we still make more than the odd reference to spectra, frequency curves and such like – and plenty of manufacturers' literature includes them, to say nothing of more technical publications. But what is a spectrum? To judge from some of the discussions on our website forum – www.hifichoice.co.uk – there's still plenty of confusion over the terminology.

First of all, what is frequency? It is, of course, the number of times in one second that a repetitive waveform repeats its basic pattern. Mains electricity has a frequency of 50Hz (hertz) – it goes through positive and negative voltages 50 times a second. Higher-pitched sounds have a higher frequency. This is all nice, obvious stuff as long as one is dealing with strictly repetitive patterns like the mains, but then music doesn't come into that category, or not for more than a second or two at a time.

All the same, it is still valid to talk about the frequency components of a piece of music. While the overall structure may not be at all repetitive, from moment to moment it is possible to find repetitive elements that can be described in terms of frequency.

Consider a bit of music – let's say we're looking at just one second of it. A recording of that music is, in a sense, a description of it. This is more obviously (though not exclusively) true when one thinks of digital recording: for one second of music, a CD stores 44,100 16-bit binary numbers. These represent the voltage of the waveform at successive times. That's an obvious way to store the information, but it's not the only one. In fact, there is an infinite variety of ways to store it. Any way that stores the same amount of information unambiguously will do, though most of those ways are completely impractical.

Using a nasty bit of maths called an 'integral transform' (actually it's a 'Fourier Transform', just one of many different kinds of integral transform), one can convert that description of the second of music into a description based on frequencies. The result is still 44,100 numbers, which are in fact amplitude and



“Because of the way the maths works, it shows us which frequencies are present in that second.”

phase at 22,050 different frequencies. This description is just as exact as the conventional moment-to-moment amplitude description but it enables us to look at the waveform in a different light.

Specifically, because of the way the maths works, it shows us which frequencies are present in that second of music. In general, all frequencies will be present to some small degree, some quite pronounced. In specific cases like electronically-generated test tones, only one frequency will be present. If one draws a graph of amplitude versus frequency (conventionally ignoring phase) one has created a 'spectrum plot'. This is usually plotted on a Fast Fourier Transform (FFT) analyser.

The important thing is that this is just another way of looking at the same information. There is, however, a significant difference. With the usual amplitude/time description of a waveform, it is perfectly valid to talk about the amplitude at a given instant. With frequencies, you can't do that: in fact, the shorter the time interval you examine, the less exact it is possible to be about the frequency or frequencies present.

We'll return to the subject of frequency and spectrum in the next *Techno*, and will look at some of the implications of examining a signal by spectrum rather than amplitude. **HFC**

Richard Black



Love sound forever.

elegante

Whether you're watching a film or enjoying music, drama and excitement are essential elements of a memorable performance. Elegante's pristine appearance and flawless reproduction inspires a passion for performance that leaves you eagerly anticipating your next encounter.

Your life, your

MISSION

www.mission.co.uk

IAG House, Sovereign Court,
Ermine Business Park, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, PE29 6XU.
Tel 01480 447700 Fax 01480 431767



LOGIK PS110 PORTABLE SPEAKERS £15

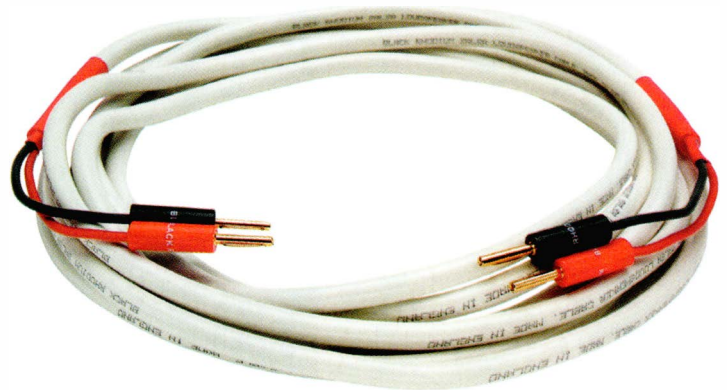
⊕ These tiny flat-panel speakers were never going to qualify as real hi-fi, but are they worth putting in an overnight bag to make listening to that CD or MP3 portable a bit more pleasant in a hotel room? They're very slightly thicker than three CD jewel cases when they're clipped together, and they weigh next to nothing. Power is from four AAA batteries, amplification (an honest 0.9 watts is quoted) is built in and the transducers themselves use NXT's Distributed Mode Technology. Not surprisingly, the sound lacks any attempt at bass, but further up the range it's not bad at all. Frequency response may not be very flat, but there's a communicative quality that's inherent to NXT designs. This makes listening pleasurable and, in smaller rooms at least, a practical alternative to headphones.

☎ 0845 850 0545 🌐 www.dixons.co.uk

BLACK RHODIUM SALSA LOUDSPEAKER CABLE £25 PER METRE

⊕ Nothing revolutionary here, at least not if you're accustomed to the Black Rhodium way of doing things. Silicone rubber insulation is a familiar feature across the range, but in this case the conductors are relatively hefty copper, silver-plated and aimed at the moderately upmarket kind of system. Termination with basic gold-plated plugs is £25 extra: we tried it in that form. The sound stuck to the BR tendency towards subtly lifted bass, but seemed more rounded out overall than we remember from cheaper BR models, with nicely detailed and extended treble. There's subtlety and good, natural vocals, too. Very dense textures seem just a shade congested compared with reference cables, but smaller ensembles really shine through with excellent imaging.

☎ 01332 342233 🌐 www.blackrhodium.co.uk



FUNK FIRM ACHROMAT TURNTABLE PLATTER MAT £40

⊕ One-time Pink Triangle designer Arthur Khoubessarian is back, producing among other things this, er, funky-looking mat (in various colours apart from red; also in 5mm thickness for slightly more money). It's made of 3mm-thick foamed vinyl, claimed to offer better acoustic matching to the LP than Perspex or even solid vinyl, and is light enough to work on sprung turntables. Its strengths lie mainly in detail and surface noise. The former is improved, the latter altered in character so as to make it less obvious, though absolute (measured) level seems unchanged. If there's a weakness, it would seem to be a slight lack of upper bass compared with a regular felt mat. That's minor, though, and detail gains are not to be sneezed at. Recommended!

☎ 020 8697 2705 🌐 www.thefunkfirm.co.uk

BLACK RHODIUM SYMPHONY ANALOGUE INTERCONNECT £95 (1M PAIR)

⊕ Black Rhodium seems to have adopted a policy of twisting left and right interconnects together – as recommended in *Hi-Fi Choice* some time ago! It's a useful extra guard against interference, adding to the stout braided screen and the pseudo-balanced operation. Signal integrity is assured by high quality plugs and, allegedly, by the use of nickel conductors. Well, we certainly found that there is plenty of detail to be had with this cable, though we had slight doubts about its bass extension: low frequencies seem a touch light, but tonality is good further up. This is a slightly oddball cable and should certainly be tried.

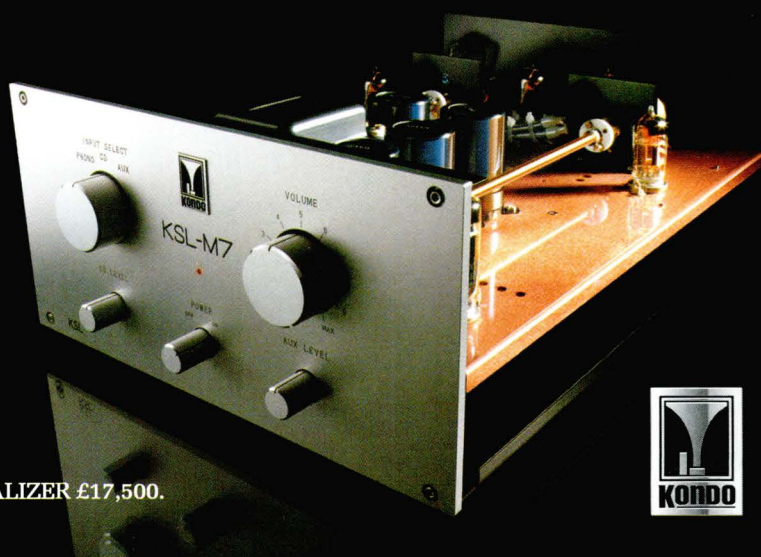
☎ 01332 342233 🌐 www.blackrhodium.co.uk



DEFINITIVE AUDIO

Mセブン | KSL-M7

LINE STAGE VALVE PREAMPLIFIER WITH PHONO EQUALIZER £17,500.



A gift to music.

Definitive Audio offers you a fresh and focused way of choosing a sophisticated sound for your home. Our service is bespoke, our philosophy is unique and our reputation peerless. The systems we create are infused with an elusive quality that will expand your musical horizons. We use a judicious selection of the world's most artful and ingenious creations, including the beautiful, beguiling Living Voice loudspeakers from England and Kondo KSL electronics from Japan.

International and marine enquiries also welcome.
Complete systems from: £5,000 to £300,000.

OBX R2

LOUDSPEAKER SYSTEM FROM £4,400.

IBX R2	£4,000
IBX RW	£7,000
OBX R2	£4,400
OBX RW	£7,500

楽王 | KSL-GAKUOH

22 WATT MONO VALVE AMPLIFIERS £48,000 PER PAIR





**VAN DEN HUL THE BRIDGE
 LOUDSPEAKER CABLE £6 PER METRE**

⌚ This pale coloured, reasonably slim-line conductor is actually one of vdH's cheapest speaker cables. Nevertheless, The Bridge includes 'silver-coated' copper conductors in its bill of materials. There's quite a lot of these conductors too, giving The Bridge a low to moderate resistance that makes it suitable for longish runs. The spaced-pair construction ensures capacitance is low so amp compatibility problems are most unlikely. The sound is sometimes a touch dry and we wouldn't have minded more bass at times, but that's being a bit picky at this price. So, enjoy the lively energy and clear, detailed midrange, plus excellent side-to-side imaging and very decent front-to-back staging to boot.

☎ 01235 511166 🌐 www.vanden Hul.com

**PRO-JECT PHONO BOX MKII
 PHONO STAGE £55**

⌚ This little box is a fully-functional phono stage catering for both MM and MC cartridges, boosting the signal from either to a level compatible with regular line-level (CD etc.) inputs. Loading isn't adjustable for either type, though it's at least tailored to 'typical' values of 47k and 100 ohms. A wall-wart supply provides enough volts to ensure overload-free headroom, and while noise is a bit higher than is ideal for MC cartridges, it's very good with MM. Sound is clear and open and generally better than it has any right to be at this price. It's actually a little tailored, boosting lower midrange at the expense of treble, but that's not at all unpleasant and often a welcome foil to the bright sound of budget turntables and cartridges. Well built, hum-free and good enough to upgrade the built-in phono stage of many budget integrated amps.

☎ 01235 511166 🌐 www.project-audio.com



**VAN DEN HUL 'THE VDH HDMI'
 HDMI DIGITAL INTERCONNECT £55 (1M CABLE)**

⌚ Yes, HDMI is a video interconnect standard, but in some ways it's the digital audio interface we've always wanted. Specified to handle up to eight channels of 24-bit/192kHz audio alongside video, it's clearly way ahead of S/PDIF: maybe high-end stereo audio manufacturers would like to use it? Thus far, HDMI connections are limited to a number of recent DVD players and display devices, plus a few multichannel amps, but the improvement it can bring to video is impressive, and its potential as a digital audio carrier is of potential interest, too. This cable is well made and the connectors mate well; longer lengths are also available for a reasonable premium.

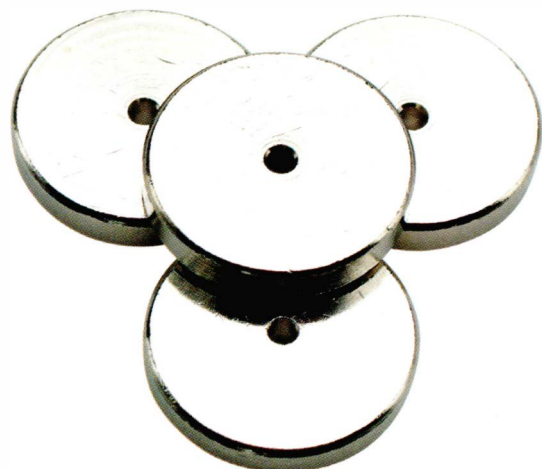
☎ 01235 511166 🌐 www.vanden Hul.com



**STANDS UNIQUE
 SPIKE FEET £9 (PACK OF 4)**

⌚ These are nothing more than washers, made of nickel-plated brass, with 20mm outer diameter, 2mm hole and 3mm thickness. They sit betwixt spike and treasured wooden floor and prevent marks. They're so basic, we almost couldn't be bothered actually testing them – which would have been a mistake. Fact is, they make quite a difference to the sound. Spikes often have a tightening-up effect on rhythm sections, but if anything these feet do even more in that department. Their one disadvantage is that they are even more critical over adjustment than 'raw' spikes but once that's sorted, they well justify the effort. Worth using even where the floor protection is not an issue.

☎ 01933 412227 🌐 www.standsunique.com





Say hello to Genie this Christmas!

Thanks to Genie's unique blend of detail, refinement and performance, you'll begin to think it's Christmas every day. Winner of *What Hi-Fi? Sound and Vision* Product of the Year and countless other awards from around the world, there's never been a better time to say hello to Genie.

MORDAUNT-SHORT

Their law

Veteran dance punks The Prodigy are back on track... and sound quality is as important as attitude, they argue. Hi-Fi Choice met them at XL Records' West London HQ

It's been a long time since The Prodigy were number one in twenty-seven countries, and that's partly down to Liam Howlett – their musical and techie brains – taking seven years to make last year's *Always Outnumbered Never Outgunned*. It used samples of guest vocalists – including Liam Gallagher – rather than featuring Prodigy mainstays Maxim Reality or Keith Flint. But now the whole gang is back. Not only have they released *Their Law – The Singles 1990-2005*, but work has already started on a new studio album. And it's not just about snarling, spiky attitude.

"With a lot of what I do it has to be the best sound," explains Liam. "It could be the best riff in the world, but if I can't find the right sound, then it'll just be f**ked off. The way The Prodigy records sound is really important. I guess a traditional band would be more worried about the tune itself. With me, I'm obviously concerned about the tune, but the sound of it has to really hit, and burst out the speaker. I've thrown away loads of good ideas because I can't get the sound idea right."

Despite going through periods where he'd buy new techie gizmos like they were sweets, a key component to The Prodigy's beefy, hard hitting warmth has been a good, old-fashioned Mackie analogue mixing desk.

"I produced the whole of *The Fat of the Land* on that, and the second album," Liam

recalls. "Then when I flipped over to the digital Mackie desk... load of sh*t. It was crap. The sound suffered. It didn't have any distortion on it. So I went back to the old one. I'd used the digital for two years and put the old one in the garage. Then I went back to the analogue. I pulled it out and it was covered in rust. It's still like that now but I use it."

1997's *The Fat of the Land* saw Liam become a studio producer with a voracious

pieces of equipment and only using five per cent of each one."

"That's true of anything," adds Keith. "Look at Lowry and his sh*t. He just had a box of crayons man, and he was f**king huge!"

Liam now uses Propellerhead's Reason software to work out ideas. However, he doesn't use its in-built soft-synths, arguing they sound way too thin when they're coming out of your hi-fi speakers. Hence, although Reason is the

"By concentrating on the timbre above all else, The Prodigy have produced material that can turn a hi-fi into a lethal weapon."

appetite for gear. He'd use everything in the room. But that was to change.

"I realised after that it is about having a one-to-one with just a few bits of equipment," he admits. "It's about how you manipulate sound rather than trying to fill your room with all this stupid equipment. It's not worth anything now. I've got racks of samplers that are worth fifty quid each."

"eBay man!!" laughs Maxim, suggesting an outlet for the old samplers. "I think there's more skill in using one piece of equipment and rinsing that 100 per cent, than having ten

compositional tool, trusty old Roland and Korg synths are deployed for the final sounds, as well as an old compressor, a Culture Vulture Distortion Unit, and a handful of extras. And that's about as complicated as it gets. However, no matter how much equipment they're using, by concentrating on the quality of timbres above all else, The Prodigy have produced material that can turn a hi-fi into lethal weapons.

"When you feel the energy he (Liam) puts in the music," Maxim asserts, "it just releases something in you. It's the ultimate."

Gal Detourn

ESSENTIAL PRODIGY RECORDINGS

Experience (1992)

Featuring singles like *Your Love* and *Charly*, this was made entirely on a Roland W30 workstation. Hence, the sound is more one-dimensional and aimed squarely at the then 'rave' scene.



The Fat of the Land (1997)

Featuring hits like *Firestarter* and *Smack My Bitch Up*, this was one of the fastest selling albums ever. A crunching, hip-hop/dance/punk fusion that had more punch than Muhammad Ali.



Always Outnumbered Never Outgunned (2004)

It was seven years in the making and received mixed reviews. Although sonically and stylistically varied, it never quite gels. A stepping stone instead of a destination.



WIN! A SUPERB PAIR OF ALR JORDAN CLASSIC 5 SPEAKERS WORTH £1,200!



A LR Jordan burst back into the UK limelight recently, clinching a Best Buy badge for the Classic 5 in *HFC 275's Ultimate Group Test*. The German manufacturer has a penchant for British-designed metal drivers and this lively floorstander shows exactly what can be achieved with a good metal cone. Twin 140mm drivers flank the tweeter d'Appolito style, all housed in a slim, real-wood veneer box. With a bit of space behind them, the speakers are capable of a truly delicious sound – strong bass with an even and warm tone. The Classic 5's well-mannered output is capable of taming even the wildest recordings without masking detail, and the overall coherence and musical communication is delivered without force or aggression. Its forte, however, is its imaging: superior

focus, depth and freedom from boxiness. Low-level bass detail is equally well delivered, so if ambient music is your thing, send in your entry now!

For your chance to win a pair, simply answer the question below. The lucky winner will be drawn at random.



QUESTION:

What does the German manufacturer have a penchant for?

- A:** A delicate waltz by Johann Strauss?
- B:** British-designed metal drivers?
- C:** Die beleidigte Leberwurst spielen?

TO ENTER:

By Phone: Simply call **0906 403 1013** and follow the instructions (maximum cost of call: £1.50).

By Text: Simply send the text message **JORDAN** (followed by a space) with the answer A, B or C to **80889**. For example, if you think the answer is A: A delicate waltz by Johann Strauss, then text JORDAN A to 80889.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Employees of Future Publishing (including freelancers) and their relatives and any agents involved are ineligible to enter. The Editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. Prizes cannot be exchanged for cash. Closing date for entries is 8th February 2006. The entries will be judged after the closing date and the winners will be notified by telephone within ten days of that date. Prizes will be sent out within 28 days of notification by the companies involved, not Hi-Fi Choice or Future Publishing. Entering costs – BY TEXT: 1x 50p (including VAT) for each entry plus your usual text message cost. This service is available to T-Mobile, Orange, Vodafone and O2 customers only. BY PHONELINE: Each call costs a maximum of £1.50. Please remember to get permission from the person who pays the bill before you enter. No purchase necessary. Alternatively, please send your name, address and telephone number with the correct answer to: Hi-Fi Choice, Future Publishing, 1 Balcombe Street, London NW1 6NA. If you have any problems making your call or sending your text, please contact the service provider, Opal Telecom. Tel: 0845 330 5002. Email: futuresupport@opaltelecom.co.uk. In terms and conditions..

PROVOance



THE WILSON AUDIO
SYSTEM 7
HIGH-END PRODUCT OF THE YEAR

Provo, Utah's hi-fi artisans, the speaker builders of Wilson Audio, have now been at the top of the high-end tree for three decades. Recent recognition of their achievements tells us that complacency has yet to affect David A. Wilson's enthusiasm. As if challenged by rave reviews and countless awards, David has launched a new flagship to supplant the legendary WAMM – surely the longest-running, true high-end speaker design of all time. The Alexandria has already been acknowledged as the greatest cost-no-object speaker available today. Its sister speakers in the WATCH range achieve the ultimate in home theatre sound playback.

As the Alexandria paves the way for new and exciting advances in music reproduction, so, too, does the Wilson WATT Puppy System 7 remain the benchmark for consumers who desire compact speakers that demonstrate zero compromise. It is with great pleasure we note that the WATT Puppy, closing in on 20 years of production, was awarded the honour of High End Product of the Year 2003 by Hi-Fi News. Now that's what we call provenance.



absolutesounds ltd.

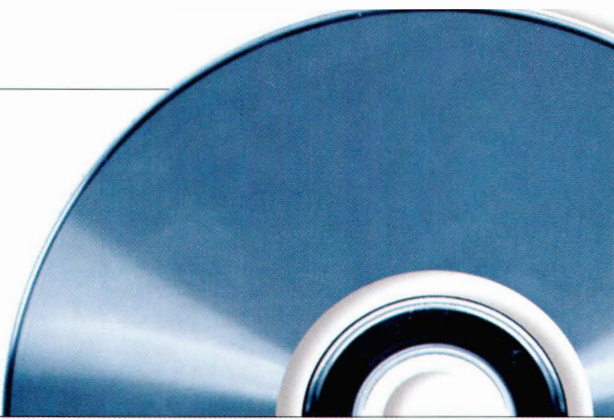
58 Durham Road, London SW20 0TW T: +44 (0)20 89 71 39 09 F: +44 (0)20 88 79 79 62
www.absolutesounds.com info@absolutesounds.com

ChoiceCuts



This month's varied musical morsels

Reviews by Alvin Gold, Jason Kennedy, Dave Oliver, Mark Prendergast, Phil Strongman and Nigel Williamson



AUDIOPHILE VINYL

STEVIE RAY VAUGHAN & DOUBLE TROUBLE

Couldn't Stand the Weather

Epic/Pure Pleasure

2x180g vinyl

Music: This reissue of Stevie Ray Vaughan's second album from 1984 spreads the original single album's eight tracks over three sides, with tracks from the original sessions on the fourth alongside a short interview with the late SRV himself.

Half the titles are covers and include WC Clark's *Cold Shot*, *The Things (That) I Used To Do* and a stunning – if not exactly original – rendition of Hendrix's *Voodoo Chile (Slight Return)*. There are several fine instrumentals but the standout track has to be *Tin Pan Alley*, which sizzles with atmosphere (and tape hiss) but reveals what a superb sense of feel this Texan bluesman had. ★★★★★

Sound: This was always a good sounding album, but this cut is astonishing in its clarity and power. Turn it up all the way and you're in the studio, soaking up the power and glory of a great musician. ★★★★★ JK

LALO SCHIFRIN

There's A Whole Lalo Schifrin Goin' On

DOT/Speakers Corner

180g vinyl

Music: Lalo Schifrin is an Argentinean composer who is known principally for his film scores, including the original *Mission Impossible*, *Bullit*, *Dirty Harry* and *Enter the Dragon*. This 1968 album is rather different: an experiment in the free associating style

popular at the time, so there appear to be no bars to stylistic combinations and instrumental fusions. *Secret Code* finds synthesizer playing alongside tabla to bizarre effect, while elsewhere on *Hawks Vs Doves*, there is a battle of musical styles that you won't find anywhere else. 'Eccentric genius' would seem an apt description of this album, but anyone looking for genuinely funky cheese need look no further. ★★ ★ **Sound:** This is a gorgeously round and full sounding LP, with a depth of sound that you just don't get with digital recordings and which is pretty scarce with analogue ones too. ★★★★★ JK

These LPs were supplied by Speakers Corner and Pure Pleasure and can be purchased from Vivante: 01293 822186 www.vivante.co.uk

COMPACT DISC & VINYL



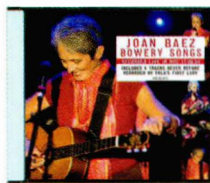
AMY RIGBY

Little Fugitive

Rounders Records

Music: Miss R just drips NYC rock chick charm with cheeky tuneful numbers dedicated to her husband's ex wife – no, honestly – as well as to the late Joey Ramone. Her voice is part edgy New Wave whisper, part folksy flourish while her guitar – both electric and acoustic – reflects her easygoing attitude to the whole verse-chorus-solo game. The extended family anthem *The Trouble With Jeanie* and the *Rubber Soul* style *So You Know Now* are perhaps the best two songs here but the whole dirty dozen are pretty damn hot. One little fugitive you should definitely make room for. ★★★★★

Sound: Co-producer Jon Graboff has skilfully brought in some nice mix touches from the 1965-68 golden age of Beatles pop. Yesterday always knows... ★★★★★ PS



JOAN BAEZ

Bowery Songs

Proper

Music: The 2004 American presidential race was hardly a good time for a veteran radical like Baez and this live album, recorded the weekend after Bush's re-election, crackles with a potent political charge. She disguises her disappointment with a defiant performance, dips into Dylan's songbook for four of the album's 14 titles, including the previously unrecorded *Dink's Song* and *Seven Curses*, and links political struggles past and present by dedicating the 1930s protest anthem *Joe Hill* to Michael Moore. Baez summons up more passion here than we've heard from her in a long time. ★★ ★

Sound: Backed by a high-class folk-rock band, the angelic voice that sounded shot on her last record, has recovered much of its former purity. ★★ ★ NW



VERDI

La Traviata

Anna Netrebko, Ronaldo Villazón, Thomas Hampson, Carlo Rizzi, (conductor), Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra & Chorus

DGG 00289 477 5936 2-disc set

Music: This is a recording of a vastly oversubscribed Salzburg Festival staging of *La Traviata*, the tragic story of courtesan love. The two male leads are excellent, and the Vienna Philharmonic under Carlo Rizzi gives measured, committed performances, but real star of the piece is Anna Netrebko, who has perfect intonation, superb control and real expression and feeling. ★★★★★

Sound: Recorded live at the 2005 Salzburg Festival, this very live sounding event, with all stage movements fully audible, is one recording where a video soundtrack and surround sound would add to (rather than detract from) the whole experience. ★★★★★ AG



LADYSMITH BLACK MAMBAZO

Long Walk To Freedom

Head's Up

Music: Almost a decade ago, South Africa's premier vocal group sold a million albums after one of their Zulu songs was used in a TV commercial. Since then, they've struggled to repeat that success, recording inappropriate duets with the Lighthouse Family and Des'ree and indulging in such dodgy enterprises as a chill-out record and an orchestral album. Now finally they've made another record worthy of their talents. Revisiting a dozen of their best-known songs with a bunch of guest vocalists including Zap Mama, Taj Mahal, Emmylou Harris and Natalie Merchant, the difference is this time their collaborators have been chosen not in cynical pursuit of pop commercialism but for their artistic empathy. A brilliant and highly credible return to form. ★★★★★ **Sound:** Sublime *a cappella* choral vocals from the eight-strong troupe, recorded with a warmth and intimacy that sounds as if the Zulu nation is holding a party in your living room. ★★ ★ NW

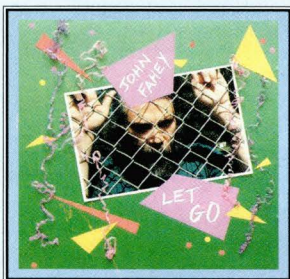


ELLEN TAAFFE ZWILICH

Violin Concerto, Rituals

Pamela Frank (violin), NEXUS percussion ensemble, IRIS Chamber Orchestra, Michael Stern (conductor) Saarbrücken Radio Symphony Orchestra Naxos American Classics 8.559268

Music: Ellen Taaffe Zwilich is a US composer with an eclectic catalogue of symphonic works and concertos to her credit. Her *Violin Concerto* is an attractive lyrical work, while *Rituals* is scored for percussion and orchestra and is programmatic, with sections for invocations, marches and dances, memorials and contests. ★★ ★ **Sound:** Not as open and as dynamic as some of the *American Classics* series, but there is nothing overtly wrong with this recording, except for a rather flat and lousy transfer. But at the price, this is still a good value recording of some attractively varied works. ★★ ★ AG

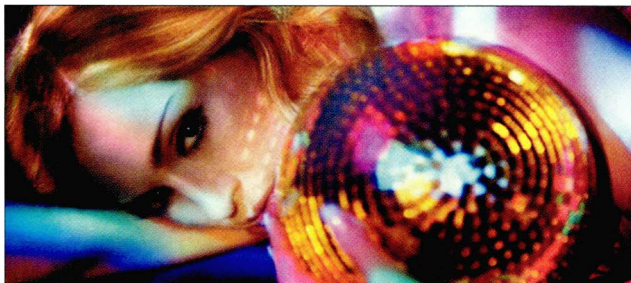


THIS MONTH'S CLASSIC HI-FI TEST DISC "There are few finer albums available."

JOHN FAHEY *Let Go* Varrick

Music: Although acoustic guitarist Fahey's music would never be described as 'folk', that music's influence can be heard on half of these ten tracks. The others come from a place that seems to be entirely original. Fahey was a big fan of Bukka White and other blues musicians and they undoubtedly will have influenced him... but this is not the blues as it is usually known. While there are many upbeat tunes, the title track is not one of them; instead it is perfectly

phrased, precisely timed and so completely honest that it speaks directly to the heart. ★★★★★
Sound: While Fahey made his most popular albums in the 1960s and early 1970s, it wasn't until the early 1980s that the quality of his recordings got to match that of his playing. Sadly, this is not matched by the quality of the naff cover artwork. But if you want to hear the dynamics and guts of a guitar, there are few finer albums available. ★★★★★ **JK**

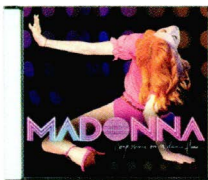


MADONNA
Confessions On A Dancefloor

Maverick

Music: Say what you like about Madonna (and – let's face it – everyone has an opinion on both her music and her ever-changing persona) but she still has the ability to make an album release an event, and it's not just down to marketing muscle. *Confessions On A Dancefloor* is the best, most enjoyable album she's done for ages, possibly the best since 1998's *Ray of Light*. *Confessions...* throws in a feast of knowing disco references, infectious beats and catchy Kylie-isms to produce a recipe that tastes like fun, and not a lot else. It's a record that's meant for dancing and it does what it says on the tin. Perhaps, like her acting, it's when she doesn't seem to be trying too hard that she produces her best work. ★★★★★

Sound: Going for a raw, street feel, the sound has been stripped back to basics with most of the tracks being laid down on a laptop in one of Madge's many garden sheds. Only kidding – this is as polished and perfect an example of pop sheen as you'll find anywhere. ★★★★★ **DO**



DVD-AUDIO & SACD

ROBIN HOLCOMB/ WAYNE HORVITZ

Solos

SACD (stereo/multichannel SACD plus stereo CD layer)

Songlines

Music: Wayne Horvitz and Robin Holcomb are husband and wife pianists. They have often contributed to one another's projects, but this is their first true collaboration. As the title suggests, this is a collection of solo pieces, six by Holcomb and eight by Horvitz. The jazz and blues roots of Horvitz's beautifully-timed playing contrast with Holcomb's ethereal and more abstract style. Her work shifts from borderline atonalism to shimmering beauty and at times reminds one of Tori Amos, albeit without the voice. Although a bit sparse for some, *Solos* is a work of depth and emotional clarity. ★★★★★

Music: Recorded direct to DSD, this is a pure-bred SACD with all the clarity and tonal depth that that implies. The Steinway D piano sounds shiny and strong, and the overall sound is smooth and cohesive. You don't get as great a sense of the recording venue as might be possible, but this remains an impressively produced disc. ★★★★★ **JK**



MOZART

Requiem (K.626 unfinished)

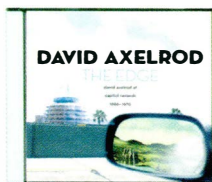
Nikolaus Harnoncourt (conductor), Concentus Musicus Wien, Arnold Schoenberg Choir, Christine Schafer (soprano), Bernarda Fink (alto), Kurt Streit (tenor), Gerald Finkey (bass)

SACD (stereo/multichannel SACD plus stereo CD layer and CD-ROM material)

Deutsche Harmonia Mundi hybrid 82876 58705 2

Music: No sterile exercise, Harnoncourt's performance of the Mozart *Requiem* is a curious mixture of period and modern sensibilities, in instrumentation, unornamented singing and the strident tempi adopted. At the same time, there is an almost understated passion and a striking confidence unfamiliar from Harnoncourt performances of the past. It's not so much what he does, but the way he does it. ★★★★★

Sound: Sound quality is complicit in all this. The live recording, made at the Großer Musikvereinsaal Wien, Austria, emphasises space and architecture, while retaining a real sense of intimacy and warmth. For those who like following the score, the original manuscript in incomplete form (Mozart did not live to complete the work) is included as a CD-ROM track on the SACD. ★★★★★ **AG**



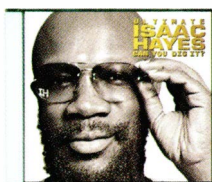
DAVID AXELROD

The Edge (David Axelrod At Capitol Records 1966-1970)

Capitol Jazz

Music: David Axelrod's legacy runs from 1950s jazz through psychedelia, classical music to modern-day trip-hop. But the five years covered here, when Axelrod was an in-house Capitol producer and arranger, are considered his peak. The rumbling bass, insistent angular percussion, squealing guitar and unsettling horn sections are all Axelrod trademarks. Selections from Lou Rawls, David McCallum (yes him), Cannonball Adderley, Don Randi and, of course, Axelrod's solo albums are all present and vividly correct. ★★★★★

Sound: From the start, you are in the realm of the 1960s movie soundtrack, but the percussion and live instrumental sampling make you feel you are in the studio during recording. ★★★★★ **MP**



ISAAC HAYES

Ultimate Isaac Hayes: Can You Dig It?

Stax/Universal

Music: Isaac Hayes' 'symphonic' soul, with layers of strings and acres of heartfelt, gut-wrenching soul, made him one of the most successful, and most respected soul stars of the age. Of course, the odd international hit soundtrack did no harm either, and *Theme From Shaft* is here, along with two disc's worth of the big man's mighty back catalogue. There's also a DVD with footage from 1972's Wattstax event, which was dubbed the 'Black Woodstock'. Peerless stuff. ★★★★★

Sound: Compilations can often have an uneven feel, but such was the uniformity of Hayes' vision that these 32 tracks sound like they could have been produced on one gargantuan album. Just like Hayes became known for in the 1970s. ★★★★★ **DO**

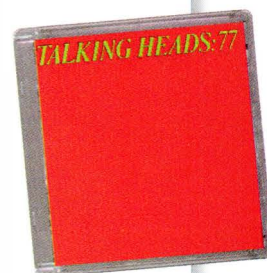
TALKING HEADS

77

DVD-Audio (24/96 surround) and CD double-pack WSM

Music: Released in the US as a DualDisc along with the rest of the Heads' back catalogue, problems with Warner's European manufacturing capabilities has led the UK release consisting of two discs – one CD and one DVD-A – for the price of a single CD. These jerky, quirky tunes were how the world first heard Talking Heads, a group whose pop sensibility and clear eccentricity never fitted well in the punk/new wave category into which they were pushed. The charm of such paeans to the perversity of the humdrum as *New Feeling*, *Don't Worry About The Government* and of course the paranoid classic *Psycho Killer*, still ring true nearly 30 years later. ★★★★★

Sound: The original stereo mix offered a claustrophobic, closed-in feeling, which did the neurotic songs no harm at all. For the DVD-A, they have been opened out by guitarist Jerry Harrison to give them more space and clarity, though it's arguable that they lose a little of their vitality in the process. ★★★★★ **DO**



NAGRA Products are distributed exclusively in the UK by:

R.T. Services
32 Rawthey Avenue, Didcot, OX11 7XN

t: +44 (0) 1235 810 455
f: +44 (0) 1235 810 324
e: info@rtsaudio.co.uk
w: www.rtsaudio.co.uk

To learn more, please contact R.T. Services or one of the specialist dealers below.

We will send you a NAGRA Brochure to browse through at your leisure along with an invitation by appointment to listen to a NAGRA system at your nearest specialist dealer.

An opportunity not to be missed!

R.T. Services also distribute the following specialists brands, which are available from the dealers below:

Accuphase, Da Vinci Audio Labs, Harmonic Resolution Systems, Leben, Nagra, Orpheus Laboratories, Peak Consult, Siltech, Spectral, T.W. Acoustic, Viola Audio Labs

Visit www.rtsaudio.co.uk for more information on each brand.

The Audio Works
14 Stockport Road
Cheadle
Cheshire, SK8 2AA
Tel: 0161 4287887
email: larry@theaudioworks.co.uk

Audio Republic
78 Olley Road
Headingley
Leeds, LS6 4BA
Tel: 01132 177294
email: andrew.jules@virgin.net

The Audio Room
2 George Street
Hedon
Hull, HU12 8JH
Tel: 01482 891375
email: hifi@theaudiroom.co.uk

Hazlemere Audio
High Wycombe
Tel: 01494 865829
email: info@hazlemereaudio.co.uk

HMF Audio
London
Tel: 02084 065699
Mob: 07768 654088



► ask about our new buy now pay later scheme (finance available subject to status)

Tivoli
'Retro' Hi-Fi...



Oxford Audio Consultants Ltd
WE LOVE TO LISTEN

Cantay House
Park End Street
Oxford
OX1 1JD

Opening Hours
mon-fri: 10am - 6pm
(closed thursday)
sat: 10am - 5pm

Tel 01865 790 879
Fax 01865 791 665
info@oxfordaudio.co.uk
www.oxfordaudio.co.uk

(visit our web site for
the latest information on
new/used equipment!)

Brands

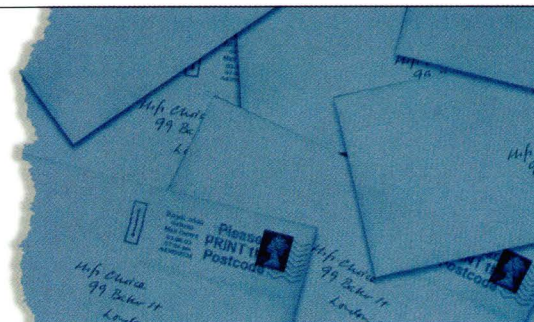
Artcooustic, Audio Aero, Audio Analogue, Audio Research, Avid, Blok, Bose, Burmester, Canton, Copland, darlZeel, Denon, Dreamvision, Fujitsu, Anthony Gallo, Graaf, Harman Kardon, Hitachi plasma, Iscan, Isoblu, Isotek, Jadis, Jamo, Kef, Koetsu, Krell, Loewe, Lyra, Marantz, Martin Logan, Michell, Mission, Musical Fidelity, NAD, Naim, Nordost, Opera, Opus, Parasound, Pathos Acoustics, Pioneer, Prima Luna, Projekt, Pure, Quadraspire, REL, Sennheiser, Sharp Aquos LCD, SME, Sonus Faber, Speakercraft, Spectral tables, Stax, Stewart Screens, T & A, Tannoy, Teac, Theta, Tivoli, Transparent cables, Triangle, Union Research, Vogel, Whest Audio, Wilson Audio, Wireworld, Yamaha

ChoiceMail



The pick of this month's best letters

Write to: Hi-Fi Choice, Future Publishing Ltd, 1 Balcombe Street, London NW1 6NA. Or email your letters to: dan.george@futurenet.co.uk



NOT SO SUPER AUDIO CD

I can't hear any difference between SACD (mastered from PCM) and the CD layer on hybrid discs. My Star Trek *Nemesis* recording is my one SACD and I listened to its SACD layer and then the CD element, and I think the SACD layer might have smoother highs. It's

somehow easier on the ears and more mellow than CD. That's hardly justification for high definition status, though. But hey, I just listened to the piece once.

Bob via email

HFC Yours is one of a few reports we've had recently questioning the superiority of SACD over CD. Even our own Richard Black has been having some doubts of late and is in a right kerfuffle. Certainly there is sound technical backing behind the format, but the proof of the pudding is in the, er, listening. We shall monitor these continuing revelations with interest...

NAKED AND CLOTHED!

When you take pictures of speakers in the magazine would it not be a good idea to show one with its front grille on? This way we would have an idea what they look like 'naked and clothed'. Also, back in the April issue (*HFC* 265), you mentioned new Profile 900 speakers from Arcam. I haven't seen anything about them since and have enquired with Arcam who know nothing.

Alan Vincent via email

HFC What eagle eyes you have, Alan! It looks like you've spotted a typo in the April issue. Our CES 2005 Show Report did indeed

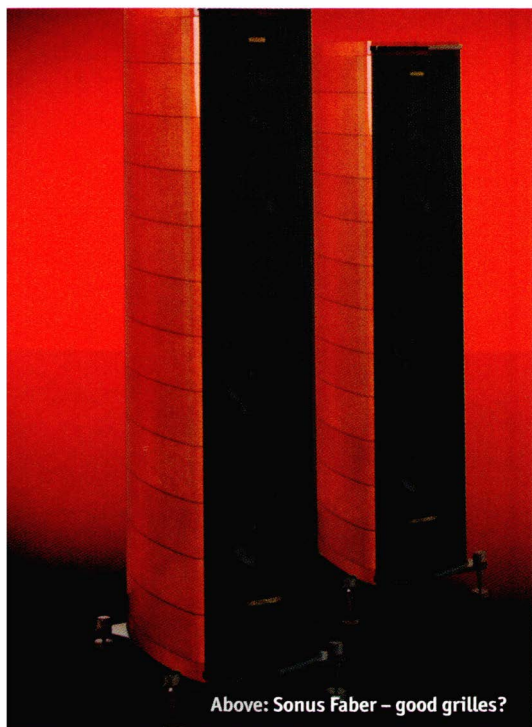
"Would it not be a good idea to show a speaker with its front grille on?"

mention Arcam's new Profile 900 range, when it should, in fact, have read *Focal's* Profile 900 range. Our apologies for that gremlin in the system; but you may wish to read all about the new Focal Profile 918 in this month's *Ultimate Group Test*.

With regards to your question on speaker grilles, with only finite room for images we try and show as much of the speaker as possible to aid the purchasing decision. Most speaker grilles serve a practical rather than sonic purpose, except for the likes of Sonus Faber's Amati Homage 'string' grilles (see left). We hope that showing the driver array is of more benefit to most readers.

COMPARATIVELY SPEAKING

The output waveform from an audio system consists of two groups of frequency components. Those generated by the correct transcription of the signal from the media plus all of the noise components, technically termed 'junk'. The superposition of these two groups



Above: Sonus Faber – good grilles?

Letter of the month

HIGH DEAF

It's simple to captivate the public's attention with HDTV demos. Stick a large display in a shop window, run high-def video and flag it up for all to see. Only a fool could miss the performance difference. Sadly, hi-fi can't be so easily demonstrated. It invariably involves a sit-down dem, which can be intimidating and make virgin hi-fi customers feel pressured. It's a shame hi-fi retailers can't sell the benefits so easily – if they could, why not go hi-fi, or even high resolution audio?

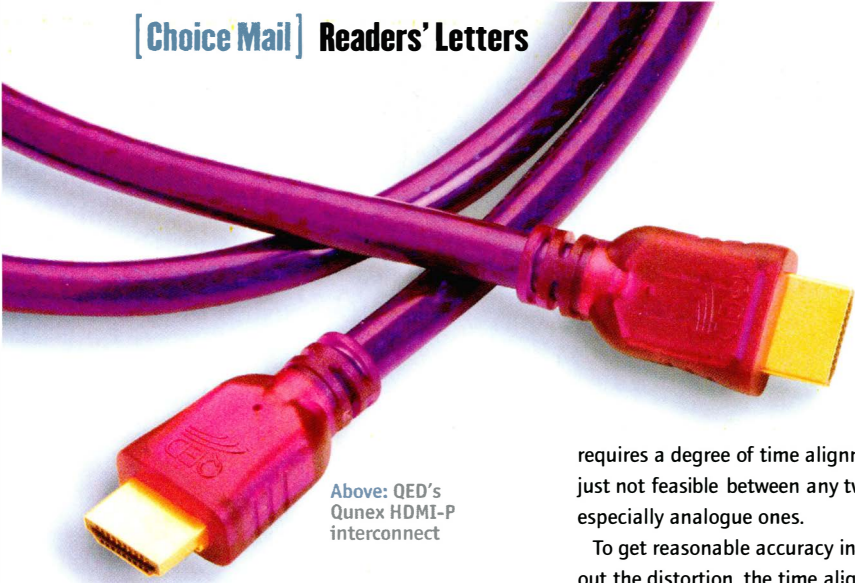
Steve Riggs via email

HFC Bose has been quite successful at this, with demonstrable product spread throughout the store and not tucked away in a dem room. Perhaps we need to learn from this? And with prominent high-street stores to catch Joe Public's eye, the formula seems to work – just ask Bose's accountants! We wonder if SACD/DVD-A listening posts, similar to the CD stations in HMV and Virgin, would inspire? Although, given HMV and Virgin's interest in these formats, it would seem unlikely.



WIN CRYSTAL CABLE PICCOLO INTERCONNECTS!

The author of our letter of the month receives a one-metre pair of Crystal Cable Connect Piccolo interconnects worth an incredible £260, featuring a silver/gold conductor with Kapton insulation, plus a transparent Teflon jacket. So get writing! (150 words max please...)



Above: QED's Qunex HDMI-P interconnect

of frequency components makes up the final waveform and hence what we hear. This is true for both digital (CD) and analogue (vinyl) based systems. It is fairly well accepted that the level of the 'junk' elements is greater for vinyl (LP surface noise, tracking angle error etc). Therefore, is it possible that what we perceive as the 'analogue sound' is primarily due to this component and this is the reason why CD-based systems sound different (not necessarily better)?

Why not take the master tape and a vinyl recording and feed the outputs through a comparator, from which the output should be the noise waveform from the LP (approximately). Merge this signal with the output from a CD (playing the same track). Then do a listening test between this output, the original CD and the LP. Does the merged output sound more like the LP than the CD?

Dean Marshall via email

HFC The idea expressed here is fine in principle. In practice, it's not merely difficult, it's impossible. To isolate distortion like this

requires a degree of time alignment that is just not feasible between any two sources, especially analogue ones.

To get reasonable accuracy in separating out the distortion, the time alignment between LP and tape must be on the order of tens of nanoseconds from start to finish. Even taking just one minute of material,

“Are there advantages to gain from using HDMI over component links?”

that means matching speeds to about one part in a billion. At best, the state of the art is about one part in a couple of thousand. A touch of judicial post-processing on a computer might help a little, but nothing like enough. And that's only just the start of the problems...

HDMI... AM I BOVERED?

My current AV system has connections using RGB on Scart. I am thinking of buying a projector and enhancing my home cinema experience. My Harman Kardon AVR8500 does not have HDMI or DVI connections, but I am quite keen on continuing to use it. Is there

any way I might be able to use HDMI with my present set-up? Are there advantages to gain from using HDMI over component links?

Ravi via email

HFC The difference between HDMI and component video connection is night and day on a large screen and if you are thinking of taking the projector route with RGB alone, you'd be missing out immensely. We're not aware of any HDMI upgrade paths for the AVR8500, but you might be best using an HDMI link direct from DVD player to projector, by-passing the video processing of the receiver for this set-up.

GIRLS ALOUD

Many thanks for a very informative and interesting magazine. However, as someone who not only has been a hi-fi anorak since the age of 12, but is also female, how come none of your specialist writers are women? Is it that females can't hear as well as males, or is Paul Messenger really a woman in disguise? And would your predominantly male readership take the views of a female as seriously as that of a male?

Janine Elliot via email

HFC *Hi-Fi Choice* has a predominantly male readership, but that doesn't mean hi-fi is an exclusively Y-chromosome club. And, although we're not aware of any female hi-fi writers currently active, *Hi-Fi Choice* is always on the lookout for good writers irrespective of sex, race, creed or shoe size.

Women often have better hearing acuity than their male counterparts, which may explain why some married men have selective hearing disorder. And, were you to meet Paul, you'd realise he's all man.

Onlineforum

A few choice comments plucked from our online forum. Join in the fun at www.hifichoice.co.uk



Can someone tell me why I cannot get Classic FM on Freeview...?

Coffee Time

...Freeview Digital Radio has no Classic FM. Use Radio 3 instead, which has the bonus of transmitting live during The Proms. Check www.freeview.co.uk/whatson/radio.html

CJROSS

Does anyone have a definitive list of HDCD encoded discs? I've had a look at www.HDCD.com but I'm pretty sure there must be more discs than that available...

BL21DE3

...There are loads, but they are not listed on the HDCD website (a bit of a joke really). They are

excellent in sound quality, I find, but don't hold out much hope for a lot of new CDs being recorded in this format. Many come from US-based artists – maybe there are lot more HDCD equipped studios over there?

CJROSS

I'm thinking about getting a HD-DVD player but I'm

aware Blu-ray will be with us soon. Is there a player out there that does both..?

R1 Mad

...HD-DVD won't be released until the second quarter of 2006. Right now it's uncertain that there will be a player that plays Blu-ray, too – probably not at first...

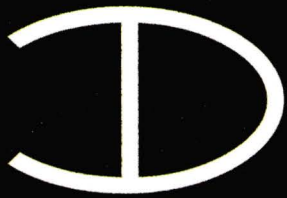
iBug

...Wait and go Blu-Ray! You can get players and recorders right now from Japan, and you could import one, but media is oh so scarce...

Skeelsie

...There will be around 80 HD-DVD releases in spring (to accompany the launch of the format).

iBug



Densen Audio Technologies

In a world where so much looks the same,
we take pride in being different !



Authorised dealers:

Acoustic Arts, Watford, Tel. 01923 245250 - Adams & Jarrett, East Sussex, Tel. 01 424 437165 - Glasgow Audio, Glasgow, Tel. 01413 324707 - HI-FI Studios, Doncaster, Tel. 01302 725550 - Holburn HI-FI, Aberdeen, Tel. 01224 585713 - Midland Audio Exchange, Belbroughton, Tel. 01562 731100 - Mike Manning, Taunton, Tel. 01823 326688 - Mike Manning, Yeovil, Tel. 01935 479361 - New Audio Frontiers, Loughborough, Tel. 01509 264002 - Phonography, Ringwood, Tel. 01425 461230 - Practical HI-FI, Lancaster, Tel. 01524 39657 - Practical HI-FI, Manchester, Tel. 01618 398869 - Practical HI-FI, Warrington, Tel. 01925 632179, R.J.F. Cornwall, Tel. 01209 710777 - Sound Seduction, Sevenoaks, Tel. 01732 456573 - VideoTech, Huddersfield, Tel. 01484 516670

Densen products are in a minimalist Scandinavian design, which are made of 100% non-magnetic aluminium, making the casing slim and sexy like none other. No visible screws make the cabinet look like one slab of aluminium.

Like the B-250 all the new integrated amps employ a true attenuator, while everybody else uses potentiometers or cheap digital volume IC's. Densen use a sophisticated micro-processor controlled attenuator; this is the reason for the distinct click you hear as you adjust the volume and it is a definitive sign that Densen use the advanced relay driven attenuator instead of cheap inferior technologies, which substantially downgrade sound quality. The click is your assurance that Densen does not compromise!

"The absolute reference or simply an exceptionally transparent electronics, opinions differ, but results endure: a profound respect for the modulating signal and the musical message which should delight the most sharpened ear".

MANUFACTURE - 5 out of 5 stars

MUSICALITY - 5 out of 5 stars

QUALITY/PRICE - 5 out of 5 stars

Revel of the B-250 pre amp

By Haute-Fidelite (France)



Our philosophy is that music must be engaging to listen to, and we are not satisfied until you feel like standing up, playing the Air-Guitar and forgetting ALL about Hi-Fi. After all a good hi-fi system is a tool to enjoy and discover music !

Having taken so much care in designing and producing our products, we naturally back it up with a decent warranty, so we give a lifelong warranty to the first owner. As we believe audio equipment should be a worthwhile investment, we try to design our products so that they can easily be upgraded in the future.

Densen products are ready for the future. For example you can upgrade the CD players and add external power supplies to pre-amps and the tuner. Upgrade your system from being a dedicated stereo system to a high-end surround system. Upgrade the power and integrated amplifiers with electronic crossovers for active systems. Our own Denlink system provides multiroom capability, and even the possibility to dim the lights in your room. More awards:



All you need to hear...



WHAT HI-FI?
SOUND AND VISION
AWARDS 2005
PRODUCT OF THE YEAR
SPEAKER PACKAGES
MONITOR AUDIO RS6 AV



Silver **RS**

THE NEW SILVER RS LOUDSPEAKERS

WHAT HI-FI?
SOUND AND VISION



RS6, Sept 2005

"...the Silver RS6 is a success: dressed to kill, delivers plenty of detail and punches like a heavyweight."

WHAT HI-FI?
SOUND AND VISION



RS1, Oct 2005

"...good looking; well made, speedy, accurate sound; articulate and dynamic."

WHAT HI-FI?
SOUND AND VISION



RS1 AV, Nov 2005

"...in terms of outright resolution and its ability to uncover detail, the RS1 AV bosses the rest of this highly competitive field."

www.monitoraudio.co.uk

T. +44(0)1268 740580 E. info@monitoraudio.co.uk



The Science of Hearing

Part Two

In this, the second of a three-part series, hearing expert R. A. Lawrence continues his exploration of the most important components in your hi-fi system – your ears. This time, it's all about the 'middle ear'

Funnily enough, the 'middle ear' comes between the 'inner' and the 'outer ear'. It is an essential part of the sound wave's path from the outside world to the inner ear and beyond. It is a clever and complex arrangement of levers and dampers that

augment the sound wave to present to the inner ear a stimulus as near as possible identical to that received in the external ear.

The middle ear serves to conduct sound energy from the external ear to the inner ear. But it doesn't just conduct it: in fact, it

functions as an acoustic transformer. Many audiophiles will be familiar with one kind of acoustic transformer, the horn loudspeaker. The middle ear works like a horn speaker in reverse, transforming vibrations with high velocity and low pressure into small but more intense ▶

ones with low velocity and high pressure. The point of this is to couple the vibrations efficiently between air in the outer ear and the solid/liquid parts of the inner ear.

LET'S GO THROUGH THE OVAL WINDOW

The input source to the middle ear is the eardrum, the surface area of which is approximately 20 times that of the base or footplate of the *stapes* bone. This connects to the inner ear at a point called the *Oval Window*. The eardrum gathers the force over the entire area and couples it via *malleus* and *incus* to the *stapes* to produce a pressure 20 times greater, which equates to a gain of about 26dB. The whole arrangement of these '*ossicles*' is basically just a lever. This is designed to reduce movement while increasing force.

The middle ear also contains a sensitive and reactive lining of mucous membrane and, in normal circumstances, it also contains air.

Of course, the above description of the middle ear's operation is much simplified. For a start, the gain quoted previously is frequency dependent, being more like 20dB at 1kHz. This is largely due to the differing patterns in the vibration of the eardrum. At low frequencies, the drum vibrates as a whole with relatively low magnitude, while at higher frequencies, portions of the eardrum vibrate in concert to produce a very complex signal that is transmitted to the inner ear. There is also some loss of energy in overcoming the inertia of the system. 'Perfect piston motion' it ain't!

THE PRESSURE EQUALISER

A familiar factor to most of us is the role of the air in the middle ear cavity. Negative or positive pressure in the middle ear alters the stiffness of the conducting mechanism and hence also the transmission of sound. The resulting loss occurs across the audible range

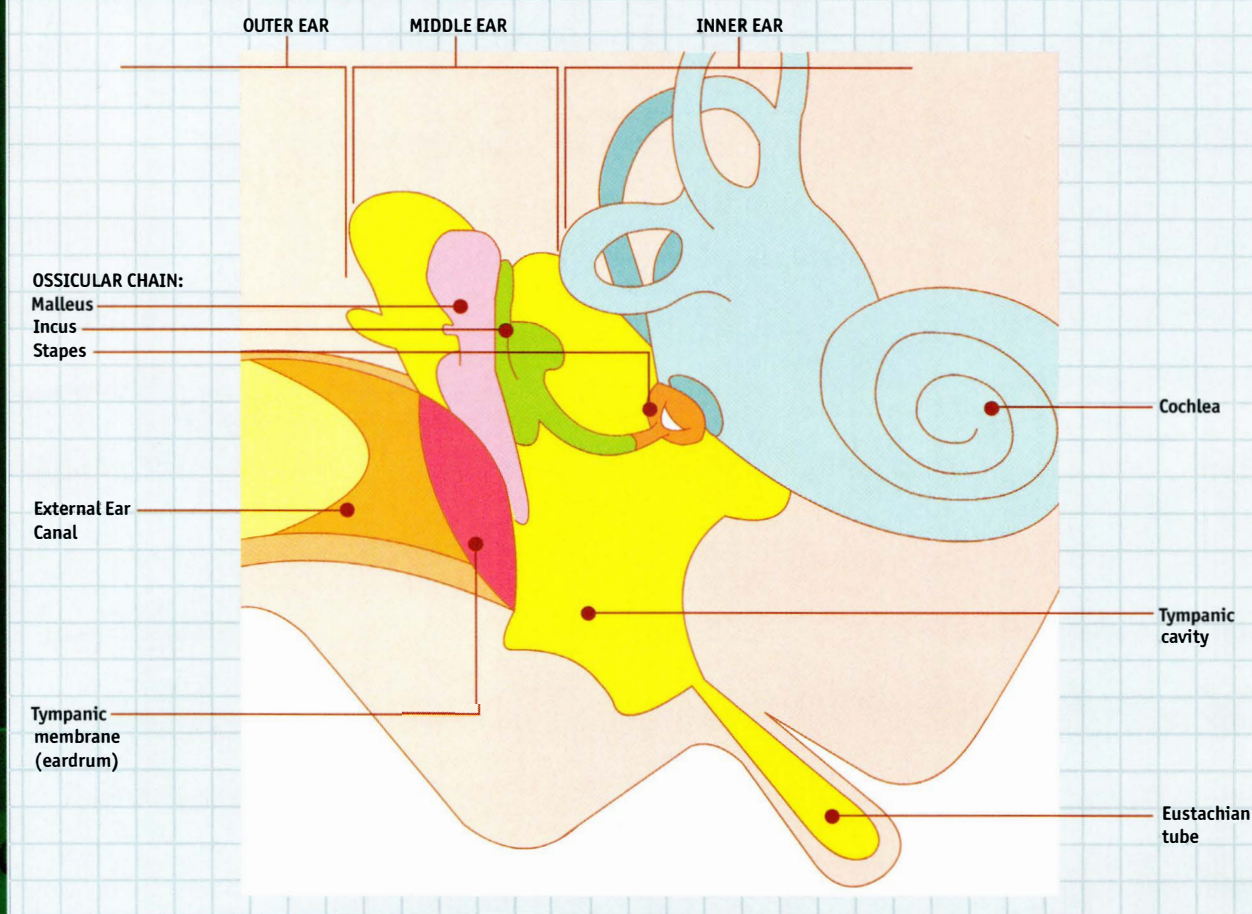
but is more apparent in the low to mid frequencies; high frequency hearing seems enhanced, making everything sound 'tinny'.

Ideally, air pressure in the middle ear should equal the atmospheric pressure. The ear achieves this by a pressure equalisation system, which involves the Eustachian tube. The other end of this tube opens at the back of one's throat, just behind the area of the nasal cavity. The tube opens with movements like yawning, swallowing, sneezing or wilfully blowing air into the tube by pinching one's nose and blowing. On average it opens about once every minute when awake and every three minutes when asleep.

Most of us have experienced middle ear pressure when we suffer with a cold or when flying in an aircraft. It's caused by the inability of the tube to open as often or as efficiently in the former case, and changing external pressure in the latter. If the pressure change is very rapid, the tube may be jammed shut by the large discrepancy in pressure. This creates a relative negative pressure (on descent in an aircraft) and positive pressure (on ascent) that can be excruciatingly painful or may even cause rupture of the eardrum.

“Most of us have experienced middle ear pressure when we suffer with a cold or when flying in an aircraft.”

The construction of the middle ear



“A very loud sound can cause the muscles to contract, reducing the energy transmitted to the inner ear and protecting it.”

A blast wave from an explosion or even a slap may simply rupture the eardrum by the sudden change in pressure and in extreme circumstances can disrupt the bony chain. Contrary to common belief, this does not necessarily result in complete deafness, but a hole – even a small one – in the eardrum does lead to significant loss of hearing acuity due to the substantial change it brings about in the eardrum's resonant characteristics and the partial acoustic short-circuit it causes between both sides of the drum. If you've ever heard a loudspeaker trying to work with a tear in the bass driver you'll have some idea.

PROTECT AND AUGMENT

In addition to the above, the middle ear uses a few other clever tricks to augment – and also protect – hearing. The muscles in the middle ear – that is, the *stapedius*, attached to the *stapes* bone, and the *tensor tympani*,

connected to the eardrum via the *malleus* bone – both affect the conduction of sound by stiffening the bony chain with their contraction. This is effectively a damper for the hearing mechanism.

A very loud sound can cause the muscles to contract, reducing the energy transmitted to the inner ear and protecting it. Stiffening the chain is an efficient way of stopping the low frequency sounds, which require a larger movement of the chain to allow transmission. Higher frequencies, on the other hand, involve less movement and pass quite happily through a stiff structure. This may well be why continued exposure to loud noise affects high-frequency hearing more.

NOISY OR NOSY

The lining of the middle ear is very similar to that found inside one's nose. It behaves in a similar fashion too, in that it swells up when

there is local infection as seen in the nose with a cold. The effect of emotion, stress and exercise is also similar to that seen with the nose. A swelling in the lining affects the rate at which air is exchanged from the middle ear cavity and also the rate at which lubricating fluids like mucous are secreted or cleared.

This has a direct effect on the volume of the middle ear space and also affects the bony chain, as this sensitive lining cloaks it, too. Small wonder that our hearing seems to vary from time to time!

It should be obvious by now that the design of the middle ear is no mean feat. It is a design born out of need and a requirement to adapt, by a creature that was at some time a resident of deep waters, to life on land, reliant on breathing air.

It helped that creature evolve from a hunter, reliant on instinct and using the ear for protection, to modern man, using the ear for purposes of communication over a wide range of frequencies and ever more reliant on brain-work for his survival. It is a brilliant work of evolution – indeed, of engineering. **HFC**

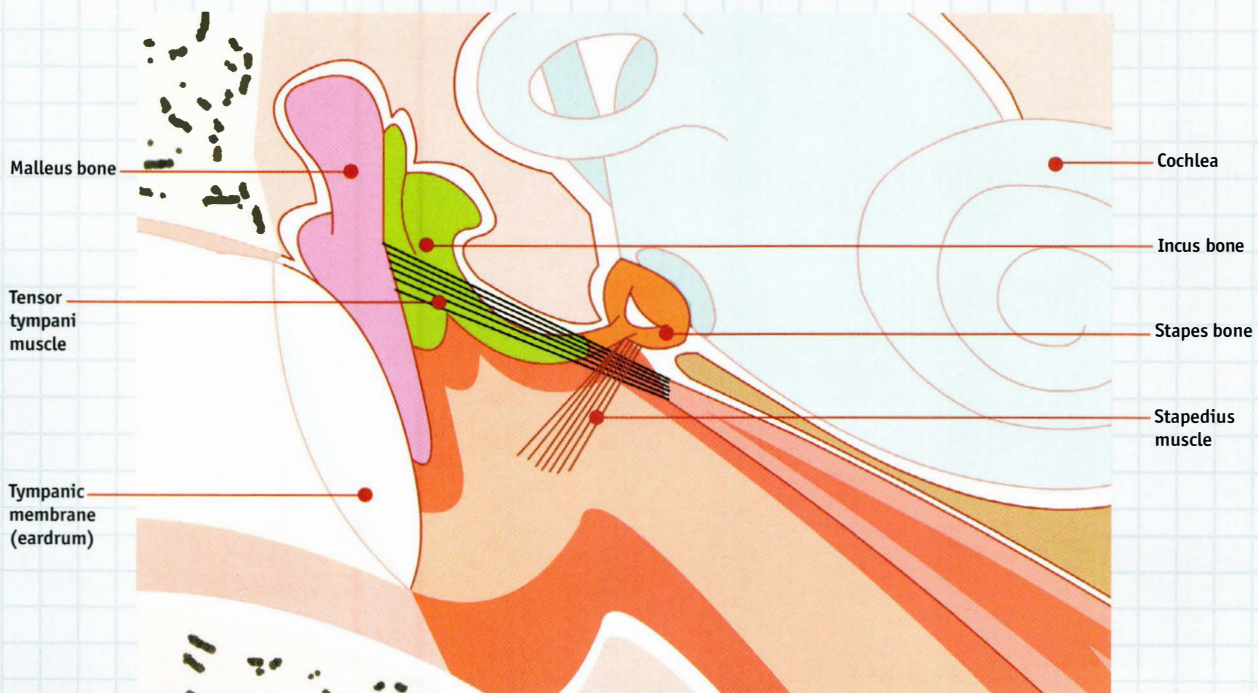
R. A. Lawrence

Next Issue: The Inner Ear

The middle ear in detail

As so often in medicine, components of the middle ear get referred to by both their Latin and English names. The *malleus* is also called the 'Hammer', the *incus* is the 'Anvil' and the *stapes* (pronounced 'stay-peas') is the 'Stirrup'. The 'tympanic membrane' is the eardrum in common parlance.

Together, the *malleus*, *incus* and *stapes* are the Ossicles or Ossicular Chain. To the left of the tympanic membrane in this drawing is the 'outer ear', while the *cochlea* is the 'inner ear'. To give some idea of size in this rather schematic illustration, the *malleus* is a little under 2cm long.





EASTERN ELECTRIC MINIMAX CD PLAYER | EASTERN ELECTRIC MINIMAX PREAMPLIFIER
EASTERN ELECTRIC MINIMAX POWER AMPLIFIER | JAS AUDIO ORSA LOUDSPEAKERS | £4,036

King Kong

A one-time outpost of the British Empire is now the home of some of the best value valve super-fi ever

Hong Kong: inventor of the "made in" label and location of a skyline against which Manhattan's looks as imaginative as a bunch of breakfast cereal boxes. The place you go if you want Yuen Wo-ping to choreograph a Kung-Fu punch up in your next movie (and have a sharp suit sewn together while you're discussing it with him over coffee). The culture/mythology/wire work Quentin Tarantino just can't get over. And, just in case you were wondering, the birthplace of this month's *Beautiful System*.

The timing is apt. Much sooner than most people expected, China has, in the last few weeks, overtaken Britain to become the fourth largest economy in the world. It's unlikely to stop there. If you haven't already noticed that an increasing amount of what purports to be British hi-fi is already made in the Far East (it applies to plenty of other countries' hi-fi, too – even neighbouring Hong Kong), it's hard to miss the proliferation of Chinese and Far East brands currently giving the world market apple cart a good shaking.

The reason the *status quo* might just be on wobbly wheels is simple. Because China's labour-driven economy is in overdrive and sustaining its 'miracle phase' against fearful pressures (including a worried US trying to re-value its currency), 'high-end for peanuts' is a natural strategy. The promise is Harrods quality at Homebase prices, and stories of audiophiles dumping their five-figure American pre-amps and CD players for cheapo Chinese alternatives aren't hard to find on the internet.

So is it all hype, myth and Hong Kong Phooey or are the Tectonic plates starting to groan? Could this be the start of a major and irreversible realignment of our super-fi sensibilities or merely a minor seismic blip? Step this way and

behold the Hong Kong conundrum: a tube-based stereo system that, on the one hand, looks too small to be taken seriously yet, on the other, seems far too good to be true.

Here's why. For a total of £4,036, you get the following: from Eastern Electric, the Minimax front end, consisting of a CD player with a valve output stage, plus a fully valved-up preamp and power amp. These are teamed (at the suggestion of EE's UK distributor, Shadow Distribution) with JAS Audio's frankly gorgeous ribbon-tweetered Orsa standmount speakers.

LOOKS CAN BE DECEPTIVE

Truth be told, the electronics really don't look that wonderful. Their diminutive stature, nondescript styling and nicely executed, but curiously cheapening, metalflake painted facias cut sharply across the traditional high-end grain. Despite the profusion of gently glowing (albeit rather titchy) valves sprouting from the amplification, the overall appearance is unlikely to convince you that these components can compete with the world's best.

This is deceptive, though. Build quality inside and out is, in fact, impressively solid and neat; with the exception of the Weetabix box sized preamp, they're weighty little beasts, too. And here's the thing. This system isn't budget esoterica. It isn't about stunning aesthetics. It isn't even pitched explicitly as junior league high-end for the slimmer-figured wallet. With this modest looking bundle of components, it is claimed, you can face down the Audio Researches, Mark Levinsons, Conrad-Johnsons, Border Patrols and other high-end mavens of this world for sheer sonic beauty. There are a few caveats, of course (there would have to be), but we'll come to those. ▣

"It's hard to miss the proliferation of Chinese and Far East brands currently giving the world market apple cart a good shaking."



Eastern Electric Minimax CD player

£879

It looks as if it wouldn't say boo to a micro system, but this valve-equipped CD spinner possesses sonic gifts from heaven. The star of the system.



Eastern Electric Minimax preamplifier

£769

EE believes in short signal paths, that's why this preamp is so small. The soundstage it delivers is anything but – it's wide open, as only the best valve designs can be.



Eastern Electric Minimax power amplifier

£989

There are more powerful headphone amps, but you'd never believe it has only eight watts per channel when you hear it with the JAS Audio Orsas. Dynamics to die for.



JAS Audio Orsa speaker

£1,399 per pair

Radical two-way, split enclosure design boasts seductive looks and a ribbon tweeter. It's so valve-chummy, you'll never want to try it with anything else. Fortunately, there's no need to.



Eastern Electric was started by US high-end distributor Bill O'Connell and valve-loving, Hong Kong-based electrical engineer Alex Yeung. They got together as the result of some Internet commerce. O'Connell placed an order for one of Yeung's early amps and quickly understood why Yeung is known as 'The Man with the Golden Ear' in Hong Kong. They haven't looked back. Yeung is now the president of Eastern Electric and continues to design all of the company's Chinese-made products. He frequently hops on the ferry to mainland China to visit the factory and make sure production standard match his own.

TAKE IT TO THE MAX

The Minimax CD player, which is just 30cm wide and 33cm deep, uses Burr-Brown 1732 DACs and leaves the factory with two 6922 tubes installed, though EE doesn't just permit owners to experiment with other compatible valves (tube rolling, as it's often called) but positively encourages it. The custom-made toroidal power transformer was designed specifically for the player and, in part, accounts for its 5.9kg weight. The player supports both conventional and HDCD-encoded compact discs, and its display can be dimmed in two stages using the beautifully chunky metal remote control (though the layout of the tiny buttons



isn't exactly intuitive). Round the back there's one pair of RCA analog outputs and one S/PDIF coaxial digital output. The Philips CD12 transport mechanism and CD7II servo circuit operate with reassuringly silky smoothness.

The Minimax preamp is a real cutie. It weighs just 4kg and is barely 7.5cm deep. That said, the front panel is fashioned from a thick slab of aluminium with rounded edges and the ends thinner than the middle. The volume and selector knobs have a smooth, positive feel, and the power flick switch has a satisfyingly precise action, too. There's no remote control, though.

On the back plate are RCA sockets for the three inputs and two pairs of outputs. In keeping with the minimalist design philosophy, there's no tape loop or headphone jack. The circuit is a basic voltage amplifier that is directly coupled to a cathode follower. Because they perform different tasks, the two tubes (12AU7s) don't need to be a matched pair. In fact, they can be chosen for complementary or contrasting sonic values. Again, experimentation is encouraged. Tube rectification falls to a 6X4 valve and a smoothing choke. There are no coupling caps between the stages and, according to Eastern Electric, the circuit is as simple and straightforward as it can be. High-end niceties include Rifa caps, low-noise,

high-precision metal-oxide film resistors and point-to-point wiring. "Is there another product out there that can bring you closer to the music?" asks Eastern Electric, expecting the answer 'no'. "We don't believe there is and will put our MiniMax up against any challengers."

EIGHT DELIGHTFUL WATTS

Never say we don't bring you contrast at *Beautiful Systems*. After the 200 and 500-watt monsters of recent issues, 'power amp' is almost a misnomer in the case of the Minimax. Although a push-pull design, it kicks out a measly (though "delightfully enjoyable", according to Eastern Electric) eight watts per channel. But then it is tiny and uses tiny tubes. Each channel has a pair of 6BM8 miniature valves, still in production at the Svetlana factory in Russia. The 6BM8 is unusual in that it contains both power pentode and triode sections in one tube. A pair of 6BM8s, where the pentodes are connected in ultralinear fashion, makes the Minimax a very simple push-pull amplifier design.

Again, attention to rectification is a feature of the design. Where many manufacturers opt for an inexpensive solid-state diode bridge rectifier and smoothing filter (even in much more expensive valve gear), the MiniMax features a 5AR4 tube rectifier and a genuine pi filter.



“Tube-based systems, especially low-powered ones such as this, are often expected to sound like a bar of Galaxy Caramel tastes: sweet, smooth but, ultimately, a little hard to swallow.”

Finally, we come to the speakers. If the Eastern Electric kit errs on the side of understatement, these JAS Audio Orsas more than compensate. They also originate from Hong Kong and are anything but ordinary, either in design or standard of finish.

A radical two-way, two-cabinet design, with the bass-reflex port placed between the two cabinets to “enhance a 360 degree horizontal dispersion of air from the speaker”, the Orsa uses a very Dynaudio-esque 150mm bass/mid driver and a 130mm ribbon tweeter, which is claimed to extend all the way up to a dog-worrying 60kHz. It also features switchable crossover settings: ‘Reference’ activates an additional circuit that maintains a more even resistance to current flow and presents an easier load to the amplifier, while ‘Dynamic’ permits more variations in resistance in the mid and bass regions, giving a punchier and more dynamic sound.

Impressive sophistication considering the £1,399 per pair asking price, but the build quality and finish are, well, bananas. For instance, inside each cabinet, pure

natural wool from New Zealand is used for damping, internal wiring is pure silver and, on the outside, the sumptuous real wood veneer is treated to 14 coats of piano lacquer. In short, the Orsa looks vastly more expensive than it is.

EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS

Tube-based systems, especially low-powered ones such as this, are often expected to sound like a bar of Galaxy Caramel tastes: sweet, smooth but, ultimately, a little hard to swallow. But the first thing that strikes you about the Eastern Electric/JAS Audio combo is its exuberant sense of life and pace.

Leaving aside tonal considerations for a moment, it’s a remarkably tactile sound, tightly focused and projected well beyond the boundaries of the cabinets in all planes – truly, expensively three-dimensional sounding. All right, it lacks the explosive presence of something with huge speakers and big power but its presentation has startling immediacy nonetheless.

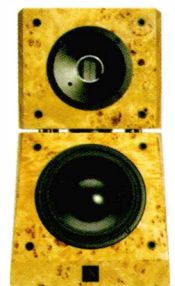
The lovely lightness of touch and grainless, almost romantic treble are true

valve hallmarks and hugely alluring, as is the effortlessly fluent and wonderfully easy-breathing delivery of complex material. The presentation of fine detail is beguilingly natural, and is all the more remarkable for the absence of fatiguing effects. It’s not strictly neutral, but when the music is allowed to communicate this intimately, does it matter?

Yes, even with speakers as efficient as the Orsas, eight watts a side only goes so far, so loud and so deep. But so long as you’re not considering using the system in a barn conversion to play Black Sabbath at party levels, you’ll rarely want for more volume. If what you crave, however, is genuine high-end magic – a level of believability and musical coherence that you thought was the preserve of house-priced systems – this combo just might be the answer to your dreams.

True, it won’t be everyone’s idea of audio nirvana, but if you’re growing a little tired of the wham, bam, lapel-grabbing school of system design, you owe yourself a listen. **HFC**

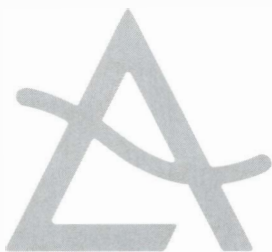
David Vivian



True beauty, revealed



At Leema Acoustics, we are
passionate about sound. Years
of research and endless testing
are reflected in every Leema product.
Perfection is a standard requirement.
When you listen with Leema, the
true beauty of your music is revealed.



LEEMA ACOUSTICS

LEEMA ACOUSTICS
UNIT 6&7
LIANBRYNMAIR WORKSHOPS
LIANBRYNMAIR, POWYS
WALES SY19 7AA

TEL/FAX: +44 (0)1650 521882
INFO@LEEMA-ACOUSTICS.COM
WWW.LEEMA-ACOUSTICS.COM

REVIEWS

Welcome to the HFC hardware reviews section – the only place for definitive tests of the latest hi-fi components. Our unique combination of extensive listening, unsighted comparisons and scientific lab reports, conducted by the UK's most experienced set of reviewers, ensures you're holding the most comprehensive and reliable guide to high performance hi-fi in the world.



EQUIPMENT REVIEWS

- 46** Eclipse TD510 loudspeaker
- 50** Creek Destiny CD player and integrated amplifier
- 54** B&W CM1 loudspeaker
- 56** Densen Beat B-150 integrated amplifier
- 59** Acoustic Energy Linear 1 loudspeaker
- 60** Marantz CD5001 OSE CD player and PM4001 OSE integrated amplifier
- 62** Border Patrol Control Unit valve preamplifier
- 65** Cambridge Audio 540P and 640P phono stages



ULTIMATE GROUP TEST

LOUDSPEAKERS £1,300-£2,000

- 68** Focal Profile 918
- 69** MJ Acoustics Subliminal S1R
- 71** Reson 5th ReTHM
- 72** Totem Model One Signature
- 73** Triangle Celius Esw
- 75** Waterfall Iguasca



OUR RATINGS EXPLAINED

Percentage ratings for various different criteria, like sound quality and value for money

Our overall conclusion after a livelier... through. The Siemens-equipped player has an snappier sound with better timing that es with dense material with remarkable fidence and ease. It even seems to be

You can find more civilised players for the money. But few combine dynamics with fine timing skills as effectively as this. **HFC** Jason Kennedy

VERDICT

SOUND >> 83%

FEATURES >> 85%

BUILD >> 85%

VALUE >> 85%

CONCLUSION

HI-FI CHOICE OVERALL SCORE >> 84%

The things we like most about the product

The things we think could be better

The product's final score. All criteria are taken into account but the emphasis is on performance. Components scoring more than 85% may qualify for an HFC Award Badge

OUR AWARD BADGES EXPLAINED



Best Buy

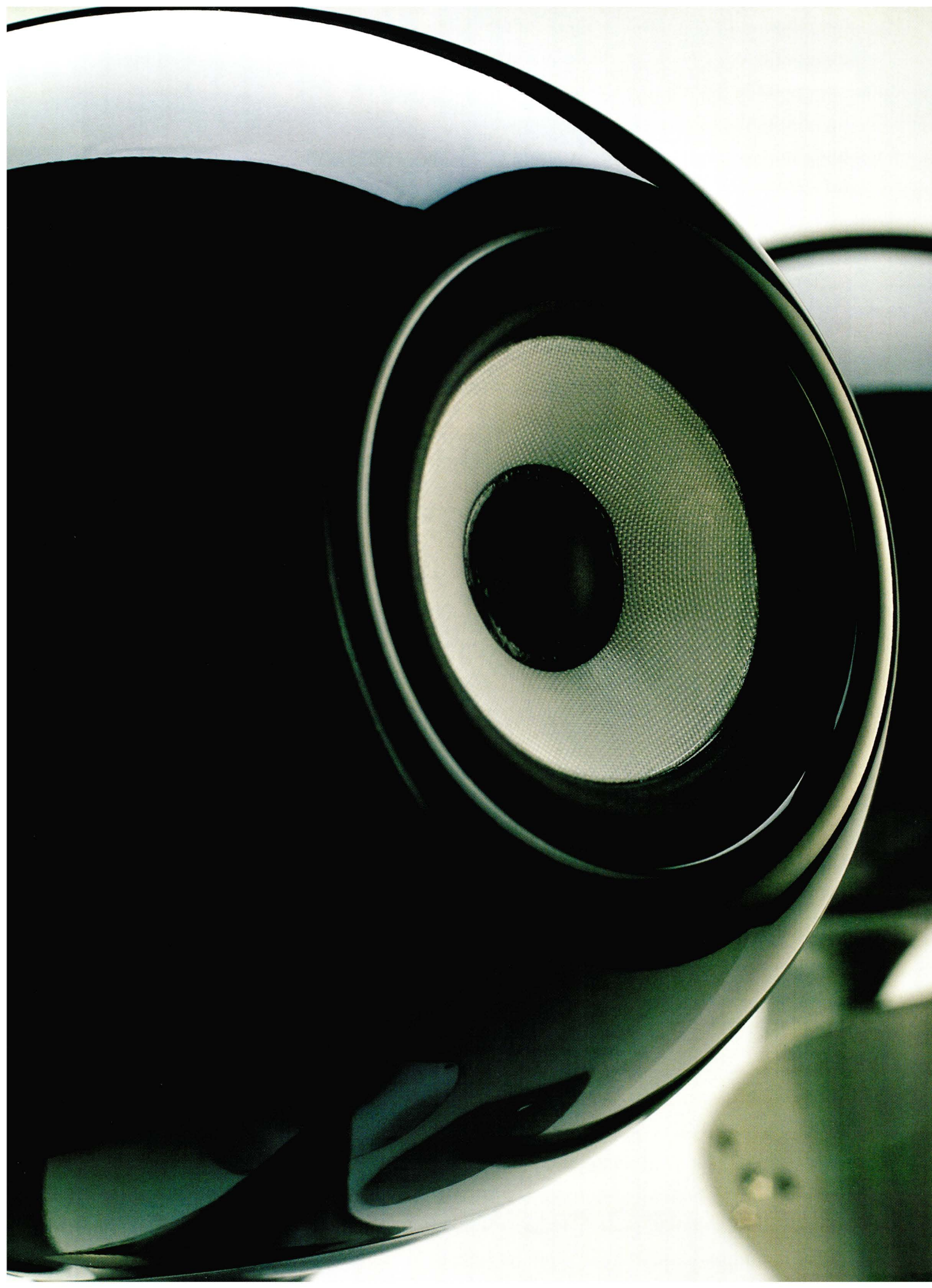
A component receiving the coveted Hi-Fi Choice Best Buy Badge has been judged to deliver excellent performance at its price point, thereby offering outstanding value for money.



Editor's Choice

This Badge is awarded only to those components that are judged to deliver reference-standard performance, regardless of cost. These products may be considered among the very best of their kind.

Turn the page for the most rigorous tests of serious hi-fi in the business...



Total Eclipse

Eclipse has replaced its first 'Time Domain' speaker with a new model – and the results are electrifying

PRODUCT Eclipse TD510

TYPE Standmount loudspeaker

PRICE £1,200 per pair (D6 floor stand: £600 per pair)

KEY FEATURES Size (WxHxD): 24x36.2x36cm (height increases to 69.3cm on D6 stand) • Weight: 8.5kg • Time Domain design features egg-shaped enclosure and single drive unit • Sensitivity: 83dB • Impedance: 6 ohms (nominal) • Available in black, white or silver

CONTACT ☎ 020 7328 4499 🌐 www.eclipse-td.com

Eclipse is the go-for-broke specialist high-end loudspeaker maker that is part of, and is supported by, a mainstream electronics company. That parent company is Fujitsu Ten, which is concerned mainly with high-volume car stereo speakers and electronics – everything from door speakers to satellite navigation. The idea behind Eclipse TD (Time Domain) speakers came from a small cadre of engineers, and it is to the parent company's eternal credit that it has been prepared to support this fledgling outpost of the empire. This surely cannot have been conceived as more than a speculative concern from the outset.

There have been three main models in the Eclipse range so far, starting with the TD512, which was the first model to be introduced to a startled marketplace about four years ago. The key ideas scale to other sizes quite naturally, and there is a smaller and also a larger model (reviewed in *HFC* 247 and 272 respectively). The new TD510 is similar in size to the TD512, and is the direct replacement. So far, the range has been sold mainly in the UK and Japan.

“It is to the parent company’s eternal credit that it has been prepared to support this fledgling outpost of the empire.”

The basic groundplan of the old and the new models is the same. In both cases, the centrepiece is the egg-shaped rear vented enclosure. The shape, which is made from a bulk moulding compound with a strength and density comparable to artificial marble, was chosen because its shape is axi-asymmetric, and supports fewer internal standing waves, while being inherently stiffer than just about any other shape. In addition, externally it provides a swept back profile for the main speaker output, cutting secondary radiation to an irreducible minimum, while allowing rear

radiation to expand in a smooth, swept back cone. It is probably the nearest approach to an enclosure without an acoustic signature and is enhanced internally with a solid mechanical earth that bears on the back of the driver. This provides a path to ground through the stand (or support) for any residual energy.

Eclipse's other key feature is the use of a single drive unit. This is to improve time coherence in a way that is not possible with a crossover-mediated multi-driver array, with its plethora of time delays that vary with listening axis. All of which means that tonal accuracy, bandwidth and power handling all have to take a back seat.

While the TD512 and the TD510 look superficially similar, there are enough differences to make the TD510 in effect a new model, more or less from the ground up. As before, the enclosure is floated (decoupled) from the drive unit using a complex, high-mass internal structure. This has been designed for more efficient energy transfer, using an internal spiked arrangement to couple to the enclosure, and a new, higher density zinc internal weight, replacing the aluminium weight of the previous design. The 120mm drive unit, with its woven fibreglass cone, has been replaced by a 100mm unit of similar design sourced from another supplier. This new driver features an improved, more efficient, higher flux magnet and a tighter gap between the voice coil and the magnetic pole piece. The cone material is said to be light and radially rigid, while

offering high internal energy loss, which translates into good damping of resonances. The designer points out that the smaller size is particularly suitable for this application. It is claimed to be intrinsically low in coloration, and small and light enough to respond very quickly to the input signal, which is key to the generic TD *modus operandi*. The overall dimensions of the enclosure itself are slightly smaller.

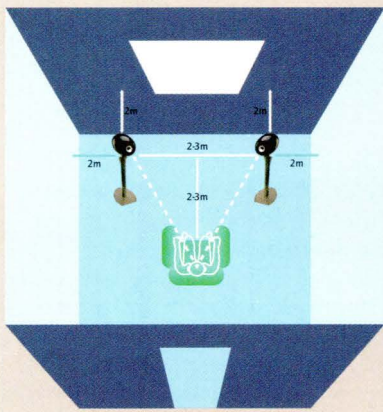
The new driver pushes the upper frequency limit of the system up from 17kHz to 20kHz (-10dB) and provides a smoother, more uniform

polar response. The TD510 was supplied for this test with a new pair of aluminium (neck only) and steel floor stands, well made and solid, with an circular cross-section, five spiked feet, a large footprint base for stability and an adjustable neck, so that the speaker can be oriented vertically in the direction that works best. A three-point suspension is used where the speaker meets the stand (desk/wall-mount stands are also available).

The new model is said to have greater loudness capability before the onset of compression, improved dynamics and better imagery. There is a trade-off, of course, and it is in the bass performance. This is now ▶



SET-UP



POSITIONING

Like the previous models, the TD510 is best used at close quarters – you may find it lacks presence and focus if you sit at one end of a long room, with the speakers at the far end. These are used as desk-top monitors in studios and that near-field position (under 3m from the listener) seems best. Toe-in can be handled by ear according to the tonal balance you prefer, but in the test listening room, we settled on moderate toe-in, so that the speaker was being heard from just off the main listening axis. The design of the D6 stand also allows vertical angling to be adjusted over a 15 degree range. Again, set it by ear – you'll probably find that the speaker sounds about right with the driver pointed at the ear plane.

The TD510 doesn't appear to like being hemmed in, and it seems probable that using them on shelves (Eclipse does make some compact tripod stands that physically will fit many shelves or flat surfaces) is unlikely to be a good idea. Ideally, move the speaker away from the back wall and – because it is a wide dispersion design – it should also be kept clear of side walls. Nevertheless, the internal redesign for this model means that there is a less direct output path from the driver to the port, and according to Eclipse, it is possible to place the speaker much closer to the back wall before obvious degradation sets in.

SYSTEM MATCHING

System matching sounds like a fairly simple exercise.

With only 40-watt power handling to play with, almost any amplifier should suit. In practice, power handling is not a good guide. The TD510 is all low sensitivity and high resolving power, so a high-quality amp with plenty of clean power on tap will suit best. We used Denon's PMA-2000AE (£1,200) with excellent results, but the speaker sounded completely at home on the end of a powerhouse Classé multichannel processor and power amp, too.



marginally less extended than the previous TD512 model, though this is not immediately obvious on audition and likely only observable when comparing the two designs side-by-side.

SOUND QUALITY

The first thing you need to know about the performance of the new Eclipse model is that there are inevitably some limitations, in many ways reminiscent of those of classic speakers like the BBC-inspired LS3/5a. It doesn't have the latter's high impedance, but it is very insensitive (the maker's 83dB/watt at one metre probably understates the situation);

you'll find yourself using a much higher volume setting than you would otherwise use.

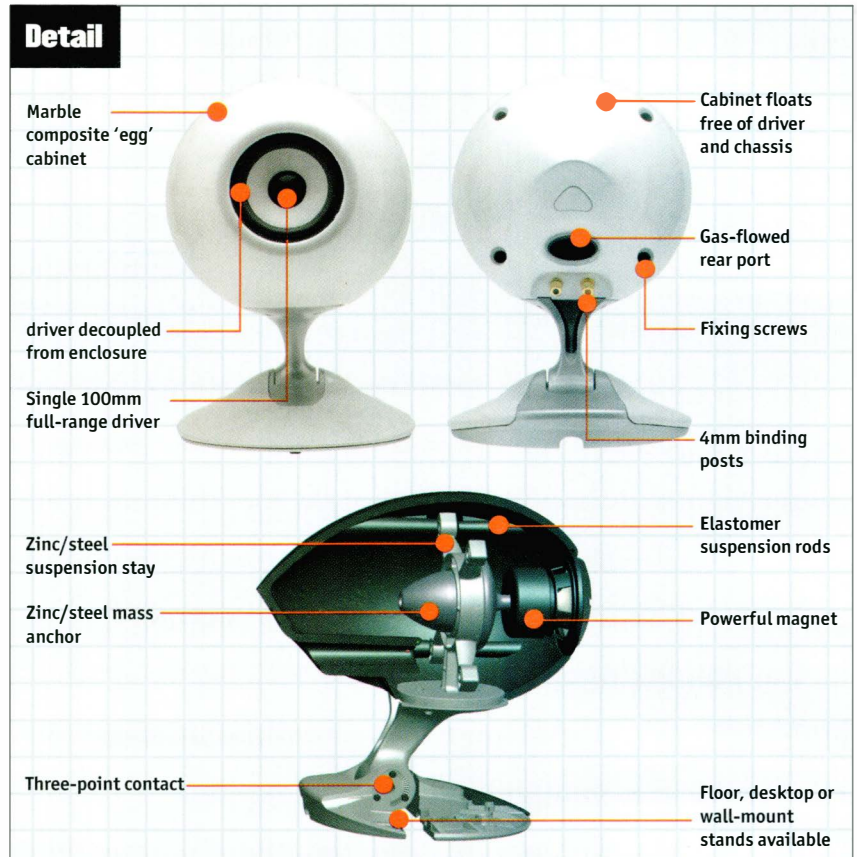
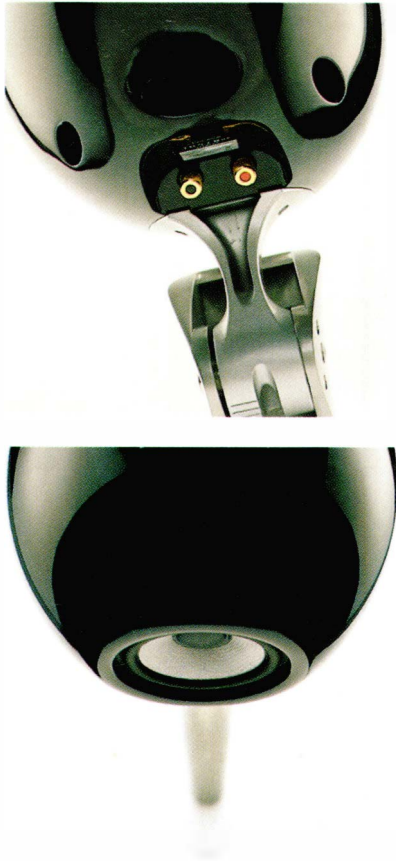
Power handling is not quite as limited as the specifications suggest, but initially gentle, almost innocuous compression sets in if it is pushed too hard, and the effect becomes more obvious if the volume is wound up further. There is only so much air that a pair of 10cm cones can wag. But it's surprising how little the performance level falls off, even in a moderately large room,

at the volume levels that are called for with full-throttle orchestral recordings.

I was discussing the pros and cons of the Eclipse approach with another journalist, one whose opinions I value. He said that he didn't much like the Eclipse sound (he was talking about earlier models, of course), because he thought they sounded colored. He's not entirely wrong, of course. In the excitement that this very different paradigm of loudspeaker-dom creates, it is easy to lose track of the really simple things. The Eclipse paradigm does result in loudspeakers that are inevitably colored, to some extent at least. Not because of the enclosure, which is arguably as low in intrinsic coloration as any enclosure yet devised (even including some flat panels), but because a drive unit large enough to cope with bass and midrange is bound to be somewhat directional at very high frequencies. It's therefore prone to coloration-inducing cone break-up through the HF region.

This was an issue with the TD512, but it is less so with its progeny, which is sharp and clean over the whole band. Relying on memory, the new model's treble is clearly superior to that of its predecessor, and there is an airiness and sophistication across the band that the TD512 struggled to convey. This leaves the speaker free to do what it does best.

What it does best is to play music, whether simple or complex, with an integrity and quality of articulation that is rare with loudspeakers of any size and price. This is one of the very few single-driver speakers that



works hard to avoid the obvious pitfalls of the species. Aside from those well-controlled coloration levels, the sense of a complete system that musically speaks with a single voice is quite remarkable. Size notwithstanding, at low and moderate levels, the Eclipse is able to conjure up the transient bite and also the warmth and body of Mitsuko Uchida's 1962 Steinway in the Schubert SACD recording reviewed in *HFC* 276, while placing the

“What it does best is to play music, whether simple or complex, with an integrity and quality of articulation that is rare.”

instrument very firmly in an easily definable space with a solid sense of focus. This is a remarkable achievement that in some ways is more like listening to a pair of headphones than a loudspeaker, with all the usual non-linearities and smear that speakers are usually subject to. The Eclipse works its magic with female vocals too, again with that same characteristic purity. It even casts its spell with large-scale orchestral material, as long as the average volume is not set too high.

As suggested, what sets the Eclipse apart is the way it focuses on the musical fundamentals. Of course, tonally it is on the lean side, though this is not true of the midband which is warm and expressive. Best of all is its timing, which is absolutely spot on. It

makes music that sounds completely on the ball; music that is clean and expressive, and where you can hear the fine detail and texture in the most complex mixes.

One of its secrets, perhaps, is that it has the knack of sounding very complete and integrated at volume levels that may seem too low with more conventional designs. You don't need to turn the volume up high to hear what's going on in the mix.

Would this be an appropriate speaker for heavy duty rock music? Well perhaps not, but again the limitations are fewer than you might suppose. There is that remarkable purity and timing that works with just about every musical genre, helping you to forget the ultimate lack of body. And Eclipse has something of a track record with recording studios, thanks to qualities which suit critical monitoring at low and medium volume levels. But yes, overall this is a speaker that is at its best when reproducing acoustic material – naturally miked classical, jazz instrumental and vocal, in particular.

The problem for Eclipse is that the product is so different from other solutions, so idiosyncratic, that it is just too easy to dismiss. The TD510 is also impractical without stands,

and for styling and functional reasons they really need to be Eclipse's own stands rather than a third party design.

Effectively then, the Eclipse costs £1,800 as a viable floorstanding package – a perfectly reasonable price for a speaker of this performance level, even leaving its elegant design to one side. It's clearly better than its predecessor and is now a speaker that stands well above many classic mini monitors.

It won't, of course, suit everyone. And its highly distinctive nature perhaps prevents it from being declared an official Best Buy. But what it does well, notably in terms of timing, it does to such an exemplary standard that an Editor's Choice badge is richly deserved. **HFC**

Alvin Gold

VERDICT	
SOUND >> 90% [Progress bar]	PRO Fast, articulate and musically coherent, the new mid-range Eclipse has superb stereo imaging and detail resolution.
EASE OF DRIVE >> 59% [Progress bar]	CON Low sensitivity and low power handling make this an awkward loudspeaker load, and it doesn't like being hemmed in on shelves despite its small size. This will never be the speaker for everyone.
BUILD >> 92% [Progress bar]	
VALUE >> 88% [Progress bar]	
CONCLUSION Dispensing with old paradigms, Eclipse proves that the kind of articulation, purity and speed possible from a single-driver speaker offers a quality of music making that in many ways is in a class of its own, even if many will find it hard to stomach.	
HI-FI CHOICE OVERALL SCORE >> 89%	

Destiny calling

Creek's new range – starting with this CD player and integrated amp – is destined for great things

PRODUCT Creek Destiny

TYPE CD player and integrated stereo amplifier

PRICE (Destiny CD) £1,200; (Destiny amplifier) £1,100

KEY FEATURES (Destiny CD) Size (WxHxD): 43x7x31 cm

• Weight: 6kg • Single unbalanced analogue output
• Electrical and optical digital outputs • Creek Link in/out • (Destiny amp) Size (WxHxD): 43x7x31 cm
• Weight: 10kg • Two sets of speaker terminals • Six line-level inputs • Phono optional • Preamp out/power amp in • Power rating: 100W per channel (8 ohms)

CONTACT ☎ 01442 260146 🌐 www.creekaudio.co.uk

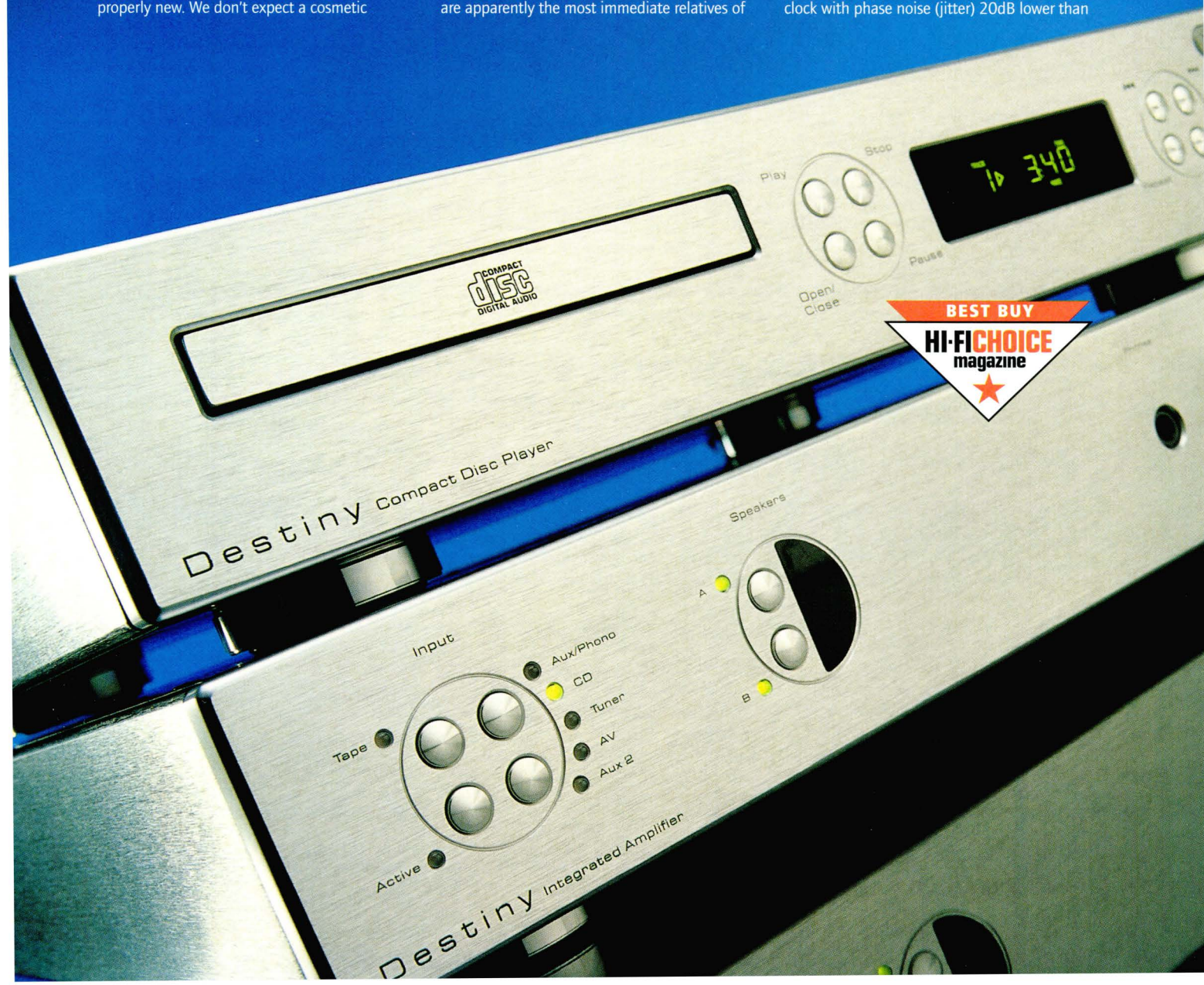
As audio brands go, Creek is a long-term operator, both in terms of its tenure in the business and as regards the life-span of models. Accordingly, when a new model does appear, we've come to expect that it's properly new. We don't expect a cosmetic

retread, and those new products are well thought-through. And when Creek announces a whole new range, we're keen to take notice.

Destiny is a whole new range. But, with typical modesty, company founder Mike Creek explained that both models are in some ways derived from existing products – and then proceeded to spend some twenty minutes outlining some of the differences and new features. We get the general idea: don't tear up a perfectly good guidebook born of many years' practical experience, but feel free to investigate a few new paths here and there.

There are immediate signs of some very clever thinking here. The fascia, for a start. It's not at all the same as on previous Creek models (the 5350SE amplifier and CD50 Mk2 are apparently the most immediate relatives of

the Destiny twins), but the brushed aluminium appearance and button layout have enough in common to alert the Creek-aware on walking past a shop display. Likewise inside: the CD player is based around a DVD drive, though it won't actually play DVDs. Such drives bring their own problems, including slow loading and mechanical noise and while Creek hasn't entirely fixed the former, it's better than some. Better still, mechanical noise (on the review sample at least) is a harmless unpitched hiss that is inaudible and unintrusive at distances above about half a metre. Thanks to several over-tightened screws, we were unable to get inside this sample for a squint, but we're told it includes discrete transistor output buffers on each channel and a particularly high-stability clock with phase noise (jitter) 20dB lower than





“We were particularly impressed with the Destiny amplifier. It has an effortless and seamless coverage of the audio band.”

that of previous Creek CD players. We couldn't verify that as the earlier models were already pushing measurement limits in audio terms, but jitter is certainly as low as we've ever seen.

The amp retains the unique MOSFET output configuration that has served Creek well for several years now, but is more powerful than in previous incarnations. The space savings associated with a move to surface-mounted components have allowed highly sophisticated monitoring circuits to be included, which pass information on idle current, offset and so on to a microprocessor that takes informed decisions on the amp's health.

That microprocessor gives other benefits, too. For instance, relay switching of inputs and outputs is all very well, but if output relays are switched under load, their life and performance can be compromised by internal arcing. Accordingly, Creek switches inputs off a fraction of a second before outputs, and vice versa, so that switching under load is eliminated. Interestingly, Creek retains a traditional mechanical, motorised volume control, believing that overall it offers better performance than electronic attenuators.

As is common these days, the amp has separable preamp and power sections, facilitating upgrading and bi-amping. In basic form it offers six line-level inputs including one

tape loop. One input is upgradeable via an internal plug-in board to accommodate LP sources if required, and other plug-in boards are planned. On the output side, twin sets of WBT terminals are individually switched, and there's even a headphone socket.

Construction of both units is extremely solid, thanks to the use of extruded sides, strong backs and fronts, and thick top and bottom panels, securely screwed down along all four edges. At every stage, Creek has evidently taken care over design and construction, from the mains input (featuring sophisticated filters) to the Schottky diode rectifiers for lowest RF noise pollution. We carried out a thorough technical analysis of both units and failed to spot any worrying signs: distortion is uniformly low, bandwidth flat, noise well suppressed. The CD player suffers, like most, from aliasing with signals of 20kHz and over, but is very well behaved with sub-20kHz signals.

SOUND QUALITY

It's hard to avoid preconceptions when testing products from very familiar brands, but all the same we tried hard not to like these units. More practically, we arranged a very basic blind test against a couple of long-term favourites. Throughout this process, we enjoyed consistently high quality sounds. Indeed, in

common with other class-leading products around the same price that we have come across recently, they pose some potentially embarrassing questions about what exactly qualifies as high end, and why. Embarrassing, that is, for people other than Creek.

By common consent, 'high-end' sound (as distinct from high-end appearance, which tends to involve more imposing bulk than these units offer) takes as a starting point competence in all the basic areas of tonality, side-to-side imaging, 'speed' and so on, and extends into such intangible areas as authority, precision of image depth and myriad little details that contribute to the sense of being there. It's not all that many years ago that achieving the basic competence cost at least the price of these units, but fortunately for us hi-fi consumers progress has been such that competence is the rule rather than the exception, even for half this cost.

We were particularly impressed with the Destiny amplifier. It has an effortless and seamless coverage of the audio band and seemingly well beyond, with bass of considerable heft that also manages the trick of sounding tuneful on potentially troublesome sounds like plucked double bass and timpani. Treble is open and airy and does little or nothing to restrict the natural resonance of high-pitched percussion (nothing shows up congested treble quite like delicate strokes on cymbal or triangle), while midrange is uncoloured and faithful, easily passing the usual tests like familiar voices and saxophone.

Performance goes well beyond those essentials, though. Imaging is remarkably

Q & A

We spoke to Mike Creek, founder and director of Creek Audio, about the new Destiny range and what the future holds for Creek



HFC: Creek Audio tends to be associated with the affordable end of the market. Is Destiny a sign of an upwards shift?

MC: Destiny widens our price range for amplifiers, but it is exactly the same price as the CD53, and cheaper than the CD53SE we previously made. Creek has tended in the past to value engineer its products more critically than on the Destiny, to achieve the best sound per pound. However, yes, Destiny describes our wish to take the company more up-market.

What have you found to be the key areas to address when developing the new circuits?

My philosophy is always to improve things by evolution, not revolution. A lot of the improvements involve better quality components, cabling and so on. Another important move was to convert much of the amplifier design to SMT (Surface Mount Technology). This improved the PCB layout and allowed much greater flexibility with ground planes and power supply tracks. Separating left and right power supplies and running the low current and logic circuitry from a separate transformer helped a lot, too. The casework has played an important role in improving the image and the Sorbothane feet reduce vibrations that disturb the circuitry.

Amplifiers and CD players are both mature technologies. Is there still any mileage left in improving them?

There is always room for improvement. Of course, the thing is to find out where this improvement can be achieved first and then how to do it within a budget, safely and reliably. We still have a few more tricks up our sleeve.

What additions will we see to the Destiny range?

We have already developed a Destiny power amplifier to match the integrated amp, for production in early 2006, and will then add a Destiny radio tuner, based on our long established T50 tuner technology.

And is it likely to go multichannel?

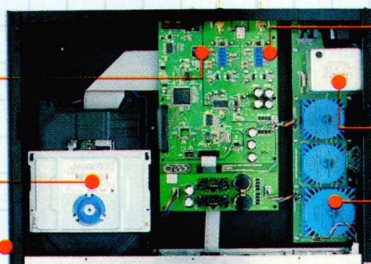
A multichannel power amplifier was in development a year or so back, but was side tracked to allow us to concentrate on the integrated amp and CD first. We can now start to look at five channels again.

Detail – CD

Separated ground planes for analogue and digital

DVD-ROM drive

Top cover fitted with 14 screws



High quality passive components

Mains filtering

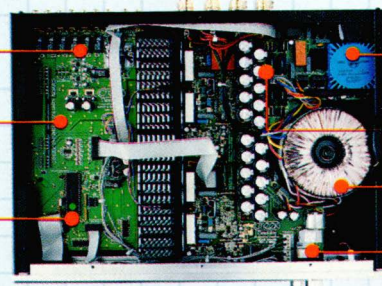
Separate mains transformers for analogue, digital and control stages

Detail – amp

Relays to switch inputs

Space for expansion board

Control and monitoring by microprocessor



Sophisticated mains filtering

Power supply capacitors

Mains transformer

Volume control with motor drive

assured in both sideways and depth dimensions, with the notably high-end trait of maintaining the position of instruments irrespective of overall dynamics. If you hear the flute in an orchestra at just such a spot when it plays solo, you'll find it exactly there in a big ensemble moment, not a yard or two to the side or back.

Then there's the vexed question of 'speed' of the sound. Vexed, because it can be apparently enhanced by a touch of distortion. The giveaway of that, though, is invariably a slight thickening of complex textures. By contrast, this amp is particularly clear at all times: but the way it can grab hold of a pair of speakers and control them with real confidence does indeed seem to improve the rhythmic performance of the whole audio chain. The end result is that anything with a danceable beat really does get the feet moving involuntarily.

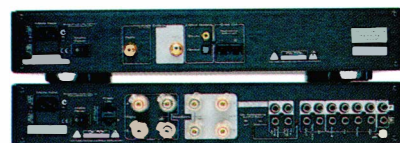
The CD player is very nearly as assured. We loved its bass and midrange, but had very slight reservations about its treble, which seemed, by high-end standards, just slightly shut in. Overall, the player is both informative and comfortable for long-term listening, but it doesn't quite seem to have the same degree of attainment as the amplifier. There's a trace of congestion on very bright sounds – trumpet,

violins – that is reflected in subtly closed-in images at times of musical stress. Still, we'd be pushed to suggest players that can obviously better it, all round, at the price.

Judged as a pair, these are fine units indeed. We are assured that new Destiny products (including a tuner) are forthcoming, and on this showing we are happy to welcome the range as a whole. Dedicated mixers and matchers may well consider the units individually but we feel, quite simply, that Creek has set out a fair high-end stall here for what in context is a most competitive price.

Go get 'em! **HFC**

Richard Black



VERDICT – DESTINY CD PLAYER

SOUND >> 88%



FEATURES >> 84%



BUILD >> 86%



VALUE >> 88%



CONCLUSION

Highly capable CD player may not be quite the equal of the amplifier in terms of treble openness, but is analytically and musically inviting.

HI-FI CHOICE
>> 88%

VERDICT – DESTINY AMPLIFIER

SOUND >> 91%



FEATURES >> 88%



BUILD >> 88%



VALUE >> 92%



CONCLUSION

Adding an impressive array of high-end virtues to the performance we've come to expect from Creek, this amp is a truly great all-rounder.

HI-FI CHOICE
>> 91%



HOT NEWS
NEW AUDIO RESEARCH CD7
JUST ARRIVED AND ON DEMO!

v a n t a g e

Living in the shadow of the impressive Summit speaker is no easy task. Vantage rises to the challenge by compressing Summit's groundbreaking ultra high-resolution XStat™, AirFrame™ and PoweredForce™ technologies into a surprisingly compact package and price (£3998).

To arrange an audition, contact Guildford Audio.

Brands Include:
audio analogue
audio research
copland
dream vision
ecs
epos
goldring
grado
harmonic
hyperion
jadis
koetsu
krell
magnum dynalab
martin logan
myryad
opera
pathos
primaluna
qed
roksan
sonus faber
stands unique
sunfire
t+a
theta
townshend
transparent
unison research
wadia
waterfall
wilson audio
& many more..

→ part exchange → home demo / loans → home installation → visit our web site for used / ex-demo products and the latest product information

**Guildford
Audio**

our demonstrations are
different and here's why



by appointment only
arranged at a time to suit you
day, evenings or weekends
in a relaxed atmosphere
not set to a time limit!
not set to just one demo!
no pressure selling!

sales@guildfordaudio.co.uk
www.guildfordaudio.co.uk

01483 537 577

radfords

"The finest place in the South West
to purchase hi-fi..."

Radfords, founded in 1973, has always been one of the best places to buy hi-fi. Based on the principles of listening to a client's needs, a visit to Radfords is a rewarding experience. With demonstration rooms, a specialist workshop, a wide and varied selection of two channel and multi-channel equipment, a home demonstration service, unrivalled expertise, and a policy of keeping our prices as low as possible, we're sure you'll enjoy your visit!

EXCLUSIVE DEALERS FOR:



PLUS:

- Monitor Audio
- Arcam
- Rega
- Audiolab
- SME
- Michell Engineering
- Pathos
- Audion
- Roksan
- Chord Company
- Nordost Reference
- Pro-Ject
- Denon
- Pioneer
- Yamaha
- Artcoustic
- Sennheiser
- REL

Demonstrations by appointment.
Open Monday to Saturday 9.30am to 6pm.
Ex-demo and second hand equipment listed on our website.



**MASSIVE
WINTER SALE**
Starts 15th of December.
Huge discounts off
everything!

See www.radfords.co.uk for details.

In Bath: 12 James Street West, Bath BA1 2BX. Telephone: **01225 446 245** or email: bath@radfords.co.uk

In Bristol: 10-12 Gloucester Road, Bristol BS7 8AE. Telephone: **0117 944 10 10** or email: bristol@radfords.co.uk

For directions and more information,
please see: **www.radfords.co.uk**

B&W's bonny baby

When B&W moves into the luxury miniature sector, it's time to sit up and take notice

PRODUCT B&W CM1

TYPE Standmount loudspeaker

PRICE £499 per pair

KEY FEATURES Dimensions (WxHxD): 16.5x28x28cm
• Weight: 6.7kg • Two-way configuration • Slimline enclosure • 25mm aluminium tweeter with high-compliance surround • 95mm bass/mid driver with Kevlar cone • Low-turbulence 'Flowport' rear port

CONTACT ☎ 01903 221500 • www.bwspeakers.com

Worthing based B&W is the world leader in hi-fi loudspeakers, and has built its position by creating a number of model ranges that fill most of the obvious sectors the marketplace. There's obvious demand for high performance speakers to partner plasma and LCD TVs, hence the new slimline, silver metal-jackets of the new XT-Series. At the same time, B&W engineers have rearranged the XT building

blocks to create the CM1 miniature standmount, for the stereo enthusiast who likes to keep things small and elegant.

High-performance miniature speakers, with internal volumes of around 5-7 litres, have long been a niche sector of the hi-fi scene. Their illustrious history can count numerous 'classics' going back over 40-odd years. Furthermore, budget-price miniatures – like the Wharfedale Diamond and Mordaunt-Short MS3.10 – were the biggest sellers a decade or two ago, before fashion changes moved towards floorstanders.

Surprisingly perhaps, B&W is one company that has tended to avoid the miniature sector of the market, especially the luxury end thereof. And while this little CM1's £499 per pair price tag is a lot smaller than the ones appearing on some of the other tinies out there, its sharply tailored real wood veneer and shiny driver trim certainly looks the part.

In this case, the enclosure is very slim indeed, helped by a smaller than usual bass/mid drive unit. It's also nearly as deep as it is tall, giving a total enclosed volume of 6.5 litres. It is, of course, a two-way, with a nominal 130mm main driver equipped with a 95mm woven Kevlar cone and pointed dust cap, plus a 25mm aluminium dome tweeter.

The tweeter is fitted conventionally into the front of the enclosure, but uses a Nautilus-style rear loading tube mounted internally to absorb the rear radiation from the diaphragm. And it also uses the diaphragm/surround arrangement developed for the 805S, giving output up to 50kHz and having a low enough fundamental resonance to allow it to be fed via a first-order, single capacitor network.

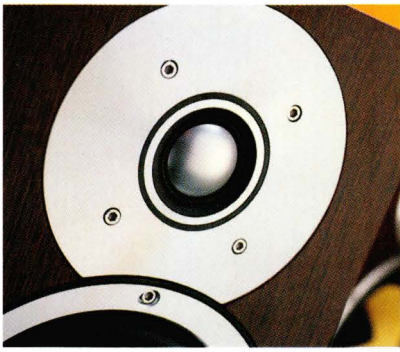
Both the CM1's drivers use detailed modelling of their magnetic motors and laser-based measurements in order to minimise distortion and linearise their net inductance.



BEST BUY

HI-FI CHOICE
magazine





“Because there’s very little cabinet here to add coloration to the sound of the drive units, there’s very little cabinet coloration.”

Their mechanical design has even been tailored to enable the simplest possible crossover network to be used. Much of the development time then went into auditioning and comparing alternative network components, since measurement techniques are still not as musically discriminating as human hearing here.

The tasty cabinet comes in wenge, rosenut or maple finish, and the fabric grille (if used) is held by magnets hidden beneath the veneer, avoiding unsightly lugs. Both drivers are flush-mounted, the tweeter featuring a highly polished faceplate to match the main driver trim, partly cut away to allow the drivers to be as close together as possible. Twin terminal pairs offer the bi-wire/bi-amp option, and a generous flared Flowport reflex-loads the enclosure. A hollow foam sleeve offers an interesting port tuning option.

SOUND QUALITY

Over and beyond considerations of price and surface finish, the one thing that usually and fundamentally distinguishes the ‘luxury’ from the ‘budget’ miniature is that the former tend to sacrifice sensitivity in order to achieve a free-space bass alignment. That’s much the case here, where our measurements indicated a sensitivity as low as 84-85dB. Wondering whether the test gear was correctly set, it was gratifying to get confirmation that the manufacturer was also claiming 84dB. This low figure means that ultimate loudness capability

will be somewhat limited, but at least the load it presents to the amplifier, which stays above five ohms, will be easy enough to drive.

With the port left completely unobstructed, it was tuned to 58Hz, which is very close to one of our room’s major modes, and consequently showed a +5dB peak on our far-field in-room averaged trace. Inserting the hollow foam bungs reduces the port output and re-tunes it to 40Hz, giving a smoother, flatter bass output with slightly greater extension. Subjectively, however, the speaker was actually preferred without the foam inserts.

Whatever the chosen bass alignment, the balance over the rest of the audio band is remarkably well judged and ordered, holding within tight limits throughout. It’s a little laid back above 1.5kHz, with just a shallow, broad depression through the presence zone.

A near-perfect balance is an excellent starting point for any speaker, whatever its size. It virtually guarantees fine basic neutrality, and that was certainly a key factor in the listening experience. Whatever the source, this speaker will deliver its sound with restrained even-handedness, gently laid back, free from exaggeration, and with surprising weight and solidity for its size.

However, the CM1’s tiny dimensions have at least three other specific implications – two positive, one negative. Because the front baffle is so small and the drivers so close together, the speaker will behave very like a point

source, and this is the reason why the stereo image is both spacious and precisely focused. And because there’s very little cabinet here to add coloration to the sound of the drive units, there’s very little cabinet coloration. Some of the more costly luxury miniatures go even further in banishing boxiness, but the CM1 certainly has very little coloration, boxy or otherwise, to distract one from the music.

On the other hand, because this speaker is so small, it doesn’t move a lot of air. This one factor robs the CM1 of the sort of dynamic expression and tension that larger speakers can generate. Although many seem happy enough with the sound of small speakers, the sound they create is invariably ‘reproduced’, lacking the greater sense of reality that only bigger speakers seem able to deliver. This one unavoidable caveat aside, if you’re looking for an attractive pair of compact speakers for a small(ish) room, the CM1 takes top honours this side of £700. **HFC**

Paul Messenger

VERDICT	
SOUND >> 83% [Progress bar]	PRO This beautifully balanced miniature has fine neutrality and delicate detailing, with impressive weight, superior imaging and little boxiness.
EASE OF DRIVE >> 72% [Progress bar]	CON Common to all very small speakers, the sound lacks dynamic tension and some expression, always sounding ‘reproduced’ rather than ‘real’.
BUILD >> 88% [Progress bar]	
VALUE >> 88% [Progress bar]	
CONCLUSION This very pretty luxury miniature is cleverly engineered to give a neutral, slightly restrained and laid back sound, with low coloration, fine imaging, impressive weight and delicate detail, though dynamic tension and expression are both constrained.	
HI-FI CHOICE OVERALL SCORE >> 86%	

The Beat goes on

Densen's top integrated amp costs more than many two-box combos, but it's still good value

PRODUCT Densen Beat B-150

TYPE Integrated stereo amplifier

PRICE £3,000

KEY FEATURES Size (WxHxD): 44x6.4x31cm

● Weight: 14kg ● Inputs: six line-level, phono option

● Outputs: two tape, two pre, processor ● Single speaker terminals ● Rated power: 100W per channel (eight ohms)

CONTACT ☎ 01732 451938 🌐 www.densen.dk

In recent issues, we've devoted several pages to Densen's latest pre and power amplifiers.

This time, it's a new integrated that attracts our attention. But it's far from a budget product, costing far more than the B-200/B-310 pairing we looked at in *HFC* 276.

One of the key features of the B-150 is its volume control. Every integrated or preamplifier must have one of those, and traditionally it took the form of a resistive carbon track with a wiper that moves along it – the basic voltage divider or 'potentiometer'. The best examples of

that breed give pretty decent performance, but in recent years electronic controls have gained popularity, using integrated circuit techniques to switch resistive components via transistors. Again, that can work well, but many remain uneasy about passing the delicate audio through so many transistors and subminiature resistors of slightly uncertain characteristics.

Densen's answer is a complex and expensive array of relays, under the control of a microprocessor, switching the signal through various combinations of high precision discrete resistors. This has been done before, too, though few are as sophisticated as this. 200 volume steps are offered, and the resistors used have intrinsically lower noise and distortion than a mechanical potentiometer, plus better matching at very low levels.

The rest of the amp has been built with as much care and attention to detail. Resistors throughout are precision types, while all actual amplification is carried out by discrete

transistors, all surface mount, apart from the high power output types which are clamped to Densen's usual heat spreader on the bottom panel. Densen is a great believer in the virtues of zero-feedback circuits, and has done something quite remarkable in combining this philosophy with Class AB operation – getting decent performance from output stages subject to the wide current swings of Class AB is no mean feat. As a result, bias current is higher than in most amps and the unit runs warm to the touch.

Densen is a great believer in upgrading, and accordingly the B-150 can be fitted not only with one of the company's phono boards (MM or MC) but also with an active crossover tailored to your loudspeakers – this will, of course, require at least one additional power amp. An external power supply is available, and the unit can also be upgraded to surround (again in conjunction with extra amps) thanks to another plug-in board. Finally, there's



DenLink – Densen’s multiroom control connection, should you wish to wire your house for sound in the future.

We came to have mixed feelings about the operation of the B-150. Volume control by pushbuttons is familiar enough by now, but while the basic steps are small, holding the buttons down for more than a second or so results in jumps of five steps at a time. In addition, the steps are not entirely even in size, varying from less than 0.1dB (barely audible) to 1dB. What’s considerably more irritating is the noise made by all those relays clattering away. Even when you hit ‘mute’ on the front panel (or on the Gizmo remote, an optional extra), the volume declines to zero to the accompaniment of a noise like a typewriter.

But that’s our only real beef. Technical performance is good, though (once again) not equal to Densen’s claims in terms of bandwidth and distortion, and provision of inputs and outputs is pretty typical: six line in, two tape out, processor loop and two preamp out, with single speaker terminals. Oh, and Densen’s trademark sharp edges on the case.

SOUND QUALITY

Once the clattering of the relays has subsided, the sound that this smart box produces is pleasant enough. In fact, it’s a good deal more than pleasant; it’s really rather appealing. It shares what seems to be the essential Densen family trait of lively, energetic rhythms. At the same time, it has a more neutral tonal presentation than the B-200/B-310 combo we reviewed last month. This pre/power pairing seems to have a very slight subjective lift in the upper bass, but the B-150 is more neutral in those parts and as a result, more analytical.

The real glory of this amp is its portrayal of deep bass. Time and again, with recordings that delve deep into the low end, it showed an entirely admirable ability to control the speakers in such a way that low-frequency sounds are clear, tuneful and yet satisfyingly visceral. This is more than just a party trick, it’s a rare and valuable talent and one of the true marks of good high-end kit. Getting a bass drum or some sound effect to flap the listener’s trouser legs is one thing, but making subtle plucked bass or quiet timpani sound both deep and well tuned is a much harder proposition. This amp manages it consistently and convincingly.

The analytical nature of some electronics is not always, to all people, deserving of unequivocal praise. Can hi-fi equipment sound both analytical and musical? Densen makes a good case for the answer being ‘yes’. Too often in the past, there was an uncomfortable tradeoff where analysis came to mean dry, soulless separation of music into its constituent parts. That tendency has become rare with the passing of time



“Can hi-fi equipment sound both analytical and musical? Densen makes a good case for the answer being ‘yes’.”

and in this case is simply not applicable. What the B-150 achieves instead is a full-scale representation of the sound where the details are perfectly apparent if you choose to listen out for them, but where they are still very much part of the overall picture.

We trust that few will argue with the suggestion that this is how things should be. But before we get too carried away and describe the B-150 as the perfect amplifier, we should admit to a couple of small reservations. Both concern the treble and may indeed be symptoms of the same cause. First, there is a merest hint of coloration in the ‘presence’ region, which is noticeable on sounds like female voice, saxophone and cymbal. It’s not really bothersome, but it is audible in quickfire comparisons with other amps. And then there’s very slightly less ‘air’ around high-frequency sounds than we’d ideally like to hear, which is perhaps harder to ignore. It seems to close down the size of the recording venue a little and minutely attenuates the natural decay of high-pitched sounds.

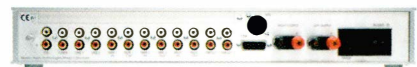
We found that effect, ironically, most noticeable in some of the same recordings that most markedly benefited from the B-150’s excellent bass, such as well-recorded jazz trios.

Here, the drum kit can sound slightly shut in compared with the bass. Big

orchestral sounds, too, really blossom in the bass and lower midrange but just slightly lack scale in the treble.

All the same, this is a very capable amplifier that does things integrated models very seldom do. Its combination of authority, musicality and insight will, for many listeners, far outweigh the minor failings in the treble and we are happy to recommend it as an alternative to the more obvious pre/power route in this price range. **HFC**

Richard Black



VERDICT	
SOUND >> 91%	PRO An excellent combination of analysis and musical integrity coupled with infectious rhythmic properties. Particularly wonderful at dealing with deep bass sounds in a rich, yet tuneful manner.
FEATURES >> 86%	
BUILD >> 87%	
VALUE >> 84%	
CON Slight coloration in the presence region and lack of high-frequency ‘air’. Beware of the case’s sharp edges!	

CONCLUSION
 Truly gorgeous sounds in the lower octaves are a joy; very slight treble dryness detracts only a little. Good sense of scale and rock-steady rhythms appeal too! This is one of the few integrated amps that can show up pre/power combos.

HI-FI CHOICE OVERALL SCORE >> 88%

Unique Sound & Vision

T+A

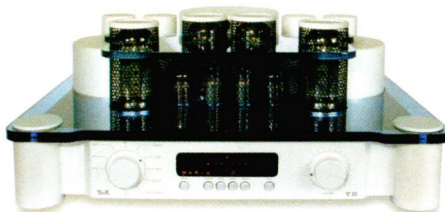


D10 SACD The first valve SACD from T+A

A sophisticated and solidly built pure two-channel high end SACD player equally at home with cd or sacd. Unsurpassable quality in terms of musical reproduction that will bring you closer than ever to the true-life concert hall experience.

The D10 has sound quality to at least equal the very best vinyl playing turntables in the world.

T+A



V10 Integrated valve amplifier

A uniquely designed and reliable super integrated valve amplifier that combines the advantages of the transistor world with the magical qualities of the valve world. Fully deserves its title as NO.1 in Europe.

"A Certifiable Masterpiece. This is to debut amplifiers what LED Zeppelin I was to debut LP's."

Ken Kessler, *Hifi News*, February 2004

T+A

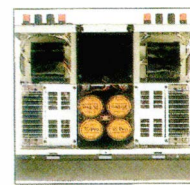
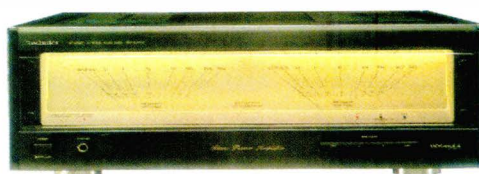
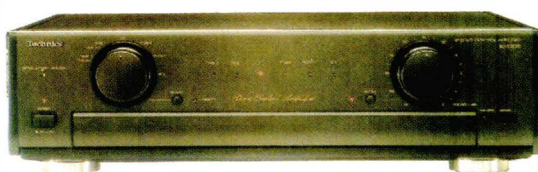


G10 Reference Turntable

Experience your vinyls like never before! Boasting SME tone arm and "ACE" pick-up system by Swiss company Benz the G10 has equal measures of style, substance and warmth. A smooth operator that will allow you to enjoy the very best from your vinyls.

"Worth mentioning is the G 10's quietness, with even disc surface noise and vinyl 'roar' pushed down to near-inaudibility", "...toppling any consumer digital format in pure musical quality."
HIFI News - August 2003

Classic technics 2000 series - closer to audio perfection



Classic technics 2000 series

The 2000 series is technics top of the line separates component system featuring the SE-A2000 power amp, and the SU-C2000 control amp. Exclusive components with ingenious circuit construction. Sturdy, attractive designs. Incredible sound quality. In other words, a system that's the closest thing yet to audio perfection.

CONTROL AMPLIFIER SU-C2000

- VIRTUAL BATTERY OPERATION extraordinary performance approaching that of a battery. (Effectively eliminates noise from the power circuit)
- Multi-layer construction for further reinforcement against vibration
- MMMC phono selector
- Class AA phono equaliser amp and class AA output amp for superior sound quality

SE-A2000

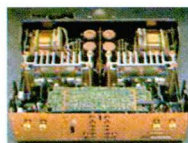
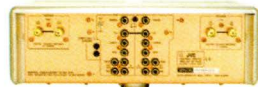
- MOS Class AA circuit Best possible circuitry for an amp's output stage
- Outstanding linearity for an audibly superior sound
- MOS-FET'S exceptional performance
- Twin mono construction minimises cross talk between left and right channels

LIMITED STOCKS PLEASE HURRY

The Ultimate Super Digifine Glass A Pure Integrated Amplifier



Victor · JVC
The Perfect Experience



JVC AX-SD1 GD

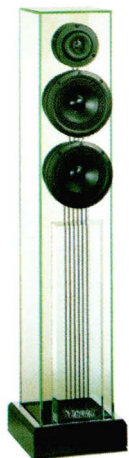
With the AX- SD1 GD you will experience sound quality like never before, simply out of this world! Since JVC started in 1927 this is the best pure amplifier they have ever made.

5 years warranty

VERDICT

Highly open, transparent and musical sound makes this one of the surprises of the year. Thoroughly recommended (hi-fi world).

WATERFALL



Victoria Waterfall (TWN)

This speaker makes voices, especially speech, sound unusually open and explicit. This is particularly convincing and effective at low listening levels bringing great clarity to song lyrics. The net results combine a wide dynamic range with good clarity and expression.

VERDICT

They succeed by being beautiful both inside and out, combining elegance and superlative engineering rigorously as an aesthetic expression (hi-fi world).

SHANLING

VERDICT

An outstanding, wilfully quirky and charismatic audiophile product (hi-fi world).



Shanling SCD-T200c

The world's first valve SACD player. The T200c brings digital sound even closer to the original. Feel the warmth of analogue sound with no trace of the metallic quality often associated with digital sources.

For a unique experience in sound call us on:
020 7272 0922 or email: info@uniquesoundandvision.co.uk

Unique Sound & Vision
Bringing you Closer to the Musical Truth

Right on time

Acoustic Energy's new Linear loudspeakers clock on to 'Time Aligned Technology'

PRODUCT Acoustic Energy Linear 1

TYPE Standmount loudspeaker

PRICE £250 per pair

CONTACT ☎ 01285 654432

🌐 www.acoustic-energy.co.uk

Think Acoustic Energy and it will probably be the metal-coned AE1 that first springs to mind. Since that stalwart design of the 1980s, Acoustic Energy has led the charge of the metal cone brigade, and metal cones have now been widely adopted by other manufacturers. So, Acoustic Energy needed another Unique Selling Point (USP) to promote its new range, and the company came up with 'Time Aligned Technology'.

Time-alignment effectively means siting the tweeter and woofer on differing vertical planes, so that the sound from both reaches your ears at the same time. It's supposed to enhance integration, staging and off-axis response and, by and large, it does. There's actually nothing new about the technology, but it is still very rare at this price point.

To achieve time-alignment, Acoustic Energy has used a moulded front baffle with a deep recess for the treble unit. It gives the speaker a distinctive, if not overtly graceful appearance.

What can't be denied, though, is the quality of construction. The 15mm MDF cabinet is finished in an expensive-looking gloss black lacquer, giving it a look that's reminiscent of the much more expensive AE1/3 range. Being Acoustic Energy there is, of course, a pressed alloy cone at the heart of the bass/mid driver. It's magnetically shielded and has a thick surround that allows it to be long of throw. This – and the ported design – should help to deliver plenty of bass. The treble unit is a conventional soft-dome design, but there's nothing intrinsically wrong with that. In fact, pairing a metal tweeter and woofer can produce an overtly bright and metallic sound quality. For those of a multichannel bent, Acoustic Energy also supplies a full Linear 5.1 set-up, with floorstanders for the front and an active subwoofer.

SOUND QUALITY

In answer to whether the time-alignment works, the response is a qualified 'yes'. Whatever the musical genre, the Linear 1 always comes across as composed, well-integrated and spacious sounding. Solo

vocalists are given great body, and there's a presence that works whether in the 'sweet spot' or not. The single concern we had with the soundstaging, however, was that there seemed to be some lack of height to the sound. Perhaps the overhanging ledge above the tweeter plays some part in this. Nevertheless, when it comes to timing and bass integration the Linear 1 is at the top of its game. Larger rivals will have more bass depth, but none will match the seamless integration or the foot-tapping timing.

While generally well-focused, there was some blurring of percussion sounds during our test programme. It was as though the last edge of the note hadn't quite been given the opportunity to fully resolve itself. It should be noted, though, that this was slight and not really a demerit given the price. Countering this was a lean and dynamic nature that proved addictive with rock, pop or even upbeat jazz.

Classical music exposed the Linear 1's main weakness. Subtle shading and instrumental timbre weren't the strongest. Instead of the brass and string sections having distinct, easily identifiable characters, the overall impression was one of a slightly colourless blend. The results were pleasant enough, just not as invigorating as with other types of music. That said, strong dynamic contrast and a generally spacious, well-separated soundstage do their best to redeem the sound.

Few amps should have trouble driving the Linear 1 and its easy-going nature also extends to placement, which is not as fussy as many in this respect. Time-aligned or not, these are enjoyable speakers and should suit most of the people most of the time. **HFC**

Dominic Todd

VERDICT

SOUND >> 78%



EASE OF DRIVE >> 90%



BUILD >> 83%



VALUE >> 91%



PRO

A spacious, well-integrated sound makes for an enjoyable listen. Fine dynamics, timing and build quality also impress. The mechanical time alignment works, too.

CON

Some blurring of percussion and lack of subtle shading disappoints with Classical music. Not the most subtle speaker around.

CONCLUSION

With a few minor reservations, these are highly enjoyable and flexible speakers for the money. Provided your musical tastes aren't predominantly classical, the Linear 1 should definitely be on your shortlist if you're looking for speakers under £300.

HI-FI CHOICE >> **85%**
OVERALL SCORE

The special ones

Do these new, breathed-on OSE components sound as special as they look?

PRODUCT Marantz CD5001 OSE and PM4001 OSE

TYPE CD player and integrated stereo amplifier

PRICE £250 each

KEY FEATURES (CD5001 OSE) Size (WxHxD): 44x9x28cm • Weight: 4kg • CD-R/RW compatibility • Electrical and optical digital outputs • (PM4001 OSE) Size (WxHxD): 44x12x34cm • Weight: 6.6kg • Five line-level inputs • Two tape outputs • Two switched pairs of speaker terminals • Power rating: 30 watts per channel (8 ohms)

CONTACT ☎ 01753 680868 • www.marantz.co.uk

Marantz has recently announced a makeover of its entire hi-fi separates range, and these two are part of the process, replacing the CD5400 and PM4400 respectively. The price premium of these 'Original Special Edition' versions adds something like 50 per cent on top of the highly competitive price of the basic products, but these models are still firmly in budget territory as far as 'quality' hi-fi separates are concerned.

The CD player is particularly smart, its display and general layout owing much to upmarket

Marantz models, and if the amp looks a little less authentically high-end, it's mostly on account of the bypassable tone control and balance knobs – features one doesn't expect to find on dearer kit.

The player offers both flavours of digital output and adjustable headphone output too, plus CD-RW playback ability and CD Text display. Unusually, 'pitch control' is provided, a feature most often associated with aerobic instructors and karaoke criminals, but which CD collectors with a good selection of analogue reissues often find handy for correcting carelessly-set transfer speeds. At this price it seems ignoble to complain, but it's worth mentioning that there is something of a quality hit in using this, as jitter rises to monumental levels when pitch is set to anything other than '0' – probably an acceptable trade-off for restoring the natural sound of voices and instruments, we'd say.

The PM4001 OSE turns out to be surprisingly well implemented internally too, with a fully discrete-transistor power amp circuit on a

generous heatsink, and enough power supply grunt to exceed comfortably its 30-watt rating – around 45 watts per channel by our meters, though clipping is unusually obvious thanks to some rather nasty behaviour when it arrives. Again, this is not too reprehensible at £250, especially since behaviour otherwise is most commendable. The five line inputs, and the signal from the ho-hum internal phono stage, are switched electronically by circuits that can comfortably handle any likely input signal level.

In these days of high-tech surface-mounted electronics, there's a real sense of nerdy nostalgia in gazing on the 1970s-style circuit boards (the audio ones at least) within both units. Old-style through-hole components are joined only where absolutely necessary by surface-mount components such as the DAC chip, and if this is still the most cost-effective way of building stuff like this we've no complaint. What does bother us is the heatsink in the CD player which cools the main supply regulator: it gets extremely hot and is close enough to several electrolytic capacitors to





“There’s no point pretending the PM4001 – OSE or not – is the next Krell-basher, but it puts up a surprisingly decent fight.”

make us fearful of reliability problems in the long term. These capacitors are the most temperature sensitive components in modern electronics and really do not like constant baking. Turn this one off at night!

SOUND QUALITY

Naturally, we tried these two matching units together, but we also partnered them with various other components from across the price range. Not for the first time in such circumstances, we took more of a shine to one unit than the other, in this case liking the amp a great deal, while having some reservations about the CD player.

That said, the CD5001 OSE has some good aspects to it and it even betters the amp in bass performance, where it is assured and solid. In other regards, though, it seems to be found wanting. What bothered us most, across a wide variety of music, was a persistent roughness to the sound. This is only slight, but serves to mask fine detail and generally get in the way between music and listener. Voices sound less resonant and characterful, bright instruments lose their bloom, mellow ones sound less mellow.

As so often, how this affects you will depend largely on what sort of music you listen to. If you like energetic but slightly grungy stuff – minor-label 1950s and 1960s rock ‘n’ roll, anything a bit punky – you may well find this player much to your taste. It’s rather less suited, though, to productions that major on sophistication and/or natural and airy acoustic sounds.



We don’t want to give the impression that this is simply a bad bit of kit. It’s not bad... just, we feel, ever so slightly indifferent. In fact, it simply sounds a bit too obviously like what it is: a budget CD player. The best budget models, like Cambridge Audio’s identically priced Azur 640C v2 (HFC 274), conceal their origins rather more successfully.

As suggested earlier, the amp is an altogether better bet. There’s no point pretending that the PM4001 – OSE or not – is the next Krell-basher, but it puts up a surprisingly decent fight. It doesn’t do much in terms of ultra-low bass control, possibly the most obvious area where budget amps still lag behind upmarket varieties. Further up the range, though, it does some praiseworthy things. Its basic tonality in the midrange is little short of excellent. We detected the odd hint of chestiness in male voices but none of the ‘quack’ that used to be the plague of affordable amplification. Female voice is similarly natural-sounding; a little hard at times but not seriously so. This will make this amp a sure-fire winner with lovers of vocals.

What will further endear it is its ability to separate musical strands, lifting voices clear of instruments so that intelligibility is unimpaired. Again, it’s not perfect in this regard, with less clear spatial separation than, for instance, the Creek Destiny (reviewed on p50). But at less than a quarter of the price of the Creek, it really hasn’t anything to be ashamed of.

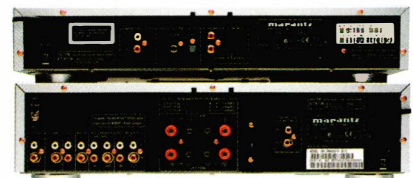
So far, then, the amp shows potential with voices and multi-layered music. It is

more significantly tripped up by rock, various dance genres and so on, which could do with more ‘oomph’ and better bass timing. If that’s a particular priority for you, then look elsewhere. Treble, too, is unremarkable – decent, not overtly constricted, but not astonishingly sweet.

If you do fancy the amp – and there’s plenty of reason to do so – and want a matching CD player, the CD5001 OSE will serve a purpose, and to some extent the weaknesses of each unit cancel each other out. But it’s not so much two wrongs making a right, more like an even distribution of greyness.

The amp shines in many of the critical areas, and – for that – we like it a lot. But the CD player, despite its good looks and strong feature set, is bettered by others at the price. **HFC**

Richard Black



VERDICT – CD5001 OSE

SOUND >> 67%
 [Progress bar showing 67%]

FEATURES >> 88%
 [Progress bar showing 88%]

BUILD >> 82%
 [Progress bar showing 82%]

VALUE >> 82%
 [Progress bar showing 82%]

CONCLUSION
 Bass is lively and weighty, but elsewhere it sounds a little rough and grainy. Neat appearance and good features are in its favour, though.

HI-FI CHOICE >> 75%

VERDICT – PM4001 OSE

SOUND >> 76%
 [Progress bar showing 76%]

FEATURES >> 88%
 [Progress bar showing 88%]

BUILD >> 82%
 [Progress bar showing 82%]

VALUE >> 91%
 [Progress bar showing 91%]

CONCLUSION
 A refined and detailed sound for the price. Decent imaging and honest tonality, too. Bass is loose and lacks extension, but communicates decently.

HI-FI CHOICE >> 84%

The wild frontier

Valve pioneer Border Patrol celebrates going West to its new American home with an updated preamp

PRODUCT Border Patrol Control Unit

TYPE Stereo valve preamplifier

PRICE £2,995 (plus £700 for optional phono stage)

KEY FEATURES Size (WxHxD): 45x12x35cm

• Weight: 12kg • Five line-level inputs • Optional moving magnet phono stage • No remote control

CONTACT ☎ 001 301 705 7460

🌐 www.borderpatrol.co.uk

Valve amp specialist Border Patrol has recently moved from Hove (actually) on the South coast of England to Maryland on the East coast of the United States of America. This continental shift seems to have had a subtle but distinct effect on the company's Control Unit preamplifier. The first Control Unit was more like a hand-built working prototype, but that didn't stop it performing well and being professionally finished. But it didn't have the squared-off, thick aluminium fascia of this new beast, nor did it sport an all-copper chassis construction, or offer the option of a valve phono stage.

When the Control Unit was originally launched, it was offered in 'CU1' and 'CU2' varieties, the former being encased in aluminium and featuring some reduction in component quality for a 30 per cent cost saving. But, as things turned out, people were more interested in the 'Full Monty' Control Unit, so the alternative has been dropped from the range. Border Patrol's proprietor Gary Dews says the 2mm copper plate chassis "produces a richer sound than aluminium, which is grainy, bleached and wispy by comparison." Possible reasons for this include that pure copper is less magnetic than an alloy. Aluminium is not magnetic in and of itself, but slide a magnet along an alloy sheet and than a copper one and you'll note it moves more quickly along the copper. The copper chassis is also twice the weight of the aluminium, which makes it harder to resonate. And it's also more malleable, which is said to be a benefit, too.

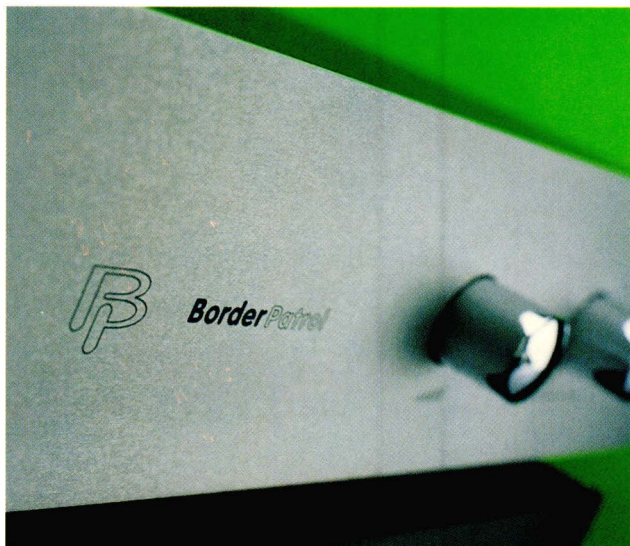
The new Control Unit uses the same negative-feedback-free circuit as previous models, but features higher quality

components such as Blackgate power supply caps and Hovland Musicaps for signal coupling. The biggest improvement is the use of choke input filtering (CIF) for the heater supply. This is combined with a CIF high-voltage supply using an EZ80 valve for rectification, as found in the original Control Unit, which produces better regulation, a lower noise floor and greater immunity to RF entering the signal path.

Border Patrol chose a single 5687 double triode valve for signal amplification and used it in an anode-follower configuration, because of the simplicity that this route offers. The price of this simplicity is a limited ability to drive interconnect cables and Border Patrol recommends keeping this link below three metres. It's a technique that also works rather better with low sensitivity power amps, such as those in the Border Patrol range; more sensitive designs will tend to give too much overall gain, which can exaggerate microphonic tendencies in the valves.

The moving magnet phono stage adds £700 to the cost of the Control Unit, but – as with





“The bass – while not as ‘crunchy’ as a transistor design – is not short on weight or depth and it scores highly on articulation.”

the line stage – it’s fully hardwired, and uses ECC83 and 6922 double triode valves in its two-stage design. At present, there are no plans to offer a step-up transformer which would make this stage work with moving coil cartridges, but these are made by other firms should you want to take the MC vinyl route.

The preamp has five line-level inputs in standard guise, or four plus phono with that stage on-board. There are a pair of output sockets and a tape out, too. Front panel controls are minimal and remote control is unfortunately not an option, reflecting the Border Patrol’s hard-core status.

SOUND QUALITY

There is a tendency to think of valve equipment as being rose-tinted, smooth and a little soft. This prejudice is not entirely surprising because there have been plenty of tube-powered amplifiers that fit the profile. However, Border Patrol’s creations tend to be exceptions to this rule, so much so that some in the ‘romance of valves’ camp describe the kit as being rather too ‘hi-fi’. We are of the opinion that whatever technology you use to create an audio component, the end result is what counts; valve romance is ultimately coloration and diverts us from our high-fidelity goal.

The Control Unit is indeed pretty neutral by valve standards. Compare it with a passive pot, however, and you’ll notice that high frequencies are rolled off and the midrange is a little more obvious. Also, next to a Bryston BP25 preamp, the bass is soft edged. But there are plenty of qualities to make up for these

limitations at the frequency extremes. The midrange, in particular, is transparent and vivid, and the sense of timing right on the money.

The bass – while not as ‘crunchy’ as a transistor design – is not short on weight or depth and it scores very high on articulation. Tonal resolve is a clear strength of valve amps and this preamp’s low-end performance is no exception. During our test period, the electric bass on Neil Ardley’s *Kaleidoscope of Rainbows* was positively lush in its vibrancy, each note being delivered with a solidity that made for a convincing sense of presence in the room.

Higher up the tonal scale, things get even more entertaining. This is where you get a sense of transparency and resolve that will win over even the most hard-hearted audiophile. It’s where music’s power to communicate is at its strongest, and this preamp makes the most of it without going overboard. This means female singer/songwriter vocals are always as heart-rending as one can bare, thanks to a balance that’s relaxed, but puts the edges right where they should be. Voices are beautifully warm, but guitar sounds still have plenty of zing. This is the nub of the Border Patrol: its ability to get to the heart of the music without forgoing the strength of the elements that make it up. Its sound is fluid but also well-separated.

We used an old Audio Innovations Series 1000 step-up transformer to bring a vdH Condor MC cartridge’s output up to a level that the Border Patrol’s phono stage could deal with, to see how it fared. This experiment revealed just how dynamic vinyl can be when played in the right

company. The power of Ardley’s ‘prog orchestra’ had substantial dynamic energy and plenty of harmonic detail; the degree to which the preamp unearths the organic, three-dimensional aspects of an LP is highly engaging, too. The term ‘chewy’ seems wholly appropriate when trying to describe the sound of a well-recorded double bass, here. Of course, when terms like that start to turn up in the notes, you know that an element of charm has taken over and you are having far too much fun to be observing results in an impartial manner!

Few music-loving audiophiles are immune to the beguiling qualities of a fine valve amp, even in the context of hard-nosed transistor power amplification. With one of Border Patrol’s single-ended triode power amps added to the mix, analytical assessment would be nigh on impossible; still, they are more ‘hi-fi’ than other valve designs, so maybe decorum could be maintained. Either way, it’s hard to turn the music off. And that’s the real joy of the Control Unit. **HFC**

Jason Kennedy

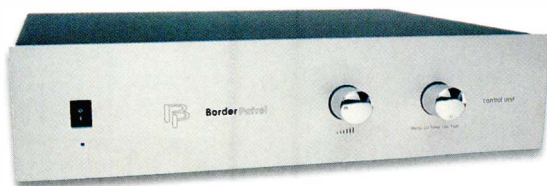


VERDICT

SOUND >> 90% [Progress bar]	PRO Excellent transparency and dynamics combined with good focus and low noise. Nice solid construction and a great (optional) phono stage, too.
FEATURES >> 50% [Progress bar]	CON Needs short (3m maximum) interconnect cables and connection to a low sensitivity power amp for best results. No remote option, MC cartridges will need a step-up.
BUILD >> 89% [Progress bar]	
VALUE >> 80% [Progress bar]	

CONCLUSION
This substantial preamp delivers all the positive qualities of valves while maintaining a degree of neutrality that is rare for the breed. If you want to get the heart of the music – and don’t mind sacrificing a remote control – this is a powerful tool.

HI-FI CHOICE OVERALL SCORE >> 85%





a

a Esoteric X-01 CD/SACD player.

This single box player redefines the capabilities of digital replay. Without doubt, it is one of the finest digital sounds we have heard almost at any price. A truly large and deep soundstage with unprecedented transparency and focus. The legendary VRDS-NEO mechanism technology allows the finest nuances of the music to be followed easily without resulting in an analytical sound. Build quality is of a reference standard. £8995.

b Audio Aero Capitole CD player.

This already superb sounding player has had a facelift and a software upgrade. The sound is now one of the most transparent and musically engaging we know. An exceptionally 3-dimensional soundstage, comparing favourably with players costing much more. It also includes a pure analogue pre-amplifier with inputs for other sources. £5500. For a very limited period we can offer this at £4675.



b



c

For further information about any of our products please visit our new website www.audioconsultants.co.uk

c Dali Ikon 6 loudspeakers.

The Ikon range brings the ribbon tweeter design concept into a more affordable package. The big soundstage and sweet tonal balance that is achieved with the Helicon series is recognisable in this loudspeaker. Remarkable value. Ikon 6 £895.

d Clearaudio Champion Level 2 turntable.

One of the most popular combination packages from this fine manufacturer. This exceptional turntable with the Unify uni-pivot tone-arm and Sigma cartridge offers incredible value. A very transparent sound and a build quality that is of the highest order. Champion Level 1 £1365. Champion Level 2 £1935. Please phone for details on package prices.



e

e Aesthetix Calypso Line pre-amplifier.

This valve pre-amplifier has a sound so unlike most tube designs, it has to heard. A very transparent sound, revealing the finest detail but without sounding analytical. A deep soundstage and a correct tonal balance with none of the usual "bloom" associated with some valve amplification. The internal design is dual mono and fully balanced. Each input has parallel XLR and RCA connectors. The build quality and features are exemplary and these alone could justify a higher price. £3500.



d



f

f Gamut DI 150 integrated power amplifier.

The new product from this well established manufacturer. It is a one-box solution to those that do not want a pre-power combination but without the compromise to sound that most integrated amplifiers have. A very high quality sound with the build quality to match. £5500

AESTHETIX ▶ AMPHION ▶ AUDIO PHYSIC ▶ AVALON ▶ AYRE ACOUSTICS ▶ BEL CANTO ▶ BENZ-MICRO ▶ CARDS ▶ CLEARAUDIO ▶ CONRAD-JOHNSON ▶ DALI ▶ EAR/YOSHINO ECLIPSE-TD ▶ ESOTERIC ▶ FINAL ▶ GAMUT ▶ GRAAF ▶ LYRA ▶ MCINTOSH ▶ MONO PULSE ▶ NORDOST ▶ NOTTINGHAM ANALOGUE ▶ PAGODE ▶ PATHOS ▶ QUADRASPIRE ROGUE AUDIO ▶ SME ▶ SHUN MOOK ▶ SUGDEN ▶ THIEL ▶ TRANSFIGURATION ▶ UNISON RESEARCH ▶ VELODYNE ▶ VIRTUAL DYNAMICS ▶ WADIA ▶ WHEST AUDIO

Located approximately 15 minutes drive from either M4/Junction 12 or M3/Junction 6 with free and easy parking outside the building.

We have a home evaluation scheme for those who might find this method more convenient.

**7 Comet House
Calleva Park
Aldermaston
Reading
Berkshire RG7 8JA**

Demonstrations by appointment

Mondays to Saturdays 10:00 to 18:00. It is advisable to call us before visiting.

Part exchange welcome. Ex-demonstration and previously owned equipment listed on our website: www.audioconsultants.co.uk

Stage two

Looking for a low-cost phono stage to give your vinyl a boost? One of these should do the job...

PRODUCT Cambridge Audio 540P and 640P

TYPE Phono stages

PRICE (540P) £40, (640P) £60

CONTACT ☎ 0870 900 1000
 @ www.cambridgeaudio.com

Vinyl is enjoying a revival on an unprecedented scale. Sales of seven-inch singles are up 80 per cent, which equates to 800,000 small black discs finding their way into people's homes. But what are they playing them on? There's been an upturn in 'quality' turntable sales over the last few years, but not on this scale – there are clearly lots of souls that need saving in terms of getting the most from the groove. To the rescue comes Cambridge Audio, with a brace of cost-effective phono stages.

These compact boxes contain the amplification and equalisation required to turn the pitifully small voltage coming out of a turntable's cartridge into something that any normal amp can, well, amplify.

The 540P is a basic, moving magnet stage with inputs and outputs alongside the requisite earthing post. According to the literature, it's built with Class A gain stages, active equalisation and discrete transistors, the latter setting it apart from most of the phono stages you'll find in budget integrated amps. Power is delivered by a plug-top supply and the whole lot comes in a neat steel and aluminium box.

The dearer 640P offers moving coil and moving magnet inputs as well as a rumble

filter to cut out undesirable low frequency energy. Inside the case, paralleled capacitors are used to achieve RIAA equalisation accurate to 0.3dB up to 50kHz; the power supply is also slightly different, though no more ostentatious. It does not specify what impedance is offered to the moving coil cartridge, but to be fair it's not aimed at high-end cartridges which can be fussy about such things.

SOUND QUALITY

Used to amplify the robust output of a Music Maker MkIII moving magnet cartridge, the 540P put in a stout performance reflecting the solidity of bass that this cartridge is capable of extracting. Vocals – especially female vocals – are not perhaps as well defined as possible, but it's easy enough to hear what's being sung and the detail of the presentation is not impeded.

More energetic tracks produce a suitable response from the 540P. It does what even quite ambitious CD players struggle to achieve, and produces acoustic space in a natural fashion. This level of performance puts it on a par (at least) with other inexpensive stages around, like those from NAD and Pro-Ject, which means it will better those found in budget amps as a rule.

The 640P is a more refined beast. It adds dynamics and weight as well as improved image precision to the 540P's sound. We particularly enjoyed the fact that voices and instruments became palpably more lifelike and real in the room, thanks to the greater level of resolution it brings to the party. Everything from the bass up is more articulate and as a

result, the music is more engaging. It's well worth the extra £20, if you can stretch to it.

With the weedier output of a van den Hul Condor moving coil cartridge, you can appreciate the improvement in high-frequency extension and detail, but you don't get a good idea of the dynamic and spatial skills of the cartridge. That said, this is a silly combination (the cartridge costs over two grand) and with lower-cost systems, the 640P makes a lot more sense. If your turntable and amp are in the sub-£500 category, it's a cost-effective way to get more from your vinyl. **HFC**

Jason Kennedy

VERDICT – 540P

SOUND >> 74%



FEATURES >> 60%



BUILD >> 80%



VALUE >> 96%



CONCLUSION

A great phono stage for the money, capable of putting a good budget turntable on a par with a digital source of twice the price.

HI-FI CHOICE
 >> 85%

VERDICT – 640P

SOUND >> 83%



FEATURES >> 75%



BUILD >> 80%



VALUE >> 96%



CONCLUSION

The 640P shifts the goalposts, bringing dynamic contrast, tonal variety and bass weight to the vinyl it amplifies. It's worthy of mid-price systems.

HI-FI CHOICE
 >> 90%



GROUP TEST & LAB REPORTS: PAUL MESSENGER

LOUDSPEAKERS

As you move upmarket, designs become more idiosyncratic... as these six show

This month's loudspeaker group test covers a relatively upmarket sector, our six candidates costing between £1,300 and £2,000 per pair. Ironically perhaps, the largest model with the most drive units is also the least expensive, which emphasises that there's little relationship between size and price. In fact, seldom have the participants in a group test shown greater diversity in size, configuration or *modus operandi*.

Triangle's latest Celius, now suffixed 'Esw' to indicate revisions mainly oriented towards the bass section, is a big bruiser of a three-way. Hopefully, Triangle has addressed some of the criticisms we've made of its predecessors.

Waterfall's two-and-a-half-way Victoria, with its striking looking 'see-through' glass enclosure, proved a notable success in 2004. The Iguascu (also named after a waterfall) has much in common with its bigger brother, but it's a straight two-way, a little smaller overall, and lacks the bass-only drive unit.

Totem's Model 1 Signature is the latest version of a classic luxury miniature, one

that has been painstakingly refined down the years. We reviewed one of its ancestors way back in 1993, when it cost £995, so today's £1,595 price tag is well in context.

The most unusual model in a thoroughly unusual group, Reson's 5th ReTHM is a horn-loaded single driver system of strange appearance and surprisingly compact dimensions. Given the ingredients, such a speaker system ought to come with the warning 'subwoofers not included', but it has other tricks up its sleeve nonetheless.

MJ Acoustics is better known as a subwoofer specialist, but is now moving out of the bass ghetto and into the full-range arena. That said, the Subliminal S1R is far from conventional. Like the Reson, it has a solitary full range driver, this time based on Jordan's metal-cone technology. This is loaded by a transmission line and mounted in an attractive hardwood enclosure.

Last but by no means least, the Focal Profile 918 is at once the most conventional in configuration, the most

hi-tech in driver and enclosure engineering, and arguably the most elegant in design terms. **HFC**

EQUIPMENT USED

- Ⓢ Naim CDS 3 CD player
- Ⓢ Burmester 001 CD player
- Ⓢ Linn Sondek LP12 turntable
- Ⓢ Rega RB1000 tonearm
- Ⓢ Linn Akiva phono cartridge
- Ⓢ Magnum Dynalab MD 102 tuner
- Ⓢ Naim NAC552 preamplifier
- Ⓢ Naim NAP500 power amplifier
- Ⓢ Yamaha MX-D1 power amplifier
- Ⓢ Cables from Vertex AQ, Chord Company, Harmonic Technology and Naim

MUSIC USED

- Ⓢ Alabama 3 *Exit on Coldharbour Lane*
- Ⓢ System of a Down *Mezmerize*
- Ⓢ Nitin Sawhney *Beyond Skin*
- Ⓢ Arcade Fire *Funeral*
- Ⓢ Laurie Anderson *Life on a String*
- Ⓢ BPO Karajan/Wagner *Tannhauser Overture*
- Ⓢ BBC Radios 3 and 4 were also used throughout the test

ON TEST



Focal Profile 918
£1,999



MJ Acoustics Subliminal S1R
£2,000



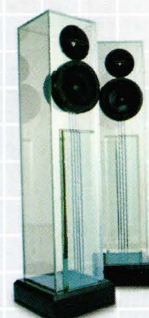
Reson 5th ReTHM
£1,750



Totem Model 1 Signature
£1,595



Triangle Celius Esw
£1,395



Waterfall Iguascu
£1,500

LISTENING TESTS

Loudspeaker listening poses more complex problems than those involved in assessing other components. Loudspeakers vary greatly and interact strongly and often unpredictably with the room. The difficulty facing sequential unsighted loudspeaker presentations is the strong tendency to judge each example according to how its balance differs from the model that preceded it. Accordingly, extended hands-on listening sessions were adopted for this group, giving scope to adjust to the changes in balance and to experiment with positioning.

LAB TESTS

The speakers were tested under in-room conditions, to best represent real-world conditions. The test equipment used included a Neutrik Audiograph analogue signal generator with synchronised pen recorder, used to plot the far-field in-room averaged response traces and impedance plots. Pair-matching was also checked at one metre.

No other magazine offers an equivalent test and listening programme for comparative tests.

LAB REPORTS: THE BAR GRAPH

Our 3D bar graphs are a simple way of showing how the speakers compare across quantitative and qualitative measures. Individual parameters are assessed and shown as better or worse than the group average.

1] Sensitivity: Sensitivity measures how loud a speaker will go for a given voltage from the amp. It's scaled to 2.83V at 1m (one watt of power for an eight-ohm load). This figure can be misleading, as sensitivity varies significantly and lower-impedance speakers extract more current and hence power from an amp than higher-impedance ones.

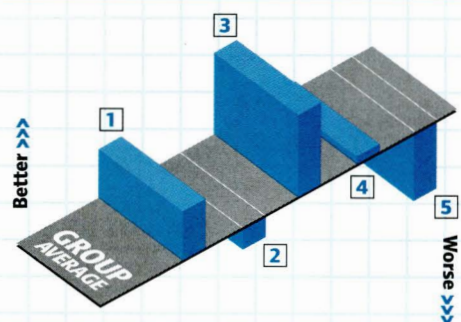
2] Bass extension: A speaker's bass is heavily modified by the room. To replicate 'real world' conditions, our figure represents the averaged bass roll-off frequency at -6dB ref the broad midband, measured across the far field for a stereo pair in a 4.3x2.6x5.5m room.

3] Ease of drive: The lower the impedance, the more current it extracts from the driving amp for a given volume. Lower impedance designs have higher sensitivities, reducing voltage requirement for given loudness levels.

4] Overall frequency balance: Overall broad frequency response trends do much to define the character of a speaker, although true neutrality is the obvious goal.

5] Response smoothness: The small scale smoothness of a speaker has much to do with the delicacy of the sound, and its ability to deliver subtle harmonic shading.

OUR BAR GRAPHS: AN EXAMPLE



£1,999 per pair ☎ 0845 660 2680 🌐 www.focal-uk.com

FOCAL PROFILE 918

Distinctive styling confers a real acoustic and aesthetic advantage

France's Focal-JMLab is one of Europe's most successful speaker manufacturers, but was better known for its driver technology than the elegance of its cabinetwork. That could well change with the introduction of the Focal Profile range, which features strikingly original and attractively discreet styling.

One of three Profile stereo pairs, the 918 two-and-a-half-way uses drive unit technology borrowed from the earlier Electras, alongside a newly developed aluminium/magnesium tweeter and a strikingly original enclosure. Both cone drivers have 165mm cast frames and use proprietary 'W-sandwich' cone technology, which bonds layers of woven glassfibre and structural foam for the optimum combination of stiffness and damping.

The bass/mid driver has a 120mm cone and is equipped with a concave pole-piece extension, whereas the bass-only unit has a dust cover and a 110mm cone. The tweeter uses an inverted 25mm dome diaphragm.



Viewed from above, the enclosure has an elliptical base, but just a semi-ellipse top, as the front half has been cut away to accommodate a backward-tilted front panel that leaves the base almost complete. A cleverly-designed grille actually makes the front look concave, while the tweeter is left exposed at the top, on a shield-shaped casting that should give optimum dispersion, and has its own removable mesh protective cover.

For maximum strength, the enclosure is formed by laminating together 3mm-thick layers of MDF. A single pair of high quality WBT terminals is fitted conveniently low down on the rear, and while the base accommodates four spikes, these were inadequately fixed by fiddly thumbwheels, and lacked a sufficiently large footprint to aid stability.

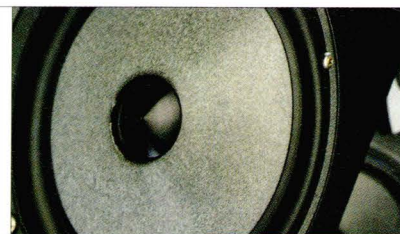
SOUND QUALITY

The Profile 918 has a decidedly laid back overall character, presumably as a consequence of the loss of energy in the presence zone, as indicated by the measurements.

While that factor dominates the sound of this speaker, it doesn't disguise its many fine qualities. Although the bass might have been tauter and tighter, with a little more punch and drive, the overall neutrality through the bass and midrange is impressive in the way that it keeps all the instruments of an orchestra or band in proper proportion, avoiding exaggerating any particular sections, and delivering the full harmonic richness of the bass instruments.

The sound could have been smoother, but the clever enclosure is very effective at banishing any boxy effects and keeping any cabinet coloration under very tight control. At the opposite end of the spectrum, the top end has a sweetness and delicacy that transmits the fine detail of the musicianship without exaggeration or untidiness. Those factors come together to create the right conditions for very fine stereo imaging, which creates a soundstage that spreads out evenly around and between the speakers without in any way clinging to the boxes.

One consequence of the weak presence zone is that the intelligibility of speech is mildly compromised, so it's necessary to wind up the volume control a little higher than usual to compensate. The plus side is that even aggressively balanced recordings may be played at quite high levels without sounding unpleasantly harsh, so those who like their music loud should check this one out. **HFC**



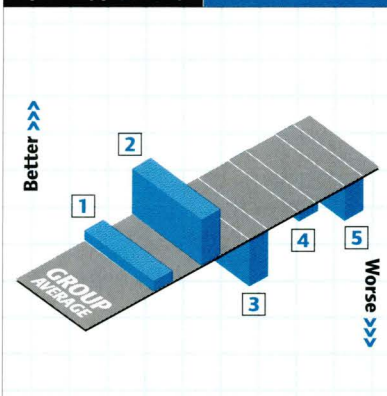
LAB REPORT

The manufacturer's specification claims a sensitivity of 90dB, which is a generous enough figure, and pretty much in line with our findings. However, the amplifier load is quite demanding here.

The claimed impedance combination of a nominal 8 ohms alongside a 3.2 ohms minimum is frankly bizarre, since the minimum should bear at least some relationship to the nominal – our guideline allows a nominal 8 ohms to include a 6 ohms minimum. On our measurement the 918's load actually drops as low as 3 ohms at around 100Hz, and stays low through much of the upper bass and lower midband.

Sited well clear of walls, the far-field in-room frequency response is very well ordered, if not particularly smooth up to 1kHz. However, above that there's a pronounced suckout from 2-3.5kHz, reaching around -6dB at 2.7kHz. The treble proper is smooth and quite strong.

HOW IT COMPARES



- 1] Sensitivity >> +10%
- 2] Bass extension >> +40%
- 3] Ease of drive >> -40%
- 4] Overall frequency balance >> -10%
- 5] Response smoothness >> -30%

SPECIFICATIONS

Measurement	Rated	Actual
Sensitivity @ 1m/2.83V	90dB	90dB
Impedance (nominal/minimum)	8/3.2 ohms	4/3 ohms
Estimated bass extension (-6dB)	-	23Hz

VERDICT

SOUND >> 86%

PRACTICALITY >> 76%

BUILD >> 88%

VALUE >> 79%

HI-FI CHOICE OVERALL SCORE 83%

Striking styling is functional and attractive. Bass and mid are beautifully balanced, if less than smooth, while treble is bright but clean and sweet. However, recessed presence makes the overall sound rather laid back.

HI-FI CHOICE OVERALL SCORE 83%

£2,000 per pair ☎ 01945 467770 🌐 www.mjacoustics.co.uk

MJ ACOUSTICS S1R

This unusual single-driver speaker has equally unusual styling

MJ Acoustics made its name as a subwoofer specialist, and is now making a move towards the speaker market proper. Both price and configuration suggest that this S1R – or ‘Subliminal’ S1R, to give it its full monicker – is distinctly oriented towards the audiophile.

Inside one massive carton lay two hefty speakers, unusual in nearly every respect. These are very shallow front-to-back, yet also tall and unusually wide. Pulled out of the box, the enclosure proper is attached to a little matching plinth by a single central rod, allowing the speaker itself to be swivelled about a vertical axis with respect to the plinth.

Said plinth is equipped with four sockets for mounting the supplied spikes. One wonders to what extent the mechanical integrity of the whole is compromised by that single rod, especially as rotating the speaker anticlockwise threatened to unscrew the whole caboodle. Still, the ability to swivel the speaker towards the listening seat while the plinth remains square on with the room is aesthetically cool. Much of the enclosure is solid hardwood, in a choice of maple, cherry or



light oak. This adds considerable class, as well as allowing heavy edge post-forming.

Removing the large, shield-shaped grille also brought a surprise, as it revealed just a solitary and rather small driver. This looks very like (but actually isn't) a Jordan driver, and has a small metal cone/dome diaphragm just 85mm in diameter, and is loaded by a labyrinthine transmission line folded within the enclosure. According to the propaganda, this 100mm driver uses something called “molecular vibration technology” to create a wide 40Hz-22kHz bandwidth, presumably referring to the way the cone's high frequency flexing is controlled. One virtue of a single full-range driver system is that there's no crossover network and therefore, of course, no need for more than one pair of terminals.

SOUND QUALITY

For best treble, it's necessary to point the drivers directly towards the main listening seat, because the 85mm cones tend to beam the highest frequencies. Finding the right positioning to get best results from the Subliminal S1R proved somewhat problematic. The room measurements indicate, and auditioning confirms, that the basic tonal balance is decidedly mid-forward with the speakers in free space.

It was anticipated that placing the speakers close to a wall would provide a worthwhile boost in the bass region. While the boost was obvious, its worth was much less certain. Close-to-wall reflections interfered with the midband evenness and the extra bass output tended to make the lack of treble that much more obvious. It was a sobering reminder about the subtleties of speaker balancing – of how the ear tunes in primarily to the midband, and how the top and bottom need to balance each other out.

The smoothness, neutrality and superior overall coherence of the midband is certainly this speaker's major strength. It's a feature that definitely helps one get involved in the music, though the relatively dull top end does tend to suppress the finest detail and air a little. And while the bass undoubtedly supplies plenty of weight, its delivery is a little short of speed and punch. Ultimately, this is a very polite and coherent speaker, but also one that's a little short of snap, drive, impetus and excitement. **HFC**

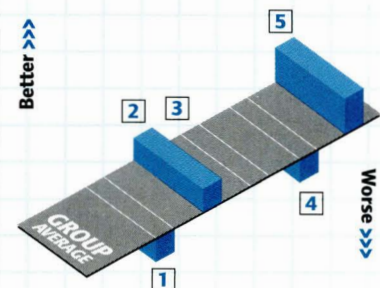


LAB REPORT

MJ Acoustics specifies a combination of 88dB sensitivity alongside a 6-ohm impedance, claims that are if anything a little conservative. Certainly the load stays at or above 6 ohms throughout, making life easy for the driving amplifier, though the impedance trace shows evidence of some resonances within the transmission line at 130Hz and 200Hz, in addition to the maximum port output 30-45Hz.

The far field in-room balance is idiosyncratic. Output is quite strong and impressively flat through the middle third of the audio band, from 200Hz up to 2.5kHz, where sensitivity is close to 90dB. The bass and treble regions, below 200Hz and 4-10kHz are both reasonably even too, but deliver around 7-8dB less output than is found in that midband zone. Close-to-wall siting can help augment the bass region significantly, but finds the lower midband lacking and the midband proper more uneven.

HOW IT COMPARES



- 1] Sensitivity >> -20%
- 2] Bass extension >> +20%
- 3] Ease of drive >> 0%
- 4] Overall frequency balance >> -20%
- 5] Response smoothness >> +30%

SPECIFICATIONS

Measurement	Rated	Actual
Sensitivity @ 1m/2.83V	88dB	88dB
Impedance (nominal/minimum)	6/- ohms	8/6 ohms
Estimated bass extension (-6dB)	-	25Hz

VERDICT

SOUND >> 80%

■■■■■■■■■■

PRACTICALITY >> 65%

■■■■■■■■■■

BUILD >> 83%

■■■■■■■■■■

VALUE >> 68%

■■■■■■■■■■

This slimline design in real wood has an unusual swivel feature. The solitary small transmission line loaded main driver delivers impressive midband, but bass and treble are both well down in relative level.

HI-FI CHOICE 74%
OVERALL SCORE



High End High Fidelity handcrafted in France since 1987 | www.micromega.co.uk

MICROMEGA

affordable, no-compromise, high-end products



“ Building a truly flexible music system has never been easier with Micromega. Think musical building blocks where you can add additional components when required, giving you total flexibility – now and for the future. ”

Micromega Killer Combo!

For a limited time only you can purchase the stunning Micromega A80 Integrated Amplifier (£659) and 'Special Edition' CDSE CD Player (£599) for the amazing price of:

£999* ~~£1258~~

Micromega A80 features: 2 x 80wpc and clean current delivery ensure a thrilling performance whenever the music commands it. Careful circuit layout and short signal paths ensure wide soundstage, dynamics, speed and no loss of fine detail.

Micromega CDSE features: 'Special Edition' High-end CD Player. A superb Philips drive mechanism feeds the delicate signal to a high resolution 24bit D/A Converter. Both are fed by CDSE's amazing Power Supply, which uses ACTS Technology. ACTS ensures a far richer, more dynamic sound that is truly breathtaking.



85%
hi-fi choice

major award-winning products

BLACK

SILVER

(choice of two different finishes)



products remote controllable



30-day money back guarantee*

*subject to conditions

Integrated Amplifiers

Source

Pre/Power Amplifiers

Home Cinema



Minium A60 - £399
2x60W Integrated Amplifier. PHONO MM Input, 6 LINE inputs, Tape monitor loop and AVP input. Headphone jack. Micromega Dot matrix display.



Minium CD - £399
High End CD player designed for the best price to performance ratio. 24 bits AD1852 D/A converter. VAMI202 Philips drive mechanism. R-Core supply.



Minium Pre - £699
High-end Pre-amplifier. MM and MC Phono stage. 6 LINE inputs, 1 multi-channel input, 6 LINE outputs Headphone jack. Dot matrix display.



Minium AVP Processor - £899
Dolby Digital, ProLogic II and DTS multi-channel processor. AVP is fitted with 3x60W of power amplification for Centre and Surround speakers.



Minium A80 - £659
2x80W Integrated Amplifier. PHONO MM Input, 6 LINE inputs, Tape monitor loop and AVP input. Headphone jack. Micromega Dot matrix display.



Minium CDSE - £599
High End CD player designed for the best price to performance ratio. 24 bits AD1853 D/A converter. VAMI202 Philips drive mechanism. SE Power Supply uses ACTS Technology.



Minium S120 - £829
2x120W Power Amplifier using the same successful technology as in A120. 600VA specific toroidal transformer. Low heat dissipation.



Minium DVD Player - £699
High-end DVD player designed for the best audio and video result. Multi-channel audio outputs Dolby, DTS. Progressive Video PAL - NTSC.



Minium A120 - £899
2x120W Integrated Amplifier. PHONO MM Input, 6 LINE inputs, 1 Multichannel input, Tape Loop, AVP input. Headphone jack. Micromega Dot matrix display, Toroidal transformer, Optional RC handset.



Minium CD132 - £699
CD player designed for the best sonic result. Burr Brown SRC4192 sample rate converter, AD1853 24 bits DAC, very low jitter master clock.



Minium T120 - £899
3x120W Power Amplifier using the same technology as A120. This guarantees an excellent homogeneity between the different units of the system.



Minium DVDSE Player - £849
High-end multi-format player designed for the best DVD, DVD-A, SACD and CD results. Multi-channel audio outputs Dolby, DTS. Progressive Video PAL - NTSC, HDMI - DVDI Video Output.



Minium FM - £349
FM Tuner with RDS function for a clear indication of the stations names. Two input sensitivities : Cable/Antenna. 50 Presets.



Distribution



01592 744 779
www.shadowdistribution.co.uk

info@micromega.co.uk
www.micromega.co.uk

Visit www.micromega.co.uk to find your nearest dealer.
New Dealer Enquiries very welcome.

£1,750 per pair ☎ 01277 227355 🌐 www.resonaudio.com

RESON 5TH RETHM

An intriguing design that has more than its fair share of magic

Reson is a well established distributor of several hi-fi brands (including Creek, Epos and Goldring, alongside high-end brands like DNM and Resolution Audio) throughout Germany and Switzerland, and has recently extended its activities to Britain.

ReTHM speakers come from California, and look curious because their enclosures are shaped to horn-load the backs of the solitary full-range drivers that they use. There are currently four ReTHM models in the range, numbered in decreasing order of size and price from the 2nd through to the cute little 5th we're reviewing here.

Horn loading has several far-reaching implications. In order to operate down into the bass registers, a horn has to be physically enormous, which is a problem in terms of both domestic acceptability and cost. The 5th ReTHM is far too compact to delve deeply into the bass regions, so it really needs the lowest octaves to be supplied by some sort of subwoofery. The UK distributor is also involved with Velodyne, one of America's top subwoofer brands, so a £700 SPL-800R was borrowed to assist with this review.

In many territories, ReTHM speakers come fitted with Lowther drive units, but Reson prefers to use units supplied by French manufacturer Supravox. The one fitted to the 5th has a 120mm

paper cone with a pleated fabric surround. The enclosure owes as much to plumbing as joinery, the ducting and pipework folded into a complete circle, while the mouth is created through D-shaped cutouts in the two wooden panels that form the sides.

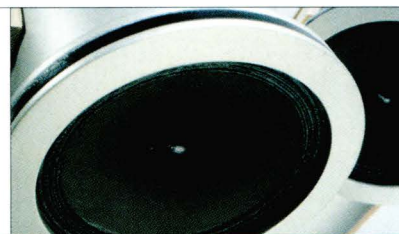
Reson prefers 2mm to the usual 4mm connection plugs and sockets. The back of this speaker actually has three 2mm sockets: two feed the signal to the voice coil; the optional third one allows the driver chassis to be earthed to the amplifier. The bottom surface of the speaker has three little cones for floor coupling, though stands are also available and would make good sense to get the driver up somewhere near ear level. If available, a sideboard or deep bookshelf is reckoned to give good results.

SOUND QUALITY

As expected, the bass registers are effectively absent if the 5th ReTHM is used on its own, and this is obvious enough with the overwhelming majority of material, though at the same time it reveals a marvellous delicacy and subtle fine detailing through the upper midband in particular. True, this detail is somewhat exaggerated, presumably by the 1-2kHz peak revealed by the room measurement, and that peak is probably responsible for adding a slightly harsh and impolite edginess.

The 5th ReTHM is very far from the perfect loudspeaker, but it has a magic all of its own that no conventional design even approaches. For all its flaws, it's a thoroughly engaging and entertaining experience. It's all to do with its uncanny ability to lay bare the sort of complex textures that reveal the number of violins playing together, for example, or the composition of a choir. This has much to do with its speed, freedom from overhang, and ability to create realistic dynamic tension.

Adding the subwoofer proved mostly effective, if a little tricky to set up for best results. Ideally in fact, two fast subwoofers are needed for best results, in order to maintain good imaging and drive the room modes well. Care also needs to be taken over choice of amplification here, as the speaker's exceptionally high sensitivity will exaggerate any background noise. **HFC**



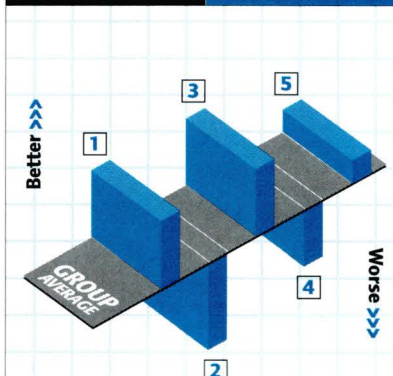
LAB REPORT

A small, full-range horn system like this was bound to give wacky measured results. Sensitivity is a massively high 98dB, alongside an easy-to-drive impedance, but output is restricted to a rather limited bandwidth.

With careful siting (on the floor close to a rearward wall), output was quite smooth and even from 120Hz up to 9kHz, apart from a decidedly obvious upper midband peak at 1-2kHz. However, there's also a case for raising the speaker off the ground so that the driver is close to ear height. Whatever, the lack of bass makes additional subwoofery virtually mandatory. In fact, a pair of subs, each located close to a horn, should be considered necessary for best imaging and most even bass delivery.

The exceptionally high sensitivity should make the 5th ReTHM an ideal partner for low-power valve amps, but it's important to choose amplification with very low background noise.

HOW IT COMPARES



- 1] Sensitivity >>> +60%
- 2] Bass extension >> -80%
- 3] Ease of drive >>> +60%
- 4] Overall frequency balance >>> -50%
- 5] Response smoothness >>> +20%

SPECIFICATIONS

Measurement	Rated	Actual
Sensitivity @ 1m / 2.83V	95dB	98dB
Impedance (nominal/minimum)	4/-	8/6 ohms
Estimated bass extension (-6dB)	80Hz	120Hz

VERDICT

SOUND >> 83%



PRACTICALITY >> 68%



BUILD >> 75%



VALUE >> 72%



Unusual, bookshelf-size, horn-loaded single-driver design has little bass to speak of, but the midband is wonderfully expressive and realistic, even though detail is a little over-projected and even edgy at times.

HI-FI CHOICE
OVERALL SCORE **78%**



£1,595 per pair ☎ 0032 15 285 585 🌐 www.totemacoustic.com

TOTEM MODEL 1 SIGNATURE

Totem's Model 1 has been around for years. Does it still deliver?

It was thirteen years ago when *Hi-Fi Choice* first reviewed Totem's Model 1, a beautiful little speaker with a notably hefty pricetag but a sufficiently delightful sound quality to merit recommendation. The current version of the same speaker looks almost identical to its predecessor, barring twin terminal pairs and a Signature postscript, and now costs a similarly substantial £1,595 per pair. But a 60 per cent price increase over 13 years is well short of the ravages of inflation, so this new version is arguably better value than its predecessor.

Canadian brand Totem favours small speakers. Although this involves sacrifice of bottom-end welly, there are compensating advantages in keeping the enclosure small. The smaller the speaker, the closer it approaches a point source, to the potential benefit of the stereo imaging. And the smaller the enclosure, the larger the ratio of wanted driver area to unwanted box surface area.

The enclosure is very compact and beautifully veneered, with neatly radiused baffle edges. Much is made of its solid construction, which includes mitred edges for extra integrity. There's no provision for a grille, apart from a protective mesh over the tweeter's metal dome, so the drive units are smoothly rebated flush with the baffle. A small diameter port is fitted into the back panel, above two pairs of high quality terminals. These come fitted with removable wire links – a rather better solution than the usual brass strips.

The main drive unit is a small but high-class affair from Dynaudio. It has a 95mm-diameter plastic diaphragm that is more dome than cone, reflecting its large diameter (75mm), high power handling voice coil. The tweeter is a 25mm metal dome device, extensively modified by Totem by fitting a specially enlarged chamber behind the magnet.

Stand quality is considered critical here, and the £399 per pair Partington Heavi, which is a carefully conceived cocktail of high mass and damping, using a combination of resin, sand and steel wool damped tubes with a shingle/resin base, was specifically developed with the Model 1 in mind.

SOUND QUALITY

From the outset, it was obvious that the Model 1 still had the magic and class that set it well ahead of the pack all those years ago – indeed, this Signature variant shows improvements in body and weight over the original. However, the magic here is mostly about the midrange, which has a beautifully ordered smoothness, evenness and neutrality that is powerfully persuasive and seductive, and substantially free from any boxy coloration.

The presence is shut in, to be sure, and if that does make the sound seem over-polite, it doesn't appear to interfere unduly with intelligibility. The treble as a whole sounds very well judged in relative loudness, and is also essentially smooth and sweet.

While the bass naturally has its limitations, and does lack both warmth and some punch, it does manage to supply a surprising amount of drive and authority. This is especially noticeable when the speakers are used on the excellent Partington Heavi stands, which certainly contributed to the overall solidity of both the bottom end and the stereo image. Image precision is an innate strength of tiny speakers, and the Model 1 is no exception. While it's true that the sound lacks a little scale and tension, there's little if any boxiness, and the soundstage fills the room beautifully. **HFC**



LAB REPORT

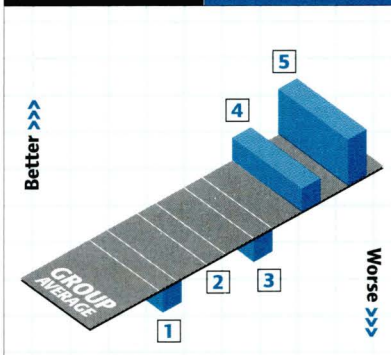
Specified at delivering 87dB sensitivity alongside a 4-ohm load, these figures actually seem to err on the conservative side and understate the case, as our measurements indicate a sensitivity that's around 88-89dB, while the impedance stays comfortably at or above 4 ohms throughout.

The port here is tuned to 45Hz, ensuring decent ultimate bass extension down to below 40Hz, even with free space siting. This is very impressive for something so small.

At the same time, output is rather lean through the mid- and upper bass up to 130Hz. It's still a little lacking around 130-250Hz, but across the broad midband from 120Hz up to 2.7kHz, the far-field averaged response is remarkably smooth and even.

However, there's a rather abrupt downturn of around 4dB between 2.7 and 3.2kHz, above which the treble continues flat, smooth and even, but at around -3dB.

HOW IT COMPARES



- 1] Sensitivity >> -20%
- 2] Bass extension >> 0%
- 3] Ease of drive >> -20%
- 4] Overall frequency balance >> +20%
- 5] Response smoothness >> +40%

SPECIFICATIONS

Measurement	Rated	Actual
Sensitivity @ 1m/2.83V	87dB	88dB
Impedance (nominal/minimum)	4/- ohms	6/4 ohms
Estimated bass extension (-6dB)	50Hz	28Hz

VERDICT

SOUND >> 89%

PRACTICALITY >> 85%

BUILD >> 90%

VALUE >> 83%

This latest version of a classic miniature remains expensive but seductive. It makes the most of its small but solid enclosure and high-class drivers to deliver a balanced sound with good bass weight and a smooth midband.

HI-FI CHOICE OVERALL SCORE 86%



£1,395 per pair ☎ 01753 652669 🌐 www.triangle-fr.com

TRIANGLE CELIUS ESW

Can this new Esw version of the big Celius better its predecessors?

This distinctive French brand has enjoyed considerable success in *Hi-Fi Choice*, especially with Esprit range models like the Comete and Antal. However, a similar feat has never been repeated by the largest and most costly model of the range, the Celius.

This latest Celius now carries an 'Esw' suffix and this refers to changes in three different aspects of the design. The most significant of these is a new T16DE160c.m. low-frequency drive unit, but the crossover network has also been tweaked, and the horn-loaded type TZ2400 tweeter has benefited from improvements arising from the development work done on the top-end Magellan models.

Apart from the large aluminium dust dome that now reinforces the bass drivers' 115mm paper cones, the Celius Esw looks exactly like its predecessor, and still costs £1,395 per pair. That's more than £400 above the price of the

Antal – hardly justified by the extra bass driver and slightly larger box. Perhaps this is better explained by the application of real wood veneer rather than vinyl woodprint.

It's not the most interesting or prettiest veneer around. The convex, black painted front panel doesn't help, even if it does press all the right engineering buttons. An elaborate damped metal plinth provides stability and tripod spike-coupling, with a large central front cone that specifically grounds the front panel.

This full three-way design combines a pair of the new 165mm bass drivers with a rather different 165mm midrange unit, in which the paper cone is terminated by a doped pleated surround, and a tweeter with a substantial cast alloy horn. Triangle's main justification for the latter is that matching its mouth diameter more closely to the midrange cone gives a smoother energy transfer through the crossover zone. All the frame drivers are Triangle's own, using cast alloy chassis throughout. The rear panel carries twin terminal pairs and a flared front port reflex-loads the bass enclosure.

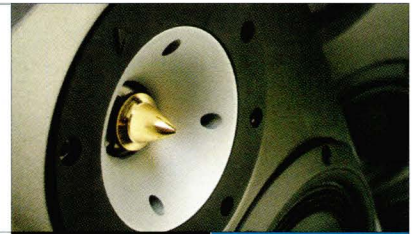
SOUND QUALITY

While this latest Celius still doesn't have the sweetest sound around, it offers worthwhile improvements over its Es predecessor. There's a smoother and more neutral overall balance and a bottom end aligned for free space siting.

Indeed, the bass end works really well here, showing fine coherence and poise alongside an essentially even delivery with taut, tight timing. It has ample weight and good dynamic range, and drives the music along with a fine sense of purpose and direction.

Midrange dynamic expression has long been a Triangle trademark. The Celius Esw carries on the tradition, with a satisfyingly vivid delivery that makes voices in particular sound very convincing. Coloration levels could be lower – there's certainly some 'woody' thickening in the lower mid, and modest nasality higher up, though neither is particularly severe.

Through mid and upper registers the sound is unusually open, which helps to maintain good intelligibility even when the system is operating at a very low level. The down side of this open and slightly bright balance is a tendency towards edginess. This speaker makes no attempt to disguise or restrain unpleasantly compressed and aggressive recording, and playing some of these at high levels – and there are plenty of examples around, regrettably – can be a rather uncomfortable experience. **HFC**

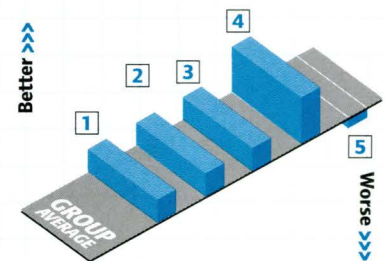


LAB REPORT

This Celius Esw is specified with a notably high sensitivity of 92dB, exactly corresponding with our measurements. Impedance is quoted as 8 ohms nominal alongside 4 ohms minimum, which is a trifle disingenuous, especially as our findings show the load falling slightly below 4 ohms through much of the midband (200-450Hz).

Tuning the port to around 34Hz ensures good ultimate bass extension down to 25Hz under in-room conditions. Impressively, the far-field averaged response holds within tight +/-3dB limits right across the band, from 40Hz right up to 10kHz – a remarkable result for such a large loudspeaker. However, although the overall balance is very good, the trace is quite uneven along the way, showing a significant lack of overall smoothness throughout all parts of the spectrum, with the most obvious excess around 250-500Hz, and some loss of output above 10kHz.

HOW IT COMPARES



- 1) Sensitivity >> +20%
- 2) Bass extension >> +20%
- 3) Ease of drive >> +20%
- 4) Overall frequency balance >> +40%
- 5) Response smoothness >> -10%

SPECIFICATIONS

Measurement	Rated	Actual
Sensitivity @ 1m/2.83V	92dB	92dB
Impedance (nominal/minimum)	8/4 ohms	6/4 ohms
Estimated bass extension (-6dB)	40Hz	25Hz

VERDICT

SOUND >> 89%



PRACTICALITY >> 84%



BUILD >> 87%



VALUE >> 88%



This offers improvements over its predecessors, with superior bass and an improved treble. The overall sound might not be the smoothest around, but it has vigour and enthusiasm, plus good scale and weight.

HI-FI CHOICE **88%**
OVERALL SCORE

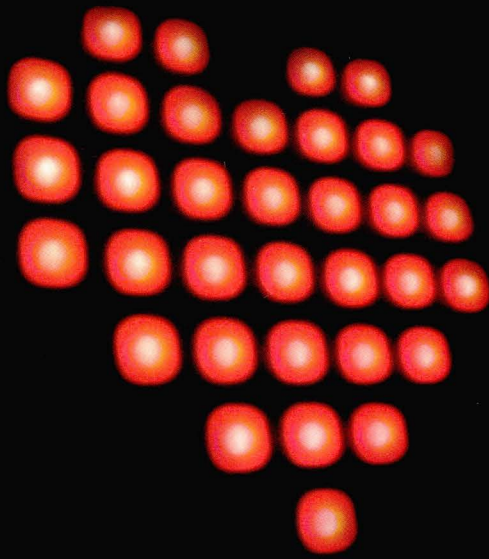


BEST BUY

HI-FI CHOICE
magazine



A recent survey revealed that men in the North West enjoy the highest levels of fidelity.



Of course, we could have told you that already.

Practical Hi-Fi Obsessive about hi-fi.

www.practicalhi-fi.co.uk

WINTER SALE NOW ON

Huge savings at all our stores on hi-fi, personal audio and home cinema.

65 Bridge Street
Manchester
M3 3BQ
0161 839 8869

88 Bridge Street
Warrington
WA1 2RF
01925 632179

43 Friargate
Preston
PR1 2AT
01772 883958

81 Whitegate Drive
Blackpool
FY3 9DA
01253 300599

33/35 Knowsley St
Bolton
BL1 2AS
01204 395789

84 Penny St
Lancaster
LA1 1XN
01524 39657

£1,500 per pair ☎ 01623 517000 🌐 www.waterfallaudio.com

WATERFALL IGUASCU

Making a glass loudspeaker isn't as easy as it appears

Waterfall comes from the South of France and distinguishes itself from other speaker manufacturers by building enclosures out of glass. We reviewed its £2,000 Victoria TWN model in HFC 262, and its performance was very impressive, so it's time to try out the Iguascu (the name comes from the French spelling of the large Iguazu waterfall, on the border of Argentina and Brazil). This is slightly smaller than the Victoria, features a two-way driver line-up, and sells for £1,500 per pair.

Why make a glass loudspeaker? Probably for several reasons. Certainly it looks lovely and is also highly distinctive, both of which are powerful marketing incentives. Actually making the enclosures posed plenty of practical problems, solved in partnership with skilled glassmakers, able to slice the sheets with sufficient precision to ensure all the joints could be properly sealed.

Creating a transparent enclosure has other consequences. You can't simply stuff it with damping material, for example, and great care must be taken so that the internal wiring and

crossover network remain unobtrusive. Although the enclosure itself is undamped, a foam pad within a short cylinder immediately behind the driver cone provides some resistive damping and absorption. The cabling is also very neatly handled. The port and crossover network are both concealed within a chunky plinth, along with a single pair of gold-plated terminals, but there's no provision for floor spikes.

The glass panels are just 6mm thick, but the 12kg weight is still pretty substantial. Glass is inherently very stiff, and the front panel is further reinforced by an extra bevelled-edge section. Note that the corners are quite sharp, and also show up sticky fingerprints, so this is not a particularly family-friendly design. The main driver is a 150mm Triangle unit, with a small paper cone just 85mm in diameter, and a wide pleated fabric surround. The tweeter has a small 20mm metal dome, with short horn flare.

SOUND QUALITY

The Victoria experience had laid down a powerful marker for the crisp clarity that a glass enclosure could bring to the party, and that same character was clearly audible in its smaller Iguascu brother. The problem is this less costly variant falls well short of its bigger brother in other important respects, most notably in lacking an even and well-ordered tonal balance.

Sure, the sound is crisp and agile, but it's also definitely too bright. Cymbals in particular can sound zingy, splashy and indeed quite overpowering on some tracks. This brightness is then compounded by the limited weight and warmth through the lower registers, which in turn makes it sound just that much more exposed and obvious.

There's still much to enjoy here, as the enclosure does seem to avoid much of the energy storage found with conventional wood-based enclosures. And if this tends to reduce the impression of warmth through the lower registers, it also assists in bringing extra clarity and musical information to the body of the music. This means a more accurate representation of the harmonic structure of instruments like cellos and basses.

It remains a mystery why the Iguascu lacks the high frequency balance and poise shown by its bigger brother, especially since the mid and treble drivers are apparently identical and the impedance differences are modest. Checks showed no significant variation between the two Iguascus, so sample or manufacturing variations seem improbable. **HFC**

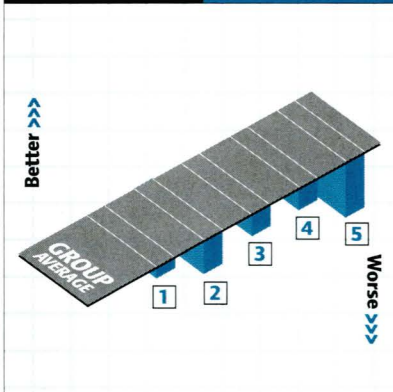


LAB REPORT

The specification quotes 89dB sensitivity alongside a 4-ohm impedance, and this is pretty well confirmed by our measurements. The impedance trace shows that the port is tuned to 50Hz here, and also reveals a pronounced resonance – probably the vertical enclosure standing wave – at 210Hz, plus further ripples between 600Hz and 800Hz.

Unlike the fine overall balance shown by the Victoria, the Iguascu's in-room response is rather idiosyncratic, showing several distinctive and unusual characteristics. The most obvious is an unusually strong treble, reaching +3dB at 6kHz the midband datum – a level that's something like 6dB stronger than the norm. Furthermore, there's a pronounced 6dB drop between 2.8kHz and 3.8kHz, leaving a quite large 'hole' in the upper presence, between 3kHz and 4kHz. At low frequencies, an obvious peak around 220Hz corresponds closely to the resonance seen in the impedance trace.

HOW IT COMPARES



- 1] Sensitivity >> -10%
- 2] Bass extension >> -30%
- 3] Ease of drive >> -20%
- 4] Overall frequency balance >> -20%
- 5] Response smoothness >> -50%

SPECIFICATIONS

Measurement	Rated	Actual
Sensitivity @ 1m/2.83V	89dB	89dB
Impedance (nominal/minimum)	4/- ohms	6/4 ohms
Estimated bass extension (-6dB)	55Hz	38Hz

VERDICT

SOUND >> 79%

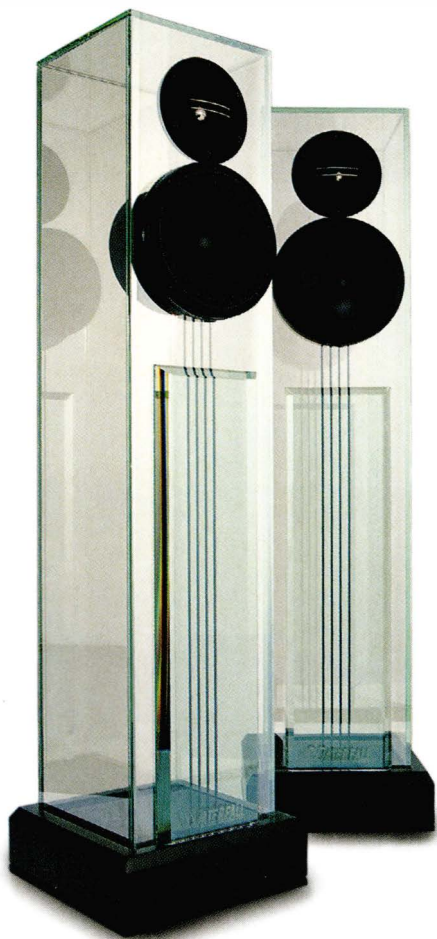
PRACTICALITY >> 82%

BUILD >> 88%

VALUE >> 75%

See-through glass design offers fine agility and crispness through the bass and midrange. However, its balance is uneven, and treble is unusually bright and obvious, so that cymbals sound uncomfortably edgy.

HI-FI CHOICE 77%
OVERALL SCORE



CONCLUSIONS

Weird and wonderful, or just plain weird? This group has elements of both

Perhaps it's a sign of the times, but this group of six speakers shows greater variation and more strangeness than any we've had in the past. Three of our six do conform to the established stereotypes, but to different examples in each case, while the other three are utterly unusual, not to mention a little weird, each in its own very different way.

Waterfall's £1,500 Iguasco proved a disappointment after the Victoria, lacking the smoothness, balance and poise of its bigger brother. It's still an agile sounding

loudspeaker, but the smaller design leads to unevenness and a bright top end.

Reson's £1,750 version of the 5th ReTHM is certainly one of the strangest speakers ever to be reviewed by *Hi-Fi Choice* – the very concept of a bookshelf horn sounds like a contradiction in terms. It's definitely advisable to augment the bass with a subwoofer, but there's also genuine magic in the midband analysis this model provides, despite some edgy forwardness. Those with very long memories may recall that Reson used to be the distributor for

Rehdeko's RK115 loudspeaker. This had a broadly similar – although more colored – sound... a pattern emerges, perhaps?

Neither of the two models up at the £2,000 mark were entirely successful. Focal's Profile 918 looks great and has a sweet top end, but lacks presence energy, while MJ Acoustics' Subliminal STR lacks both treble and bass output, albeit these extremes are either side of a smooth and coherent midband.

Totem's Model 1 has long vied for the title of 'world's ultimate miniature', and continues to do so in its latest Signature guise.

Expensive, yes, but the combination of beautiful finish and an artful balance with a notably smooth midband deserves a Best Buy rating, for those who rate discretion a high priority.

Paradoxically, the largest speaker in the group is also the least costly, and it seems that Triangle has finally got to grips with its largest 'budget' floorstander. The £1,395 Celius Esw is still bulky and inelegant, but it shows worthwhile improvements over its predecessors, and finally gets a Best Buy rating, just like its little Titus, Comete and Antal brothers. **HFC**

TRY THEM WITH THESE

CD PLAYERS

MARANTZ SA-11S1 £2,000
This audiophile-oriented all-rounder includes SACD but sticks to stereo.

NAIM CD5X

£1,450
Simple player with grip and coherence, engaging and musically involving.

AMPLIFIERS

AUDIO NOTE OTO LINE SE £1,599
Very limited power, but a delightful example of a single-ended valve amp.

PRIMARE 130

£1,500
Well-built integrated sounds smooth, sophisticated and agile – all at once!

HINTS AND TIPS

» Floor-coupling spikes should have tight lock-nuts, but don't over-tighten these or you'll strip the socket threads.

» Finding the right place to put the loudspeakers acoustically is very important. Do take the time and trouble to experiment.

» Moving a speaker from a free space location until it's close to a wall will substantially boost the mid-bass.

» Expect speakers to improve steadily over the first 100 hours or so.
» Use decent speaker cable, if you want your system to perform at its best.

LOUDSPEAKERS AT A GLANCE

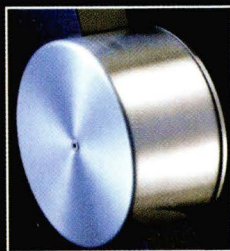
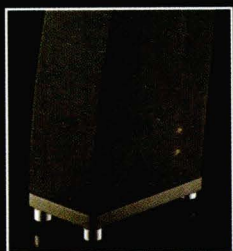


MAKE MODEL	Focal Profile 918	MJ Acoustics Subliminal STR	Reson 5th ReTHM	Totem Model 1 Signature	Triangle Celius Esw	Waterfall Iguasco
PRICE	£1,999	£2,000	£1,750	£1,595	£1,395	£1,500
SOUND						
PRACTICALITY						
BUILD						
VALUE						
OVERALL						
CONCLUSION	Striking styling, fine bass-to-mid balance and sweet treble, but presence is very recessed. Poor spacing.	Slimline, swivelling floorstander has fine midband coherence and delicacy, but lacks bass and treble output.	Dramatic bookshelf horn needs a subwoofer, but edgy midband is wonderfully expressive and realistic.	Lovely miniature remains costly but very seductive, with a beautiful balance and smooth midband.	Bulky floorstander shows improved bass and treble. Not smooth but great vigour and enthusiasm.	Beautiful glass speaker sounds crisp and agile, but uneven in balance with over-bright treble.
KEY FEATURES						
SIZE (WxHxD)	23x99x35cm	36x98x11cm	17x47x44cm	17x31x23cm	34x118x20cm	22x86x22cm
DRIVER CONFIG	2.5-way	1-way	1-way	2-way	3-way	2-way
MAIN DRIVER SIZE(S)	2x165mm	1x100mm	1x160mm	1x130mm	3x165mm	1x150mm
STAND/ FLOOR?	Floor	Floor	Stand	Stand	Floor	Floor
CABINET FINISH	Real wood	Solid wood	Paint/solid wood	Real wood	Real wood	Glass
BI-WIRE?	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
LAB CONCLUSIONS E = EXCELLENT • G = GOOD • A = AVERAGE • P = POOR						
SENSITIVITY	90dB G	88dB A	98dB E	88dB A	92dB G	89dB A
EST. BASS EXTENSION	23Hz G	25Hz A	120Hz P	28Hz A	25Hz A	38Hz P
IMPEDANCE (NOM/ MIN)	4/3 ohms P	8/6 ohms G	8/6 ohms G	6/4 ohms A	6/4 ohms A	6/4 ohms A
OVERALL FREQ. BALANCE	-10% A	-20% P	-50% P	+20% G	+40% G	-20% P
RESPONSE SMOOTHNESS	-30% P	+30% G	+20% A	+40% G	-10% A	-50% P

The new Reference 3 with CDT II™ Tweeter Technology

Anthony Gallo isn't one to follow the crowd, a characteristic he shares with the people who buy his loudspeakers.

His latest speaker design, the Reference 3, is rewriting the price versus performance equation. So much so in fact that influential U.S. publication *The Absolute Sound* have bestowed on it their ultimate honour - product of the year.



"Gallo's Reference 3's are rewriting the book on value in high-end loudspeakers, making accessible a level of performance that might previously have been far beyond the reach of most of us."
The Absolute Sound

For further information or to locate your nearest dealer, please visit our website

www.anthonygallo.co.uk

tel. 0870 350 1348

nonconformist

adj. an individual who does not comply with conventional norms or socially approved patterns of behavior or thought

DIRECT DEBIT

just **£8.87** every 3 months!

For the latest overseas subscription offers go to:
www.myfavouritemagazines.co.uk/HFC/P012

PRIORITY SUBSCRIPTION ORDER FORM



I WOULD LIKE TO SUBSCRIBE TO HI-FI CHOICE MAGAZINE BY DIRECT DEBIT AND CLAIM MY FREE QED QUNEX 3 INTERCONNECT CABLES

YOUR DETAILS (BLOCK CAPITALS PLEASE)

Title _____ First Name _____

Surname _____

Address _____

Post code _____

Tel no. (inc. code) _____

Email address _____

Please indicate if you do NOT wish to receive relevant information about special offers or products/services from *Hi-Fi Choice*, Future Publishing or any of its sister companies by post or telephone
Please indicate if you do NOT wish us to pass your details on to other carefully selected companies to enable them to contact you about their products/services by post or phone

We will use the contact details supplied to communicate with you about your *Hi-Fi Choice* subscription. We'd also like to keep you up to date with any special offers or new products/services that may be of interest. If you're happy for *Hi-Fi Choice*, Future Publishing and its sister companies to contact you by email, indicate here: If you're also happy for us to pass your details on to carefully selected companies so they can send you relevant information about their products/services by email, please indicate here:

Terms and conditions: In the event that stock runs out, *Hi-Fi Choice* magazine reserves the right to send an alternative gift to the same value or extra issues of the magazine to the value of the gift. Offer for UK subscribers only. Free Gift is a UK direct debit offer only. Please allow 28 days for delivery of gift.

Media Code: P012 Offer ends: 08/03/2006

Instruction to your Bank or Building Society to pay Direct Debits.



Originator's Identification Number

7 6 8 1 9 5

1. Name and full postal address of your bank or building society branch

To: The Manager _____
_____ Bank/Building Society
Address _____
_____ Post code _____

2. Name(s) of account holder(s) _____

3. Branch sort code (from the top right-hand corner of your cheque)

□ □ □ □ □ □

4. Bank or building society account number

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

5. Instruction to your bank or building society

Please pay Future Publishing direct debits from the account detailed on this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with Future Publishing and if so, details will be passed electronically to my bank or building society.

Signature(s) _____ Date _____

Ref No (Office use only) _____

Banks and building societies may not accept direct debit Instructions for some types of account.



HURRY!
LIMITED OFFER SO
ACT NOW!



www.myfavourite

GREAT SUBSCRIPTION OFFER!

SAVE 30%

AND GET A FREE PAIR OF QED
QUNEX 3 INTERCONNECT CABLES
WORTH £40!

BENEFITS

- ▶ Save £1.17 off the shop price of every issue!
- ▶ Get your FREE pair of QED Qunex 3 interconnects worth £40 when you subscribe by Direct Debit! HURRY! This offer is limited!
- ▶ Every copy delivered direct to your door – never miss an issue again!
- ▶ Free P&P in the UK!

HOW TO SUBSCRIBE

- ▶ Go online to:
www.myfavouritemagazines.co.uk/HFC/P012
- ▶ Call:
0870 837 4722
Quote offer code: P012
For overseas call +44 1858 438749
- ▶ Complete the form opposite and send to:

Hi-Fi Choice Magazine,
Future Publishing Ltd,
FREEPOST RLSC-SXSE-SKKT,
Unit 4, Tower House, Sovereign Park,
Market Harborough,
Leicestershire, LE16 9EF

When you subscribe to **HI-FI CHOICE** by Direct Debit, you don't just get a hefty discount off the normal shop price – this month you'll also receive a free pair of QED Qunex 3 interconnects worth £40 into the bargain! These cracking cables use high-grade materials and precise, 'twisted balanced' geometry to obtain a superb standard of sound at an affordable price. The conductors are silver-plated, 99.999 per cent oxygen free copper, with extensive screening to provide immunity from detrimental external interference, and each cable is fitted with high-quality, gold-plated RCA phono plugs. They're perfect for connecting amps and source components, but stocks are limited – so hurry!

For further information on the QED Qunex 3:

☎ 01279 501111 🌐 www.qed.co.uk

For overseas rates or non-Direct Debit UK orders, please visit www.myfavouritemagazines.co.uk/HFC/P012 or call our order hotline.

magazines.co.uk/HFC/P012

HI-FI CHOICE ACCESSORIES SHOP

Choice Bits is the easy way to buy the best audio accessories available today. Simply pick up the phone, order online, drop us an email or fill out the order form opposite and pop it in the post. It couldn't be simpler!

Welcome to our new, expanded Choice Bits accessories shop. Every month, our highly-trained audio experts trawl the world of hi-fi for the freshest goodies and the finest accessories, all perfect to help bring the most out of your system and each one ready to be delivered straight to your door.

This issue, we are going back to the early 1990s, with the re-release to one of the most controversial, but arguably highly effective, CD treatments money can buy... the legendary 'green pen' CD Stoptlight from AudioPrism. For our full selection, visit our dedicated website: www.choicebits.co.uk



AUDIOPRISM CD STOPLIGHT

This green, water-based, non-toxic and environmentally friendly acrylic paint is specially designed for coating the edges of your CDs, DVDs or SACDs. AudioPrism

discovered that during playback, a significant quantity of stray laser light bounces around inside a CD. This stray light finds its way back to the pick-up assembly, creating 'jitter' – a form of digital distortion. CD Stoptlight was developed to passively reduce the effect of stray light that ultimately causes jitter.

Using Stoptlight is easy, as the device comes with its own applicator. You'll notice increases in soundstage definition and image solidity, plus an improvement in the bass reproduction of recordings. Stoptlight also lowers the level of treble grain so typical of CD sound. This easy to use pen will treat over 100 discs.

ONLY £19.95

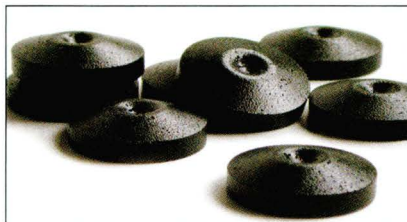
Best Buy Accessories



Clearaudio Deluxe Bubble Level

Use Clearaudio's high-quality stainless steel bubble level to ensure your turntable is lined up.

Price: £21.95



Clearlight Audio RDC Cone Cups

Made from the revolutionary RDC compound, use the Cups to improve spike and cone sound.

Price: £19.95 (set of four)



Isotek Full System Enhancer Disc

Our top-selling burn-in and demagnetisation disc is a must-have for any CD or DVD-based system.

Price: £14.95



L'Art du Son Record Cleaning Liquid

Alcohol-free record cleaning fluid. This biodegradable solution will clean 500 records.

Price: £27.95



Furutech IEC Power Connector

Simply adding this connector to your mains leads improves the sound of your system.

Price: £59.95



Knosti Disco Antistat Record Cleaner

Transform your dusty LPs with this classic wet cleaning system. Highly recommended.

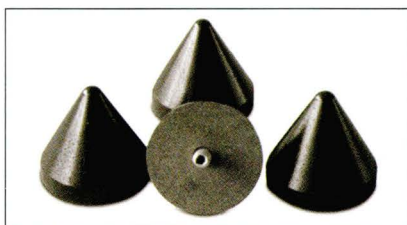
Price: £44.95



Nagaoka Anti-Static Record Sleeves

Quite simply, the best LP inner sleeves made. The audiophile's choice. Sold in packs of 50.

Price: £14.95 (pack of 50)



Clearlight Audio RDC 2 Cones

Used under CD players, RDC cones are the perfect balance of size, cost and performance.

Price: £29.95 (set of four)



LAST Stylus Cleaner

Discs sound better and are less likely to be damaged if your stylus is completely clean.

Price: £19.95

ANALOGUE ACCESSORIES

Cardas 180g Frequency Sweep LP	£21.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clearaudio Stroboscopic Test Record	£24.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clearaudio Stroboscopic Light	£69.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clearaudio Deluxe Bubble Level	£21.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clearaudio Clever Record Clamp	£12.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clearaudio Quadra Record Clamp	£69.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clearlight Audio (RDC) Record Puck	£54.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
KAB Strobe Disc & Light	£79.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Loricraft Record Mat	£49.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Michell Engineering Record Clamp	£22.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Michell Universal Dust Cover	£44.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Michell Techno Weight	£67.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Milty Zerostat	£37.50	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mobile Fidelity GeoDisc	£44.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ortofon T Force Tracking Force Gauge	£7.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pebbles 'The Weight' Rega Modification	£67.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Polaris Plus Stylus Alignment Gauge	£5.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pro-Ject Bubble Level	£14.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ringmat's How to Set Up A Turntable	£7.50	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ringmat Developments The Ringmat	£49.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ringmat Anniversary Ringmat	£69.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shure Stylus Force Gauge	£24.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
'The Producer's Cut' Test LP	£24.95	<input type="checkbox"/>

AUDIO BOOKS

The Complete Guide To High-End Audio	£24.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
How To Set Up And Fine Tune A Turntable	£7.50	<input type="checkbox"/>
The LP is Back	£9.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Home theatre For Everyone	£19.95	<input type="checkbox"/>

DIGITAL ACCESSORIES

Allsop DVD Optimiser/Laser Lens Cleaner	£19.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
AudioPrism CD Stoptight	£19.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
AVIA Home Theatre Set-Up & Calibration	£34.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
A-Z CD Clips	£7.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bedini Hand Held Clarifier MkII	£69.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Compact Dynamics CD Plus	£14.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Compact Dynamics CD UpGrade	£14.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Densen DeMagic CD	£11.95	<input type="checkbox"/>

Digital Video Essentials (PAL) DVD Set-Up Disc	£19.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Furutech RD-2 Disc Demagnetizer	£199.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lasertrack CD2000 Set-Up Disc	£19.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marigo Orpheus CD Crossbow Mat	£79.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mobile Fidelity ULTRADISC CD-R (Qty 5)	£14.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Opus3 Showcase (HDCD)	£14.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Richard Black's U.S.H.E.R. CD	£14.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
IsoTek System Enhancer, DeMag & Burn-In CD	£14.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Order both the above discs for only	£21.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ringmat The Statmat MkII	£19.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sound Improvement Disc (Model 14/15)	£17.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ultra Burn-In CD3000	£24.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
XLO Reference Test & Burn-In CD	£24.95	<input type="checkbox"/>

CARE/ CLEANING PRODUCTS

Allsop Carbon Edge Laser Lens Cleaner	£14.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Allsop CD & DVD Fast Wipes	£4.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Allsop CD Scratch Repair Kit	£12.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Allsop Radial CD Cleaner	£10.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clearaudio Carbon Fibre Record Brush	£13.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
DeoxIT Contact Cleaner (200ml)	£13.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Goldring Exstatic Deluxe Record Brush	£14.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Goldring Exstatic Record Sleeves	£11.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Knostli Disco Antistat Record Cleaner	£44.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Okki Nokki Vacuum Record Cleaner	£225.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
L'Art du Son Record Cleaner (5Litre)	£27.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Last All-Purpose Record Cleaner	£39.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Last Record Preservative	£39.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Last Stylus Cleaner	£19.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Last Stylus Stylus Treatment	£29.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lyra SPT Stylus Cleaner	£24.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nagaoka Antistatic Record Inner Sleeves (50)	£14.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nordost Eco 3 Static Inhibitor Spray	£24.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Optrix CD Cleaner & Clarifier	£16.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
ProGold Contact Enhancer (ProGold 20ml)	£13.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unbranded Inner Sleeves (Qty 100)	£24.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Walker Audio Super Silver Treatment	£59.95	<input type="checkbox"/>

ISOLATION RACKS AND CONES

Clearlight Audio RDC Aspect Rack Black 4 Shelf	£549.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clearlight Audio RDC 1 Cones (Qty 4)	£39.95	<input type="checkbox"/>

Clearlight Audio RDC 2 Cones (Qty 4)	£29.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clearlight Audio RDC Cone Cups (Qty 4)	£19.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clearlight Audio RDC 3 Cones (Qty 4)	£44.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clearlight Audio RDC 5 Cones (Qty 4)	£19.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clearlight Audio RDC Combi Base (Qty 4)	£49.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clearlight Audio RDC SPP Platform	£109.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
IXOS Sorbothane Feet (Qty 4)	£19.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nordost Pulsar Points (Aluminium) (Qty 4)	£54.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spectral FoculPods Support Systems (Qty 4)	£14.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spectral Polipods Support Systems (Qty 8)	£14.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Townshend 3D Seismic Isolation Platform	£234.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Voodoo AIRTEK (430x360mm/20kg)	£234.95	<input type="checkbox"/>

MAINS CABLES AND CONDITIONERS

IsoTek Premium Mains Cable (1.5M)	£49.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
IsoTek Elite Mains Cable (1.5M)	£79.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
IsoTek Optimum Mains Cable (1.5M)	£129.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nordost Shiva Mains Cable (2.0M)	£220.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nordost Vishnu Mains Cable (2.0M)	£450.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nordost Brahma Reference Mains Cable (2.0M)	£895.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nordost Valhalla Reference Mains Cable (2.0M)	£1750.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
Furutech Ultimate Rhodium Fuse	£32.50	<input type="checkbox"/>
Furutech FI-15 IEC Connector (24ct Gold)	£19.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Furutech FI-11 Round Bodied IEC (24ct Gold)	£29.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Furutech FI-1363 IEC Connector (24ct Gold)	£59.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
IsoTek IsoPlug	£29.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
IsoTek NeoPlug	£49.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
IsoTek GII Solus	£295.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
IsoTek GII Multi-4-Way	£155.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
IsoTek GII Multi-6-Way	£185.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
IsoTek GII Multi-8-Way	£220.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
IsoTek GII Gemini-6-Way (distribution strip)	£260.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
IsoTek GII Mini Sub/Vision	£495.00 / £549.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
IsoTek GII Titan	£1425.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
IsoTek GII Nova	£1495.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kemp Electronics Power Strip 4-Way	£324.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kemp Electronics Power Strip 6-Way	£375.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kemp Electronics Power Strip 8-Way	£424.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nordost THOR by IsoTek	£1595.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
V.D.H. Polarity Tester	£17.50	<input type="checkbox"/>
WattGate 320 IEC Connector (Black)	£18.95	<input type="checkbox"/>
WattGate 320I HC (16Amp)	£28.95	<input type="checkbox"/>

 **0870 240 7228**  **www.choicebits.co.uk**

ORDER FORM

Orders can also be placed online: www.choicebits.co.uk

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____ Tel: _____

Cheque/postal order enclosed for £ _____ made payable to Choice Bits.

Or please charge my Visa/Mastercard/Amex/Switch Card number:

□□□□ □□□□ □□□□ □□□□ □□□□ Signature _____

Valid From _____ Expires _____ Issue number (Switch) _____

How to order:

Simply complete this order form, fill in your details and send it to: P.O. Box 5996, Newbury RG20 4XH

Alternatively: give us a call on: 0870 240 7228

email: orders@choicebits.co.uk

Order online: www.choicebits.co.uk

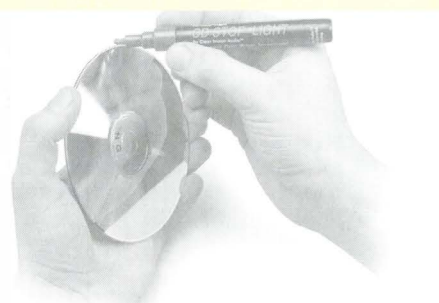
UK postage:

Postage is £2.00 for the first item and £1.00 thereafter. All Prices include VAT at 17.5%.

European/ International sales:

Overseas sales are welcome - please call for a postage quotation. Sales outside the EU are VAT exclusive.

This service is operated by hiforsale.com Ltd (registered address) trading as Choice Bits under license from Future Publishing Ltd. Your order will be fulfilled by hiforsale.



HI-FI CHOICE BACK ISSUES



ISSUE 259



ISSUE 260



ISSUE 261



ISSUE 262



ISSUE 263



ISSUE 264



ISSUE 265



ISSUE 266



ISSUE 267



ISSUE 268



ISSUE 269



ISSUE 270



ISSUE 271



ISSUE 272



ISSUE 273



ISSUE 274



ISSUE 275



ISSUE 276

YOUR DETAILS

Name _____
 Address _____

 Email address _____
 Card number _____
 Expiry date _____
 Signature _____

SEND YOUR ORDER TO

UK READERS:
 Hi-Fi Choice back issues,
 FREEPOST BS4900, Somerton,
 Somerset, TA11 6BR

OVERSEAS READERS:
 Hi-Fi Choice back issues,
 Cary Court, Somerton,
 Somerset, TA11 6TB, UK

WHICH ISSUE(S) DO YOU REQUIRE?

MONTH & YEAR	ISSUE NUMBER	AMOUNT

HOW WILL YOU BE PAYING?

Make cheques/POs payable
 to Future Publishing Ltd.
 (PLEASE TICK RELEVANT BOX)

CHEQUE
 MASTERCARD
 MAESTRO
 VISA
 POSTAL ORDER

HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?

UK £4.00 (per issue), Overseas £6.95 (per issue)

BACK ISSUES

Back issues are available by mail order (as long as stocks remain). They cost £4.00 (UK) or £6.95 (overseas). Both prices include p&p. You can order by phone on 0870 837 4733 – we accept Mastercard and Visa credit cards, and Maestro debit cards. Alternatively, send a cheque or PO made payable to Future Publishing Ltd. Please fill in your details on the left of this form.

ORDER A REVIEW REPRINT

If you're interested in an HFC review of an older component and the back issue has sold out, we can usually send photocopies of individual reviews to any UK address for a flat fee (inc. p&p) of £5 per review. You must know in which issue the original review appeared; we are unable to search back issues for old reviews.

Please send a written request, enclosing a cheque for £5 made payable to Future Publishing Ltd, to:
 Hi-Fi Choice Reprint Service,
 Future Publishing, 1 Balcombe Street,
 London, NW1 6NA.

PLEASE NOTE: THIS SERVICE IS ONLY FOR OTHERWISE UNOBTAINABLE REVIEWS

Why not subscribe to Hi-Fi Choice?



See page 78 for more details...

HI-FI CHOICE BUYER'S BIBLE



Welcome to the *Hi-Fi Choice Buyer's Bible* – the ultimate guide to the very best high performance hi-fi and multichannel gear you can buy. Here, you'll find our favourite current products listed under easy to use categories, plus useful information on what to look for and how to get the most from your components.

Reviews you can trust

Our test results are the most reliable in the business. We employ the most experienced reviewers and use the most stringent techniques to ensure our ratings are the ones you can trust. All the equipment we rate most highly is contained within these pages, from CD and vinyl to the latest multichannel disc players. Whether hi-fi stereo or high performance surround and vision, these components will take you a step closer to reality.

How to use this guide

The *Hi-Fi Choice Buyer's Bible* is the best way to make a shortlist of components for your system. Pick the ones that best suit your taste and budget, then use our *Dealer Classified* section to find specialist outlets where you can audition these components with your favourite discs.

Products that score more than 80 per cent overall are automatically considered for inclusion in the *Hi-Fi Choice Buyer's Bible*. Any Best Buy or Editor's Choice Badges awarded are also displayed.

SOURCE COMPONENTS

- 84 CD PLAYERS
- 86 DVD PLAYERS
- 88 VINYL
- 91 RADIO TUNERS
- 93 DIGITAL RECORDERS

AMPLIFIERS

- 100 STEREO AMPS
- 102 MULTICHANNEL AV AMPS

LOUDSPEAKERS

- 106 STEREO SPEAKERS
- 110 MULTICHANNEL SPEAKER PACKAGES

ANCILLARIES

- 113 HEADPHONES
- 115 CABLES
- 117 STANDS AND SUPPORTS
- 119 GLOSSARY

DEALER CLASSIFIED

- 122 DEALER GUIDE
- 128 DEALER DIRECTORY

CD PLAYERS

Audio disc players for music only



Despite the emergence of new formats and the resurgence of an old one (vinyl), CD is still the king of formats if you require breadth of choice. And despite the fact that other sources will play CDs, if you want to hear your discs at their best, there's little substitute for a dedicated CD player.

It's also the most enduring format on the market. Despite high-resolution contenders like SACD and DVD-Audio, nothing has been able to undermine this universally popular format.

CD players work by reading a stream of 1s and 0s off a disc that spins at a constantly changing speed (to counteract the increasing length of 'groove'). This bitstream is then digitally filtered before undergoing digital-to-analogue conversion in the DAC (D-to-A convertor). Thereafter, the signal is filtered



again before being amplified and sent to the output sockets.

The processes of reading the disc and converting the data are sometimes split between a CD transport and separate DAC in so-called two-box players. A popular approach with very high-end kit, this separates the electronically noisy elements from the sensitive analogue stages, but can introduce timing errors known as jitter, therefore one-box players usually offer best results where budget is a consideration.

SUPER AUDIO CD

SACD or Super Audio CD is a relatively new audio-only format introduced by Sony and Philips. It offers higher resolution than CD in the form of considerably greater bandwidth and improved dynamic range. It also has



the potential for uncompressed surround sound using up to six channels, and most new discs take advantage of this. SACD discs are usually hybrids and will play on normal CD players, but you won't be able to appreciate their highest quality or their multichannel capability without an SACD-compatible player. Some SACD players also play DVD and even DVD-Audio – these are listed in our DVD section.

Q&A

WHAT'S A DAC?

A DAC or digital-to-analogue convertor is a fundamental part of any CD player and converts the digits read from the disc into an analogue music waveform which is amplified to line level.

WHY HAVE SEPARATE TRANSPORTS & DACS?

Discs are read by a transport or disc drive, which creates radio frequency 'noise'. Separating the DAC means the conversion can be done with less interference.

CAN I USE AN OUTBOARD DAC WITH MY INTEGRATED CD PLAYER?

Yes, if it has a digital output – and most do.

DO I NEED DIGITAL CABLES FOR A CD PLAYER?

No. All analogue cables are suitable for connecting a CD player to an amp. Digital specific cables with 75ohms impedance are useful when connecting the player to a digital recorder or DAC.

WHAT IS OVERSAMPLING/UPSAMPLING?

Oversampling involves multiplying the sampling frequency by a whole number, usually between four and 32, but sometimes higher, and is designed let the DAC to work in a more linear fashion. Upsampling is where the data stream is stretched out by interpolation and is typically used to refer to large changes in sampling rate such as from 44.1kHz to 192kHz.

CAN I PLAY SACDS ON A NORMAL CD PLAYER?

Yes. The vast majority of SACD discs are hybrids, with a CD layer that all CD players can read.

CAN I PLAY DVDS ON A CD PLAYER?

No, the same applies to DVD-As. But you can play CDs and DVD-As on normal DVD players.

TOP BUYS



Cambridge Audio Azur 640C v2 £250

The old 640C was a fantastic low-cost CD player, and its new 'v2' replacement is even better – an extraordinarily graceful and dynamic-sounding player for the money.



Cyrus CD8x £1,000

The latest diminutive CD spinner from Cyrus is an absolute stunner. Highly detailed and supremely musical, it's more than a match for many more outwardly exotic machines.

Our favourite **CD PLAYERS**

BB BEST BUY **EC** EDITOR'S CHOICE

Audio-only CD and SACD players

BADGE?	PRODUCT	£	COMMENTS	SPECIFICATIONS							ISSUE NUMBER
				SACD COMPATIBLE	ELEC DIG OUTPUT	OPT DIG OUTPUT	CD-RW COMPATIBLE	CD TEXT	BAL ANALOGUE OUT	HEADPHONE SOCKET	
UP TO £1,000											
BB	Arcam DIVA CD73T	400	Refined and articulate, smooth and dynamic – a finely judged balance for budget to mid-price systems								247
BB	Arcam DIVA CD192	850	Beautifully built, well featured player with clear, open and involving sound								264
BB	Cambridge Azur 640C v2	250	Does most things extremely well and has a remarkably good sense of poise for the money								274
EC	Consonance CD120	795	Fine performance in all areas with the possible exception of slight treble harshness								269
BB	Cyrus CD6s	650	Small, efficient and cheerful, with plenty of energy and just the smallest lack of detail								276
BB	Cyrus CD8x	1,000	Impressive mix of detail, musicality, analysis and appearance. Even better with the PSX-R power supply (£400)								270
BB	Exposure 2010 S	599	Highly communicative sounds with good bass, though not always the most analytical								264
BB	Marantz CD7300	350	Astonishingly capable sub-£500 player with effortless bass, detailed mid and treble and vast soundstages								250
BB	Naim CD5i	825	As idiosyncratic as ever, but sonically the CD5i is the definitive player at the price								259
BB	Roksan Kandy MkIIID	650	Clean, tidy and expressive player – a more than worthwhile improvement on previous versions								259
BB	Sony SCD-XA3000ES	800	A good, if not truly great, all-rounder with CD and fine multi-channel SACD performance								276
ABOVE £1,000											
BB	Arcam FMJ CD36	1,400	Deeply revealing player that tells it like it is: if you can stand the unvarnished truth, you'll love it								271
	Audia Flight CD One	4,500	Sumptuously built toploader capable of real world dynamics with great recordings. Two digital inputs								269
EC	Ayre CX-7 CD Player	2,950	Superbly built and natural sounding player that will win you over with its range of capabilities and transparency								251
BB	Copland CDA823	1,750	Its ability to resolve micro dynamics and acoustic space is second to none								267
	Hegel CDP2A	1,500	A technically proficient and masterly-sounding player built by people who clearly know what they are doing								252
EC	Krell SACD Standard	4,244	A landmark SACD player and an excellent CD player at what by Krell standards is a relatively affordable price								251
EC	Lindemann 820	6,999	Stereo SACD player with sumptuous build and sound, onboard analogue volume control and multiple digital inputs								262
BB	Marantz SA-15 S1	1,200	Some inconsistency over imaging, but enjoyable performance, strong on detail								276
BB	Marantz SA-11 S1	2,000	A stereo player for audiophiles – lack of DVD and multichannel SACD lead to subtle, highly focussed sound								265
	Meridian G07	1,595	Immaculately conceived and executed player with a softly-spoken voice. Needs careful system matching								259
EC	Meridian 808i Signature	8,250	Stunning CD player with added preamp functions. Versatile and quite delightful								263
BB	Myryad MXC6000	1,400	A highly listenable player with excellent tonal balance and very fine detail								270
BB	Naim CD5x	1,450	A genuinely engaging CD player with remarkable musical grip and coherence								264
EC	Naim CDX2	2,800	Fine quality one-box CD player, but its best feature is upgradeability via outboard XPS supply								238
	Primare CD31	1,500	A well made player that may not appeal to timing freaks but does lovely things with large musical forces								270
EC	Resolution Audio Opus 21	2,850	Dynamic, well timed and 3D performance with an analogue volume control and digital input for a second source								244
BB	Sugden CD21SE	1,395	Delivers its particularly musical touch brilliantly and warrants the attention of all true music lovers								271
BB	Shanling CD-T100	1,650	Stunning-looking player that offers various operating modes: in any, sound is clear and assured								270
EC	Wadia 302	3,999	A dynamic and gripping player, with bass to die for and resolution to change your listening habits								253
EC	Wadia 861se	9,995	Stunning player with a full digital preamp and an all-revealing sound that'll keep you up all night								256

SPECS KEY **SACD COMPATIBLE** Plays high-resolution SACD discs in multichannel and/or two-channel mode. **ELEC DIGITAL OUTPUT** Electrical coaxial output for digital connection to a DAC or digital recorder.

OPT DIGITAL OUTPUT Optical Toslink output for digital connection to a DAC or digital recorder. **CD-RW COMPATIBLE** Will play CD-RW (rewritable) discs, most CD players can cope with CD-Rs.

CD TEXT Will display album and track titles from inserted disc. **BAL ANALOGUE OUT** Balanced XLR output connections for similarly equipped amplifiers.

HEADPHONE SOCKET Quarter inch (6.3mm) headphone jack fitted to the CD player. **VARIABLE OUTPUT** Player features both fixed level and variable, volume adjustable outputs.



Copland CDA823 £1,750

This distinguished, yet minimalist Scandinavian CD player combines a real ear for detail with full-scale dynamics and an effortless musical style. A genuine hi-fi star.



Resolution Audio Opus 21 £2,850

This player is king of subtlety. Outwardly, the music sounds dynamic and well-scaled, but it's the level of inner detail resolved here that is truly outstanding.

DVD PLAYERS

Disc players for audio and video

➤ DVD has proved a phenomenal success in commercial terms and has virtually extinguished the market for budget CD players – you can't really beat a multifORMAT player when it comes to features. Early DVD players were not particularly good CD spinners because of the enormous amount of RF interference produced by video circuits, but as this problem has been identified manufacturers have begun to tackle it. Nowadays, most DVD players are competent CD players and a few are very good – often as not they are the ones that play DVD-Audio discs as well.

The great advantage of DVD is that it offers sufficient capacity to hold a feature length movie or music concert *and* discrete multichannel sound on a disc the size of a CD. In the case of plain DVD-Video discs, the audio is encoded in either the Dolby Digital or DTS format, both of which use 'lossy' compression to fit the audio onto the disc alongside the video data. You can use



a DVD player with your stereo system by connecting the stereo outputs, though this won't give the surround sound benefits that the format specialises in.

Q&A

WHICH AUDIO OUTPUTS GIVE THE BEST QUALITY?

Use the analogue outputs for CD, DVD-A and SACD, and the coaxial digital output for DTS and Dolby Digital movie soundtracks.

WHICH VIDEO OUTPUTS GIVE THE BEST QUALITY?

The best connection is component video closely followed by RGB Scart, which is clearly superior to S-video and the basic composite video option.

DO I NEED A MULTICHANNEL AMP TO USE A DVD PLAYER?

Only if you want to hear music and movie soundtracks in multichannel surround. DVD players can be used with stereo amps and just two speakers to great effect, but you'll only get stereo, not surround sound.

DO I NEED PROGRESSIVE SCAN VIDEO?

It's worthwhile for the very best picture quality, but make sure your DVD player and display device support PAL progressive.

DVD-AUDIO

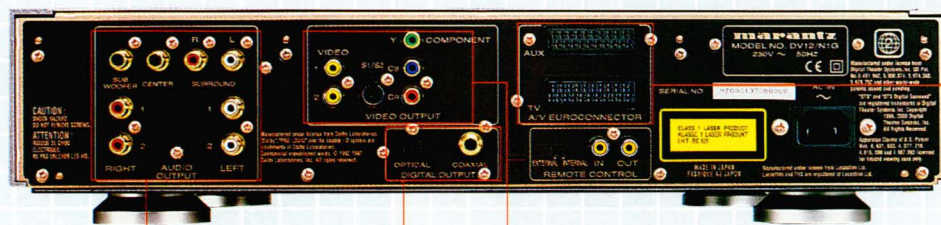
DVD-Audio is a high-resolution format that offers multichannel, stereo and Dolby Digital tracks on dedicated DVD-A discs. The discs can be played on any DVD player, but the CD-beating high-fidelity sound can only be appreciated with a DVD-A player.

While offering similar benefits to SACD, it has the advantage of on-screen display for information – lyrics, images and so on. To save

you having to decide which format to go for, a few brands are bringing out universal players to cover SACD and DVD-A, alongside CD and DVD-Video – a neat and relatively future proof route into high-resolution multichannel music. Higher-end models featuring high-bandwidth compatible digital audio links are now also appearing, enhancing DVD-A/SACD sound when used with similarly equipped amps.



CONNECTIONS



ANALOGUE AUDIO OUTPUTS: For stereo and multichannel connections, use these for best results with DVD-Audio, SACD and CD.

DIGITAL OUTPUTS: For Dolby Digital, DTS and PCM audio bitstreams.

VIDEO CONNECTIONS: Yellow sockets are composite; red, green and blue sockets are for component which gives best results, while the black multipin socket is S-Video, which sits qualitatively between the two.

SCART CONNECTIONS: These are a good-quality option for video, especially ones that output RGB.

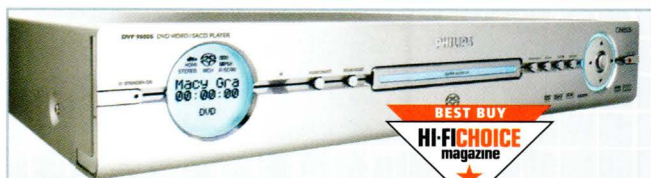
Our favourite BEST BUY EDITOR'S CHOICE DVD PLAYERS

Audio/Video disc players

BADGE?	PRODUCT	£	COMMENTS	SPECIFICATIONS					ISSUE NUMBER	
				DVD-A COMPATIBLE	SACD COMPATIBLE	ELEC DIG OUTPUT	OPT DIG OUTPUT	HEADPHONE SOCKET		
UP TO £1,000										
BB	Arcam DIVA DV78	700	Imagine almost all of the DV88 Plus at a knock-down price. Top picture and sound performance for the money							254
BB	Denon DVD-1920	250	Respectable (if unexciting) and flexible audio player, but something of a star from its HDMI equipped upsampling video subsystem							276
BB	Denon DVD-2910	600	Denon's entry-level universal player lives in the shadow of the '3910, especially on CD, but is a fine overall model							262
BB	Denon DVD-3910	900	Exceptionally well-specified universal player with a performance to match. A true class-leader							260
BB	Marantz DV7600	600	A mid-market cracker, with sound and picture quality that generally exceeds expectations							274
BB	Onkyo DV-SP503E	300	Budget Onkyo universal player is a straightforward Pioneer based implementation, which performs well with audio and video							275
BB	Philips DVP9000S	400	Philips proves it hasn't lost its touch with mid market DVD players. Includes SACD and HDMI for quality video, and it's a star							274
BB	Pioneer DV-585A	150	Don't expect tip-top performance for this kind of money – the fact that it's a competent universal player is impressive enough!							273
BB	Pioneer DV-868AVi	1,000	State of the art universal player with next-gen digital outputs – HDMI for video and i.Link for high-resolution audio							252
BB	Sony DVP-NS9100ES	1,000	Video playback is foremost, with the i.Link delivering significantly better sound than the analogue counterparts							274
ABOVE £1,000										
BB	Arcam FMJ DV29	1,600	An excellent DVD player, very fine with both CD and DVD-Audio music discs and superb in its video role							263
BB	Cyrus DVD8	1,200	An impressive step up from the DVD7+, which includes component video outputs							238
EC	Denon DVD-A1XV	2,500	Sophisticated universal player with state of the art video processing, high class disc replay, especially SACD							266
EC	Linn Unidisk SC	2,995	Groundbreaking universal player with built-in preamplifier, with excellent picture for home cinema and sound for hi-fi							259
EC	Meridian G98AH	3,625	Meridian's most widely compatible G-Series DVD player – groundbreaking DVD-Audio replay and a fine CD player too							265
EC	Naim DVD5	2,565	Naim's first DVD player is a real success, notable for its class-leading sound with CD and (optional) multichannel DVD-Audio							263
EC	Townshend TA 565 CD	3,000	A universal machine that excels with music and is quite exceptional with good ol' stereo CD							270

SPECS KEY **DVD-A COMPATIBLE** Plays high-resolution DVD-A discs in two and multichannel modes. **SACD COMPATIBLE** Plays high-resolution SACD discs in two and multichannel modes. **ELEC DIGITAL OUTPUT** Electrical coaxial output for digital connection to a multichannel amplifier or receiver. **OPT DIGITAL OUTPUT** Optical Toslink output for digital connection to a multichannel amplifier or receiver. **HEADPHONE SOCKET** Quarter inch (6.3mm) headphone jack fitted to the DVD player

TOP BUYS



Philips DVP9000S £400

An attractive and well designed DVD player with a great picture and good CD/SACD sound.



Marantz DV7600 £600

A universal player that's strong with all formats, including music on CD/SACD/DVD-A.



Arcam FMJ DV29 £1,600

Arcam's best DVD player yet – a world-class, HDMI-equipped audio/video feast.



Meridian G98AH £3,625

A digital *tour de force* – as exceptional with both audio and video as you'd expect.



Audio Analogue has brought over ten years expertise in audio design to the exciting new **Enigma**.

The perfect one-box solution for today's space and style conscious customer; **Enigma** boasts a high quality 50 watt integrated amplifier, CD player and AM/FM tuner in a single compact and elegant package.

Add valve technology for smooth clarity and a price tag of **£850** and you have the perfect recipe for success. **Enigma** is incredibly versatile, making

it ideal for a main or second system in studio, bedroom or office.

Advanced in design but easy to use, the only mystery about **Enigma** is how **Audio Analogue** has managed it at such an affordable price!

For information, brochures and dealers contact:

UKD Ltd
Tel: 01753 652 669
info@ukd.co.uk | www.ukd.co.uk

The not-so-puzzling solution for music lovers of all ages...

VINYL

Turntables, cartridges and phono stages



Record players or turntables offer the digital revolution serious competition when it comes to sound quality. Even a modest model can turn musical tricks that most CD players struggle with. Some call it vinyl warmth, but in reality it's a lack of digital hardness that makes the format so engaging. True, the software requires a bit more care, but even a knackered LP is more playable than a scratched CD.

Record players are made of three, perhaps four, fundamental parts. The turntable is the plinth and platter, usually also containing the motor and any suspension system. A tonearm sits on the plinth and allows the cartridge to trace the vinyl groove by pivoting or parallel tracking over the record. The cartridge contains the means of turning the mechanical movement of the groove wall into an electrical signal.

A fourth element is an amp dedicated to the delicate job of amplifying and equalising the cartridge's insubstantial output. This is called a phono stage and can be found in some integrated amplifiers and preamps, but is increasingly purchased separately for use with line-only amps.



TURNTABLE SET-UP

Setting up a turntable varies from model to model, but the general principle is to level the platter by adjusting the suspension or, as with solid platters, the surface it sits on. Sprung suspensions sometimes require a bit of fine-tuning to sound their best, but the principle is to achieve a smooth, pistonic bounce. Cartridge set-up is even more critical, as the angles at which the stylus traces the groove affects its tonal balance and levels of distortion. A good alignment protractor is essential if you are intending to set up your own cartridge, as is a degree of patience. In essence, there are two angles you need to get right: the tracing angle as the cartridge crosses the record if you are looking from above, and the vertical tracking angle (VTA), which is adjusted by raising or lowering the arm base to bring the arm parallel with the record surface.

There are two types of phono cartridge: moving magnet (MM) and moving coil (MC), and with a few exceptions the latter outperforms the former. But MCs produce a lower output and require better-quality amplification to be heard at their best. As a general rule, MCs offer a broader bandwidth, greater dynamics and more detail, but the better moving magnets do most things well enough to distract you from your CD collection.

TOP BUYS



Goldring
GR2 £265

This Rega-derived design is stunning value for money. Supplied with an RB250 arm and Goldring 1012GX cartridge, it'll blow most budget CD players into the weeds.



Michell
Tecnodec £767

A distillation of all the good things from some of Michell's past masters, all knitted together beautifully. Understated looks and a full-bodied sound make this a star.



Clearaudio
Champion £1,475

Current king of acrylic, the Clearaudio deck, arm and cartridge combination turns in a beautifully well-balanced delivery, but choose your support wisely.



Avid
Volvere Sequel £3,500

Avid has been one of the most impressive exponents of the vinyl arts in recent years, and this mid-range deck is a stunning example of analogue engineering.

Our favourite **BB** BEST BUY **EC** EDITOR'S CHOICE

TURNTABLES

Record players

BADGE?	PRODUCT	£	COMMENTS	SPECIFICATIONS				
				SPEEDS	SUSP SUBCHASSIS	SWITCHABLE SPEED CHANGE	SUPPLIED WITH ARM	ISSUE NUMBER
BB	Avid Diva	1,100	A solid and powerful sounding deck with fine build, requires a smooth, relaxed cartridge for best results	33/45	●			247
EC	Avid Volvere Sequel	3,500	Heavyweight turntable that will deliver more of what's in a vinyl groove than most of the competition	33/45	●	●		229
BB	Clearaudio Champion	1,365	Smart, practical and good-sounding, with impressively 'dead' arm. Isolation recommended	33/45			●	268
EC	Clearaudio Ambient	4,220	Innovative use of materials leads to a fast, precise and thrilling sound (tonearm extra)	33/45		●	●	271
EC	EAR Disc Master	7,695	Combines new 'no contact' drive technology and high quality materials to bring state of the art resolution	33/45/78	●	●	opt	276
BB	Goldring GR2	265	Nicely finished Rega-manufactured deck with RB250 arm and an open, engaging sound quality	33/45			●	266
BB	Michell Gyro SE	1,058	New DC motor-equipped Gyro offers great looks and even better sound. Price includes RB300 arm	33/45	●		●	239
EC	Michell Orbe SE	2,015	A superb turntable, able to mix it with the best at virtually any price. Now features new DC motor	33/45	●			235
BB	Michell Tecnodec	767	Simple and smartly understated, performs above expectations – full-bodied and highly detailed	33/45			●	268
	NAD C 555	250	A good budget turntable with plenty of potential for cartridge upgrades. Shames many comparable CD players	33/45			●	271
BB	Nottingham Analogue Horizon	529	A fluid midrange and nimble but rich bass are two of the many attributes of this bargain deck (price inc RB250 arm)	33/45			●	253
BB	Pro-Ject Debut SE	200	The best Debut has a quality cartridge and easy upgrade arm cable, it delivers a scale, energy and resolve with ease	33/45			●	276
BB	Pro-Ject RPM 9 X	1,000	A gorgeous turntable that sounds as good as it looks – vital and transparent! Price includes carbon-fibre arm	33/45			●	268
	Rega P3/RB300	298	Updated Planar 3, building on the strengths of the P2 with added subtlety and detail	33/45			●	214
BB	Rega P5/RB700	698	Combines a great sense of timing with market-leading resolution and a phenomenal tonearm – a hard act to beat	33/45			●	opt 257
BB	Rega P7/RB700	1,298	A highly capable player that could hold its own in the most exalted company – a vivid and natural performer	33/45			●	opt 257
EC	Rega P9/RB1000	2,498	Exceptionally elegant hi-tech player with complex outboard supply, ceramic platter and wonderful RB1000 tonearm	33/45		●	●	228
BB	Roksan Radius 5/Nima	850	Sophisticated design with accomplished sound quality, excellent imagery and good isolation (acrylic version tested)	33/45	●		●	248
EC	Roksan TMS2/Artemiz	7,500	Typical Roksan sound, but better: pitch-accurate, lean, detailed and controlled, without the 'bloat' of lesser designs	33/45	●	●		246
EC	SME Model 10A	3,411	Elegant and extremely capable design, tested here with Series V/309 hybrid arm	33/45	●	●	●	195
EC	SME Model 20.2A	5,274	Beautifully built, extremely neutral damped and suspended deck with superb sound. Inc V arm	33/45/78	●	●	●	186
EC	Townshend Rock Anniversary	4,900	If you want to get to the meat and bones of the music this is a great tool for the job (price inc. Excalibur arm)	33/45	●		●	259

Our favourite **BB** BEST BUY **EC** EDITOR'S CHOICE

PHONO CARTRIDGES

MM and MC cartridges

BADGE?	PRODUCT	£	COMMENTS	SPECIFICATIONS			ISSUE NUMBER
				MM	MC	REPLACEABLE STYLUS	
BB	Cartridge Man MM III	625	The MM III challenges MCs at twice the price, it produces detail, space and energy and has stunning resolve in the right arm	●			266
	Grado Prestige Black	40	Offers admirable detail and treble extension, with good bass and ambience too	●		●	214
BB	Grado Prestige Gold	110	Produces rich, open and expansive music with the minimum of fuss	●		●	235
EC	Lyra Helikon	1,095	Highly capable and highly neutral, this is a cartridge for all seasons, albeit fussy about vinyl quality	●			215
BB	Sumiko Blue Point Spec Evo III	239	High output MC with refinement at high frequencies and a nimble, articulate and revealing sound		●		270
BB	van den Hul MC One Special	699	A gorgeous cartridge that's worth the price every time you hear a familiar track in a whole new light		●		235
EC	van den Hul Colibri XGP	2,699	Phenomenal resolution, custom building to suit hard and software, but needs 500 ohm loading and is vulnerable to damage		●		244
EC	van den Hul Condor XCM	2,400	A stunning cartridge with stereo imaging, dynamics and detail resolution to die for		●		265
EC	Wilson Benesch Naked Analog	1,450	With its smooth clean highs, transparent midband and nimble bass, this is a lot of performance for the money		●		253

Our favourite **BB** BEST BUY **EC** EDITOR'S CHOICE

PHONO STAGES

Phono stages

BADGE?	PRODUCT	£	COMMENTS	SPECIFICATIONS				
				MM PHONO INPUTS	MC PHONO INPUTS	AUJ GAIN	AUJ IMPEDANCE	
	Clearaudio Smart-Phono	250	Minute and very practical unit with slightly bright, but very detailed and low-noise, sound	●	●			268
BB	NAD PP2 phono stage	50	A fine buy for turntable users on a tight budget – open tonality and clarity is distinctly impressive for the money	●	●			245
BB	Tom Evans Microgroove	400	For dynamics and real bass extension with good tonal colour this is the one to beat. The Plus version (£700) is even better!		●			234
EC	Tom Evans The Groove	1,800	Plenty of detail, excellent imaging and almost flawlessly neutral: a good choice for maximum information retrieval off any LP	●				201
BB	Trichord Dino/Dino+	498	Relaxed yet resolute with very good image depth and natural balance, not to mention great flexibility	●	●	●	●	234

TURNTABLE SPECS KEY **SPEEDS** Speeds offered in rpm. **SUSP SUBCHASSIS** Turntables with a sprung or suspended support for the platter and arm. **SWITCHABLE SPEED CHANGE** Some decks require manual lifting of the belt from one pulley to another to change speed, but not these ones. **SUPPLIED WITH ARM** Deck is supplied complete with tonearm – some require a separate purchase in this department, but the dealer will fit it for you.

SUPPLIED WITH CARTRIDGE Some decks are supplied with a starter cartridge and this is included in the price shown.

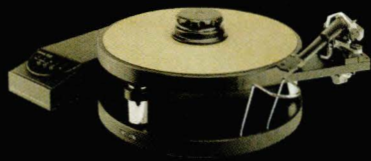
CARTRIDGE SPECS KEY **MM** Moving magnet cartridge – see amp and phono stage features to match this type. **MC** Moving coil cartridge – see amp and phono stage features to match this type.

REPLACEABLE STYLUS Some cartridges have separate styli for ease of replacement, but it compromises sound quality.

SME

The way to play vinyl ...

Model 10



Model 20/2



Model 30/2



Series M2



Series 300



Series IV



Series V



Make sure a BADA member is on your short-list.

You've set your budget, read the reviews and prepared your short-list. Now you're ready to listen! Your local BADA accredited dealer will be only too happy to help - with relaxed demonstration rooms, choice from the best products available and the knowledge to ensure you build your perfect system - you won't be crossing us off!



ABERDEEN	HOLBURN HI-FI	01224 585713
ASHFORD	SOUNDCRAFT HI-FI	01233 624441
BANBURY	OVERTURE	01295 272158
BASINGSTOKE	AUDIO T	01256 324311
BIRMINGHAM	MUSIC MATTERS	0121 429 2811
BISHOPS STORTFORD	AUDIO FILE	01279 506576
BOURNEMOUTH	MOVEMENT AUDIO	01202 529988
BOURNEMOUTH	SUTTONS HI-FI	01202 555512
BRACON ASH	BASICALLY SOUND	01508 570829
BRENTWOOD	AUDIO T	01277 234730
BRIGHTON	AUDIO T	01273 609431
BRISTOL	AUDIO EXCELLENCE	0117 926 4975
CAMBERLEY	AUDIO T	01276 685597
CARDIFF	AUDIO EXCELLENCE	029 2022 8565
CHANDLERS FORD	AUDIO T	023 8025 2827
CHELMSFORD	RAYLEIGH HI-FI	01245 265245
CHELTENHAM	AUDIO T	01242 583960
CHESTER	AUDIO EXCELLENCE	01244 345576
COVENTRY	FRANK HARVEY HI-FI	024 7652 5200
DARLINGTON	MUSIC MATTERS	01325 481418
EAST GRINSTEAD	AUDIO DESIGNS	01342 314569
EASTBOURNE	AUDIO T	01323 731336
ENFIELD	AUDIO T	020 8367 3132
EPSOM	AUDIO T	01372 748888
EXETER	AUDIO EXCELLENCE	01392 491194
GLASGOW	GLASGOW AUDIO	0141 332 4707
GUILDFORD	P J HI-FI	01483 504801
HAMPOLE, YORKS	HI-FI STUDIOS	01302 725550
HARROW	HARROW AUDIO	020 8863 0938
HATCH END	MUSIC MATTERS	020 8420 1925
HEREFORD	ENGLISH AUDIO	01432 355081
HIGH WYCOMBE	AUDIO T	01494 558585
HORSHAM	AUDIO DESIGNS	01403 267766
HOVE	POWERPLANT (HI-FI)	01273 775978
KINGSTON-ON-THAMES	INFIDELITY	020 8943 3530
LEEDS	IMAGE AUDIO	0113 278 9374
LEICESTER	CYMBIOSIS	0116 262 3754
LEICESTER	LEICESTER HI-FI	0116 253 9753
LONDON	AUDIO T	020 7794 7848
LONDON	BARTLETTS HI-FI	020 7607 2148
LONDON	BILLY VEE	020 8318 5755
LONDON	GRAHAMS HI-FI	020 7226 5500
LONDON	ORANGES AND LEMONS	020 7924 2040
MAIDSTONE	HOME MEDIA	01622 676703
NEW MALDEN, SURREY	UNILET	020 8942 9567
NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE	GLOBAL HI FI	0191 230 3600
NORWICH	MARTINS	01603 627010
NOTTINGHAM	NOTTINGHAM HI FI	0115 978 6919
OXFORD	AUDIO T	01865 765961
OXFORD	OXFORD AUDIO	01865 790879
POOLE	MOVEMENT AUDIO	01202 730865
PORTSMOUTH	AUDIO T	023 9266 3604
RAYLEIGH	RAYLEIGH HI-FI	01268 779762
READING	AUDIO T	0118 958 5463
SALISBURY	SALISBURY HI-FI	01722 322169
SHEFFIELD	MOORGATE ACOUSTICS	0114 275 6048
SOLIHULL	MUSIC MATTERS	0121 742 0254
SOUTHAMPTON	PHASE 3 HI FI	023 8022 8434
SOUTHEND-ON-SEA	RAYLEIGH HI-FI	01702 435255
STOURBRIDGE	MUSIC MATTERS	01384 444184
SUTTON COLDFIELD	MUSIC MATTERS	0121 354 2311
SWANSEA	AUDIO EXCELLENCE	01792 474608
SWINDON	AUDIO T	01793 538222
TUNBRIDGE WELLS	AUDIO T	01892 525666
WARRINGTON	CHRIS BROOKS AUDIO	01925 261212
WARRINGTON	DOUG BRADY HI-FI	01925 828009
WEYMOUTH	WEYMOUTH HI-FI	01305 785729
WORCESTER	AUDIO EXCELLENCE	01905 619059
WORTHING	PHASE 3 HI FI	01903 245577

www.bada.co.uk

Ask for details of this superb range:

SME LTD · STEYNING · SUSSEX · BN44 3GY · ENGLAND

tel: +44 (0)1903 814321 · fax: +44 (0)1903 814269

email: sales@sme.ltd.co.uk

or visit our website www.sme.ltd.co.uk

RADIO TUNERS

FM and DAB hi-fi separates



Radio is a fantastic musical resource that's in danger of being taken for granted, but whatever your tastes there's someone out there catering for it. If you haven't got a decent tuner hooked up to your hi-fi already, you're missing out!

DAB or FM?

Digital Audio Broadcasting (DAB) is now said to be available to more than 80 per cent of the population and the long-term plan is to switch public broadcasting over to digital entirely, but hardware prices have yet to come down to a point where this would be acceptable. Its advantages over FM include hiss-free reception, the potential for a wider range of stations and the ability to display comprehensive programming information. FM's RDS system means that station name and occasionally track titles are displayed, but the range of information is fairly limited.

Where FM scores over DAB is in the lower cost of hardware and the greater reception

area. It can also provide higher sound quality if reception conditions are favourable. Absolute sound quality judgements are muddled by the fact that you are listening to different forms of compression and processing at the studio for each station.

What is clear, however, is that there are more and more radio stations broadcasting on DAB that aren't available on FM. So if it's variety of programming you're after, they have a lot to offer.

RECEPTION

The quality of signal you feed a tuner will dictate its sound quality. So serious FM listeners should get a decent external aerial and connect it with as few junctions and splits as possible. Every time you split the cable (ie take a feed for another tuner) you halve signal strength! With DAB the same applies but get a DAB-specific aerial. See www.bbc.co.uk/digitalradio for details.

TOP BUYS



Denon TU260L II £130

The benchmark for all other budget FM/AM tuners, with great sound and features.



Denon TU-1800DAB £250

Combines DAB with FM/AM reception and good all-round design at a tempting price.



Creek T50 £550

A thoroughly accomplished AM/FM tuner with a substantial and detailed sound.



Magnum Dynalab MD 90T £1,195

FM tuner with valves – 'affordable' for an MD, but still streets ahead of most radios.

Our favourite TUNERS

BEST BUY EDITOR'S CHOICE

FM & DAB HI-FI SEPARATES

BADGE?	PRODUCT	£	COMMENTS	WAVEBANDS	PRESETS	RDS	REMOTE CONTROL	SIG. STRENGTH METER	ROT. TUNING KNOB	ISSUE NUMBER
FM TUNERS										
	Creek T50	550	Very fine results indeed with precision, polish and insight added to excellent basics	FM,M,L	128	● ● ● ●	● ● ● ●	● ● ● ●	● ● ● ●	251
	Denon TU-260L II	130	The return of the all-time favourite, now enhanced with RDS and sounding as fine as ever	FM,M,L	40		● ● ● ●	● ● ● ●	● ● ● ●	193
	Magnum Dynalab MD 90T	1,195	No remote or presets as standard, manual everything and valves... but its sound is simply sublime	FM	opt		opt	● ● ● ●	● ● ● ●	257
	Magnum Dynalab MD 102	2,200	Superb remote control analogue FM tuner delivers a superbly transparent sound that makes radio fun	FM	5		● ● ● ●	● ● ● ●	● ● ● ●	241
	NAD C422	180	Admirably free of roughness or other obvious nasties, with just a slight lack of clarity	FM,M	30	● ● ● ●		● ● ● ●	● ● ● ●	250
	Primare T21	600	A very fine tuner – bass and treble are both well extended and detail is excellent	FM	30	● ● ● ●		● ● ● ●	● ● ● ●	230
	Rega Radio 3	398	Unpretentious unit which does what it claims, very well. Unusually fine FM sound in all areas	FM,M	20		● ● ● ●		● ● ● ●	242
	Rotel RT-02	279	A highly competent tuner which always sounds appealing and fuss-free	FM,M	30	● ● ● ●		● ● ● ●	● ● ● ●	242
DAB TUNERS										
	Arcam DIVA DT91	450	As good as any on DAB, with serviceable FM, this one-box solution offers good build and value	DAB,FM	16			● ● ● ●	● ● ● ●	269
	Cambridge Audio DAB500	150	Very good sound, plus optional response tweaks, and slickest operation yet	DAB	10			● ● ● ●	● ● ● ●	248
	Cambridge Azur 640T	200	Slightly ahead of the pack in DAB performance, though FM is never better than decent	DAB,FM	60	● ● ● ●		● ● ● ●	● ● ● ●	260
	Denon TU-1800DAB	250	DAB reception is as good as any and FM performance clearly benefits from Denon's long experience	DAB,FM,M	200	● ● ● ●		● ● ● ●	● ● ● ●	274
	Pure Digital DRX-701ES	250	A good introduction to DAB – fine value and simple to use	DAB	99			● ● ● ●	● ● ● ●	234
	Pure Digital DRX-702ES	330	Very flexible DAB (inc L-band) and FM tuner. DAB is good, FM a touch disappointing	DAB,FM,M	99	● ● ● ●		● ● ● ●	● ● ● ●	242
	Sony ST-SDB900	200	Nicely designed UK-tuned model is a touch bright with both DAB and FM but generally insightful and clear	DAB,FM,M	60	● ● ● ●		● ● ● ●	● ● ● ●	259

SPECS KEY WAVEBANDS Which bands are supported: FM, M – medium wave, L – long wave, DAB – digital audio broadcasting. PRESETS How many stations can be stored in memory. RDS Radio Data System – station names and program titles can be displayed among other facilities (FM only, DAB has more comprehensive display potential). REMOTE CONTROL For the couch potato. SIGNAL STRENGTH METER Useful for setting up an aerial. ROTARY TUNING KNOB An ergonomic alternative to buttons.

AUDIO T & AUDIO EXCELLENCE have been selling hi-fi and home cinema equipment for over 65 years between us so there's no better place to go for unbiased advice and unrivalled expertise. Whether you need a two channel stereo system or a ten room distributed audio and video system, we have the expertise to do the job.

As members of the British Audio-Visual Dealers Association we have fully trained staff and always specify the best sounding products. We can even come round to your house and install the system for you to make sure it's working at its best. For more information please visit our websites.

audio T

www.audio-t.co.uk

Visit Audio T in: BASINGSTOKE BRENTWOOD
BRIGHTON CAMBERLEY CHELTENHAM
EASTBOURNE ENFIELD EPSOM HIGH WYCOMBE
LONDON: W. HAMPSTEAD OXFORD PORTSMOUTH
READING SOUTHAMPTON SWINDON
TUNBRIDGE WELLS

audio X
EXCELLENCE

www.audio-excellence.co.uk

Visit Audio Excellence in: BRISTOL
CARDIFF CHESTER SWANSEA
WORCESTER



Experience... the experience



FREE GUIDE

The New 2006 edition of "Music and Movies at Home - the Ultimate Guide" is waiting in store for you now. To get your FREE copy call in at your local store or freephone 0500 101501 (quote HFC06b) www.music-at-home.co.uk

Brands include: Arcam, Audiolab, B&W, Chord, Cyrus, Denon, Dynaudio, Focal, KEF, Linn, Meridian, M&K, Monitor Audio, NAD, Naim, Pioneer, PMC, ProAc, Quad, Rega, Rotel, Spendor, Tannoy, Totem, Velodyne, Wilson Benesch, Wharfedale, Yamaha and many more.



3 versions:
emotion
emotion signature
emotion silver signature

emotions revealed

art loudspeakers

tel/fax +44 (0)1292 319 416 | contact@loudspeaker-art.com | www.loudspeaker-art.com

DIGITAL AUDIO RECORDERS

CD, MiniDisc and hard drive recorders



MiniDisc

MD's strength is versatility. You can record and then re-record many times over. Editing facilities are second to none – you can erase mistakes, name tracks and re-order a disc's contents with a few simple button pushes, making it ideal for building compilations. They're pretty robust too.

Sound quality is below that of CD-R/CD-RW. The format uses a Sony-developed compression technology called ATRAC, which discards part of the data in order to squeeze it on the disc. If you're copying from CD to MD, the result tends to sound a little cold in comparison, lacking a degree of detail and ambience. But to most people it still sounds light years ahead of cassette – clean and hiss-free.

Recordable CD

With recordable CD you have a choice of two disc types: CD-R discs are the cheapest, but you can only record once; and CD-RW discs are a little more costly, but you can re-record on them *ad infinitum*.

Though the latest machines incorporate some useful editing facilities, CD-R/RW is not as flexible as MD. However, sound

quality is higher – if you're recording from a CD, the best models will give you a copy that is very close to the original. In terms of compatibility, most CD players will play back a CD-R disc, but older models might have trouble with CD-RW (though you can, of course, play the disc back on your own recorder). If you want to play a CD-R/RW on a DVD player, check for compatibility.

Hard drive

The latest contender on the digital recording scene is also the most flexible. Some HDD (hard disk drive) recorders can store whole music collections if you use a compression format such as MP3. HDD recorders are taking over from multisc CD changers as sound servers in multiroom installations, where their ability to play more than one piece of music at a time is a great boon. HDD also offers impressive editing facilities on a par with MD, and they can also record from CD (or to CD-R/RW) at high speed.

At present, sound quality isn't the driving force behind the format – flexibility and storage capacity being bigger issues – and a plain CD-R/RW machine will outperform an HDD recorder in fidelity terms.

TOP BUYS



Philips CDR802 £300

Multisc recorder that's slick and capable, albeit with a slightly flaky build.



Marantz DR6000 £400

Quality in a box – it eschews gimmickry, but it does a simple job very well.



Yamaha CDR-HD1300 £600

Combining hard disk with CD-R makes CD recording a whole lot more flexible.



Cambridge Audio Azur 640H £600

Rip and store CD tracks on hard disk, create playlists, connect to a PC and more.

Our favourite BEST BUY EDITOR'S CHOICE DIGITAL RECORDERS

CD-R/RW, MD and HDD recorders

BADGE?	PRODUCT	£	COMMENTS	SPECIFICATIONS			ISSUE NUMBER
				DECKS	HD CAPACITY (GB)	OPTICAL IN/OUTPUTS	
CD-R/RW RECORDERS							
	Marantz DR6000	400	No frills, but in its fundamentals this is one of the finest CD recorders on the market	1		● ●	233
	NAD C660	500	Audiophile twin deck offering high-speed copying, HDCD replay and notably fine recording from analogue	2		● ●	243
	Philips CDR802	300	Tacky looks and build notwithstanding, this is a well-equipped and technically sound 3-to-1 autochanger/recorder at a good price	2		● ●	233
	Philips CDR951	380	An improvement on previous models, it delivers the musical goods in some style	1		● ●	205
	Pioneer PDR-609	270	Classic CD recorder with outstandingly good sound for the money on both record and replay	1		● ●	243
	Pioneer PDR-W839	350	Good-quality twin CD burner makes recordings that can be hard to distinguish from the original. Good value too	1		● ●	218
MD RECORDERS							
	Pioneer MJ-D508	200	Well equipped, but musically sleep-inducing player that receives its Recommendation owing to the price	1		● ●	205
	Sony MDS-JE480	130	Straightforward and effective, but the three real killer features are price, price and price	1		●	233
HDD RECORDERS							
	Cambridge Audio Azur 640H	600	Not so much a HDD recorder, more a complete audio computer and nerve centre in one useful box. Complex, but worth it	1	160	● ●	276
	Imerge S2000	1,599	Intended as the centrepiece of a multi-room installation, this three-output server combines flexibility with good sound	2	80	● ●	243
	Yamaha CDR-HD1300	600	Superb combination of high-speed CD-RW drive and hard disk, adding editing flexibility to CD recording	2	80	● ●	276

SPECS KEY **DECKS** Amount of drive mechanisms on board – twin-deck recorders use one to play while the other records. **HD CAPACITY** Amount of gigabytes of storage capacity, for HD only. **OPTICAL IN/OUTPUTS** Optical Toslink in and outputs for digital connection to a CD player or DAC. **ELEC IN/OUTPUTS** Electrical coaxial in and outputs for digital connection to a CD player or DAC.

SEVENOAKS

SOUND & VISION

Winter Sale Now On!

Save £s in our fabulous Winter Sale. For information on all the latest offers, visit www.ssav.com or call your nearest store on Freephone **0800 587 9909**

NEW STORES LOUGHTON & YEOVIL

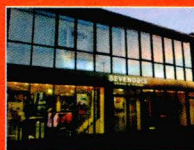
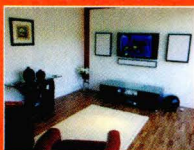
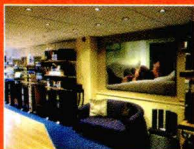
We are pleased to announce that these new stores are now open: -

LOUGHTON

7-9 GOLDINGS HILL • 020 8532 0770

YEOVIL

14 SILVER STREET • 01935 700078



Specialist hi-fi & home cinema

Contemporary hi-fi is constantly setting new standards in sound reproduction and design. Whatever you listen to, Sevenoaks can recommend separate components that will bring your music collection to life and complement your home. We're enthusiasts and experts, passionate about helping you build (or upgrade) a system that will delight for years to come.

The recent growth of DVD has led to a huge rise in demand for home cinema equipment - DVD players, AV receivers, projectors and plasma screens but, with so many options, it's not easy to know which ones will suit your needs. Indeed, in the face of this quickly evolving and often bemusing array of products, we aim to assist you in assembling a home cinema system to be proud of - one that achieves outstanding picture and sound quality.



WHAT HI-FI? SOUND AND VISION AWARDS 2005
PRODUCT OF THE YEAR
STANDARD CATEGORY
ROTEL RA-01

Rotel

The 02 Series is Rotel's entry-level range. The RCD-02 CD player combined with either an RA-01, RA-02 or RA-03 integrated amplifier represents true audiophile performance at an affordable price. For increased high-end performance, the RC-03/RB-3 pre/power amplifiers are available. The RT-02 tuner completes the range.



WHAT HI-FI? SOUND AND VISION AWARDS 2005
TURNTABLES
BEST SOUNDING MODEL £100
PROJECT B001T II

Roksan

Roksan designs and manufactures some of the most acclaimed hi-fi equipment currently available. All Roksan products are carefully evaluated by experienced engineers at every stage of the design process with the emphasis on performance and build quality.

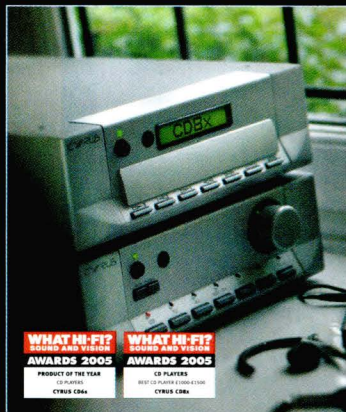
Audiolab NEW 8000 Series

Audiolab's new 8000 series offers a definitive and genuine hi-fidelity performance from a no-nonsense approach to engineering. These famous products have all been re-engineered to create a complete two channel range, including the 8000S, 8000Q, 8000M and 8000P models plus a all new CD player. A 7.1 channel pre and power amplifier completes the range.



Project

Project is currently one of the world's leading suppliers of turntables, with a range of models designed to satisfy all levels of expectation and budget. The range is simple to use, maintenance free and will function for a lifetime.



WHAT HI-FI? SOUND AND VISION AWARDS 2005
PRODUCT OF THE YEAR
CD PLAYER
CYPUS C044

WHAT HI-FI? SOUND AND VISION AWARDS 2005
CD PLAYERS
BEST CD PLAYER £1000-£2000
CYPUS C044

Cyrus

If you've enjoyed listening to music before, try listening to it through a Cyrus system. With every product tuned by ear, Cyrus represents a quality of sound, which is rare at any price. Invest in a Cyrus system and you'll be rewarded with a wealth of sound you wouldn't have thought possible.



B&W

The focus of Bowers and Wilkins Loudspeakers has always been to offer the best possible musical experience. With a combination of the latest R&D techniques and a passion for music, B&W produces a diverse range of products befitting the largest audio manufacturer in the UK.

B&W MINI THEATRE MT-30

"Talented, covetable and worth every penny, the MT-30 (and PV1 especially) could well be heading for iconic status."

WHAT HI-FI? SOUND AND VISION AWARDS 2005
★★★★★
SEPTEMBER 2005



WHAT HI-FI? SOUND AND VISION AWARDS 2005
SUBWOOFERS
BEST SUBWOOFER £500-£1000
B&W PV1

WHAT HI-FI? SOUND AND VISION AWARDS 2005
PRODUCT OF THE YEAR
(COMPACT SPEAKER PACKAGES)
B&W MT-30

WHAT HI-FI? SOUND AND VISION AWARDS 2005
COMPACT SPEAKER PACKAGES
BEST COMPACT SPEAKER £1000-£2000
B&W MT-30



WHAT HI-FI??
AWARDS 2004
BEST STEREO SPEAKERS
C500-C500
Quad 11L

Quad

Founded in 1938, Quad's history is one of audio excellence. Today's range includes both electronics and speaker systems.



WHAT HI-FI??
AWARDS 2005
PRODUCT OF THE YEAR
BEST DOCKING STATION
MONITOR AUDIO I-DECK

Monitor Audio

Since 1972 Monitor Audio has been developing and perfecting the implementation of metal drivers, innovative crossovers, and exemplary speaker cabinet construction and finish to further the ideal of achieving sound which is to the original "as close as it gets". The range includes - **GOLD, SILVER RS, BRONZE** and **RADIUS** speakers, plus the exciting new **i-Deck** docking station, an excellent any-room companion for your iPod.



Silver RS1

WHAT HI-FI??
AWARDS 2005
★★★★★
OCTOBER 2005

Digital Radio

With Digital Audio Broadcasting (DAB) capability, these high-quality tuners deliver more stations and offers pure, distortion-free, CD-like sound, while providing useful radio and data services.



WHAT HI-FI??
AWARDS 2005
PRODUCT OF THE YEAR
BEST PACKAGE
MONITOR AUDIO RS6 AV



Pure DRX702ES & NEW Denon TU-1800DAB

WHAT HI-FI??
AWARDS 2005
BEST DIGITAL TUNER
DENON TU-1800 DAB

Wharfedale

Diamond 9.1
"Wharfedale has been updating and tweaking its Diamonds for 20 years - and rough they're not! Tight bass, clear midband, and sparkling treble for not a lot of cash."



WHAT HI-FI??
AWARDS 2005
BEST STEREO SPEAKER UNDER £200
WHARFEDALE DIAMOND 9.1



Diamond SW150
"Considering the price, the detail and definition to the bass are controlled and cohesive - equally adept with movies and music."

WHAT HI-FI??
AWARDS 2005
BEST SUBWOOFER UNDER £100
WHARFEDALE DIAMOND SW150

KEF

Replacing the highly successful Q Series, KEF's New iQ line-up comprises eight models from the entry-level iQ1 bookshelf to the impressive iQ9 floorstander. All models incorporate KEF's Uni-Q driver technology and are available in a variety of finishes.



WHAT HI-FI??
AWARDS 2004
BEST HOME CINEMA IN A BOX OVER £100
KEF KIT 100

Other KEF ranges include XQ, KHT and the Award-winning KIT100 Home cinema system.

KEF KIT100 "Creating a virtual surround sound experience has never been simpler or more effective, thanks to this two speakers plus subwoofer concoction from KEF."

Acoustic Energy

Established in 1987, Acoustic Energy is one of Britain's premier loudspeaker manufacturers offering one of the most targeted range of hi-fi and home cinema loudspeaker systems on the market today.

"The legendary AE1 lives on in this groundbreaking new version... It sets a new standard for small speakers."



WHAT HI-FI??
AWARDS 2004
BEST STEREO SPEAKERS OVER £200
Acoustic Energy AE1



KEF iQ55
"The iQ55s are little stars, providing stunning scale and authority from discreetly sized towers... The iQ55s are fully deserving Products of the Year."

WHAT HI-FI??
AWARDS 2005
PRODUCT OF THE YEAR
BEST SPEAKER
KEF iQ55



KEF KHT1005
"The KHT1005 is an ideal first-time buy, and will suit those looking to 'downsize' to a more living-room friendly style of speaker."

WHAT HI-FI??
AWARDS 2005
BEST COMPACT SPEAKER
KEF KHT 1005



WHAT HI-FI??
AWARDS 2005
BEST DVD PLAYER UNDER £100
ARCAM DVA 5000

WHAT HI-FI??
AWARDS 2004
BEST MULTICHANNEL RECEIVER UNDER £1000
ARCAM AVE250

Arcam

Arcam has spent more than a generation building some of the finest high-fidelity products the world has ever seen. Whether you're interested in two-channel or a complete multi-channel AV system, the Arcam DIVA series offers the music and movie lover the most complete range of high-performance home entertainment solutions from any specialist manufacturer.



Arcam Solo Music System
"Excellent all-round sound combined with the convenience of a one-box product."

WHAT HI-FI??
AWARDS 2005
PRODUCT OF THE YEAR
ALL-IN-ONE SPEAKER
ARCAM SOLO

Marantz

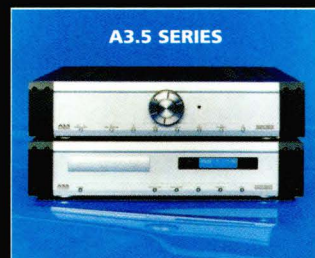
Marantz is introducing a host of new products ranging from high-end hi-fi to HD-ready DVD players and AV receivers. The two main products groups are the 'premium' and 'range' series.

The SR9600THX Ultra2 AV receiver offers seven channels, each 140w, and features HDMI inputs. The groundbreaking DV9600 is one of the first DVD players capable of upscaling images to 1080p and is fully prepared for the high-definition future.



NEW MARANTZ SR9600 AV RECEIVER

CRIME CINEMA
Best Buy
AWARDS



A3.5 SERIES

Musical Fidelity

Musical Fidelity's A3.5 Series amplifier, using circuitry closely related to A5's, and upsampling CD player combine high end performance, visuals and finish at a competitive price.

PLEASE NOTE Some products/brands are not available at all stores. Please call to confirm or visit our website before travelling. Special Offers and Sale Offers - Not in conjunction with any other offer. Advert valid until at least 09/02/2006, E&OE.

Winter Sale Now On!

Save £s in our fabulous Winter Sale. Visit www.ssav.com or call your nearest store on Freephone 0800 587 9909 for the latest prices and information.

Denon

Denon, Japan's oldest audio company, has established an enviable reputation for the performance of both its hi-fi and home cinema products, winning numerous awards and accolades over the years. Its stylish systems have succeeded in becoming the benchmark by which all other are judged.

WHAT HI-FI? SOUND AND VISION AWARDS 2005
PRODUCT OF THE YEAR
BEST DVD PLAYER
DENON DVD-19XV

WHAT HI-FI? SOUND AND VISION AWARDS 2005
SURROUND AMPS/RECEIVERS
BEST SURROUND RECEIVER
DENON AVR-1900

WHAT HI-FI? SOUND AND VISION AWARDS 2005
TECHNOLOGY
DENON DVD-19XV & DENON AVR-1900



Smart Life S-301



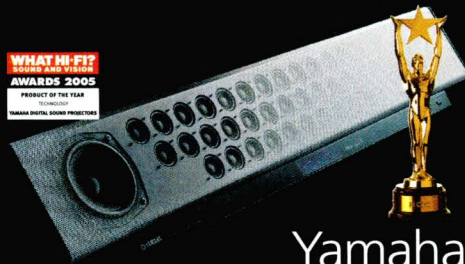
WHAT HI-FI? SOUND AND VISION AWARDS 2005
PRODUCT OF THE YEAR
BEST ALL-IN-ONE SYSTEM
DENON SMART LIFE S-301



DVD-A1XV "The most obvious winner of any category this year has to be Denon's evolutionary step in DVD deck design, the landmark DVD-A1XV... An astonishing piece of kit that has no equals."

AVC-A1XV "It's not often we can't find fault with a product, but as we said in our review, "It not only expands the home cinema envelope, it shreds it and then nukes it for good measure." HOME CINEMA CHOICE - AWARDS 2005

WHAT HI-FI? SOUND AND VISION AWARDS 2005
PRODUCT OF THE YEAR
YAMAHA DIGITAL SOUND PROCESSOR



Yamaha

Yamaha is recognised as a world leader in the fields of musical instruments and audio equipment, and in more recent years, home cinema. New models for 2005 include upgraded AV receivers, amplifiers, and DVD players plus the innovative YSP-1 virtual surround speaker.



WHAT HI-FI? SOUND AND VISION AWARDS 2005
BEST DVD PLAYER
YAMAHA DVD-S2500



WHAT HI-FI? SOUND AND VISION AWARDS 2005
PRODUCT OF THE YEAR
YAMAHA DSP-AZ757SE



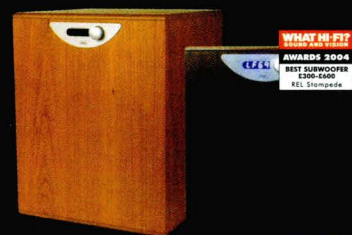
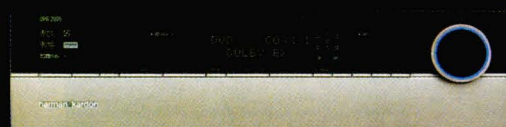
WHAT HI-FI? SOUND AND VISION AWARDS 2005
SURROUND AMPS/RECEIVERS
BEST SURROUND RECEIVER
YAMAHA RX-V4600

YAMAHA'S DVD-S2500, DSP-AZ757SE & RX-V4600

Harman/Kardon

Harman/Kardon's high quality audio, audio/visual and multi-room products are more than just boxes with knobs on, they are declarations of passion for music and movies. Producing pure, realistic sound with ever smarter engineering and simpler design,

Harman/Kardon products delight both the audio purist and the film lover around the world. We invite you to experience the unique combination of artistry and engineering that is Harman/Kardon.



WHAT HI-FI? AWARDS 2004
BEST SUBWOOFER
£200-£500
REL Stampede

REL

In a market packed with subwoofers claiming to deliver the ultimate bass experience, only one brand of sub-bass system can prove its supremacy. With a record of review success stretching back over a decade, REL is acknowledged as the leading provider of deep, clean bass frequencies.



M&K

Enjoy cinema as the director intended with a speaker system that is genuinely designed for surround sound. Every Miller & Kreisel surround sound system is designed around the highest quality centre speaker available and partnered with two identical main speakers, producing seamless panning across the front soundstage, combined with remarkable clarity and effortless dynamics.

WHAT HI-FI? AWARDS 2005
BEST SURROUND SYSTEM

Onkyo

"A Dinky design that offers a vigorous listen, plus reassuringly solid build... Onkyo's CR-505DAB is a fab buy."



Onkyo DS-A1 iPod Connector Dock

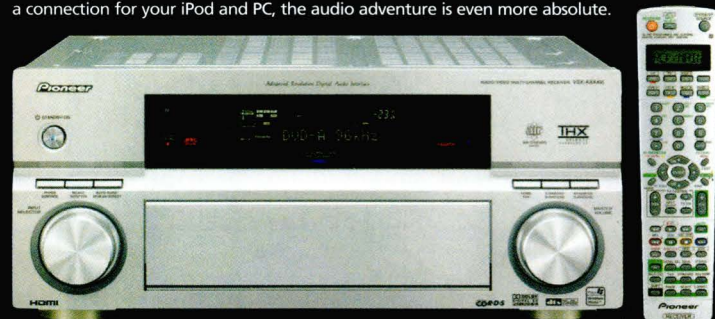
WHAT HI-FI? AWARDS 2005
BEST iPod CONNECTOR DOCK
ONKYO DS-A1



WHAT HI-FI? AWARDS 2005
ALL-IN-ONE SYSTEM
BEST ALL-IN-ONE SYSTEM FOR DVD
ONKYO CR-505DAB

Pioneer

Pioneer's AV amplifiers and receivers are sound-tuned by the world-famous Air Studios to perfectly recreate the natural sound and energy of the original performance. The result is powerful, pure and crisp. Coupled with HDMI and iLink digital connectivity, as well as a connection for your iPod and PC, the audio adventure is even more absolute.



DVD Recorders

Although making digital recordings of TV broadcasts isn't new, the choice, versatility and quality of recorders keep getting better. Our product selection includes DVD only, hybrid DVD/hard-disk and multi-format models.



WHAT HI-FI? SOUND AND VISION AWARDS 2005
DVD & HARD-DISK RECORDERS
BEST DVD RECORDER
PANASONIC DMR-E15

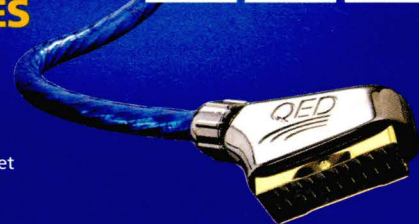
ESSENTIAL ACCESSORIES

The right accessories can make or break your system. Our carefully selected range, including QED, SOUNDSTYLE and GRADO, will ensure you get the very best performance from your system.

WHAT HI-FI? AWARDS 2005
CABLE
BEST TV CABLE (100')
QED SUPER TV

WHAT HI-FI? AWARDS 2005
PRODUCT OF THE YEAR
HIFI
QED SILVER ANNIVERSARY 2T

WHAT HI-FI? AWARDS 2005
CABLE
BEST SPEAKING CABLE
QED SUPER FILL



£ PRICING POLICY

We always try to ensure our prices are highly competitive. In the event you can find the same products and excellent service at a lower price, please bring it to our store managers' attention.

FLEXIBLE FINANCE OPTIONS*

Spread the cost of buying. Flexible finance options are available on the majority of products we stock. *Written details on request. Licensed credit brokers. Minimum balance £400. Subject to status.

PLEASE NOTE Some products/brands are not available at all stores. Please call to confirm or visit our website before travelling. Special Offers and Sale Offers - Not in conjunction with any other offer. Advert valid until at least 09/02/2006, E&OE.



Specialist home cinema

At the heart of any home cinema is its screen: Sevenoaks Sound & Vision can put you in the picture with a selection of flat-panel displays and projection systems. LCD and plasma screens are just a few centimetres thick and come in sizes from a 13inch portable to over 60inches.



Sharp Aquos

Only Sharp Aquos LCD TV offers so much perfection. With supreme styling, the appeal of the Aquos range is obvious. The Titanium Series combines Sharp's sixth-generation LCD panel with stunning, angular-styling, titanium colour-finish and superb build quality to produce a premium class of LCD idTVs

TITANIUM SERIES LC-45GD1E LCD TV with integrated FREEVIEW

"Sharp's mammoth 45in LCD TV is a testament to the growing viability and performance of large-scale LCD. Its 1,920 x 1,080 resolution panel allows high-definition pictures to be viewed without compromise and when exploited to its full potential, the results could see this screen hung in a gallery. Images are so crisp and sharp, it almost makes reality look dull. We think it's inspirational. Go pay homage." **HOME CINEMA CHOICE • AWARDS 2005**

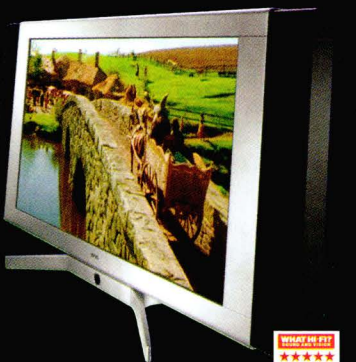
FREEVIEW channel and service subject to coverage. Aerial upgrade may be required.

Loewe

Concept L32 32" LCD TV

With its minimalist, functional design, slim profile and ease of operation, the Concept L32 exudes all of the classic Loewe virtues.

"This HD Ready set boasts 1366x768 resolution and plenty of inputs, including HDMI, component video and two Scarts. It also packs an integrated digital TV tuner, and - as ever with Loewe sets - its speaker set-up is a cut above most rivals... The Concept L32 is immensely attractive: it deserves to sell very well indeed."



WHAT HI-FI? AWARDS 2005
★★★★★



32WLT58 LCD TV

"All in all, this is a great set. The twin HDMI inputs lift it a step above the current competition, while the performance could easily grace something far costlier."

WHAT VIDEO • XMAS 2005 #301

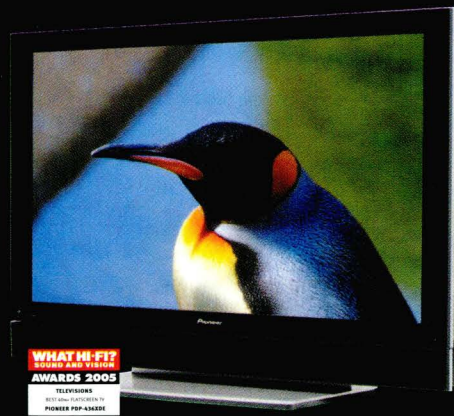
BEST What Video AWARDS BUY

Toshiba LCD TV

These super-slim screens will take your breath away. Each model has been moulded from a stunning blend of cutting-edge design and state-of-the-art technology to create the ultimate audio-visual sensation. The collection comprises LCD screen technology, offering unrivalled combinations of image quality and sophistication and a variety of screen sizes and options, including integrated digital tuner

SEVENOAKS

SOUND & VISION



Pioneer

Following its highly successful '5' series, Pioneer has unveiled its sixth generation of plasma TVs. The 43" PDP-436XDE and 50" PDP-506XDE models include built-in digital tuners plus dual HDMI inputs.

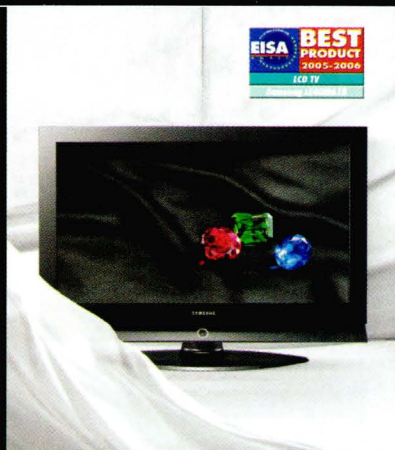
PDP-436XDE PLASMA TV

"Pioneer's latest is also its greatest: this is a truly wonderful HD-Ready TV."

WHAT HI-FI? AWARDS 2005
★★★★★

Samsung Milano LE40M61B 40" LCD TV

Samsung's New 40" LCD TV (LE40M61B) was honored with an EISA award for its premium display technology in terms of contrast ratio (5000:1), color expression (6.44 billion colors, 92% color gamut for NTSC), viewing angle (178°) and response time (8 ms). Also the model's simple body design focuses the viewer's attention on the screen. On the front of the minimalist design, the speakers are hidden from view in the bottom bezel and nothing distracts from the superb image quality



EISA BEST PRODUCT 2005-2006 LCD TV

Panasonic Viera

There seems little doubt that the future of television is flat, and the future of flat is the award-winning VIERA range from the world leaders in screen technology, Panasonic. The VIERA range consists of both LCD and Plasma televisions. New additions to the range include 37, 42 & 50in PV500 models with support for both high-definition and MPEG-4 recording.



TH42PV500 PLASMA TV

"All told, Panasonic's new TH42PV500 is a stunning set that's clearly the new class leader."

WHAT HI-FI? AWARDS 2005
★★★★★

WHAT HI-FI? AWARDS 2005
★★★★★

WHAT HI-FI? AWARDS 2005
★★★★★

Winter Sale Now On!

Save £s in our fabulous Winter Sale. Visit www.ssav.com or call your nearest store on Freephone 0800 587 9909 for the latest prices and information.



Projection

If you'd prefer to measure your screen-size in feet, how about one of the new generation of projectors? The latest designs are delivering superb results at increasingly affordable prices... and they're more home friendly than previous projectors, too.

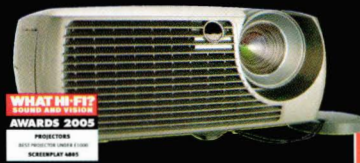


SP7210

"The new projector's picture is just phenomenal... Looks like ScreenPlay's success story is set to continue."

ScreenPlay

From the worldwide leader in digital projection technology and solutions, InFocus® ScreenPlay™ DLP™ projectors are changing the face of home cinema offering market-beating performance, specification and value at every price point.



SP4805

"Another stunning success from ScreenPlay - there's never been a better time to take the big-screen plunge."

Sim2

Sim2 Multimedia is a world-leading manufacturer at the forefront of home cinema technology and a name synonymous with high-end home cinema projection.

HT300E "Spectacular, in a word... Another terrific projector from Italy's finest."
WHAT VIDEO • ISSUE 292



Themescene

Since its launch, the multi-award winning ThemeScene™ brand has rapidly established a five-star reputation for uncompromised image quality.

H30A "There are so many good points it's hard to know where to start... Just how much better can budget DLP projectors get?!"
WHAT VIDEO • ISSUE 292



The **iScan™ VP30** is a high-definition video processor and AV hub that converts standard or high definition from your DVD player, VCR, PVR, HD set top box, game console, or PC to any output resolution between 480p and 1080p, including popular HDTV resolutions such as 720p and 1080i.

£ PRICING POLICY

We always try to ensure our prices are highly competitive. In the event you can find the same products and excellent service at a lower price, please bring it to our store managers' attention.

FLEXIBLE FINANCE OPTIONS*

Spread the cost of buying. Flexible finance options are available on the majority of products we stock. *Written details on request. Licensed credit brokers. Minimum balance £400. Subject to status.

PLEASE NOTE

Some products/brands are not available at all stores. Please call to confirm or visit our website before travelling. Special Offers and Sale Offers - Not in conjunction with any other offer. Advert valid until at least 09/02/2006, E&OE.

Product Selection

Listed below is a small selection of our extensive product range. **Please note:** Some products/brands are not available at all stores. Please call to confirm or see the brand locator at www.ssav.com before travelling.

TURNTABLES

Goldring GR2	£ SALE	£ SALE
Linn RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Michell RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Project RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Roksan Radius 5	£ SALE	£ SALE

TUNERS

Arcam RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Cyrus FM X	£ SALE	£ SALE
Denon TU260L MKII	£ SALE	£ SALE
Harman Kardon RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Linn RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Marantz RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Pure DRX-701ES DAB	£ SALE	£ SALE
Pure DRX-702ES DAB/FM	£ SALE	£ SALE
Rotel RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE

CD PLAYERS

Arcam RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Audiolab RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Cyrus RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Denon DCD485	£ SALE	£ SALE
Linn RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Marantz RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Meridian RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Musical Fidelity RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
NAD RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Quad RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Roksan RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Rotel RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE

CD RECORDERS

Yamaha CDR-HD1500	£ SALE	£ SALE
-------------------	--------	--------

AMPLIFIERS

Arcam RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Audiolab RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Cyrus RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Denon PMA355	£ SALE	£ SALE
Linn RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Marantz RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Meridian RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Musical Fidelity RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
NAD RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Quad RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Roksan RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Rotel RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Yamaha AX396	£ SALE	£ SALE

HI-FI SPEAKERS

Acoustic Energy Aegis Evo One	£ SALE	£ SALE
Acoustic Energy Aegis Evo Three	£ SALE	£ SALE
Acoustic Energy Aelite RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Acoustic Energy AE1 MKIII	£ SALE	£ SALE
AVI Neutron IV	£ SALE	£ SALE
B&W RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
KEF RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Linn RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Meridian RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Mission RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Monitor Audio RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Quad RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Ruark RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Wharfedale RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE

HI-FI SYSTEMS

Arcam Solo Ex Speakers	£ SALE	£ SALE
Denon RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Linn Klassik Music Ex Spks	£ SALE	£ SALE
Monitor Audio i-Deck	£ SALE	£ SALE
Onkyo CR505DAB Ex Spks	£ SALE	£ SALE
Teac RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Yamaha CRX-M170 Ex Spks	£ SALE	£ SALE

DVD SYSTEMS

Denon RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
KEF KIT100 Inc Speakers	£ SALE	£ SALE
Teac RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE

MULTI-ROOM AUDIO

Cyrus Link RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Living Control RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Yamaha MusicCast RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE

DVD PLAYERS

MAKE & MODEL	REGION 2	MULTI REGION
Arcam RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Cyrus RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Denon RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Denon DVD-A1XV	£ SALE	£ SALE
Harman Kardon RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE

Marantz RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Meridian RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Panasonic RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Pioneer RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Samsung DVD-HD950	£ SALE	£ SALE
Toshiba SD350	£ SALE	£ SALE
Yamaha RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE

DVD RECORDERS

MAKE & MODEL	REGION 2	MULTI REGION
Panasonic RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Pioneer RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE

AV AMPLIFIERS & RECEIVERS

Arcam RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Audiolab RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Cyrus RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Denon AVC-A1XV AV Amplifier	£ SALE	£ SALE
Denon RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Harman Kardon RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Lexicon RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Marantz RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Onkyo RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Pioneer VSX-1014s AV Receiver	£ SALE	£ SALE
Pioneer VSX-2014i AV Receiver	£ SALE	£ SALE
Pioneer VSX-AX5Ai AV Receiver	£ SALE	£ SALE
Pioneer VSA-AX10Ai AV Amplifier	£ SALE	£ SALE
Pioneer NEW RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Rotel RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Yamaha DSP-AX757SE AV Amplifier	£ SALE	£ SALE
Yamaha RX-V357 AV Receiver	£ SALE	£ SALE
Yamaha RX-V557 AV Receiver	£ SALE	£ SALE

AV SPEAKERS & PACKAGES

Acoustic Energy Evo 3B	£ SALE	£ SALE
Artcoustic RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Audica RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
B&W RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
B&W Mini Theatre RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
KEF KHT1005	£ SALE	£ SALE
KEF KHT2005.2	£ SALE	£ SALE
KEF Q7 AV	£ SALE	£ SALE
M&K RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Mission M Cube	£ SALE	£ SALE
Mission Elegante RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Monitor Audio RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Mordaunt Short Genie	£ SALE	£ SALE
Quad L-Series	£ SALE	£ SALE
Wharfedale Diamond 9 HCP	£ SALE	£ SALE
Yamaha YSP RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE

SUBWOOFERS

B&W RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
M&K RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
MJ Acoustics RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Monitor Audio RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Quad L Series	£ SALE	£ SALE
REL RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Wharfedale Diamond SW150	£ SALE	£ SALE

PLASMA

Fujitsu RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Hitachi RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
LG RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Loewe RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Panasonic RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Pioneer PDP436XDE 43"	£ SALE	£ SALE
Pioneer PDP506XDE 50"	£ SALE	£ SALE
Samsung RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE

LCD TV

Hitachi RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
LG RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Loewe RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Panasonic RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Philips RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Samsung RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Sharp Aquos RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Toshiba RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE

PROJECTORS

Optoma RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Screenplay RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
ScreenPlay SP5700 (REFURBISHED, LAST FEW)	£ SALE	£ SALE
Sharp RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Sim 2 RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE
Sim 2 C3X	£ SALE	£ SALE
ThemeScene RANGE	£ SALE	£ SALE

ACCESSORIES

We have a wide range of Accessories from QED, Soundstyle, Grado, Goldring and more...

Who are Sevenoaks?

Established as Sevenoaks Hi-Fi in 1972, we have grown steadily onto one of the leading independent home entertainment specialists in the UK, earning a reputation for outstanding service, choice and value for money. In 1995, reflecting our commitment to the emergent new technologies in home cinema, our name was changed to Sevenoaks Sound & Vision. We now have 49 stores across the land stocking a broad range of exceptional equipment and accessories.

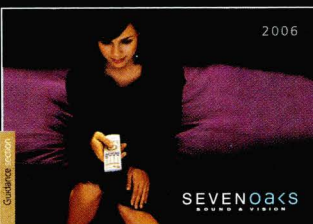
How to shop at Sevenoaks

When it comes to making big decisions about what to buy, there's no substitute for actually road-testing your prospective purchases - seeing, hearing and experiencing the products in action, with the benefit of our expert knowledge and guidance to help you choose.

Hi-Fi & Home Cinema Guide

New 2006 Edition

Pick-up a copy of our new **68 Page Guide** at your nearest Sevenoaks Sound & Vision store or order a copy via our Website. The brochure will be posted to you (UK mainland addresses only) **FREE OF CHARGE**.



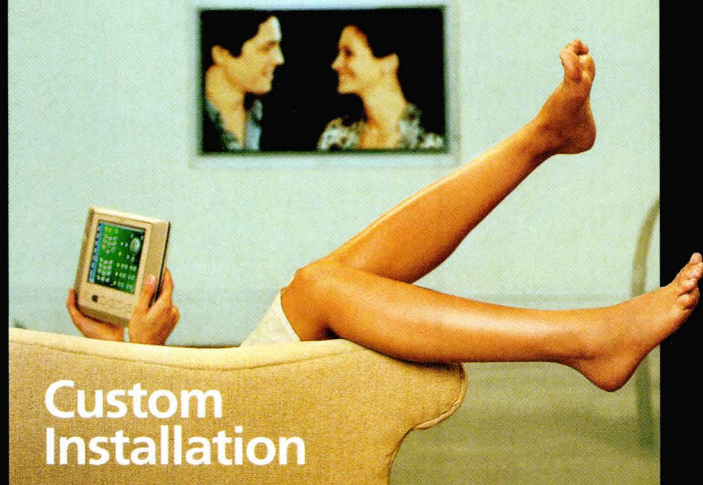
New Sevenoaks Website

The fully re-designed Sevenoaks Sound & Vision website has news and information on the Sevenoaks group and detailed pages to help you locate your nearest store. You will find all our fabulous **WINTER SALE** offers and, in addition, hundreds of **STOCK CLEARANCE** items available from our stores nationwide.

To find out more, just click on www.ssav.com

WITH OUR CUSTOM DESIGNED INSTALLATIONS, your home entertainment choices become as convenient as they are clever. We can help transform every room and every home, whatever your requirements and budget.

Our installation experts are trained to the highest standards in all areas and provide a prompt, reliable and totally professional service. Rest assured also that our commitment to service doesn't end once your equipment is in place. Sevenoaks staff will continue to support you and your kit long after your initial visit to one of our stores.



Custom
Installation

SEVENOAKS

SOUND & VISION

NATIONWIDE STORE GUIDE

ABERDEEN 01224 252797

● 57 CROWN STREET *OPEN SUNDAY*

BEDFORD 01234 272779

● 29-31 ST PETERS STREET

BRIGHTON 01273 733338

● 57 WESTERN ROAD, HOVE

BRISTOL 0117 974 3727

● 92B WHITELADIES ROAD, CLIFTON

BROMLEY 020 8290 1988

● 39A EAST STREET

CAMBRIDGE 01223 304770

● 17 BURLEIGH STREET

CARDIFF 029 2047 2899

● 104-106 ALBANY ROAD

CHELSEA 020 7352 9466

● 403 KINGS ROAD

CHELTENHAM 01242 241171

● 14 PITTVILLE STREET

CRAWLEY 01293 510777

● 32 THE BOULEVARD

CROYDON 020 8665 1203

● 369-373 LONDON ROAD

EALING 020 8579 8777

● 24 THE GREEN *OPEN SUNDAY*

EDINBURGH 0131 229 7267

● 5 THE GRASSMARKET

EPSOM 01372 720720

● 12 UPPER HIGH STREET *OPEN SUNDAY*

EXETER 01392 218895

● 28 COWICK STREET

GLASGOW 0141 332 9655

● 88 GREAT WESTERN ROAD *OPEN SUNDAY*

GUILDFORD 01483 536666

● 73B NORTH STREET

HOLBORN 020 7837 7540

● 144-148 GRAYS INN ROAD

HULL 01482 587171

● 1 SAVILE ROW, SAVILE STREET *OPEN SUNDAY*

KINGSTON 020 8547 0717

● 43 FIFE ROAD *OPEN SUNDAY*

LEEDS 0113 245 2775

● 62 NORTH STREET *OPEN SUNDAY*

LEICESTER 0116 253 6567

● 10 LOSEBY LANE

LINCOLN 01522 527397

● 20-22 CORPORATION STREET (*OFF HIGH STREET*)

LOUGHTON 020 8532 0770 **NEW**

● 7-9 GOLDINGS HILL

MAIDSTONE 01622 686366

● 96 WEEK STREET

MANCHESTER 0161 831 7969

● 69 HIGH ST, CITY CENTRE

NEWCASTLE 0191 221 2320

● 19 NEWGATE STREET

NORWICH 01603 767605

● 29-29A ST GILES STREET

NOTTINGHAM 0115 911 2121

● 597-599 MANSFIELD ROAD, SHERWOOD

OXFORD 01865 241773

● 41 ST CLEMENTS STREET

PETERBOROUGH 01733 897697

● 36-38 PARK ROAD *OPEN SUNDAY*

PLYMOUTH 01752 226011

● 107 CORNWALL STREET

POOLE 01202 671677

● LATIMER HOUSE, 44-46 HIGH STREET

PRESTON 01772 825777

● 40-41 LUNE STREET *OPEN SUNDAY*

READING 0118 959 7768

● 3-4 KINGS WALK SHOPPING CENTRE

SEVENOAKS 01732 459555

● 109-113 LONDON ROAD

SHEFFIELD 0114 255 5861

● 635 QUEENS ROAD, HEELEY *OPEN SUNDAY*

SOLI HULL 0121 733 3727

● 149-151 STRATFORD ROAD

SOUTHAMPTON 023 8033 7770

● 33 LONDON ROAD *OPEN SUNDAY*

SOUTHGATE 020 8886 2777

● 77 CHASE SIDE

STAINES 01784 460777

● 4 THAMES STREET *OPEN SUNDAY*

SWINDON 01793 610992

● 8-9 COMMERCIAL ROAD

SWISS COTTAGE 020 7722 9777

● 21 NORTHWAYS PDE, FINCHLEY RD *OPEN SUNDAY*

TUNBRIDGE WELLS 01892 531543

● 28-30 ST JOHNS ROAD

WATFORD 01923 213533

● 478 ST ALBANS ROAD

WEYBRIDGE 01932 828525

● 43 CHURCH STREET, THE QUADRANT

WITHAM (ESSEX) 01376 501733

● 1 THE GROVE CENTRE

WOLVERHAMPTON 01902 312225

● 29-30 CLEVELAND STREET

YEOVIL 01935 700078 **NEW**

● 14 SILVER STREET

OPENING HOURS: PLEASE TELEPHONE OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE
E-MAIL: [insert store location]@ssav.com

Winter Sale Now On!

Save £s in our fabulous **Winter Sale**. Visit www.ssav.com
or call your nearest store on Freephone **0800 587 9909**
for the latest prices and information.

STEREO AMPLIFIERS

Integrated and pre/power amps



Amplifiers come in two basic forms: integrated and preamplifier (pre) plus power amp combinations. Integrated simply means that both pre and power sections are in one box. There are definite advantages to separating the low level, delicate signals in the preamp from the radiations of a power amp, so the more ambitious designs come in two or more cases. In some cases, each channel has its own power amp called a monoblock.

Amplifiers use two basic technologies: transistors or valves. Transistors are popular because of their practical and technical advantages, but valves – aka tubes – live on owing to aspects of sound quality that trannies can't replicate. If you want to play your music loud, use trannies; if you appreciate acoustic music, try valves.

The fundamental of amp/speaker interfacing is power rating and speaker sensitivity. You can drive a high-sensitivity speaker with a ten watt valve amp, but it takes a 200W behemoth to get the best out of speakers which present a difficult load. As a rule, you can't have too much power.

How to choose an amp

The main areas in which amps vary are: timing, dynamics, stereo imaging and transparency. Timing is the ability to present the attack and decay of each note precisely; amps with strong timing have a snap and coherence that is very appealing.



Dynamics is a general term for the ability to portray variations in level between individual notes and is different to dynamic range (the difference between the loudest and softest notes). Dynamically strong amps tend to have more life and energy.

Stereo imaging is how solid or three-dimensional an instrument or voice sounds. The point of having two rather than one speaker is to make it possible to recreate the soundstage of the original recording, thus amps that have strong imaging skills can create a sonic space that seems to extend the room.

Transparency of detail is the most obvious difference between amps. One amp will present more subtlety than another, but the drawback with using this as your main criterion is that a forward or 'bright' sounding amplifier will emphasise detail at the expense of overall musical coherence.

HOME CINEMA STEREO

Stereo amps can be used in home cinema set-ups as well. You don't get the surround and centre channels, but well set-up stereo speakers do a remarkably good job of creating atmosphere for movies. Stereo amps

tend to be better at reproducing music as they don't have the (electrical) noise-inducing digital processing of AV amps. AV amps cost three to four times as much as stereo models of a similar quality.

Q&A

SHOULD I LEAVE MY AMP ON ALL THE TIME FOR BEST RESULTS?

All audio electronics perform better when they are warmed up, and this is particularly the case when it comes to amplifiers. If there's no way that you can leave it on all the time, make an effort to switch it on at least 20 minutes before listening.

WHAT IS BI-WIRING AND BI-AMPLING?

Bi-wiring is when you run separate cables to the treble and bass/mid terminals on the speaker. In most instances, this improves sound quality so long as identical cables are used. Bi-amping is using two stereo amps to drive one pair of speakers, using one amp to drive the treble and the other for the bass/mid sections of the speakers.

WHY DO VALVE AMPS HAVE SO LITTLE POWER?

Valve amps are inherently low powered in absolute terms – at least when you compare them to their transistor-based cousins. But when partnered with high-sensitivity loudspeakers, they are quite capable of producing perfectly adequate head-banging levels.

TOP BUYS



NAD
C352 £350

NAD made its name building world-beating budget amps, and the C352 continues that tradition in style – powerful, dynamic and thoroughly enjoyable with all music types.



Arcam
DiVA A90 £890

Top dog in Arcam's DiVA range is this excellent integrated amp. Its strengths include a slick, flexible user interface and beautifully smooth and detailed sound.



Naim
NAC 112x/NAP 150x £1,475

Naim's new entry-level pre/power amp is a fabulously engaging combo. As you'd expect, rhythm and timing are to the fore, with a healthy dollop of finesse to boot.



Primare
PRE30/A30.2 £2,400

Beautifully made and with a sound to match, this Scandinavian pre/power combines warmth and body with energy and detail – a truly musical performer.

Our favourite BB BEST BUY EC EDITOR'S CHOICE

STEREO AMPLIFIERS

Integrated amplifiers

BADGE?	PRODUCT	£	COMMENTS	SPECIFICATIONS					
				LINE INPUTS	PHONO INPUT	REMOTE CONTROL	HEADPHONE SOCKET	POWER OUTPUT (W)	ISSUE NUMBER
UP TO £1,000									
	Arcam DIVA A80	600	A very competent mid-range amp with a sophisticated control system and crisp, detailed sound	6	●	●	●	90	251
BB	Arcam DIVA A90	850	Very well specified, well built, a delight to use and a real musical all-rounder	7	opt	●	●	90	273
BB	Audio Analogue Primo	475	Small, stylish amp with a smooth and beguiling sound. Makes a fine partner for AA's equally compact Primo CD player	5	opt	●		70	255
BB	Cambridge Audio Azur 540A	200	A well built and fully featured amplifier that costs this little should not sound this revealing	6	opt	●	●	50	255
	Cyrus 6vs	600	Best seen in a Cyrus rack but capable of sweet sounds elsewhere too. Impressively clean and agile but lacking musical grunt	7		●	●	40	262
	Cyrus 8vs	800	Slightly inferior to Cyrus 6vs, but the tables are turned with the add-on PSX-R power supply – in that form it's a real Best Buy	7		●	●	70	261
BB	Electrocompaniet EC13	999	Large and fairly powerful, with individual looks and very refined sound	6		●		70	262
	Exposure 3010I	1000	Full-bodied and enjoyable sound: phono stage well worth an extra £200	5	opt	●		100	273
BB	Exposure 2010 S	599	Beneath the unassuming exterior lurks a very capable performer that's passionate about music	6	opt	●		75	262
BB	Marantz PM4400 OSE	250	Highly competent and well specified – a lively performer that makes great music	5	●		●	50	256
BB	Musical Fidelity X-80	600	The entry-level to Musical Fidelity's amplifier range sounds both powerful and refined	4		●		55	255
BB	NAD C352	350	A dynamic and musical amp at a bargain price – another budget classic from NAD	7		●	●	55	253
BB	Naim Nait 5i	699	A trade-off of more power and better connectivity against less inputs works surprisingly well in a grunty, musical manner	4		●		50	252
BB	Onkyo A-933	500	PCM amplifier facilitates dinky toy packaging, with full size performance, and more engaging musically than you might expect	5			●	80	275
BB	Primare I21	750	A confident and energetic amp, with just a touch of veiling at times. Great build quality	4		●		75	273
	Rotel RA-03	499	Does all the basics commendably, only losing out to dearer competition in imaging and fine detail	5	●	●	●	70	273
BB	Rotel RA-1062	595	A great value amp with a detailed and engaging sound, and the ability to drive almost any speaker in its path	5	●	●		95	251
BB	Sugden A21a	899	This single-ended, Class A transistor amp has exquisite resolving ability and presence – an authentic classic	5				25	224
ABOVE £1,000									
BB	Arcam FMJ A32	1,200	Ultra-civilised amp with plenty of features that's also highly revealing and musical	7	●	●	●	100	266
EC	Bryston B100-SST DAC	3,850	A remarkable amplifier which is greatly enhanced by the inclusion of an impressive onboard DAC	6	●	●	●	100	275
BB	Copland CSA29	1,900	A hybrid valve/solid state amplifier that gets close to offering the best of both worlds	6	opt	●		85	255
BB	Denon PMA-2000AE	1,200	Unusually refined and detailed medium power design with the attributes necessary for good stereo only SACD replay	5	●			80	275
BB	Exposure XXXV	1,599	Musical, powerful, tuneful and controlled, though not always the most analytical	6	opt	●		80	271
EC	Gamut DI 150	5,700	Serious contender for the best integrated amp ever. The DI 150 takes on pre/power combos on their own terms	6		●		180	275
EC	Krell KAV-400xi	2,698	The best integrated Krell yet is quick, agile, solid and finely detailed	5		●		200	247
EC	McIntosh MA2275	5,400	A valve amplifier that doesn't patronise. It's not soft-centred and it understands dynamics	5	●	●		75	271
BB	Marantz PM-11S1	2,500	A good-looking, well-endowed, high-quality amp that's a great match for the impressive SA-11S1 stereo CD/SACD player	6	●	●	●	100	265
BB	Moon i-3	1,595	Powerful Canadian amp whose lively presentation is particularly suited to big-scale music	6		●		100	265
BB	Primare I30	1,500	A smooth, sophisticated yet agile performer, and beautifully built too	6			●	100	267
EC	Sugden A21SE	1,995	Hot-running Class A amplifier that sounds more delicious than most. A definite step up from the classic A21a	4		●		40	268
BB	Unison Research Unico 200	3,000	Hybrid integrated with high power/quality low power modes combines much of the best of solid state and valve design	5			●	200	269

Our favourite BB BEST BUY EC EDITOR'S CHOICE

STEREO AMPLIFIERS

Pre/power amplifiers

BADGE?	PRODUCT	£	COMMENTS	SPECIFICATIONS						
				PRE-AMPLIFIER	POWER AMPLIFIER	LINE INPUTS	PHONO INPUT	REMOTE CONTROL	POWER OUTPUT (W)	ISSUE NUMBER
UP TO £2,000										
BB	Arcam FMJ A32/P35	1,980	One of the few correctly matched integrated/power combinations, the sound has real gravitas and sophistication	●	●	7	●	●	100	227
EC	Cyrus DAC XP	2,200	A knockout DAC/pre with naturalness and resolution to die for and six digital inputs for signals up to 96kHz	●		2		●		266
EC	Densen Beat B-250/B-350	8,200	Upgradeable to surround, with sweet preamp and slightly coloured power amp, but sound is big and assured	●	●	6		●	125	270
BB	Exposure 2010 S Integrated/Power	1,098	Bi-amping with the additional power amp increases the musical communication of an already fine integrated	●	●	6		●	75	264
BB	Naim NAC 112x/NAP 150x	1,475	Upgraded entry-level Naim pre/power is a master of musical communication	●	●	6		●	50	262
BB	Quad 99/909	1,650	Well thought out and well executed, with good strong sound and just a little veiling	●	●	5	●	●	136	256
ABOVE £2,000										
BB	Arcam FMJ C31	1,200	Professionally presented, beautifully built and exceptionally revealing, this preamp achieves much by doing little	●		5	opt	●		273
EC	Border Patrol P20	6,750	Muscular 300B push-pull design with fluidity and dynamics to match the best	●	●				20	231
	Bryston BP25/4BSST	4,000	Extremely transparent, high-power combo, you'll listen louder and longer because you can	●	●	8	opt	●	300	241

SPECS KEY **LINE INPUTS** Input sockets for source components with a line level output: CD players, DVD players, tape decks, tuners, phono stages etc. **PHONO INPUT** Input sockets and onboard phono stage for a cartridge. Either MM (moving magnet) or MC (moving coil), occasionally both. **REMOTE CONTROL** A remote control is supplied with the amplifier. **HEADPHONE SOCKET** To drive your cans with. **POWER OUTPUT** Manufacturer's rated output in watts per channel.

Our favourite BEST BUY EDITOR'S CHOICE

STEREO AMPLIFIERS *continued*

Pre/power amplifiers

BADGE?	PRODUCT	£	COMMENTS	SPECIFICATIONS						
				PRE-AMPLIFIER	POWER AMPLIFIER	LINE INPUTS	PHONO INPUT	REMOTE CONTROL	POWER OUTPUT (W)	ISSUE NUMBER
EC	Chapter Preface/II+	9,800	Among the finest amps available, the resolution of this preamp and power amp challenges the best at any price	●	●	6		●	300	249
EC	Chord Prima/Mezzo 140	6,100	Small, muscular, beautifully made and styled and sounds like a dream	●	●	5		●	120	269
EC	Conrad-Johnson ACT2/Prem 350SA	20,000	Valve preamp and solid-state power deliver some of the most transparent and naturally dynamic sounds around	●	●	5		●	350	264
	Densen Beat B-200/B310	2,300	Lively, energetic combination that bring a great sense of scale to familiar recordings	●	●	8		opt	80	276
	EAR 864/534	4,156	Valve combo delivers fine measured and subjective performance and inspires great confidence	●	●	6	●		50	254
EC	ECS EA-1	6,000	Understated monoblocks with real transparency to the fine detail, passion and energy in your record collection		●				180	253
EC	Gamut D3	3,430	Creamy smooth, yet lets you hear all the fine detail that goes to making a tonally rich, dynamically strong sound	●		5	opt	●		265
EC	Gamut D200 Mk3	3,950	A great power amp that's now even better – one of the best regardless of price		●				200	247
EC	Halcro dm10/dm68	25,550	Extravagant, extreme and massive amp combo will probably polarise opinions, but delivers stunning midrange clarity	●	●	5	●	●	225	243
EC	Hovland HP-100/RADIA	12,745	Uncommonly musical valve/transistor hybrid transcends stereotypes, one of the genuine high achievers	●	●	9	opt		125	250
EC	Krell FPB 700cx	14,998	Reference class amplifier may represent overkill in many systems, but when no compromise is called for, this is it		●				700	234
EC	Linn Klimax Kontrol	6,000	Beautifully executed example of Scots audio art, sounds as clean as it looks and is a lot more transparent than most	●		4		●		238
	Naim NAC 202/NAP 200	2,720	More sophisticated than its forebears with a fleet-footed sound that draws you into the music	●	●	8		●	70	241
EC	Naim NAP 500	11,875	Wonderful neutrality, bandwidth and dynamic range, plus Naim's traditional leading-edge definition		●				140	208
EC	Naim NAC 552	12,100	Extremely expensive preamp, but still solid value. Magnificent sound with fine flexibility and convenience	●		6		●		233
	Primare PRE30/A30.2	2,400	Smart kit that lives up to the visual promise with gorgeous sound – a really musical performer	●	●	7		●	128	256

AV AMPLIFIERS

Surround sound amps for music and movies



The multichannel, surround sound or AV amplifier is a popular option, thanks to the success of the DVD player and home cinema. Now you can buy five channels or more of amplification for the price of two. Now that multichannel music is also on the agenda, there's a lot to be said for a good AV amp or receiver (an amp with a radio tuner built in).

So if you fancy hearing what DVD-Audio, SACD or even music DVD-Video can do, then check out a multichannel amp and speaker set-up – they're stunning with movies and none too shabby with music.

AV amps are usually designed primarily for movies and come with digital processing for the various soundtrack formats – Dolby Pro-Logic (analogue), Dolby Digital and DTS, which offer discrete surround sound in 5.1 and 7.1 channel formats. More ambitious designs also offer THX post processing, designed to emulate the sound of the mixing theatre at home.

Processing in AV amps is needed because the surround formats on DVD-Vs are compressed, limiting their high-fidelity



potential. This is why new formats SACD and DVD-A, which don't use 'lossy' compression, were created for music.

All this processing power can take its toll on analogue formats. The best multichannel amps for music are often the simplest, but any that offer a complete bypass option with six-channel input are suitable. It's also worth looking at real power – five or seven channels of amplification are not easy to produce with a feeble power supply, and the cheaper amps in particular often fail to live up to the claims.

Q&A

HOW MANY CHANNELS?

Depends on how many speakers you want. Multichannel music discs come with six or 5.1 channels, but for new movies, 7.1 is where it's at. 7.1 set-ups also mean you have speakers directly behind you – preferable for music discs.

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A PROCESSOR AND AN AV AMP?

Processors don't have built-in amplification and you need separate power amps. AV amps and receivers have processing and amps in the same box.

WHAT DOES THE .1 IN 5.1 STAND FOR?

This is the LFE (low frequency effects) or bass channel that is reproduced by a subwoofer.

HI-FI MEETS SURROUND SOUND

With DVD-Audio and SACD offering high-quality multichannel music, surround sound is no longer just a home cinema thing. An increasing number of people want to build a multichannel system that will do their music as well as their movie

DVDs justice, and the number of AV products delivering sufficient quality is on the increase. But most aren't cheap – building a top-quality system with five or more channels is inevitably more expensive than sticking with stereo. There

are some very decent integrated options below £1,000, though the best (and most costly) route is to buy a separate processor and power amp(s). Or you can add AV amplification to a stereo model you can't bear to part with.

TOP BUYS



Yamaha
DSP-AX757SE £499
 If you're looking for a multichannel amp that's good with music as well as home cinema, this is your best bet below £500.



Arcam
DiVA AVR300 £1,300
 Here's one for those who value great sound over numerous gizmos and gadgets – an integrated AV amp for audiophiles.



Denon
AVC-A11XV £2,500
 A splendid 7.1-channel amp that packs in the latest digital links and processing formats without sacrificing sound quality.



Arcam
FMJ AV8/P7 £5,750
 A fantastic achievement from this respected UK brand – a top-ranking AV processor and seven-channel power amp.

Our favourite AV AMPLIFIERS

BEST BUY **EDITOR'S CHOICE**

Multichannel amplifiers

BADGE?	PRODUCT	£	COMMENTS	SPECIFICATIONS				
				RECEIVER	LINE INPUTS	7.1 COMPATIBLE	5-CHANNEL POWER (W)	ISSUE NUMBER
MULTICHANNEL INTEGRATED AMPS								
	Arcam DiVA AVR300	1,300	Cracking all-round music and movie ability sets the Arcam apart from the AV crowd	●	8	●	100	257
	Denon AVC-A11XV	2,500	Sensible, real world derivative of AVC-A11XV, but still immensely flexible, and well endowed with digital i/o		11	●	140	273
	Denon AVC-A1XV	4,000	Inelegant, but powerful and effective tool with excellent auto set-up and capable of driving two 5.1 systems simultaneously		●	●	170	266
	Lexicon RV-8	5,000	Classy multi-zone receiver lacks high tech digital attributes (HDMI etc) but majors on very effective audio engineering	●	10	●	140	267
	Marantz SR-12S1	3,000	A multichannel amp that can be taken seriously in stereo too. Resources are in the engineering rather than the gimmicky	●	3	●	160	255
	Pathos Cinema-X	4,750	No processing, just sexy Italian style, a sextet of valves and the chance of 450 watts in stereo! Cultured sound, too		5		110	270
	Pioneer VSA-AX5Ai	1,200	A well specified receiver with a powerful, upfront sound. Includes i.Link digital interface and MCACC auto set-up	●	11	●	100	248
	Pioneer VSA-AX10Ai	3,000	State of the art one-box amplifier with enhanced sound quality, auto set-up and other enhancements		10	●	150	260
	Sony STR-DB798	250	Cheap but effective, and passably good with pure audio sources, but control system messy	●	7	●	100	273
	Sony STR-DB795	300	A superb value little amplifier, well appointed technically and successfully tuned for UK ears	●	7	●	100	260
	Sony TA-DA9000ES	2,600	Arguably the first convincing fully digital amplifier, an excellent match for players with i.Link encrypted outputs	●	10	●	200	253
	Yamaha DSP-AX757SE	499	Exceptional sounding budget/mid price receiver offers brilliant sound per pound; ergonomics could be better	●	9	●	100	273
MULTICHANNEL PREAMPS/PROCESSORS AND POWER AMPS								
	Arcam A90+7.1 mod, P90/3	1,920	Add Arcam's multichannel module and a P90/3 power amp to the A90 stereo integrated and you've got got superb purist 5.1		8	●	90	250
	Arcam AVP700/P1000	3,000	Cutting-edge processor/tuner with HDMI sounds great, but the matching Class H power amp lacks finesse to match its power	●	8	●	135	275
	Arcam FMJ AV8/P7	5,750	High-quality preamp/processor (£3,150) and seven-channel power amp (£2,600). An excellent fusion of stereo and surround sound		7	●	180	235
	Copland CVA306/CVA535	3,748	Tube analogue six-channel pre transforms multichannel audio from a novelty into a genuine advance for the high fidelity art		5		125	236
	Cyrus AV8/3x Smartpower	2,900	Classic Cyrus sound translated to a multichannel arena, limited features and power, but civilised sound		3		105	238
	Linn Exotik	1,750	Is hi-fi ready to make the jump to multichannel music? Linn think so with this musical preamplifier		4			260
	Meridian 861	9,833	Powerful surround processor with flexible modular construction, marvellous versatility to drive any speaker configuration		6	●		230
	Naim AV2/NAPV175/NAP150	4,175	First truly credible multichannel system from Naim is idiosyncratic but offers excellent basic sound with modest spatial steering		5	●	50	238
	Parasound Halo C1/A51	7,500	Powerful and flexible processor/power amp combo with impressive sound. Excellent value – processor includes onboard screen		11	●	250	243
	Primare SP31.7/A30.5	4,200	Great all-round system which brings the qualities of good stereo high fidelity to a multichannel world		5	●	120	238

SPECS KEY **RECEIVER** Integrated multichannel amp with built-in radio tuner. **LINE INPUTS** Input sockets for source components with a line level output: CD players, DVD players, tape decks, tuners, phono stages etc. **7.1 CHANNEL COMPATIBLE** The amp either has seven-channel in and outputs or in some instances is equipped with seven channels of amplification. **5-CHANNEL POWER (W)** Power output in watts per channel of all channels driven by the amp.

Billy Vee
SOUND • SYSTEMS

SAVE UP TO 50% ON EX-DISPLAY BARGAINS

SOME AS NEW (MARKED*) WITH 2 YR WARRANTY 24HR DEL ONLY £5. CHECK STOCK BEFORE ORDER
CALL SALES: (020) 8318 5755 or 8852 1321 - 248 Lee High Road, London, SE13 5PL
 Credit options are available for purchases exceeding £660, please call for details. S/H = Pre-Owned unit. E&OE

Arcam AVR 200 AV Receiver (2Yr G/tee)	(799.00)	£399.00	Linn Majik Amplifier - Blk S/H (1Yr G/tee)	(945.00)	£375.00
Arcam AV8 A/V Preamp/amplifier S/H (1Yr G/tee)	(3150.00)	£1895.00	Linn LK100 Power amplifier S/H (1Yr G/tee)	(650.00)	£375.00
Arcam P7 7 Ch Power Amp S/H (1Yr G/tee)	(2995.00)	£1795.00	Linn 2250 Power Amplifier Silver (2Yr G/tee)	(1995.00)	£1195.00
Arcam DT81 DAB Digital Tuner (2 Yr G/tee)	(649.00)	£299.00	Linn Trikan Centre Spkr - Maple (2Yr G/tee)	(495.00)	£249.00
Arcam FMJ CD33 CD Player (2Yr G/tee)	(1349.00)	£795.00	Naim 112 Preamplifier S/H (1Yr G/tee)	(660.00)	£425.00
B&W DM604 S3 Spkrs Blk S/H No Box (1Yr G/tee)	(799.00)	£449.00	Naim NAC 52 Preamp S/H - 135484 (1Yr G/tee)	(3685.00)	£2195.00
AVI Pro 9 Speakers - Cherry (S/H) (2Yr G/tee)	(799.00)	£399.00	Naim SuperCap P/Sup S/H - 135281 (2Yr G/tee)	(2315.00)	£1795.00
B&W CM2 Speakers Rosenut (S/H) (2Yr G/tee)	(550.00)	£295.00	Naim NAP250 P/Amp S/H - 128365 (1Yr G/tee)	(1922.00)	£1475.00
Denon AVR 3805 AV Amplifier (1Yr G/tee)	(999.00)	£499.00	PMC OB1 Speakers (2Yr G/tee)	(2450.00)	£1795.00
KEF Q4 Speakers (Cherry) (2Yr G/tee)	(399.00)	£199.00	Rotel RA-01 Amplifier (2Yr G/tee)	(249.00)	£159.00
Linn Unidisk SC M/format Player Silver (2Yr G/tee) (2995.00)		£2249.00	Spendor S5e Speakers - Cherry (2Yr G/tee)	(1095.00)	£749.00
Linn Kairn Phono Preamplifier S/H (1Yr G/tee)	(2200.00)	£795.00	Sugden A21a Amplifier (1Yr G/tee)	(945.00)	£659.00
Linn 5103 AV Processor - Black (2Yr G/tee)	(4500.00)	£950.00	Yamaha HD1300 H/Disk CD Player (1Yr G/tee)	(599.00)	£429.00

For latest addition to our pre-owned and ex-display bargains please visit the marketplace section of our new website at billyvee.co.uk.

New Brand: Bryston

EDITOR'S CHOICE
HI-FI CHOICE
magazine



Bryston B100 SST

This new amplifier from Bryston is only their second integrated amplifier in 32 years. Not only will this 100wpc Amplifier bring your speakers to life but your CD Player and any other digital sources as well with its stunning optional onboard D/A Converter (4 inputs).

Was it worth the wait? You bet!

Musical Fidelity KW

(NEW Product)
KW DM25 Transport
KW DM25 DAC

Here's the problem... In general people believe that more expensive a product is the better it must be. The KW DM25 system proves this not to be the case.

The KW DM25 system delivers dramatically more of that per pound than any other system available.

Audition the KW DM25 Transport & DAC at Shadow Audio today.



New Brand: PMC



Professional Monitor Company

PMC is a UK based, world-leading manufacturer of professional monitor and audiophile speaker systems that have won numerous awards - everywhere!

Take a listen to any of the models in the range and its easy to understand why PMC speakers sit in so many homes and studios around the world!

Models include:

DB1+ The latest incarnation of the worlds smallest transmission line design.

FB1+ Features the identical high performance 27mm soft dome tweeter as found in the OB1 and more costly loudspeakers in the range, providing reference quality high frequency response.

GB1 A true breakthrough; a loudspeaker that encompasses PMC's award-winning professional monitoring heritage in a compact and elegant design, ideally suited to match modern décor and lifestyles.

OB1 The OB1 design, is not only ground breaking in its innovative bass loading system, but it also allows the listener to engage a piece of music and awe at the sheer scale of a truly massive sound stage.

Shadow has the complete range for demonstration!

New Brand: VPI

Super Scoutmaster Signature

A direct development of both the state of the art VPI TNT HR-X and the Scout entry level turntable.

The standard Scout uses an all acrylic platter, this one uses a composite platter manufactured from two slabs of acrylic, sandwiching a steel plate.

The bearing is the same design as used throughout the VPI range., however the main bearing housing has been lengthened to accommodate the new, thicker platter first seen on the TNT HR-X turntable. This bearing is very much at the heart of the Scout's design.

Harry Weisfeld has known for a long time that both the quality of the power supply and the drive system are critical to the overall performance of the playback system, so for this turntable the drive system from the awesome HR-X is used. Finally the turntable ships with a JMW - 9 Signature Tone



Arm, an arm critically acclaimed Worldwide for its ease of setup, outstanding design and stunning sound quality. Now, exclusively for the Super Scoutmaster Signature, VPI has collaborated with cable experts, Nordost, to produce this new Signature arm which is wired with Nordost Valhalla Micro Monofilament tonearm cable.

By using this unique cable with the JMW 9 Signature Tone Arms stunning engineering and the outstanding performance of the VPI Super Scoutmaster, a vinyl playback system is created which truly challenges the very best available.

Retailing at £4995, no other turntable comes even close to its performance.



New Brand: EAR/Yoshino

EAR/Yoshino

Shadow Audio are very excited and pleased to represent EAR/Yoshino in Scotland. EAR has a very loyal following and its designer Tim de Paravicini continues to delight both existing and new customers with his innovative products that offer exceptional sound and true value for money.

All EAR amplifiers are truly original, including the custom transformer, metal work, circuit printed circuit board. All the work of Tim de Paravicini.

Tim works by a simple premise: If he designs it, it must be a better design than anything else, or he will not manufacture it. His sole goal is taking audio to the furthest possible point of development. Current research is taking him further along this path than any single competitor.

EAR are very proud to launch their new Master Disk Turntable.

Most striking perhaps is the all-new 'no contact' drive system. For the ultimate in flexibility all three speeds - 33, 45 and 78 - are also offered.

Truly a turntable for the connoisseur!



That's not all !! EAR are going to launch the Primary Drive Loudspeaker.

For many years it has been widely accepted that the ideal loudspeaker should combine the low coloration of the electrostatic with the bass extension and high power handling of the box, with imaging at least as good as the best of either type. Primary Drive, with sensitivity of 90dB (1W at 1m) and power handling of 200W allied to a complete absence of boxy resonances, meets that criterion. Primary Drive is the future of high fidelity loudspeakers. Call us for further information.

ART Loudspeakers

Emotion

The long-awaited new Loudspeakers from ART Loudspeakers are finally here and it's all about emotion. Designed by Derek / Ramsay Dunlop, the Emotion loudspeaker is without doubt their finest creation to date and they are rightly very proud of this speaker - it took us at Shadow less than 5 minutes to see and hear why!

Three Emotion loudspeaker models are available: Emotion (£5,000), Emotion Signature (£9,000) and Emotion Silver Signature (£TBA). Emotion and Emotion Signature can both at a later date be upgraded to the next model(s) - truly ingenious!





The finest selection of Hi-Fi Products in the UK, all under one roof:

ART Audio, ART Loudspeakers, Audio Analogue, Aurum Cantus, Audio Zone, Audio Physic, Audionet, ATC, AVI, Bel Canto, Black Rhodium, Blue Note, Border Patrol, Bryston, Custom Design, Croft, EAR/Yoshino, Eastern Electric, GamuT, Goldring, Graaf, Hovland, Hyperion, Isol-8, IsoTek, JAS Audio, JungSon, Living Voice, Lumley, Marantz, McIntosh, Micromega, Musical Fidelity, Musical First, Nordost, Opera, Origin Live, Ortofon, Pass Labs, Pathos, PMC, Project, QED, Qinpu, Ref 3a, Resolution, Roksan, Shanling, Soundstyle, Stello, TacT Audio, Triangle, Trichord, Townshend Audio, Unison Research, Wadia, Whest, Wilson Benesch, Vertex AQ, VPI and many more.

Hyperion



When a product like the Hyperion 938 wins this many awards in a single year, you know to expect something pretty special!

The beautiful piano high gloss finish and attention to detail can hardly fail to impress but its the noise this speaker makes that will leave most speechless. Listen to other speakers and in most cases you'll find one aspect, one area that you wish you could change to create that perfect loudspeaker. Listen to the Hyperion 938 and the first thing you'll ears will tell you is just how balanced the 938 is. You really cannot fault its performance in any area.

A duo-cabinet design has been created for this full-range 3-way speaker. With a dedicated cabinet for the bass, two 8" S.V.F. woofers are used instead of a larger size woofer for truly amazing bass speed, resolution, coherence and impact. The New HPS-938 is your answer to a new level of audio experience.

This high-efficiency loudspeaker (90db) can be driven by both valve and solid-state amplifiers with ease. Contact Shadow Audio for more information and to arrange an audition.

New Brand: Pass Labs



Pass X series preamplifiers

All X series preamplifiers incorporate the same innovative, patented technology. The differences between these models are both a matter of features and the degree to which this technology can be realized given the market considerations of cost, value and degree of executed sophistication required by a wide range of audiophiles.

Pass X.5 series power amplifiers

Select refinements from the balanced single-ended Class A circuits of the XA series amplifiers have been incorporated into several new X.5 series models, significantly improving their subjective performance while keeping the high power and reliability.

The new and sensational Pass Labs X350.5 and equally sensational X1 two box pre-amp have just arrived at Shadow Audio.

The entire natural colour and dynamics; from the thunder of a Bosendorfer piano to the subtle whisperings of a Stradivarius are delivered with startling precision. The air, space and emotional content of the recording come to life. The actual air and physical presence of the performing artists are thus recreated with uncanny palpable realism.

Contact Shadow today to arrange a Pass Labs demonstration.

New Brand: Marantz



After many customer requests, we pleased to announce that Shadow are now a Marantz Premium Dealer.

Premium Series

In the long search for the perfect hi-fi, the Marantz philosophy is simple: to maintain the purity and integrity of the original signal at all times. This, they believe, is the only route to achieving true hi-fi sound quality.

Premium-series are built to respond to the steepest signal attacks with incredible speed and accuracy, so none of the subtleties in the ebb and flow of the music are lost. Neither is the scale of music or truly massive sound stage.

We have four NEW products on demonstration:

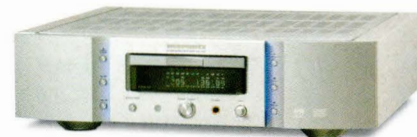
Integrated Amplifiers

PM-15S1 (NEW) and PM-11S1 (NEW)

Super Audio CD Players

SA-15S1 (NEW) and SA11-S1 (NEW)

Marantz has one of the finest design teams in the world and they have every right to be very proud of the Premium Series. Premium quality at far less than premium prices!



IsoTek / Nordost

Special Offers

On the following IsoTek/Nordost mains filtration systems:

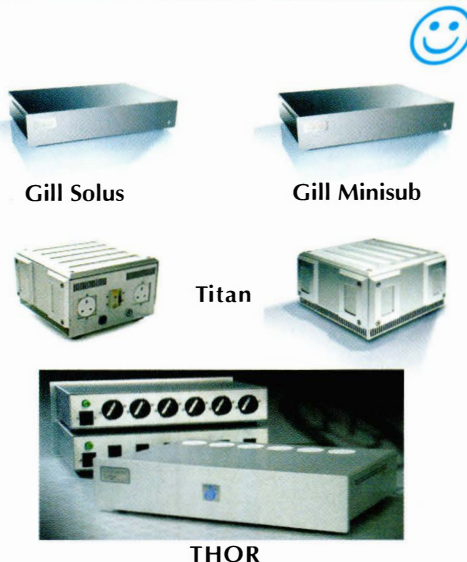
IsoTek NOVA (new)	£1695
IsoTek Titan (new)	£1495
IsoTek GII Minisub	£545
IsoTek GII Solus	£325
Nordost THOR	£1599

FREE delivery, FREE Iso8/IsoTek mains cable worth £49 and a 30-day money back guarantee*.

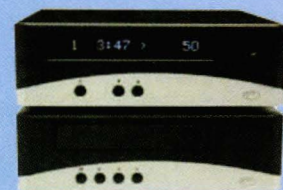
Nordost THOR

(shown on the right)

The Nordost Thor is an upgradeable solution to AC mains power distribution. By systematically improving the quality of the input and output power cords the performance of the unit increases dramatically. Upgrading through the range of Nordost cables, utilising Shiva, Vishnu and Valhalla, prioritising the input cable first will offer major performance enhancements. The THOR is a stunning achievement.



Resolution Audio



By moving the power supply and display of the Opus 21 CD Player to a second chassis, the critical audio circuitry is free to bring out more detail than ever before. Three-dimensional circuit construction, while more costly, dramatically reduces signal path for unparalleled precision.

A design this sophisticated requires an equally compelling chassis. By avoiding steel, the audio signals are free to develop without being constricted by magnetic interaction. The compact design is a refreshing departure from the common, overbuilt excesses crowding the marketplace. The result is a distinctive player of unmatched musicality at a surprisingly affordable price.

OUR PEACE OF MIND, NO RISK, 30-DAY MONEY BACK OPTION* *(CONDITIONS APPLY)

STEREO SPEAKERS

Speaker pairs for stereo sound



While loudspeakers are relatively straightforward in construction, they have one of the most difficult jobs in hi-fi – turning an electrical signal into an acoustic one. Most consist of two or more drive units in a box that usually has a port in it to make life easier for the cone in your mid and/or bass driver. Alternatives to this arrangement include panel speakers, which use electrostatic or ribbon technology, and horns, which use drive units in complex cabinets that greatly improve efficiency.

Box speakers are either designed to stand on the floor (floorstanders) or on a stand (stand or shelfmounts). Floorstanders have greater internal volume which can translate into greater efficiency and/or bass extension, but less substantial designs also introduce cabinet resonance and thus distortion. But they don't need stands and therefore have the aesthetic edge. Standmounts have less cabinet to vibrate and often score in terms of imaging and timing, but need good stands to work well.

Positioning

The closer the speaker is to a wall, the greater the reinforcement of bass. As all rooms differ, there's no simple formula for placement and experimentation will yield the best results. Altering the angle at which the speakers face the listener can also make a difference to balance and stereo image.

Going multichannel

Many stereo speakers can be augmented with centre and surround channels from the same brand to create a multichannel system. The most important element is a centre channel, which needs to match the stereo pair as closely as possible. For the best musical results, surrounds should be as per the front left and right channels, but if space or funds don't permit, smaller designs can be used quite effectively.



Choosing speakers

Because speakers and the rooms they are used in vary so much, choosing a pair tends to be quite subjective. To find some that will suit you, try to listen to a good variety to hear how they differ, and if possible, audition some at home. Tonal balance tends to vary the most, but is less important than more subtle factors such as timing and dynamics. Finally, listen with your ears not your eyes – great-looking speakers aren't necessarily great sounding.

Spikes

Floorstanding speakers and stands have threaded inserts for spikes that allow rigid coupling with the floor. These have the advantage of draining resonance from the speaker and giving tighter bass, but can result in more vibration getting back to the electronics and often cause the floor to resonate as well.

POWER

Though some speakers have a power rating, this isn't as informative as a rating for how difficult they are to drive, nor does it indicate wattage extremes for the partnering amp. In practice, an amplifier cannot be too powerful. Our listings quote ease of drive to indicate how much power

your amp needs to avoid a mismatch. An above-average (A+) speaker will work with amps rated at 25W plus, while an average (A) speaker will need 50W or more, and a below average (A-) speaker could require 100W plus to sound its best. These are guidelines rather than rules.

Q&A

IF SPEAKERS ARE RATED AT 75 WATTS, DOES THAT MEAN I NEED A 75 WATT AMP?

No, see the box on power for the full story.

WHICH SPEAKERS ARE BEST FOR SMALL ROOMS?

Those designed to work close to the wall will be smoother in confined spaces. Speakers that have relatively dry, tight bass will also sound better.

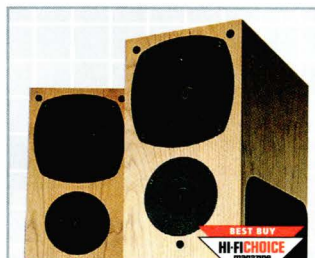
WHICH SPEAKERS ARE BEST FOR BIG ROOMS?

Big, efficient, easy-to-drive designs are more likely to be able to fill a room better than compact models.

DO I NEED TO BUY CENTRE AND SURROUND CHANNELS FROM THE SAME BRAND AS MY STEREO SPEAKERS?

Yes, assuming that you're wanting to create a homogenous surround sound experience, where voices don't change when they move from one channel to another.

TOP BUYS



Rega R3 £448

A neat little floorstander that really knows how to communicate with music. Its sound is crisp and agile, and what it lacks in sheer bass weight it makes up for in energy.



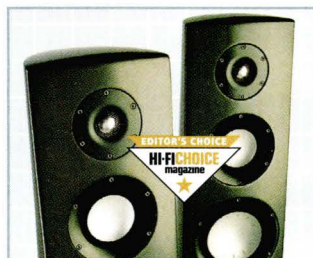
KEF iQ9 £800

This superbly judged floorstander delivers a clean, powerful and transparent sound, with impressively taut bass. A very fine all-rounder for the money.



B&W 805S £1,600

A superbly well-engineered standmount that's capable of delivering magnificent musical communication, alongside superior subtlety and delicacy.



Mordaunt-Short Performance 6 £3,500

This extraordinary speaker stands at the pinnacle of Mordaunt-Short's current range. State of the art resolution and imaging are among its many attributes.

Our favourite BEST BUY EDITOR'S CHOICE STEREO SPEAKERS

Stereo speakers

BADGE?	PRODUCT	£	COMMENTS	SIZE WxHxD (CM)	FLOORSTANDER	EASE OF DRIVE	BASS FROM (Hz)	FREE SPACE	CLOSE TO WALL	ISSUE NUMBER
UP TO £1,000										
	Acoustic Energy Aegis Evo 1	180	An unusually classy and sophisticated performer for the price; laid-back sound and good looks too	19,36,24	A	30	●	●	●	226
	ATC SCM12	999	Magnificent main driver confers great authority, grip and smoothness, though upper bass a little lean	22,39,26	A-	55	●	●	●	253
	AVI Neutron IV	499	A great example of what can be done with a genuinely small speaker, but the warts-and-all balance won't suit all	15,27,21	A-	65	●	●	●	260
	B&W DM303	180	Chunky looking and lively sounding, with deep bass, a fine midband and a restrained top end	20,33,23	A	23	●	●	●	226
	B&W DM602 S3	300	Old-fashioned size/shape, but this timeless design has a rare combination of grip, authority and headroom	24,49,29	A	25	●	●	●	234
	B&W DM603 S3	600	Excellent all-rounder, smooth for its price with fine bass and mid, though top might be more refined	20,91,29	●	A-	25	●	●	231
	B&W 705	900	Deft, delicate and delightful, if a little bass light, with clever enclosure and driver engineering	22,42,29	A	35	●	●	●	253
	Castle Richmond 3i	320	Does most things well and the most important thing - musical communication - remarkably well for the price	17,33,23	A	60	●	●	●	260
	Castle Conway 3	930	Lovely real wood finish and a beautifully balanced sound, fine dynamics and transients, but might have more 'air'	22,91,27	●	A+	30	●	●	237
	Dali Ikon 6	899	Needs care with setup, but rewards you with impressively transparent and almost obsessively detailed sound	19,100,33	●	A	37	●	●	271
	Dali Ikon 7	999	Bulky vinyl floorstander has high sensitivity and a bright sound with superior coherence, delicacy and transparency	20,114,34	●	A+	22	●	●	275
	Dynaudio Audience 42	400	An aristocrat of the vinyl-covered miniature breed. A terrific small speaker for the price	17,29,24	A	40	●	●	●	215
	Dynaudio Audience 52	557	Brilliant neutrality, though a little understated dynamically (wood veneered version, as tested - £647)	20,33,26	A-	30	●	●	●	250
	Epos ELS 303	399	Midband is impressively smooth, even and coherent, but the sound lacks some dynamic grip and top end detail	18,85,20	●	A-	28	●	●	273
	Epos ELS3	200	Few affordable speakers sound as clean and convincing while taking up so little real estate	18,27,19	A-	60	●	●	●	241
	Epos M5	349	Gorgeous miniature works well close to wall. Could be smoother but communicates with authority	18,33,21	A-	40	●	●	●	269
	Epos M12.2	449	A true classic stand-mount with lovely presentation, fine sound balance, superior coherence and low coloration	20,37,25	A-	40	●	●	●	265
	Epos M22	949	Very classy floorstander has a tricky bass and an edgy top, but a very smooth and even midband	20,88,25	●	A-	25	●	●	275
	Focal-JMlab Chorus 707 S	350	The size and shape might be unfashionable, but this is an outstanding all-round performer at a very sharp price	24,49,30	A	25	●	●	●	251
	Focal-JMlab Chorus 716 S	550	Not the smoothest around, but combines coherent voicing with fine dynamic expression and real authority	22,95,30	●	A	20	●	●	250
	Focal-JMlab Chorus 726 S	780	Big generous sound with good dynamic freedom, hampered by some voice-band congestion	22,100,32	●	A+	55	●	●	253
	Harbeth NRG2	650	Strikingly styled standmount majors on dynamic excitement at some expense in smoothness and coloration	19,34,29	A+	42	●	●	●	263
	JBL Studio L880	700	Good value floorstander with neutrality, massive headroom and plenty of punch. Could be more transparent	22,99,37	●	A	25	●	●	275
	KEF iQ9	800	Shapely and solid floorstander has wide bandwidth and dynamic range with superior neutrality and sensitivity	22,94,33	●	A	25	●	●	273
	Monopulse 42A	995	Uniquely different in style and sound, midband time-coherence is magnificent but treble is too restrained	26,110,25	●	A+	28	●	●	271
	Monitor Audio Bronze B4	350	A beautifully balanced loudspeaker with fine overall dynamic range and good imaging	19,85,26	●	A	23	●	●	255
	Monitor Audio Silver RS8	800	Too much bling, boldness and dynamics mark it out from the crowd, and it's an easy load which works well in big rooms	90,18,27	●	A	33	●	●	276
	Mordaunt-Short Avant 906	350	Capable and engaging, this neat design will complement the majority of sub-£500-per-component systems	18,85,27	●	A	45	●	●	254
	Naim n-SATS	695	Very discreet and informative, if a bit lean and forward. Just add an n-SUB for excellent all round results	20,29,21	A	50	●	●	●	268
	Nbien NX6	899	Very nice cabinet work for the money and a decent speaker it makes too with good imaging and low noise	21,38,30	A	46	●	●	●	275
	PMC DB1+	625	Now with sweeter treble, this fun-size tiny lacks some weight and authority, but is beautifully balanced	16,29,24	A	50	●	●	●	261
	PMC TB2+	795	This fine allrounder has a lovely laid-back neutrality, fine transparency, low coloration and a sweet treble	20,41,31	A	30	●	●	●	261

SPECS KEY SIZE WxHxD (CM) Width, height and depth of one cabinet in centimetres. **FLOORSTANDER** Speakers that don't require stands. **EASE OF DRIVE** How much power the amplifier needs (approximately) to drive the loudspeaker effectively. **A+** 25 watts plus **A** 50 watts plus **A-** 100 watts plus **ACT** Active - the speaker has its own in-built amplifier. **BASS FROM** How low the speaker goes - the smaller the number the deeper the bass. **FREE SPACE** The speakers work best away from wall(s). **CLOSE TO WALL** The speakers will work best when up against a wall (but avoid corners).

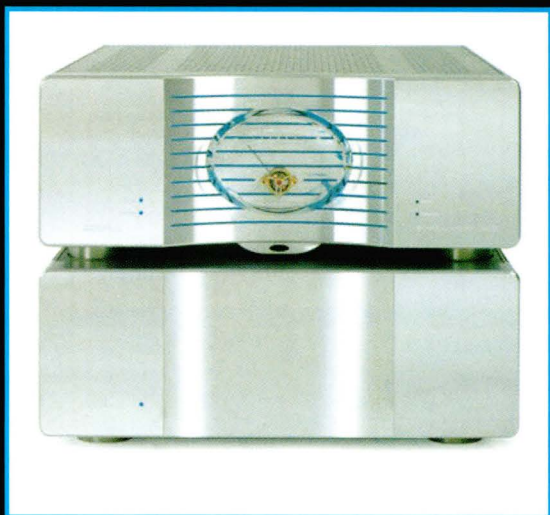
PINEWOOD MUSIC

*Someone has to have the best,
and it doesn't get better than this*

KRELL EVOLUTION ONE

KRELL EVOLUTION TWO

KRELL LAT-1000



The Krell EVOLUTION ONE monaural amplifier

And it doesn't get better than this, either:

The new all-valve

AUDIO RESEARCH CD7

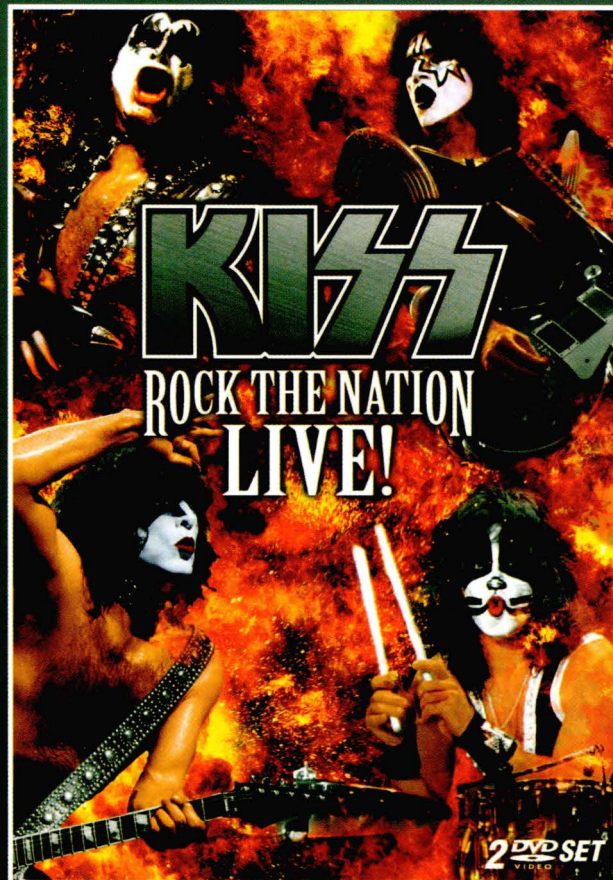
*This is the jam of tomorrow that came from
the bread of yesterday - yes, the Red Book
format that everyone said was flawed and
useless. So who's laughing now? Hear the
CD7 and our old favourite the CD3 MkII. Start
living and stop worrying!*

The Pinewood Music Company

Telephone: 01460 54322

Mobile: 07860 351113

e-mail: brianriv@mac.com



KISS captured live on their 2004 "Rock The Nation" Tour

+ previously unseen footage of soundchecks,
backstage, travelling, photo sessions
- and much more

Extras include:

- Seven "Select-a-KISS" songs: choose the band member you want to watch
- Six behind-the-scenes documentary segments
- Intimate footage shot at the band's show in Melbourne, Australia

2DVD unleashed
23-01-2006

AVAILABLE AT

MEGASTORES  OTHER STORES



virginmegastores.co.uk

SONY • BMG

Our favourite **BEST BUY** **EDITOR'S CHOICE**

STEREO SPEAKERS *continued*

Stereo speakers

BADGE?	PRODUCT	£	COMMENTS	SPECIFICATIONS					
				SIZE (WHD) (CM)	FLOORSTANDER	EASE OF DRIVE	BASS FROM (HZ)	FREE SPACE	CLOSE TO WALL
BB	PMC GB1	995	Ultra-compact floorstander is beautifully clean, articulate and free from boxiness, with a notably delicate top end	16,92,24	● A+	30	●	257	
BB	PMC TB2+	795	Classy transmission line stand-mount has superior midband, restrained presence and a bright clean top end	20,40,30	● A	28	●	275	
BB	ProAc Tablette Ref Eight	699	Stunning standmount with electrostatic-like imagery. Its Signature brother costs £200 more and is even better!	15,27,23	● A+	40	●	267	
BB	Quad 21L	695	Elegant lacquer finish floorstander has a smooth, well balanced sound, even bass and good detail projection	21,80,26	● A+	25	●	263	
BB	Rega R1	298	Cute baby sounds busy, coherent and involving, if a touch thin. Sweet and delicate treble with even bass	15,32,24	● A	50	●	269	
BB	Rega R3	448	Discreet, pretty and fine value. A little lightweight but impressively open, it delivers music with great agility	20,76,28	● A	40	●	265	
BB	Tannoy Fusion 4	350	This big d'Appolito twin two-way has fine coherence and dynamics. A neutral and even all-rounder	21,97,29	● A	20	●	255	
	Tannoy Sensys DC2	649	Has impressive scale and weight with fine stereo imaging, but is also rather laid back, lacking easy agility	21,97,29	● A	20	●	250	
BB	Triangle Antal ES	975	Neither pretty nor smooth but a very exuberant and involving communicator, with plenty of scale and expression	20,108,34	● A	20	●	263	
BB	Triangle Titus ES	370	Not pretty but busy, coherent and involving, if a little thin. Sweet and delicate treble with even bass	18,37,30	● A-	40	●	269	
BB	Triangle Comete ES	500	Bulky standmount lacks style but delivers engrossing musical coherence and vivid dynamics	20,42,34	● A	40	●	265	
ABOVE £1,000									
BB	Acoustic Energy AE1 MkIII	1,690	Luxury miniature has a laid-back but bouncy sound, a marvellous dynamic range and very superior imaging	19,31,25	● A-	30	●	251	
	Acoustic Energy AE3 MkII	4,490	A beautifully neutral speaker with very wide dynamic range and superior imaging, plus lovely Art Deco styling	19,99,29	● A	20	●	251	
BB	ALR Jordan Classic 5	1,200	Slim, laid back floorstander has sweet sound with fine coherence, imaging and dynamic range	17,99,26	● A	28	●	275	
BB	ATC SCM35	1,999	If you want to hear the uncoloured truth about your record collection in all its glory, this is a speaker to treasure	23,88,30	● A-	48	●	250	
BB	Audio Physic Spark 3	1,499	Classy and discreetly laid back floorstander has delightfully neutral balance and surprising bass weight	15,98,22	● A+	27	●	271	
BB	Audiovector Mi 3 Signature	2,320	Smooth and beautifully balanced with superb neutrality, wide dynamic range and a warm, sweet character	20,100,29	● A-	24	●	260	
BB	Audiovector Mi 3 Super	1,596	Dynamically very expressive, clear and intelligible voices, arguably even better value than the Signature version	20,100,29	● A	20	●	267	
BB	Aurum Cantus Leisure 3SE	1,200	Fabulous lacquer finish and a classy ribbon tweeter. Sounds smooth and sweet, if a touch laid back	25,40,30	● A	28	●	263	
BB	B&W 704	1,400	Cleverly tapered enclosure and external tweeter delivers superior bass and treble, with a laid-back midband	22,96,32	● A	20	●	257	
BB	B&W 802D	8,000	Great timing, superior dynamics and a sweet top end all enhance musical communication. Makes sweet music	37,115,56	● A	<20	●	267	
BB	B&W 805S	1,600	Classy standmount with excellent coherence and imaging. Can sound laid back but otherwise a real delight	24,39,33	● A	25	●	271	
BB	B&W 703	2,000	Bass is immensely powerful and even, and the overall sound is lively and dynamic, though not overly smooth	23,101,36	● A-	20	●	260	
	Beauhorn B2.2 Revelation	3,984	Magnificent midband and fine overall balance but limited bass is best with small-scale material	34,130,75	● A+	80	●	244	
BB	Canton Vento 809DC	1,800	Quick, lively and agile, with fine overall coherence and expressive dynamics. A thoroughly impressive allrounder	25,112,35	● A	30	●	267	
	Chario Cygnus	1,200	Beautiful solid walnut sides. Port tuning suspect, but laid back sound has fine delicacy, imaging and refinement	20,96,27	● A-	28	●	275	
BB	Dali Helicon 400	2,999	Advanced drivers and enclosure give a generous sound with wide dynamic range and no boxiness	22,103,46	● A	20	●	264	
	Elac FS 607 X-Jet	5,000	Highly revealing and capable, the mid/tweeter provides impressive detail and depth of soundstage	29,108,33	● A	28	●	269	
BB	Focal-JMLab Alto Utopia Be	11,000	Attractive and beautifully balanced, with fine bass alignment and focus, low coloration and very clean top end	37,121,53	● A-	20	●	248	
BB	Focal-JMLab Diva Utopia Be	7,599	Lovely slimline speaker combines remarkable transparency with fine dynamics and gorgeous bass	25,110,53	● A+	30	●	255	
BB	Focal-JMLab Electra 1027 Be	4,000	Outstanding mid and top with fine delicacy and low coloration, but lacks some bass grip and drive	26.5,111,35	● A-	25	●	276	
BB	Focal-JMLab Micro Utopia Be	3,799	New 'Be' version is clearly an exceptional standmount, capable of revealing the innate quality of the music	25,42.5,38	● A	50	●	245	
	Focal-JMLab Profile 908	1,300	Open and revealing especially of spatial and atmospheric detail, makes up for its bass restraint with joi de vivre	23,39,27.5	● A	50	●	274	
BB	Gamut L5	5,900	Impressive build and sophisticated driver design make the L5 a stunning speaker with rare transparency levels	20,116,43	● A-	32	●	271	
BB	Krell Resolution 2	6,497	Large., but good looking with Sonus Faber type elasticated front. Musically a great full bandwidth all-rounder	122,29,61	● B	28	●	273	
	Living Voice Auditorium	1,700	Gloriously coherent and dynamic midband, though the top end is restrained and bass was uneven in our room	22,86,28	● A-	30	●	247	
BB	Living Voice Avatar OBX-R2	4,000	Has Dynamics, tonal colour, detail, space and time resolution in spades. External crossovers require extra cabling	22,100,27	● A+	35	●	244	
BB	Neat Motive 1	1,200	Beautifully neutral balance sounds open without aggression. Fine midband but could be more authoritative	16,92.5,20	● A-	20	●	276	



Sound Fantastic

Olsons new *Sound Fantastic* range of units are specifically designed for both the home and professional hi-fi audio markets.

Each unit is fitted with a 10A mains R.F.I. filter with earline choke and transient suppressor, designed to filter mains-borne transients, switching surges, R.F. interference, intermittent spikes and other disturbances.

- ✓ Robust steel construction
- ✓ 13A Sockets
- ✓ 10A Panel Mount Fuse
- ✓ RFI 10A Mains Filter & Surge Suppressor
- ✓ External Earth Stud
- ✓ 2m x 1.5mm Screened Cable
- ✓ UK Plug - 10A Fuse Fitted
- ✓ Colour Black
- ✓ Specials to order

TYPE NO.	NO. OF SOCKETS	OVERALL LENGTH	PRICE
HF 4	4	446mm	£83.72
HF 6	6	557mm	£92.47
HF 8	8	670mm	£98.70

Call 020 8905 7273

Home Entertainment — **POWER VERDICT UP**

OLSON ELECTRONICS LIMITED
OLSON HOUSE, 480 HONEYPOT LANE,
STANMORE, MIDDX HA7 1JX
TEL: 020 8905 7273 FAX: 020 8952 4282
email: sales@olson.co.uk www.soundfantastic.co.uk




FROM

£83.72

inc. VAT & p&p

24 HOUR SERVICE. VISA, MASTERCARD AND SWITCH ACCEPTED



Our favourite BEST BUY EDITOR'S CHOICESTEREO SPEAKERS *continued*

Stereo speakers

BADGE?	PRODUCT	£	COMMENTS	SPECIFICATIONS					
				SIZE (WxHxD (cm))	FLOORSTANDER	EASE-OF-DRIVE	BASS FROM (Hz)	FREE SPACE	CLOSE TO WALL
	MartinLogan Mosaic	1,799	Curious hybrid construction marries many panel speaker-like attributes with moving coil simplicity	24,102,30	●	A-	46	●	257
HB	MartinLogan Clarity	2,498	Relatively affordable and easy to live with electrostatic hybrid with class-leading resolving power	26,135,31	●	A-	46	●	245
EC	Mordaunt-Short Perf 6	3,500	Revolutionary enclosure design and aspirated tweeter make for a fast, hi-res ride	24,121,37	●	A-	35	●	264
	Naim Ariva	1,275	Cute and discreet floorstander has superb bass and a wide dynamic range, but it could be smoother and sweeter	23,88,31	●	A	25	●	259
HB	Neat Elite SE	1,499	Smooth and natural performer with notably expressive midband. Fine voice articulation and unusual sweetness	20,90,18	●	A	25	●	267
EC	Neat Ultimatum MFS	2,995	Wonderful five-driver standmount sounds bigger than it looks. Very spacious and informative	22,38,37		A+	25	●	241
HB	PMC FB1+	1,695	Nicely proportioned floorstander has a sweet top and a beautifully natural, open and restrained midband	20,100,30	●	A	20	●	260
EC	PMC IB2	6,150	Stunning in an understated way, this speaker creeps up on you and hooks you with its transparency and power	33,74,47		A-	25	●	237
EC	ProAc Response D25	2,995	The traditional ProAc high-end detail mixed with greater efficiency and more pace - a splendid speaker	22,107,25	●	A+	20	●	254
HB	Rega R7	1,498	Super-slim and super-smooth floorstander has fine agility with a slightly bright overall character	27,98,35	●	A	25	●	271
HB	Rega R9	2,498	This subtle, laid back but very informative performer has a very superior dynamic range, especially in the bass	17,103,39	●	A	20	●	256
EC	Revel F32	3,200	Meticulously balanced, tonally neutral design makes for a taut, well disciplined sound	22,105,39	●	A	30	●	265
EC	Revel M22	1,800	A remarkably clean and revealing speaker with superb tonal and microdynamic capabilities	22,37,30		A-	48	● ●	274
HB	Ruark Talisman III	1,499	No bass demon, but a sophisticated and agile speaker epitomising Ruark's design ideals	22,84,31	●	A	22	●	259
HB	Sonus Faber Concerto Domus	1,799	Great choice, especially for acoustic material, which performs significantly above its price level	21,99,31	●	A	35	●	270
HB	Sonus Faber Cremona A.	2,149	Standmount 'Auditor' version of the Cremona makes a soundstage bigger and better than its size suggests	19,35,32		A	48	●	246
	Spendor S6e	1,495	Combines deep, powerful bass with an attractively open midband, but perhaps too much restraint up top	30,88,19	●	A+	23	●	257
	Spendor S9e	2,895	An improvement on the original S9 - very entertaining at high levels with a fabulously open and weighty bass	24,101,38	●	A+	40	●	256
EC	Tannoy Dimension TD8	4,000	This stylish speaker is a splendid all-rounder, with fine dynamics, precise imaging and minimal coloration	31,86,30	●	A-	25	●	240
HB	Totem Forest	2,390	Low sensitivity but wonderfully open neutrality, at heart a beautifully communicative and musical loudspeaker	20,90,27	●	A	25	●	247
EC	Triangle Magellan Concerto	9,995	Scintillating midrange and treble, with tuneful, well-timed bass - a thoroughly engaging musical ride	28,149,34	●	A	35	●	262
HB	Usher Compass CP-6381	2,500	Lots of speaker for your money, with plenty of deep bass, unusual styling and massive build	35,127,65		A	20	●	270
EC	Vivid Audio B1	7,750	Impressive cabinet design combined with hi-tech drivers to make truly world class speaker	27,110,38	●	A-	40	●	261
	WEGG3 Stelar 1	4,995	A full-range sound from a small(ish) box is possible, but only if you are very careful about set up, room and amps	35,97,45	●	A-	28	●	275
EC	Wilson Benesch Curve	5,000	Much (but not all) of the ACT's performance in a much more compact and affordable package	23,91,37	●	A	28	●	254
EC	Wilson Benesch ACT	8,400	Superb enclosure gives uncanny freedom from 'boxiness'. Well balanced, but top end might be sweeter	23,108,36	●	A	20	●	252

AV SPEAKERS

Speaker solutions for multichannel surround sound

Multichannel speaker systems have a front left/right (L/R) stereo pair, a centre or dialogue channel, two (5.1) or four (7.1) surround speakers and often a subwoofer. For best results, each of these speakers bar the sub should be identical. The problem is that few surround systems are dedicated to music and perform a home cinematic role as well, meaning the centre speaker has to sit above or below a video

monitor. Centre channels are usually wide and short for this reason.

This should not be a barrier to great surround for music and movies however, as many brands make centre channels with a very close sound to their L/R designs.

Music vs movies

High-resolution SACD and DVD-A music recordings tend to be mastered with

surround speakers in the ITU standard position which is as far behind the listener as the front channels are in front. 5.1 movie soundtracks tend to place surround channels not so far behind and to the side of listeners. Usually, practical limitations will dictate a limited range of placement options, but if you are a dedicated music fan, check out the ITU set-up regulations in the booklet supplied with SACD discs.

SET-UP

Ideally you should set up surround speakers with as much care as you would stereo systems, but practical issues tend to have a significant bearing on surround and centre speaker placement. Surround channels can be floorstanding or wallmounted, and centres usually have to perch on the TV or underneath it. Given these limitations, adjust your L/R front

speakers to give the best tonal match with the centre. If there's more than just you listening, 'toe in' the speakers so that their axis crosses in front of the listening position - this gives a wider stereo image. And if there's a subwoofer it should be placed near the front speakers. Use a sound pressure metre (available from Tandy among others) to accurately set levels.

SUBWOOFERS

Subs start working where stereo speakers run out of steam at low frequencies. The idea is to create deeper, better-controlled bass rather than more of it. They usually have onboard amplification (active) and connect to either the LFE (Low Frequency Effects) channel in a home cinema set-up or the speaker terminals in a stereo set-up.

TOP BUYS



B&W
600 S3 package £900
Incorporates 602s, 601s and an LCR 600 centre speaker. Great in both stereo and multichannel surround modes.



Naim
n-SAT/CENT/SUB £3,385
Five n-SATs, and n-CENT and an n-SUB make a highly engaging and (for Naim) discreet multichannel package.



ATC
Concept 3 £4,877
It might not look as flashy as some, but the quality of engineering in this ATC package ensures superb all-round performance.



Linn
Akurate package £13,750
Linn has worked wonders with its new multichannel speaker system – it's not cheap, but its performance is breathtaking.

Our favourite BB BEST BUY EC EDITOR'S CHOICE AV SPEAKER PACKAGES

Multichannel speakers

BADGE?	PRODUCT	£	COMMENTS	SPECIFICATIONS					
				EASE OF DRIVE	NUMBER OF SPEAKERS	BASS FROM (Hz)	FREE SPACE	CLOSE TO WALL	ISSUE NUMBER
BB	ATC Concept 3	4,877	Extremely engaging, revealing and musical multichannel system providing 360 degrees of full-on entertainment	A-	6	12	●	opt	255
	B&W 300 package	900	An excellent compromise between the requirements of music and those of home cinema (inc. subwoofer)	A	6	27	●		241
BB	B&W 600 S3 (602/601/LCR 600)	900	Unquestionably delivers the sonic goods. High-quality drivers in standmount enclosures	A	5	22	●		224
	Castle CAV Sterling	1,250	Lovely real wood veneers. Sound has fine dynamic drive and expression, but can sound a little hard	A	5	28		●	224
	Dynaudio Audience 42 package	1,142	Multichannel package for hi-fi purists with real authority and imaging, but needs subwoofer for full-bore movie sound	A-	5	53	●		241
	Final Sound Electrostatic system	4,875	Slim, attractive, electrostatic panels have clever connections, limited loudness but a breathtaking transparency	A-	6	20	●		251
	Focal-JMLab Electra package	3,017	Bold, solid system, tremendous consistency and easy to expand with an added subwoofer	A	5	50	●		232
EC	Linn Akurate (242/212/225/221)	13,750	An extremely capable system that offers new insights into the potential for multichannel audio	A-	6	18	●		253
	Mirage Omni 2	2,650	Dark tonality, but superb imagery makes this an excellent all-round choice	A	5	30	●		232
BB	Mission m5 package	1,450	Main m52 is a clean, attractive full-range stereo speaker, while the m5as sub does big bass for movie fans	A	6	28	●		241
	Mordaunt-Short Genie	800	A prince among sub/sat packages – good integration and impressively little compromise compared to full-size models	A-	6	38		●	262
	Mordaunt-Short Declaration 500	1,600	Good value vinyl THX Select package with Power Towers. Good authority, but must be 5.1-connected	A	5	25		●	210
BB	Naim n-SAT/n-CENT/n-SUB	3,385	Priced here as a 5.1 package, Naim's neat n-SATs and matching sub/centre make an exceptional compact ensemble	A	6	20		●	268
	Tannoy Arena	1,200	Fabulously stylish sub/sats with Dual Concentric drivers. Unusually revealing for the breed, but sub lacks refinement	A	6	29		●	269

SPECS KEY **EASE OF DRIVE** How much power the amplifier needs (approximately) to drive the loudspeaker effectively: **A+** 25 watts plus **A** 50 watts plus **A-** 100 watts plus.
NUMBER OF SPEAKERS The amount of individual loudspeakers in the package. **BASS FROM** How low the speaker goes, the smaller the number the deeper the bass.
FREE SPACE The speakers work best away from wall(s). **CLOSE TO WALL** The speakers will work best when up against a wall (but avoid corners).

Our favourite BB BEST BUY EC EDITOR'S CHOICE SUBWOOFERS

Bass speakers

BADGE?	PRODUCT	£	COMMENTS	SPECIFICATIONS			
				SIZE (WxHxD (CM))	POWER (W)	BASS FROM (Hz)	ISSUE NUMBER
	B&W PV1	950	Gorgeously styled sub shakes the air but not the floor, delivering a very clean sound with negligible coloration	29,34,35	500	20	259
EC	B&W ASW850	2,000	Does all the things subwoofers should do with music and movies alike, but transparently and seamlessly	53,56,52	1000	18	246
	Monitor Audio ASW100	300	For the price, this compact subwoofer performs particularly well	32,32,34	120	27	225
BB	REL Stampede	550	Few subs at this price match the Stampede's subtlety and ease of integration. Much more hi-fi than AV	28,40,29	100	18	257
BB	REL Strata 5	700	Highly musical sub that integrates well but the REL Stampede offers near-identical performance for less money	32,46,33	150	18	257
	REL Storm III	900	Excellent sub with powerful, detailed and deep bass. Comprehensive facilities, including flexible filter adjustment	42,62,33	150	18	225
	REL Storm 5	1,000	Well engineered, good bass depth, appropriate for mixed hi-fi & home cinema/multichannel systems	34,52,37	200	15	267
EC	REL Stadium III	1,500	It's a bulky piece of furniture, but offers superior filtering as well as an ability to delve deep into the bass nether regions	59,56,39	200	16	217
	Titan Saturn	800	Very bulky sub has curious styling, but decent filtering gives good weight and headroom	72,48,72	200	20	239

SPECS KEY **SIZE WxHxD (CM)** Width, height and depth of one cabinet in centimetres. **POWER (W)** How many watts the onboard amplifier of active models delivers.
BASS FROM How low the sub goes, the smaller the number the deeper the bass.

Do you want to choose your hifi or home cinema system, in a comfortable and relaxing environment...?

Do you want friendly and impartial advice (and a cup of tea) ...?

Do you want to buy your system based on what you hear, and see, and not what somebody tells you...?

Do you live in GUILDFORD...?

.....or Addlestone, Aldershot, Ashford(Middx), Ashstead, Bagshot, Basingstoke, Bracknell, Bookham, Bramley, Camberley, Chertsey, Chipstead, Chobham, Cobham, Cranleigh, Crowthorne, Dorking, Epsom, Esher, Farnborough, Farnham, Fleet, Frimley, Godalming, Hartley Wintney, Hampton, Haslemere, Hook, Horsham, Kingston, Liphook, Leatherhead, Liss, Molesey (East&West), New Malden, Odiham, Petersfield, Reading, Reigate, Redhill, Richmond, Shepperton, Virginia Water, Walton-on-Thames, West Byfleet, Weybridge, Windsor, Woking, Wokingham, Yateley .

Nobody else in these areas carries all the following major hifi brands:

Apollo, Arcam(Diva/FMJ), Ash Design, Atacama, **Atlas** (spkr cables & interconnects) B&W, **Chord Company**, **Creek**, **Cyrus**, Denon, Epos, **Exposure**, **Genelec**, **Anthony Gallo Acoustics**, Harman Kardon, Infinity, Iso Tek, KEF (including **Reference**), Linn Products(including Knekt), **MJ Acoustics**, Meridian, Michell, **Mirage**, Mission, Musical Fidelity, NAD, **Naim**, Ortofon, Pioneer, **PMC**, **Primare**, **Proac**, Project, Pure, QED(including Systemline), Quad, Quadraspire, REL, Rotel, Sennheiser, Soundstyle, **Spendor**, Stands Unique, **Tag McLaren**, Wharfedale, Yamaha.

Nobody else in these areas carries all the following major Home Cinema products:

DVD players: Arcam & **FMJ**, **Cyrus**, Denon, Harman Kardon, Meridian, Rotel, **Tag McLaren**, Yamaha,

Processors: **Arcam FMJ AV8**, **Cyrus**, **Lexicon**, Linn, Meridian, Rotel, **Tag McLaren**.

Amplifiers: Arcam/FMJ, **Bryston**, **Cyrus**, Denon, Harman Kardon, **Lexicon**, **Naim**, Rotel, **Tag McLaren**, Yamaha.

Display devices: Plasma screens from Loewe, Panasonic, Pioneer and **Yamaha**. Televisions/LCD: Loewe.

Projectors: **Barco(CRT/DLP)**, **Sim (DLP)**, **Yamaha(DLP/LCD)** Screens: **Stewart/Draper/Vutec** ,

Video Processing: **Faroudja**, **I-Scan**, **Key Digital**, **Lumagen**, **Tag**. Control systems: **Crestron**, Lutron lighting.

Specialist set up services: **ISF Display Calibration**.

Nobody else in the area offers you a "One Stop Solution" to all of your home entertainment requirements, as we are also Custom Installation experts. Discuss your requirements with us and we can survey, design, install, commission, and maintain full Sound and Audio-Visual distribution, and automated lighting around your home.

Visit us first and you won't need to go anywhere else.

We have superb demonstration rooms for both Hifi and Home Cinema, and we will deliver and install.

We are a **Mountainsnow** dealer, and members of **BADA**, so you can trust us to look after your every need.



P.J.hi-fi

The only **real hi-fi** shop in **Guildford**

Guildford's only REAL Hifi and Home Cinema store
Open 9-6 Monday to Saturday (later by appointment)
3, Bridge Street, Guildford, Surrey GU1 4RY (opposite Wetherspoons)

01483 504801 and 01483 304756

www.pjhifi.co.uk email: info@pjhifi.co.uk

".....it's hifi for fun's sake....."

HEADPHONES

For your ears only



Headphones come in several varieties and some are designed for particular usage. The majority of 'cans' use dynamic cone and coil-type drive units and can be used with anything from a personal stereo to a dedicated amplifier. Other types also exist, most significantly electrostatics that use a charged panel membrane to produce a distinctly refined sound. These are supplied with their own dedicated amplifiers, which tends to increase the price.

Cans are split into several types. There are open and closed-back designs, the latter being best for noisy (or noise sensitive) environments as they minimise leakage and intrusion. Open-back types tend to have a more open, less 'in-head' sound. There are also three variants of earpad design: circumaurals enclose the ear and press on your head, supra-aurals press on

the ear and intra-aurals sit in the ear and are particularly popular with personal stereo users.

Getting the best from your cans

Getting a good result with headphones is not quite as straightforward as it should be. Merely plugging them into the output on your CD player or amp will not give particularly engaging results unless you are very lucky. If you are planning on serious listening, invest in a dedicated amp – the increase in dynamics is not in the least bit subtle. A variety of models are made and prices start at around £80 for a QED, a little more for designs from, say, Creek or Musical Fidelity. And if you're really into cans, look up the valve-powered Earmax.

Our favourite HEADPHONES

🏆 BEST BUY 👍 EDITOR'S CHOICE

Stereo headphones

BADGE?	PRODUCT	£	COMMENTS	SPECIFICATIONS							
				ELECTROSTATIC	SUPRA-AURAL	CIRCUMAURAL	OPEN BACK	CLOSED BACK	WEIGHT (g)	3.5MM JACK ADAPTOR	ISSUE NUMBER
🏆	AKG K44	20	Lively, enjoyable and remarkably detailed: a bargain			●		●	190	●	219
🏆	AKG K270 Studio	129	Pro oriented design which is very transparent and great with acoustic material			●		●	270	●	230
👍	AKG K1000	650	Neutral, analytical and completely out of the head sound, suitable for connection to speaker outputs only				●		270	●	244
	Audio Technica ATH-D40fs	105	Detailed and involving sound with a professional 'studio' quality appeal			●		●	250	●	194
🏆	Beyerdynamic DT990	160	Impeccable balance, very extended bass and treble, and bags of detail place this model ahead of the pack			●	●		250	●	245
🏆	Grado SR-60	90	For sheer musical enjoyment these are hard to beat. Retro styling may not be to everyone's taste		●			●	200	●	194
🏆	Grado SR325i	310	Highly sophisticated and detailed sound with great extension: check for comfort		●			●	200	●	270
🏆	Philips HP890	70	A remarkably sophisticated and very comfortable headphone			●	●		330	●	219
	Sennheiser HD595	150	Technology from upmarket HD650 model makes this a very revealing headphone that's also extremely comfortable			●	●		270	●	266
👍	Sennheiser HD650	300	Astonishing resolution and hardly less impressive tonal balance make this a true hi-fi experience			●	●		260	●	252
👍	Stax SRS-2020 Basic Sys. II	349	Luxury option at its price, but the sound delivery is five-star quality all the way	●			●	●	295	●	205
👍	Stax SR-001 Mk II	239	Expensive and power hungry, but this electrostatic drags personal stereo into the world of high fidelity	●	●			●	280	●	268

SPECS KEY **ELECTROSTATIC** Uses electrostatic film instead of more common cone or dome dynamics. **SUPRA-AURAL** Earpads sit on ear rather than around it. **CIRCUMAURAL** Earpads rest on the head around the ears. **OPEN BACK** Vented capsules let sound in and out. **CLOSED BACK** Sealed capsules. **WEIGHT** In grams. **3.5MM JACK ADAPTOR** Allows connection to personal stereos, computers etc.



TacT-Lyngdorf Specialist

Affordable Digital Audio Amplification and Room Correction Systems that offer the Ultimate performance in your living space.

For further information, advice or to arrange an audition please call, email or visit our web site.

Formula One audio systems
Specialist Audio Consultants

(t) 020 8480 3333
(m) 079 18 022 870

info@formulaoneaudio.com
www.formulaoneaudio.com

Formula One audio systems
one formula: to create the right system for you

SALE
100s OF
PRODUCTS
REDUCED

FINAL REDUCTIONS
SALE ENDS 25 FEBRUARY
MASSIVE SAVINGS ONLINE AND IN-STORE
WHEN THEY'RE GONE, THEY'RE GONE
WWW.SUPERFI.CO.UK/SALE

**TURNTABLE
GOLDRING GR1.2**

- www.superfi.co.uk exclusive
- Includes Goldring Elektra cartridge
- High-quality tonearm
- £99.95 (Was £139.95, Save £40)



WAS: £139.95
SAVE: £40.00

£99.95

HI-FI AND HOME CINEMA SPECIALISTS

Acoustic Energy, Apollo, Arcam, Audiolab, B&W, Creek, Denon, Elac, Epos, Grado, Humax, KEF, Linn, Marantz, Mission, MJ Acoustics, NAD, Onkyo, Panasonic, Pioneer,

Pro-Ject, QED, Rotel, Sennheiser, Sony, Sound Organisation, Soundstyle, Tannoy, Topfield, Wharfedale, Yamaha and many more top brands.

Not all products are available from all outlets: please call, or check online at www.superfi.co.uk

Superfi

**TURNTABLE
PRO-JECT DEBUT III**

- "It knocks the wind out of every other hi-fi source anywhere near the price"
- From £119.95 (Was £129.95, Save £10)



WHAT HI-FI?
AWARDS 2005
WAS: £129.95
SAVE: £10.00
FROM **£119.95**

**SPEAKERS
MISSION
VOLARE V63**

- High-class cabinet construction
- Quality drivers and electronics
- Real-wood veneer
- Black finish
- £299.95 (Was £599.95, Save £300)

EISA
AWARDS
WAS: £599.95
SAVE: £300.00
£299.95



**SPEAKERS
KEF iQ5**

- Floorstanding design
- Choice of finishes
- £349.95 (Was £399.95, Save £50)

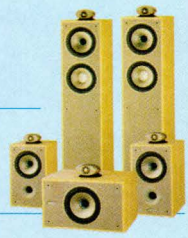


WHAT HI-FI?
AWARDS 2005
WAS: £399.95
SAVE: £50.00
£349.95

**SPEAKERS
TANNOY SENSYS RANGE**

- Maple, rosewood or black finishes
- For stereo and home-cinema systems

- Sensys DC1 bookshelf
- £299.95 (Was £449.95, Save £150)
- Sensys DC5.1
- DC1 + DC2 + DC Centre + TS10 subwoofer
- £1099.95 (Was £1799.95, Save £700)



- Sensys 2 floorstanding
- £299.95 (Was £399.95, Save £100)
- Sensys 5.1
- Sensys 1 + 2 + Centre + TS10 subwoofer
- £799.95 (Was £1199.95, Save £400)



- Tannoy TS10 subwoofer
- £299.95 (Was £399.95, Save £100)



**DAB TUNER
DENON TU1800DAB**

- DAB/FM/AM coverage
- RDS and DAB text services
- Black or silver. All metal case and aluminium fascia
- £199.95 (Was £249.95, Save £50)



WAS: £249.95
SAVE: £50.00
£199.95

WHAT HI-FI?
AWARDS 2005

**CD PLAYER
NAD C542**

- "Tight musical bass"
- High-end Burr Brown DACs for audiophile sound
- CD and HDCD playback
- £279.95 (Was £329.95, Save £50)



WAS: £329.95
SAVE: £50.00
£279.95

WHAT HI-FI?
AWARDS 2005
OCTOBER 2003

**CD/HD RECORDER
YAMAHA
CDRHDI500**

- 250GB built-in hard disk
- 375 hours of CD quality music
- "It's a stroke of genius"
- £499.95 (Was £599.95, Save £100)

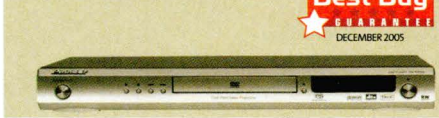


WAS: £599.95
SAVE: £100.00
£499.95

WHAT HI-FI?
AWARDS 2005

**DVD PLAYER
PIONEER DV585**

- Multi-region DVD player
- Multi-format: DVD-Audio, SACD, DivX, MP3, WMA, JPEG and VCD
- Black or silver
- £99.95 (Was £149.95, Save £50)



WAS: £149.95
SAVE: £50.00
£99.95

HOME CINEMA
Best Buy
GUARANTEE
DECEMBER 2005

**DAB TUNER
PURE DRX701ES**

- DAB/FM/AM coverage
- DAB text services
- Black or silver. All metal case and aluminium fascia
- £149.95 (Was £249.95, Save £100)



WHAT HI-FI?
AWARDS 2002

WAS: £249.95
SAVE: £100.00
£149.95

MAIL ORDER AND WEBSITE

MAIL ORDER HOTLINE
0800 7311 821

BUY ONLINE NOW AT
WWW.SUPERFI.CO.UK

Our website contains extensive product specifications, useful product guides and offers full order tracking.

STORES - EACH OF OUR BRANCHES HAVE EXCELLENT DEMONSTRATION FACILITIES

Birmingham
67 Smallbrook, Queensway
0121 631 2675

Derby
22 Sadler Gate
01332 360303

Leeds
7 King Edward St
0113 244 9075

Lincoln
271a High Street
01522 520265

London
2-4 Camden High St
020 7388 1300

Manchester
54 Bridge Street
0161 835 1156

Nottingham
15 Market Street
0115 941 2137

Stockport
68-70 Lower Hillgate
0161 429 9080

Stoke on Trent
51 Piccadilly, Hanley
01782 265010

CABLES



Wires to hook your system together



Hi-fi cables come in two varieties: interconnects and speaker cables.

Analogue interconnects come in preset lengths, generally with RCA (phono) plugs attached, though some equipment uses XLR connectors for balanced connection – this can be sonically advantageous, especially over longer runs. Speaker cable is commonly sold by the metre and can be used without plugs or can

be fitted with screw or solder-on types.

Choosing cables is not quite as straightforward as it might seem. One problem is that components interact with the cables you use and this often results in audible effects, but there are few cables that are fundamentally incompatible with any components, and we recommend the advice of a good dealer. In any case, you should look to spend as much as you can afford.

Digital cables come in two flavours: electrical and optical. In most instances electrical varieties sound better than optical, given the choice, but optical cables may be a better bet over long runs (10m+). Optical inputs/outputs usually use Toslink connectors, while most electrical types use RCA plugs, but some opt for BNC connection instead – check your components before you buy.

Our favourite CABLES

BEST BUY EDITOR'S CHOICE

Interconnects and speaker cables

BADGE?	PRODUCT	£	COMMENTS	SPECIFICATIONS				ISSUE NUMBER	
				STRANDED	SOLID CORE	COPPER	SILVER		DIGITAL CABLE TYPE
ANALOGUE INTERCONNECTS									
	Black Rhodium Illusion	77	An upfront, lively, exciting cable which still manages subtlety when needed. Slight coloration though		●	●			248
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Black Rhodium Opera	297	Very open, clear and detailed sound, with excellent extension at frequency extremes			●	●		260
	Brilliance Hi-Fi Synergy	83	High quality materials help give this cable fine imaging: bass not as extended as some	●		●			275
	Chord Company Signature	499	Silver plated, triple screened. Some granularity but great resolving ability, a good match for Chord Signature loudspeaker cable			●	●		255
<input type="checkbox"/>	Chord Company Chorus	215	Very even-handed balance with notably extended bass	●		●			259
	Kimber Silver Streak	242	Not the cheapest around, but more than justifies itself with terrific poise and balance of virtues	●		●			241
<input type="checkbox"/>	Kimber Timbre	89	Typical Kimber construction with ditto sound – clean, extended and detailed	●		●			248
<input type="checkbox"/>	Monster Interlink 400 Mk2	70	Really lively and enjoyable sound at a sensible price	●		●			224
<input type="checkbox"/>	Townshend DCT100	100	Unusual construction with copper strip conductors, giving very detailed sound, but just an occasional hint of hardness		●	●			241
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Townshend Isolda DCT	300	Unusual construction and cryogenically treated too: whatever the reason, a remarkably capable wire		●	●			234
<input type="checkbox"/>	van den Hul The Bay C5	55	Terrific detail, nice balance – a great cable	●		●			224
<input type="checkbox"/>	van den Hul The Well	85	Hybrid cable with carbon-fibre conductors added. Very slight bass coloration does little to detract from fine performance	●		●			241
<input type="checkbox"/>	van den Hul D102 Mk III	79	Hybrid conductors (carbon and copper) and intelligent construction give strong bass and excellent detail	●		●			234
<input type="checkbox"/>	Wireworld Luna 5	30	Authoritative bass and clear treble outperform many cables at twice the price	●		●			273
<input type="checkbox"/>	Wireworld Solstice 5	70	A cable with all-round appeal – treble is slightly 'dark' but bass is excellent and the overall balance very good indeed	●		●			259
DIGITAL INTERCONNECTS									
<input type="checkbox"/>	Black Rhodium PolarScherzo	135	Highly detailed sound with notably solid and stable stereo imaging	●		●		E	270
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Kimber Select KS2020	629	Provides a subtle but rewarding lift in musicality with any DAC, justifying the price		●	●		E	260
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	QED Qunex Signature 75	80	First-rate balance and imaging – ever so nearly as good as it gets at any price			●		E	265
<input type="checkbox"/>	QED Qunex SR75	50	Lots of bass and good clear midrange and treble at a sensible price	●		●		E	234
<input type="checkbox"/>	Supra ZAC	32	High grade fibre and quality plugs add up to a noticeable improvement over giveaway optical leads					O	259
<input type="checkbox"/>	van den Hul Optocoupler II	49	Noticeably has the edge over other optical leads, but still second best to electrical types					O	234
SPEAKER CABLES PRICE PER METRE									
	Black Rhodium S300	18	Tight, precise and extended bass makes this a great cable for rock 'n' roll	●		●			241
<input type="checkbox"/>	Black Rhodium Disco	4	Lively and energetic with pretty good detail, if a touch bass-light	●		●			274
	Chord Company Signature	117	Dynamic, solid sounding cable, but it's bulky and not very tractable	●		●			255
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Electrofluidics 20/20	45	Excellent bass extension and very fine performance elsewhere – one of the best all-round cables available		●	●			241
<input type="checkbox"/>	Kimber BVS	18	Beautifully full, open and transparent sound right across the board	●		●			227
	Kimber BPR	21	Bass very full, just occasionally a touch flabby, but detailed and sweet upper frequencies make this a good value cable	●		●			241
<input type="checkbox"/>	Kimber BTC	39	Very capable in all areas, particularly good at imaging and with firm bass. Price for 5m terminated pair	●		●			203
	QED Silver Anniversary XT	5.50	Full bass and nicely detailed treble combine with good imaging - a budget bargain	●		●			276
<input type="checkbox"/>	QED X-Tube XT300	10	A natural and well controlled sounding cable that's cost effective for mid-priced systems		●	●			234
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Townshend Isolda DCT	50	Cryogenically treated 'impedance matched' cable with stabilising components added: great sound all-round		●	●			241
	Wyrewizard Spellbinder	5.50	Sold off the reel, this entry-level cable is a surprisingly purist performer, lean yet powerful, with good detail resolution.		●	●			267
<input type="checkbox"/>	Wireworld Terra 5	5	Deep powerful bass, clear treble and very solid imaging add up to above-class performance	●		●			261
<input type="checkbox"/>	Wireworld Solstice 5	20	Unfriendly to handle, but makes up for it with very assured sound – heaps of bass and great insight	●		●			248
<input type="checkbox"/>	Wireworld Oasis 5 Biwire	38	Full-bodied and precise sound across the board – an excellent performer in bi-wire or single-wire mode	●			●		262

SPECS KEY **STRANDED** Cable has a number of (usually) twisted strands to conduct the signal. **SOLID CORE** Cable has one or more individually insulated strands to conduct the signal. **COPPER** Material used to form the conducting element of the cable. **SILVER** Alternative material used to form the conducting element of the cable. **DIGITAL CABLE TYPE** E – electrical, O – optical. Cables are one metre length unless otherwise stated.

High End Cable



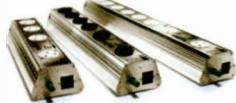
Chord Signature
Reference interconnects
and Speaker cable



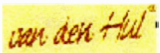
Stereovox Digital cable
HDXV 75 ohm
HDXV AES EBU 110 ohm



Chord Power cords



IsoTek Muli way



Interconnects, speaker cable
and Scart



Ortofon Rondo Range



Nordost Interconnects
and tonearm cables

Chord | Acoustic Zen | Stereovox | Nordost UK | van den Hull | IsoTek |
Black Rhodium DCT | Ayre | STAX | Ortofon | Turbosound | Secondhand

Free delivery worldwide on all interconnects
Up to 25% trade allowance on your old cables and equipment

www.highendcable.co.uk

or call Dave on 01775 761880

On a cold
winter's
day come
home to
something
warm and
inviting...

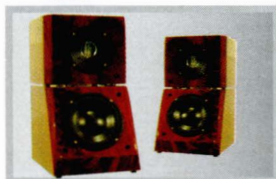
VISIT
OUR NEW
WEB SITE



Consonance
Cyber Signature 10



Consonance
CDP 50 CD Player

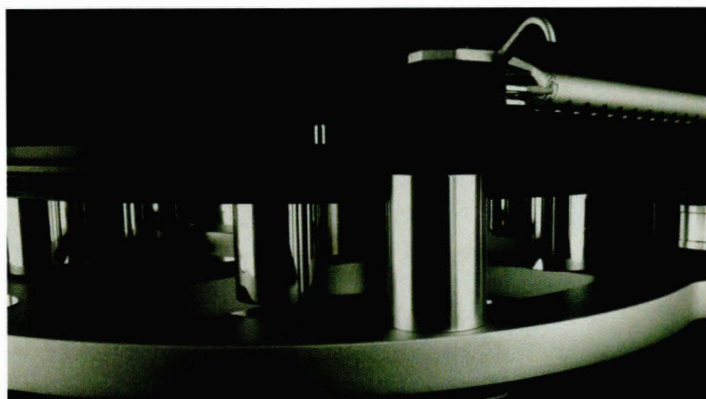


JAS-Audio
Orisa Loudspeakers

Monkey says:

acacoustics create the finest systems to suit you and your budget.

acacoustics, 47 Chartley Avenue, Neasden, London, NW2 7QY
Tel 020 8830 6509 | info@acacoustics.co.uk | www.acacoustics.co.uk



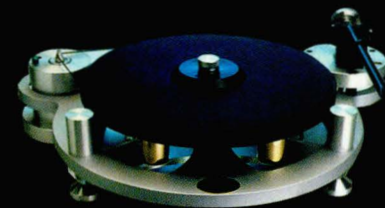
BRITISH DESIGN AND
ENGINEERING AT ITS BEST

After 35 years, Michell is still a family run business
with a team of dedicated and proud craftsmen,
producing quality turntables and accessories



Orbe SE

The Michell flagship for music lovers
who are not prepared to compromise



Gyro SE

The classic Michell turntable, refined
over many years of development to
its current level of performance.



TecnoDec

Entry level turntable incorporating
features from the classic Gyro



MICHELL ENGINEERING

J A Michell Engineering Ltd
2 Theobald Street, Borehamwood,
Hertfordshire, England, WD6 4SE

Telephone: 020-8953 0771
Fax: 020-8207 4688
michell-engineering.co.uk

STANDS AND SUPPORTS

Equipment racks and speaker stands



If you want to get the most from your source and amp components, it's important to consider good quality support. Dedicated equipment supports are racks and tables made specifically to hold hi-fi gear, and the best can have a profoundly positive effect on sound

because, for example, they can help to isolate kit from ground-borne vibrations and mechanical or electrical interference. Equally, if you own a pair of small 'bookshelf' or 'standmount' speakers, it's important to place them on good quality, purpose-built speaker stands.

Our favourite EQUIPMENT SUPPORTS

BB BEST BUY **EC** EDITOR'S CHOICE

Equipment supports

BADGE?	PRODUCT	£	COMMENTS	SPECIFICATIONS					
				HEIGHT (CM)	TOP PLATE SIZE (CM)	WELDED	NUMBER OF SHELVES	SHELF TYPE	ISSUE NUMBER
	Alphason A5-G	399	Nice looking, very solid and practical with a pretty well balanced sound, but lacks a little detail	80	66,46		5	Glass	247
	Atacama Equinox	280	Stable, modular design with style. Excellent bass transients and a fresh design concept	81	50,50	●	4	Glass	217
EC	Audiophile Base	615	Price is justified by its earth-shattering sonic abilities – a worthy upgrade	82	43		4	MDF	193
	Avid Isoschelf	1,100	An enthusiast's equipment support stand free from coloration, if a little fiddly to set up	87.5	48		5	MDF	193
BB	Clearlight Audio Aspekt	650	Stunning neutrality and detail from a well-damped design. Its performance makes the price tag good value	75	53.5,45		4	MDF	217
	Custom Design Aspect 650	270	Smart looks and practical thanks to adjustable shelves. Sound is fair with some loss of detail	66	46	●	4	Glass	206
BB	Custom Design Icon 400	600	Beautifully built, conveniently adjustable and with little sound of its own, a very classy rack	75	57, 41		5	Glass	263
BB	Custom Design Concept 400	700	Slightly drab looks, but great sound and efficient use of space ('Acoustic' version tested – standard version £300)	74	48,40		4	Metal	247
BB	Custom Design Vantige	449	'Acoustic Aluminium' shelves plus steel supports equal practicality plus musical satisfaction: just a shade bright	62	49,44		4	Metal	271
EC	Naim Fraim	1,825	Pricey but very classy looking and sounding, with modular flexibility	96	45,34		5	Glass	232
	Isobue 'The Stand'	460	Attractive modular design that's as easy on the ear as on the eye	47	48,40		4	MDF	247
	Quadraspire Q4 Reference	480	Excellent performance from the school of wobbly racks. Natural sounding and plenty of detail	51.5	49,39.5		4	MDF	217
	Russ Andrews Torlyte Rack	988	Attractive modular system made of very light Torlyte: a touch of added warmth is its only vice	68	54,49		4	Torlyte	240
BB	Sound Organisation Z560	195	Excellent value rack, five shelves too! Well balanced and under 200 quid!	92	50,40		5	Glass	217
EC	Townshend VSSS	1,300	The Seismic Sink goes all glassy and attractive, yet retains the same excellent vibration-killing sound quality	76	35,50		4	Glass	273

Our favourite SPEAKER STANDS

BB BEST BUY **EC** EDITOR'S CHOICE

Speaker stands

BADGE?	PRODUCT	£	COMMENTS	SPECIFICATIONS					
				HEIGHT (CM)	TOP PLATE SIZE (CM)	FILLABLE	WELDED	NUMBER OF LEGS	ISSUE NUMBER
BB	Atacama Nexus 6	60	An excellent all-round performer and a genuine hi-fi bargain	60,50	14.5,18	●		3	202
	Custom Design RS 300 MkII	100	A solid stand improving on the original, with better focus and detail	61,56,51	16.5,18	●		2	202
EC	hne Cableway	395	Looks great, sounds great, so start saving! Clean and sweet, and neutrality is exceptional with orchestral material	63	17,20	●		1	220
BB	Kudos S50	159	Formidable bass with real authority, and a wide dynamic range across a broad bandwidth	61	15, 20	●		1	220
BB	Partington Ansa 60	99	Elegant flat-packer 'disappears' sonically; restrained but neutral and coherent	62	18,15	●		4	232
EC	Partington Dreadnought BS	249	The Dreadnought Broadside is a superb stand for high-class standmount speakers – and it looks great too!	61	17,15	●	●	5	261
	Sound Organisation Z522	95	Very hefty build for the price helps to deliver a solid sound with good authority and drive	60	16	●		4	220
EC	Townshend Seismic Sink	499	Unique inflatable plinth that works wonders with decent floorstanders, as well as standmounted speakers	4	38,48			0	202

EQUIPMENT SUPPORTS SPECS KEY HEIGHT Of complete stand. **TOP PLATE SIZE (CM)** Width by depth of the supporting platform(s). Single figures indicate a square platform. **WELDED** As opposed to bolt-together construction. **NUMBER OF SHELVES** To put your kit on (different configurations are often available). **SHELF TYPE** Material that shelves are made of. **SPEAKER STANDS SPECS KEY** HEIGHT Of each stand, not including spikes. **TOP PLATE SIZE (CM)** Width by depth of platform. Single figures indicate a square platform. Speakers generally overhang top plates. **FILLABLE** The stand can be mass-loaded with sand and/or lead to stop ringing. **WELDED** As opposed to bolt-together construction. **NUMBER OF LEGS** That support the stand.

"It is, quite simply, the most impressive mains filter we've ever heard."
Hi-Fi News, Gll Titan

"...one of the most cost-effective home cinema and Hi-Fi upgrades there is."
What Hi-Fi, Gll Vision



IsoTek[®]
www.isoteksystems.com

"It is one of the most effective units I have had the pleasure of using."
Hi-Fi News, Gll Mini Sub

"The Gemini is a stunning performer giving a good overall tonal balance."
What Hi-Fi, Gll Gemini

IsoTek is available from over 150 UK stores
Call: 01635 291357 for your FREE brochure

IsoTek power conditioners start at just £30.00.

2003

2004

2005



2003 Hi-Fi Choice
Editors Choice
IsoTek Mini Sub



2003 What Hi-Fi?
Category Winner
IsoTek Mini Sub



2003 Hi-Fi Choice
Category Winner
IsoTek Mini Sub



2003 Hi-Fi News
Category Winner
IsoTek Mini Sub



2004 What Hi-Fi?
IsoTek Gll Vision



2004 Hi-Fi Choice
Category Winner
IsoTek Gll Mini Sub



2004 What Hi-Fi?
Category Winner
IsoTek Gll Vision



2004 Hi-Fi Plus
Category Winner
Horstak Thor by IsoTek



2005 What Hi-Fi?
IsoTek Gemini 6-Way



2005 Hi-Fi Choice
Editors Choice
Horstak Thor by IsoTek



2005 What Hi-Fi?
IsoTek Titan

Hi-FiChoice Blue Band

FREE CD!

THE NEW FOR '06

GLAM! MY CRAZY 70s BY MICK ROCK

★ CLASSIC ★ ROCK

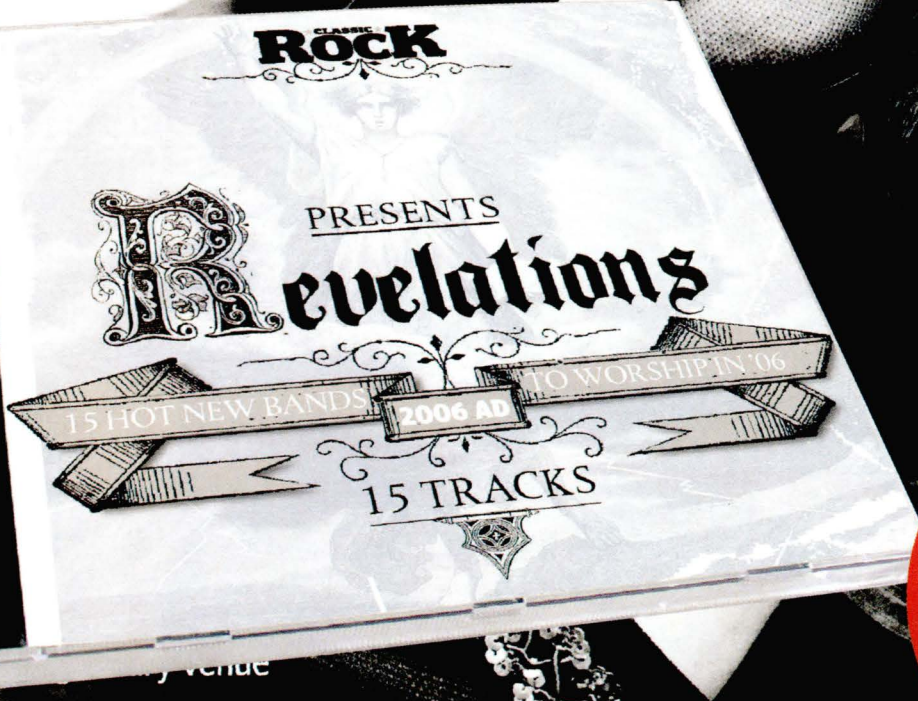
FEB. 2006
ISSUE 89
£4.25

HIGH VOLTAGE / ROCK 'N' ROLL

Rats! Ghosts!
Slippermen!
The **weirdest**
concept
album ever!

GENESIS

THE INSIDE STORY OF THE LAMBS LIES DOWN ON BROADWAY



**CREEDENCE
CLEARWATER
REVIVAL
SUPERTRAMP
WHITESNAKE
THE FACES**

**ON
SALE
NOW!**

HIGH VOLTAGE ROCK 'N' ROLL. EVERY MONTH.

★ CLASSIC ★
ROCK

GLOSSARY

TECHNICAL TERMS

5.1-CHANNEL AUDIO Six discrete channels, typically front left and right, centre, surround left and right, and LFE (Low Frequency Effects) for a subwoofer.

BALANCE Most loudspeakers have a characteristic frequency balance resulting from emphasising parts of the audio range and/or de-emphasising others.

BASS The lowest three octaves of the audio band – 'low bass' refers to the bottom octave (20-40Hz), 'mid-bass' the middle octave (40-80Hz) and 'upper bass' the top octave (80-160Hz).

BI-AMP (sometimes tri-amp). Loudspeakers equipped with separate access terminals to each drive unit can be driven by separate (matching) power amplifiers for each driver.

BI-WIRE (sometimes tri-wire). Loudspeakers with separate access terminals to each drive unit can be driven by separate cable runs between the amp and each driver.

CD-R Recordable CD that cannot be erased, though discs that have not been completely filled can have tracks added until the disc is finalised.

CD-RW Re-writable or re-recordable CD, incompatible with older CD players.

CLASS A The operation of an amplifying stage or device in which current always flows, as opposed to Class B, where some of the devices are effectively turned off some of the time. Class A tends to have the advantage of offering lower distortion, while Class B tends to generate less heat.

CLASS AB Most practical amps operate in Class A for the first fraction of a watt and Class B thereafter.

CLIPPING An amplifier's output waveform is 'clipped' if the volume is advanced too far and no more 'volts' are available to sustain ever-increasing power levels. Distortion increases dramatically at this point.

CLOCK Any electronic oscillator that is used to generate a timing reference signal. Used to synchronise the data being taken from a disc.

CROSSOVER A simple electrical network which divides the full bandwidth signal received from the power amplifier, apportioning appropriate parts of the spectrum to the various drive units.

DAB (digital audio broadcasting). Digital radio using frequencies in the 217.5-230MHz band. Broadcasters use varying degrees of compression and offer a broad range of programming.

DAC or Digital-to-Analogue Converter. The stage in any digital component at which incoming digital data is used to reconstruct a recognisable analogue (music) waveform.

DOLBY DIGITAL A compressed digital audio format that typically contains five or more entirely discrete channels, eg 7.1 EX where side and rear channels are used.

DOLBY PRO-LOGIC, DPL Fore-runner to DD that 'steers' information to the front L/R, centre and mono surround channels via an analogue matrix.

DRIVE UNIT/DRIVER A transducer which converts electrical energy into acoustic energy, eg bass driver, tweeter.

DSD (direct stream digital) The coding format used for SACD offers a frequency response of over 100kHz and a dynamic range over 120dB. It has over four times the data capacity of CD.

DSP (digital signal processor). Integrated circuit that handles the decoding of digital audio streams. In 5.1 processors, it separates the left from right and front from rear, while managing the various bass options.

DTS or Digital Theatre Sound. Competitor to Dolby Digital with a reduced 4:1 compression ratio that, ostensibly, promises higher quality.

DVD-AUDIO High-resolution variant on DVD offering up to 192kHz bandwidth and 24-bit dynamic range. Discs are compatible with standard DVD players.

ELECTRICAL DIGITAL Any digital connection that uses an electrical cable rather than optical. Includes the balanced ('AES/EBU') interface.

FILTERS Filters are intrinsic to digital audio, both analogue and digital. These are often very sophisticated in design, and in total they probably have rather more to do with the 'personality' of CD player sound than most other factors.

FREQUENCY RESPONSE The range of frequencies, from low to high, which a loudspeaker will reproduce.

IMPEDANCE With speakers, the complex electrical load that a loudspeaker presents to the amplifier driving it.

JITTER An insidious distortion specific to digital audio caused by imprecision in the clock, used to regulate the conversion of data into analogue audio.

KBPS (Kilobits per second) Digital data rate measurement system used primarily with highly compressed formats such as MP3, DAB etc. The higher the amount, the better the quality.

LINE LEVEL Practically every modern source component (except phono cartridges) gives an output in the region of 1-2V, referred to as 'line level'. It follows that all inputs labelled 'CD', 'tuner', 'aux' or 'tape' are designed for this input level and are thus interchangeable.

LOSSLESS COMPRESSION A method of reducing the number of data bits (density) without corrupting the original description of the musical signal.

LOSSY COMPRESSION Reduction in data density by recourse to a complex psycho-acoustical model that predicts what is, and what is not, 'audible' within a sequence of music.

MIDRANGE The middle three or so octaves of the audio band, where the ear

is most sensitive, covering the approximate frequency span from 160Hz up to 3kHz

MP3 (MPEG layer 3) Lossy compression format for digital audio that drastically reduces data content in order to squeeze music through internet connections or allow hundreds of CDs to be stored on a hard disc.

OUTPUT IMPEDANCE A measure of resistance to alternating current, a source with low output impedance (below 100 ohms) helps ensure compatibility with most amplifiers, even with long interconnect cables.

PCM (pulse code modulation) The digital coding system for analogue waveforms used for CD and DVD. Quality is limited by the oversample and bit rates used – CD is 44.1kHz/16-bit while DVD-A is capable of 192kHz/24-bit.

PRESENCE BAND Critical section of the audio band at the point where midrange and treble meet.

QUANTISATION NOISE A form of distortion or noise resulting from errors in the description of the musical signal by the digital code.

SACD (Super Audio CD) was launched in 1999 and is a Sony/Philips format based on DSD coding that offers high resolution stereo and multichannel sound from hybrid discs that can also be played on ordinary CD drives.

SAMPLE RATE The rate at which the musical waveform is sliced up into discrete chunks. For CD, this is 44.1kHz or once every 0.022msec. DVD will also support 48kHz and 96kHz.

SENSITIVITY The relative loudness that a speaker generates for a specific voltage input. Expressed in decibels per watt (dB/W), measured 1m from the speaker.

THX Standards system for home cinema set-ups which includes amplifier power and speaker dispersion characteristics. The latest THX Ultra 2 standard is more stringent than THX Select.

TOSLINK The proprietary name given by Toshiba to the optical fibre signal transmission system it invented for consumer applications.

TRANSISTOR/MOSFET The two main types of power semiconductor used in solid state amplifier output stages.

TREBLE High frequencies, the top end of the audio band, ie above 3kHz.

TWEETER Treble driver.

TWO/THREE-WAY Loudspeaker crossovers split the signal into two or three frequency bands, a two-way speaker can have more than two drive units.

WATTS (per channel) The watt is the unit of electrical power and the WPC rating is the maximum average undistorted power that an amp can deliver to a typical speaker. However, speaker sensitivity variations can make more difference than amplifier output.

WOOFER Bass driver.

DESCRIPTIVE TERMS

AGGRESSIVE Forward and bright sonic character.

AMBIENCE The impression of an acoustical space, such as the performing hall in which a recording was made.

ANALYTICAL Highly detailed.

ARTICULATE Intelligibility of voice(s) and instruments and the interactions between them.

ATTACK The leading edge of a note and the ability of a system to reproduce the attack transients in music.

BALANCE Essentially tonal balance, the degree to which one aspect of the sonic spectrum is emphasised above the rest. Also channel balance, the relative level of the left and right stereo channels.

BODY Fullness of sound, with particular emphasis on upper bass. Opposite of thin.

BOXY The sound of a loudspeaker with audible cabinet resonances.

BRIGHT A sound that emphasises the upper midrange/lower treble.

DARK A tonal balance that tilts downwards with increasing frequency. Opposite of bright.

DECAY The fadeout of a note, it follows the attack.

DEFINITION (or resolution) The ability of a component to reveal the subtle information that is fundamental to high fidelity sound.

DEPTH (of image) The perception of music being reproduced behind the loudspeakers and inhabiting a reproduction of the acoustic space of the original recording.

DETAIL The most delicate elements of the original sound and those which are the first to disappear with lesser equipment.

DRY A sound that is devoid of 'juice', which usually comes across as fine-grained and lean. Also a loss of reverberation as produced by a damped environment.

DYNAMIC The suggestion of energy and wide dynamic range. Related to perceived speed as well as contrasts in volume both large and small.

EUPHONIC An appealing form of distortion that generally enhances perceived fidelity, often ascribed to the harmonic elaborations of some valve amps.

FAST Good reproduction of rapid transients which increase the sense of realism and 'snap'.

FOCUS A strong, precise sense of image projection.

FORWARD(NESS) Similar to an aggressive sound, a sense of the image being projected in front of the speakers and of music being forced upon the listener.

GRAINY A slightly raw, exposed sound which lacks finesse.

GRIP A sense of control and sturdiness in the bass.

GRUNT See grip.

HARD Uncomfortable, forward, aggressive sound with a metallic tinge.

HARSH Grating, abrasive.

IMAGING (stereo) The sense that a voice or instrument is in a particular place in the room.

JUICY Sound that has joie de vivre, energy and life.

LOW-LEVEL DETAIL The quietest sounds in a recording.

MUSICAL or musicality. A sense of cohesion and subjective 'rightness' in the sound.

NATURALNESS Realism.

OPAQUE Unclear, lacking transparency.

OPEN Sound which has height and 'air', relates to clean upper midrange and treble.

PACE Often associated with rhythm, a strong sense of timing and beat.

PRESENCE A sense of an instrument or voice occupying a place in the listening room.

PRESENCE RANGE The upper midrange.

SEISMIC Very low bass that you feel rather than hear.

SIBILANCE An emphasis of the 'S' sound, often heard on radio.

SNAP A system with good speed and transient response can deliver the immediacy or 'snap' of live instruments.

SPEED A fast system with good pace gives the impression of being right on the money in its timing.

STURDY Solid, powerful, robust sound.

THICK A lack of articulation and clarity in the bass.

THIN Bass light.

TIMBRE The tonal character of an instrument.

TIMING A sense of precision in tempo. See speed and pace.

TRANSIENT The leading edge of a percussive sound. Good transient response makes the sound as a whole more live and realistic.

TRANSPARENCY, TRANSPARENT A hear-through quality that is akin to clarity and reveals all aspects of detail.

TWEAK To tune a system or component in an attempt to get the best performance from it.

TWEAKER Someone who enjoys this process.

VEILED Loss of detail due to limited transparency.

WARM A fullness in the lower midrange/upper bass.

WEIGHT A sense of substance and underpinning produced by deep, controlled bass.

OUR BIGGEST EVER WINTER SALE

NOW ON!

directlinx "To instantly find these offers online, enter the code into the directlinx box on our website."

SONY Double Cassette Deck

with Dolby HX Pro Circuit



directlinx 10C2

- Auto Reverse • Electronic Tape Counter • Full Logic Transport Controls
- High Density Permalloy Head • Multi AMS Track Search • Dolby Noise Reduction B/C • CD Synchro Recording
- Replay Play **Model No. TCWE475B**

empire direct price
RING NOW FOR THE HOTTEST DEAL
MAINLAND UK DELIVERY: £4.99

DENON Digital DAB Tuner

with Radio Data System (RDS)



directlinx 10C3

- DAB, FM (RDS) and AM Radio Tuner
- 100 DAB Presets / 100 FM/AM Presets • High Quality D/A Converter
- Three Levels of Dynamic Range Control • Last Function Memory Facility **Model No. TU1800DAB-SIL**

empire direct price
RING NOW FOR THE HOTTEST DEAL
MAINLAND UK DELIVERY: £4.99

SONY Super Audio CD Player

with Optical Digital Out for CD



directlinx 10C4

- Multi Channel and Stereo Super Audio CD, CD-R(RW) Playback with SACD / CD-Text • Super Audio D/A Converter • Multi Channel Audio Output • Super Audio CD Delay Time Adjustment **Model No. SCDXE597S**

empire direct price
RING NOW FOR THE HOTTEST DEAL
MAINLAND UK DELIVERY: £4.99

DENON Single CD Player

with CD-R / CD-RW Playback



directlinx 10C5

- Delta-Sigma Multi-Bit D/A Converter
- Bx Oversampling Digital Filter • Jog Dial • Music Calendar • Variable Analogue Output • 20-Track Program Play • Display Dimmer • Optical Digital Output **Model No. DCD685**

empire direct price
RING NOW FOR THE HOTTEST DEAL
MAINLAND UK DELIVERY: £4.99

BUY NOW AND PAY LATER...
NO DEPOSIT AND NOTHING TO PAY FOR 6 MONTHS*
ON ALL PRODUCTS OVER £399

YAMAHA A/V Speaker Package

with Automatic Standby Function



- Main and Rear Effect Speakers, Centre Speaker and Subwoofer
- Advanced Yamaha Active Servo Processing Design with 16cm Multi Range Driver • 8cm Cone Woofer and 1.9cm Balanced Dome Tweeter **Model No. NSP220**

empire direct price
RING NOW FOR THE HOTTEST DEAL
MAINLAND UK DELIVERY: £4.99

SONY A/V Speaker Package

2 Front, 4 Rear, 1 Centre and a Subwoofer



- 2 x 120w Floorstanding, 4 x 120w Satellite and a 120w Centre Speaker
- 150w Hi-Power Active Subwoofer
- 25mm Balanced Dome Tweeters
- 150mm Long Throw Dual Drivers
- Extended Definition Tuner / Satellite Speakers **Model No. SAVS3DDH**

empire direct price
RING NOW FOR THE HOTTEST DEAL
MAINLAND UK DELIVERY: £4.99

Click or call for the very latest prices

PLASMA SCREENS

MAKE	MODEL	MAKE	MODEL
Hitachi	32PD5200	Sharp	LC26GAGE
Hitachi	42PD5200	Sharp	LC20SH1E
Hitachi	42PD5300	Sharp	LC32GD1E
JVC	AV42B50	Sony	KLV17HR3B
LG	RZ42PX11	Sony	KLV17HR3S
Panasonic	TH37PE30B	Sony	KLV20SR3S
Panasonic	TH37PW7B	Sony	KLV23M1S1
Panasonic	TH42PE30B	Sony	KLV23M1B
Panasonic	TH42PW7B	Sony	KLV21SG2
Panasonic	TH50PV30B	Sony	KLV26HG2
Philips	37PF9946	Sony	KLV32M1S1
Philips	42PF9966	Sony	KLV32M1B
Philips	42PF9986	Sony	KDL32MRX1
Pioneer	PDP435XDE	Sony	KDL42MRX1
Pioneer	PDP435FDE-TE	Toshiba	14VL44B
Pioneer	PDP505XDE	Toshiba	17WL46B
Pioneer	PDP503MXEV	Toshiba	17WLT46
Samsung	PS42V4SX	Toshiba	23WL46
Samsung	PS50P3HXX	Toshiba	27WL46B
Sharp	LC37GD1E	Toshiba	30WL46B
Sony	KDEP42M1S1	Toshiba	32WL46P

A/V SYSTEMS

MAKE	MODEL	MAKE	MODEL
Sony	KEP37M1S	Aiwa	AVJX33
Sony	KDEP37XS1	Denon	DHT500SD
Sony	KDEP42XS1	Denon	DHT505SD
Sony	KDEP42MRX1	JVC	TH63
Vision	PM4230	JVC	TH55
Toshiba	42WP46B	JVC	TH58

LCD TELEVISIONS

MAKE	MODEL	MAKE	MODEL
DMTech	DML4117WD	JVC	THA75R
DMTech	DML4120SD	JVC	QP112AL
Hitachi	17LD4220	JVC	QP30AL
Hitachi	28LD5200	JVC	QPF70AL
JVC	LT17C50	JVC	QPF90AL
JVC	LT17D50	LG	LHT6740
JVC	LT23C50	Panasonic	SCHT520
JVC	LT26D50S	Panasonic	SCHT05
JVC	LT32D50S	Panasonic	SCHT870
LG	RZ15LA70	Panasonic	SCHT25R
LG	RZ20LA70	Panasonic	SCHT1500
LG	RZ17LZ40	Panasonic	SCST1S
LG	RZ26LZ50	Panasonic	SCHT37R
Loewe	MIMO15C	Philips	LX3900SA
Panasonic	TX20LA2	Pioneer	DCS222
Panasonic	TX22LX2	Pioneer	DCS323
Panasonic	TX26LXD1	Pioneer	DCS222MR
Panasonic	TX32LXD1	Pioneer	HC51S
Philips	15PF8946	Pioneer	DCS424
Philips	17PF9946	Pioneer	NSDV1000
Philips	23PF9946	Sanyo	DCS780
Philips	30PF9946	Sony	DAVD150
Philips	32PF9976	Sony	HTP1200
Philips	23HM8821	Sony	DAVSB200
Philips	32PF9986	Sony	HTDDW860
Philips	37PF9986	Sony	DAVSB300
Philips	42PF9986C	Sony	DAVSR1
Samsung	LE15E31SX	Sony	DAVSB500W
Samsung	LW20M11CX	Sony	DAVSR3
Samsung	LW17N23NX	Sony	DAVSR2
Sony	27LC3	Sony	HTR6100
Sony	30LD3	Sony	DAVSR4W
Sharp	LC15SH1E	Sony	DAVLF1
Sharp	LC15L1E	Thomson	DPL915VD
		Toshiba	SD44HK
		Yamaha	DVXS100
		Yamaha	DVXS120

We also stock the very latest in hi-fi systems and separates, in-car, photography, personal computers and much, much more...

ALL PRICES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

An Unbeatable Range of The Latest In Home Theatre & Hi-fi Separates...

YAMAHA

Home Cinema Amplifier
with 7 Channel Surround Sound



- 7 x 100w Max. Output
- HDTV (720p/1080i) Compatibility
- Quad-Field CINEMA DPS and 14 Surround Programmes
- Digital ToP-ART and High Current Amplification
- Dialogue Lifting

Model No. DSPAX757SETI

empire direct price
RING NOW FOR THE HOTTEST DEAL
MAINLAND UK DELIVERY: £4.99

directlink 10CB

SONY

'E' Line Pure Amplifier
with Remote Commander



- 2 x 70w (4 ohms) Output Power
- Source Direct Switch
- Loudness Switch
- 6 x Inputs
- Bass, Treble and Balance Control
- Phono Input
- Suitable for Moving Magnet Turn Table

Model No. TAFE370S

empire direct price
RING NOW FOR THE HOTTEST DEAL
MAINLAND UK DELIVERY: £4.99

directlink 10CB

YAMAHA

Home Cinema Receiver
with Quad-Field CINEMA DSP



- 510w (6 x 85w) Maximum Output
- Dolby Pro-Logic II, Dolby Digital EX, DTS-ES and DTS 96/24 Compatibility
- 3x Digital Inputs (2x Optical and 1x Coaxial)
- 6.1 Channel Surround Sound

Model No. RXV457BL

empire direct price
RING NOW FOR THE HOTTEST DEAL
MAINLAND UK DELIVERY: £4.99

directlink 10CB

SONY

Home Cinema Receiver
with AV Synchro Function



- 7 x 150w Max. Output
- Dolby® Digital EX / DTS-ES / DTS NEO:6 Decoder / DTS 96/24
- RDS Tuner with 30 Presets
- Subwoofer Crossover
- Digital Cinema Sound EX

Model No. STRDE698S

empire direct price
RING NOW FOR THE HOTTEST DEAL
MAINLAND UK DELIVERY: £4.99

directlink 10CC

DENON

Home Cinema Receiver
with Equal Power 7 Amplifier Channels



- 7 x 115w Maximum Output
- Dolby Pro-Logic IIx, Dolby Digital and DTS Decoder
- Dolby Digital EX and Complete DTS-ES
- Pre-Outs for 7.1 Channels
- On-Screen Display
- RDS Tuner

Model No. AVR1906S

empire direct price
RING NOW FOR THE HOTTEST DEAL
MAINLAND UK DELIVERY: £4.99

directlink 10CD

DENON

Home Cinema Receiver
with Equal Power 6 Amplifier Channels



- 6 x 110w Max. Output
- Dolby Pro-Logic IIx, Dolby Digital and DTS Decoder
- Convertor for All Channels
- 32-Bit Floating Point SHARC-DSP
- Audio Delay Adjustment Function

Model No. AVR1706

empire direct price
RING NOW FOR THE HOTTEST DEAL
MAINLAND UK DELIVERY: £4.99

directlink 10CE

It's not just our website that makes us No.1!

THE UK'S NUMBER ONE

With over 1 million customers and 10,000 items in stock, we're No. 1 online in the UK

ALL THE INFO YOU'LL EVER NEED!

Online Product Brochures, View Products in 3D and Super Close-Up, Product Guides - How to use your Equipment, Independent Reviews from Customers, Jargon Buster...

...AND MANY MORE FEATURES ONLINE NOW!

PAY UP TO 30% LESS

We check online and in-store to guarantee our prices are always up to 30% lower

LOWEST PRICE GUARANTEE

Find it cheaper and we'll beat the price by 20% of the difference!**

AWARD WINNERS

Empire Direct are winners of the National E-Commerce Award, as well as being ranked a Hitwise Top 10 Website and 'Boys Toys' Top 100 Worldwide website

NATIONWIDE DELIVERY

All orders are normally delivered within 2 days to any address on the UK mainland

7 DAYS PEACE OF MIND

Our Price Guarantee extends up to 7 days after you purchase your goods

ALL THE TOP BRANDS

From Aiwa to Zanussi you'll find all the best brands at Empire Direct

..WIN..WIN..

A SUPERB 5.1 MEGAPIXEL SONY DIGITAL STILL CAMERA TO BE WON* EVERY MONTH ON-LINE!

No purchase necessary, simply register on-line!

CAN'T FIND WHAT YOU WANT?

Visit www.empiredirect.co.uk where we have over 10,000 top brand electrical products online now!

empiredirect.co.uk
...just a click away!

Order On-Line at www.empiredirect.co.uk

Order By Phone: 0870 835 1943
Mon - Fri: 9am - 8pm Sat: 9am - 6pm Sun: 10am - 5pm

APR 29.9%

* Example - Cash Price £449.99. Pay nil deposit and nothing for 6 months. Then either pay the cash price of £449.99 by the due date with nothing further to pay, or by 42 monthly instalments of £21.92 per month. Total payable £920.64 APR 29.9%. Finance is subject to status. Written quotations available on request. **Low Price Guarantee applies providing the item is identical, brand new and in stock - see website for terms and conditions of price guarantee. †See website for terms and conditions of competition. Head Office: Empiredirect, The Clock Buildings, Roundhay Road, Leeds LS8 2SH.

ADAMS & JARRETT

0800 146569

Music Fidelity

Cyrus

Denson

Rel

Kef

Isotek

Audio Quest

Audio Vector

Nad

Marantz



NORMAN ROAD, ST LEONARDS-ON-SEA, EAST SUSSEX
Tel: 01424 437165 Fax: 01424 444148

Atacama
Audio Lab
Audio Quest
Castle
Cyrus
KEF
Marantz
Meridian
Michell
M. J. Acoustics
Monitor Audio
Mordaunt-Short
NAD
Nordost
Origin Live
Ortofon
Pathos
Pickering
Primare
Pro-Ac
Project
QUAD
Roksan
Shanling
SME
Stands Unique
Sugden
Tannoy
TEAC
Trichord
Unison Research
Van Den Hul
Wharfedale
Yamaha
& Lots more...

Award Winning Retailers...

Vickers Hi-Fi

The North of England Hi-Fi Specialists

- ▶ Quality Hi-Fi separates from £100 to £10,000
- ▶ Widest choice in the area ▶ Independent advice
- ▶ Consumers Choice Gold Award Winners
- ▶ Over 35yrs experience ▶ Qualified staff
- ▶ Comfortable dem rooms ▶ Superb showrooms
- ▶ Main road location ▶ Major car parks nearby
- ▶ Insurance estimates ▶ Service Dept.
- ▶ Up to 3 years Interest Free Credit* only 20% deposit
- ▶ Carriage Free Mail Order (inc. credit) *subject to status
- ▶ Delivery & installation
- ▶ Part Exchange
- ▶ Open 10:30am - 5:30pm 6 days: Mon. to Sat.
- ▶ Visa, Mastercard, Switch etc.

24 Gillygate, York YO31 7EQ

Tel: 01904 629659

www.Vickers-HiFi.co.uk

Specialists in high fidelity sound reproduction - since 1967

SUFFOLK

signals
hi-fi for grown-ups

- > hardware
- atc
- epos
- harbeth
- in-focus
- lexicon
- michell
- mj acoustics
- naim audio
- neat
- primare
- sme
- trichord
- > cartridges
- goldring
- lyra
- ortofon
- sumiko
- > cables
- chord company
- nordost
- dnm
- > headphones
- grado
- beyer
- stax

l p s w i c h
(01473) 655171
fax (01473) 655172
email: enq@signals.uk.com
www.signals.uk.com

LONDON

ORANGES & LEMONS



020 7924 2040

www.oandlhifi.co.uk

61 Webbs Road, Battersea SW11 6RX

email: oranges.lemons@virgin.net



YORKSHIRE

Audio reflections Limited
REAL HI-FI SYSTEMS

For friendly advice or to arrange your demonstration of some of the World's finest audio equipment contact JOHN BLEAKLEY on LEEDS (0113) 204 9458 (evening calls welcome). Generous part exchange allowance always available. Agencies include: ATC • AVI • Byston • Chord • Gamut • Nordost • Primare • REL • Wilson Benesch • The Professional Monitor Co • Wadia and many more.



Phone: LEEDS (0113) 204 9458
Fax: LEEDS (0113) 253 3098
Email: info@audioreflections.co.uk
Website: www.audioreflections.co.uk

www.hifichoice.co.uk

LINCOLNSHIRE

Lend us your ears and we'll blow your mind . . .

Arcam, ATC, B & W, Celestion, Denon, Kef, Marantz, Meridian, Mitchell, Mission, NAD, Pioneer, Panasonic, Quad, Rotel, Ruark, Sony, Tag McLaren, Tannoy, Teac, Technics, Yamaha and more.

Audition the very best at Lincolnshire's premier Hi-Fi dealer . . .

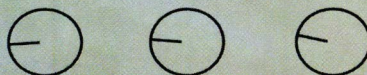
MANDERS
HI-FI LTD.

AUDIO • TV • VIDEO & SATELLITE SALES

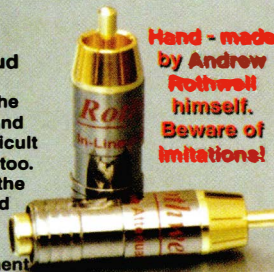
2-4 EDWARD STREET (Off Pasture St.)
GRIMSBY. TEL: (01472) 351391

SOUND IMPROVEMENTS

Is This Your Problem?



Here's Your Answer



Hand-made by Andrew Rothwell himself. Beware of imitations!

It's a common problem. The usable range on the volume control is all down at the bottom end and fine control at low listening levels is either difficult or impossible. The noise floor may be audible too. There is now a simple and effective solution - the Rothwell In-Line Attenuators. They can be used with pre/power or integrated amps to cure the problems of excess gain and bring sonic benefits even with the most expensive equipment.

The cost is only £39 per pair delivered. To order, call

01204 366133 or visit www.rothwellaudioproducts.co.uk

Excellent reviews in Hi-Fi Choice, Hi-Fi World, Hi-Fi Plus, What Hi-Fi and www.tnt-audio.com

NOTEWORTHY AUDIO

hi-fi by enthusiasts

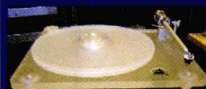
BELOW IS A SMALL SELECTION FROM OUR RANGE OF CAREFULLY CHOSEN EQUIPMENT

Audio Note lo 1 MC cartridge. Surely one of the best cartridges in existence, the lo uses Alnico magnets and pure silver coils to extract everything from your LP's in the most musical way possible: £1,595.

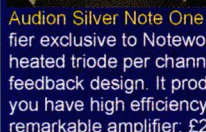


Note products cables Exciting new range of high quality cables which starts with the £350 InterNote (pictured left) and extends to the PurerNote at £750. These cables use only the finest materials including pure silver conductors and natural cotton insulation.

The Something Solid XR has become our reference equipment support, its novel use of balsa end grain shelves and tensioned shelf suspension give it a neutral presentation that lets equipment perform without added artifice. 4 tier version available from £600. (Stop press: new 'Economy' version now available from just £300).



Clearaudio Emotion The Clearaudio Emotion turntable package includes the Satisfy tonearm and the Classic cartridge for just £655 and offers astonishing value for money.



Audio Note Silver Note One This is a specially commissioned amplifier exclusive to Noteworthy Audio. It uses a single 2A3 directly heated triode per channel in an ultra purist single ended zero feedback design. It produces 4 of the finest watts available, if you have high efficiency speakers you need to hear this remarkable amplifier: £2,500.



Music first Audio TVC pre amplifier Instead of using resistors to control the volume the TVC uses stepped transformers. Incredible transparency without any of the dynamic compression found in conventional passive preamplifiers. Copper wired version: £1,500. All silver wired: £2,750.



Opus Continuo Reference turntable with Cantus parallel tracking tonearm. Designed to compete with a master tape the Opus sounds exceptionally musical. Combination pictured costs £3,200 including The Cartridge Man Music Maker 3.



Noteworthy Audio

36 Buckingham Street, Aylesbury, Bucks, HP20 2LH. Tel: 01296 422224

www.noteworthyaudio.co.uk



www.avihifi.com



Tel: 01453 752656
Fax: 01453 752777
www.avihifi.com
sales@avihifi.co.uk

AVI International Ltd
Suites 6 & 7 Lightpill Mill
Bath Rd Trading Estate
Stroud, Gloucestershire
GL5 3QF

MAIL ORDER

IAN HARRISON HIFI

SALE NOW ON!

Mail order supplier of Hi-Fi for 17 years

Michell, Clearaudio, Graham, SME, Hadcock, Transfiguration, Denon, Koetsu, Trichord, EAR, Tom Evans, Stax, Harbeth, Epos, Gamut, Graaf, Pathos-Acoustics, Unison Research, Van den Hul and many more.

All goods are brand new and fully guaranteed. Goods are not supplied on approval. Free UK delivery.

Details and prices from: Ian Harrison, 7 Mill Hill, Repton, Derby DE65 6GQ, UK. Tel: 01283 702875 9am-9pm inc Sundays

BIRMINGHAM



Tues - Sat 10.00am - 5.30pm
Free Car Parking

CHORD CO.
CREEK • EPOS • EXPOSURE
HARMON KARDON • INFINITY • LINN
MARANTZ • MONITOR AUDIO • MORDAUNT SHORT
NAD • ORTOFON • PROJECT • PURE • REL • ROKSAN
THEMESCENE • TRICHORD • VAN DEN HUL

Wide selection of HiFi furniture and accessories
Finance Facilities

37 HIGH STREET, ALDRIDGE. 01922 457926
www.soundcinergy.co.uk

HI-FI CHOICE
TO ADVERTISE HERE CALL
BEVAN WALSH ON
01225 442244





- Amphion • Arcam • ART • Audiolab • AVID • Ayre • B&W •
- Classé • Focal.JM Lab • Linn Products • MJ Acoustics • Monitor Audio •
- Naim Audio • Nautilus • Primare • Quadraspire • Rega • REL • Rotel •
- Shahinian • Spondor • Sugden • Thiel • Wadia •



See us at the Manchester Hi-Fi Show
 28 & 29 January 2006, at the Radisson Hotel, Manchester Airport

Acoustica
 17 Hoole Road
 CHESTER CH2 3NH
01244 344227
www.acoustica.co.uk

Acoustica
 114 Wolverhampton Road
 STAFFORD ST17 4AH
01785 258216
www.acoustica.co.uk

Griffin Audio
 3 Gibb Terrace, Gibb St
 BIRMINGHAM B9 4AA
0121 224 7300
www.griffinaudio.co.uk

To place your company in front of **£373,434,000** call Bevan Walsh on **01225 788255**

The Missing Link

HI-FI CHOICE

To advertise here call Bevan Walsh on 01225 442244 or email bevan.walsh@futurenet.co.uk

“We have been more than pleased with the advertising that we have done recently with your magazine and have had very positive returns from buyers (and sellers, as it happens...we were recently contacted by a seller offering us a large amount of stock at a very good price...the seller found us in HI-FI CHOICE). The advertising works and we enjoy dealing with you. As always, it is a pleasure to communicate with you...many thanks for your genuinely friendly attitude, help, consideration and very professional courtesy.”

Very Best Wishes.....Jan and Mark, The Missing Link”

HI-FI CHOICE

TO ADVERTISE HERE CALL
BEVAN WALSH ON

☎ 01225 442244



O'Brien Hi-Fi

ARCADIS • AUDIO NOTE • AUDIO RESEARCH • AUDIO TECHNICA • AVID • BEYER • CARLETALK • CHORD • CREEK • DIAPASON • DYNARECTOR • EPOS • GOLDRING • JADIS • JELKIN • MICHELL • MOON • NAD • NAIM • ONKYO • OPERA • OPTIMUM/SPECTRUM • QED • REGA • RESON • SENNHEISER • SME • SONNETER • SONUS FABER • SUGDEN • TEAC • THORENS • TRANSPARENT CABLES • UMSON RESEARCH • ORION LIVE • TRIANGLE • WATERFALL • WILSON

Clearance/Secondhand/Ex Demo Equipment • Details on Request

	Was	Now		Was	Now
ATCSIA2 amplifier (s/h)	£2500	£1150	Musical Fidelity T1 tuner (s/h)	£500	£395
Audio Analogue Bellini Pre (s/h)	£625	£395	NAD 7760		Offers
Audio Analogue Donizetti Mono (pr) (s/h)	£1050	£495	NAD C542 (ex-demo)	£330	£210
Audio Analogue Donizetti Stereo power (s/h)	£595	£350	Onix various models		please enquire
Audio Analogue Maestro CD (new)	£1150	£895	Onix A60MK11 (new)	£795	£375
Audio Analogue Paganini CD (ex-demo)	£895	£395	Onix A120MK11 (new)	£995	£495
Epos M12 (s/h)	£449	£199	Prologue 3 and 5 (ex-demo)	£1898	£1600
Exposure 2010 amplifier (new)	£599	£349	REL Strata ST111 (s/h)	£700	£395
Exposure Classic 35 amplifier (ex-demo)	£1600	£1200	Rogers Export Monitors (s/h)	£—	£149
Exposure 3010 amp (ex-demo)	£1000	£749	Sugden Phono Masters (ex-demo)	£650	£499
Garrard Zero 100S (78 rpm) (s/h)	£—	£75	Sugden Masterclass CD (new)	£2700	£2200
Garrard 401 (s/h)	£—	£POA	Sugden Bijuosystem (new)	£2647	£1650
Martin Logan Aeon (s/h) perfect	£3150	£1395	Sugden Masterclass Amplifier (new)	£3150	£2250
Monrio Asty amp (ex-demo) black	£450	£229	Theta Data 11 CD (newmech)	£1500	£800
Moon 5080 (3) (ex-demo)	£1550	£895			



AUDIO ANALOGUE



COPLAND



KRELL

0% Instant Finance Available - Written details on request
Demonstration room • Free car parking • Major Credit Cards
 Personal Export • Mail Order • Installation Service • Repair facilities
 • 5 mins walk Raynes Park BR20 mins Waterloo
 • 5 mins from A3 (Raynes Park B282 exit) • 25 mins M25 Junc 10

60 Durham Road, West Wimbledon, London SW20 0TW
 Tel: (020) 8946 1528/0331 Email: shop@obrienhifi.com
 Open 9.30-5.30 Tuesday-Saturday

www.hifichoice.co.uk

LONDON

Front End Problems?

contact:

The Cartridge Man

It doesn't have to cost an arm and leg to get the best
 – listen to my Koetsu – and – Decca – eater.
 Also agents for Croft, Moth, Hadcock & Mitchell & E.A.R, Graham Slee projects.
 Valve equipment re-build service available.
 – Plus cartridge re-tipping service

020 8688 6565

Website: www.thecartridgeman.com

DEVON

Audio Destination

> devons audio specialists

browse sit back choose
 relax listen simple

Stockists of: Audia, Audio Physic, Audion, Avid, Ayre, Bel Canto, Chapter Audio, Cairn, Chord, Final, Grand Prix Audio, Lexicon, McIntosh, Micromega, Monitor Audio, Moon, Nordost, Parasound, Primare, Project, Roksan, Ruark, Slax, Tannoy Prestige, Teac Esoteric, Thiel, Tivoli, Totem Acoustics, VDH, Veldyne and many more.

Call 01884 243 584

Open mon - sat: 9am - 5pm
 32B Bampton Street, Tiverton, Devon, EX16 6AH
 info@audiodestination.co.uk | www.audiodestination.co.uk

To advertise here
 please call
 01225 442244

Rochester Hi-Fi

30 HIGH STREET, ROCHESTER, KENT, ME1 1LD
 01634 880037

info@rochesterhi-fi.co.uk



ARCAM, ADVANTAGE, ATACAMA, AUDION, AUDIOPHILE BASE,
 AVI, BAT, BOULDER, CAIRN, CLEARAUDIO, CYMBAL, DALI,
 JMLAB, GAMUT, GOLDRING, GRADIENT, GRADO, GRAHAM SLEE,
 GRAVES AUDIO, LOEWE, LUMLEY, MERLIN MUSIC MAKER, MUSIC TOOLS,
 NAD, NOTTINGHAM ANALOGUE, OPTIMUM, PARTINGTON,
 PURE, QUADASPIRE, STELLO, TIVOLI, TRANSFIGURATION,
 USHER, VINCENT

CALL NOW TO UPGRADE YOUR SYSTEM

The new Naim dealer for Berkshire

hi-fi cinema



1 Mars House, Calleva Park
 Aldermaston, Berks RG7 8LA
 0118 982 0402
 www.hificinema.co.uk

SALES & SERVICES

REVOX SERVICE

THE MANUFACTURERS' APPOINTED SERVICE COMPANY

REVOX SERVICE

Correct Revox Spare Parts Pricing
24 Hour Estimation procedure
Manufacturer Upgrades and Advice
Delivery and Collection Service
Comprehensive Guarantees

Factory Trained Engineers
Rapid Response Turnaround
Full Revox range serviced
Written Technical Reports
Late Evening Opening

THE AR TECHNOLOGY LIMITED

TTL House, Sheeptick End, Near Lidlington, Bedfordshire, MK43 0SF
Telephone 01525 841999 Facsimile 01525 841009

HI-FI CHOICE

TO ADVERTISE HERE CALL
BEVAN WALSH ON

01225 442244

Naim...Meridian...Arcam...Tag McLaren...
Teac...Mission...Stands Unique...
and much, much more.

152a High Street, (Sharing ASDA Car Park) Bloxwich, Walsall

01922 493499



0121 321 2445

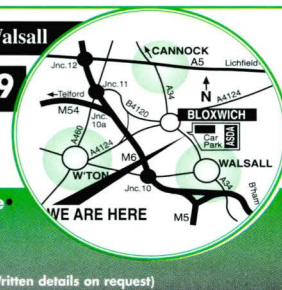


3 Hi-Fi Studios Home Trials Home Cinema Theatre
In House Service Department Mail order available

Late nights Thursdays - Open til 7pm

Interest Free Credit available

(On Selected Items, subject to 20% deposit. Written details on request)



MUSIC MATTERS

THE AUDIO SPECIALISTS



Our extensive range of products includes the very finest hi-fi and home cinema from Arcam, Audio Research, B&W, Chapter Audio, Chord, Cyrus, Denon, Dream Vision, Dynaudio, KEF, Krell, LAMM, Marantz, Martin Logan, Meridian, Michell, Mission, Monitor Audio, Musical Fidelity, Naim, Nordost, Panasonic, Pioneer, Project, Pure, Quad, REL, Rotel, Sennheiser, Sim2, SME, Sonus Faber, TEAC, Technics, Theta, Wharfedale, Wilson Benesch and Yamaha.

INTEREST FREE CREDIT ON SELECTED ITEMS APR 0%. Written details on request. Licensed Credit Broker.

Open Tuesday to Saturday 10.00 - 5.30. Late night (not Stourbridge) Wednesday until 6.30

www.musicmatters.co.uk



363 HAGLEY ROAD, EDGBASTON,
BIRMINGHAM B17 8DL.
TEL: 0121-429 2811 FAX: 0121-434 3298

93-95 HOBS MOAT ROAD, SOLIHULL,
WEST MIDLANDS B92 5JL
TEL: 0121-742 0254 FAX: 0121-742 0248

9 MARKET STREET, STOURBRIDGE,
WEST MIDLANDS DY8 1AB
TEL: 01384 444184 FAX: 01384 444968

10 BOLDMERE ROAD, SUTTON COLDFIELD,
WEST MIDLANDS B73 5TD
TEL: 0121 354 2311 FAX: 0121 354 1933

344 UXBRIDGE ROAD, HATCH END,
MIDDLESEX HA5 4HR
TEL: 020 8420 1925 FAX: 020 8420 1928

tom tom audio

A New Dawn for Naim and Tom Tom Audio...

...the only dealer in the world specialising purely in these world class products

Extensive selection of current Naim Audio product range on demonstration and the largest stock of pre-loved Naim Audio equipment on the planet

- Part exchanges very welcome
- Friendly help and advice
- Open 7 days till late
- Compare current with previous Naim ranges

New website at www.tomtomaudio.com

Tel • St Albans 01727 86 86 59



The new CM1 from Bowers & Wilkins - pure music for just £500



- B&W Nautilus
- Pure AVi
- Grado JmLab
- Naim Lutron
- Rega Sim
- Linn Denon
- M&K Fujitsu
- Arcam Fmj
- Nevo Attacama
- IsoTek Chord co
- Project Stax
- Triad Pioneer
- Goldring Systemline
- Vogel Beyer
- Mission Quadraspire
- and More..

Quality Audio Since 1985

THE **SOUND GALLERY**

65 Castle Street, High Wycombe, Bucks

www.soundgallery.co.uk

01494 531682



www.hifichoice.co.uk

**Make it
a date!**

24th – 26th
February 2006
10am – 5pm
every day
at the
Marriott City Centre
Hotel
Lower Castle St.
Bristol

The UK's favourite show -
now in its 19th great year!

SOUND & VISION

THE BRISTOL SHOW

Over 150 brands... with more still
booking every week!

**HI-FI, HOME CINEMA, FLAT SCREENS,
PROJECTORS, HIGH DEFINITION TELEVISION,
CUSTOM INSTALLATION - IT'S ALL AT BRISTOL**

Some early sneak previews... (and we know there are lots more
surprises in store!)

★ **SKY HIGH DEFINITION TV** – High-Definition will be the biggest
revolution in TV picture quality in decades. It's going to be bigger,
better and sharper and will transform TV viewing forever. Sky launches
its HD service in 2006. Come and talk to us about Sky HD. ★ **SHARP**
– launch of the world's largest, high definition LCD screen... the 65"
LC-65GD1E. ★ **DENON** – the AVR-4306, the world's first internet enabled
home cinema receiver. ★ **KEF** – launching a surprise new product!
★ **ARCAM** – the FMJ AV9 THX Ultra2 HDTV processor. ★ **CYRUS** –
new CD8 XT and CyrusLink models. ★ **NAD** – launching the incredible
Masters Series. ★ **NAIM** – nVi home cinema receiver and CDS555 CD
player. ★ **PIONEER** – a new High Definition Plasma TV. ★ **REGA** – the
first public outing for the new Apollo CD player. ★ **RUNCO & M&K**
– see and hear a stunning £100k home cinema system! ★ **ACOUSTIC
ENERGY** – the compact Aego M system and internet radio. **ECLIPSE**
– launching the TD510 Time Domain Monitors. ★ **AUDIONET** – 6 new
products to see! ★ **FOCAL** – Profile 928 floorstander and SR908
surround loudspeaker to complete the Profile range. ★ **WILSON
BENESCH** – Torus amplifier. ★ **BRYSTON** – see the new SP2.
★ **MERIDIAN** – see and hear the all new DSP3100 compact loudspeaker.
★ **PMC** – the wafer series of flat panel loudspeakers. ★ **PROJECTION
DESIGN** – the Model Three 1080p - single chip DLP projector.
★ **TECHNOLOGY** – check out the latest networking products from
Roku, Sonos, Acoustic Energy, Hifidelio and more... ★ **TOTEM
ACOUSTIC** – welcome in the new Tribe loudspeaker. ★ **RUARK** –
Crusader III & Ruark Vita Symphony Series. ★ **YAMAHA** – YSP800
sound projector, surround sound from one small box. ★ **OEHLBACH
PURE** – a German cable brand debuts at the Show.

**Fantastic deals and
special offers available**

**PLUS YOUR CHANCE TO WIN SOME SUPERB PRIZES IN
THE SHOW COMPETITION**

Admission: Adults £7.00; Students/OAPs/UB40s £3.50;
Accompanied children under 16 free

www.bristolshow.co.uk

BRANDS ON SHOW INCLUDE:

Abbey Road, Acoustat,
Acoustic Energy, Aesthetix,
AMX, Anthony Gallo, Apart,
Apollo, Arca, Arcam,
Artison, Audinni, Audiolab,
Audionet, AV Forum, B&W,
Bandridge, Beamax, Beyer
Dynamic, Black Rhodium,
Blok, Boston, Bryston,
Cabasse, Canton, Case
Logic, Cinemax, Clearaudio,
Clearlight Audio, Cyrus,
Cyruslink, Dali, Da-Lite,
Denon, Diverse Vinyl,
Dynaudio, Eclipse, Einstein,
Entertainment PC, Esoteric,
Exposure, JL Audio, Flying
Mole, Focal, Fujitsu, GamuT,
Halcro, Heed Audio,
Hermstedt, Hi-Fi Choice,
Hi-Fi Plus, Hi-Fi World,
Home Cinema Choice, Inca
Design, Infocus, Isotek,
Ixos, Jamo, JL Audio, KEF,
Kondo, Kudos, Lexicon,
Linn, Living Voice, Lutron,
Luxman, M&K, Meridian,
Merlin Cables, Michell,
Monitor Audio, Moon,
Myryad, NAD, Naim
Audio, Nbien, Neat, NHT,
Nordost, Oehlbach, Onkyo,
Ortofon, Philips iPronto,
Pioneer, Plasmacabinets,
Plinius, PMC, Primare,
ProAc, ProfiGold, Project,
Projection Design, PSB,
PURE, Puresonic, QED,
Quad, Quadraspire, Rega,
REL, Resolution, Revel,
Rogers, Roksan, Rotel,
Roth, Ruark, Runco,
Russound, Sennheiser,
Screen Research, Shakti,
Sharp, Shun Mook, Sim2,
Sky, Sound Organisation,
Soundstyle, Spectral,
Spendor, Stands Unique,
Stello, Stil-stands, Storex,
Stuff Magazine, T3, Tact,
Talk Electronics, Tannoy,
TCl, Teac, Techlink, The
Chord Company, The
Funk Firm, Tivoli, Totem
Acoustic, Trichord, Uvorn,
van den Hul, Velodyne, Vifa,
Vivante, Vivid, Vogels, VPI,
Wharfedale, What Hi-Fi?
Sound & Vision, Wilson
Benesch, Wireworld, World
Audio Design, Yamaha and
more...

**SOUND
& VISION**
THE BRISTOL SHOW



Check the website for latest
parking information.

GETTING TO THE SHOW

By train: Temple Meads Station
is a short distance from the
Marriott and is accessible by
bus, foot or taxi.

By car: from the M4 take J19
(M32 – Bristol). Follow signs for
City Centre and RAC signs to
the Show.

For the very latest
information please
check out
our website...

www.bristolshow.co.uk



audio X audio T
EXCELLENCE
www.audio-excellence.co.uk

www.audio-t.co.uk

In association with

WHAT HI-FI?
SOUND AND VISION

DEALER DIRECTORY

Choosing a good hi-fi dealer is the most vital step in acquiring the system that is right for you. This unique directory gives full information on dealers able to help in your area.

BATH/BRISTOL

THE RIGHT NOTE, tel: 01225 874728. Give your ears a new reference point for the best sounds at any price. Forget reviews and trying to put together a system like a patchwork quilt with the 'best' bits around. It's our job to do the assessing, you judge the results. Come here, or we'll come to you, and plan a system for the future, even if you spread the purchases. Leave "upgrade-itis" behind, save money and enjoy music. Just listen, and you'll know. CD: Accuphase, Advantage, Audio Synthesis, Balanced Audio Technology, dCS (Elgar etc), Meracus, Pass, Sugden, Wadia. Vinyl: Audio Synthesis, Basis, Clearaudio, DNM, Graham, (The) Groove, Lehmann (Black Cube), Michell, Sumiko, Transfiguration. Amps: Accuphase, Advantage, Balanced Audio Technology, CAT, DNM, Gamut, Lumley, Meracus, Michell, Nagra, Pass, Sonneteer, Spectral, Sugden. Speakers: Audio Physic, BKS, Ethos, Harbeth, Lumley, Magneplanar, NEAT, Totem, Verity Audio. Tuners: Accuphase, Magnum Dynalab. Cables: Argento, Chord Co, DNM, Hovland, Nordost, SonicLink, Siltech, Yamamura Churchill. Mains: Accuphase.

CHESHIRE

ACOUSTICA, 17 Hoole Rd, Chester CH2 3NH. www.acoustica.co.uk. Tel: 01244 344227. All that's best in Hi-Fi and Home Cinema from quality manufacturers including Amphion, Arcam, ART,

Audiolab, Ayre, B&W Nautilus, Classe, Focal/JM Lab, Michell Engineering, Monitor Audio, Naim Audio, Primare, Quadraspire, Rega, REL, Rotel, Spondor, Sugden, Thiel, Wadia. We offer friendly, helpful advice, interest-free credit and trade-in facilities, and deliver and install systems through Cheshire, Merseyside and North Wales. Open Tues. - Sat. 10-5.30, evenings by arrangement.

ACTON GATE AUDIO, 4 Ruabon Rd., Wrexham. Tel: 01978 364500. Audio Visual specialists. AAD, Arcam, Audio Analogue, Bose, Celestion, Castle, Denon, Harman- Kardon, Jamo, JBL, Marantz, Michell, Mission, Musical Fidelity, NAD, Onkyo, Pure Digital, Quad, REL, Roksan, Ruark, Tannoy, Teac, UKD, Unico, Vibe, Yamaha. Demonstration room, installation service. Easy parking and motorway access. Mastercard, Visa etc.

NORTH WEST

DOUG BRADY HI-FI, Kingsway Studios, Kingsway North, Warrington WA1 3NU. Tel: 01925 828009. Email: doug.brady@dougbradyhifi.com. Website: www.dougbradyhifi.com. For the widest range of high quality hi-fi in the Northwest. Family business est. 45 years. 3 demo rooms, inc. home cinema, home trials; deliveries throughout NW; Mastercard, Visa, credit facilities - Interest Free Credit! Open 10.30 - 6. Send for free map. **BADA**

HI-FI SHOWROOMS

12a West St, off West St car park, Congleton, Cheshire. CW12 1JR. Tel: 01260 280017. Email: mail@hifishowrooms.co.uk. Web: www.hifishowrooms.co.uk. Carefully selected audio range, including Naim, NAD, Roksan, Michell, Harman, Primare, Castle, Vienna, JM Labs, Neat Acoustics, Ruark, Audion Valve amps, Project, Goldring, Monitor Audio. Also the best in AV from Harman, Onkyo, Lexicon, M&K, Primare, Parasound, Naim, SIM2, Vutec, Da-lite, REL, MJ Acoustics, definitive. Demonstration by appointment. Open Tuesday - Saturday.

DORSET

MOVEMENT AUDIO, 588 Ashley Road, Parkstone, Poole. Tel: 01202 730865/380018. www.movement-audio.co.uk. Arcam, Audio Vector, B&W, Castle, Chord Electronics, Cyrus, Denon, Densen, Lavardin, Marantz, Mission (inc. FS series), NAD, Pioneer, Roksan, REL, Rotel, Tannoy (inc. Dimension), Yamaha. 3 demo rooms, Hi Fi and Home Cinema specialists, easy parking on site, high quality used equipment, massive range of audio and video leads and connectors etc. Credit facilities. Open Tues-Sat 10-5.30. **BADA**

MOVEMENT AUDIO, 926 Wimborne Road, Moordown, Bournemouth, Dorset. Tel: 01202 529988/ 520066. www.movement-audio.co.uk. Arcam, B&W, Celestion, Denon, KEF, Marantz, Michell, Musical Fidelity, NAD, Opera, Pioneer, Project, Quad, REL, Roksan, Rotel, Tannoy, Teac, Yamaha. Home cinema and Hi Fi specialists, full demo facilities, friendly expert advice, home demo and installation, easy parking, credit facilities, Visa/Mastercard. Open Tues-Sat 9.30-5.30.

LEICESTERSHIRE

LEICESTER HI-FI CO, St Martins Square Leicester LE1 5EW. Tel: 0116 253 9753. Fax: 0116 262 6097. Website: www.leicesterhifi.co.uk. Email: shop.leicesterhifi@btconnect.com. Acoustic Energy, Arcam, Atacama, Audica, AVID, B&W/Nautilus, BenQ, Chord Electronics, Creek, Crimson, Cyrus/CyrusLink, Denon, Epos, Greig IK Loudspeakers, Marantz, Michell, Mission, Mordaunt-Short MP3 Players, Musical Fidelity, NAD, Optimum, Pioneer, ProAc, Project, Pure, Quad, REL, Rotel, Sennheiser, Sharp, Teac, Totem, Yamaha, and more. 4 Listening areas/rooms over 3 floors. We can Demonstrate, Deliver and Install. HiFi/Home Cinema/Multi-room Audio/Plasma/LCD/Custom Installation/Design. Bargain Bin on Website. Open Mon-Sat 9.30-5.30 **BADA**

LIVERPOOL

ACOUSTICA, 17 Hoole Rd, Chester CH2 3NH. Tel: 01244 344227. See our main entry under Cheshire.

LONDON

CORNFLAKE.CO.UK, 37 Windmill Street, London W1T 2JU. Tel: 020 7631 0472, fax: 020 7436 7165. E-mail: help@cornflake.co.uk. Open Tues-Sat 10-6, Thurs 10-7. The specialists in high quality sound, be it for one room or many more. They offer friendly advice, and a full delivery and installation service is available. Two listening rooms with full A/V facilities demonstrating Arcam, ATC, AVI, Bryston, Dynaudio, Isotek, Mark Levinson, Lexicon, Naim, Origin Live, Proceed, PMC, Rega, Totem, Yamaha and more. Service department. Amex, Mastercard, Switch, Visa and worldwide mail order service. Still the coolest Hi-Fi shop in London. www.cornflake.co.uk

Members of the British Audio dealers Association are able to offer:

- Two year guarantee, transferable to another BADA dealer should the purchaser move more than 30 miles from his/her original address
- low cost five year guarantee option
- proper demonstration facilities
- seven day exchange or refund scheme if the dealer's advice is taken on product selection
- fully guaranteed service work
- customer complaints procedure in the event of problems

For more information contact BADA on

☎ 0870 126 9137



INDICATES MEMBERSHIP OF THE BRITISH AUDIO DEALERS ASSOCIATION



WEST MIDLANDS

ACOUSTICA, 114 Wolverhampton Road, Stafford ST17 4AH. Tel: 01785 258216.

See our main entry under Cheshire.

NORFOLK

BASICALLY SOUND, The Old School Rd, Bracon Ash, Norwich NR14 8HG.

Tel: 01508 570829.

Audio Analogue, Beyer, Bryston,

Chord Cables, Creek, Denon, Dynavector, Epos,

Goldring, Grado, Isoblue, Naim,

ProAc, PMC, Rega, Soundstyle, Thule,

Unison Research.

2 comprehensive demo rooms. Home Trial. Free

installation. Visa, Mastercard.

0% Finance. Tues-Fri 9.30-1, 2-5.30.

All day Sat.



www.falcon-acoustics.co.uk

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

NOTTINGHAM HI-FI CENTRE, 120-122 Alfreton Road, Nottingham. Tel: 0115 978 6919. www.nottinghamhifi.co.uk. We are the area's leading

specialists. Relax in our superb demonstration

rooms and enjoy the very best in Hi-Fi, multi-room

and home cinema solutions. Our outstanding

customer service means a two-year parts and labour

guarantee, an on-site service department and a full

delivery and installation service. Home trials and free

easy parking are also available. Established in 1968,

we have been giving sound advice for over 30 years.

Open Mon-Sat 9 - 5.30.



OXFORDSHIRE

ASTLEY AUDIO LTD, 3 Marketplace, Wallingford OX10 0EG. Tel: 01491 839305, fax: 01491 825024.

Founded 1975. Great deals on B&W, Denon, KEF,

Marantz, Mission, Panasonic, Pioneer, Project, Sony,

Technics, Yamaha. Home trial, installation and

delivery service. Service dept on site. 2 yr guarantee

on most products. Interest free credit on selected

items. 1 home cinema room, 2 listening rooms.

Mastercard, Visa, Amex, Diners. Instant credit.

Tues-Fri 9-5.30, Sat 9-5. CDs and DVDs stocked.

STAFFORDSHIRE

ACOUSTICA, 114 Wolverhampton Road, Stafford ST17 4AH. www.acoustica.co.uk Tel: 01785 258216.

All that's best in Hi-Fi and Home Cinema from

quality manufacturers including Arcam, ART,

Audiolab, Ayre, B&W, Focal.JM Lab, MJ Acoustics,

Monitor Audio, Naim Audio, Primare, Rega, REL,

Rotel, Spondor, Sugden, Thiel, Wadia, Yamaha Pre

Eminent. We offer friendly, helpful advice, interest

-free credit and trade-in facilities, and deliver and

install systems throughout Staffordshire and the

Midlands. Opening hours Tues. - Sat. 10.30-6.00,

evenings by arrangement.

SUFFOLK

EASTERN AUDIO, 41 Bramford Rd, Ipswich IP1 2LU. Tel: 01473 217217. Email: HiFi@eastern-audio.com. Giving sound advice for over 25 years. Parking.

Demo room. Lots of free advice. Arcam, Meridian,

Denon, Quad, NAD, B&W, Celestion, Project, KEF,

Castle, Technics, Top Tape, plus all the usual and

unusual leads, cables, stands, racks, headphones,

cartridges & styli etc.



AUDIO IMAGES, 128 London Road North, Lowestoft, Suffolk NR32 1HB. 01502 582853 info@audioimages-hifi.com - www.audioimages-hifi.com

THE Hifi & Home Cinema shop

From the smallest item to the largest custom install Fully remote lighting systems.

A refreshingly different selection with Valve amps to transistor, Cartridges to headphones & Turntables to

Projectors. Helpful, friendly people to deal with.

Synthesis, Rothwell, Shinpy-audio Volta, Sugden,

Triangle, Castle, Michell, ScreenPlay, Lumley, Harman

Kardon, Project, Rako, Sim2, Onkyo, Velodyne, Vincent,

Stax, Grado, Pathos, JM Labs, Pioneer, Mirage, Hovland,

Boulder, Tom Evans Audio Design, Isol-8, Ortofon,

Coldring, Van den Hul, Townshend, Vfa & many others

to list.

All full dealer facilities with separate dem room, repairs and servicing.

SUSSEX

POWERPLANT, 40 Church Road, Hove BN3 2FN.

Tel: 01273 775978. E-mail: sales@powerplant.co.uk

Whatever your budget we can help you choose

from our carefully selected range of today's finest

hi-fi, home cinema and multi-room equipment.

Recommended agencies include Arcam, Bose, B&O,

Cyrus, Epos, Isotek, Linn, Loewe, Michel, M&K, PMC,

ProAc, Runco, Stewart, Triad, Velodyne and Yamaha.

Excellent demonstration facilities, knowledgeable and

friendly staff. Cedia member.

Open Tues-sat 10.30am - 5.30pm

All major credit cards. Full credit facilities.

WEST MIDLANDS

GRIFFIN AUDIO, 3 Gibb Terrace, Gibb Street,

Birmingham B9 4AA Tel: 0121 224 7300

www.griffinaudio.co.uk

Birmingham's specialist hi-fi and home cinema

consultancy. A select range of quality equipment from

Arcam, ART Loudspeakers, Audiolab, Focal.JM Lab,

Linn, Naim, Rega, Shahinian, Spondor & Sugden.

Accessories from Quadraspire, The Chord Co,

Harmonic Technology and MusicWorks. Come and

listen to just how good music can sound. Call us to

arrange your personal demonstration.

SALISBURY HI-FI, 15 Catherine Street, Salisbury.

Tel: 01722 322169/330841. www.movement-audio.co.uk

Arcam, Audio Analogue, B&W, Celestion,

Chord Company, Denon, Harmon Kardon, KEF,

Marantz, Meridian (inc. Digital theatre), Mission,

Michell, Musical Fidelity, NAD, Nordost, Opera,

Project, QED, Rotel, REL, Teac, Yamaha. Home

Cinema and Hi Fi specialists, multi room and

commercial installation specialists, service dept. on

site, high quality used equipment, projection TV

and plasma. 2 demo rooms, credit facilities, Visa/

Mastercard. Open Mon-Sat 9.30-5.30. **BADA**

YORKSHIRE (SOUTH)

DONCASTER

THE HI-FI STUDIOS, The Long Barn, Wakefield

Road, Hampole, Doncaster DN6 7EU. Tel: 01302

727274/ 725550, fax: 01302 727274.

Email: info@thehifistudios.freemove.co.uk

Web: thehifistudios.co.uk

Hi-Fi, Home Cinema and Multi-Room experts.

Musical Fidelity, Tag McLaren, Wadia, Anthony

Gallow, ProAc, Ruark, Castle, Teac, Unison Research,

Impulse Horns, Monitor Audio, Harbeth, NAD,

Michell Turntables, Audio Analogue, Living

Voice, Exposure, Densen, Lynwood Electronics,

Opera, Trichord Research, Nordost, Stands Unique,

Stax Electrostatics, Ortofon, Project, Goldring,

REL Subwoofers, Tag McLaren, SIM 2 & Denon

Home Cinema products, plus others. Viewing and

demonstration by appointment. Home trials and

free installation on hi-fi equipment. Credit card and

finance facilities. Phone for more information.

10am-6.30pm Tues-Fri, 10am-5pm Sat.

Closed Sunday & Monday. **BADA**

WALES

NORTH WALES

ACOUSTICA, 17 Hoole Rd, Chester CH2 3NH. Tel:

01244 344227. See our main entry under Cheshire.

To advertise in the HI-FI CHOICE Dealer Directory, Call Bevan Walsh on 01225 788255 now!

Next month

ISSUE 278 ➤ APRIL 2006 ➤ ON SALE 09 FEBRUARY

In-depth reviews of the most vital new kit, including...

- B&W XT4 loudspeaker
- Classé SSP-600 processor and CA-520 multichannel power amp
- Roksan Caspian M Series 'updated' CD player and integrated amplifier
- Design e GT3 Series loudspeaker
- T+A SACD 1245 R CD/SACD player
- Yamaha CDR-HD1500 CD/hard-disk recorder
- Briston BP26 DA preamp/DAC and 2B SST power amp

Plus...

Our regular round-ups of accessories and music, not to mention the latest news, views and features from hi-fi's smartest grapevine... And much, much more!

BE SURE NOT TO MISS BRITAIN'S MOST RELIABLE GUIDE TO REAL HI-FI

ULTIMATE GROUP TEST >> AMPLIFIERS

The latest integrated amps are subjected to our uniquely rigorous group test regime, including...

- Arcam DVA A65 Plus
- Denon PMA-1500AE
- Micromega A60
- Myryad Z140
- Onkyo A-933
- Rotel RA-1062



SUBSCRIBE! TO HI-FI CHOICE SEE PAGE 78 FOR DETAILS

Give this form (or a photocopy) to your local newsagent to guarantee your own copy of Hi-Fi Choice reaches you every month

PLEASE RESERVE ME A COPY OF **HI-FI CHOICE** EVERY MONTH

Name

Address

Postcode

Contact telephone no.

To the newsagent: Contact your magazine wholesaler to order Hi-Fi Choice

HI-FI CHOICE

MARCH 2006 ISSUE 277

Future Publishing Ltd, 1 Balcombe Street, London NW1 6NA
Tel: +44 (0)20 7042 4000 Fax: +44 (0)20 7042 4529

EDITORIAL

Tim Bower **editor**
tim.bower@futurenet.co.uk
Dan George **reviews editor**
dan.george@futurenet.co.uk
Benny Benson **art editor**
benjamin.benson@futurenet.co.uk

CONTRIBUTORS

Richard Black, Gal Detourn, Art Dudley, Collette Fahy, Alvin Gold, Stuart Harrison, Jimmy Hughes, R. A. Lawrence, Jason Kennedy, Magic Torch, Jon Marks, Paul Messenger, Dave Oliver, Mark Prendergast, Alan Sircom, Phil Strongman, Dominic Todd, David Vivian, Nigel Williamson

PHOTOGRAPHY

Adrian Lyon

ADVERTISING

Matthew Tasker **head of sales**
020 7042 4263 matthew.tasker@futurenet.co.uk
Fiona Beech **advertising manager**
020 7042 4258 fiona.beech@futurenet.co.uk
Brad Francis **senior sales executive**
020 7042 4255 brad.francis@futurenet.co.uk
Simon Abbott **senior sales executive**
020 7042 4266 simon.abbott@futurenet.co.uk
James Rhodes-Baxter **sales executive**
020 7042 4260 james.rhodes-baxter@futurenet.co.uk
Bevan Walsh **classified sales executive**
01225 442244 bevan.walsh@futurenet.co.uk
Nick Weatherall **inserts and direct marketing manager**
020 7042 4155 nick.weatherall@futurenet.co.uk

HFC ONLINE

www.hifichoice.co.uk
Mike Cooper **online editor**
mike.cooper@futurenet.co.uk

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Tel: +44 (0)870 837 4722
Email: hifichoice@subscriptions.co.uk
Prices (13 issues): UK £31.65 (or £7.91 quarterly Direct Debit), Europe £45.39, North America \$52.77, rest of the world £65.44

BACK ISSUES

Tel: +44 (0)870 837 4722
Prices: UK £4 per issue, overseas £6.95 per issue

MARKETING & LICENSING

Tim Hudson **head of international licensing**
tim.hudson@futurenet.co.uk
Nicola Hensman **senior promotions executive**

PRODUCTION & DISTRIBUTION

Paul Burden **circulation manager**
Clare Scott **production manager**
Katty Pigott **production controller**
Helen Ramjuttan **ad coordinator**

PUBLISHING & MANAGEMENT

Andy Ford **group publisher**
andy.ford@futurenet.co.uk
Nick Merritt **group senior editor**
Clare Dove **advertising director**
Dom Beaven **publishing director**
Jim Douglas **editorial director**
Simon Wear **international director**
Robert Price **managing director**

Distributed by Marketforce (UK) Ltd, 5th floor, Low Rise Building, Kings Reach Tower, Stamford Street, London SE1 9LS. Tel: 020 7633 3300

All contents © Future Publishing 2005. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form without the express permission of the publisher. While we make every effort to ensure that everything we print in *Hi-Fi Choice* is factually correct, we cannot be held responsible if factual errors occur. Advertisements are accepted by us in good faith as correct at the time of going to press.



Future Publishing Ltd is part of Future plc. Future produces carefully targeted special-interest magazines for people who share a passion. We aim to satisfy that passion by creating titles offering value for money, reliable information, smart buying advice and which are a pleasure to read. Today we publish more than 150 magazines in the UK, US, France and Italy. Over 100 international editions of our magazines are also published in 30 other countries across the world. Future plc is a public company quoted on the London Stock Exchange (symbol: FUTR)

Roger Parry **non-executive chairman**
Greg Ingham **chief executive**
John Bowman **group finance director**

+44 (0)1225 442244 www.futureplc.com
Bath • London • Milan • New York
Paris • San Diego • San Francisco



When you have finished with this magazine please recycle it.



2ND HAND HI-FI HOME CINEMA BUYER

FREE! 8 PAGE MAGAZINE
WITH THE MARCH ISSUE OF HI-FI CHOICE



cambridge audio

DIGITAL TUNER D

A-Z GUIDE TO SECOND-HAND KIT

#19 ROKSAN

Launched in 1986, the Roksan Xerxes was arguably the first serious challenge to Linn's dominant LP12 turntable. Take a listen to the Xerxes even today and it's not hard to be impressed. Although dry, the sound was – and still is – punchy, dynamic and focused in a manner an equivalent LP12 can only dream of. During its ten year production life, there were numerous minor tweaks and no fewer than three different power supply units. Labelled XPS1, 2 and 3, we'd always recommend going for a second-hand deck with at least an XPS2 supply. The first supplies weren't the most reliable and have a habit of blowing at 45rpm. Another well publicised failing of the original Xerxes is the sagging

plinth. If this has reached a terminal level, the platter can ground, but a small degree of sag shouldn't be of concern. Even in the worst cases, the plinths can usually be straightened, although this does involve a complete strip down of the turntable.

As with any turntable, it's well worth checking the main bearing. If this is badly

“Although dry, the sound was – and still is – punchy, dynamic and focused.”

worn, the resulting parts required could be costly. Fortunately, Roksan's Cognoscenti club offers advice and no-labour-costs servicing, for a £100 annual fee. Roksan told us that most parts and a wide selection of upgrades are still available for the Xerxes. Second-hand Xerxes can go for as little as £150, but these tend

to be in a very poor state. Spend upwards of £300 and you're likely to get a good one with a Rega or even Roksan Tabriz tone arm. Find a well looked after model – with an Artemiz arm – for around £500 plus, and you'll have a turntable that will still show a

clean pair of heels to any of today's sub £1,000 decks.

It's not just turntables that Roksan is respected for – its amps have something of a following, too. We reckon that the best all rounder is the Caspian integrated. Although still available new, it has been around in various forms, since 1997. It an amp with a generous and involving sound that's particularly good at driving tricky speakers.

If you can afford it, the post-2003 model, which sports improved power (85w) and better ventilation is the best model to have. Look to paying upwards of £450 for one of these. Otherwise, an early model can be had from £200 and should provide a reliable and thoroughly musical buy.

As with the Xerxes turntable, the Caspian amplifier has the full support of Roksan and can be serviced by either a Roksan dealer or Roksan itself. Reliability is generally excellent, although the earlier models can blow if overdriven. For this reason, always make sure you get to listen to the amp and don't buy blind – good advice, whatever the product. If you like your music dynamic, dry and punchy yet, at the same time, fluid and involving then you could do a lot worse than taking a look at these two. **HFC**

Dominic Todd
Next month: Rotel



Above: Roksan's original Xerxes turntable

DIY CORNER SPEAKERS

Part 19 Enclosures

Connect a raw bass/mid drive unit to your hi-fi, and you'll discover that it has virtually no bass. That's because the sound generated from the front of the cone is cancelled out by that coming off the back.

To get a drive unit working properly, it's necessary to prevent that cancellation, and this is normally done by mounting the driver in a box which encloses the rear of the unit. Building this enclosure is one area which offers real scope for DIY work – indeed back in the 1950s, 'loudspeaker' meant 'drive unit'.

All manner of materials have been used to build enclosures, including metals, concrete and exotic even composites like carbon fibre.

The vast majority, however, use wood-based materials of one type or another, because these are easy to fabricate, and are also easy to decorate with veneer.

Numerous kinds of wood-based boards are available from the local DIY store or timber merchant, and each has its advocates. Conventional wisdom has it that the very best board is Finnish (or Russian) birch ply, which has a high density because it has grown slowly in northern latitudes, though it's certainly not the easiest material to work.

Chipboard has long been a speaker builder's favourite, and many consider it sounds better than the more recently developed and more



homogenous MDF (medium density fibreboard). The big bonus with MDF though, is that it's easy to machine and doesn't tend to split or fragment like the coarser boards. **HFC**

Paul Messenger

DIY CONTACTS

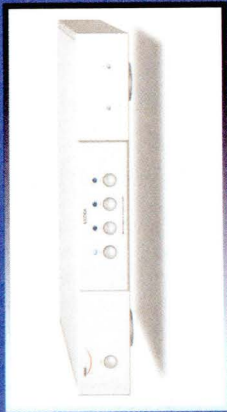
FALCON ACOUSTICS ☎ 01493 751100
🌐 www.falcon-acoustics.co.uk

WILMSLOW AUDIO ☎ 01455 286603
🌐 www.wilmslow-audio.co.uk

IPL ACOUSTICS ☎ 01271 867439
🌐 www.iplacoustics.co.uk

NEXT MONTH: More on Enclosures

Quite possibly the Ultimate 4-box Integrated Amplifier and 2-box CD Player



ASR Amplifiers

ASR Audiosystems has been successfully building integrated amplifiers, pre amplifiers, and phono pre-amplifiers since 1980. The concept for their integrated amplifiers are totally different from all other integrated amplifiers.

Friedrich Schaefer, owner and head of development at ASR Audiosystems has a very definite idea of how an amplifier should sound: The musical reproduction should be homogeneous and natural.

ASR Audiosystems has only one goal: combining the harmony and musicality of a superb tube amplifier with the accuracy and sovereign power distribution of modern transistor amplifiers.

Possibly the Ultimate Integrated Amplifier?

Just In

- AUDIO PHYSICS VIRGO MK2 £2,800
- AUDIO RESEARCH 1S16mk2 EN/A
- BRISTON 1.7B PROCESSOR (10 MONTHS OLD) £2,700
- BRISTON 88ST 4 CHANNEL POWERAMP £4,800
- BRISTON 75T MONOBLOCKS £2,500
- CAT 1L1 MONOBLOCKS £6,500
- DCS ELGAR PLUS VERDI (DAC AND TRANSPORT) £18,000
- ISOTEC CLUBE 2K £1,500
- KEF REFERENCE 107 SPEAKERS (BLACK ASH) £800
- KRELL PAM 5 PREAMP £3,500
- QUAD 606 MK2 EN/A
- QUAD 606 MK1 EN/A
- QUAD 34 PREAMP £1,500
- QUAD 989 SPEAKERS (AS NEW) £3,500
- WILSON WITTS £2,000
- WILSON AUDIO WATT/PURPY 32 £18,000

Current

- ACCU-PHASE C2000 PREAMP (LATEST) £4,800
- ACCU-PHASE PS500 POWER CONDITIONER £4,000
- ATC SP100TP SPEAKERS £2,500
- AUDIO ARTISTRY DVORAK SPEAKERS £6,500
- AUDIO NOTE ANE-SP (EBONY FINISH) £1,400
- AUDIO RESEARCH LS16 £900
- AUDIO RESEARCH PH3 PHONO AMP £2,800
- AUDIO RESEARCH V70 POWERAMP £4,000
- AUDIO RESEARCH CLASSIC 120 MONOBLOCKS £2,400
- AUDIO RESEARCH VT150 MONOBLOCKS £1,400

Weiss Jason Transport & Medea Dac

The JASON CD Transport is an addition to the already famous MEDEA D/A Converter. The design and electronics are of the same high quality in both units. Included are many features in the JASON which make it the CD Transport of choice not only in conjunction with the MEDEA but for all kinds of D/A Converters or Digital Amplifiers.

The MEDEA is a stereo 24 bit / 192kHz Digital to Analogue converter, designed with the aim of keeping an absolutely uncompromised audio signal path.

Without a doubt it is the most open, detailed and natural sounding two-box combination that we have ever heard!

AUDIO RESEARCH REFERENCE 600 MONOBLOCKS

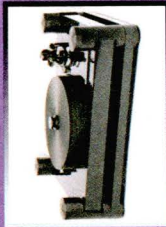
- AUDIO RESEARCH 1S16mk2 £7,000
- AUDIO STATIC 5s (new) £3,250
- AUDIO SYNTHESIS DAX DECADE (DAC PRE) £1,100
- AUDIO VALVE BALDUR 70 MONOBLOCKS £3,000
- BASIS DEBUTE GOLD STANDARD/S/IEV £2,400
- BATVKS55 POWERAMP (X DEB) £3,500
- BOULDER PHONO STAGE £1,800
- CADENCE ANINA SPEAKERS (NEW) £7,500
- CANARY AUDIO CA303 MONOBLOCKS £1,900
- CARY CAD300 SIGNATURE SE AMPS £1,500
- CASTLE HOWARD S2 SPEAKERS (OK) £500
- CLEARAUDIO MASTER REFERENCE (MASTER TQ) ARM £5,500
- CONRAD JOHNSON PREMIER 8A MONOBLOCKS £6,500
- CONRAD JOHNSON PART 2 PREAMP £7,995
- CONRAD JOHNSON PREMIER 8A MONOS £500
- CONRAD JOHNSON PREMIER 2 PREAMP £995
- COPIJARE 4 TIER STAND £2,700
- CYRUS PRE X (SILVER) £750
- GAMMA 2 I1 MONOBLOCKS £1,200
- GAMUT CD2 £3,000
- JM LABS COBALT 807 SPEAKERS £350
- JEFF ROWLAND CONCENTRA MK2 (BOXED AS NEW) £2,995
- JM LAB MINI UTOPIA £7,500
- KONDO (AUDIO NOTE) JAPAN J KASSAI SILVER (POWERAMP) £17,000
- LINN SONDEK LP12 AKITO/CIRCUSTRAMP (LINN) £550
- LINN SONDEK LP12/BASIK PLUS EN/A
- LINN PEKIN FM/AM £650
- LUMLEY ST70 VALVE POWERAMP £650



Acoustic Signature

Masterpieces of analog music reproduction developed, produced and made for natural listening. You lose nothing; all the emotions that are on your records can be heard. After all, music is for everybody. Very special products indeed...

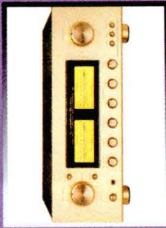
Call for more details.



Basis

The philosophies underlying Basis designs are sound principles of physics; provable concepts that result in the most accurate replay of records possible. Precise execution of those principles is critical, and you'll find Basis turntables are made with exacting care and precision machining unsurpassed in the industry.

Call for more details.



Luxman

Finally Luxman is back in the UK at long last and its definitely been worth the wait! The L-509F Integrated Amplifier (£3800) is shown above and we have not heard anything below £10k that comes even close... it really is that good.

Call for more details.



Music First

David Price says, "The MF Audio pre-amp is extremely open and sophisticated better performer that beats a number of even more expensive designs." We definitely agree! Call for more details.

Also Dealers for:

Acoustic Zen, Airtight, Amphion, Audience, Audio Valve, BAT, Border Patrol, Boulder, Cabbase, C.A.T. CEC, Clearaudio, Gamut, Graham, Halcro, Hovland, Hyperion, Lavardin, Music First, Oracle, Pass Labs, Plinius, PS Audio, Reference 3A, Rogue Audio, S.P.J Record Players, Transfiguration, Vincent, & Many More...

South Coast Main Dealer for:

Acoustic Signature, ASR, Basis, Luxman, Weiss

- MARANTZ CD12 EN/A
- MARK LEVINSON ML380 PREAMP £4,500
- MCINTOSH MA 6850 INTEGRATED £1,500
- MCINTOSH MC2000 POWERAMP £3,500
- MUSE 18 SUBWOOFER (with active cards) £5,995
- MUSICAL FIDELITY DVD 1 £14,000
- NAIMI NAP90/NA62K PRE/POWER 450
- NOLA ELITE SIGNATURE SPEAKERS £295
- ORACLE ALEXANDRIA+ARM £1,200
- PASS LABS X150 POWERAMP £4,250
- PVC 588 SPEAKERS £550
- PROAC D15 SPEAKERS £1,400
- PROAC D15 SPEAKERS (NEW) £1,100
- PUNISU 250 POWERAMPLIFIER £1,200
- PLINIUS CD LAD MK2 PREAMP £2,500
- PS AUDIO 600 POWERPLANT £995
- ROKSAN XERXES 10 TURNTABLE + 1S PSJ (AS NEW) £1,200
- ROWLAND CONCENTRA 2 £995
- ROWLAND SYNERGY PREAMP £2,000
- SNELL TYPE A TYPE2 SPEAKERS £3,500
- SOUNDLAB A1 SPEAKERS (VERY LATEST) £995
- TANNOY CANTERBURY'S £4500
- TOM EVANS GROOVE PHONO STAGE £1,000
- WADIA 270/271Z DAC TRANSPORT (LATEST MODEL) £18,000
- WEISS MEDIA DAC £4,500
- WILSON BENSCH-FACTOR £9,000
- WILSON SYSTEM 7 WATT/PURPY (LATEST) £1,800
- VOYD REFERENCE/CYBENE/AUDIO NOTE (KONDO) £12,995
- £2,500
- £8,000
- £4,500
- £18,000
- £2,000
- £2,500
- £2,900
- £2,000
- £5,000
- £7,500
- £500
- £1,800
- £6,000
- £3,000
- £700
- £7,500
- £30,000
- EN/A
- £650
- £2,450

LIST CHANGES DAILY SO BE SURE TO VISIT OUR WEB SITE REGULARLY

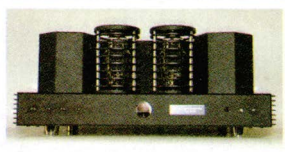
audiolincs

LUXMAN

The magnificent new Luxman L-509f integrated amplifier delivers an effortless 150wpc - 225wpc and provides the most capable array of control, flexibility and facilities.

More than this, the L-509f has proved effortlessly capable of driving some notoriously difficult loudspeakers.

Hi-fi's finest traditions have been brought right up-to-date by Luxman with this masterstroke of sheer musicality



ACOUSTIC SIGNATURE

Meticulous engineering, superb materials and massive construction deliver class leading performance with style. Our reference turntable.

KR AUDIO

The internationally acclaimed VA340 employs 300BXLS valves to deliver higher than average power for a single ended integrated amplifier of this type. If you're genuinely sensitive to music (rather than hi-fi) you'll appreciate the exquisite subtlety and near tangible presence offered by this amazing amplifier.

HORNING

Our reference speakers demonstrate how an effortlessly natural sound quality proves music reproduction is an achievement which transcends mere hi-fi.

BLUE NOTE AUDIO

WE ACCEPT PAYPAL PAYMENTS AND ALL CREDIT CARDS!!

NAIM: FULL RANGE OF PRODUCTS INCLUDING ALL ACCESSORIES AND THEIR SUPERB CD RANGE!!

UNIQUE BLACKCAT PANTHER INTERCONNECTS. Cryogenically treated, fitted with 'Eichmann Silver Bullet Plugs' £185 per metre pair

SELECTED PRODUCTS FROM: AUDIO NOTE: ROKSAN: ISOBUE: ATACAMA: AUDIO ANALOGUE: AUDION: BLACK CAT ELECTRONICS: CARTRIDGE MAN: CONSONANCE VALVE EQUIPMENT: ETALON AUDIO: GOLDRING: GRAAF: GRAHAM SLEE: HADCOCK: HEART: MICHELL: MISSION: ORIGIN LIVE: ORTOFON: PATHOS ACOUSTICS: PROJECT: SHANLING: SME: TRIANGLE SPEAKERS: MONOPULSE LOUDSPEAKERS: LINSON RESEARCH: USHER LOUDSPEAKERS: MISSION SPEAKERS AND SURROUND SOUND SYSTEMS

VALVE AMPS			
AUDIO RESEARCH LS15, boxed as new	£1350	MONOPULSE 42A5 ex-dem, seriously dynamic	£325
AUDIO RESEARCH LS9, boxed as new	£650	TDL ELECTRONICS REFERENCE STUDIO 4 HUGE FLOORSTANDING	£795
AUDIO NOTE OTO SE serviced	£675	MULTI-FACED SPEAKERS (seven units per cab, in black) [£6500]	£1500
BEARD P35MK1	£475	QUAD ESL57's black, known history	£850
WORLD AUDIO EL34 AMP	£550	QUAD ESL 63 Speakers complete service by QUAD	£1250
AUDION EL34 STEREO POWER AMP	£899	QUAD ESL 63 Speakers complete service by ONE THING	£1250
AUDION 300B STEREO POWER AMP ex-dem [£2150]	£1500	Jordan Watts Modular speakers rare matched pair ex-BBC	£295
Black Cat Electronics PX4 Valve, PAIR of MONO blocs (Lowthers/Fanny)		Snell speakers K's fantastic small stand mounter	£325
Black Cat Electronics stunning Valve line stage/FET Phonostage/PREAMP		CELESTION V6302, 'S' shaped style. [£650]	£275
ARION Class A Valve Integrated Amp uses 5881 valves	£1250	Monitor Audio Monitor 3 Speakers (Top Tweeter Model)	£275
Croft Super Micro tube phono/pre-amp	£850	Epos ES 11 brilliant small stand mounter	£245
Audion CD1 Valve pre-amp - classy sound	£275	Epos M15's excellent all rounder, floor standers	£350
ANTHEM X1 EL 34 single ended stereo valve integrated amplifier	£325	RUARK SABRES, cheap	£275
BAT 3K, hybrid, phono stage, boxed	£525	RUARK Equinox in black, very nice!!	£775
MISTRAL 5881 push-pull 20 watt integrated		Celestion 5L6 excellent cond	£275
TRANSISTOR		Hybrook Quintess gold piezzo tweeter (E1450)	£425
ETALON Suprampli remote, 40watts, simply stunning	£880	VIENNA ACOUSTICS Mozart speakers, as new, boxed [£1500]	£225
KELVIN LABS class A, MM and MC phono stages	£425	QUAD 11L's cherry, beautiful	£249
MVI, A1 integrated, class A, 100 watts	£150	JR149, metal cylindrical speakers like BBC LS3/5a's mint	£375
NAIM NAC42, mint	£175	MERIDIAN M23, active, as new plus stands and all cables	£375
NAIM NAC 42-5, as new, phono by-pass mod	£175	USHER standmounts 5202's	£265
NAIM SNAPs, just serviced	£225	CD PLAYERS:	
NAP 110 very nice	£225	MARANTZ CD17 MKII [£850]	£595
MISTRAL integrated, black, warm but dynamic	£225	Audio Innovations fish-eye CD-TUNER boxed as new	£225
CYRUS 1 good classic	£95	CYRUS DAD7 & PSX as new and boxed	£750
LINK STRATOS VDH wired pre-amp dual-mono	£275	HEART CD60000SE LE	£2150
QUAD 66 pre-amp with large console control	£425	SHANLING SCO-T200[NEW]	£1650
QUAD 606 mint	£375	SHANLING CD100 VALVE cd player as new boxed	£125
QUAD 99 two mono tones, excellent condition	£725	Marantz CD5000 [brand new and boxed]	£175
Quad 77 integrated, boxed	£350	MYRAD CD10 boxed	£215
QUAD 3344 pre-amps, 303/306/405 power amps always available		MYRAD CD20 boxed	£295
Exposure 11 and 12 Pre-amp and Power Supply		DPA PDM1 Series 2 DAC	£135
Exposure Super 8 Power Amp		CAIRN FOG 2	£1500
Arcam Alpha 8 amp		LECTOR Tube CD Player CDPO.6T	£950
Marantz PM60100SE integrated, boxed, as new		LURNABLES AND ACCESSORIES:	
Meridian 201 pre		THE ISOLATOR-unbelievable results!!	£85
Musical Fidelity B1 excellent condition		ORIGIN LIVE SILVER ARM	£599
QUAD 3344 pre-amp, 303/306/405 power amps always available		ORIGIN LIVE ENCOUNTER ARM	£970
Exposure 11 and 12 Pre-amp and Power Supply		ORIGIN LIVE ILLUSTROUS ARM	£1570
Exposure Super 8 Power Amp		Graham Slee phono stage ERA GOLD	£480
Arcam Alpha 8 amp		Graham Slee phono stage GRAM AMP 2SE	£214
Marantz PM60100SE integrated, boxed, as new		Graham Slee Gram Amp 2 Communicator MM/MC	£150
Meridian 201 pre		Graham Slee phono stage GRAM AMP 1	£98
Musical Fidelity B1 excellent condition		GARRARD 401, very good cond, SME plinth, 3009 arm, Ortofon cart	£485
Musical Fidelity A1 very nice		LINN SONDEK LP12, Valhalla, LVM ARM, LINN K9 CARTRIDGE	£525
LUXMAN C-120A HIGH END PRE-AMPLIFIER warm sound		THORENS TD125-SME 3009 ARM-John Morris SPIRALEX	£625
Musical Fidelity P140 Power Amp in new condition		MICHELL gyrodec SE	£940
Suggden CS1P51, classic pre-power combo in very good cond.		MICHELL Technodec	£575
Tandberg 3002 Pre-Amp		MICHELL Techno Man 'A'	£419
SPEAKERS		ORIGIN LIVE AURORA	£970
USHER X-719 standmount speakers including stands		ORIGIN LIVE AURORA GOLD	£1470
LIVING VOICE - Auditoriums-as new-boxed, maple [£1750]		ORIGIN LIVE MODIFIED OLT ARM	£444
ETALON Supraton 1			
ETALON Supraton 2 very natural sound			
NAIM Credo's in cherry beautiful, boxed			
AUDIO NOTE AN-J LOUDSPEAKERS with stands			
KEF 1052 REFERENCE LOUDSPEAKERS, darlek type			

GENERAL PART EXCHANGE ON ALL EQUIPMENT-MAIL ORDER ANYWHERE!!

AUDIO CABLES & ACCESSORIES-PHONO OR 5 PIN DIN [BOTH AS GOOD AS ANY ANYWHERE AT ANY PRICE!!]

MADE TO ORDER**FEEL FREE TO PHONE OR E-MAIL FOR FRIENDLY ADVICE

chrisbirchley@btinternet.com tel: 01736 740421 mobile: 07947 678256

website: www.bigearsaudio.org.uk updated daily

LIKE NEW ...
... NOTHING
LIKE THE
PRICE!

ACOUSTIC ZEN Silver Reference Interconnect (£1285)	Mint	£825
ACOUSTIC ZEN Hologram Mk 2 12ft Bi-wires (£1195)	Mint	£795
AUDION Sterling Integrated (EL34) amplifier	New valves	£645
AUDIO INNOVATIONS 500 Integrated amp	New valves	£475
AUDIOSTATIC DCI Wing Loudspeakers (£5,000)	Mint, boxed	£3295
BAT VK-51SE Pre-amp (£7,995)	Mint, boxed	£3995
BAT VK-150SE Monoblocks (£15,500)	Mint, flight cases	£8995
BAT VK-P5 Phono stage	New, boxed	£1395
CARDAS Golden Cross 1mt RCA	Unmarked	£345
CARY 300B SE Monoblocks (£2,750 +)	Mint, boxed	£1995
CONRAD JOHNSON EF1 Phono-stage (£2000)	Mint, boxed	£895
CONSONANCE Ref 1.2 Pre-amp (£2,995)	Ex-dem, boxed	£1995
CROFT Chorisma 'X Spec' Pre-amp. Upgraded.	Mint, boxed	£1795
CYRUS CD6 CD Player	Mint	£525
DENSEN Beat 400XS CD Player with Gizmo	Very little use, boxed	£1795
GRAAF GM50B Integrated Amp	As new, boxed	£2895
HORNING Loudspeakers. Most models in stock		NEW
KIMBER Kabel Type Bag Spkr cable 1.6mtr (£3,000)	Boxed	£795
KR AUDIO Kronzilla DM T1610 Monoblocks (£11,995)		NEW
LINN SONDEK LP12 (Trampolin) New Origin Live Ultra DC motor and new origin Live Conqueror arm. (Circa £4,500)	Mint	£2,995
MUSIC FIRST MF1 Pre-amp		NEW
QUAD ESL 57 Late series / black	Excellent	£495
MANTICORE Mantra + Musician Tonearm	Superb	£395
PAPWORTH M200 Monoblocks 2004 (£4995)	Mint, boxed	£2995
PROAC Response 1SC	Unblemished	£745
REFERENCE 3a Loudspeakers. Most models in stock		NEW
SHANLING Models CD-T80/100/300 in stock		NEW
TOWNSHEND Isolda Spkr Cables - 3mtr banana	Mint	£375
UNISON S2K Integrated valve amp.	Beautiful, boxed	£895
XTC CDT1LE CD Transport Remote control.	As new, boxed	£495

PHONE:
078 2192 5851
01476 591090

www.audiolincs.com
GRANTHAM (A1) LINC'S

NATIONWIDE DELIVERY DAILY EXPORT
PART-EXCHANGE COMMISSION SALES
HIGH-END REPAIRS VALVE SPECIALISTS

Update on Last Month!

I referred last issue to the new Abbey Road Cables, and am happy to report that the speaker cable in particular sounds very good, from the cheapest 'Monitor 2-core speaker cable' to the top 'Reference bi-wire speaker cable'. The latter sounds not dissimilar to my Kimber Cable Monocle X, which is nowhere near as user friendly, being more like a hose pipe than a speaker cable. The main characteristic of the Abbey road cables is a very neutral but detailed sound without the brightness some silver cables can give. A 3m pair of the Monitor costs £338 while the Reference costs £626 (similar to the Kimber), though prices are likely to go up in the New Year. I have only heard the cheaper Monitor Interconnect (£135), but at the moment still prefer my silver interconnects (£250).

I am now burning in the AVI Duo floorstanders, which look good for £1,299, and still burning in the Nola Vipers, which do take a long time, but are already sounding very good. More updates next month.

SALE ITEM	NORMAL PRICE	SALE PRICE
ATC SCM50SL (ROSEWOOD - As new)	£5500	£3000
ATC SCM20SL (WALNUT) + STANDS	£2600	£1400
RUARK SOLSTICE (OAK) NEW	£4000 +	£2500
RUARK CL10 (CHERRY)	£1200	£600
RUARK BROADWORDS (ROSEWOOD)		
One damaged cabinet	£750	£200
AVI BIGATRON(CHERRY)	£600	£350

MUSIC AND HOME CINEMA CAN GO TOGETHER

V'AUDIO 0117 968 6005

36 Druid Hill, Stoke Bishop, Bristol BS9 1EJ
Email: icvhifi@yahoo.co.uk

HOME CINEMA & HI-FI CONSULTANTS



Audio Consultants

Call 01592 744 779 for the best part-ex prices!
List changes daily so visit www.shadowaudio.co.uk regularly!

digital

Musical Fidelity CD Pre 24 (£2000) £849
Marantz CD6000OSE Ki Signature, in black, mint £249
TEAC P700 CD transport, boxed as new £399
Marantz CD94, boxed manual 9/10 condition, very very rare £369
Unison Research Unico CD Triode valve CD player (£1295) £895
Musical Fidelity Nu-Vista CD player, one owner, as new condition £1395
Musical Fidelity Tri-Vista 21 DAC - boxed as new £895
Bel Canto PL-1, boxed as new, ex-dem, (£6990) EPOA
Cyrus Discmaster CD Transport, Black, PSX-R available, see misc £295
Bel Canto PL-1 Universal CD/DVD-A/SACD boxed as new (£9490) EPOA
Wadia 302 CD player (£4000) £2995
Musical Fidelity Nu-Vista CD Player £1495
Shanling CDT-100 (3D acoustics UK model) - £1600 £990
Audio Analogue Paganini (£950) £695
Musical Fidelity A308CD player £995
Roksan Kandy MKIII silver/black ex-dem £450

Musical Fidelity KW500 (£4000) £3199
ATC SPA2 150 power amplifier (£3400) £1995
Audio Innovations 2nd Audio Monoblocks (£3000) £1200
Audionet Amp II mono blocks (£2250) £1995
Audionet Pre 1 including EBS (£3645) £995
Musical Fidelity A300c dual mono power amplifier £695
Musical Fidelity A308 pre amplifier (£2000) £795
McIntosh MC252 power amplifier £3852 £2995
Classe 47.5 pre amplifier (£3300) £695
BATVK-200 unmarked in black £895
Bryson BP20 with 4RST pre/power £2195
Musical Fidelity A3.2 integrated amplifier (£999) £495
Linn Wakonda pre amplifier £495
ES Lab DXS4 digital power amplifier (£2600) £995
Graaf GV50, award winning valve amplifier (£4000) £2795
Chord SPM 1200E in silver one owner with Integra Legs (£5800) £3995
Copland CSA 28 integrated amplifier (£1500) £695
McIntosh MA2275 valve integrated (£5773) EPOA
Audio Valve Eclipse Pre-amplifier (£2395) £1295
Pathos TT-RR integrated amplifier (£3595) £1995
Jeff Rowland Model 8 ti power amplifier (£14000) £5895
Roksan Caspian M1 pre-amplifier and 2x M1 Mono blocks (£3500) £1995
Bel Canto Evo4, boxed as new, ex-dem (£3499) EPOA
Bel Canto Pre2, boxed as new, ex-dem (£2999) EPOA
Bel Canto EVO 2i, boxed as new (£2750) £795
Meridian 557 Power amplifier EPOA
McIntosh MA6500 integrated amplifier, ex-dem EPOA
McIntosh MC501 Monoblocks (pair), boxed as new (£7800, pair) EPOA
AVI Lab Series Integrated amplifier (£1500) £949
Conrad Johnson PV14L pre, 2yrs old (£2300) £1250
Croft TS1 with Epoch Pre (£3000) £1795
Audio Analogue Puccini Setanta (£950) £795
Musical Fidelity X-150 v3 (£799) £650
Hovland HP100 pre-built in phstage (£5350) £3595
Hovland Radia Power amplifier (£7995) £4995
Hovland HP200 + phono stage (£7325) £4995
Audio Analogue New Maestro (£1750) £1255
Audio Analogue Primo Setanta £325
Roksan Kandy MKIII (silver or black) £450

ATC SCM 7 in premium rosewood (£563) £395
Usher AC10 loudspeakers Very rare in Walnut (£8000) £2995
PMC GB1 speakers, boxed as new, one owner, in Oak £745
ATC SCM-35, one owner, cherry, boxed as new (£1999) £1395
Monitor Audio CR10 speakers in cherry, mint (£850) £390
PMC OB1 speakers in cherry, boxed as new (£2700) £1595
ART Expression V6, boxed as new, one owner in cherry (£3250) £1995
ATC SCM-50ASL, finished in Yew, boxed as new (£7947) £4995
Wilson Benesch Curve speakers (£5000) £3495
Dali Helicon 400 (£3300) £1995
Audio Note AN-ED speakers, w/lnut finish £595
Living Voice Avatar II, finished in cherry (£2700) £1595
Ref 3a Dacapo I, maple (£2700) £1650
Triangle Hellade, Champagne finish (£595) £395
Wilson Benesch ARC's with stands (£2500) £1699
Triangle Australe in cherry (£3300) £1995
Living Voice Avatar OBX-R in Cherry £2895
Wilson Benesch Discovery (£5700) £3895
Quad 989 ESL Vintage, new £5000 £3600
Quad 988 ESL in Nouveau, cost new £3750 £2999
Audio Physic Virgo III, Cherry £2895

Mark Levinson JC-1 phono stage, very rare £1495
Pro-ject Tube Box - as new - superb valve phono stage £195
Linn LP12, Ittok LVII, one owner, very good condition £495
Ortofon Jubilee, very low hours, boxed as new, be quick! £595
SME 10, boxed AS NEW (£2800) £1895
SME 20/2a + SME V tonearm (£5695) £3695
Wilson Benesch Full Circle+Ply Cart (£2100) £1495
Michell Orbe SE boxed as new £1595
SME 10A, boxed £2495
Nottingham Analogue Spacedec £695
Trichord Dino - silver front £199
Vertex AQ Roraima Plus, mains lead with filter, one owner as new (£490) £395
Grado RS2, reference headphones, boxed new, unused (£550) £350
PS Audio P600 power plant, just serviced, Multivave model (£2895) £1395
ISOLB Mainline2 digital mains lead, inline filter (£225) £129
Kimber 4TC 2x 4.5m (£262) Kimbers best selling speaker cable £145
Grado RS1, top of the range headphones (£750) £450
Atlas Navigator XLR Interconnect , 2.5m (£400) £225
Nordost Vishnu 2m mains lead, one owner as new (£450) £349
Townshend Super Tweeters in Titanium matt £650

amplifiers

loudspeakers

misc

21-22 Cadham Centre, Glenrothes, KY7 6RU, Scotland
tel: 01592 744 779, fax: 01592 744 710
info@shadowaudio.co.uk, www.shadowaudio.co.uk

definitive audio

Definitive Audio creates a quality of musical experience that is peerless. Our service is bespoke, our philosophy is unique and our results are celebrated the world over.

We use a selection of the most artful and ingenious creations, including the emotionally persuasive and sublimely beautiful KSL Kondo amplifiers and Living Voice loudspeakers.

Living Voice - full product range

KSL Kondo - full product range

Resolution Audio Opus 21

Magnum Dynalab

Kuzma, including Airline and XL

SME including Model 30

Finite Elemente including Pagode HD Reference Series

New Western Electric 300B valves available from stock.

Sale of part exchanged and ex-dem items

Sale New

Conrad Johnson Premier 140 - 2003 - very good condition	£5000	£7500
Pathos 2 box pre-amp - spotless	£1700	
Audion Golden Night 300B monos - very good condition	£1750	£3200
EAR 534 power amplifier - excellent condition	£1100	
Audio Note DAC 3 with Border Patrol PSU	£1200	£2600
Naim CD5 - 2003 - mint - manual - boxed	£795	
Border Patrol Control Unit - line pre-amp	£1000	£1700
Audio Note Japan M7 pre-amp - line only	£3000	
Musical Fidelity A2 Integrated - very nice	£250	£500
Art Audio PX25 - 5watts - Single ended flea power for the sensitive type	£3000	£4000
Krell KAV-300IL	£1900	£3000
Helios Model 1 CD player	£500	£1300
Teac BRDS 10SE CD player - reclocked	£400	
SJS Phono amp	£750	£2000
AVI S.2000 M1 integrated amp	£400	£1000
Border Patrol P21 - mahogany - integrated - 11 months	£3800	£4800
Audio Mecca Mephisto CD transport	£1000	£2500
Canary 303 [110v] - new - fillet mignon	£3800	£7200
B&W CDM	£290	
Audio Innovations L2 pre-amp	£450	
Aloia pre-amp - very new - very good condition - beautifully made - OK	£900	£2800
Thomas Sheu turntables (80mm platter with 12" arm)		ring for details
(50mm platter with 9" arm)		
Vitavox RH330 Mid range horn - pair	£400	
Revolver 45 loudspeaker - grey + maple	£400	£900

Tel: 0115 973 3222

Fax: 0115 973 3666

Internet: www.definitiveaudio.co.uk

email: shout@definitiveaudio.co.uk



NAGRA DAC



nagra
MIDLAND AUDIO XCHANGE



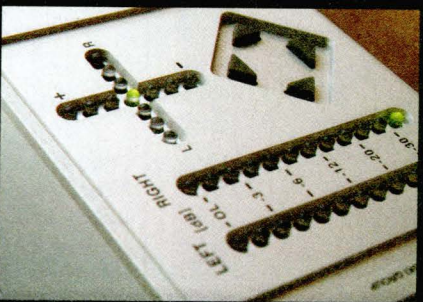
NAGRA



MPA 250W AMPLIFIER

For audiophiles and tube-lovers who need a tremendous power, the MPA will deliver 250 Watts of clear and pure audio. The MPA remains, since its introduction in 2000, an innovative product based on a specific Nagra design.

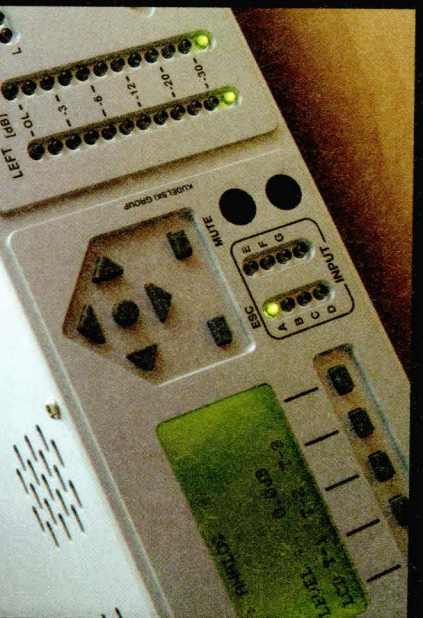
The MPA stands to convince you that a MOSFET based amplifier can convey the emotion and warmth of tubes, in exactly the same way we proved that digital and analogue were not antagonist concepts when serving musicality.



HIGH DEFINITION DAC

The DAC has inherited the fabulous electronic design of the Nagra D and Nagra V digital recorders used by the most prestigious music companies and recording engineers in the world. These exceptional machines have convinced the engineers that digital audio could convey the emotion and warmth of analog tape recorders and long play disks that they miss with other digital formats.

The DAC was designed with the same ingredients and philosophy to provide you with state-of-the-art technology respecting your music.



PL-P PREAMPLIFIER

The PL-L is a Pure Class A vacuum tube line pre-amplifier, based on the proven design concepts of the world-renowned PL-P. The jewel-like machined anodized aluminum case features input source selection, balance and volume controls, as well as a precision modulator for system level matching. The PL-L is designed to provide the highest quality audio performance in an ultra-high-resolution audio system.

The PL-L uses three high-grade vacuum tubes and Nagra-made transformers to provide a variety of operating options. Each vacuum tube used in the PL-L has been burned-in for 12 hours and thoroughly tested to ensure the highest level of performance. The PL-L is designed in a pure audiophile approach of both quality and simplicity in signal's path.

ENQUIRIES: T. 01562 731100
F. 01562 730228

THE OLD CHAPEL, FORGE LANE,
BELBROUGHTON. DY9 9TD
sales@midlandaudiox-change.co.uk

ELECTRONICS

Accuphase, Audio Analogue, Audio Research, Belcanto, Conrad Johnson, Copland, Creek, Densen, DCS, Electrocompaniet, Krell, Lavardin, Magnum Dynalab, Nagra, Orpheus, Pathos, Primare, PS Audio, Reson/Resolution Audio, Spectral, Sugden, Trichord, Unison Research, Wadia, 47 Laboratory.

LOUDSPEAKERS

Audio Physic, ATC, Avalon, JM Labs, Konus Audio, Pen Audio, Proac, Peak Consult, Martin Logan, REL, Sonus Faber, Velodyne, Verity Audio.

CABLES / SUPPORTS / ACCESSORIES

Cardas, Clearaudio, Eichman, Finite Elemente, Furatech, Grand Prix Racing, Nordost, Quadrasphere, Siltech, Shakti, Shun Mook, Transparent, Van de Hul.

TURNTABLES / CARTRIDGES

Avid, Benz Micro, Dynavector, Koetsu, Kuzma, Lyra, Michell, Rega, Roksan, RS Labs, SME, Triplanar, VPI.

READER CLASSIFIED

Welcome to *Hi-Fi Choice Reader Classified*, the UK's first and best free private ads service for second hand hi-fi. These pages a must-read if you're thinking about buying used kit, and if you want to sell something it's definitely the place to be. It's free to place an advertisement – simply submit your ad of up to 30 words,

remembering to include your name, phone number and home town or county. The simplest way to send your ad is via email – send to: dan.george@futurenet.co.uk. Or mail to: **Reader Classified, Hi-Fi Choice, Future Publishing, 1 Balcombe Street, London NW1 6NA**. Please note that this service is open to private advertisers only.

FOR SALE

ARCAM A65+ amplifier black, boxed, brand new, never used. £295 for a quick sale! Norman on 020 8318 0665 or 07957 650274 (London).

ARCAM ALPHA 9 integrated amplifier including phono stage, £175. Arcam Alpha 9P power amplifiers (two of), £150 each. Toshiba SD-140E multi region DVD player, £25. All boxed with manuals. 07768 923766 (Middlesex)

ARCAM FMJ A32 integrated amplifier, unused since purchase, mint condition, boxed, (£1,200) £900. 01491 613760 (Oxford).

ATACAMA R720 speaker stands, mass filled, 50cms tall, 12 months old, very heavy and a perfect platform, (£280) £150. 01539 725413 (Cumbria).

AUDIO RESEARCH LS5 preamp. Fully balanced inputs and outputs, (£5,290) £1,690. ATC 20T ASL, (£4,800) £2,300, part exchange welcome, call for details. 020 8504 1638 (London)

AUDIO RESEARCH LS9 preamp, as new, boxed with remote, £650ovno. 01782 397971 (Staffs).

AUDIO SYNTHESIS DESIRE Decade power amplifier. Hardly used and in mint condition. Complete with original box and instructions. Can demo in London, £950. Jim Boswell on 020 7351 8669 or 07736 339194 (London)

AUDIONOTE ANJ/ B speakers. Highly efficient, natural sounding, (£795) £345. Dedicated Huygens/Target stands heavy, spiked, (£230) £95. Buy together, £395. All good condition, John 01253 886609 (Blackpool).

B&W DM602 S3 Sorento finish, includes Apollo AZ6 stands in black, also mint condition, (£390) £250. Buyer collects, Philip 020 8923 9757 (London)

B&W NAUTILUS 805 speakers in cherry wood with dedicated B&W stands, mint, boxed, £850. 0121 601 0325 (West Mids).

CYRUS CD8x silver, boxed. Only £725, includes postage within UK. Also Kimber Select 0.5 metre 1121 analogue cables WBT plugs, £150. 02841 764088 (N.Ireland).

DENON CD UD-M31 receiver, includes Mission M70i loudspeakers and cables, mint condition, £150ono. 07733 364380 (Oxford).

DENON DRM-555 cassette recorder excellent condition. C/W straight wire Chorus interconnect, (£60) and IXOS 105 digital interconnect, both for £50. 01772 752379 (Preston)

DUNLOP SYSTEMDEK II (biscuit tin). Linn LVX tonearm, Michell dust cover, £200. Linn LVX tonearm, Michell dust cover, £200. Mordaunt Short Avant 902, new, boxed, £100. Lumley Lampros 100/S2 new, boxed, unopened, (£2,000) offers 01706 873538 or email michela@goldendreams.wanadoo.co.uk (Rochdale)

EPOS 15.2 light cherry, includes plinths, seven months old. Mint condition, (£730) £490. 020 8923 9757 (London)

KEF CONCERTO speakers, two pairs, walnut and teak, good condition. Recently overhauled by Radford hi-fi, £300 per pair. 01275 849276 or 07788 456656 (Bristol)

KEF KHT 2005.2 speakers, five satellites, boxed as new £200. Rob 01992 534271 (Herts)

KRELL 300CD quality player in excellent condition. Boxed with instruction manual. £1,095 01803 855321(S.Devon).

LEAK TROUGHLINE 3 £50. Hitachi 5500, £50. Cardboard speakers (unused), £100. Linn Valhalla PSU and motor, £100. Garrard 401 with SME Mk2, £450. Michell Hera +150, £400 01606 784767 (Cheshire).

LINN LK100 power amplifier, great sound £275 plus postage. 0131 466 0205 or email gordon@gordon.scobie.name (Edinburgh).

LINN LP12 with Linn Basic Plus arm, Valhalla and Cirkus upgrade. No cartridge, boxed, £400. Naim Nait 3 with MM phonostage, Naim speaker cable and interconnects (inc tape) plus Kimber Powerkord, boxed with manual, £400 Michael 020 8365 3622 (London).

LINN MIMIK CD player recently serviced, complete with remote, instruction booklet and original box. In good condition and perfect working order, £250. Dave 01782 397204 or 07884 430988 (Staffs).

LIVING VOICE AUDITORIUM in cherry wood veneer. Editor's Choice in *Hi-Fi Choice*, mint, ▶

WANTED

A&R T21 tuner and A&R P60 power amp, must both be in good condition. 01873 856499 (Gwent).

BRYSTON 4B-SST amplifier. Good price paid 01487 814015 (Camps).

DENON AU320 MC transformer. 01942 891741 (Wigan).

MARANTZ CD63MKII KI Signature, fully functioning, black, made in Japan and in excellent condition. Will pay reasonable price. 07974 274615 (W Yorks).

MUSICAL FIDELITY A308CR power amp. 0115 9126424 (Notts)

MUSICAL FIDELITY TRI-VISTA 21 DAC. Will pay good price, must be excellent condition. 0121 601 0325 (West Mids).

NORDOST VALHALLA speaker cable and digital lead with standard plugs. Will pay cash. 01264 335479 (Andover)

ROTEL RC5000 preamp and RB5000 power amp. 01942 720220 (Cheshire).

SHAHINIAN ARCS or Celestion A3. 01722 334694 (Wilts).

BUYING TIPS

Buying second-hand can be a great way to pick up a bargain. A formerly expensive second-hand component might well prove a better long-term bet than a brand-new product if the price is right.

Do some research on which brands have a good service back-up, so if something does go wrong, you can get it fixed. Unless you purchase from a dealer, you're unlikely to get any warranty, so it's up to you to ensure the fitness of any gear that you buy.

Usually, speakers should be less prone to breakdown than amps, and amps should be more reliable than CD players. But any abused component could be trouble – have a proper dem, and judge the seller as well as the goods!

FOR SALE

boxed, (£1,700) £895 (no offers please). 07899 808918 (Kent)

MARANTZ CD6000 OSE limited edition CD player.

Excellent condition and perfect working order. Complete with original box, packaging, manual and remote. Can post, call for details. 01384 412234 (West Midlands).

MARANTZ CD6000KIS CD player black, boxed, manual, mint, (£600) £200. Two three metre lengths of Talk 3.1 bi-wire, terminated, £20. Two Sony TCX-100 tape decks, silver, powered loading tray, £30 each. 01356 248467 (Glasgow).

MARANTZ PM66SE amp, recently serviced, £90. Marantz CD67 CD player, (well reviewed), £80ono. Sony MiniDisc player MDS930, £100ono. Mission M73 speakers, £90. 01404 891728 (Devon).

MERIDIAN 24/ 96 DSP5000 speakers in black, £2,050ono. Meridian 596 DVD with SDI upgrade, £1,500ono. All excellent condition, happy to demo in the Cheshire area. 07775 855744 (Cheshire)

MICROMEGA DUO CD 3.1 transport, top loading balanced and RCA digital outputs, excellent sounding, mint, boxed, £400. Siltech HF6 digital interconnect (WBT/RCA), £40. 020 8543 8625 (London).

MISSION 752F in Rosewood, £225. Marantz 7200 amp, £185 01582 724414 (Beds).

MUSICAL FIDELITY X-PRE V3 X-P200 power amps (two), X-ray V3 CD, Monitor Audio RS6 speakers, £3,800 can deliver. 01566 779350 (Launceston)

MUSICAL FIDELITY A3 CD player mint, £325. X-80 amp, mint, £175. Both boxed with manuals. 07941 174804 (Berks).

MUSICAL FIDELITY A370 MkII power amp, mint, £1,100. Gary 020 8980 9003 (London).

MUSICAL FIDELITY E600 CD player, Balanced outs, £125. £50 FM tuner, £100 or £200 for both. Andrew 020 7663 1264 9am-6pm Weekdays (London)

MUSICAL FIDELITY XLPS phono stage MM/MC bought December 2003, black and silver, very good sound and in excellent condition, £85ono. Clem on 07962 672671 (Middlesex)

MUSICAL FIDELITY limited addition 250-watt M3 pre/power combination in lovely condition. Authenticity certificate, owners manual, original packaging, rave reviews, stunning with 24k gold trim, £1,600. 01943 466381 (Yorkshire).

NAIM CDS1 brand new, boxed, £600. Sony XB720E CD player as new, £50. Paul 07963 947689 (Derbyshire).

NAIM NAP500 power amp, just one year old, absolutely mint, boxed, £8,000. Naim NAC202 preamp, 18 months old, also mint and boxed, £850. Naim NACA5 speaker cable with Naim plugs, 2x5m, £65. 01285 862539 (Cirencester).

PIONEER 505 PRECISION CD player (£460), £150. Sennheiser HD580 headphones (£200), £65, both items boxed and mint. 01278 78262 (Bridgwater).

PIONEER F203 RDS stereo tuner black, boxed, vgc, £40ono. 020 8694 9350 (S.London).

PRIMARE PRE30 two A30.2s, black, one year old, (£3,600) £2,400. Philips CDR 796 silver, (£350) £100. Good tuner also wanted 01803 523553 or 07821 863950 (Devon)

QUAD 306 power amps 80 watts each, gold speaker terminals, ideal for bi-amping, mint, £160 each or £300 for both (no offers) 029 2059 6351 (Cardiff).

QUAD ESL 63S, brown, excellent condition, £1,000ono. Call for more details 02392 257750 (Hampshire).

REGA EAR Headphone amplifier, black model, complete with power supply, £65. Denon TU-260L2 FM/AM tuner, black, the award winner, unused and new in box, £55. 01538 360456 (Stoke-on-Trent).

RUARK TALISMAN floor speakers (excellent condition), Myriad MA120 power amp, Sounds Unique equipment rack, NAD 120 turntable, (£2,500) £500 the lot. 07966 310993 (Lincoln/Newark).

RUSS ANDREWS Superpurifier, (£350) £220 and two yellow power mains cables (offers) 01202 680968 or 07983 0525185 (Dorset)

SD ACOUSTICS SD1 speakers, £350ono. Buyer collects 01931 716477 (Cumbria).

SHUN MOOK MPINGO disc, boxed, (£50) £30 as new. Stuart, 01384 394441 (West Mids)

SHURE V15VxMR cartridge, £250. Only 18 months old, complete with all accessories. New, unused replacement stylus VN5xMR, £130. 07729 626598 (Essex).

SONY XA9000ES SACD player, one year old, black. Stereophile A plus rated. 020 8951 3178 (Edgware).

SPENDOR SP2 speakers, walnut veneer, excellent condition, £250. 01622 683330 (Kent).

SUGDEN CD21, (£1,049) £725. Marantz PM14 MkII KI, (£1,000) £500. PMC DB1 + cherry, (£625) £285. Panasonic PT500 projector, (£1,200) £525. 01295 275983 (Banbury).

TARGET HI-FI RACK four shelf. Complete with castors and spikes, £35. Micromega MS1 Monitor speakers, £35. Clive 01483 569837/07904 309202. (Guildford)

TDL STUDIO 1 speakers, dark oak cabinets, some scuffs and grille badges missing, £80. 07706 556951 (Northants)

TOTEM ARRO floorstanders, Dreamcatche centre, Lynx dipoles. Maple, mint, boxed, (£2,045) £1,300 (Swansea).

VRDS transport, looks and sounds a million dollars. Highly reviewed and sought after, £1,300ono. 020 8882 850 or 07900 191717 (London)



Above: Primare PRE30/A30.2



HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR FREE ADVERTISEMENT

To submit your advert to us instantly please email dan.george@futurenet.co.uk or alternatively, use the postal form below. Please limit ads to a maximum of 30 words, ensuring all details, model names etc are correctly stated. Kindly also include your telephone number and home town or county. We regret that we cannot take adverts over the phone.

Name _____ Advertisement _____
 Address _____

 Daytime telephone _____
 Date _____

Please insert my advert for: 1 issue

PLEASE SEND YOUR ADVERTISEMENT TO:

Reader Classified, Hi-Fi Choice, Future Publishing, 1 Balcombe Street, London NW1 6NA.



The new Artikulat Loudspeaker System. Gorgeous.

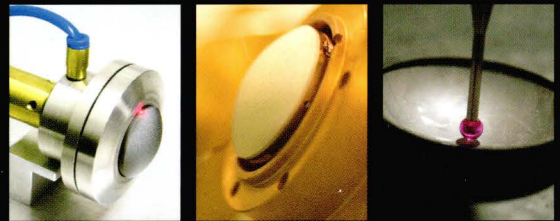


Linn Products Limited.
For more information or a demonstration call 0500 888 909 www.linn.co.uk



B&W Bowers & Wilkins

The new B&W 800 Series Diamond Tweeter Technology




Diamond
At Work™

> RELEASED

The mark of a truly great tweeter – one that can release all the vivid detail in your music – is what's called 'perfect piston behaviour'. As long as the tweeter dome is vibrating rigidly, like a piston, its delivery will be accurate. The higher the frequency, though, the harder that becomes. The materials most resistant to 'break-up' combine lightness and stiffness. And there's one that does that better than anything else on earth.

The new B&W 800 Series feature tweeter domes of pure, ultra-hard diamond. It may seem extravagant, but nothing gets closer to the behaviour of a hypothetical 'perfect tweeter' – one with infinite stiffness. Our diamond dome carries on vibrating like a piston well beyond the range of human hearing, and delivers audible sound with unheard-of clarity.

www.bw800.com

Visit our website and order your free DVD
Call +44 (0)1903 221 500

 Only 800 Series models with this symbol use
B&W diamond tweeter technology